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AND
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GENERATION, the beginning
of a Godly Life.

PART II. The MEANS, DU-
TIES, ORDINANCES, both
Secret, Private, and Publick;
for continuance and increase of

a Godly life once begun, till
we come to Heaven.

PART III. Meditations on LIFE,
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HELL, the Sufferings of
CHRIST, and HEAVEN.

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To the Worshipful, The

MAYOR, ALDERMEN,

And other Inhabitants of the Town of Preston in Amounderness.

THE Apostle Peter knowing (as he saith 2 Pet. i. 14, 15.) that shortly he was to put off that his tabernacle of the flesh, as our Lord Jesus Christ had shewed him; he therefore endeavoured that God's people, after his decease, might have those things he taught them always in remembrance: And thus it came to pass, that to this day we have that portion of holy writ, which he then left in writing. If Peter's practice be imitable in this kind, I suppose the same duty lies on me. Revelation I have none, but many stitches and infirmities, which I take to be forerunners of my departure hence. Some things, and among the rest, these *First Things* I have taught you; what remains now, but that, after my decease, you might have these things always in remembrance? To that purpose, the same I delivered once to your ears, I now present to your eyes; as you were then pleased to hear them, so I trust you will now peruse them: only, one thing you may please to observe through this treatise, That whereas, in the name of Christ, I often beseech, exhort, command the unregenerate to believe, to be reconciled to God, to pray, to fall on this, or that duty; it is not as if they could do any thing of their own strength or power, but because Jesus Christ, in exhorting, entreating, commanding, puts forth his own power, and his own strength to enable them. While Paul exhorted the Jaylor to believe in the Lord Jesus, that he might be saved, God enabled the Jaylor to believe. Life and power is conveyed to the soul in gospel-commands and exhortations. While Ezekiel prophesied over dead bones, breath came into them, and they lived: so, while the prophets of the Lord do preach over sinful, and impenitent hearers, who are like to the Prophet's dry bones, the breath of Heaven, the Spirit of the Most High, in the ministry of the gospel, enters into them, and so they are made new creatures, and see the kingdom of God. I have no more to say, only I beseech God, you may receive a blessing by these poor labours upon your poor souls: it is the hearty prayer of,

Yours to be commanded,

In all Christian Services,

ISAAC AMBROSE,

T O t h e R E A D E R .

O*F many books there is no end, and much study is a wearisomness of the flesh,* Ecc. xii. 12. The experience of this truth, especially in those latter days, hath sometimes put me to sad and serious thoughts, How should a Christian furnish himself with a sufficient library to help him heaven ward? Should he buy up all the Ancients, or, in case he want the tongues, should he buy up all our modern English writers, positive and polemical, they might fill his closet, but he should find no end of buying, as there is no end of making books: and if he resolutely fell to reading, he might conclude with the Wise-man, *much study is a weariness of the flesh*; nay, in such variety, he would find the most of his study so impertinent, so unprofitable, that he might further conclude, Such a study is a loss to his soul, and rather an hinderer, than an helper of it in the way to heaven. To prevent this, some have advised Christians to choose out, amongst that world of variety we now enjoy, such Authors as are most suitable to their genius and employment. The Lord Verulam, with some others, give their opinions, "That, if the choice and best observations, which have been made dispersedly in our English sermons (leaving out the largeness of exhortations and applications thereupon) were set down in a continuance, it would be the best work in divinity that hath been written since the apostles times." And Dr. Hackwill repeats almost the same words, saying, "That the sermons of this latter age, especially in this land, have doubtless been more exquisite and effectual, than ordinarily they have been in any precedent age; inasmuch as it is observed, that if there were a choice collection made of the most accurate since the entrance of Queen Elizabeth, to these present times (omitting the large application thereupon) it would prove one of the rarest pieces that hath been published since the apostles times." Indeed, had we such a book extant, I would advise the Christians of our age to buy the Bible, and that book, and to study them, and no more, as to their spiritual good: but, alas! this book is rather wished for, than hoped after; we may expect and wait for it never so long, without perhaps being ever the nearer. However, it was my design to have carried on such a business as this in the main necessary things; not that I would read over all Authors on all subjects, but that I would limit myself to such subjects, and then, upon them cull out the best and choicest observations of many godly and learned Authors. In this design I have practised and observed these particulars;

1. I have brought into method the duties of a Christian, which I call, *The Middle Things*, in reference to *The First and Last Things*; the matter I have for the most part drawn from others, only the method I have framed, as the Lord hath enabled; and wherein all Authors, that ever I saw, were silent, I have thereto added, to complete the work, for the matter also.

2. I have purposely omitted the many controversies and tedious disputes of this age: for my part, I see little edifying in them; nay, is not the fat and marrow of Christian religion lost by them? Were I to advise against any error, or heresy, I had rather bid my adversaries read some books of positive, practical divinity wherein truth and religion is laid out in its life and power, than all the voluminous controversies that ever I could write, or ever have been writ by any of the sons of men. I deny not, but these kind of books, the Spirit concurring, may convince mens judgments; but the o-

ther fort works both on the judgment and conscience, on their heads and hearts; the controversial way of arguing, *pro et contra*, [for, and against] I cannot but approve; but the way of the Spirit, in which he leadeth and convinceth the soul irresistibly, I must needs prefer. Hence you see the reason of the method I have propounded; wherein I dare say, yet with a spirit of submission, the workings of the Spirit, the breathings of Christ, the pantings of a soul after Christ are more fully manifested, than in all the jarring pamphlets which this age hath copiously afforded. My desire is both to inform, and to reform; to inform the judgment, and to reform the life.

3. I have the rather fallen on this subject of duties, both because necessary in their way, and because they are so much opposed by many of our age, who surely are not acquainted with them (with the workings of the Spirit in them, and by them,) for otherwise it could not be so: If this error spread, it will quickly eat out all religion, and throw down souls to hell. Their pretence is, who are the abettors of it, That they have found out a near and easy way to heaven; But, "I rather believe Christ (saith Rutherford) who tells us, it is a way of many miles, strait, narrow, and thorny; indeed, the meritorious way to us is easy, but the way of a Christian conversation (whether they will or no) lieth thro' duties; it is not words, *Lord, Lord*; but working, sweating, running, wrestling, fighting, striving, overcoming, bleeding, suffering, abounding in the work, denying ourselves, taking up the cross, enduring temptation, sowing to the Spirit, serving the Lord with all humility, and with many tears and temptations, watching, praying, taking Christ's yoke upon us, selling all our sweetest delights, keeping the commandments of Christ, which, howsoever they are not grievous, yet they are not so easie, as that only the bare act of believing should be the only Gospel-work. Matt. vii. 21. 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25. 2 Tim. iv. 7. Luke xiii. 24. Rev. ii. 7. Acts xiv. 22. Rev. i. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Heb. xii. 4. Matt. xvi. 24. Jam. i. 12. Gal. vi. 8. Acts xx. 19. Mat. xxix. 42. Mat. xi. 29. 1 John v. 3. Might we still lie in our ivory beds, under no law, no obligation of doing, no danger of sinning, no broken bones, no terrors, no sense of sorrow for sin, no progress in personal repentance, mortification, sanctification, no care of watchful walking to perfect holiness in the fear of God, no abstaining from worldly lusts, no strictness of conversation, but only believe that Christ hath suffered, and Christ hath done all duties for us, repented for us, mortified lusts for us, walked strictly and holily for us, this were an easy work indeed. "For my part, I would not make the way to heaven longer than Christ hath made it; but if we believe the Scriptures, we shall find other commandments on us under the Gospel, than believing only for righteousness; Rom. xii. 1, 2, 3. Eph. v. 1, 2, 3, 4. Col. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4. 1 Thel. iv. 1, 3. Jam. ii. 13, 14, 15. 1 John iii. 17." There is the righteousness of Christ received by us, and working in us; the first is the righteousness of justification, the second of sanctification; and our establishment lieth in both.

4. I have in every duty, prescribed the manner of performing it; not that I would tie every spirit to this particular way or method: those who are accustomed to these exercises of devotion, may perhaps devise more fitting courses, or ways of proceeding, than these are; and it is reason, and a point of wisdom, for every man to make use of those rules which in his own experience he findeth most proper to his own disposition, and most powerful for his own reformation; only, the reader, that is not better furnished, may please to make use of these; and I trust (by God's blessing) he may find them profitable; which if he do in any measure, it shall be to me sufficient joy, contentment, recompence.

5. I have made use in this treatise not of one or two, but of many precious men; as. Angler, Ash, Ball, Bolton, Burroughs, Byfield, Downham, Dyke, Goodwin, Gouge, Hooker, Leigh, Mason, Rogers, Shepherd, Torshel, White, etc. that the adversaries of duties may see what a cloud of witnesses are for duties. It was sometimes Elijah's trouble, *The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and I, even I only am left,* 1 Kings xix. 10. 18. But it was the Lord's encouragement of Elijah, *I have left me seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal.* I bless God it hath encouraged me, and methinks it might trouble the opposites, that not only many thousands of God's people, but many Elijahs among those thousands, should appear with me, and against them. This is one reason, why I choose rather to bring in the Authors, who seem to be, and indeed are, *pillars in the temple of our God,* Gal. ii. 9. Rev. iii. 12. than to speak only in my own dialect, or altogether from my own invention.

6. I have writ nothing, but in some measure I have, by the Lord's assistance, practised the same, and felt the comfort of it in my own heart and soul; yet, by way of caution, I desire the reader to remember, if at any time in the exercise of any of the duties within written, he also feels his heart warmed or savingly affected (which is the very spirit, power, grace, comfort, presence, and sweetness of Christ) that he consider, it is not the duty, it is not the bare ordinance that elicits such divine and noble acts in the heart and affections, but it is the blood of Christ, the intercession of Christ sprinkling these duties, that makes them work such graces in the soul. In this case, the blood of Christ is as the salve, and duty is as the cloth or leather to which it sticks, and by which it is applied. Now from the cloth (the duty) comes no virtue; no, no, it is only the blood of Christ which by duty heals and cheers the soul. Many have wondered why sometimes they are lifted up in duties, and sometimes again they are no more moved by them than a mountain of brass is moved by the winds. "Why should the same truth, the same scripture, the same meditation affect me at one time, and not at another, when I am as fitly disposed to be affected as at the first? Why should the same instruction, the same reproof, the same consolation awaken, wound, and revive my spirit at one time, and move me no more at another than a charm doth a deaf adder, as the Psalmist speaks? Psal. lviii. 4, 5." I grant, in respect of the subject, the spiritual sense is sometimes benumbed, and sometimes awakened; but in respect of the efficient, it is only Christ's blood, Christ's intercession that doth all by an admirable and secret operation. I have no more to say of this book, only, the Lord give a blessing to it, and to the reader of it: So prayeth

Thy Servant in Christ Jesus,

J. A.

MR. ISAAC AMBROSE was born in the year 1591, and, though we are at a loss to know his parentage, yet, by the figure he made both in the learned world, and more especially in the church, it appears his education was liberal, and himself assiduous in his application to his studies; of which he has given evident proof in his writings, (it being impossible that such precious fruit should grow either in a barren, or uncultivated soil) through all of which there shineth the greatest piety, zeal for God's glory, and concern for the salvation of souls.

During the long parliament under Oliver Cromwell, he was settled at Preston, in Lancashire, where he laboured in his ministerial work, for a considerable time, with great success, and regarded of all; from thence he was removed to Garstang, within ten miles of Preston, where the *act of uniformity* found him in the year 1662, which was the second year after the restoration of king Charles II. when he, with near two thousand more ministers, lecturers, &c. were silenced and laid aside from the publick work of the ministry, for not conforming to the established church of England, and he was never again restored during life: yet that time was not spent in inactivity by him, but employed to the most valuable purpose; for then it was he revised, and gave the finishing stroke to the greatest part of his works, and wherein he composed other parts of them, in particular his discourse concerning angels, which was the last of all these his performances: through which, and through all the rest of his works there run a constant strain of piety, holy devotion, and meditation, and the greatest fervour of spirit; which very well agreeth with the following character given of him by a very learned and eminent hand*: while speaking of the reverend Mr. Isaac Ambrose, he says, "He lived and died a Nonconformist, and was a man of that substantial worth, that eminent piety, and that exemplary life, both as a minister and a Christian, that it is to be lamented the world should not have the benefit of particular memoirs concerning him from some able hand." The same author addeth further, "One thing that was peculiar in him deserveth to be mentioned here: it was his usual custom once in a year, for the space of a month, to retire into a little hut in a wood, and avoiding all human converse, to devote himself to contemplation. Possibly by this practice, he was fitter for his sacred ministrations all the rest of the year. He lived, in the latter part of his life, at Preston, and when his end drew near, was very sensible of it. Having taken leave of his friends abroad with unusual solemnity, as if he foresaw that he should see them no more, he came home to Preston from Bolton, and set all things in order. In a little time some of his hearers came from Garstang to visit him: After discoursing freely with them, and like a man sensible of his death being near, He accompanied them to their horses, and when he came back, shut himself in his parlour, the usual place of his soliloquy, meditation and prayer; they thought he stayed long, and so opened the door, and found him just expiring. This was in the year 1664, Aged 72. He was holy in his life, happy in his death, and honoured by God, and all good men.

* See Dr. Calamy's lives, v. 2. page 409.

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 Thomas Smith wright there 13 copies.
 Alexander Smellie hat-maker there
 Robert Spier, portioner in Dalgarvan, Kilwinning parish
 John Scott weaver in Govan
 Thomas Stevenson weaver in Anderstoun
 John Smellie weaver in Shettleston
 William Stuart weaver there
 Robert Struthers bleacher in Kilmarnock
 John Siller taylor in Govan
 James Stevenson weaver there
 John Spruce weaver in Anderstoun
 John Scot in Rutherglen
 John Smellie farmer in Shettleston
 George Stephen in milln of Pitteden
 William Singer farmer in Old Bethelme
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 Mr. John Shand at milln of Rain
 Mr. Arthur Shand at Westhall
 Mr. Thomas Spark merchant in Aberdeen
 George Seton of Mounie Esq.
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 James Stephen smith there
 Mr. Thomas Simpson merchant at milln of Ardendraught
 William Souter vintner in Longhaven
 John Shepley in Hyde in Stockport parish, Cheshire
 George Stuart in Renfrew

T

R Ev. Mr. Pat. Thomson min. of the gospel at Touch
 James Thomson in Glendiffell
 Alexander Taylor weaver in Glasgow
 Thomas Taylor weaver there
 John Todd sen. maltman there
 John Taylor cooper there

Names of Subscribers, which had been omitted, or came too late to hand to be inserted above.

M R. William Buckley student in divinity, in Ath-
 ton, Lancashire
 Miss Betty Buckley in Duckinfield, parish of Stockport,
 Cheshire
 William Burgefs in Ninton-muir, parish of Motteram,
 Cheshire
 Bezaleel Butterwith in Duckinfield, parish of Stockport,
 Cheshire
 James Buckley in Stayley, in the parish of Motteram
 Hugh Brown merchant in Dalry
 Robert Brown farmer in Lin, Dalry parish
 John Boyd in Wood, in Kilwinning parish

John Turner weaver in Paisley
 Mr. Alexander Thomson, merchant and overseer, in
 Glasgow, 13 cop.
 Baillie William Thomson merchant in Aberdeen
 John Thom square wright in Whitefores
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 George Taite in Craigmiln
 Margaret Thomson in Old Westhall
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W

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 lop parish
 Mrs. Margaret White of Hollingworth Hall in Holling-
 worth, Cheshire
 Thomas Walker in Cornhill, parish of Ashton, Lanca-
 shire
 David Wilson weaver in Anderstoun
 John Wilson weaver in Paisley
 Robert Witherpoon hammerman there
 John Witherpoon weaver in Renmuir
 William Wilson senior weaver in Paisley
 William Wilson junior weaver there
 Robert Winning weaver in Glasgow
 John Watson weaver there
 Matthew Winning taylor there
 Joseph Whitehill priester there
 Matthew Whitlaw maltman there
 Thomas White innkeeper in Govan
 William Walker weaver there
 John Walker in Cardross
 James White of Wood-side, in Kilwinning parish
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 Thomas Watt at Craigwell
 John Watt in Newland
 Mr. James Walker at milln of Lumquhart
 Mr. George Wilson jun. merchant in Aberdeen

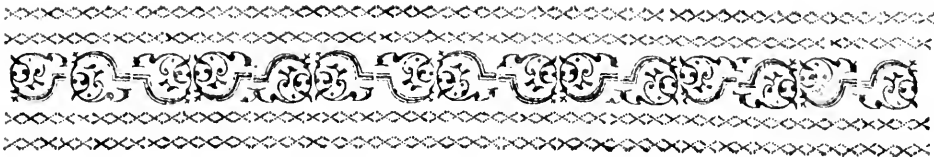
Y

M R. Francis Young officer of excise at Fraserburgh
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 James Craig farmer in Old muir, Dalry parish
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 Mr. William Freebairn in Glasgow
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 John Ferguson weaver in Pollockshaws
 Michael Grieve shoemaker in Glasgow

John Gartside in Stayley, in Cheshire
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 Joshua Heginbotham of Hollingworth, in Cheshire
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 James Robinson mason in Govan
 George Ronald mason in Campsie
 John Ronald there.



T H E
N E W B I R T H.

JOHN III. 3.

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of GOD.

WE read in the former chapter, John ii. 23. *When Jesus was at Jerusalem, at the feast of the passover, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did; amongst those many, here is one of them (saith Austin *;) What one? of all men the most unlikely is a Jew, of all Jews a ruler, of all rulers a Pharisee; John vii. 48. Have any of the rulers, or Pharisees believed on him? But howsoever it seem thus unlikely unto us, the Spirit of God bloweth where it listeth: here is amongst many believers one Nicodemus, verse 1. and he is a man of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews; a Jew, a Ruler, a Pharisee: God is able even of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham, Luke iii. 8.; yea, we see here, be they never so stony, our Saviour melts one of them with a miracle, and, by a New Birth, he will make him*

a son of Abraham indeed. A miracle brings him to Christ, and Christ brings him to a New Birth. The First Nicodemus confesseth, John iii. 2. *Rabbi, (saith he to our Saviour) we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.* The Second our Saviour affirmeth, as if he had answered, *To say I am sent from God, and not to be born again, will never help thee to heaven; thy confession is right, that I am sent from God, but thy conversation is wrong, that art not born again: thou comest to me with confession of thy faith, but here is a further catechism, another lesson; and therefore, as thou callest me Rabbi, if thou wilt be a scholar in my school, thou must learn these principles, these rudiments, these first things, this text, this A, B, C of Christian religion, Except a man be born*

* *Nicodemus ex his erat qui crediderant in nomine ejus, videntes signa et prodigia quae faciebat, i. e. Nicodemus was one of those who had believed in his name, when they saw the signs and miracles which he did. Aug. Tract. on John.*

again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

In prosecution of which words, (all tending to this one point, the *New Birth*) we shall follow the order set down by the holy Ghost, where is,

1. The Necessity of it, no going to heaven without it; *except*.

2. The Generality of it; every man is bound to it; *a man*.

3. The Manner of it; how a man is wrought in it; he must *be born again*.

4. The Issue of it, what effects are annexed to it, *The kingdom of God, and sight of that kingdom; a man that is born again shall see the kingdom of God: and, except a man be born again, he shall not see the kingdom of God*.

These be the branches; and of every of them (by God's assistance) we shall gather some fruit for the food of your souls. The first branch is the first word, *except*.

Except.]

THIS *except* is without exception; for unless we are new born, there is no going to heaven: before we live here, we are born; and before we live there, we are new born. As no man cometh into this world, but by the first birth; so it is impossible that any should go to heaven in another world, but by the second birth. And this gives us the Necessity of Regeneration*.

Doct. *Except a man be new born, he can never be saved*. It is our Saviour's speech, and he confirms it with a double asseveration, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee*. Twice *verily*, which we find not any where

but in John's gospel †, and no where in the gospel so oft, as on this argument: how then should we disbelieve this truth, where we have such a witness as Christ, such a testimony as his *verily, verily, I say unto thee?*

Again, God the Father thus counsels not only Nicodemus, but all the Jews of the old church, saying, *Make you a new heart, and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?* Ezek. xviii. 31. Notwithstanding all their privileges (for they are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, Rom. ix. 4), yet here is [*unum necessarium*] *one thing necessary*, that must crown all the rest; they must have a *new heart, and a new spirit*, i. e. they must be *new born*, or there is no way but death; from which death, see how the Lord pulls them with his cords of love; alluring, wooing, questioning, *Why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

And yet again, not only the Son and the Father, but the holy Ghost too will avouch this truth; *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; And what is that? To him that overcometh, will I give a white stone ‡, and in the stone a new name written: yea, I will write upon him new Jerusalem; and I will write upon him my new name*, Rev. ii. 17. and iii. 12. The meaning is, He that is *new born*, and so overcometh sin, God's Spirit will give him his grace, *the white stone*, and his kingdom, *the new Jerusa-*

* This is one way of shewing the Necessity of it; and it is well if men are convinced, by any argument whatever, of that necessity: but, to the intelligent Reader, it is needless to observe, That the Necessity of Regeneration is not founded so much on any analogy between the natural and spiritual birth, as upon the authority of God, and the nature of the heavenly happiness.— God, the supreme governor and judge of all, commandeth us to be possessed of a certain temper of mind, and to pursue a certain course of life, implied in this great change or revolution, emphatically styled the *New Birth*; besides, that temper of mind, and course of life, which he enjoineth us, is absolutely necessary to fit us for heaven: and therefore we are bound, in point of interest as well as duty, to obey this law of Him who is our great Sovereign and Friend.

† Rupert.

‡ Alluding to an ancient custom in courts of justice; where he who was condemned had a black stone given him; but he that was acquitted, had a white one put into his hand, with his name written in the stone. See Ovid's metamorphos. book xv. and Petrus's satires.

lem, and a new name, the name of filiation, (saith a modern, Aretius on the place.) whereby truly he is called the *new born* son of God. See here how *Old things being done away, all things are become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17. By a *new birth* man has got a *new name, a new inheritance*: and therefore as the Spirit, so the New Birth is called a *Fire*, that purgeth away dross, and maketh souls bright and new; so that we must pass through this *Fire*, or no passage into *Paradise*.

Nor is this doctrine without reason or ground.

For, *except* by the second birth, man is, *first*, unholy, and therefore most unfit to enter into heaven; for *without holiness, no man shall see God*, Heb. xii. 14. And what is man before he is *new born*? if we look upon his soul, we may see it deformed with sin, defiled with lust, outraged with passions, overcarried with affections, pining with envy, burthened with gluttony, boiling with revenge, transported with rage: and thus is that image of God transformed into the ugly shape of the devil. Or should we take a more particular view: every faculty of the soul is full of iniquity; the understanding understands nothing of the things of God, 1 Cor. ii. 14. The will willeth nothing that is good, Rom. vii. 20. the affections affect nothing of the Spirit, Gal. v. 17. In a word, the understanding is darkened, the will enthralled, the affections disordered, the memory defiled, the conscience benumbed; all the inner man is full of sin, and there is no part that is good, *no not one*. But what say we of the body? sure that is nothing better; it is a rotten carion, altogether unprofitable, and good for nothing. Should we view it in every part and member of it? the head contrives mischief, the eyes behold vanity, the ears let in sin, the tongue sends out oaths. Come

we lower; the heart lodgeth lust, the hands commit murder, the feet run to evil: all the senses are but so many matches to give fire to lusts, deceits, envies, and what not? How needful now is a *New Birth* to a man in this case? Can he enter into heaven, that savours all of earth? Will those precious gates of gold and pearl open to a sinner? No, he must first be new moulded, and sanctified; or he is excepted; *Except a man be new born*.

Secondly, *Except*] This, and man is God's enemy; no greater opposition than betwixt God and a sinner: consider we him in his essence, or in his attributes? in his essence he is called *Jehovah*, both in respect of his Being, and of his promises; in respect of his Being, and so God is contrary to sin; for sin is *ataxy*, disorder, confusion, a not-being; and God is order, perfection, holiness, an absolute and a simple Being: in respect likewise of his promises, wherein there is a main opposition to sin; for howsoever he promiseth a reward to the regenerate, and so the name *Jehovah* is a golden pledge unto us, that, if we repent, he will forgive us; yet withal he promiseth *storms* and *tempest*, *fire* and *perdition* to the unregenerate: and thus his name and nature is altogether opposite to sin and sinners. But view we those attributes of God, I mean his justice, truth, patience, holiness, anger, power; his justice in punishing the impenitent according to his deserts, his truth effecting those plagues which he hath spoken in his time, his patience forbearing sins destruction till they are grown full ripe, his holiness abhorring all impurities, *He cannot behold iniquity*, his anger stirring up revenge against all offered injuries, his power murthering up his forces, yea, all his creatures against his enemies: and what can we say, but if all these attributes are at enmity with sinful man, wo worth to man

because of offences! better he had never been born, than not to be *new born*; alas, what shall become of him? Can he that is God's enemy see God in his glory? No, there is no way but one, *Except he repent, Except] he be born again.*

Thirdly, *Except* by a new birth, man is *without Christ*, Eph. ii. 12. for *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*: and if he be not in Christ, what hopes of that man? It is only Christ that opens heaven, it is only Christ that is the *Way* to heaven; besides him, there is no way, no truth, no life: and, if we be in him, *as the branch in the vine*, it is of necessity that we bring forth good fruit. Upon these terms his death is effectual, if we become *new creatures*; or otherwise, all his merits (his blood that was shed, his body that was crucified, his soul that was agonized) they are nothing unto us, we nothing bettered by them. He died for all, but his death is not applied, his kingdom is not opened, save only unto those that have learned and practised this rule of *exception*: *Except] a man be born again.*

Fourthly, *Except* before *excepted*, a man is a very limb of Satan, a child of darkness, and one of the family of hell. Consider this, ye that are out of the state of grace, in what miserable thralldom are your souls? Should any call you servants, or slaves of Satan, you would take it highly in disdain; but take it as you please, if you are not regenerate, you are in no better case? Paul appeals to your own knowledge; *Knew ye not, that to whomsoever you give yourselves as servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?* Rom. vi. 16. If then ye obey the devil's suggestions (which you do, being unborn) what are you but the devil's servants? And if he be your master, what is your

wages? You may see it, Rom. vi. 23. *The wages of sin is death*; death of the body, and death of the soul; death here, and death hereafter in hell-fire. Alas, that Satan should have this power on man! that he who is the enemy, and means nothing to a sinner but death and damnation, should be his lord, and tyrannize it over him at his own will and pleasure! Would any man be hired to serve lions and tygers? And is not the devil a *roaring lion, walking about, and seeking whom he may devour?* 1 Pet. v. 8. To serve him that would devour his servant, is a most miserable bondage; and what pay can one expect from devils, but *roaring*, and *devouring*, and tearing of souls? In this plight are *the servants of corruption*, slaves of *Satan*, so I rightly call them; for, *Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage*, 2 Pet. ii. 19. To wind up this point; *Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle, who shall dwell in thy holy hill?* If we believe David, *Not he that slandereth with his tongue, or doth evil to his neighbour, or giveth his money upon usury, or taketh a reward against the innocent*, Psal. xv. 1, 3, 5. No; such are the servants of *Satan*, and here is matter of *exception* against them; *except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

The sum of all: *Without Regeneration no Kingdom*; for whether we consider man in regard of *himself*, or of *God*, or of *Christ*, or of *Satan*, he is (*except he be new born*) *unholy, God's enemy, out of Christ, in Satan.*

Use. And if the *New Birth* be thus necessary, how should we † labour to be born again? I mean not, as Nicodemus, *to enter into our mothers womb again, and be born.* It is not the seed of man in the womb of our mother, but the seed of grace in the

† Thus is the language of God; *I said, I'd call me, to a nation that was not called by my name*, Isa. lxxv. 1.

womb of the church, that makes us blessed (a): and if we are thus born by grace, then are we sanctified, made sons of God, heirs with Christ, over whom Satan can have no power at all. Now then, as you tender your souls, and desire heaven at your ends, endeavour * to attain this *one thing necessary*; † Lift up your hearts unto God, that you may be *washed, justified, sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus*; and that by the Spirit of God you may walk in new ways, talk with new tongues, as being new creatures, created unto good works. Thus would you ‡ wait on God in his way, I trust the Lord in mercy would remember you, and his Spirit would blow upon you, and then you would find and feel such a change within you, as that you would bless God for ever, that you were thus *born again*: otherwise how woful are you, considering this bar in heaven's door, to keep out the unregenerate, *except*] *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

Thus far of the *exception*; we now come to the *person*, that is in a *nisi prius* in the front, *except*: this is the party that must prosecute the cause, *a man*.

A Man]

AND this man] is every man, and every part of man. It implieth all men; for all are bound to it: and all man; for all the parts of his body, and all the powers of his soul are to be renewed, or he cannot be saved. The word then is general, whether we respect *genera singulorum*, the kinds, all men; or *singula generum*, the *individuum*s, all man, or all the parts of man, body and soul.

We will first begin with the kinds.

Doct. 1. *All men (or all mankind) must be regenerated before they be saved.* Not one of all the sons of Adam that shall ever go to heaven, *except he be born again.* May your contemplations, guided by God's word, go into that paradise above, there walk the streets, behold the towers, view the subjects, *from the one end of heaven to another*: and whom find you there? Not one that liveth and dieth in sin; there is not in it, nor shall *enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie*, Rev. xxi. 27. Yet if such repent them of their sins, *the gates shall not be shut against them*: all the saints that now *walk in the light of it*, were sinners; but first they were purged by the Lamb, and sanctified by the Spirit; first they were regenerated, and so they were saved.

You may object, If all men that go to heaven must be *new born*, what shall become of infants, that die ere they be born? *Can a man enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?* (said Nicodemus). But can a man enter into the second birth in his mother's womb, (say you) and be born again, before he is once born?

I answer [*To be born again*] supposeth to be once born indeed; therefore, according to the letter, our Saviour speaketh of a man already born into the world, that he must *be born again*: but if we seek out the sense, [*To be born again*], as our Saviour interprets, is *to be born of water and of the Spirit*; and so may infants not born into the world, *be born again*.

(a) These expressions, although pithy and just, are yet coarser than those scripture phrases; where the same sentiment is expressed, but in finer language; John i. 12, 13.

* Thus whilst the minister speaks, it is Christ cometh with power in the word, Ezek. xviii. 31.

† Pray, because God biddeth you pray: it may be he will come in when you pray. When Simon Magus was in the gall of bitterness, Peter biddeth him pray, Acts viii. 22.

‡ Not that we can wait by a power of our own, but he that saith, Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious to you, Isa. xxx. 18. He draweth and giveth a power to wait on him, and he cometh in, when he hath waited, in the fittest time.

Thus we read of Jeremiah, *The word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee,* Jer. i. 5. And thus we read of John the baptist, the angel of the Lord saying of him, *that he should be filled with the holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb,* Luke i. 15. By these examples we see what the Lord can do; yea what he doth indeed, although we know not how, nor can it be observed by us.

You may yet object, [*To be born again*] is (saith our Saviour) [*to be born of water and of the Spirit*:] now water is the outward baptism, and the Spirit is the inward grace, (thus all the Ancients † have construed this text, saith Hooker) but children not born, howsoever they are sanctified by the Spirit, they cannot be baptized with water, and therefore they cannot see the kingdom of God.

I answer, In cases of extremity, or impossibility, if actual baptism be wanting, vocal is enough, and thus far some of our adversaries grant us; *Though it be wanting indeed,* (saith Aquinas, 3. part. q. 68. art. 2.) *yet baptism in desire is sufficient to salvation:* and to this end he citeth Austin, saying, *Sanctification may be without baptism, and baptism without sanctification: if sanctification be, though baptism be not, it availeth to salvation; but if baptism be, and sanctification be not, it availeth nothing at all.* Our conclusion is this, *All men,* (or all mankind) *young men and maidens, old men and children,* Ps. cxlviii. 12. all must be regenerated, or they can never see the kingdom of God.

Doct. 2. Secondly, As all men, so all man] all the members of his body, all the faculties of his soul. *Sanctification, if*

*saving, must be perfect and entire, though not in respect of degrees, yet in respect of parts; every part and power of body and soul must have its part of sanctification, though no part his full perfection, before the dissolution of our earthly tabernacles: hence (say divines) there is a regeneration, or sanctification (it is all one) *inchoata* and *consummata*; *inchoata*, begun in this life, *consummata*, perfected in that other: and of this saith our Saviour, Matth. xix. 28. *Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel:* we speak not of this *Regeneration*, but of that which bringeth to this; for we must be regenerate here, or have no part there with God in his glory.*

And should we consider *Man* in his parts, every part must bear a part in this birth; his Body must be regenerated; his Soul must be renewed. We will begin with the body: *As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness,* Rom. vi. 19. As every member of the *old man* is full of sin; so every member of the *new born man* is to be renewed by grace. To instance in some of them; *the Heart,* that in the *old man* is full of *evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies,* Matth. xv. 19. In the *new man*, it is the member that must first be renewed; here grace first seats itself, and after is dispersed over all: as in natural generation the heart is first framed; so in spiritual regeneration the heart is first reformed. Some call it the first mover of all mens ac-

† Bellarmine (in *U. l. h. v. 2.* Of the efficacy of the Sacraments) *insisteth in no less than fifteen Fathers, who thus construe this text.* Hooker's *Eccles. Polit.* book. v. Sect. 59.

rions; for as the first mover carrieth all the spheres of heaven with it, so doth the heart carry all the members of the body with it; and therefore it is, that the *new man* beginneth first with his heart: for, if that fountain be right, all the streams of his desires, purposes, affections, speeches, actions, conversations run sweet, and clear, and pleasant. Again the *eye*, that in the *old man* is the brooker, that goeth between the heart and the object, to make up the sinful bargain; that which our Saviour calleth an *evil eye*, Matth. vi. 23. St. Peter termeth an *adulterous eye*, 2 Pet. ii. 14. In the *new man* it must be exercised on other objects; *I made a covenant with mine eyes* (saith *Job*, chap. xxxi. 1.) *Why then should I look upon a maid? I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills* (saith *David*), Psal. cxxi. 1.) *from whence cometh mine help*. Again, *the ear*, that in the *old man* is stepped against the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely; Psal. lviii. 5. or if it be open, like death's porter, it letteth in sin and Satan at every occasion; in the *new man* it must be the gate of life, or the door of faith: therefore there is not a member that the devil more envieth than the *ear*, as we see in the man possessed with a deaf devil, Mark ix. 25.; who possessed that sense, as the most excellent, to hinder him from hearing. Again, *the tongue*, that in the *old man* is a world of iniquity, that defileth the whole body, that setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell, Jam. iii. 6. In the *new man* it must be the trumpet of divine praise, or (as *David* calleth it) *the pen of a ready writer*, Psalm xlv. 1. uttering only those things which the heart inditeth in sincerity and truth. To sum up all in one: *the heart* is it, where grace beginneth first, and is felt last; and therefore saith God, *Son, give*

me thy heart, Prov. xxiii. 26. And therefore prayeth *David*, *Create in me a clean heart*, Psal. li. 10. And therefore willett *Solomon*, *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life*, Prov. iv. 23. Would any man that is regenerate encounter sin in his heart, it were impossible to break out into action: Would the *heart* of any man that is *born again*, but meet sin with this dilemma: 'If I commit this sin, I must either repent, or not repent for it; if I do repent, it will cost me more heart-break, and spiritual smart, than the sensual pleasure can be worth: if I never repent, it will be the death and damnation of my soul:' sure this thought conceived, and rightly followed in the heart of the regenerate, would be enough to crush sin at the first rising of it; and so it is, for if he be regenerate, he doth not sin*, *Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin*, 1 John iii. 9. He is moulded anew, and all the members of his body are conformed to the sovereignty and rule of grace; yea, *his body is preserved blameless, holy, acceptable unto God*, 1 Thess. v. 23. Rom. xii. 1. It is a *member of Christ; the temple of the holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. vi. 15. 19. Happy man that is blest with this body! sure, *a man thus born again, he shall see the kingdom of God*.

Secondly, as the Body, so the Soul of this man is to be renewed by grace; *Therefore glorifie God in your body and in your spirit*, (saith *Paul*, 1 Cor. vi. 20.) The body and the spirit must both glorifie God; and as all the parts of the body, so all the powers of the soul.

First, *The Understanding*, that in the *old man*, Eph. iv. 18. *is blind and ignorant* about heavenly things; or howsoever it may know many things, yet never can attain to saving knowledge: in the *new man*

* The meaning is, he doth not sin *habitually*; he does not *delight* in sinning; he is not *aslave* to sin, or the servant of it; and if, at any time, through the force of temptation, or the weakness and imperfection of his graces, he falleth into sin, he is heartily grieved for it, sincerely repents, and returneth to his duty.

it must be anointed with the eye-salve of the Spirit, Rev. iii. 18. inspired with the knowledge of divine truths, especially with those sacred and saving mysteries which concern *the kingdom of God*. Again, *the Will* that in the *old man* affects nothing but vile and vain things, is froward and perverse in the ways of godliness; in the *new man* it must prove and approve what is the *good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God*, Rom. xii. 2. Yea, it must attend and be subordinate to the grace of God, since God indeed, and God only *worketh in us both the will and the deed*, Phil. ii. 13. Again, *the Memory* that in the old man is slippery in the things of God, or if naturally good, yet not spiritually useful; in the new man it must be sanctified to good performances; and although it cannot increase to a great natural perfection, (for grace doth not this) yet the perfections it hath must be straight, and right, and guided to God-ward; *Remember the Lord thy God*, saith Moses, Deut. xiii. 18. Again, *the conscience* that in the old man sleepeth and slumbereth, or, if it be awake, teareth and roareth as if a legion of devils now possessed it: in the new man it must be calm and quiet; and yet not sleep or slumber, but rather, in a friendly loving manner, check and controul wherefoever sin is; yea, never be quiet, until with kind and yet earnest expostulations, it draw the sinner before God to confess his fault, and so seek pardon for it. Again, *the affections* that in the old man are sensual, inordinate, bewitched, and set on wrong objects; in the *new man* they must be turned another way. Mary Magdalene, you know, was given to unclean lusts, but the Lord diverted this sinful passion, and so she became penitent, and thirsted after grace. To sum up all: all must be renewed, *the*

Understanding, Will, Memory, Conscience, Affections.

But to feel more of their sweetness, I will pound these spices, and dwell a while on them. Now then for your better acquaintance with the regenerate man, and that you may know his difference from the man unregenerate, observe, I pray, these passages:

First, I say, in the *new man* the *Understanding* must be renewed; so the apostle, *The new man is renewed in knowledge*, Col. iii. 10. And this knowledge implieth two habits, (*sapientiam*) *Wisdom*, and (*prudentiam*) *Prudence*, Col. i. 9. First, *Wisdom*, and that is speculative. Secondly, *Prudence*, and that is practical. By the one the child of God having the eyes of his mind opened and enlightened, doth see the mysteries of salvation, the secrets of the kingdom, the whole counsel, and the wonders of the law of God: by the other he is enabled with a judicious sincerity to deliberate and determine in cases of conscience, in the practice of piety, and the experimental passages of a Christian man. If we consider the first, (*wisdom*) how is it possible that a man that is unregenerated should know the mysteries of salvation? It may be he may go as far as the power of natural discourse, and light of reason can bear sway; he may be furnished with store of rare and excellent learning, and yet for all this, want the true knowledge of *spiritual wisdom*. Why so? Because all his knowledge, like the light of the moon, is discharged upon others, but never returneth and reflecteth upon his own soul*. He should know but knoweth not the darkness of his own understanding, the disorder of his own affections, the slumber of his own conscience, the deadness of his own heart; but the man

* He that knows every thing but his own heart, knows nothing at all.— One may say of self-knowledge, what the apostle says of charity;— *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels; yet, tho' I have the gift of prophecy, understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not the knowledge of myself, it profiteth me nothing.*

regenerate (know he never so little) he hath the *saving knowledge*, and in this he exceedeth the greatest *rabbies*, the profoundest clerks; he only knoweth God with a steadfast apprehension, he only knoweth himself a most mean, base and contemptible thing: his *new birth* hath learned him how wicked a creature he naturally is, and therefore in that respect is he odious to himself, and loathsome in his own eyes. Or if we consider the *second*, (*prudentiam, Prudence*) how is it possible that a man unregenerate should experimentally know the practice of piety in a Christian course? Should we instance in this *mystery of regeneration*: here is one *Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, and a teacher of Israel*; yet as learned as he was, if he confer with Christ about the salvation of his soul, he is strangely childish, and a mere infant: tell him of the *New Birth*, and he thinketh it as impossible, as for *an old man to return into his mother's womb, and be born again*. The natural man cannot discern the operations of grace, he knoweth not that dark and fearful passage, which leadeth from the state of nature through strange terrors and torments of soul, into the rich and glorious happiness of the kingdom of Christ: whereas on the contrary, the regenerate man, that hath had the experience of the power of godliness upon his own soul, he can see and judge of the light of grace, he can taste and relish of the fruits of the Spirit; and hence it is, that many a silly one (man and woman) whom the worldly-wise pass by with scorn and contempt, are often in spiritual affairs more wise and learned than the learnedst doctors.

Secondly, The will must be renewed; and this *Will* of the regenerate containeth two things, (*rectitudinem*) *Rightness*, and

(*promptitudinem*) *Readiness*: it is first rectified, when it is conformed to the will of God. 2dly, it is so inflamed with the love of goodness, that he willingly pursueth it with alacrity of spirit. If we consider the *First*, (*rectitudinem, the Rectitude of the Will*) we see by experience the will of the unregenerate is all out of course, he willeth nothing but that which is evil: how should he, considering his want of God's image, his blindness of heart, his proneness to evil, together with the vehemency of his affections, which draw the will after them, and trouble the judgment? But in the man that is regenerate, the will being moved, it afterwards moveth itself, God's grace that concurrerth with it, quickeneth it and reviveth it; so that now his will is nothing but God's will: if it may appear that God biddeth him, or forbidderth him, to do this, or that, he chooseth *above all* to follow his commands, whatsoever becomes of him; why this is the † very heart and marrow of regeneration; you may be sure, the man that chooseth above all to please God, is the only man of God, and shall be rewarded by God.— Or if we consider the *Second* (*promptitudinem, the Readiness of the will to good*) alas, the will of the unregenerate hath no pleasure in goodness, he understandeth not the sweetness of it, and therefore nothing is more irksome to him than the ways of godliness, *Job xxi. 14*. Whereas on the contrary, the will of the regenerate is willing, and this willingness indeed is the perfection of his will; yea (if we can say more) it is the highest degree of his perfection in this life, to be willing to do good.

Thirdly, the *Memory* must be renewed; and this memory reflecteth occasionally on a double object (*Deum et Dei verbum*; on

† To will Christ, or to choose Christ, or to consent that Christ shall be ours, together with his benefits, may be consistent with an unregenerate estate: but to will or choose Christ more heartily, strongly and prevailingly than his pleasures or inferior good; no wicked man can do. *Baxter's everlasting Rest.*

God, and the things of God.) First *On God*, by remembrance of his presence every where. Secondly, *On the things of God*, by calling them to mind at useful times. If we consider the first object, (*Deum*) God, the unregenerate hath no mind on God: *God is not in all his thoughts*, Psal. x. 4. Like the hood-wink fool, that seeing no body, thinketh no body seeth him; so hath he said in his heart, *How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven*, Job xxii. 13, 14. But contrariwise, the regenerate man, he remembereth his Creator in the days of his youth, Eccles. xii. 1. And though God, as being a Spirit, is, in some sort, absent from his senses, yet by virtue of his sanctified Memory (which maketh things absent as present) his eye is on God, and he considers God as an eye-witness of all his thoughts, and words, and doings, and dealings; he knows nothing can be hid from that all-seeing eye: though sin tempt him with the fairest opportunities of night and darkness, yet still he remembers if his eye seeth nothing, all those eyes of heaven (of God and of his angels) are ever about him; and therefore he answers the Tempter, 'How dare I sin to his face, that looks on me what I am doing? If I dare not do this folly before men, how dare I do it before those heaven-spectators, God and his angels?' Or if we consider the second object (*Dei verbum, the word of God*) the unregenerate never burdeneth his memory with such blessed thoughts; if sometimes he falls upon it, it is either by constraint, or by accident, never with any settled resolution to dwell on it, or to follow it: but the soul that is regenerate, with *Mary, keepeth all these things in his heart*, Luke ii. 51. Or with *David*, gives it out, *Thy word have I hid in my heart*, Psal. cxix. 11. Whatsoever lessons he learneth, like so many jewels in a casket, he lays them up safe, and then as need serveth, he remembers his store, and

makes all the good use of them he may. I will not deny, but any man, good or evil, may retain good things according to that strength of retainment, which nature affords him; but the regenerate, whose memory only is sanctified, whatsoever he retains, he hath it opportunely at hand; in temptation or affliction he remembers and applies, and so remembering to apply, and applying that he remembers, he is thereby enabled to resist evil, or to follow those good things which the Lord hath commanded.

Fourthly, the Conscience must be renewed, and that two ways; either by drawing the soul [*ad bonum, or a malo*] to good, or from evil. 1. *To good*, by inclining and encouraging; 2. *From evil*, by restraining and bridling. If we consider its first office, in that it draws and leads the soul [*ad bonum*] to good, I confess the unregenerate is not of that conscience, for the most part his conscience lies dead in his bosom, or, if it stir sometimes, he labours all he can to smother it in his waking: to such an one should men and angels preach, yet so far is he bewitched with sin that he hath no mind of goodness, or if he do any good act (which is a rare thing with him) it is not out of conscience to do good, but for some sinister end or respect. It is otherwise with the regenerate, his conscience incites him to good, and he doth good out of conscience; he stands not upon terms of pleasure or profit, but his conscience being guided by the rule and square of God's holy truth, he submits to it merely out of his obedience to God: hence it is, that come what will come, well or wo, his eye is fixt on God, and if man oppose where God commands, he is quickly resolved out of that in Isaiah li. 12. *I even I am he that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man who shall be made as grass? and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and*
hid

laid the foundations of the earth? Or, if we consider the *second* office of conscience, in drawing the soul [*a malo*] from evil, the unregenerate either hears not, or heeds not his reclaiming conscience; if it speak, he first goes about to lull it asleep again; or if it cry out, and will not peace, then, (in spite of goodness) he runs out of one sin into another, and usually from presumption to despair. On the other side, the regenerate hath a conscience that draws him from, and keeps him out of evil: 'tis known especially by these two properties, *remorse* and *tenderness*: *remorse* hath an eye on all *sins past*; *tenderness* hath an eye on all *sins to come*: by *remorse* is bred sorrow for sin, and loathing of sin; no sooner he considers how by his manifold sins he hath offended God, crucified Christ, grieved the holy Spirit, but his heart bleeds and breaks that he hath done so wickedly against so gracious a God; this sorrow for sin brings with it a loathing of sin, he cannot but hate it that hath caused his heart break, yea, he hates it and hates the very thought of it; every look-back is a new addition of detestation, and every meditation makes the wound of his remorse to bleed again and again: by tenderness of conscience is bred a care and watchfulness to avoid sin to come; for no sooner is sin presented to his conscience but he startles at its sight, and thinks on its vanity, and meditates on that strict and general account he must one day make for it; which thoughts and sin put together in the balance, he dares not do wickedly for a world of gain: and you may observe it, this tenderness, or easiness to bleed at the apprehension of sin, is proper and peculiar to that conscience alone that is enlightened and sanctified, and purged by Christ.

Fifthly, the *Affections* must be renewed, and that is done by setting them upon right objects. I shall instance in some of them, as *Love, Hatred, Hope, Fear, Joy, Sorrow*. *Love*, I place first, which, in the unregenerate man, is fastened inordinately upon the creature; and, as one sin begets another, so on whatsoever object it fall, it begets some sin: thus the love of honour breeds ambition, love of riches breeds covetousness, love of beauty breeds lust, love of pleasure breeds sensuality; whatsoever he loves (the object being earthly) it brings with it some sin, and thereby (the worst of all) he wickedly prefers earth before heaven, a dunghill before paradise, a few bitter-sweet pleasures for an inch of time, before unmixed and immeasurable joys world without end: but the regenerate man settles his love upon other objects; as he that is carnal mindeth things carnal, so he that is spiritual loveth things spiritual; no sooner is he turned (by a sound and universal change of the whole man) *from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*, Acts xxvi. 18. but he presently begins to settle with some sweet contentment upon the flowers of paradise, heavenly glimpses, saving graces, and his infinite love runs higher and higher, till it embrace him that dwelleth in the highest, * God almighty: and how sweet is that love that casteth itself wholly into the bosom of his Maker? how blessed is that man, that yearns, and melts, and cleaves, and sticks unto his gracious God above all? why, this is right love, and for this is the Church commended, *Cant. i. 4. The righteous love thee, or, as others translate, amat in rectitudinibus, she loves thee righteously*; her love is set above all upon the right object, God: not that the regenerate loves nothing else, for

* I am persuaded there is no wicked man amongst us, but he hath some love to Christ, better or less; only here is the unsoundness which undoes such a man, he loves his inferior blessings more than him, and for this he perishes. *Baxter's Reg.*

he loves the law, Psalm. cxix. 165. the ministers, 1 Theff. v. 13. and all the ordinances of God appointed for his good; but whosoever he loves, it reflects upon God, he loves all for God, and God for himself.

The second affection is *Hatred*, which in the unregenerate is so inordinate, that he is an *hater of God*, Rom. i. 30. not that he *hates* God in himself (for God is universally good, and cannot be hated) but in some particular respect, because he restrains him from his pleasure, or punisheth him for his sin, or crosseth his leud appetites by his holy commands. And as he *hates God*, so likewise his *brother*, 1 John ii. 11. Hence arise those envies, emulations, jars, contentions amongst those that profess themselves christians; of which Paul could say, *A brother goeth to law with a brother*. 1 Cor. vi. 6. But of all brethren, he hates them most, of whom our *Saviour is the first-born*; Rom. viii. 29. God's faithful ones ever were, and ever will be *signs, and wonders, and monsters unto many's a scorn, reproach and derision to them that are round about them*, Isa. viii. 18. Psal. lxxi. 7. Psal. lxxix. 4. But he that is regenerate hates sin, and in whomsoever sin rules or reigns, he cannot but *hate* them, *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? (saith David) and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?* Psal. cxxxix. 21. Not that David, or any saint of God, hates the person of any one, but sin in the person, or he is said to hate them for sin's sake that is in them; in this respect he bids them defiance in the verse ensuing, *I hate them with a perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies*, Psal. cxxxix. 22. I know there is a perpetual combat in the regenerate betwixt the flesh and the spirit, and therefore we must understand this ha-

tred, which David calls a *perfect hatred*, according to the perfection in *parts*, but not in *degrees* (*intensive non extensive*): never any but Christ hated sin to the full, with all his strength, and with all his might; but in some measure his servant's hatred is *perfect*, which makes him always hate sin in others and often in himself, when after the commission of any evil he begins to repent him, and to *abhor himself* (as Job did) *in dust and ashes*, Job. xlii. 6.

The third affection is *hope* (this I rather name than *desire*, because whatsoever we *hope* for, we cannot but \ddagger *desire* it, and so it is implied in it.) Now this *hope* in the unregenerate is fastened on *this world*, and *the things of this world*; he hopeth for preferment, riches, or the like; as for his hope of heaven, it is but (*semnium vigilantium*) a waking man's dream; a dream, said I? Yes, as dreams in the night fill us with illusions and vain forms, (you know a beggar may dream he is a king) so *hope* abusing the imagination of the unregenerate, filleth their souls many a time with vain or empty contentments: but the hope of the regenerate both enjoys the right object and right means; his eye is fixed on future good, and he endeavours to pursue it till he get the possession; if in the pursuit he meet with crosses, losses, griefs, disgraces, sicknesses, or any other calamities, his hope is able to sweeten the bitterest misery that can possibly befall him; the *afflictions of this life* bid him look for a better, a cross here minds him of the glory above; and howsoever this hope may have many difficulties and wrestlings in him, (therefore it is compared to an anchor, which holdeth the ship in a storm, *Heb. vi. 19.*) yet it holdeth and sticks so firm to God and his promises above all, that he is con-

\ddagger Many that perish, may desire, and hope, and love God, and Christ, and heaven; but they desire, and hope, and love some inferior good more; he that desires, and hopes, and loves God sincerely and savingly, he doth all this supremely; God above all things else. *Baxter's regl.*

sident, that after this life an heavenly crown shall be set on his head by the hands of God and his angels.

The *fourth* affection is *fear*, which in the unregenerate is either worldly, or servile: if it fasten on the world, then he *fear-eth* the loss of his credit or of his profit, and because he and the world must part at last, he feareth this separation above all fears: *O death*, (saith the wise man) *how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath prosperity in all things*, Eccl. 41.

1. O these thoughts of these grisly forms and ugly face of death, of the parting from all worldly pleasures for ever, of his rotting in the grave, dragging to the tribunal, and terror of the last day, they cannot but make his heart to shrug together for horror, and many time to quake and tremble like an aspine-leaf: or, if his fear reflect on God, then is it a servile fear: for, as the servant or hireling worketh not for love of his master, but only for fear of punishment; or, as the adulterous woman is afraid of her husband, not out of love or affection, but lest he reward her to her foul demerits: so he feareth God for fear of punishment due unto him from God: it is otherwise with the man that is born again, his fear is either *initial* or *filial*; in pangs of the new birth, or in the new born babe it is called *initial* [*weems*], because then he casteth away sin, both out of God's love, to which he hath partly attained, and out of the woeful effects of sin, which he hath thoroughly considered; with the right eye he beholdeth God, and with the left eye he beholdeth punishment; so that this fear is a middle (as it were) between *servile* and *filial* fear: and as the needle draweth in the thread, so this fear draweth in charity, and maketh way for filial fear, to which, if by growth in grace

he be fully ripened, then he feareth God out of love to God, as the prophet Isaiah proclaimeth, *The fear of the Lord is his treasure*, Isa. xxxiii. 6. Never was treasure more dear to the worldling, than is God's fear to the regenerate; his love of God, his desire to please God, and his fear of being separated from God keeps him in such awe, that though no punishment, no death, no hell were at all, yet he would not sin wickedly, wilfully, and maliciously, for a world of treasures.

The *fifth* affection is *Joy*, which in the unregenerate is merely sensual and brutish; it hath no better object than gold, or greatness, or offices, or honours, or the like: and what are all these but a shadow, a ship, a bird, an arrow, a post that passeth by, or rather *as crackling of thorns under a pot*, as flashes of lightning before everlasting fire? But the joy of the regenerate is a spiritual joy, and the matter of it is the light of God's countenance, or the robe of Christ's righteousness, or the promise of God's word; or, above all, God Almighty, blessed evermore: thus David; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee*, Plal. lxxiii. 25. Why, this is that joy which no man can conceive, but he that enjoyeth it; this is that *white stone*, Rev. ii. 17. whose splendor shineth only upon heavenly hearts; this is that glimpse of heaven's glory, which springing up in a sanctified heart, out of the wells of salvation, and carried along with addition of fresh comforts (from the word and sacraments) through a fruitful current and course of man's life, is at last entertained into the boundless and bottomless ocean of the joys of heaven. I will not say, but sometimes it may be assaulted, and stopped with some doubts, or distrust, or weakness of degree, yet in respect of its creation, or essence, or blissful issue, it is (saith one *)

a very glimpse of heaven, a pure taste of the rivers of life, and first-fruits (as he calls it) of everlasting joys.

The sixth affection is sorrow, which in the unregenerate is a worldly sorrow, and the effects of it are death: so the apostle, *the sorrow of the world worketh death*, 2 Cor. vii. 10. In this kind how endless are the sorrows of men for their losses or crosses that sometimes may befall them? And howsoever some may endeavour to comfort them in Christ, they are so dead hearted that nothing can persuade, nothing resist with them that concerns heaven or salvation: but in the regenerate, sorrow looks up to God wards, not that the beholding of God in himself can bring sorrow to a man, for he is a most comfortable object, which made David say, *The light of thy countenance is gladness to my heart*, Psal. iv. 6, 7. but the beholding of sin which hindereth from the clear sight of that object, this is it which breeds sorrow, and this the apostle calls *godly sorrow, working repentance to salvation, not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10. It is not every sorrow, but *godly sorrow*, ver. 9. *I rejoice*, saith the apostle, *not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance*: And would you know who sorrows to repentance? it is he, and only he that groans and sighs under the heavy weight and burden of his sins, that is of a broken and contrite heart, that *trembleth at God's word*, that is grieved at his enormities, that forsaketh all sins, and that resigns up himself in all holy obedience to God's blessed will; this sorrow is a blessed sorrow that brings forth joy and immortality: therefore *comfort ye, comfort ye all that mourn in Sion*; what though for a night (in pangs of the new birth) you lie sorrowing and weeping for your sins; mark a while; and the day will dawn, *ride on, because of the word of truth*, and a day-star will arise in your hearts that will never set: nay weep and weep again, till you can say with David,

all the night make I my bed to swim with my tears, Psal. vi. 6. and presently the sun of righteousness will appear, and he will dry away our tears, and shine upon you with everlasting light. Certainly thus it is with every regenerate man, *he loves and hates, and hopes and fears, and joys and sorrows*, and all these passions are renewed in him. To give an instance in one David for all the regenerate; his love appears, Psal. cxix. 47. *I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved*: his hatred appears, Psal. cxxxix. 22. *I hate thy enemies with a perfect hatred*: his hope appears, Psal. lxxii. 5. *My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him*: his fear appeareth, Psal. cxix. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments*. His joy appears, Psal. cxix. 162. *I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoil*: His sorrow appears, Psal. cxix. 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes: because they keep not thy law*. Here is love and hatred, and hope and fear, and joy and sorrow, and all are set upon their right spiritual objects.

You see now a pourtrature of the new man, which should be the case of all men; my text saith indefinitely *a man*] implying every man, and every part of man; every man should be regenerated, every part of man should be renewed: and whereas man consists of two parts, the body and soul, all the members of his body, the heart, the eye, the ear, the tongue in special; all the powers of the soul, the understanding, the will, the memory, the conscience, the affections in general, all must be renewed, and the whole man born again.

Use. And yet (beloved) I mean not so, as that a man renewed is never overcome with sin: I know there is in him a continual fight betwixt the flesh and the spirit, each of which striveth to make his party strong against the other, and sometimes Amaleck prevails, and sometimes Israel prevails; sometimes his heart falls a lust-

ing, his eyes a wandering, his ears a tickling, his tongue a speaking idly; sometimes his understanding errs, his will rebels, his memory fails, his conscience sleeps, and his affections turn the stream after sensual objects; but (that which differs him from the unregenerate man) if he sin, it is with a gracious reluctance, he resists it to the uttermost of his abilities, and if at last he commit sin through the violence of temptation, subduing the infirmity of the flesh, he is presently abashed, and then begins he to set repentance a work in all the parts and powers of his body and soul; then begins his conscience to trouble him within, and will never be at quiet until the cistern of his heart (being overcharged) hath caused his eyes, the flood-gates, with moist sinful † humours, to overflow the cheeks with tears of contrition; and thus he is washed, justified, sanctified, 1 Cor. vi. 11. and restored to his former integrity again. Examine then yourselves, you that desire heaven at your ends, would you inherit the kingdom? would you live with angels? would you save your souls? examine and try whether your *bodies and souls be sanctified throughout*; and if you have no sense or feeling of the new birth (for it is a mystery to the unregenerate) then never look to see (in that state) the *kingdom of God*; but if you perceive the working of saving grace effectually in you, (and you cannot but perceive it, if you have it) if you feel the power of godliness first seizing the heart, and after dispersing itself over all the parts and powers of body and soul; or, yet more in particular, if your *hearts be softened by the Spirit*, if your *eyes wait upon God*, if your *ears listen to his word*, if your *tongues shew forth his praise*, if your *understanding attain to saving knowledge*, if your *wills conform to the will of God*. If your *memories be stored with heavenly*

doctrine, if your *consciences be tender and sensible of the least sin whatsoever*, if you *love that which is good*, if you *hate that which is evil*, if you *hope for the blessings above*, if you *fear him that can destroy both body and soul*; in a word, if you *joy in goodness*, if you *sorrow for sin*, then are you *born again*. Happy man in this case that ever he was *born*; and thus every man must be, or he cannot be happy: *Except a man*] (every man, every part of a man) *be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*.

Thus far of the subject Man.] We come now to the act, or deed to be done, he must be born again.

Be born again.]

THE children are brought to the birth; and lest the saying be true of us, *there is no strength to bring forth*, 2 Kings xix. 3. I shall now (by God's assistance) proceed to the *birth* itself. Here we have the manner of it, and we may observe a double manner.

First, Of the words containing the *new birth*.

Secondly, Of the *new birth* contained in the words.

The manner of the words appears in the original, γεννηθη αναθεν] two words, and each of them has its divers reading. γεννηθη, Valla would have to be *genitus*, begotten; *Except a man be begotten.* Others usually say *natus*, born; *Except a man be born.*] And as γεννηθη, so αναθεν, some would have to be αναθεν ευραθεν, above or from heaven; *Except a man be born from above.*] Others usually αναθεν το παλιν, again; *Except a man be born again.*] Chrysostom cites both these; and of each reading, we shall gather something for our own instruction.

Doct. *Except a man be regenerated, or begotten* (saith Valla.) As man that is born of a woman is begotten by a man, so he

† Sinful, because shed for sin, not sinful in themselves.

that is born again, must have a begetting too: and therefore sometimes it is called *renascentia*; a new birth, and sometimes *regeneratio*, [Erlasmus' annotations on the place.] a new begetting, or *regeneration*. If you ask, Of whom is the new man begotten? James tells you, James i. 18. *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth*: the former words note the impulsive cause, these latter, the instrument; it was God that begat us, and with the Seed of the word.

First, God begat us, and so are we called God's sons, born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, John 1. 13. Regeneration is the work of God, and because it is a work external, it is therefore communicable to each person of the Trinity: *Ye are sanctified* (saith the apostle) *in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*, 1 Cor. vi. 11. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost all sanctifie, all work the same work: but as in the Godhead there is but one essence, and three manners of being of the same essence; so in God's outward operations, all the persons work *rem eandem*, one thing; but all work not *eodem modo*, after one manner. For instance, the works of creation, redemption, and sanctification are the common works of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. viii. 6. John i. 10. Job xxvi. 13. yet every one of these, common to all three, are terminated in some one of them; so the Father is said to create, the Son is said to create, the Holy Ghost is said to create; so the Father is said to redeem, the Son is said to redeem, the Holy Ghost is said to redeem; so the Father is said to sanctifie, the Son is said to sanctifie, the Holy Ghost is said to sanctifie: thus all Three concur to every one of these works, and yet every one of these works, is terminated, specified, and formed (as it were) in the very last act by one of these three: the work of creation is

terminated immediately in God the Father, the work of redemption is terminated immediately in God the Son, the work of regeneration is terminated immediately in God the holy Ghost. And it is memorable, that as the community of these works, *ad extra*, depends on the unity of God's essence, so the diversity of their determinations depends on the divers manners of God's existence, or subsisting: the Father is of himself, neither made nor begotten, and therefore it best agrees with him to make all things of nothing, which is the work of *creation*; the Son is of the Father alone by reflection of his intellect, and so called the representation of his Father's image, and therefore it best agrees with him to represent his Father's mercies to mankind, by saving them from death and hell, which is the work of *redemption*; the Holy Ghost is of the Father and Son, proceeding (and as it were breathed) from them both by the act of the will, and therefore it best agrees with him (*that bloweth where he listeth*) to blow on our wills, and by his breath to purge and purify us, which is the work of *regeneration*. To sum up all in a word: This work of *regeneration* (or *sanctification*, or whatever else you will call it) in respect of the work, it is of the Father, Son and holy Ghost; but in respect of the last act, it is of the Holy Ghost, and not of the Father, nor the Son; and thus our Saviour concludes, John iii. 8. *That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit; and so is every man that is born of the Spirit.*

Secondly, as God's Spirit is the principal, so God's word is the instrumental cause of our regeneration; *Ye are born again*, saith Peter, *not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever*, 1 Pet. i. 23. this Word John calls the *Word of life*, 1 John i. 1.; Paul the producer of faith, and the *power of God unto salvation*, Rom. i. 16.: yea, this word is quick and power-

powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, Heb. iv. 12. They that are born again, cannot but remember how quick and powerful and sharp God's word was at their regeneration: first, like an hammer it beat on their hearts till it broke them all to pieces; and then like a sword by a terrible, cutting, piercing power, it struck a shaking and trembling into the very center of their souls; last of all like oil (when, as the man in the gospel, Luke x. 30. they were wounded indeed) it began to supple those wounds, and to heal the bruises, and to refresh the weak and tender heart with all the promises of God revealed in Christ.

And thus a man being begotten of the Spirit with the word of truth, he comes at last to the birth; so we read, *Except a man be born.* And this I suppose to be fuller than the other, because, a *begetting* may be, and no *birth* follow; as many that are stifled in the womb are *begotten*, not *born*; but if the *birth* be, it doth presuppose a *begetting*, and so it implies it: *except a man be born again*, that is, *except a man be begotten and born, he cannot see God's kingdom.* If you ask, Of whom born? I answer, As God is the *Father*, so the church is the *mother* of every child of God: to this purpose saith the apostle, *Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all*, Gal. iv. 26. What is *Jerusalem* but the church? for as that city was the seat of David, Psal. cxxii. 5.: so is this church the throne of Christ, figured by the kingdom of David, Rev. iii. 7. and therefore of both these God thus proclaims, *This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it*, Psalm cxxxii. 14. And rightly is the church called our mother, 1. because she is the spouse of our *Father betrothed*, Hos. ii. 19. coupled and made *one*. Cant. vi. 3. *I am*

my beloved's, and my beloved is mine; and 2. because we are children born of her, this teacheth us to honour our mother, and like little children to hang at her breasts for our sustenance, *Suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory*, Isa. lxvi. 11. It is the church that brings forth children to God by the ministry of the word, and if we are children of this mother, we must feed on that milk which flows from her two breasts, the Old and New Testament; *As new-born babes, saith the apostle, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*, 1 Pet. ii. 2. In a word, out of the church there is no salvation: 'Who have not the church for their mother, cannot have God for their Father,' was the saying of old; and good reason, for out of the church there is no means of salvation, no word to teach, no sacraments to confirm; but all these, and all other means are in the womb of the church; it is here, and here only, where the Spirit of *immortal seed* begets grace in the heart, and so a man is *born again*.

Doct. This ἀνωθεν, some read ἐνωθεν, from heaven, and so the words run, *Except a man be born from above.* From above it is that every good and perfect gift cometh. *A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven*, John iii. 27. But how then saith our Saviour of the wind (to which he compareth every one that is born of the Spirit) that we know not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth? ver. 8. I answer, This whence respects more the cause than place, we know the wind comes from the South, or North, or East, or West, but why so and so, we cannot tell; we know the Spirit is above, and the new birth, or regeneration comes from the Spirit; but [το ποθεν] why it is so, or what moves the Spirit to do so, besides his [εὐδοκίαν] the good pleasure of his will, we cannot tell.

Or, if we read *ἀναγεννηθῆναι* τὸ πάλιν, as others do, [*Beda and Erasim.* paraph. on the place] the words then run thus, *Except a man be born again. To this Nicodemus' reply seems more direct, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb? No question he took Christ's ἀναγεννηθῆναι pro παλιῶν.* [from above, for again] only thus he mistook, that the second birth should be after the manner of the first birth, and therefore he saith, *Can a man that is old, such as he himself was, be born again? No, saith our Saviour, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and there is but one birth, after this manner; but to be born again, is to be born after the Spirit, and this is the second birth; a man is first born of the flesh, and he must be again born of the Spirit.*

Doct. Hence appears the difference of the first and second birth; the first birth is of the earth, carnal; the second birth is of the Lord from heaven, heavenly: the first birth is of nature, full of sin; the second is of grace, full of sanctity: the first birth is originally of flesh and blood, the second birth is originally of the Spirit and water: in a word, the first birth kills, the second gives life: generation lost us, it must be regeneration that recovers us: O blessed birth, without which no birth is happy; in comparison of which, though it were to be born heir of the whole world, all is but misery! this was Moses' praise, that he esteemed the reproach of Christ above all the treasures in Egypt; rather would he be the Son of God, than to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, Heb. xi. 24. No question it is a great dignity to be called the son-in-law to a king, 1 Sam. xviii. 23. but nothing in comparison of being the Son of God: this sonship is that degree, a-

bove which there needs no aspiring, and under which there is no happiness, no heaven, no kingdom. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

Thus far of the manner of the words, which contain the New Birth; it appears in them, the Father of it is God, the seed of it the word, the mother of it the church, the place of it, whence? from heaven; the time of it, when? after a man is once born, then he must be again born; except a man be born.

Secondly, as you see the manner of the words containing the new birth; so now see the manner of the new birth contained in the words. I know it is not wrought in all after one manner, nor is the manner known to us, but only so far forth as it is sensible in us, and therefore we must consider man before baptism, in baptism, after baptism.

In some is the New Birth wrought before baptism, as in the eunuch under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, Acts viii. 37. and in Cornelius the captain, together with his kinsmen and near friends, Acts x. 47. and in Lydia, Acts xvi. 14. and so our charity tells us that every infant, dying before baptism, is renewed by the Spirit; but the manner of this working we know not, for it is one of the secrets of the Spirit of God.

In others is the New Birth wrought in baptism, which indeed is the sacrament of the new Birth, and seal of regeneration; but howsoever in *poedo-baptism* we see the outward seal, yet we see not, we feel not the manner of the inward working; for this also is the secret of the Spirit † of God.

In others is the New Birth wrought after baptism; so *Polanus**: but whether after baptism, or in baptism we will not

† *Bellarmine*, vol. 2. of *Sacram. Baptism.* ch. p. 10. *Habent fidem habitualem.* They have the habit of faith. See Dr. *Field* concerning the Author of the grounds of the old and new religion, S. 2. *Fides est in infantibus potentia* &

* *Poland Syntag.* book 6. ch. 37.

not dispute; only, as the case stands with us, this I affirm, *There is no manifestation of the new Birth, until after baptism.* But, When after baptism? I answer, *Whensoever men receive Christ by faith, which, though it be many years after, yet then do they feel the power of God to regenerate them, and to work all things in them which he offered in baptism.* Now the manner of this feeling, or of God's Spirit working, proceeds usually thus.

There be certain steps of degrees, say divines, by which it passeth, and howsoever in those whom God hath blessed with that great favour of holy and Christian education, the Spirit of God dropping grace into their hearts, even very betimes; these steps or degrees are not so easily perceived: yet in those men who have lived long in sin, whose sins have been gross, and great, and grievous, no sooner come they to a new birth, but they can feel grace work in them step after step, and these steps we shall reckon to the number of eight.

The *first* is a *sight of sin*, and this our Saviour reckons for the first work of the Spirit, *When he is come he will reprove [or, convince] the world of sin*, John xvi. 8. Of sin; how? Why, thus: no sooner begins this blessed change from nature to grace, but the conscience, wrought on by God's word, opens its book, and presents to the soul a bed-roll of these many, mighty, hainous sins committed against God and man; there he may read in bloody burning lines the abominations of his youth, the sins of all his life. And, to bring them into method, the commandments of God stand as a remembrancer before his eyes: the *first* tells him of his loving somewhat

above God: the *second* of his worshipping a false god, or the true God after a false manner: the *third* of his dishonouring the great and mighty name of God: the *fourth* of his breaking the Lord's day, either in doing the works of the flesh, or in leaving undone the works of the Spirit; nor is this all: as against God, so against his neighbour hath he sinned; the *fifth* tells him of his stubbornness, and disobedience: the *sixth* of his passions and desire of revenge: the *seventh* of his lewdness and lustful courses: the *eighth* of his robberies and covetous thefts: the *ninth* of his lies and slanders, back-bitings, and rash judgments: the *tenth* of his covetous thoughts, and motions of the heart to all manner of evil. Good Lord! what a number of evils, yea what innumerable swarms of lawless thoughts, and words, and actions doth he read in his conscience? But above all, his darling delight, his beloved sin, is writ in greatest characters; this he finds to have bewitched him most, and to have domineered above all the rest in his wadded conscience; this sin, in some is worldliness, wantonness, usury, pride, revenge, or the like; in others it is drunkenness, gluttony, gaming, scurril jesting, simony, or the like: whatsoever it is, the conscience tells him of it again and again, where that he may read it together with his other sins: the Spirit of God now opens the eyes of his mind, and lets him see the very mud and filth of his soul, that lay at the bottom before unseen, and undiscerned. Thus is the first working of the new life, to wit, a feeling of the old death of his soul in sins and trespasses; and here the axiom is true, '*No generation without corruption*;' a man

in initiation, Ursinus parte secunda cateches. quest. 74. Faith is in infants by power, and inclination. *Ursinus catechesis part 2. question 74 Spiritus operator in potentis anime ipsorum at Bellar.* The Spirit operates in the powers of the soul of these infants; according to *Bellarmino. Habent spiritum fidei.* They have the Spirit of faith, *Zanch.* on the 2 of *Ephes.*

must first feel this death, before he is *born again*.

The *second step* is, *sense of divine wrath*, which begets in him fear; so the apostle, *the spirit of bondage begets fear*, Rom. viii. 15. and thus it works: no sooner hath the man a sight and feeling of his sin, but then God's Spirit (*now called the spirit of bondage*) presents to him the armory of God's flaming wrath, and fiery indignation; this makes him to feel (as if he were pricked with the stroke of an arrow or point of a sword, or sting of an adder) that he is a most cursed and damnable creature, justly deserving all the miseries of this life, and all the fiery torments in hell in that life to come; yea, this makes him tremble, and stand and look as if he were thoroughly frightened with the angry countenance of God almighty: would you view him in this case? His conscience has now awaked him out of his dead sensual sleep, by the trumpet of the law; his heart is now scorched with the secret sense of God's angry face; his soul is now full sorely crasped under the most grievous burthen of innumerable sins; his thoughts are now full of fear and astonishment, as if no less than very hell and horror were ready to seize upon his body and soul. I say not what measure of this wrath is poured on all men in their conversion; for I suppose some feel more, and some have less of it; but I verily believe, some there are that, in these pangs of the *New Birth*, have been scorched, as it were, with the very flames of hell, inasmuch that they might truly say with David, *God's wrath lieth hard upon me, and he hath afflicted me with all his waves*, Psal. lxxxviii. 7. And no wonder, for this is the time of fear; now it is that Satan strives busily to still the *new man* in the womb, and therefore he that before diminished his sins, and made them appear little or nothing in his eyes, when he once sees the

man smitten down into the *place of dragons*, and covered with the *shadow of death*, Psal. xlv. 19. then he puts into his mind his innumerable sins, and (that which immediately follows) the curse of the law, and the wrath of God, which he yet makes more grilly and fierce, with a purpose to plunge him into the bottomless pit of horror and despair. By this means he persuaded Cain to cry out, when he was in this case, *My punishment is greater than I can bear*, or, as others translate, *Alone iniquity is greater than can be forgiven*, Gen. iv. 13. And therefore thus far the unregenerate goes with the man born again; both have a sight of sin, and sense of wrath; but here they part; for the man unregenerate either sinks under it, or labours to allay it with worldly comforts, or some counterfeit calm: but *the man born again*, is only humbled by it, and seeks the right way to cure it; and at last, by the help of God's Spirit, he passeth quite through it, I mean, through this hell upon earth, into the spiritual pleasures of grace; which is to be *born again*.]

The *third step* is *sorrow for sin*, and this is more peculiar to God's child: There is a *sorrow*, which is a common work of grace, which an hypocrite may have; and there is a *sorrow*, which is a work of special grace, and this likewise precedes the exercise of faith.

But some object, 'Christ must work
' this sorrow, or it is good for nothing;
' now if Christ be in the soul working for-
' row, then there is faith; therefore faith
' must go before sorrow.'

I answer, although it is true that Christ cannot be in the soul, but in the same instant there is the habit of faith; yet it follows not that faith is before sorrow, for the habits of these graces are both together, and at once in the soul; or howsoever, it follows not that the soul is enabled by an act of faith to apply Christ to itself as soon

soon as Christ is in the soul, or as soon as the habit of faith is infused into the soul: the question is, 'Whether the soul in respect of us, who can only judge of the habit by the act, cannot be said to have sorrow or repentance before faith?' The question is not, 'which the soul hath first in respect of God's gift, but which it acts first for our apprehension?' Surely to us it first sorrows for sin, and then it acts or exerciseth faith by coming to Christ, and relying upon Christ for salvation, &c. Observe, this sorrow is sometimes taken largely, for the whole work of conversion; sometimes strictly, for conviction, contrition, and humiliation; in like manner repentance is taken sometimes largely, and sometimes strictly: by this distinction it may easily appear how sorrow goes before repentance, and how repentance goes before faith. Indeed, for the latter is the great controversy; but some reconcile it thus: repentance hath two parts, the aversion of the soul from sin, and the conversion of the soul to God; the latter part of it is only an effect of faith, the former part of it, *viz.* the turning of the soul from sin is also an effect, but not only an effect; for it is begun before faith, though it be not ended till our life end. Some object, 'That God works repentance and faith together:' but we dispute not how God works them, but how the soul acts them; not which is in the soul first, but which appears out of the soul first: neither is it any new thing in philosophy to say, Those causes which produce an effect, though they be in time together, yet are mutually before one another in order of nature in divers respects, to their several causalities. Thus a man must have repentance before he have saving and justifying faith; and yet a man must have faith before the work of repentance be perfect in the soul. As we maintain repentance to be a precedent work, so we deny it not to be a subsequent effect:

and that sorrow is before the birth too, the apostle intimates, 2 Cor. vii. 10. *Godly sorrow works repentance*; that is, sorrow prepares a man for repentance, it goes afore it, and prepares for it. And now it is, that God's Spirit begins to renew his heart; as God himself proclaimeth, *I will put a new spirit within them, and I will take the stony heart out of their bodies, and will give them a heart of flesh*, Ezek. xi. 19. His heart that before was hard as flint, now begins to relent and soften, and break in pieces; how so? It is God's Spirit that pricks the heart, Acts ii. 37. and this pricking softens it. *Dum pungit, ungit*, saith Jerom; [i. e. 'while it pricks, it a-
'nointeth.'] compunction softens and sup-
ples the heart, so that be it never so stony, presently it becomes *an heart of flesh*: you know those that are apt to weep, or yern or sorrow, we call them *tender-hearted*; you may be sure then he that is pricked, until his heart bleed inwardly, he that weepeth blood, (which every heart doth that is pricked in this manner) sure his heart is tender indeed; I say, *tender*, for as the very word importeth [*xxxiix* to weep, from *xxxix*, to break,] his heart weepeth, why? his heart is broken: David joines these together, *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*, Psalm li. 17. And no wonder if an heart that is broken, and rent, and wounded, and pricked, falleth a-weeping blood; well might David say when he was broken, Psalm xxxviii. 8. *I have wept, nay more, I have rored for the very grief, or disquietness, of my heart*: and again, *my soul, or my heart, melteth, or droppeth, for very heaviness*, Psal cxix. 28. Not that his heart dropped indeed, but because the tears which he shed, were not drops of water running only from his eyes, (an onion may cause so much) but issuing from his heart; which heart being grieved, and sore grieved, it is said to be *wounded*; and so his tears coming from it, they may be

called no less than very blood, ' Drops of blood issuing from a wounded heart.' Thus it is with the man now labouring in his New Birth; his heart grieves, his eye weeps, whence the proverb, ' The way to heaven is by weeping crosses: ' the way to God's kingdom is to cry like children coming into the world; the way to be *new born* is to feel throws (as a woman labouring of child) and so is Christ formed in us. Can a man be born again without bitterness of soul? No, if ever he come to a sight of sin, and that God's sanctifying Spirit work in him *sorrow for sin*, his soul will mourn until he may say with *Jeremiah*, *Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission: mine eye affecteth my heart, because of all the daughters of my city, because of all the sins of my soul*, Lam. iii. 49. 51. True it is, as some infants are born with more pain to the mother, and some with less: so may the new man be regenerated in some with more, in some with less anxiety of travel; but more or less, it cannot be so little; but the man that laboureth in these pangs shall mourn and mourn; *There shall be great mourning, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon*, Zech. xii. 11. What else? He cannot look on a saint, that failed not first through the ocean of tears, and therefore he falleth on his face with Abraham, *Gen. xvii. 17.* he wrestles with God like Jacob, *Gen. xxxii. 24.* he roareth out his grief with Job, *Job iii.* he poureth out his soul with Hanna, *1 Sam. i. 15.* he weepeth rivers of tears with David, *Psal. cxix. 136.* he mourneth as a dove with *Hzekiah*, *yea like a crane or a swallow, so doth he chatter*, Isa. xxxviii. 14. O the bitter pangs and fore travel of a man, when he must be born again.

The fourth step is, *Seeking rightly for comfort.* He runs not to the world, or flesh, or devil, *miserable comforters all*; but to scripture, to prayer, or to the ministry of God's word; if he find comfort in scriptures, he meets with it in the † gospel; not the law, but *the gospel* (saith the apostle) *is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth*, Rom. i. 16. The law is indeed *the ministry of death and damnation*, 2 Cor. iii. 7. : but *the gospel is the glad tidings of salvation*, Luke ii. 10. The law shews a man his wretched estate, but shews him no remedy; and yet we abolish not the law, in ascribing this comfort to the gospel only; though it be no cause of it, yet it is the occasion of it: those doleful terrors, and fears of conscience begotten by the law, may be in their own nature the very gates and downfall to the pit of hell; yet I cannot deny, but they are certain occasions of receiving grace; and if it please God that the man, now labouring in his pangs of the New Birth, do but rightly settle his thoughts on the gospel of Christ, no doubt but thence he may suck the sweetest comforts and delights that ever were revealed to man. Or if he find comfort in prayer (to which he ever and anon repaireth in every of these steps) then it is by Christ, in whose name only he approacheth to that heavenly throne of grace: no sooner had the king of Nineveh humbled himself, but his proclamation runs, *Let man and beast be covered with sack-cloth, and cry mightily unto God. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?* Jonah iii. 8, 9. And thus the man now wrestling with the grievous afflictions and terrors of his conscience, *Who can tell* (saith he) *if God will turn away his fierce anger? Let me then*

† *Lex ostendit peccatum, et solum evangelium peccati remedium.* i. e. " The law sheweth sin, but the gospel alone, " the remedy of sin." *Aug. tract 17. on Joh.*

cry mightily unto the Lord of heaven, let me cry, and continue crying, until the Lord of mercy do in mercy look upon me; and if for all this God give him a repulse, for reasons best known to himself, if at the first, second, third, fourth, or at many more times, he seem to have cried in vain, at last he flies to the ministry of the word, and if he may have his will, he would hit upon the most skilful, experienced, soul-searching and sound-dealing man amongst all God's messengers; and thus was it with Peter's hearers, whose hearts being pricked, and rent with legal terrors, then could they begin to cry it out, *Men and brethren, what must we do?* Acts ii. 37. Thus was it with the jaylor, who after his trembling and falling down to the ground in an humble abasement, could then begin to say, *Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?* Acts xvi. 30. And thus the man now ready to be born again, if he find no means to assuage the rage and terror of his guilty conscience, at last he cometh to God's minister with a 'What shall I do, what must I do to be saved? Alas! now I feel the wounded conscience, the broken heart, the spiritual blindness, the captivity and poverty, of which often you have told me; if then there be any instruction, direction or duty, which may tend to my good, or free me from this evil, now open those lips that should preserve knowledge, now direct me in God's fear, and I will willingly follow it with my utmost endeavours.'

And now, and not till now, hath God's minister a strong and seasonable calling to amplify and magnifie the soul saving sufficiency of Christ's death and passion: were the blood of Christ, and promise of salvation proffered to an unwounded conscience, what were it but like the pouring of a most sovereign balsam upon a sound member of man? It is the only, right everlasting method, first to wound by the law and then to heal by the gospel; first to cause smart

for sin, and then to lay to a plaister of Christ's blood; and therefore when the heart is broken, then hath the man of God his warrant to bind it up again, then may he magnifie God's mercy, then may he set out to the height the heavenly beauty of Christ's passion and person, and thus playing the midwife by his high and holy art of comforting the afflicted, at last the child of God (prepared for his birth) becometh a man *born again*.

The *fifth* step is a clear (I say not a general light, which he had before) but *the clear sight of Christ laid open to the eye of faith*: no sooner is the poor wounded soul informed throughly in the mystery and mercy of the gospel, but he then looketh on his Saviour as the Jews on the brazen serpent, and seeing him lifted up on the cross, he cannot but see in him an infinite treasury of mercy and love, a boundless and bottomless sea of tender-heartedness and pity, a whole heaven of sweetness, happiness, peace and pleasures; after the *spirit of bondage* entereth the *spirit of adoption*, the terrors of the law lead him to the comforts of the gospel, his sorrow for sin brings him to the clear light of his Saviour; and then as a man in death's pangs, that lifts up his eyes to heaven *whence cometh his help*; so he in birth's pangs lifts up his eyes to Christ, who must either help him, or he sinks under his sin to the bottomless pit of hell. And I must tell you this sight of Christ Jesus to an humble sinner (together with those glorious privileges which he brings with him, as reconciliation to God, forgiveness of sins, adoption, justification, righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, redemption) it is a most pleasant, ravishing, heavenly sight: *not Solomon in all his royalty, no, nor the lilies of the field arrayed better than Solomon*, Matth. vi. 29. not all the curious sights on earth, nor all those glittering spangles in heaven, can possibly afford such pleasure or delight to the eye of man,

as doth this one object, Christ bleeding on the cross to the soul of a sinner. Imagine that you saw some malefactor, whose trial and doom were past, to be led to the doleful place of execution; imagine that you heard him wail and weep for his mis-spent time, for his bloody acts, for his hainous crimes; yea imagine his wailings and weepings so bitter that they were able to force tears from others, and to make all eyes shoot and water that but looked upon him; if this man in this case should suddenly see his king running and riding towards him with his pardon in his hand, what a sight would this be? sure there is none to this. Thus, thus it is with the man sorrowing for sin, whilst he is weeping his case, and confessing what a little step there is betwixt him and damnation (as if he were now at hell's mouth, the very place of execution) in a maze he looketh upon Christ, whom he sees with a spear in his side, with thorns in his head, with nails in his feet, with a pardon in his hand, offering it to all men that will but receive it by faith. O here is a sight indeed, able to revive the wickedest man upon earth, dead in sins and trespasses. And now there is hopes of the birth, if it once come to this, there is more than probability of an happy delivery, we may call it the stirrings of God's child, or the first feelings of life, before he is *born again*.]

The sixth step is, *An hungering desire after Christ and his merits*; and to this step blessed are they that arrive; *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled*, Mat. v. 6. Filled? how? *I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely*, Rev. xxi. 6. This is the step (as if it were in Jacob's ladder) that raiseth him on high towards heaven; it is such a token of true faith, that he who hath it, needs no more doubt that he believeth, than he that breatheth needs to doubt

that he liveth; and why? his thirst of worldly things is cooled, his thirst of heavenly things inflamed.

Object. But Christ saith, 'He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.'

Sol. Not after the world, but he shall thirst more and more after Christ. No hungry man did ever with more appetite wish for meat, nor thirsty man for drink, nor covetous man for money, nor ambitious man for glory, than he now longeth to be reconciled unto God in Christ; in this case, had he the pleasures and profits of a thousand worlds, willingly would he part with all for the application of Christ's sufferings; it is that sovereign blood that can only heal his soul; it is that bitter passion which can only quench his thirst: give him but the merits of Christ's death (whereby God and he may be at one) and he cares not though he suffer death and hell again, yea he will venture goods, life, all; or if that be not it which the Lord requireth, he will do whatever behoves him, even *sell all, all that he hath*, part with all sin that he loveth, yea were it *his right hand*, or *his right eye*, nothing shall be dear to him, so that he may enjoy his Saviour. O here is a thirst above all thirsts! it breedeth ardent desires, vehement longings, unutterable groans, mighty gaspings, just like the dry and thirsty ground, that gasps, and cleaves, and opens for drops of rain. David, though in the desert of Ziph, a barren and dry land without water, yet he complaineth most because of his thirst, *My soul thirsteth for thee, O God*, Psalm lxxiii. 1. This is that violent affection that God puts into the hearts of those that seek him in sincerity and truth: never was Ahab more sick for a vineyard, nor Sifera for milk, nor Sampson for water, Judg. xv. 19. when God was fain to open him a fountain in the jaw of an ass, than is a truly humbled soul after Christ, ever thirsting and long-

ing, that he may hide himself in his righteousness, and bathe himself in that blood which his Saviour shed for him. I have read of a gracious woman, who labouring in these pangs, and longing after Christ Jesus, cried out, 'I have borne nine children with as great pain as other women, and yet I would with all my heart bear them all over again, yea bear them, and bear them all the days of my life, to be assured of my part in Christ Jesus.' One replying, 'Doth not your heart desire and long after him? Oh, said she, I have an husband and children, and many other comforts, I would give them all, and all the good I shall ever see in this world, or in the world to come, to have my poor thirsty soul refreshed with that precious blood of my Saviour.' So eager and earnest is the heart of each man, parched with the angry countenance of God, after this blood of his. 'I thirst, I faint, I languish, I long, saith he, for one drop of mercy; my spirit is melted in me into tears of blood; my heart, because of sin, is so shaken and shivered; my soul, because of sorrow, is so wasted and parched, that my thirst is insatiable, my bowels are hot within me, my desire after Christ is extremely great and greedy.' Stay! all these expressions are far short of those longings, *No man knoweth them, save he that receiveth them*, Rev. ii. 17. save he that is born again.

The seventh step is, *A relying on Christ*: no sooner he considers and remembers those many melting invitations of our Lord and Saviour; *If any man thirst, let him come unto me**: *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters* †: *come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden* with sin ‡: but, resting himself on the impregnable truth of these blessed promises, he throws himself into the merciful and meritorious arms of his crucified Lord. Come life, come death, come hea-

ven, come hell, come what come will, here will he stick for ever: *Who*, saith Paul, *shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, I am persuaded* (not these, nor more than these) *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*, Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39. Thus it is with the man labouring in this Birth: 'What? (saith he) doth Christ call the heavy laden? why, Lord, I am heavy laden with a weight, a mass of sin, and if he may come that is called, Lord, I come, I come, and now I am come, with thee will I build my tabernacle, with thee will I rest for ever.' Nor is this any wonder, experience tells us, the hunted beast flies unto his den, the wounded man hies unto the surgeon, and so the poor man broken and bruised with the weight of sin, how should he otherwise but cast himself willingly into the sweet compassionate inviting arms and embracements of Christ, whose promises run, *I will ease him, I will refresh him*? Matth. xi. 28. You may see sometimes a little infant, upon apprehension and approach of some sudden danger, how hastily he runs into his mother's arms: even so a truly wounded soul, pursued by the terrors of the law, and frightened with the angry countenance of almighty God, it flies with speed into the bosom of its blessed Redeemer, there it clings unto his blessed wounds, there it rests upon his meritorious death, there it grasps about his crucified body, there it hides itself in the clefts of this rock, yea there it sticks with this full resolution, that should all terrors, all temptations, all men, all devils combine together to

* John vii. 37:

† Isa. lv. 1.

‡ Matth. xi. 28.

cast him into hell, they should not tear him, rend him, pull him hale him, from the bleeding wounds, and tender bowels of his heavenly Saviour. This was Job's case, who in the bitterness of his pangs could cry it out, saying, *Though the Lord slay me, yet will I trust in him*, Job xiii. 15. And I must tell you, this * Affiance, Dependance, Adherence, Reliance (or whatsoever else we call it) upon the merits of Christ, is the right justifying faith; whither if a man once come, there is but one degree more, and he is then born again.

The last and highest step is, *universal obedience to Christ*. No sooner hath he cast himself upon him, but he takes him, not only as a Saviour to redeem him from the miseries of sin, but as an husband, a Lord, a king, to serve him, love him, honour him, and obey him: now will he *take his yoke upon him*; now will he *bear his cross and follow after him*; now will he *enter into the narrow way*; now will he *walk in the holy path*; now will he associate himself to that *sect and brotherhood that is every where spoken against*, Acts xxviii. 22. Now will he oppose himself against all sin whatsoever; now will he shake off his old companions, *brethren in iniquity*; now will he keep peace and a good conscience towards God and man; now will he watch over his secret sins, lustful thoughts, occasions of evil; now will he direct his words to the glorifying of God, and to give grace to the hearers; now will he conform all his actions to the sovereignty of grace; now will he delight in the word, the ways, the saints, the services of God; now will he never more turn again unto

folly, or to his trade of sin; yea though *Satan* set upon him with baits and allurements to detain him in his bondage but by one darling delight, one minion sin, yet he resolves to answer him as *Moses* did *Pharaoh*, *There shall not so much as an hoof be left behind*; for well he knows, one breach in the city exposeth it to the enemy, one leak in a ship will sink it in the sea, one stab in the heart will speed a man to death, one knot in a thread will stay the needle's passage as well as five hundred, and *therefore he will sell all, that he hath*, even all his sins, to the last filthy rag of his minion-delight, his bewitching, beloved, bosom sin. And now is *the new man born* amongst us, will you view him? *Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17. His heart, his eye, his ear, his tongue, his understanding, his will, his memory, his conscience, his love, his hatred, his hope, his fear, his joy, his sorrow; will you any more? his thoughts, his words, his actions, his affections are all *new*: this conversion is universal, this change is a thorough change; now is Christ formed in him; now is he transformed into a new creature, before he was in making a new man, but now he is made *new*; God the Father accepts him for his son, God the Son stamps on him the image of his Father, but more immediately, God the holy Ghost hath thus moulded and fashioned him, as I have let you see him, and now he is *born again*; which *except a man be, he shall not, cannot see the kingdom of God*. Lo here those steps that raise up a man to the state of regeneration, A Sight of sin, Sense of misery, Sorrow for sin, Seek-

* *Ursin*, secunda, catech. q. 6. *Fides justificans non est tantum notitia, sed etiam fiducia, qua tanquam medium applicamus nobis meritum Christi, ac in eo acquiescimus.* Trcl. l. 2. institutus. *Loquens de natura fidei justificantis, apprehensio ejus duplex; una constituitur in intellectu, altera fiducie in voluntate, utramque includit fides.*—*At* voluit *Bellarmin.* *fidem esse in voluntate.* *Ursin's* catech. q. 6. says justifying faith is not only intellectual [that is, relating to, the understanding] but fiducial, [that is, effecting trust or confidence] by which we rely upon, or trust in the merits of Christ, as our Mediator, and do heartily acquiesce in him. And *Tr. book 2. institut.* speaking of the nature of justifying faith, says, the notion of it is twofold; one, of knowledge in the intellect, the other of affiance in the will, both which faith includes.—But *Bellarmin* would not have faith to be in the will,

ing for comfort, A sight of Christ, Desire after Christ, Relying on Christ, Obedience to Christ. One word before we have done.

Use 1. You see how God brings along the man whom he purposeth to make his; and yet let no truly humbled sinner be discouraged if he observe not so distinctly the order of these steps, and especially in that degree as you see we have related: for, if in substance and effect they have been wrought in them, if he have them in truth, though perhaps not in this degree, I dare pronounce of him that he is surely *born again*. It is one of our worthies hath said it, 'That in our humiliations, and other preparative dispositions, we do not prescribe precisely just such a measure and quantity, we do not determine peremptorily upon such and such a degree and height, we leave that to the wisdom of our great Master in heaven, the only wise God, who is a most free agent: but sure we are, a man must have so much, and in that measure, as thoroughly to humble him, and then to bring him to his Saviour; he must be weary of all his sins, and of Satan's bondage wholly, willing to pluck out his right eye, and cut off his right hand, I mean to part with his best beloved bosom-lusts, to sell all, and not to leave not so much as a hoof behind; he must see his danger, and so haste to the city of refuge; he must be sensible of his spiritual misery, that he may heartily thirst for mercy; he must find himself lost and cast away in himself, that Christ may be all in all unto him; and after must follow an hatred of all false and evil ways for the time to come, a thorough change of former courses, company, conversation, and setting himself in the way and practice of sobriety, honesty, and holiness.' And another speaks to the same purpose, 'That the discovery of the remedy as soon as the misery, must needs prevent a great part of the trouble, and make the distinct effects

' on the soul to be with much more difficulty discerned; nay, the affings of the soul are so quick, and oft so confused, that the distinct orders of these workings may not be apprehended, or remembered at all. And perhaps the joyful apprehension of mercy may make the sense of misery sooner forgotten.' The sum is; Of every soul is required thus much: 1. A truly penitent sight, sense and hatred of all sin. 2. A sincere and insatiable thirst after Jesus Christ, and righteousness both imputed and inherent. 3. An unfeigned and unreferred resolution of an universal *new obedience* for the time to come. If any man hath had the experience of these affections and effects in his own soul, whatsoever the order, or whatsoever the measure be (less or more) he is safe enough, and may go on comfortably in the holy path.

Use 2. Now then let me advise thee, whatsoever thou art that readest, to enter into thine own soul, and examine thine own state, whether or no thou art yet *born again*? Search and see whether as yet the *spirit of bondage* hath wrought its effects in thee; that is to say, whether thou hast been enlightened, convinced, and terrified with a sensible apprehension and particular acknowledgment of thy wretched estate? Search and see whether as yet the *spirit of adoption* hath sealed thee for his own; that is to say, whether, after thy heart being broken, thy spirit bruised, thy soul humbled, thy conscience wounded, and awak-ed; thou hast had a sight of Christ, and hast thirsted after him, and hast cast thyself on him, and hast followed his ways and commandments by an universal obedience? If upon search thou canst say, without self-deceit, that so it is with thee, then mayst thou bless God that ever thou wast born; certainly, I dare say it, thou art *born again*. But if thou hast no sense or feeling of these works, if all I have spoken are very mysteries to thee, what shall I say? but if ever, if ever thou meanest to see the kingdom of

God, strive, struggle, endeavour with thy might and main to become truly regenerate: [*Thus while the minister speaks, it is Christ that comes with power in the word, Ezek. xviii. 31. 32. * Rememb^r that.*] Thou mayest say, perhaps, It is not in thy power, thou art only a mere patient, and God's Spirit the agent, and who can command the Spirit of the Lord, that bloweth where he listeth, at his own will and pleasure. I answer, It is indeed the Spirit, and not man, that regenerates or sanctifies: but, I answer withal, The doctrine of the gospel is the ministration of the Spirit, and wheresoever that is preached, as I preach it now to thee, there is the Holy Ghost present, and thither he comes to regenerate: nay, I can say more, There is a common work of illumination that makes way for regeneration, and this common work puts power into a man of doing that, which when he shall do, the Spirit of God may, nay, will in the day of his power mightily work in him, to his quickening and purging. If then, as yet thou feelest not this mighty work of God in thee, and yet fain wouldest feel it, and gladly dost desire it, (otherwise I confess it is in vain to speak) follow me in these passages; I shall lend thee two wings to bear thee, two hands to lead thee to the foot of this ladder, where if thou ascend these steps aforesaid, I dare certainly pronounce of thee, Thou art the man born again.

The first wing is Prayer, which first brings thee to God's throne, and (there, if thou hast thy request) then to the New Birth; if I must acquaint thee how to pray, Hof. xiv. 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.* And then it followeth—*I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely,* ver. 4. Jer.

xxxii. 18. *I have surely heard Ephraim bewailing himself, thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned.* The soul may object: I may say thus, and be no better: But I answer, Say it, though you be no better, because God bids you say it; say it, and say it again: it may be he will come in when you say it, Hof. xiv. 4. The soul may object again, How can I pray, and have not faith? I answer, Put thyself upon prayer, and who knows but assistance and blessing may come? Pray that God would please to prepare thy heart, to sanctify thy affections, to order thy will, to preserve thee from sin, to prepare thee for growth unto full holiness and righteousness: this was the effect of Jeremiah's prayer, Jer. xxxi. 18. *Convert me, O Lord, and I shall be converted;—Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, O Lord, and I shall be saved,* Jer. xvii. 14. *Turn thou us, O Lord, and so we shall be turned,* Lam. v. 21. It is the Lord that converts and heals, and saves, and turns; and prayer is the means to produce this effect in thee. When we are required to pray, to repent, and believe, we are not to seek strength in ourselves, but to search into the covenant, and turn the promise into prayer. As the command is, *Repent,* Acts ii. 38. so the covenant is, *Christ shall give repentance,* Acts v. 31. and therefore pray, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned,* Jer. xxxi. 18. Therefore bow thy knees, and humbly, heartily, frequently, fervently implore the influence of God's blessed Spirit: cry, with the *Spouse in the Canticles, Awake, O north-wind, and come thou south-wind, and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out,* Cant. iv. 16. The more rushing and

• Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

mighty this wind of the Spirit is, the more will he make thee fructify in his graces and blessings; therefore cry again and again, *O Lord, let thy spirit come upon me: create in me, a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me,* Psal. li. 10. 'O Lord Jesus, send thy Spirit into me, which may restore me from this death of sin, unto the life of holiness.' Thus wouldst thou ask, and continue asking; thus wouldst thou cry, and continue crying, then could I assure thee of the promise, when the Lord cometh in, which God hath made, and cannot deny, *He that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh* (by continuance and perseverance) *it shall be opened,* Mat. vii. 8.

The second wing, or hand, that bears and leads thee to these steps of the New Birth, is, Constant hearing of the word: thou must attend the gates of wisdom, and wait on her posts; thou must come to God's house, and hearken to the ministry of the word: no doubt, but if thou beest constant in this duty, God will stir up some good Samuel, God will use some of his priests, consecrated to that office, to beget thee again: understand this soberly; for if Jesus Christ himself should preach to the soul every day, and give not out of himself, the ordinance would be empty to it: it is Christ's coming in to his people in the ordinances, that only fills the empty soul with good things. And yet God's ministers are called spiritual fathers, *I have begotten you,* saith Paul, *through the gospel,* 1 Cor. iv. 15. The pastor's tongue is the Lord's conduit-pipe, and hereby he drives the sweet and wholesome waters of life into the souls of his chosen; only, do thou frequent the means, and thou shalt see at one time or other God will remember thee in mercy: it is true, I know not when; and therefore I wish thee miss no Lord's

day to repair to God's house, lest the day of thy neglect might have been the day of thy conversion: certain it is, no man should expect God's blessing without his ordinances; no eating of bread without plowing and sowing, no recovering of health without eating and drinking, no posting on land without somewhat to ride on, no passage on seas without somewhat to sail in: so no blessing, no grace, no regeneration, no New Birth at all, without waiting upon God in his ways, and in his ordinances. Now then, as thou desirest heaven, or (the way to heaven) to be born again, I beseech thee make high account of this ordinance of God, the preaching of his word: in preaching of the gospel, light, motion and power goes out to all, which men resist; and some are destroyed, not because they could not believe, but because they resist, and will not obey, and so die, Acts vii. 51. Luke xiii. 34. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Hof. xiii. 9. and yet I wish thee not only to hear it, but after thou hast heard, consider of it, ponder on it, and lay the threats and reproofs, the precepts and promises unto thine own soul: thus if thou hearest and meditatest, I doubt not but God's word will be a word of power to thee, and (together with prayer) bring thee towards the New Birth, whither except a man come, he cannot possibly see the kingdom of God.

Thus far of the New Birth: you see we have mounted those steps, whose top, like Jacob's ladder, *reacheth up to heaven,* Gen. xxviii. 12. witness the next word, *He that is born again shall see the kingdom of God,* but he that is not born again, *he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

He cannot see the kingdom of God.

THE privileges of the New Birth are these two, *to see*] and *to see the kingdom of God.*

First, *to see.*] Which is all one (saith a

modern *) as to enjoy: yet a man may see that which he doth not enjoy; but without regeneration there is no sight, much less possession of the kingdom of God.

To see then is the lesser happiness, of which the unregenerate are debarred; but to see, in itself is a great and gracious privilege, † to which the regenerate are admitted: for, whither by God's kingdom be meant the kingdom of grace, or the kingdom of glory, *Happy are the eyes that see these things.*

But whose eyes are they? if we examine the unregenerate, he sees no whit into the awful majesty of God the Father, he sees no whit of the beauty, mercy and pity of his Saviour, he sees no whit into that glorious highness of God's Spirit in heaven, nor yet of his highness to his brethren on earth: hence it is, that when he comes among the congregation of God's saints, his soul is not delighted with their prayers, praises, psalms, and service; he sees no comfort, no pleasure, no content in their actions. But the new man is of better sight, the graces of the Spirit, and the ‡ ward-robe of God's glory are all produced to his eye, as if the Lord should say, *Venite & videte, 'Come and see:'* so Moses, *Stand still and see the salvation of God* §; so Christ to his apostles, *It is given to your eyes to see these things, to others but by parables.* He that is born again hath a spiritual eye, and a celebrated object; *The eye of his understanding is enlightened*, saith Paul; *anointed*, saith John **, *To what end?* But that he may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his in-

heritance is in the saints, Eph. i. 18. See a privilege, of which the unregenerate is ever barred, his mind is dark, even *darkness itself*, Eph. v. 8. And therefore it is no wonder, what is said by our Saviour, that *he cannot, cannot see the kingdom of God.*

The Second privilege is the object of this sight, here called the kingdom of God. By which some understand heaven; some the way to heaven; most of the ancients say, that by this kingdom is meant heaven: Calvin is of mind, that 'not heaven, but a spiritual life is thereby understood ††.' Arctius saith (and I am of his mind) that whether we understand the one or the other, *parum refert* ††, it matters not much; sure we are, that both these, grace and glory, are annexed to the New Birth, and both very well may be implied in the word, *the kingdom of God.*

First then, if by the *kingdom of God*, is meant the kingdom of grace whereof our Saviour speaketh, *The kingdom of God is within you*, Luke xvii. 21. see to what a privilege the new man hath attained, all the graces of God, all the fruits of the Spirit are now poured into him? If you ask, what graces? what fruits? Paul tells you, Gal. v. 22. *Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;* or, would you have us to contract them? Paul doth it elsewhere, *The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xiv. 17.

1. Righteousness, and that is either active, or passive; holiness of life, or the cause of this holiness, our righteousness

* Arctius.

† One reason, perhaps, why the scripture chuseth to set forth the enjoyment of the heavenly happiness, by that of seeing, may be this, because sight is of all the other senses the most capacious and finest; and therefore most fit to shadow forth the enjoyment of a happiness so extensive and certain as that of heaven is.

‡ And the ward-robe of God's glory is produced to his eye.] The meaning is, That God's glory, which was formerly concealed from his view, is now, in some measure, manifested to him.—The reader will do well to separate, in his own mind, all low notions from the word [ward-robe] in the text, when he applies it to any thing relating to God; of whom we can never think highly and honourably enough.

§ Exod. xiv. 13. ** Rev. iii. 18. †† Calvin on the place. †† Arctius on the place.

in Christ : If the first be meant, no sooner is man born again, but he enters into the holy path, he declines all evil, and stands at the sword-point with his most beloved sin ; or : if ever any sin through the violence of temptation seize on him again, he is presently put again into the pangs of the new birth, and so renewing his sorrow, and repairing repentance, he becomes more resolute and watchful over all his ways : and as he abhors evil, so he *cleaves to that which is good*, Rom. xii. 9. his faith, like the sun, sets all those heavenly stars on shining, as hope, and love, and zeal, and humility, and patience ; in a word, universal obedience, and fruitfulness in all good works. Not one, but all good duties of the first and second table begin to be natural and familiar to him : and though he find some duties more difficult ; yet he resolveth, and striveth to do what he can, and is much displeas'd and griev'd, if he do not as he should.—Or if by righteousness is meant passive righteousness, to wit, *our righteousness in Christ*, 1 Cor. i. 30. no sooner is a man born again, but he is clothed with this righteousness ; the other, God knows, is but weak, and full of imperfection, and therefore, to speak properly, *It is the righteousness in God that makes us appear righteous before God** : would you have a plain case ? As Jacob, to procure the blessing of his father, hid himself into the apparel of his brother, and so received it to his own commodity under the person of another † : thus the new man puts on the righteousness of Christ, with which being clad as with a garment, God accepts him in his stead, [*not indeed by mistake, as Isaac took his son Jacob for Esau,*] his faults being covered with his Saviour's perfection.

2. From this righteousness ariseth peace :

no sooner is man righteous, but he is at peace with man, at peace with God, at peace with himself. He is at *peace with man*; *the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard with the kid*, saith the prophet, *Isa. xi. 6*. The meaning is, that in the kingdom of Christ, when a man is called into the state of grace (howsoever by nature he is as a wolf, or a leopard, or a lion, or a bear, yet) he shall then lay aside his cruelty, and live peaceably with all men ; with all men. I say bad and good ; for if bad, the apostle implies them, *As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men*, Rom. xii. 18. Or if good, then he cannot but have peace with them ; yea, although before his conversion he hated and malign'd them, yet now he is ravish'd with the delight and love of them, and to this end he labours might and main to ingratiate himself into their blessed communion ; true, how should he but love them, and sympathize with them, whom he believes one day to meet in heaven, and there to enjoy them, and they him for ever ? Nor is this all, he is at *peace with God* ; he hath humbled himself, and confessed his fault, and cried for mercy, and cast himself upon Christ, and vow'd amendment of life : so that now God by his word hath spoken peace to his soul ; by the mediation of Christ it is obtained, and by the testimony of the Spirit he feels it within him. This is that peace which passeth all understanding : it made the angels sing, *peace upon earth* ; it makes his soul reply, *My peace is in heaven* : what else ? the storm is past, and *the rain is gone away*, he that lay for a night in the darkness of sorrow, and weeping for his sins, now he beholds *the sun of righteousness appear* (as the disciples often did upon the mount of Olives, signifying peace) all quiet and calm, and pleasant. Nor is this

* *Extra nos est justitia, non in nobis* : i. e. 'A righteousness without us, not in us.' *Luther's Christian institut.*

† Gen. xxvii. 15, &c.

all; he is at peace with himself, I mean his own conscience: that which before stirred up the fire, that brought him to a sight of sin, and sense of divine wrath, that filled him with fearful terrors, compunction, remorse, and true sorrow for sin, it is now turned good and quiet. Solomon calls it a *continual feast*, Prov. xv. 15. Who are the attendants, but the holy angels? What is the cheer, but joy in the *holy Ghost*? Who is the feast-maker, but God himself, and his good Spirit dwelling in him? Nor is this feast without musick; God's word and his actions make a blessed harmony, he endeavours to continue it by keeping peace and a good conscience towards God and man.

3. From this *peace* issues *joy in the holy Ghost*; no sooner is a man at *peace* with man, with God, with himself, but he is filled with joy that no man can take from him: this joy I take to be those blessed stirrings of the heart, when the seal of remission of sins is first set unto the soul by the *spirit of adoption*. For thus it is, the soul having newly passed the pangs of the *new birth*, it is presently bathed in the blood of Christ, lulled in the bosom of God's mercies, secured by the spirit of its inheritance above; and so ordinarily follows a sea of comfort, a sensible taste of everlasting pleasure, as if the man had already one foot in heaven. But I hear some object, *They have felt the pangs, cast themselves on Christ, resolved against all sin, and yet no comfort comes*. It may be so, though not ordinarily: certain it is, whosoever hath this joy, is new born; yet not every one new born hath this joy; if any then be in such case, let him hear what the Spirit of truth saith, *Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him*, Isa. lxiv. 4. 'Waiting patiently (*saith a modern*) for the Lord's coming to comfort us, either

in temporal or spiritual distresses, is a right, pleasing and acceptable duty and service unto God, which he is wont to crown with multiplied and overflowing refreshings when he comes.' To this end saith the prophet, *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint*, Isa. xl. 31. 'Nay, and should a man die' (saith my author) 'in this state of waiting, if his heart in the mean time sincerely hate all sin, heartily thirst for the mercy of God in Christ, and resolve truly upon new universal obedience for the time to come, he shall certainly be saved; because the Holy Ghost saith, *Blessed are all they that wait for him*, Isa. xxx. 18.' Or if this will not satisfy his desire, let his desire quicken and set on work (with extraordinary fervency) the spirit of prayer, let him have recourse again and again to the promises of scripture towards the poor, heavy-laden, penitent souls; and when the time is come (if it will come) which God hath appointed, then shall he feel this joy unspeakable, *the joy of the holy Ghost*; and this is the head, the height, the top, the highest step in this kingdom of grace, *the kingdom of God*.

Or, Secondly, If by *the kingdom of God*, is meant the Kingdom of Glory, see then what a privilege waits on the *new man*: no sooner shall his breath and body be divorced, but his soul, mounted on the wings of angels, shall straight be carried above the starry firmament; there shall it inherit *the kingdom*, Luke xii. 32. *an heavenly kingdom*, Matth. vii. 21. *the kingdom of God*, Acts xiv. 22. and truly called so, for it is a kingdom of God's own making, beautifying and blessing; a kingdom befitting the glorious residence of the King of kings; a kingdom creating all kings that but inhabit in it. But here my discourse must give way to your meditations: I cannot speak this privilege, therefore

conclude with Austin, *Anima quae amat, ascendat frequenter, & currat per plateas coelestis Jerusalem, &c.* 'Mount your meditations on the wings of faith, and behold in heaven those states of wonder, patriarchs shining, prophets praising, saints admiring, hands clapping, harps warbling, hearts dancing; the exercise, a song; the ditty, allelujah; the quiriters, saints; the comforts, angels;' &c. In this fountain of pleasure, let the New born Christian bathe his soul, for his it is, and he it is only that shall see it, enjoy it; *Except the man be born again,* no man shall ever see the kingdom of God. See more of this in my *Last Things*.

Thus far of the privileges of the New Birth; there waits on it the Eye of Faith, and Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost; in a word, the Kingdom of grace, and the Kingdom of Glory.

Use. And now, beloved, say, what would you do to obtain these privileges? should any hand reach you a crown for the pains to take it? should any but cast at your feet a bag of gold, and you might make it your own for the stooping, would you not for so great a reward do so little a service? and what is God's service but perfect freedom? *the yoke is easy, the burden is light,* Mat. xi. 30. but the reward is grace, glory, endless felicity. Bestir then yourselves, and if ever you mean to see the Kingdom of God, endeavour to

run through this new Birth, and to lead a better life than heretofore you have done. Only remember, Thus whilst the minister speaks, Christ comes with power, and therefore he speaks and persuades. I conclude with my speech to thee (whosoever thou art) into whose hands this book is fallen: the truth is, the work is weak, and answerable in that kind to the author of it; many and many a stitch in my side, many a pull at my heart, many a grip at my stomach, besides the pangs of my soul (endeavouring to practise what I have writ) have I suffered and felt since I first begun it; and yet the comfort I received in this one necessary thing, hath made me (contrary to the desire of my best friends) to run through this short work, by taking a longer time as my continual disease would now and then suffer me. If, when I am gone, thou reapest any spiritual good by this my surviving pains, it is, next to God's glory, all my desire. Yet I live; but, to save thy soul, I care not how soon I might die; yea, on that condition I could be willing (if God so pleased) the lines that thou readest were writ with the warmest blood in my heart: willing, said I? yea, I could be willing and glad (as little blood as I have in my body) to let it run and run, for thy spiritual good, to the very last drop in my veins. I say no more; consider what I have said, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

A N

A P P E N D I X,

C O N T A I N I N G

A more particular Method, for the Man not yet born again, to have his Part in the Second Birth.

C H A P. I.

The occasion, and method of this treatise.

SOME there are, who hearing the New Birth (or first repentance) to be so necessary to salvation, but never feeling in themselves any such change or conversion, have therefore desired further helps, though naturally they are blind, and wretched, and miserable, and poor, and naked; yet the Lord hath not left them without means and helps: to this purpose he hath set up his ordinances; not that man of himself can dispose himself unto grace, but that the spirit of Christ in the use of the ordinances without any habitual or sanctifying grace in man's heart, can dispose of man to the reception of habitual or sanctifying grace. True it is, I advised them in the former treatise to be frequent in prayer, and hearing the word: but so we have done, say they, and yet we feel no conversion. It may be so: for, not always the doing of them, but perseverance in them through Christ, obtains the blessing desired. And yet, if they will out of hand settle themselves to the work (seeing it is the Lord that saith, *Break up the fallow grounds*, Jer. iv. 3. i. e. ' Seek to the Lord to break

them for thee: be in the use of means, that the Lord may come in and break thy heart') I shall, for their further satisfaction, give them a more particular method, and, without a text taken, take myself more liberty to put them in the way.

Two things I suppose necessary for them that would have part in the New Birth.

I. To get into it.

II. To be delivered of it.

I. The means to get into it, is,

1. Examination of themselves.

2. Confession of their sins.

3. Hearty prayer for the softening of their hearts.

By which three are obtained the three first Steps, Sight of sin; Sense of Divine wrath; Sorrow for sin.

II. The means to be delivered of it, is by application of the promises, and these, according to their several objects, produce their several effects;

Some a sight of Christ.

Some a desire after Christ.

Some a relying on Christ.

Some an obedience to Christ.

Some a comfort in Christ, not only sought for, but obtained, if the promises be rightly applied.

C H A P.

CHAP. II. SECT. I.

The First means to get into the New Birth.

THE means to get into the New Birth, is, first, Examination; and the way to examine, is to set before men that crystal glass of the law for their light and rule: to this purpose, I have here annexed a Catalogue, or table, to shew them their offences; not that I can possibly enumerate all sins, but only the kinds, and, if herein I come short, yet consciences awakened may be occasioned hereby to bring into their thoughts those others not mentioned.

Now then, whosoever thou art that beginnest this blessed work, examine thyself by this catalogue, but do it warily, and truly; and where thou findest thyself guilty, either note it in this book, or transcribe it into some paper, that so they may be ready for thine eye when thou comest to Confession.

S E C T. II.

Sins against the first Commandment.

IN every commandment we must observe both the duties required, and the sins forbidden, for both these are implied in every one of the commandments; if in the first thou art guilty, thou must answer negatively; if in the second, thou must answer affirmatively: now then to proceed.

It is the first commandment, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me.*

For the duties here required.

Say, 1. Hast thou ever in mind, will, and affections took the true God in Christ to be thy God? 2. Hast thou abounded in those graces by which thou shouldst cleave unto God, as in the warmth of knowledge and love, and fear, and joy, and trusting

in God? 3. Hast thou observed God's mercies, and promises, and works, and judgments upon thee, and by a particular application took special notice thereof? 4. Hast thou communicated with the godly? and joined thyself to God's people, and delighted chiefly in them?

Or, for the sins here forbidden.

Say, 1. Hast thou not sometimes been guilty of blasphemy, or idolatry, or witchcraft, or atheism, or epicurism, or heresy? 2. Hast thou not been guilty of pride, a sin flatly opposing God, and first committed by devils? 3. Hast thou not had inward reasonings that there is no God *, or that he seeth not, or knoweth not †, or that there is no profit in his service ‡? 4. Hast thou not failed to love God, and fear God, and put thy whole trust in God? 5. Hast thou not trusted in man §, or feared man, or loved the world; and thereby alienated thy heart from God? 6. Hast thou not resorted to witches, or in the first place to physicians, and not to the living God? 7. Hast thou not tempted God, and, in the matters of God, been either cold or lukewarm, or preposterously zealous? 8. Hast thou not a proneness to sin, yea, to rebel against God in thy whole man? 9. Hast thou not been careless to perform the inward duties of God's worship in sincerity and truth? If in these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment, *Thou shalt have no gods but me.*

S E C T. III.

Sins against the second commandment.

IT is the second commandment, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image.*

For the duties here required.

Say, 1. Hast thou ever worshipped the true God purely, according to his will?

* Psa. xiv. 1.

† Isa. xxix. 15.

‡ Job xxi. 14.

§ Jer. xvii. 5.

2. Hast thou observed all those outward duties of his worship, as prayer, and vows, and fasting, and meditating, and the rest?

3. Hast thou repaired to God's house, observed family-duties, received the preachers of the gospel?

Or, for the sins here forbidden.

Say, 1. Hast thou not sometimes walked after the imaginations of thy own heart*, serving God out of custom, or (after the manner of thy fore-fathers) by will-worship, and superstitions? 2. Hast thou not committed idol-worship, conceiving of God in thy mind, or respecting him in thy sense, in the likeness of a creature? 3. Hast thou not mentioned the names of other gods †, either by way of swearing, or apology? 4. Hast thou not made an image to liken God to it ‡, or used any gesture of love and reverence to any such image? 5. Hast thou not been careless to worship God ††, to call upon the Lord †† to receive God's ministers †††, or to perform any of the outward duties of God's worship? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image.*

SECT. IV.

Sins against the third commandment.

IT is the third commandment, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*

For the duties here required.

Say, 1. Hast thou been ever a constant learner, hearer, and doer of God's word and will? 2. Hast thou prayed with perseverance, understanding, and power of the Spirit, without doubting, or wavering? 3. Hast thou come preparedly to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and being come, hast thou discerned the Lord's body? 4. Hast

thou used all the titles, and properties, and works, and ordinances of the Lord with knowledge, faith, reverence, joy, and sincerity?

Or, for the sins here forbidden.

Say, 1. Hast thou not sometimes in thy talk dishonoured the titles, attributes, religion, word, people of God, or any thing that hath in it the print of his holiness? 2. Hast thou not sworn, or forsworn, or loved false oaths? 3. Hast thou not caused the name of religion, or people of God to be evil thought of by thy ill course of life, or by committing some gross sin? 4. Hast thou not rashly, or unpreparedly, or heedlessly read the word, heard sermons, received the sacraments, or performed any other part of the worship of God? 5. Hast thou not thought or spoken blasphemously, or contemptuously of God, or of any thing whatsoever pertaining to God? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*

SECT. V.

Sins against the fourth commandment.

IT is the fourth commandment, *Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath-day.*

For the duties here required.

Say, First, hast thou, according to the equity of this commandment, ever observed the Lord's day, and other days and times set apart for God's service? Secondly, Hast thou on those days rested from the servile works of sin, and rested and relied upon Christ for the remission of sins, and led an holy and religious life, that so thou mayest enter into that rest of heaven? Heb. iv. 11. Thirdly, Hast thou always prepared thy heart, before thou wentest into the house of the Lord, by meditation

* Jer. ix. 14.

†† Hag. xiv. 3.

† Exod. xxiii. 13.

†† Matth. x. 14.

‡ Isa. xl. 18.

*† Zech. xiv. 17.

of God's word and works, by examination and reformation of thy ways, by prayer, thanksgiving, and holy resolution to carry thyself as in God's presence, and to hear and obey whatsoever thou shouldst learn out of the pure word of God? Fourthly, Hast thou repaired to God's house in due time, and stayed the whole time of prayer, reading, preaching of the word, singing of Psalms, receiving of the sacraments? Fifthly, Hast thou performed private religious offices upon the Lord's day, to wit, in private prayer and thanksgiving, in acknowledging thy offences to God, in reconciling thyself to those thou hast offended, or with whom thou art at variance; in visiting the sick, comforting the afflicted, contributing to the necessity of the poor, instructing thy children and servants, and the rest of thy family, in the fear and nurture of the Lord?

Or for the sins here forbidden.

Say, First, Hast thou not sometimes spent the Lord's day in idleness, or in worldly business, in vanities or in sin? Secondly, Hast thou not omitted public duties, or camest in too late, or wentest out too soon? Ezek. xlvi. 10. Thirdly, Hast thou not in those days *sold wares, carried burdens, brought in sheaves, or wrought in the harvest?* Neh. x. 31. and ch. xiii. 15. Fourthly, Hast thou not employed thy cattle, or servants, or children, or any other, though thou workedst not thyself? Fifthly, Hast thou not profaned the Lord's day, by needless works, words or thoughts about thy calling, or about thy recreation? Sixthly, Hast not the strict observance of the duties of that day been tedious unto thee, saying in thine heart, *When will the day be gone?* Amos viii. 5. If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment, *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.*

S E C T. VI.

Sins against the fifth commandment.

IT is the fifth commandment, *Honour thy father and thy mother.*

For the duties here required, they are either in the Family, Common-weal, or Church.

First, For the family: say, if thou art an husband; 1. Hast thou ever *loved thy wife, and dwelt with her according to knowlege, giving honour to her as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers were not hindered?* Eph. v. 25. 1 Pet. iii. 7. If thou art a wife: 2. *Hast thou submitted to thine own husband, as unto the Lord, in every thing?* Eph. v. 22, 24. 3. *Hast thou put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price?* 1 Pet. iii. 4. If thou art a parent: 4. *Hast thou brought up thy children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?* Eph. vi. 4. 5. *Hast thou corrected them, yet not provoked them by immoderate correction?* 6. *Hast thou provided for them in their callings, or outward estates?* 1 Tim. v. 8. If thou art a child: 7. *Hast thou obeyed thy parents, and received correction with submission and reverence?* Rom. i. 30. 8. *Hast thou relieved them in their wants?* Heb. xii. 9. 9. *Hast thou observed their instructions, and covered their infirmities?* Prov. xv. 15. Gen. ix. 22. If thou art a master: 10. *Hast thou entertained God's servants, Gen. xix. 2, 3, and given unto thy servant that which is just and equal?* Col. iv. 1. If thou art a servant: 11. *Hast thou been obedient to thy master according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ? Not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity?* Tit. ii. 9, 10.

Secondly, For the common-weal; if thou art a magistrate: 12. Hast thou executed just laws? 13. Hast thou reformed others

others abuses, according to the power that is in thee? If thou art a subject: 14. Hast thou obeyed the higher powers in all just commands? 15. Hast thou been *subject unto them, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake?* Rom. xiii. 5.

Thirdly, For the church; if thou art a minister: 16. Hast thou *taught in season, and out of season?* 17. Hast *thy light shined before men, that they might see thy good works,* Mat. v. 16. If thou art an hearer: 18. Hast thou *communicated to them that teach thee in all good things?* Gal. vi. 6. 19. Hast thou *obeyed them, and prayed for them, and loved them, and followed them, considering the end of their conversation,* Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 18.

Or for the sins here forbidden.

And first, For the family: say, if thou art an husband: 1. Hast thou not sometimes abused thy wife, Prov. xxi. 19. or smitten her, or injured her in thought, word or deed? If thou art a wife: 2. Hast thou not been wasteful, or froward or idle? If thou art a parent: 3. Hast thou not been careless, especially of thy childrens souls? If thou art a child: 4. Hast thou not *despised thy father's, or mother's instructions?* Prov. xv. 5. 5. Hast thou not *mocked them, or despised them, or cursed them, or smitten them, or shamed them, or grieved them?* Pro. xxx. 17. and ch. xx. 20. If thou art a master: 6. Hast thou not governed thy family negligently? 7. Hast thou not withheld that which is just and equal in diet, wages, encouragement? If thou art a servant: 8. Hast thou not been idle, and slothful? 9. Hast thou not served grudgingly, and not from the heart.

Secondly, For the common-weal: if thou art a magistrate: 10. Hast thou not been *as a lion or a bear, roaring and ranging over the poor people?* Pro. xxviii. 15. 11. Hast thou not *decreed unrighteous decrees? respecting the persons of the poor, or honouring the persons of the mighty?* Isa. x. 1. Lev. xix. 15. If thou art

a subject: 12. Hast thou not *reviled the gods, or cursed the ruler of thy people?* Exod. xxii. 28. 13. Hast thou not *disobeyed the higher powers; or not denied tribute, or custom, or honour, or fear to whom they are due?* Rom. xiii. 1 and 7.

Thirdly, For the church; if thou art a minister: 14. Hast thou not been *profane and wicked in thy life and conversation?* 15. Hast thou *not run before thou wast sent?* Jer. xxiii. 21. or being sent, hast thou not been *negligent in the gift that is in thee?* 1 Tim. iv. 14. 16. Hast thou not *propheesied in Baal, and caused God's people to err?* Jer. xxiii. 13. 17. Hast thou not committed simony, or sought indirectly for the fleece, not regarding respectively the flock? 18. Hast thou not strengthened *the hands of evil doers, in preaching peace to wicked men?* Jer. xxiii. 14. 19. Hast thou not *given heed to fables, or to some unprofitable matter, rather than to a godly edifying, which is in faith?* 1 Tim. i. 4. If thou art an hearer: 20. Hast thou not resisted the minister, and the word preached by him? Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 18. Whatsoever thou art, *husband, or wife, or parent, or child, or master, or servant, or magistrate, or subject, or minister, or hearer* (if in any of these thou hast transgressed) then hast thou broke this commandment, *Honour thy father and thy mother.*

S E C T. VII.

Sins against the sixth commandment.

IT is the sixth commandment, *Thou shalt do no murther.*

For the duties here required.

Say: hast thou ever desired and studied by all means lawful, to preserve thine own person and the person of thy neighbour?

Or for the sins here forbidden.

Say: 1. Hast thou not sometimes envied others for their wealth, or for their gifts, or for their respects with others? Gen. xxvi. 14. Num. xi. 29. Gen. xxxvii.

11. 2. Hast thou not offended others in gestures, gnashing on them with thy teeth, or sharpening thine eyes on them? Job. xvi. 9. 3. Hast thou not offended others in words, by censuring, or reviling, or rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing? 1 Pet. iii. 9. 4. Hast thou not offended others in deeds, plotting against the just, Psal. xxxvii. 12. or doing evil to any man? 5. Hast thou not been angry with thy brother without cause, Matth. v. 22. or continued long in anger, keeping thy wrath (as it were) for ever? Amos i. 11. 6. Hast thou not rejoiced at others fall, or wished a curse to their souls? Pro. xxiv. 17. Job xxxi. 30. 7. Hast thou not done evil to thyself, by inordinate fretting, or grieving, or drinking, or surfeiting, or saying in thy passions, *Would God I were dead?* Numb. xiv. 2. 8. Hast thou not been a sower of discord, Prov. vi. 14. or some way or other, a just occasion of the discomfort, or of the death of thy neighbour? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, thou hast then broken this commandment, *Thou shalt do no murder.*

S E C T. VIII.

Sins against the seventh commandment.

IT is the seventh commandment, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

For the duties here required.

Say: Hast thou ever kept thyself pure in soul and body, both towards thyself and others?

Or for the sins here forbidden.

Say: 1. Hast thou not sometimes been defiled with buggery, sodomy, incest, whoredom, adultery, polygamy, self-pollution, or with changing the natural use into that which is against nature? 2. Hast thou not offended in the occasions of uncleanness, as in idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, wanton company, whorish attire, or perfumes? 3. Hast thou not sinned in thy senses, or gestures, or words, by filthy communication proceeding out of

thy mouth? 4. Hast thou not harboured in thy heart burning lusts, impure thoughts, inordinate affections? 5. Hast thou not behaved thyself immodestly, unsoberly, or shamelessly abusing thy body, or using some manner of dalliance and wantonness? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* See Rom. i. 26. Prov. vii. 16, 17. Col. iii. 8. Matth. v. 28. Col. iii. 5.

S E C T. IX.

Sins against the eighth commandment.

IT is the eighth commandment, *Thou shalt not steal.*

For the duties here required.

Say: Hast thou ever, by all good means, furthered the outward estate of thyself, and of thy neighbour?

Or for the sins here forbidden.

Say: First, Hast thou not sometimes got thy living by an unlawful calling? 2. Hast thou not impoverished thyself by idleness, luxurious or unnecessary expences? 3. Hast thou not withheld from thyself or others, that which should have been expended? 4. Hast thou not gotten, or kept thy neighbour's goods by falsehood or force, and made no restitution? 5. Hast thou not stolen by usury, or oppression, or fraud in buying or selling? An abomination unto the Lord? 6. Hast thou not robbed God of his tithes and offerings by sacrilege or simony? 7. Hast thou not some way or other impaired thy neighbour's state? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment, *Thou shalt not steal.* See Deut. xxv. 16. Mal. iii. 8.

S E C T. X.

Sins against the ninth commandment.

IT is the ninth commandment, *Thou shalt not bear false witness.*

For the duties here required.

Say, Hast thou ever by all means sought to

to maintain thy own and thy neighbour's good name, according to truth and a good conscience?

Or for the sins here forbidden.

Say, 1. Hast thou not sometimes loved, or made a lie? 2. Hast thou not raised a false report, to the defaming of many? 3. Hast thou not censured or judged others, yet never considered the beam that is in thine own eye? 4. Hast thou not flattered thyself and others, saying unto the wicked, *Thou art righteous*? 5. Hast thou not condemned some without witness, or forbore to witness for others when thou knewest the truth? 6. Hast thou not been uncharitably suspicious, or a despiser of thy neighbour? 7. Hast thou not told a lie, whether jestingly or officiously, or pertinaciously? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broke this commandment, *Thou shalt not bear false witness*, Rev. xxii. 15. Jer. xx. 10. Mat. vii. 3. Prov. xxiv. 24.

S E C T. XI.

Sins against the last commandment.

IT is the last commandment, *Thou shalt not covet*.

For the duties here required.

Say: 1. Hast thou ever been truly contented with thy own outward condition? 2. Hast thou rejoiced at others good, and loved thy neighbour as thyself? Mat. xix. 19.

Or for the sins here forbidden.

Say: 1. Hast thou not sometimes conceived evil thoughts in thy heart? Mat. xv. 19. 2. Hast thou not delighted in the inward contemplations of evil? 3. Hast thou not been full of discontent with thy own condition and state? 4. Hast thou not felt another law of thy members warring against the law of thy mind? Rom. vii. 23. 5. Hast thou not coveted after something or other that was thy neighbour's, either with will, or by actual concupiscence? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broke

this commandment, *Thou shalt not covet*.

C H A P. III.

The second means to get into the new birth.

After Examination, which may well serve thee for one day's work or two, the next duty is Confession. Now then take the catalogue of those sins, or if thy awakened conscience can tell thee of any other, which thou knowest thou hast committed, and noted, either in this book, or in some other paper; and kneeling on thy knees, spread thy catalogue before the Lord; I say, spread thy catalogue before the Lord, as Hezekiah did his letter, 2 Kings xix. 14. There read thou seriously and particularly, saying, 'O Lord, I confess I have committed this sin, and the other sin, as they are before thee in order, of all these sins I am guilty, especially of those sins wherein I delighted, my darlings, my minions, my bosom sins' (take notice of them, and confess them again) 'of all these sins I am guilty; and now, O Lord, standing, as it were, at the bar of thy tribunal, I arraign myself, and accuse myself, and judge myself worthy of the utmost of thy wrath and indignation; for one sin thou castedst Adam out of paradise; for one sin thou castedst the angels out of heaven, for one sin thou destroyedst a world of men; and what then shall become of me, that have committed a world of sins?'— [Here pause a while, and meditate on thy unworthiness] 'O that I should be so foolish, so brutish, so mad to commit these sins, these manifold sins! O that by these sins I should break so holy a law, provoke so good and great a majesty! what shall I do, but remembering my evils ways, even loath myself in my own sight, yea abhor myself in dust and ashes, for my iniquities, and my abominations? Ezek. xxxvi. 31.' For conclusion; thou mayst imitate the publican, who not daring to lift up his eyes, smote his breast: so do thou, and sigh, and say

say with him, *O God, be merciful to me a sinner*, Luke xviii. 13.

CHAP. IV. SECT. I.

The third means to get into the New Birth.

AFTER Confession, which may well serve thee for another day's work, the next duty thou must labour for, is to seek for true sorrow and mourning for thy sins: seek thou must, and never leave seeking, till thou feel thy heart melt within thee. To this purpose read some tracts of death*, of judgment †, of hell **, of Christ's passion ††, of the joys of heaven. †† Last of all (and I take it best of all) resolve to set every day some time apart to beg it of the Lord: When Daniel set himself to pray, the Lord came in to him, Dan. ix. 3. When Peter had gone apart to pray; and when Paul had prayed in the temple, then the Lord came into them, Acts x. 6. and xxii. 17. And why may not I bid thee pray, as well as Peter bid Simon Magus, yet being in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity? Acts viii. 22, 23. Resolve then, and at the time appointed fall down on thy knees, spread thy catalogue, confess, accuse, judge, condemn thyself again; which done, beg, beg of the Lord to give thee that soft heart he promised, Ezek. xxxvi. § *A new heart will I give you, and a new*

spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. Say then to thyself, 'Is this the Lord's promise? O Lord, perform it to my heart; take away my stony heart, give me an heart of flesh, a new heart, a new spirit, etc.' [Here make thine own prayer, be not careful of words, only let the words be the true voice of thy heart:] and the more to work softening thou mayest sob, and sigh, and beat thy breast (a), above all thou must pray, and call, and cry with vehemency and fervency not to be uttered (b). When thou hast done, if the Lord do not yet hear thee, pray again the next day, and the next day, yea put on this resolution, that thou wilt never leave praying till the Lord hear thee in mercy, till he make thee to feel thy heart melt within thee, yea, if it may be, till thou feelest thy *† *Tears trickling down thy cheeks*, because of thy offences. The Lord will perhaps hear thee at the first time, or at the second time; or if he do not, be not discouraged, God hath his times; Moses smote the rock at Horeb twice before it would yield, Numb. xx. 11. and at last it sent out abundant streams of living waters; God speaketh once and twice, and man perceiveth not; happy he who relenteth at last: give it not over, persist thou, thy suit is

§ As, Sherlock on death.

† Sherlock on judgment.

** Our Author himself on hell's horror.

†† The gospels.

‡‡ Dr. Scot's Christian life. vol. i. and our Author himself on this, as well as the other subjects.

§ The promises of Jeremiah, xxxi. 37. Heb. viii. 10. Hos. ii. 23. and xiv. 4. Isa. lxx. 4. are absolute promises which are made not only to them that are for the present his people, but to them which for the present are not: which 1. Raise up the soul of an helpless sinner to some hope at least of mercy and help from the Lord. And 2. They serve to create, and draw out faith in Jesus Christ in the promises: it is observed, that no conditional promise firstly begins faith; for he that is under a condition, is presupposed to have faith; in the first place therefore look on the absolute promises, Ezek. xxxvi. 29.

(a) This direction is not to be understood in the literal sense.—Our Author doth not advise any one to sigh, sob, or beat his breast, in order to produce inward sorrow;—which, though it were produced by that means, would little avail any one. It is more reasonable to suppose, he meant only to say, that inward sorrow, wrought in the mind by a sense of sin, would shew forth itself in these expressive signs, viz. sighing, sobbing, and beating of the breast. As we see in the instance of the Publican, *confessing his sins*, Luke xviii. 13.

(b) The same is to be understood of this other direction.

*† *Ut hoc modo confri gas capita draconum tuorum in aquis.*

just, and impotency will prevail; yea I can say, Thy desire to sorrow being resolute, it is a degree of godly sorrow itself, and no doubt the Lord will encrease it, if thou bessest hard a while.

S E C T. II.

The first reason for this sorrow.

THIS must be done; First, because without pangs no birth: the pangs of a penitent man, *are as the pangs of a woman* †. Now as there can be no birth without pains of travail going before, so neither true repentance without some terrors of the law, and straits of conscience. *We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear*, saith the apostle to the Romans, ch. viii. 15. And what is that? but to shew us, they once did receive it; when? but in the very first preparation to conversion: then it was that the Spirit of God in the law did so bear witness unto them of their bondage, that it made them to fear. And certainly thus it is with every man in his first conversion, his contrition must be compungent, and vehement, bruising, breaking, renting the heart, and feeling the throws, as a woman labouring of child, before there can be a new birth, or the new creature be brought forth.

S E C T. III.

The second reason for this sorrow.

Again, Without contrition no Christ; therefore it was that God first opened the eyes of our first parents to make them see and be sensible of their sin and misery, Gen. v. 7. before he promised Christ, ver. 15. 'Therefore it was that John Baptist' (saith Chryostom, in ch. 3. Mat. hom. 11.) 'first thoroughly frightened the minds of his hearers with the terror of judgment, and expectation of torment,

and with the name of an ax, and their rejection, and entertainment of other children, and by doubling the punishment, to wit, of being hewn down, and cast into the fire; and when he had thus every way tamed, and taken down their stubbornness, then at length he makes mention of Christ.' 'Why then is Christ seasonably revealed' (saith Musculus ‡) 'when the hearts of men being soundly pierced by preaching repentance, are possessed with a desire of his gracious righteousness.' Or if you will hear Calvin, †* 'To whom is Christ promised, but to them alone, who are humbled and confounded with the sense of their own sins?' Certainly the first thing that draws to Christ, is to consider our miserable estate without him; no man will come unto Christ except he be hungry; no man will take Christ's yoke upon him, till he come to know and feel the weight of Satan's yoke; to this end therefore must every man be broken with threats, and scourges, and lashes of conscience, that so despairing of himself, he may flee unto Christ.

S E C T. IV.

The third reason for this sorrow.

Again, Without hearty sorrow, no spiritual comfort. We must first be *humbled before the Lord*, and then he will lift us up, James iv. 10. Christ indeed was appointed to preach good tidings, but to whom? *To the poor, to the broken-hearted, to the captives, to them that are bound, to the bruised*, Isa. lxi. 1. God pours not the oil of his mercy save into a broken vessel; God never comforts thoroughly, save where he finds humiliation and repentance for sin. 'The word of God (*siithone**) hath three degrees of operation in the hearts of his chosen: first, It falleth to men's ears as

* What else (saith Austin) are the pangs of the penitent, but the pangs of a woman in travail? Aug. on Psal. xlviii. † *Mis. on Matt.* ch. iii. *Secl. Time accedit Jesus.* i. c. Then cometh Jesus, &c. †* Calvin on Isa. lxi.

* Forbes on Revel. ch. iv.

C H A P. V. S E C T. I.

The means to be delivered out of the pangs of the New Birth.

AND now, if by God's blessing, thou feelest this sorrow and melting of heart, the next thing thou must do, is to seek for the remedy; which remedy consists of these ingredients: 1. A sight of Christ. 2. A desire after Christ. 3. A relying on Christ. 4. An obedience to Christ. 5. A comfort in Christ sought for and obtained. Thou wilt say, These ingredients are pearls indeed, but how should I obtain them? I answer, By application of the promises; and sith every ingredient hath its particular promises, I shall let thee see them in order, only do thou apply them thyself; it is enough for the physician to prepare the medicine, thy own body must receive it: so in this medicine it is, thou must apply it if thou wilt have soul's health. Some may object, I dare not look to the promise, I cannot believe; if I could believe, then I could expect good from the promise. I answer, Thou shalt never believe upon these terms, thou must not first have faith, then go to the promise, but thou must first go to the promise, and from thence receive power to believe: *The dead* (saith Christ) *shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it shall live*, John v. 25. It is spoken of the dead in sin; first, there is the voice of Christ to the soul, before there can be again an echo of the soul to Christ; the Lord saith, Come soul, and the soul saith, I come Lord: O then go to the promise, and expect faith from thence; this is the rule, I must not bring faith to the promise, but receive faith from it, and therefore there will I hang, and wait, till the Lord please to work it.

the sound of many waters, a mighty, great, and confused sound, and which commonly bringeth neither terror nor joy, but yet a wondring, and acknowledgment of a strange force, and more than human power; this is that which many felt hearing Christ, when they were astonished at his doctrine, as teaching with authority: *What manner of doctrine is this?* Mark i. 22. 27. Luke iv. 32. *Never man spake like this man*, John vii. 46. The next effect is the voice of thunder, which bringeth not only wonder, but fear also; — not only filleth the ears with sound, and the heart with astonishment, but moreover shaketh and terrifieth the conscience. The third effect is the sound of harping, while the word not only ravisheth with admiration, and striketh the conscience with terror, but also, lastly, filleth it with sweet peace and joy. Now, albeit the two first degrees may be without the last, yet none feel the last, who have not in some degree felt both the first.' He saith true, *in some degree*, tho' commonly the deeper is the sense of misery, the sweeter is the sense of mercy. 'In our dead security before conversion (*saith another* †) God is fain to let the law, sin, conscience, Satan, a deep sense of our abominable and cursed state loose upon us, and to kindle the very fire of hell in our souls, that so we might be rouzed, and afterwards more sweetly and soundly raised and refreshed; for after the most toilsome labour is the sweetest sleep, after the greatest tempests the stillest calms: sanctified troubles and terrors establish the surest peace, and the shaking of these winds makes the trees of God's Eden take the better rooting. Spiritually there is never a perfect calm but after a tempest; the wind and earthquake and fire make way for the soft voice.'

† *Bolton's* instructions for afflicted consciences.

S E C T. II.

The promises procuring a sight of Christ.

THE first step, or ingredient that brings comfort to thy heavy soul, is *the sight of Christ*; and to procure this sight, thou hast these promises.

Matth. i. 21. *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.*

Luke ii. 10, 11. *Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people, that is, that unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

John i. 29. *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.*

John iii. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have life everlasting.*

John iii. 17. *God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.*

Romans iii. 25. *God hath set forth [Christ Jesus] to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.*

1 Cor. i. 30. *Christ Jesus of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*

1 Tim. i. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*

Heb. xiii. 12. *Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*

1 John ii. 1, 2. *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Rev. v. 9. *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*

All these tell thee, That as thou art a sinner, so thou hast a Saviour; only do thou apply them, and certainly they will

help thee in the first step, the first ingredient of this remedy to thy misery, to wit, the sight of Christ.

S E C T. III.

The promises procuring a desire after Christ.

THOU mayst say, I see Christ, and I see that his person, and death, and blood-shed are precious and saving; but how may I make him mine? how may I know that he is my Saviour? I answer, Thou must *hunger, and thirst after him*; this desire is the second step: and to provoke thee to this duty, consider of these promises.

Isa. lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.*

Matth. v. 6. *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.*

John vii. 37, 38. *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink: he that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

Rev. xxi. 6. *I will give to him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely.*

Rev. xxii. 17. *Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

Psaln lxiii. 1. *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.*

Psaln cxlv. 19. *He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him.*

All these may provoke thee to thirst after Christ, that most sovereign and soul-saving fountain, opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin, and for uncleanness, Zech. xiii. 1.

S E C T. IV.

The Promises procuring a Relying on Christ.

YET thou mayst say, I thirst indeed, but I dare not drink; I desire, but I dare not come near to lay hold on Christ: how so? I am, (sayst thou) a most vile, unworthy, wicked wretch, and my sins are of scarlet, crimson dye: true it is; for thee to pretend part in Christ, wallowing yet in thy sins, for thee to believe that Christ is thy righteousness, purposing yet to go on in the practice or allowance of any one known sin, it were a most cursed horrible presumption indeed; but where all sin is a burden, every promise, as a world of gold, and the heart sincere for a new way, there a man may be bold: a man may? Yes, he must; if thou groanest under sin, if thou longest after Christ, apply these promises, and they will force thee to lay hold upon the rock, to take Christ for thine own, to throw thy sinful soul upon the bleeding wounds of Jesus, and to cast thyself with confidence into the bosom of his love.

1. Then, 'Take notice (saith a modern) that Jesus Christ keeps open house for all hungry and thirsty souls.' †

Rev. xxii. 17. *Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* Or if open house will not fit, without invitation, hear him call;

Matth. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Or if invitation will not fit, without proclamation, hear him proclaim;

John vii. 37. *Jesus stood, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink: he that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of waters.* Or, lest thou shouldst think, thou must come to thy cost, and bring somewhat in thy hand, hear how he doubles, and trebles his cry to the contrary;

Isa. lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth,*

come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price. And yet, lest thou say, I am so far from bringing any thing in my hand, that I bring a world of wickedness in my heart, and my sins, I fear, will hinder my acceptance: no; (saith he again.)

Isa. lv. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, (and this is thy desire, thy case) and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Or, if all this will not do without a more solemn invitation, see then how the Lord of heaven sends forth his ambassadors to move thee, and entreat thee to come in.

2 Cor. v. 20. *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* Or, if he cannot woo thee, lo, he commands thee;

1 John iii. 23. *And this is the commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.* Or, yet to drive thee to Christ, he not only commands, but threatens;

Heb. iii. 18. *And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?*

And what can he do more unto his vineyard? 1. To bid thee welcome, he keeps open house. 2. He invites. 3. He proclaims. 4. He calls thee sans-fee, without money or money-worth. 5. He apologizeth. 6. He lendeth. 7. He commandeth. 8. He threatneth. Hear what mine author concludes from these premisses: 'How cruel then is that man to his own wounded conscience, who in his extreme spiritual thirst will not be drawn by this eight-fold merciful cord, to drink his fill of the fountain of the water of life, to cast himself with confidence and comfort into the arms

† Bolton's instructions for afflicted consciences.

of the Lord Jesus? Yea, how is it possible, but that all, or some of these, should bring in every broken heart to believe, and every one that is weary of his sins, to rely upon the Lord of life for everlasting welfare?

S E C T. V.

The promises procuring obedience to Christ.

AND yet thou mayst say, I have cast myself on Christ, is this all I must do? No, there is yet another step, he is not only to be thy Saviour, but thy husband, thou must love him, and serve him, and honour him, and obey him; thou must endeavour not only for pardon of sin, and salvation from hell, but for purity, new obedience, ability to do, or suffer any thing for Christ. And to provoke thee to this duty, consider of these texts:

Jer. xxxi. 33. *but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* See the same promise in Heb. viii. 10. Heb. x. 16.

Matth. vii. 21. *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven.*

Matth. xi. 29. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

Matth. xvi. 24. *If any man will follow me, let him take up his cross, and follow me.*

2 Cor. v. 15. *He died for all, that they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them.*

2 Cor. v. 17. *If any man be in Christ, let him be a new creature: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.*

1 John i. 6, 7. *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the*

blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 John ii. 5, 6. *He that keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

1 John iii. 6, 9. *Whoever abideth in him, sinneth not. Whoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

1 John iii. 24. *He that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

1 John v. 18. *We know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not: but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.*

All these may invite thee to enter into the holy path, and to fight under Christ's banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil, unto thy life's end.

S E C T. VI.

The Promises procuring comfort in Christ.

ONCE more, thou mayst say, 'I have been truly humbled with the sense of sin, and sense of misery, and sorrow for sin; yea, I have seen and thirsted, and relied, and purposed, universal obedience to my Saviour, and yet no comfort comes.' It may be so; but hast thou praised God for this work of wonder, the New Birth wrought in thee? If so, then is there another duty expected from thee, right precious and pleasing unto God, and that is, waiting: Yet, I could with thee to address thyself to these precious promises; settle thy soul on them with fixed meditation and fervent prayer, and where thou perceivest the condition of the promises to be by God's grace formed in thee, thou mayest surely assure thyself of so much favour as is expressly contained in the promises.

Lev. xxvi. 40, 41, 42, 44. *If they shall*

confess their iniquity,—If their uncircumcised hearts be humbled,—Then will I remember my covenant,—That I might be their God; I am the Lord. The condition is, to confess and be humbled; and this if thou dost, the covenant is sure, *the Lord is thy God.*

Job xxxiii. 27, 28. *If any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which is right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.* The condition is, *If any say I have sinned,* if thy heart say thus in sincerity and truth, the promise is sure, *God will deliver thy soul from hell, and thou shalt see the light of heaven.*

Psal. li. 17. *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* The condition is, *a broken and a contrite heart* for sin; and if thy heart be thus; be sure *God will not despise it.*

Prov. xxviii. 13. *Whosoever confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy.* The condition is, *to confess and forsake sin;* and this if thou dost, as sure as God is God, *thou shalt have mercy.*

Isa. lvii. 15 *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* The condition is, *to be of a contrite and humble spirit;* and if thou art thus, God is true who hath said it, *he dwells in thee, to revive thy spirit, and to revive thy heart.*

Isa. lxi. 1. *The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted.* The condition is, *to be meek and broken-hearted;* and if this be thy case, then *good tidings* belong to thee, and Christ is sent *to bind up thy broken heart* in the bundle of peace.

Jer. xxxi. 19, 20. *Surely, after that I was turned, I repented (saith Ephraim) and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea even con-*

founded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Therefore (saith God) my bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. The condition is, *to repent, to be ashamed, con-founded for sin;* and if thy case be like *Ephraim's,* God is the same to thee, *his bowels yearn for thee, he will surely have mercy on thee.*

Matth. v. 6. *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness.* The condition is, *to hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ;* and if this thou dost, then art thou *blessed* from the mouth of our Saviour.

Matth. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* The condition is, *to come to Christ,* and if thus thou wilt, God's word is sure, *thou shalt have rest* spiritual and eternal.

—Rev. xxi. 6. *I will give unto him that is athirst, of the water of life freely.* The condition is, *to thirst* after the heavenly streams of God's favour, and Christ's sovereign blood; and this if thou dost, then hast thou part *in the fountain of the water of life that proceeds out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb,* Rev. xxii. 1.

All these are so full of comfort, that if thou but crush them with the hand of faith, they cannot but yield some juice of sweetness to thy afflicted soul. O alas! say some, I have done what I may, and yet no comfort comes; sweet soul, be not discouraged, but be the more humbled; in this case thou must fall down with *Mary,* and ly still washing the feet of Christ with thy tears; and then look up again, view again and again these promises of Christ, it may be, he will even now, or before long rake thee up in his arms, and *kiss thee with the kisses of his mouth.*

S L C T. VII.

The Means to apply the said Promises.

I SAID before, it was enough for me to prepare the medicine, it is thou must apply

apply it; yet if thou feelest a backwardness to perform thy part, I shall tell thee of some means to incite thee, and help thee onward to the performance of this duty.

Take then the promises, and carry them, as thou didst the catalogue of thy sins, into the presence of the Lord; and, fallen down on thy knees, beseech God for thy Saviour's sake to incline thine heart to believe those promises. If thou hast the requisite, pray again and again, yea, resolve never to make prayer, but to use this petition, 'That the Lord would please to let thee have some feeling of the life of those promises.' Some soul may object; I have no heart nor spirit to pray: yet use thy endeavour, and in thy endeavours God may come in; and whensoever thou feelest any of them to be spirit and life to thee, whensoever thou feelest by a certain taste, the joys of the Holy Ghost to fall upon thee, O happy man that ever thou wast born! then art thou to thy own knowledge, new born indeed: then hast thou, without doubt, done this most glorious exercise of passing thorow the New Birth, and then hast thou cause (as thou canst not chuse) to sing and praise God day and night, without end: so, true is that of Christ, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*, Matth. v. 4. Amen.

S E C T. VIII.

The Conclusion.

HERE is an end, and to you, to whom I have dedicated this work. my conclusion is this: The year hath now run his round since I first came amongst you, and how the Lord hath wrought by me, you yourselves know best: for my part, if I did but know one poor soul amongst you truly converted by such a weak unworthy instrument, I would ever think myself most happy in that soul, and richly paid for my pains. I know it, neither Paul nor Apol-
lo can do this, except God give the increase: however, I must tell you, with Paul, my desires have been this way; I have, since

my coming, travailed of you, and travailed again, *that Christ may be formed in you*, Gal. iv. 19. And what's the issue? once could the Lord say, *Shall I bring to thee the birth, and not cause to bring forth?* Isa. lxi. 9. And, to join issue with you, have I travailed of you in birth, and not one of you brought forth? The Lord forbid. I confess, beloved, I have received from you many kindnesses of love; now, for the Lord's sake, do me this one kindness more, give me, at least, one soul among you, that I may give it unto God: O what a kindness would you then do me! not all the wealth of your town, nor all the increase of your state, nor all you have, or ever shall have, would do me so much good, in the day of my Lord Jesus, as this one boon I ask; then could I say, 'Lord, I have not lost the fruits of my labour in this town, see here the soul now shining in glory which I converted by thy power; see here the soul of such a one, and such a one which through thy grace, and my ministry were converted unto thee.' If this were thus, why then, beloved, you would bless me for ever, and I should bless you for ever, and we should all bless God for ever, for this so gracious and so blessed a work. Now the Lord of his goodness give you a sight of your sins, and a true sorrow for sin; and if not afore now, yet now, this day, the Lord this day set his print and seal upon you.

The time draws on, and I have but a minute, a little time to speak to you; for a farewell then, let these last words take a deeper impression in your hearts: if you would do all I would have you do, I could wish no more, but, that to this humiliation or repentance you would add charity love; the first you owe to God, and the second to your neighbour; by the first you may become new creatures, by the second true Christians, like them in the church's infancy, of one mind, one heart, and one soul; sure it is not possible that we should
have

have forgiveness of sins, but that we must be of the communion of saints. A thousand pities it is to hear of the many factions in our church, and kingdoms, and towns and families: O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love it: and let us pray (as need we have too) for our own peace one with another: you cannot come to a communion, but you hear this lesson in the invitation; you that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and be in charity and love with your neighbours, etc. Here's both repentance to God,

and charity (nay, more than charity, as we use the word commonly) even love of our neighbours. For my part, I wish that my very heart-blood could cement *the divisions of Reuben*, Judg. v. 15. (for which are great thoughts of heart) in this town, in this church, in these kingdoms. I will say no more, but conclude with those words of the apostle, *Finally, brethren, fare ye well: be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace be with you for ever and ever*, 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

THE

Doctrine and Directions, But more especially, The Practice and Behaviour of a man in the Act of the New Birth.

A TREATISE by way of APPENDIX to the Former.

The occasion of this Treatise.

HITHERTO I have given the doctrine and application of the soul-saving New Birth; but some there are, whose hearts are so steely, that all this cannot work upon them: if any such desire yet any more, (and desire they must, or there is no remedy for them) I have for their help in the practice, brought a practitioner afore them. It was Cesar's great praise, that he bade his soldiers, still come; and if men had but many Cesars or leaders in these practical points, I suppose there would be more followers. A plain doctrine may win some, and a particular direction may win more, but a good example wins most. Howsoever then, concerning the New Birth, I have delivered the doctrine, in the sermons; and directions, in the appendix: yet, one thing is wanting, which may help more than either, to wit, The practice of some saint in this one necessary thing: And what saint? what man hath writ more on this subject, than T. Hooker? It was said of blessed Mr. Bolton, That, 'for himself, he could profess, to his comfort

on his death-bed, that he never taught any godly point, but he first wrought it on his own heart. † The same, do I more than probably think, was the practice of this man. Now therefore, I thought fit, not only to contract his books in this appendix, (which some without his privity, have unskilfully put out) but also, and that more especially, to set afore you (whosoever you are) those prime, powerful, patetrical expressions of his soul pangs in the New Birth, as matter for your imitation: these expressions indeed are they I most especially aim at, which, if you observe, are always delivered in the first person [I,] and I verily believe, they were not feigned, but feeling from his heart and soul. What needs more? if either doctrine in the first part, or direction in the second part, or practice in the third part of the book (which consists most of practice) can work on your souls, I hope some of these, or all of these will help you on in the way from corruption to christianity, and from the state of nature into the kingdom of grace.

† Mr. Eoiton's funeral sermon, by Mr. Etwick.

CHAPTER I.

The Soul's Preparation.

BEFORE the soul can share in Christ's merits (to speak in the author's title or language, without any alteration) two things are required.

1. A preparation to receive and entertain Christ.

2. An implantation of the soul into Christ.

That there must be a preparation, is the first ground we lay; and herein observe we 1. the matter; 2. the manner, 3. the means of this preparation.

1. For matter: the soul of a sinner must be prepared for Christ, before he can entertain him. When kings go to any place, they send (to make readiness) their harbingers afore them; if Christ (the king of saints) come into a soul, there must be a preparation before he enter; and good reason, he is not a mere man, an ordinary person, but a king, a king of glory. David, in this case, could call upon his soul, (so we may expound his gates and doors) Psa. xxiv. 7. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in*; as, who should say, be enlarged, love, joy, hope, set open, give way, for the Lord is coming: *But who is the Lord? it is the Lord of hosts, the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle*: and with that he knocks again, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in*; as if he should say, what shall the Lord knock? shall the king of glory stand? open suddenly, and make all preparation.

2. The manner of this preparation consists in these three passages; 1. The soul breaks that league which formerly it hath had with corruptions, and reserves itself for Christ. And, 2. The soul is most willing to give way to Christ Jesus, and to let

him overthrow whatsoever shall oppose him. 3. The soul is content that God should rule all, not only the eye, or hand, or tongue, or heart; but the whole man; it opens all the gates, and desires Christ to come, and take all the keys of the house upon him.

3. The means of this preparation is the powerful ministry, which God hath appointed for this work; and it is discovered in three particulars: 1. In a particular application of the truth to the souls of men with courage. 2. In a confirmation of the truth by soundness of argument, and plain evidence of scriptures. 3. In a kind of spiritual heat in the heart and affections of the minister, answerable to that which he communicates to the people. And this powerful ministry works on the soul, (1.) By discovering what is in a man's heart, so that the soul seeth what it never saw before, and so is driven to a stand. (2.) By drawing the soul into an awe of sin, so that it dares not meddle with sin as formerly it hath done.

Use. If any soul that hath enjoyed these means any while, is not yet fitted and prepared, it is a fearful suspicion, that God will never confer any good to that soul: go home then, (if there be any such) and reason with your own souls, and plead with your own hearts, saying, Lord, why not yet am I humbled and prepared? will exhortations never prevail with me? will terrors and reproofs never break my heart into pieces? I have heard sermons that would have shaken the very stones I trode on, that would have moved the very seat I sat on; the very fire of hell hath flathed in my face; I have seen even the plagues of hell, and if any thing can do me any good, why not then those exhortations, instructions, admonitions and reproofs that I have often had? I have had as powerful means as may be, which never yet did me good. The Lord be merciful to such a poor soul; the Lord turn the

heart of such a poor sinner, that he may lay hold on mercy in due time.

CHAPTER II. SECT. I.

The general circumstances of preparation on God's part.

BUT for a further distribution, which shall be our method; in this preparation two things are considerable;

1. The general circumstances.
2. The substantial parts.

The general circumstances are twofold, some on God's part; and some on man's part.

On God's part they are these,

1. The offer of Christ and grace.
2. The condition of this offer.
3. The easiness of this condition.

On man's part, two things are considerable :

1. That corruption doth oppose this grace.
2. That God will remove this corruption.

The first general circumstance of the soul's preparation, is on God's part; wherein is The offer of Christ Jesus; the condition of this offer, and the easiness of this condition; we may have all in this one comparison: as with a malefactor convicted of high treason, for plotting some wicked practice against his prince, if, after the discovery of all passages, the king make a proclamation, that, upon the surceasing of his enterprises, he shall be pardoned; nay, if the king shall continue to send message after message, secretly to tell him, that would he yet lay down his arms, and take a pardon, he shall freely be remitted, and graciously accepted into favour again: if this traitor now should rather sling away his pardon than his weapons, then should the king raise an army, and overcome him, and take him, and execute him without any pity or mercy, I appeal to your own consciences, is he not justly rewarded? what will the world say? he had a fair offer of pardon, and the king sent messenger after messenger unto him; seeing therefore he refused and neglected such offers, it is pity [it is just] but condemnation should befall him; thus would all

say. Why, this is the condition of every poor foul under heaven, we are all rebels and traitors; by our oaths and blasphemies we set our mouth against heaven; and yet after all our pride, and stubbornness, and looseness, and profaneness, and contempt of God's word and ordinances, the Lord is pleased to proclaim mercy still to every one that will receive it: 'All you that have dishonoured my name, all you that have profaned my sabbaths, and contemned my ordinances, all you cursed wretches, come; come who will, and take pardon;' therein is the Offer: only let them lay aside all their weapons; therein is the Condition; and then have Christ for the taking; therein is the Easiness of the condition.

'Blessed God, (may every soul say) if I will not do this for Christ, I will do nothing: had the Lord required a great matter of me to have attained salvation; had he required thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil; had he required the first-born of my body for the sins of my soul; had he required me to have kneeled and prayed until mine eyes had failed, until my hands had been wearied, until my tongue had been hoarse, and until my heart had fainted, one drop of mercy at the last gasp, would have quit all this cost: but what goodness is this, that the Lord should require nothing of me, but to lay down my weapons, and to receive Christ offered?' Lo, the Lord this day hath sent from heaven, and offered salvation unto you sons of men; the Lord Jesus has become a suitor to you, and I am Christ's spokesman, to speak a good word for him: O that we may have our errand from you! O that there were such a heart in my people (saith God) to fear me, and keep my commandments always! Deut. v. 29. Shall the Lord and his messengers thus wooe and intreat? and will any yet stand out against God, and say, 'I will none of Christ, I will try it out to the last?' O then, if the great God of heaven and earth shall

shall come with ten thousand thousand of judgments, and execute them upon that man; if he shall bring a whole legion of devils, and say, 'Take him, devils, and torment him, devils, in hell for ever; because he would not have mercy when it was offered, he shall not have mercy; because he would not have salvation when it was tendered, let him be condemned.' If God should thus deal with that man, the Lord should be just in so doing, and he justly miserable.

S E C T. II.

The general circumstances of preparation on man's part.

THE Second general circumstance of the soul's Preparation, is on man's part; and herein is observable,

1. That corruption opposeth grace.
2. That God will remove this corruption.

1. The First is clear, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them; and Acts vii. 51. Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye. Give us a man in the state of nature, and though all the ministers under heaven should preach mercy unto him; though all the angels in heaven should exhort and intreat him; though all glory and happiness were laid before him, and he were wished only to believe and take it, and it should be his for ever; yet, in his natural condition, he could have no power to receive so blessed an offer: howsoever, this hinders not, but he is to wait upon God in the means. And then,

2. God may remove this corruption, which he himself cannot do: herein observe we 1. The author of this grace: and 2. the time of it.

1. The author is God; *I will take away their stony hearts* (saith God) *and give them an heart of flesh*; Ezek. xi. 19. I will remove that sturdy heart which is

in them, and will give them a frameable, teachable heart, which shall ply, and yield to whatsoever I shall teach them: the taking away of the indisposition of the soul to any duty, and the fitting, framing and disposing of a soul to perform any spiritual service, is the alone work of God.

Use 1. Quiet then thy soul, and content thy heart; thou mayest say, 'I have an hard heart within, and it will receive no good from without, the word prevails not, the sacraments have no power over me, all the means, and cost, and charges that God hath bestowed upon me is lost, and my heart is not yet humbled, my corruptions are not yet weakened;' but in this be thou comforted, tho' means cannot do it, which God useth at his pleasure, yet the Lord can do it, there is nothing difficult to him that hath hardness itself at command.

Use 2. Be then exhorted, you that have stony hearts, to have recourse unto this great God of heaven. Should a physician set up a bill, that he would cure all that were troubled with the stone in the reins, and that we should hear of many healed by him, this would stir up all to repair to him, that laboured of this disease: why, the Lord this day hath set up a bill, that he will cure all stony hearts that will but come to him, and all the children of God have found the proof hereof, to the comfort of their souls. You wives, that have husbands with stony hearts, and you parents, that have children with stony hearts, tell them, you have heard this day of a physician that will cure them, and exhort them to repair unto him.

Secondly, The time of this grace, is either,

1. In regard of the means: or, 2. in regard of the men.

1. In regard of the means; and that is, when the sons of men have the gospel shining in their faces; if ever God work upon their hearts, it will be then.

Use 1. This should teach us how thankful

ful we ought to be unto the Lord, that enjoy these liberties in the land of the living; that a man was born in such a time, in the last age of the world, in such a place, in this kingdom, wherein the way of life and salvation is so fully, so plainly, and so powerfully made known, that the sun of the gospel shines full in his face, and is not yet set: O how thankful should he be!

Use 2. And for those that neglect the means of their salvation, how should we pity them? Methinks I see a poor creature, that slighted mercy and salvation when it was offered him; methinks I see that soul lying upon his death-bed, light is departing from his eyes, and his soul is departing from his body: O the name of a minister, of a church, they are as bills of indictments against the soul of this man; methinks I hear such a man say at his last gasp, 'The day is gone, the gate is shut, and now it is too late to enter;' and thus the soul departs from his body, the body to the grave, and the soul to hell; O what bitter lamentations will that soul make in hell, 'O the golden time that I have seen, and not regarded! O the gracious opportunities of salvation that my eyes have beheld, and yet I neglected! O the mercy, and grace, and goodness of God, that have been offered unto me! all these I have contemned, and trampled under my feet, and therefore now must I be tormented with the devil and his angels, from everlasting to everlasting.' Now the Lord give us hearts to take notice of these things. If I were now breathing out my last breath, I would breathe out this legacy to all surviving christians, *This is the accepted time, this is the day of salvation.* Do you hear? this day is grace offered; and if any here would entertain it, O what comfort might he have! 'I was never humbled afore,' (might he say) 'but this day was I humbled; I could never before receive mercy, but this day have I received it O this was

a good day to me, now blessed am I for ever.'

2. In regard of men on whom God works, that is to say, on some in their tender age, on some in their ripe age, on some in their old age: but however the Lord doth at several times convert several of his servants, yet most, and most usually before their old age; and that some interpreters wittily observe out of the parable of the vineyard, Mat. xx. 3, 4, 5. *The master of the vineyard, saith the text, went out at the third, sixth, and ninth hour, and saw some standing idle, and he sent them into his vineyard:* He went then, say interpreters, on purpose to see, and hire, and to send in labourers to work in his vineyard; but he went out at the eleventh hour, not to hire any, he expected not then to have seen any idle; he went out upon some other occasion, and therefore seeing them standing, he wondered at it, saying, *Why stand ye here all the day idle?* As if he should say, 'No man will hire you now, it is but an hour to night, and therefore rather a time to leave working, than to begin to work.'

Use. O let this provoke us, that while the flower is in prime, we would use all means for our good; let us now in the heat and summer of our days, improve our selves in good works, that so when the harvest comes, we may be gathered into God's barn: O, would we be exhorted to take the best time and opportunity of salvation, then might we receive the fruits of our labours, the salvation of our souls.

C H A P. III.

The substantial parts of preparation on God's part; or his dispensations of his work on the soul.

HITHERTO of the general circumstances of the soul's preparing for Christ. Now the substantial parts of this preparation are generally two:

1. The dispensation of God's work on the soul.

2. The

2. The disposition of the soul by God's work.

The dispensation of God discovers itself in drawing the soul from sin to himself.

But because these two are made up by one action and motion, we shall therefore handle them together; and the sum is this; 'That God by an holy kind of violence (which is called drawing, John vi. 44.) doth pluck the soul from those sins that harbour in it, unto himself?' wherein we may consider two things:

1. What the nature of this drawing is.

2. The means whereby God draws.

1. For the nature of this drawing, it is of a double kind: (1.) There is a moral drawing, when, by reasons propounded and good things offered to the understanding and will, a man comes thereby to have his mind enlightened, and his will moved to embrace things offered: thus was it with Paul, when he was 'constrained by Lydia to abide in her house,' Acts xvi. 15. (2.) There is a physical drawing, when the Lord is pleased to put a new power into the soul of a sinner, and withal to carry the will to the object propounded, that it may embrace it; when the Lord not only offers good things to the soul, but enables the soul to lay hold upon the things offered. And thus the Lord draws a sinner from sin unto himself.

2. For the means whereby he draws, they are these four:

First, The Lord lets in a light into the soul of a poor sinner, and discovers unto him that he is in a wrong way. This the soul marvels at, because usually it comes on a sudden, the sinner perceiving nothing less, Isa. lxvi. 1.

Secondly, Tho' a man would defeat the power of this light, yet God still follows it with forcible arguments, and draws with the cord of his mercy; *I taught Ephraim to go*, saith God, *taking them by the arms; I drew them by the cords of love, and with the bands of a man*, Hos. xi. 4. This mercy

consists in these bonds, or this love is made up of four cords.

1. The Lord reveals himself to be ready to receive, and willing and easie to entertain poor sinners when they come unto him: *Let the wicked*, saith the prophet, *for sake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*, Isa. lv. 7. The word in the original is, 'He will multiply pardons:' Hast thou multiplied rebellions? the Lord will also multiply pardons: the bowels of compassion are still open, and the arms of mercy are still spread abroad; he pardoned *Manasses*, and *Paul*, and *Peter*, and so will he thee; his pardons are multiplied, there is yet mercy for thee also, and for a thousand thousand more.

2. The Lord is not only ready to forgive when men come to him, but, that they may come, he also calls and commands them. O but may I, (saith a poor sinner) shall I, dare I go unto the Lord God for mercy? May I be so bold to press in for favour at the hands of the Lord? I have been a grievous sinner, and have heaped abomination upon abomination, I am afraid therefore to approach near unto the Lord's presence. Is it so? hear what the Lord saith, *Come unto me, ye rebellious people, and I will heal your rebellions*, Jer. iii. 22. 'You that never prayed, never came to hear, all rebels, come unto me:' and then the people answer, *Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art our God*. This is great encouragement to a poor sinner, he begins now to wonder, and say, 'Lord, shall all my sins be pardoned? shall all my oaths and abominations be forgiven? I that slighted so many mercies, and committed so many follies, shall I be entertained?' Yes' (saith the Lord) 'come unto me, and thou shalt be forgiven; come, I command you, come.'

3. The Lord doth not only command a poor

a poor sinner to come in, but when he is nice in this case, saying, There is mercy with God, but not for me; the Lord then followeth him still, and sends another cord after him, that, if it be possible, he may win him, and woo him to receive mercy of him: if Command therefore prevail not, he intreats and beseeches him to come and receive mercy and this, methinks, should move the hardest heart under heaven. *We, saith the apostle, are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled unto God,* 2 Cor. v. 20. Rather than you should go away from Christ, even Mercy itself will come and kneel down before you, and beseech you, and intreat you, for the Lord Jesus' sake to pity your poor souls, and to receive pardon for your sins: a sinner is not able to comprehend this, but he begins to be at a stand, and at amazement; What, that the Lord should beseech him! O that thou wouldst receive pardon for thy sins, and be blessed for ever! Good Lord, saith the soul, is this possible, that the great King of heaven should come and beseech such a traitor, such a rebel as I am, to take pardon? That a king on earth should proclaim a pardon to some notorious traitor, this were much, but that the King of heaven should lay down his crown; and come creeping to me, and beseech me, on his knee as it were, to take mercy; this is a thing beyond all expectation: what, shall Heaven stoop to earth? shall Majesty stoop to misery? shall the great God of heaven and earth, that might have condemned my soul, and, if I had perished and been damned, might have took glory by my destruction? Is it possible, is it credible, that this God should not only entertain me when I come, and command me for to come, but intreat and beseech me to come, and receive mercy from him? O the depth of the incomprehensible love of God! I imagine you saw the God the Father in-

treating you, and God the Son beseeching you, as he doth this day, 'Come now, and forsake your sins, and take mercy, which is prepared for you, and shall be bestowed upon you:' would not this make a soul think thus with itself, 'What, for a rebel? not only to have mercy offered, but to be entreated to receive mercy, it were pity [it were just] if I will not take it, but I should go to hell and be damned for ever.' The Lord complains, Ezek. xviii. 31. *Why will ye die? As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a sinner,* Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die, ye sinful sons of men? Mercy is offered you, the Lord Jesus reacheth out his hand to you: fain would he pluck the drunkard out of the alehouse, and the adulterer from his whore: O, if you break this cord, I know not what to say to you, this is able to break a mountain in pieces; *Shake, O mountains,* saith the prophet; *Why? because God hath redeemed Jacob,* Isa. xlv. 23. The redemption of Jacob was enough to break a mountain, let his mercy break our hearts; it is God that begs, the blessing is our own.

4. If yet all this prevail nothing at all, the Lord will then wait, and stay in long patience and suffering, to see whether any time a sinner will turn unto him. Our Saviour follows poor sinners from alehouse to alehouse, and says, 'I beseech you, drunkards, take mercy, and have your sins pardoned:' the Lord (as we may say) tires himself, and wearieth himself with waiting one day after another, and one week after another: 'It may be, saith Christ, this week, this sabbath, this sermon a sinner will turn unto me; what will it never be?' Are you not ashamed, my friends, that the Lord Jesus should thus wait your leisure, and follow you from house to house, and from place to place; nay, that Christ should every morning appear to your understanding, and every night come to your bedside,

side, saying, ' Let this be the last night of sinning, and the next day the first day of your repentance : O, when will you be humbled? when will you receive mercy, that it may go well with you, and with yours for ever?' If none of the other will move you, yet, for shame, let this cord draw you to the Lord: hear, hear his doleful pangs, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? O when will it once be?* Jer. xiii. 27. A woman that is in travail, O how she expects and longs for her delivery! now a throb comes, and then she cries; anon comes a second throb, and then she cries again, ' O when comes deliverance?' Thus God the Father takes on him the person of a travailing woman; he travails and travails until he bring forth a son; until some soul be converted, and brought home unto him, *O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? when will it once be?* ' I have waited one, ten, twenty, thirty, forty years long have I waited on this generation; when will it once be?' The Lord thus travails in patience, looking when we will receive mercy; will never our proud hearts be humbled? will never our stubborn hearts be softened? will never our prophane hearts be sanctified? when will it once be? Christ hath waited this day, this week, this month, this quarter, this year, these ten, twenty, thirty, forty years on us: you old sinners, that are gray-headed in your wickedness, how long hath the Lord waited on you? O for shame let him wait no longer, but turn, turn ye unto him, that ye may receive mercy from him.

3. If bonds of love move not, the Lord hath iron cords, that will pluck in pieces; to wit, the cords of Conscience; which thus disputes, ' He that being often reprov'd, doth still harden his heart, shall perish everlastingly.'

' But thou, being often reprov'd, dost still harden thy heart; therefore thou shalt perish everlastingly.'

In this syllogism are contained (1.) the Monition; (2.) the Accusation; and (3.) the Condemnation of Conscience.

In the first proposition, Conscience gives the sinner a monition to come from sin, upon pain of the heaviest judgment that can be inflicted. It is the Lord that sends the conscience on this errand, ' Go to such a man, and tell him, you have blasphemed God's name, and you have spoken against God's saints, and you have broken God's sabbaths, and you have contemned God's ordinances: be it known unto thee then (saith conscience, when it delivers the message) that I have a command from heaven, and from God, I charge you, as ye will answer it at the dreadful day of judgment, take heed of those evils and sinful practices that heretofore you have committed, lest you damn your souls for ever.' Will you question his commission? see Prov. xxix. 1. *He that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed:* If you often be reprov'd, and will not be bettered, then the Lord says, and conscience from the Lord tells you, ' Be at your own peril, ye shall suddenly be destroyed.' No sooner conscience thus perks upon the crown, [No sooner does conscience, seize as it were, upon a man, and shew him his sin] but the sinner hangs the wing [is cast down] and withdraws himself from his former lewd courses. But now, when wicked persons see their companion is gone, they make after him amain, and then Conscience plucks one way, and they pluck another way; at last, by carnal company, and cursed persuasions, the soul is drawn back again to his former wicked courses, and so perhaps this twist is broken, and the sinner is gone.

2. If so, then Conscience, that was a Monitor, now turns Accuser in the minor proposition; before it was only God's herald to forewarn him, but now it is become a pursevant and serjeant to arrest him; it fol-

follows him to the alehouse, and pursues him home, then takes him in his bed, and arrests him in his sleep; there (by a meditation) it hauls the soul before the tribunal-seat of Christ, saying, 'Lo, Lord, this is the man, this is the drunkard, adulterer, blasphemer; this is he, Lord; an enemy to thy servants, an hater of thy truth, a despiser of thy ordinances; at such a time, in such a place, with such a company this man despised thy truth, this is he, Lord this is the man.' And when Conscience hath thus dragged him before God, and accused him, then 'Take him, jaylor, take him, devil, (saith the Lord) and imprison him; let vexation and horror, and trouble, and anguish ly upon his soul, until he confess his sins, and resolve to forsake them.' In this case was David, when he was forced to say, *My bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long; for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer: what then? O then* (saith David) *I acknowledged my sin unto thee,—I confessed my transgression unto thee, O Lord, and so thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin,* Psal. xxxii. 3, 4, 5. David folded up his sins at the first, and therefore his bones were consumed, and he roared continually; when the Lord had him on the rack, he made him roar again, and would never leave tormenting, till David came to confessing; but when he confessed this sin, and the other sin, then the Lord forgave him the iniquity of his sin. Thus Conscience brings the soul of a sinner on the rack (as traitors are used that will not confess otherwise) and makes him to confess his sins, and then he cries, 'O the abominations I have committed which the sun never saw; in such a place, at such a time, O then I railed on God's servants, and blasphemed God's name, I profaned God's sabbath, and contemned his ordinances: what then? Conscience will make him confess more yet; to the

rack again with him; and then he cries and roars for anguish of spirit, then he confesses all, and resolves to amend, then he will pray, and hear, and sanctify God's sabbaths, and lead a new life. Thus Conscience receives some satisfaction, and begins to be quiet; and now having got some quiet, his cursed companions set upon him again, 'Refreth (say they) your soul with some ancient dalliance, etc.' To this, and the like temptations, of Satan, he listens again, and then he begins to follow his old sins, perhaps with more violence and eagerness than ever he did before; and now is another twist broken likewise.

3. If so, then Conscience that was a Monitor and Accuser, now turns Executioner. The first proposition admonished, the second accused, if neither of these prevail, then Conscience concludes, 'Thou must to execution, thou shalt perish everlastingly.' And now Conscience cries, 'Motions or accusations could not prevail with this man; come, come, ye damned ghosts, and take away this drunkard, this blasphemer, this adulterer, and throw him headlong into the pit of hell: he would not be amended, let him be condemned; he would not be humbled, therefore let him be damned.' The man hearing this, then he is amazed, and thinks himself past hope, past help, past cure: did you ever see or hear a tormented conscience in these pangs? Now he calls, then he cries, 'Lo, where devils stand, the heavens frown, God is incensed, hell mouth is open:' and now a minister is sent for, who displays to this despairing soul the mercy and grace of God in Christ Jesus: 'O (replies he) this is my bane, my damnation, if I had never heard of mercy, if I had never lived under the gospel, and the means of salvation, then had I been an happy man. Alas! it is mercy I have neglected, it is salvation I contemned, how then should I be saved? O the persuasions of the Lord that I have had! the Lord hath even wept over me, as he

did over Jerusalem; O that thou hadst known the things belonging to thy peace! yet all these persuasions have I contemned, and therefore certainly to hell I must go.' The minister replies, Truth it is, you have done thus, but would you do so still? Is it good now to be drunk, or to blaspheme, or to rail on God's saints, or to contemn God's ordinances? 'O no, no, (saith he) I now find what the end of those wicked courses will be: God's word could not prevail with me, the minister could not persuade me: O the good sermons that I have heard, the very flames of hell have even flashed in my face, the minister hath spent his pains, and would have spent his blood for the good of my poor soul! but alas! I despised the word, and mocked the minister: wo, wo unto me for ever! now my conscience gnaws and tears and terrifies my soul here, and I shall to hell hereafter, and perish for ever and ever.' The minister replies again, The truth is, you have done thus, but would you do so now? would you still blaspheme and curse, and be drunk, and riotous? or, rather would you not now part with all these, and take mercy instead of them? Then the poor soul cries out, 'Now the Lord, for his mercies sake remove these sins from me: O I had never so much delight in my sins heretofore, as now I have wo, misery and vexation for them; but, alas! it is not in my power to help my soul; if the Lord would do this, let him do what he will with it.' What? (saith the minister) you are then willing and content to part with your sins: 'O yes, (saith the soul) I would rather offend all the world than God; I had rather go to hell than to the committing of a sin; if it would please God to help me, I would forsake my sins with all my heart.' Why, now the poor soul is coming again, God is drawing him again from his corruptions and sinful distempers.

4. When the soul is thus loosened, the Lord then fully plucks it by the cord of

his Spirit; with an almighty hand he plucks the soul off from sin, and takes it into his own hand, that he may govern him, and dispose of him according to his own good will and pleasure. Thus much of preparation for the substance of it on God's part.

CHAP. IV. SECT. I.

The substantial parts of preparation on man's part, or the disposition of the soul by God's work.

NOW are we to observe the disposition of the soul on man's part, which God works on the hearts of whom he draws. It is known in two works:

1. Contrition, whereby the soul is cut off from sin.

2. Humiliation, whereby the soul is cut off from itself.

For so it is, that either the soul seeth no need to depart from sin, or else it thinks it can help itself out of sin; the first is called security, when the soul being blind, takes rest, and seeing no need to be better, desires it not therefore: against this the Lord sends contrition, causing men thereby to know the misery of sin, and to see need of a change: the second is carnal confidence, when a sinner begins to seek succour, and to scramble for his own comfort in his self-sufficiency; against this the Lord works humiliation, causing the soul hereby to see the weakness and emptiness of its duties, and that there is enough in its best services to condemn him for ever. Before we speak of the works, it is not amiss to begin with the lets, [or hindrances].

The first is Security: when the soul is taken up with a secure course, and rests itself well payed [well pleased] in his own practices, and therefore it never seeth any need of a change, nor ever goes out for a change: now while a man lives thus, and blesteth himself in his sin, it is impossible that ever he should receive faith, or by the power of faith repair unto Christ; where faith comes,

it ever works a change, *Old things are done away, and then all things are become new*; the Lord therefore to remove this let, he burthens the soul extremely, and says, 'You will live in drunkenness, in covetousness; you will have your sins, then take your sins, and get you down to hell with them.' At this voice the sinner begins to see where he is: 'Is this true? (saith he) then I am the most miserable creature under heaven;' therefore as they said, Acts ii. 37. *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* 'We have been thus and thus, but if we rest here, it will be our ruin for ever; O what shall we do?' So the soul comes to a restless dislike of itself, and saith, 'I must either be otherwise, or else I am but a damned man for ever.'

2. When the soul is thus resolved, that it must of necessity change, when it seeth his wound and his sin ready before him to condemn him, and it hath, as it were, a little peep-hole into hell; the soul, in this distress, sends over to prayer, and hearing, and holy services, and thinks by his wits and duties, or some such like matters, to succour itself; and it begins to say, 'My hearing, and my prayer, will not these save me?' Thus the soul in conclusion rests on duties: I will not say but these duties are all good, honourable and comfortable, yet they are not gods, but the ordinances of God. It is the nature of a sinful heart, to make the means, as meritorious to salvation: a man that seeth his drunkenness and his base contempt of God, O then he voweth and promiseth to take up a new course, and he begins to approve himself in reformation of his ways: then he cries, 'Now I will have no more drunkenness, now no more scoffing and scorning at those that go to hear the word: and then he thinks, what can I do more? to heaven I must go. All this is but a man's self: why so? Christ, who is the substance of all, and the pith of a promise, is forgotten: a Christ in hearing, a Christ

in praying is not regarded, and therefore the poor soul famisheth with hunger. Mistake not, I pray you, these duties must be had and used, but still a man must not stay here. Prayer saith, *There is no salvation in me*; and the sacraments and fasting say, *There is no salvation in us*: all these are subservient helps, not absolute causes of salvation. A man will use his bucket, but he expects water from the well; these means are the buckets, but all our comfort, and all our life and grace is only in Christ: if you say, your bucket shall help you, you may starve for Christ, if you let it not down into the well of water: so, though you boast of praying, and hearing, and fasting, and of your alms, and building of hospitals, and of your good deeds, if none of these bring you to a Christ, or settle you on a Christ, you shall die for Christ, though your works were as the works of an angel. As it is with a graft, therefore, 1. It must be cut off from the old stock; 2. It must be pared, and made fit for implantation into another: so the soul, by contrition, being cut off from sin, then humiliation pares it, pares away all a man's privileges, and makes it fit for the ingrafting into Christ Jesus. Thus much of the lets, now for the works of contrition and humiliation.

S E C T. II.

A sight of sin.

BUT for a further discovery of these two necessary things, we shall enter into particulars, and begin first with contrition; which contain these steps:

A sight of sin.

Sense of divine wrath.

Sorrow for sin.

The first step is, A sight of sin; and sin must be seen clearly, and convincingly.

1. Clearly: It is not a general sight, and confused sight of sin that will serve the turn; it is not enough to say, 'It is my infirmity, and I cannot amend it, we are

all sinners? no, this is the ground why we mistake our evils, and reform not our ways; a man must search narrowly, and prove his ways, as the goldsmith doth his gold in the fire; *I considered my ways* (saith David) *and turned my feet unto thy testimonies*; in the original, *I turned my sins upside down*, Psa. cxix. 50. he looked all over his ways. And this clear light of sin appears in two particulars.

1. A man must see his sin nakedly in its own proper colours: we must not look on sin through the mediums of profits, and pleasures, and contentments of this world, for so we mistake sin: but the soul of a true Christian that would see sin clearly, he must strip it of all content and quiet that ever the heart received in it: as the adulterer must not look upon sin in regard of the sweetness of it, nor the covetous man on his sin, in regard of the profit of it: you that are such, the time will come when you must die, and then consider what good these sinful courses will do you: how will you judge of sin then, when it shall leave a blot on your souls, and a guilt on your consciences?

2. A man must look on sin in the venoia of it; and that you may do partly, if you compare it with other things, and partly, if you look at it in regard of itself.

1. Compare sin with those things that are most fearful and horrible, as, suppose any soul here present were to behold the damned in hell, if the Lord should give any one of you a little peep-hole into hell, that you saw the horror of the damned, then propound this to your heart, What are those pains which the damned endure? and your heart will shake and quake at it; yet the least sin that ever you did commit, is a greater evil, in its own nature, than the greatest pains of the damned in hell.

2. Look at sin simply as in itself, what is it, but a protest opposing of God himself? A sinful creature joins side with the devil, and comes in battle-array against the Lord,

and flies in the face of the Lord God of hosts. I pray you, in cold blood, consider this, and say, 'Good Lord, what a sinful wretch am I? that a poor damned wretch of the earth should stand in defiance against God! that I should submit myself to the devil, and oppose the Lord God of hosts!'

II. Convictingly; that sin may be so to us as it is in itself; and that discovers itself in these two particulars:

1. When we have a particular apprehension in our own person, that whatsoever sin is in general, we confess it the same in our own souls: it is the cursed distemper of our hearts, howsoever we hold the truth in general, yet when we come to our own sins, to deny the particulars. The adulterer confesseth the danger and filthiness of that sin, in gross, but he will not apply it to himself: the rule therefore is, 'Arrest thy soul, whatsoever thou art, of those sins particularly, whereof thou standest guilty:' to this purpose, say, 'Is murder, and pride, and drunkenness, and uncleanness such horrible sins? O Lord, it was my heart that was proud and vain; it was my tongue that spoke filthily, and blasphemously; my hand that wrought wickedness, my eye that was wanton; and my heart that was unclean and filthy; Lord, here they are:' thus bring thy heart before God.

2. When the soul sits down with the audience of truth, and seeks no shift to oppose truth revealed; when the Lord comes to make racks in the hearts of such as he means to do good to, the text saith, *He will reprove the world of sin*, John xvi. 8. that is, *He will convince the world of wickedness*; he will set the soul in such a stand, that it shall have nothing to say for itself, he cannot shift it off. The minister saith, God hates such and such a sinner; 'And the Lord hates me too,' saith the soul, 'for I am guilty of that sin.' Thus many a time, when a sinner comes into the congregation (if the Lord please to work

work on him) the mind is enlightened, and the minister meets with his corruptions, as if he were in his bosom, and he answers all his cavils, and takes away all objections: with that the soul begins to be in a maze, and saith, ' If this be so (as it is, for ought I know) and if all be true that the minister saith, then the Lord be merciful to my soul, I am the most miserable sinner that ever was born.'

Use of advice. You that know your sins, that you may see them convictingly, get you home to the law, and look into the glass thereof, and then bundle up all your sins thus: ' So many sins against God himself in the first commandment, against his worship in the second, against his name in the third, against his sabbath in the fourth: nay, all our thoughts, words, and actions, all of them have been sins, able to sink our souls into the bottom of hell. And, 2. That you may see them clearly, consider of their effect, both in their doom, and in the execution: only to instance in their doom; methinks I see the Lord of heaven and earth, and his attributes appearing before him, ' The mercy of God, the goodness of God, the wisdom of God, the power of God, the patience, and long-suffering of God,' and they come all to a sinner, an hypocrite, or to a carnal professor, and say, mercy hath relieved you, goodness hath succoured you, wisdom hath instructed you, power hath defended you, patience hath born with you, long-suffering hath endured you: now all these comfortable attributes will bid you adieu, and say, ' Farewel, damned souls; you must go hence to hell, to have your fellowship with damned ghosts: mercy shall never more relieve you, goodness shall never more succour you, wisdom shall no more instruct you, power shall never more defend you, patience shall never more bear with you, long-suffering shall never more endure with you.' And then shall you to endless, easeless, and

remediless torments, where you will ever remember your sins, and say, ' My covetousness and pride was the cause of this, I may thank my sins for this. Think of these things, I beseech you, seriously, and see your sins here, to prevent this light hereafter.

S E C T. III.

Sense of Divine wrath.

THE sinner by this time having his eyes so far opened that he beholds his sins, he begins then to consider, That God hath him in chafe: and this sense of Divine wrath discovers itself in these two particulars;

1. It works a fear of some evil to come.

2. It possesseth the soul with a feeling of this evil.

1. The soul considers, that the punishment, which God hath threatened, shall be executed on him sooner or later; he cries therefore, ' What if God should damn me? God may do it? And what if God should execute his vengeance upon me?' Thus the soul fears that the evil discovered will fall upon him: this is the reason of those phrases of scripture, *We have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again*, Rom. viii. 15. the spirit shews our bondage, and thence comes this fear: again, *God hath not given us the spirit of fear*, 1 Tim. i. 17. that is, the spirit of bondage that works fear. It is with a soul in this fear, as it was with Belshazzar, when he commanded the cups to be brought out of the house of the Lord; *An hand-writing came against him on the wall, and when he saw it, his thoughts troubled him, and his face began to gather paleness, and his knees knocked against one another*: Dan. ix. 5. as if he should say, ' Surely there is some strange evil appointed for me;' and with that his heart began to tremble and shake: just so it is with this fear; he that runs riot in the way of wickedness, and thinks to despise God's Spirit, and to hate the Lord almighty, and to resist the work

of his grace; now it may be there comes this fear, and *hand-writing against him*, and then he cries, 'These are my sins, and these are the plagues and judgments threatened against them, and therefore why not I be damned? why may not I be plagued?'

2. The Lord pursues the soul, and discharges that evil upon him which was formerly feared; and now his conscience is all on a flame, and he saith to himself, 'O I have sinned, and offended a just God, and therefore I must be damned, and to hell I must go.' Now the soul shakes, and is driven beyond itself, and would utterly faint, but that the Lord upholds it with one hand, as he beats it down with the other; he thinks every thing is against him, he thinks the fire burns to consume him, and that the air will poison him, and that hell-mouth gapes under him, and that God's wrath hangs over him, and, if now the Lord should but take away his life, that he should tumble down headlong into the bottomless hell: should any man, or minister persuade the soul in this case to go to heaven for mercy, it replies in this manner, 'Shall I repair to God? O that's my trouble! is he not that great God, whose justice, and mercy, and patience I have abused? And is not he the great God of heaven and earth, that hath been incensed against me? Oh, with what a face can I appear before him? and with what heart can I look for any mercy from him? I have wronged his justice, and can his justice pardon me? I have abused his mercy, and can his mercy pity me? What, such a wretch as I am? If I had never enjoyed the means of mercy, I might have had some plea for myself; but oh, I have refused that mercy, and have trampled the blood of Christ under my feet, and can I look for any mercy? No, no, I see the wrath of the Lord incensed against me, and that's all I look for.'

S E C T. IV.

Sorrow for sin.

THE next step is sorrow for sin; concerning which, are two questions:

1. Whether it be a work of saving grace?
2. Whether God work it in all alike?

To the first, I answer, There is a double sorrow, one in preparation, the other in sanctification: they differ thus; sorrow in preparation, is when the word of God leaves an impression upon the heart of a man, so that the heart of itself is as it were a patient, and only bears the blow of the Spirit; and hence come all those phrases of scripture, as wounded, pierced, pricked, in the passive voice: so that this sorrow is rather a sorrow wrought on me, than any work coming from any spiritual ability in me: but sorrow in sanctification flows from a spiritual principle of grace, and from that power which the heart hath formerly received from God's Spirit: so that in this a man is a free worker: now both these are saving sorrows, but they differ marvelously; many think, that every saving work, is a sanctifying work, which is false: *Those whom he calleth*, (saith the apostle) *them he also justifies, and whom he justifies, he glorifies*, Rom. viii. 30. You may observe, that glorification in this place implies sanctification here, and glory hereafter; now before glorification, you see there is justification and vocation, and both these are saving.

To the second, I answer, Howsoever this work is the same in all for substance, yet in a different manner it is wrought in most: two men are pricked, the one with a pin, the other with a spear; two men are cut, the one with a pen-knife, the other with a sword: so the Lord deals kindly and gently with one soul, and roughly with another: there is the melting of a thing, and the breaking of it with hammers; so there is a difference in persons: for instance, if the person be a scandalous liver, and

and an opposer of God and his grace. 2. If a man hath harboured a filthy heart, and continues long in sin. 3. If a man hath been confident in a formal civil course. 4. If God purpose by some man to do some extraordinary great work: in all these four cases he lays an heavy blow on the heart, the Lord will bruise them, and rend the caul of their hearts, and make them seek to a faithful minister for direction, and to a poor Christian for counsel, whom before they despised. But if the soul be trained up among godly parents, and live under a soul-saving ministry, the Lord may reform this man, and cut him off from his corruptions kindly, and break his heart secretly, in the apprehension of his sins, and yet the world never see it. In both these we have an example in Lydia and the Jaylor: Lydia was a sinful woman, and God opened her eyes and melted her heart kindly, and brought her to a taste of his goodness here, and glory hereafter: but the Jaylor was an outrageous, rebellious wretch, for when the apostles were committed to prison, he laid them up in stocks, and whipped them fore, now there was much work to bring this man home: when the apostles were singing psalms, there came an earthquake, which made the prison-doors flie open, and the prisoners fetters to fall off; but yet the jaylor's heart would not shake: at last the Lord did shake his heart too, and he came trembling, and was ready to lay violent hands upon himself, because he thought the prisoners had been fled; but the apostles cried to him, *Do thyself no harm, for we are all here.* With that he fell down before them, and said, *Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?* Acts xvi. 30. For conclusion, give me a Christian that God doth please to work upon in this extraordinary manner, and to break his heart soundly, and to throw him down to purpose, though it cost him full dear, this man walks ordinarily with more care and

conscience, and hath more comfort coming to himself, and gives more glory unto God.

Use. 1. Is it so, that the soul of a man is thus pierced to the quick, and run through by the wrath of the Almighty? then let this teach all how to carry themselves towards such as God hath dealt withal: Are they pierced men? O pity them! let our soul, O let the bowels of commiseration and compassion be let out toward them! let us never cease to do good to them, to the very uttermost of our powers: and to the performance of this, reason and religion and pity, methinks, should move us: hear the cry, 'Oh (saith the poor soul), will these and these sins never be pardoned? Will this proud heart never be humbled?' Thus the soul sighs and mourns, and says, 'O Lord, I see this sin, and feel the burden of it, and yet I have not an heart to be humbled for it, nor to be free from it: O when will it once be?' Did you but know this, it would make your hearts bleed to hear him: Oh! the sword of the Almighty hath pierced through his heart, and he is breathing out his sorrow, as tho' he were going down to hell, and he saith, 'If there be any mercy, any love, any fellowship of the Spirit, have mercy upon me a poor creature, that am under the burden of the Almighty!' O pray, and pity these wounds and vexations of spirit, which no man finds nor feels, but he that hath been thus wounded. It is a sign of a soul wholly devoted to destruction, that hath a desperate disdain against poor wounded creatures: is it possible there should harbour such a spirit in any man? If the devil himself were incarnate, I cannot conceive what he could do worse.

Use. 2. If ever thou wouldest be comforted, and receive mercy from God, labour never to be quiet, till thou dost bring thy heart to a right pitch of sorrow; thou hast a little slight sorrow, but oh! labour

to have thy heart truly touched, that at last it may break in regard of thy many distempers; remember, the longer seed-time, the greater harvest: *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*, Matth. v. 4. But *wo to you that are at ease in Zion*, Amos vi. 1. Thou hadst better now be wounded, than everlastingly tormented; and therefore if thou desirest to see God's face with comfort, if thou wouldst hear Christ say, 'Come, thou poor heavy-hearted sinner, I will ease thee,' labour to lay load on thy heart, with sorrow for thy sin; O what a comfort shall a poor broken heart find in that day!

SECT. V.

The extent of this sorrow.

Hitherto of Contrition; the next work is Humiliation, which differs from the other, not in substance, but circumstance: for humiliation, as I take it, is only the extent of sorrow for sin, of which we have spoken; and it contains these two duties. 1. Submission. 2. Contentedness, to be at the Lord's disposal.

The first part of Humiliation, is submission, which is wrought thus: the sinner having now had a sight of his sins, and a sorrow in some measure for sin, he seeks far and wide, improves all means, and takes up all duties, that if it were possible, he might heal his wounded soul: thus seeking and seeking, but finding no success in what he hath or doeth, he is forced at last, in his despairing condition, to make trial of the Lord: it is true, for the present he apprehends God to be just, and to be incensed against him, he hath no experience of God's favour for the while, no certainty how he shall speed, if he go to the Lord; yet because he sees he cannot be worse than he is, and that none can help him but God, if it would please him; therefore he falls at the footstool of mercy, and he lies grovelling at the gate of grace, and submits himself to the Lord, to do with him

as pleaseth himself, or as it seemeth good in his eyes.

This was the Ninevites case, when Jonah had denounced that heavy judgment, and as it were, thrown wildfire about the streets, saying, *Within forty days Nineveh shall be destroyed*, Jon. iii. 9. See what they resolved upon, *They fasted and prayed, and put on sackcloth and ashes; who can tell*, said they, *but God may turn, and repent him of his fierce wrath, that we perish not?* As if they had said, 'We know not what God will do, but this we know, that we cannot oppose his judgments, nor succour ourselves:' Thus it is with a sinner, when he seeth hell-fire to flash in his face, and that he cannot succour himself, then he saith, 'This I know, that all the means in the world cannot save me, yet who can tell, but the Lord may have mercy on me, and cure this distressed conscience, and heal all these wounds that sin hath made in my soul?' This is the lively picture of the soul in this case.

Or for a further light, this subjection discovers itself in four particulars.

1. He seeth and confesseth that the Lord, for ought he knows, will proceed in justice against him, and execute upon him those plagues that God hath threatened, and his sins have deserved; he seeth that justice is not yet satisfied, and those reckonings between God and him are not yet made up, and therefore he cannot apprehend but that God will take vengeance on him: what else? when he hath done all he can, he is unprofitable still; justice remains unsatisfied, and saith, 'Thou hast sinned, and I am wronged, and therefore thou shalt die'.

2. He conceives, that what God will do, that he will do, and he cannot avoid it; if the Lord will come, and require the glory of his justice against him, there is no way to avoid it, nor to bear it; and this crusheth the heart, and makes the soul to be beyond all shifts and evasions, whereby

it may seem to avoid the dint of the Lord's blow.

3. He casts away his weapons, and falls down before the Lord, and resigns himself into the sovereign power and command of God. Thus David, when the Lord cast him out of his kingdom, he said to Zadok, *Carry back the ark of God into the city; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back again, and shew me both it and his habitation: but if he thus say to me, I have no delight in thee; behold, here I am, let him do with me as seemeth good in his eyes,* 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. This is the frame of a poor soul; when a poor sinner will stand upon his privileges, the Lord saith, 'Bear my justice, and defend thyself by all thou hast, or canst do: and the soul answereth, I am thy servant, Lord, do what is good in thine eyes, I cannot succour myself.'

4. The soul freely acknowledgeth, that it is in God's power to do with him, and dispose of him as he will; and therefore he lies and licks the dust, and cries, Mercy, Mercy, Lord: he thinks not to purchase mercy at the Lord's hands, but only saith, 'It is in God's good pleasure to do with me as he will:' only he looks for favour, and cries, 'mercy, Lord, mercy to this poor distressed soul of mine.' O, (replies the Lord) dost thou need mercy? Cannot thy Hearing, and Praying, and Fasting carry thee to heaven without hazard? Gird up now thy loins, and make thy ferventest prayers, and let them meet my justice, and see if they can bear my wrath, or purchase any mercy: 'No, no, (saith the sinner) I know it, by lamentable experience, that all my prayers and performances will never procure peace to thy justice, I only pray for mercy, and I desire only to hear some news of mercy, to relieve this miserable, wretched soul of mine; it is only mercy that must help me; O mercy, if it be possible, to this poor distressed soul of mine.' Methinks the

picture of those poor famished lepers may fitly resemble this poor sinner, when the famine was great in Samaria, *There were four leprous men sate in the gate of the city, and they said, Why sit we here until we die? if we enter into the city, the famine is there, and if we sit here, we die also; now therefore, let us fall into the hands of our enemies, and if they save us alive, we shall live, and if they kill us, we shall but die,* 2 Kings vii. 3, 4. They had but one means to succour themselves withal, and that was to go into the camp of the enemies, and there, as it happened, they were relieved. This is the lively picture of a poor sinner in this despairing condition, when he seeth the wrath of God pursuing him, and that the Lord hath beset him on every side; at last he resolves thus with himself, 'If I go and rest on my privileges, there is nothing but emptiness; and if I rest in my natural condition, I perish there also: let me therefore fall into the hands of the Lord of hosts. I confess he hath been provoked by me, and for ought I see he is mine enemy; I am now a damned man, and if the Lord cast me out of his presence, I can be but damned.' And then he comes to the Lord, and he falls down before the footstool of a consuming God, and saith, as Job did, 'What shall I say unto thee, O thou Preserver of men? I have no reason to plead for myself, and I have no power to succour myself, my accusations are my best excuse, all the privileges of the world cannot justify me, and all my duties cannot save me; if there be any mercy left, O succour a poor distressed sinner in the very gall of bitterness.' This is the behaviour of the soul in this work of subjection.

The second part of humiliation, is, contentedness to be at the Lord's disposal; and this point is of an higher pitch than the former: for example, take a debtor who hath used all means to avoid the creditor, in the end, he seeth he cannot avoid

the suit, and to bear it he is not able: therefore the only way is to come in, and to yield himself into his creditor's hands; but suppose the creditor should exact the utmost, and throw him into prison, to be content now to undergo the hardest dealing, it is an hard matter, and a further degree. So when the soul hath offered himself, and he seeth that God's writs are out against him, and he is not able (whensoever the judgment comes) to avoid it, nor to bear it, therefore he submits himself, and saith, 'Lord, whither shall I go? thy anger is heavy and unavoidable;' nay, whatsoever God requires, the soul lays his hand on his mouth, and goes away contented, and well satisfied, and hath nothing at all to say against the Lord. This is the nature of Contentedness.

Or, for a further light, this contentedness discovers itself in these three following particulars:

1. The soul reflects on God's mercy, which though he begged when he submitted, yet now he seeth so much corruption and unworthiness in himself, that he acknowledgeth himself unfit for mercy: O mercy, mercy, Lord! What? saith the Lord, I had thought your own duties would have purchased mercy: 'O no, saith the soul, it is only mercy that must relieve and succour me; but such is my vileness, that I am not fit for the least mercy and favour; and such is the wickedness of this wretched heart of mine, that whatsoever are the greatest plagues, I am worthy of them all, though never so unupportable: all the judgments that God hath threatened, and prepared for the devil and his angels, they are all due to my wretched soul; O, saith the soul, had the devils the like hopes, and means, and patience that I have enjoyed, for ought I know, they would have been better than I am.' It is that which shames the soul in all his sorrows, and makes him say, 'Had they the like mercy? O those sweet comforts, and those precious promises that I have had! how many heavy journeys

hath the Lord Jesus made to me? How often hath he knocked at my heart, and said, Come to me, ye rebellious children; turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? O that mercy that hath followed me from my house to my walk, and from thence to my closet; here mercy hath conferred with me, and there mercy hath wooed me; yea, in my night-thoughts, when I awaked, mercy kneeled down before me, and besought me to renounce my bad courses, yet I refused mercy, and would needs have mine own will; had the devil but such hopes, and such offers of mercy, they that tremble now for want of mercy, they would, for ought I know, have given entertainment to it; and what, do I seek for mercy? shall I talk of mercy? What, I mercy? The least of God's mercies are too good for me, and the heaviest of God's plagues are too little for me; I suppose (for so is my opinion) that God cannot do more against me than I have justly deserved, but be sure, God will not lay more upon me than I am justly worthy of.' Nay, sure it is, the soul cannot bear nor suffer so much as he hath deserved, if God should proceed in rigour with him; therefore it reasons thus: 'I, only for one sin, deserve eternal condemnation, for the wages of all sin is death, being committed against divine justice, and against an infinite majesty; and then what do all these my sins deserve, committed and continued in, against all checks of conscience, and corrections, and the light of God's word! hell is too good, and ten thousand hells too little to torment such a wretch as I am: what, I mercy? I am ashamed to expect it; with what heart, I pray you, can I beg this mercy, which I have trodden under my feet? The Lord hath often wooed me, and when his wounds were bleeding, and his side gored, and his hideous cries coming into mine ears,' My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 'then, even then this Christ have I slighted, and made nothing of his blood; and can this blood of Christ do me now any

ny service? Indeed I crave grace, but how do I think to receive any? All the pillars of the church can testify how often grace and mercy have been offered and offered, but I have ever refused: how then can I beg any grace? O this stubbornness and villainy, and this wretchedness of mine! what, I mercy? it is more than I can expect, I am not worthy of any; Oh no, I am only worthy to be cast out for ever.'

2. The soul reflects on justice, and now it acknowledgeth the equity of God's dealings, be they never so harsh; he confesseth that he is as clay in the hands of the potter, and the Lord may deal with him as he will: yea, the soul is driven to an amazement at the Lord's patience, and that he hath been pleased to reprove him so long, that God hath not cast him out of his presence, and sent him down to hell long ago: it is the frame of the spirit which the poor lamenting church had, *It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not*, Lam. iii. 22. When the Lord hath humbled the heart of a drunkard or adulterer, he begins thus to think with himself, 'The Lord saw all the evils I committed; and what then? O then the soul admires that ever God's justice was able to bear with such a monster, and that God did not confound him in his drunkenness, or burning lusts, and cast him down into hell. 'Oh, saith he, It is because his mercies fail not, that my life and all have not failed long ago.' Hence it is that the soul will not maintain any kind of murmuring, or heart-rising against the Lord's dealings; or, if nature and corruption will be striving sometimes, and say, 'Why are not my prayers answered? I know such a soul humbled, and I see such a soul comforted, and why not I as well as he?' Then the soul stifles, and crusheth, and choaks these wretched distempers, and doth also abase itself before the Lord, saying, 'What if God will not hear my prayers, what if God will not pacify my conscience, doth

the Lord do me any wrong? Vile hell-hound that I am, I have my sin and my shame; wrath is my portion, and hell is my place, thither may I go when I will. it is mercy that God thus deals with me.' And now the soul clears God in his justice, and saith, 'It is just with God that all the prayers which come from this filthy heart of mine, should be abhorred, and that all my labours, in holy duties should never be blessed; it is I that have sinned against checks of conscience, against knowledge, against heaven, and therefore it is just that I should carry this horror of heart with me to the grave; it is I that have abused mercy, and therefore it is just that I should go with a tormenting conscience down into hell: and O that (if I be in hell) I might have a spirit to glorify and justify thy name there; and say, now I am come down to hell among you damned creatures, but the Lord is righteous and blessed for ever in all his doings and dealings, and I am justly condemned.'

3. Hence the soul comes to be quiet and frameable under the heavy hand of God in that helpless condition wherein he is; it takes the blow, and lies under the burthen, and goes away quietly and patiently: O this is an heart worth gold! 'O, saith he, it is fit that God should glorify himself, though I be damned for ever, for I deserve the worst: whatsoever I have, it is the reward of my own works, and the end of my own ways: if I be damned, I may thank my pride, and my stubbornness, and my peevishness of spirit: what, shall I repine against the Lord, because his wrath and his displeasure lies heavy upon me! Oh no! let me repine against my sin, the cause of all; let me grudge against my base heart that hath nourished these adders in my bosom, but let me bless the Lord, and not speak one word against him.' Thus David, *I held my tongue, saith he, and spake nothing, because thou Lord hast done it*, Psal. xxxix. 9. So the soul, when the sentence

of condemnation is even seizing upon him, and God seems to cast him out of his favour, then he cries, 'I confess God is just, and therefore I bless his name, and yield unto him; but sin is the worker of all this misery on me.' Jeremiah pleading the case of the church, now going to captivity, *Who is me for my hurt, saith he, my wound is grievous; but I said, truly this is my grief, and I must bear it*, Jer. x. 19. Such is the frame of an heart truly humbled, it is content to take all to itself, and so to be quiet, saying, 'This is my wound, and I must bear it: this is my sorrow, and I will suffer it.' Thus you see what is the behaviour of the soul in this contentedness to be at the Lord's disposal.

Object. But some may object, 'Must the soul, or ought the soul to be thus content to be left in this damnable condition?'

Answer. For answer, This contentedness implies two things; 1. A carnal security, and a regardlessness of a man's estate, and this is a most cursed sin. 2. A calmness of soul, not murmuring against the Lord's dispensation towards him; and this contentedness is ever accompanied with the sight of a man's sin, and suing for mercy: it ever improves all means and helps that may bring him nearer to God; but if mercy shall deny it, the soul is satisfied, and rests well apayed, [contented]: and this contentedness (opposed to quarrelling with the Almighty) every humbled soul doth attain to, tho' in every one it is not so plainly seen. To give it in a comparison: A thief taken for robbery, on whom the sentence of death hath passed, he should not neglect the means to get a pardon, and yet if he cannot procure it, he must not murmur against the judge for condemning him to death, because he hath done nothing but law: so we should not be careless in using all means for our good, but still seek to God for mercy: yet thus we must be, and thus we ought to be, contented with whatsoever mercy shall deny, because we are not worthy of any favour.

The soul in a depth of humiliation, it first stoops to the condition that the Lord will appoint, he dares not fly away from God, nor repine against the Lord, but he lies down meekly. 2. As he is content with the hardest measure, so he is content with the longest time; he will stay for mercy, be it never so long: *I will wait upon the Lord* (saith Isaiah, ch. 8. 17.) *that hideth his face from Jacob; and I will look for him: so the humbled sinner, 'Although the Lord hide his face, and turn away his loving countenance from me, yet I will look towards heaven, so long as I have an eye to see, and a hand to lit up; the Lord may take his own time, and it is manners for me to wait:'* nay, the poor, broken heart resolves thus, 'If I lie and lick the dust all my days, and cry for mercy all my life long, if my last words might be mercy, mercy, it were well, I might get mercy at my last gasp. 3. As he is content to stay the longest time, so he is content with the least pittance of mercy; 'Let my condition be never so hard, (saith the soul) do, Lord, what thou wilt for me; let the fire of thy wrath consume me here, only recover me hereafter; if I find mercy at the last, I am content, and whatsoever thou givest, I bless thy name for it:' He quarrels not, saying, 'Why are not my graces increased; and why am I not thus and thus comforted?' No, he looks for mercy, and if he have but a crumb of mercy, he is comforted and quieted for ever. And now you may suppose the heart is brought very low.

Use 1. Hence we collect, 1. That they who have the greatest parts, and gifts, and ability, and honour, are, for the most part, hardly brought home to the Lord Jesus Christ; they that are most hardly humbled, are most hardly converted: what is humiliation, but the emptying of the soul from whatsoever makes it swell? The heart must not joy in any thing, nor rest upon any thing, but only yield to the Lord, to be at his disposing and carving: now these parts, and gifts,

gifts, and abilities and means are great props and pillars for the heart of a carnal man to rest upon, and to quiet itself withal; whence the apostle, *Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty men, not many noble men are called*, 1 Cor. i. 26. Indeed, blessed be God, some are, but not many; few that have so much of themselves are brought to renounce themselves; and no wonder, for a rich man to become poor, and a noble man to be abased, and a wise man to be nothing in himself, this will cost hot water, [much work]: and yet this must be in all that belong to the Lord: not that God will take away all these outward things and parts, but that they must loosen their affection from these, if they will have Christ.

2. That an humble heart makes all a man's life quiet, and marvellously sweeteneth whatsoever estate he is in. Indeed sometimes he may be tossed and troubled, yet he is not distracted, because he is contented; as it is with the ship on the sea, when the billows begin to roar, and the waves are violent, if the anchor be fastened deep, it stays the ship: so this work of humiliation is the anchor of the soul, and the deeper it is fastened, the more quiet is the heart: when Job, in time of his extremity, gave way to his proud heart, he quarrelled with the Almighty, his friends, and all; but when the Lord had humbled him, then, *Behold, I am vile and base, once have I spoken, yea, twice, but now no more*.

And this humiliation quiets a man, both in fiercest temptations; and in heaviest oppositions.

1. In fiercest temptations; when Satan begins to besiege the heart of a poor sinner, and lays battery against him, see how the humbled heart runs him out of breath at his own weapons: Dost thou think (says Satan) to get mercy from the Lord, when thy own conscience dogs thee? Nay, go to the place where thou livest, and to the chamber where thou liest, and consider thy fearful abominations; sure God will not

respect the prayers of any such vile sinners. 'True, saith the poor soul, I have often denied the Lord when he called upon me, and therefore he may justly deny me all the prayers I make; yet thus he hath commanded, that seek to him for mercy I must; and, if the Lord will cast me away, and reject my prayers, I am contented therewith; what then, Satan?' What then, saith the the devil? I thought this should have made thee to despair; but this is not all, for God will give thee over, and leave thee to thyself, to thy lusts and corruptions, and thy latter end shall be worse than thy beginning; thou mayst call and cry, and, when thou hast done, be overthrown; God will leave thee to thyself, and suffer thy corruptions to prevail against thee, and thou shalt fall fearfully, to the wounding of thy conscience, to the grieving of God's people, to the scandal of the gospel, to the reproach of thy own person. To this answers the humbled soul, 'If the Lord will give me up to my base lusts, which I have given myself so much liberty in, and if the Lord will leave me to my sins, because I have left his gracious commands; and if I shall fall one day, and be disgraced and dishonoured, yet let the Lord be honoured, and let not God lose the praise of his power, and justice, and I am contented therewith: what then, Satan?' What then, saith the devil? I sure thought now thou wouldst have despaired; but this is not all, for when God hath left thee to thy sins, then will he break out in vengeance against thee, and make thee an example of his heavy vengeance to all ages to come; and therefore it is best for thee to prevent this untimely judgment by some untimely death. To this replies the soul, 'Whatsoever God can do, or will do, I know not, yet so great are my sins, that he cannot, or at least, will not do so much against me, as I have justly deserved: come what will come, I am contented still to be at the Lord's disposal: what then, Satan?' And thus he runs Satan out of breath.

The want of this humiliation many times brings a man to desperate stands, and sometimes to untimely deaths: alas, why will you not bear the wrath of the Lord? it is true indeed your sins are great, and the wrath of God is heavy, yet God will do you good by it, and therefore be quiet. In time of war, when the great cannons fly off, the only way to avoid them, is to lie down in a furrow, and so the bullets fly over: so in all temptations of satan, lie low, and be contented to be at God's disposing, and all these fiery temptations shall not be able to hurt you.

2. In heaviest oppositions; when Satan is gone, then come troubles and oppositions of the world, in all which humiliation will quiet the soul. A man is sometimes sea-sick, not because of the tempest, but because of his full stomach, and therefore, when he has emptied his stomach, he is well again; so it is with his humiliation of heart, if the heart were emptied truly, though a man were in a sea of oppositions, if he have no more trouble in his stomach, and in his proud heart than in the oppositions of the world, he might be very well quieted. Cast disgrace upon the humble heart causelessly, and he cures it thus; he thinks worse of himself than any man else can do, and if they would make him vile and loathsome, he is more vile in his own eyes than they can make him: O that I could bring your hearts to be in love with this blessed grace of God!

Is there any soul here that hath been vexed with the temptations of Satan, oppositions of men, or with his own distempers? and would he now arm and fence himself, that nothing should disquiet him, or trouble him, but in all, to be above all, and to rejoice in all? O then be humbled, and then be above all the devils in hell: certainly they shall not so disquiet you, as to cause you to be misled, or uncomforted, if you would but be humbled.

Use 2. What remains then? Be exhort-

ed, as you desire mercy and favour at God's hands, to this humiliation. And for motives, consider the good things that God hath promised, and which he will bestow upon all that are truly humbled: I shall reduce all to these three following benefits;

1. By humiliation we are made capable of all those treasures of wisdom, grace, and mercy that are in Christ.

2. Humiliation gives a man the comfort of all that good in Christ: many have a right to Christ, and are dear to God, yet they want much sweet refreshing, because they want this humiliation, in some measure. To be truly humbled, is the next way to be truly comforted: *The Lord will look to him that hath an humble contrite heart, and trembles at his word, Isa. lxii.*

3. The Lord will not only know him (he knows the wicked too, in a general manner) but he will give him such a gracious look, as shall make his heart dance in his breast. Thou poor humbled soul, the Lord will give thee a glimpse of his favour, when thou art tired in thy trouble; when thou lookest up to heaven, the Lord will look down upon thee, and will refresh thee with mercy; God hath prepared a sweet morsel for his child, *he will receive the humble*: O be humbled then, every one of you, and the Lord Jesus, *who comes with healing under his wings*, will comfort you, and ye shall see the salvation of our God.

4. Humiliation ushers glory, *Whoever humbles himself as a little child, shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Matth. xviii.* He shall be in the highest degree of grace here, and of glory hereafter: for as thy humiliation, so shall be thy faith, and sanctification, and obedience, and glory.

And now, methinks your hearts begin to stir, and say, 'Hath the Lord engaged himself to this? O then, Lord, make me humble.' Now the Lord make me, and thee, and all of us humble, that we may have

have this mercy. See how Everlasting Happiness and Blessedness looks and waits for every humbled soul; 'Come, (saith Happiness) thou that hast been vile, and base, and mean in thy own eyes; come, and be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Brethren, though I cannot prevail with your hearts, yet let Happiness, that kneels down, and prays you to take mercy, let that, I say, prevail with you: if any man be so regardless of his own good, I have something to say to him, that may make his heart shake within him. But oh!—Who would not have the Lord Jesus to dwell with him? who would not have the Lord Christ, by the glory of his grace to honour and refresh him? Methinks your hearts should yearn for it, and say, 'O Lord, break my heart, and humble me, that mercy may be my portion for ever.' nay, methinks every man should say as Paul did, 'I would to God that not only I, but all my children and servants were not only thus as I am, but also, if it were God's will, much more humbled, that they might be much more comforted and refreshed.' Then might you say with comfort on your death-bed, 'Though I go away, and leave wife and children behind me, poor, and mean in the world, yet I leave Christ with them:' when you are gone, this will be better for them, than all the beaten gold or honours in the world. What can I say? but since the Lord offers so kindly, now *kiss the son*, Psa. ii. 12. be humble, yield to all God's commands, take home all truths, and be at God's disposing: let all the evil that is threatened, and all the good that is offered prevail with your hearts, or, if means cannot, yet the Lord prevail with you; the Lord empty you, that Christ may fill you; the Lord humble you, that you may enjoy happiness and peace, and be lifted up to the highest pinnacle of glory, there to reign for ever and ever.

C H A P. V.

The call on God's part, for the soul to close with, and rely on Christ.

HITHERTO of our first general, to wit, the 'preparation of the soul for Christ:' the next is, the 'implantation of the soul into Christ;' and that hath two parts;

1. The putting of the soul into Christ.

2. The growing of the soul with Christ.

As a graft is first put into the stock, and then it grows together with the stock: these two things are answerable in the soul, and when it is brought into this, then a sinner comes to be partaker of all spiritual benefits.

The first part is, the putting in of the soul: when the soul is brought out of the world of sin, to lie upon, and to close with the Lord Jesus Christ; and this hath two particular passages:

The call on God's part; and the answer on man's part.

The Call on God's part is this, when the Lord, by the call of his gospel, and work of his Spirit, doth so clearly reveal the fulness of mercy, that the soul humbled returns answer.

In which observe 1. the means, and 2. the cause, whereby God doth call.

1. The means is only the ministry of the gospel; the sum whereof, is this, 'That there is fulness of Mercy, and Grace, and Salvation, brought unto us through the Lord Jesus Christ.' Hence the phrase of scripture calls this gospel, or this mercy, *A treasury*; Col. ii. 2. *All the treasures of wisdom and holiness are in Christ*: not *one* treasure, but *all* treasures; not *some* treasure, but *all* treasures; where the gospel comes, there is joy for the sorrowful, peace for the troubled, strength for the weak, relief seasonable and suitable to all wants, miseries and necessities, both present and future.

Use. If then sorrow assail thee (when thou art come thus far) look not on thy sins,

fin, to pore upon them; neither look into thy own sufficiency, to procure any good there. It is true, thou must see thy fins, and sorrow for them, but this is for the lower [class] and thou must get this lesson before-hand; and when thou hast gotten this lesson of Contrition and humiliation, look then only to God's mercy and the riches of his grace in Christ.

2. For the Cause: the Lord doth not only appoint the means, but by the work of the Spirit, he doth bring all the riches of his grace into the soul truly humbled: If you ask, how? 1. With strength of evidence; the Spirit presents to the broken-hearted sinner, the right of the freeness of God's grace to the soul: And 2. The Spirit doth forcibly soak in [infuse] the relish of that grace, and by an over-piercing work, doth leave some dint of supernatural and spiritual virtue on the heart.

Now the word of the gospel, and the work of the Spirit always go together; not that God is tied to any means, but that he tieth himself to the means: hence the gospel is called, *The power of God to salvation*, Rom. i. 16. because the power of God ordinarily, and in common course appears therein: the waters of life and salvation run only in the channel of the gospel; there are golden mines of grace, but they are only to be found in the climates of the gospel: nay, observe this, when all arguments prevail not with corruption, to persuade the heart to go to God, one text of scripture will stand a man instead above all human learning and inventions, because the Spirit goes forth in this, and none else.

Use. 1. This may teach us the worth of the gospel above all other things in the world, for it is accompanied with the Spirit, and brings salvation with it. What if a man had all the wealth and policy in the world, and wanted this? he were a fool: what if one were able to dive deep into the secrets of nature, to know the motions of the stars, to speak with the

tongues of men and angels, and yet know nothing belonging to his peace, what avails it? Why do we value a mine, but because of the gold in it? or a cabinet, but because of the pearl in it? O this is that pearl we sell all for.

Use. 2. Wouldst thou know whether thou art carnal or spiritual? Observe then, if thou hast the Spirit, it ever came with gospel: see then how the soul stands affected with the gospel, and so it stands affected to the Spirit. 'Is it so' (may every soul reason with itself) 'that I will not suffer the word to prevail with me? then shall I miss of the Spirit, then will Christ none of me.' O remember, the time will come when you must die, as well as your neighbours, and then you will say, 'Lord Jesus, forgive my sins; Lord Jesus, receive my soul:' but Christ will answer, 'Away, be gone, you are none of mine, I know you not.' Any man, whether noble, or ignoble, let him be what he will be, if he has not the Spirit, he is none of Christ's; *His you are to whom you obey*, Rom. vi. 16. but pride and covetousness you obey; pride therefore will say, 'This heart is mine, Lord, I have domineered over it, and I will torment it: Corruptions will say, 'we have owned this soul, and we will damn it.' You therefore that have made a tush at [despised] the word, 'this wind shakes no corn, and these words break no bones;' little do you think that you have opposed the Spirit: what, resist the Spirit? methinks it is enough to sink any soul under heaven: hereafter therefore think this with thyself, 'Were he but a man that speaks, yet would I not despise him; but that is not all, there goeth God's Spirit with the word, and shall I despise it? There is but one step between this and that unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost, only adding malice to my rage: I oppose the Father, perhaps the Son mediates for me; I despise the Son, perhaps the holy Ghost pleads for

for me; but if I oppose the Spirit, none can succour me.

G H A P. VI. S E C T. I.

The answer on man's part for the soul to close with, and to rely on Christ.

Hitherto of the call on God's part; now we are come to the answer on man's part. No sooner hath the gospel and God's Spirit clearly revealed the fulness of God's mercy in Christ, but then the whole soul (both the mind that discovers mercy, and Hope that expects it, and Desire that pursues it, and Love that entertains it, and the will that rests on it) gives answer to the call of God therein. Mercy is a proper object of all these; of the mind to be enlightened, of hope to be sustained, of desire to be supported, of love to be cheered: nay, there is a full satisfactory sufficiency of all good in Christ, that so the will of man may take full repose and rest in him; therefore the Lord saith, *Come unto me, all that are weary and heavy laden*, Matth. xi. 28. Come, mind, and hope, and desire, and love, and will, and heart: they all answer, Welcome: the mind saith, Let me know this mercy above all, and *desire to know nothing but Christ and him crucified*: let me expect this mercy, saith Hope; that belongs to me, and will befall me: Desire saith, Let me long after it: O, saith Love, let me embrace and welcome it: O, saith the heart, let me lay hold on the handle of salvation; here we will live and here we will die at the footstool of God's mercy. Thus all go, mind, hope, desire, love, joy, the will, and all lay hold upon the promise, and say, 'Let us make the promise a prey, let us prey upon mercy, as the wild beasts do upon their provision.' Thus the faculties of the soul hunt and pursue this mercy, and lay hold thereupon and satisfy themselves herein.

S E C T. II.

A Sight of Christ, or of mercy in Christ.

BUT for a further discovery of these works of the soul, we shall enter in-

to particulars: and for their order, 1. The Lord lets a light into the mind, for what the eye never seeth, the heart never desireth, hope never expecteth, the soul never embraceth: if the soul then seemeth to hang afar off, and dares not believe that Christ will have mercy on him, in this case the Spirit lets in a light into his heart, and discovers unto him, that God will deal graciously with him. It is with a sinner, as with a man that sits in darkness, haply he seeth a light in the street out of a window, but he sits still in darkness, and is in the dungeon all the while, and he thinks, 'How good were it if a man might enjoy that light?' so many a poor, humble-hearted broken sinner seeth, and hath an inkling of God's mercies, he heareth the saints speak of God's love, and his goodness, and compassion; Ah, (thinks he) how happy are they? blessed are they, what an excellent condition are they in? But I am in darkness still, and never had a drop of mercy vouchsafed unto me: at last, the Lord lets a light into his house, and puts the candle into his own hand, and makes him see by particular evidence, 'Thou shalt be pardoned, and thou shalt be saved.'

The manner how the Spirit works this, is discovered in three passages:

1. The Spirit of the Lord meeting with an humble, broken, lowly, self-denying sinner (he that is a proud, stout-hearted wretch, knows nothing of this matter) it opens the eye, and now the humbled sinner begins to see (like the man in the gospel) some light and glimmering about his understanding, that he can look into, and discern the spiritual things of God.

2. Then the Lord lays before him all the riches of the treasures of his grace; no sooner hath he given him an eye, but then he lays colours before him (*the unsearchable riches of Christ*, Eph. iii. 8.) that he may see and look, and fall in love with those sweet treasures; and then saith the soul, O that mercy, and grace and pardon were mine: O that my sins were done

away ! The Lord saith, I will refresh them that are heavy laden; then saith the soul, ' O that I had that refreshing ! ' ' You shall have rest,' saith God ; ' O that I had rest too,' saith the soul ! and now the soul begins to look after the mercy and compassion which is laid afore it.

3. The Spirit of the Lord doth witness or certify thoroughly and effectually to the soul, that this mercy in Christ belongs unto him, and without this, the soul of an humble, broken-hearted sinner hath no ground to go unto Christ : what good doth it an hungry stomach to hear that there is a great deal of cheer and dainties provided for such and such men, and he have no part therein ? Take a beggar that hath a thousand pounds told before him (he may apprehend the sum of so much gold, and so much silver) ' but what is all that to me, (saith he) if in the mean time I die and starve ? ' It falls out in this case with a broken-hearted sinner as with a prodigal child: the prodigal he hath spent his means, and abused his father, and now is there a famine in the land, and poverty is befallen him ; he knows indeed there is meat and cloaths enough in his father's house, but alas ! what can he expect thence but his father's heavy displeasure ? If a man should say, ' Go to your father, he will give you a portion again ; ' would he, think you, believe this ? ' No, (would he say), it is my father I have offended, and will he now receive me ? ' Yet should a man come and tell him, that he heard his father say so, and then shew him a certificate under his father's hand that it was so, this would surely draw him into some hope that his father meant well towards him : so it is with a sinner when he is apprehensive of all his rebellions ; if a man should tell such a soul, ' Go to God, and he will give you abundance of mercy and compassion ; ' the soul cannot believe it, but thinks, ' What, I mercy ? no, no : blessed are they that walk humbly before God, and conform their

lives to his word, let them take it ; but for me, it is mercy I have opposed, it is grace I have rejected ; no mercy, no grace for me : ' but now if God send a messenger from heaven, or if it come under the hand of his Spirit, that he will accept of him, and pass by all his sins, this makes the soul grow into some hopes, and upon this ground it goes unto the Lord ; but here observe me, that none either in heaven or in earth, but only God's Spirit can make this certificate ; when it is night, all the candles in the world cannot take away the darknes ; so all the means of grace and salvation, all the candle-light of the ministry, they are all good helps, but the darknes of the night will not be gone, before *the sun of righteousness* arise in our hearts. Hence it is that it proves so difficult a matter to comfort a distressed soul ; *I shall one day perish*, saith David ; *I shall one day go down to hell*, saith the soul : let all the ministers under heaven cry, ' Comfort ye, comfort ye : ' still he replies, ' I Mercy ? and I comfort ? will the Lord pardon me ? It is mercy I have despised and trampled under my feet, and I mercy ? no, no.' Thus we ministers observe by experience, some that in their own apprehensions are going to the bottom of hell, we make known to them reasons, and arguments, and promises, but nothing takes place ; what's the reason ? O none but God's Spirit can do it, he must either come from heaven, and say, *Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, or it will never prevail* : let me speak therefore to you that are ministers, you do well to labour to give comfort to a poor fainting soul, but always say, ' Comfort, Lord : O Lord, say unto this poor soul, Thou art his salvation.'

S E C T. III.

Hope in Christ.

THE mind being thus enlightened, the Lord calls on the affections ; Come, Desire : Come, Love : but the first voice is to Hope ; now Hope is a faculty of the soul

soul that looks out for mercy, and waits for the same; so the apostle, Phil. i. 20. *According to my earnest expectation*: it is a similitude taken from a man that looks after another, and lifts up himself as high as he may, to see whether any be coming after him: so here the soul stands as it were a tip-toe, [or, earnestly] expecting when the Lord comes; he hath heard the Lord say, 'Mercy is coming towards thee, mercy is provided for thee.' Now this affection is set out to meet mercy afar off, it is the looking out of the soul: 'O when will it be, Lord? Thou sayest mercy is prepared, thou sayest mercy is approaching;' the soul standeth a tip-toe, [or, looketh earnestly] 'O when will it come, Lord!' here is the voice of Hope; 'This sinful soul of mine, it may through God's mercy be sanctified; this troubled, perplexed soul of mine, it may through God's mercy be pacified; this evil and corruption which harbours in me, and hath taken possession of me, it may through God's mercy be removed; and when will it be?'

The manner how God's Spirit works this, is discerned in three particulars.

1. The Lord doth sweetly stay the heart, and fully persuade the soul, that a man's sins are pardonable, and that all his sins may be pardoned, and that all the good things he wanteth, they may be bestowed: this is a great sustainer of the soul: when a poor sinner seeth his sins in their number, nature; when he seeth no rest in the creature, nor in himself, though all means, all help, all men, all angels, should join together, yet they cannot pardon one sin of his; then the Lord lifteth up his voice, and saith from heaven, 'Thy sins are pardonable in the Lord Jesus Christ.'

2. The Lord doth sweetly persuade the soul that all his sins shall be pardoned; the Lord makes this appear, and persuades his heart that he intendeth mercy, that Christ hath procured pardon for the soul of a broken-hearted sinner in special, and that

he cannot but come unto it; by this means Hope comes to be assured, and certainly persuaded to look out, knowing the promise shall be at the last accomplished: the former only sustained the heart, and provoked [or, encouraged] it to look for mercy, but this comforts the soul, that undoubtedly it shall have mercy: *The Lord Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost*: now saith the broken and humble sinner, 'I am lost; did Christ come to save sinners? Christ must fail of his end, or I of my comfort. God saith, *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden*: 'I am weary, and unless the Lord intend good unto me, why should he invite me, and bid me come? surely he means to shew me mercy, nay he promiseth to relieve me, when I come, therefore he will do good unto me.'

3. The Lord lets in some relish and taste of the sweetness of his love, some scent and flavour of it, so that the soul is deeply affected with it, and carried mightily unto it, that it cannot be severed; it is the letting in the riches of his love, that turneth the expectation of the soul another way, yea it turneth the whole stream of the soul thitherward.

Use 1. This reproves,

1. Those that cast off all hope.

2. Those that without ground will do nothing but hope.

1. If the Lord stir up the heart of his to hope for his mercy, then take heed of that fearful sin of despair. Despair we must in ourselves, and that is good; but this despair we speak of, is hainous in the eyes of God, and hurtful to thee. 1. Injurious to God, thou goest to the deep dungeon of thy corruption, and there thou sayest, 'These sins can never be pardoned, I am still proud, and more stubborn, this distress God seeth not, God succours not, his hand cannot reach, his mercy cannot save. Now mark what the prophet saith to such a perplexed soul, *Why sayest thou*

thou thy way is hid from the Lord? Isa. xl. 27. The Lord saith, *Why sayest thou? Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* O you wrong God exceedingly, you think it a matter of humility, when you account so vilely of your selves: 'Can God pardon sin to such unworthy creatures? It is true, (saith the soul) Manasses was pardoned, Paul was converted, God's saints have been received to mercy; but can my sins be pardoned? can my soul be quickened? No, no, my sins are greater than can be forgiven.' Why then, poor soul, Satan is stronger to overthrow thee, than God to save thee; and thus you make God to be no God, nay you make him to be weaker than sin, than hell, than the devil.

2. This sin is dangerous to thy own soul, it is that which taketh up the bridge, and cutteth off all passages, nay it plucks up a man's endeavours, as it were quite by the roots: 'Alas, (saith he) what availeth it for a man to pray? what profits it a man to read? what benefit in all the means of grace? The stone is rolled upon me, and my condemnation sealed for ever: I will never look after Christ, grace, salvation any more; the time of grace is past, the day is gone.' And thus the soul sinketh in itself; *Will the Lord cast me off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* *I said,* saith David, *This is my infirmity,* Pf. lxxvii. 7. 10. The word in the original is, *This is my sickness;* as who should say, 'What? is mercy gone for ever? This will be my death, then is life gone.'

2. This reproves and condemns that great sin of Presumption, a sin more frequent, and, if possibly may be, more dangerous; as they said, *Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands:* So hath Despair slain his thousands; but Presumption his ten thousands. It is the counsel of Peter, that *every man should be ready to give an account of his faith and hope that is in him,* 1 Pet. iii. 15. Let us see the reasons that persuade you to

these groundless foolish hopes? You say, 'You hope to be saved, and you hope to go to heaven, and you hope to see God's face with comfort;' and have you no grounds? It is a foolish hope, an unreasonable hope.

Use 2. But comfort ye, comfort ye, poor drooping spirits; *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,* Isa. xl. 31. You say, 'You cannot do this, and you cannot do that;' I say, 'If you can but hope, and wait for the mercy of the Lord, you are rich Christians.' If a man have many reversions, they that judge of his estate, will not judge him for his present estate, but for the reversions he shall have: haply thou hast not for the present the sense and feeling of God's love and assurance; away with that feeling, do not dote upon it, thou hast reversions of old leases, ancient mercies, old compassions, such as have been reserved from the beginning of the world, and know thou hast a fair inheritance.

Use 3. You will say, 'Were my hopes of the right stamp, then might I comfort myself; but there are many false, flashy hopes, and how should I know that my hope is sound and good?' I answer, you may know it by these particulars.

1. A grounded hope hath a peculiar certainty in it, it doth bring home unto the soul in special manner, the goodness of God, and the riches of his love in Christ Jesus. It stands not on I's and And's, but saith, 'It must undoubtedly, it must certainly be mine;' and good reason, for this hope hath a word to hang an hold upon: What is that? *I will wait upon the Lord,* and *I will hope in his word,* Psal. cxxx. 5. It is a scripture-hope, a word-hope: the word saith, *The Lord came to save those that were lost,* Matth. xviii. 11. Why, 'I find myself to be lost, (saith the soul), and therefore I hope: the Lord will seek me, though I cannot seek him; I hope the Lord will find me, though I cannot find my-

myself; I hope the Lord will save me, tho' I cannot save myself.' So the word saith, 'He appointeth unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes: will you have a legacy of joy, mercy and pity? Here it is, the Lord Christ left it you, 'I bequeath and leave this to all broken-hearted sinners, to all you humble mourning sinners, this is your legacy, sue for it in the court, and you shall have it for ever.'

2. A grounded hope is ever of great power and strength to hold the soul to the truth of the promise; hence take a poor sinner when he is at the weakest, under water, when all temptations, oppositions, corruptions grow strong against him, and he saith, 'I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul, this proud, foolish, filthy heart of mine will be my bane, I shall never get power, strength and grace against these sins.' Here is the lowest under of a poor soul. If a man should now reply, 'Then cast off all hope and confidence, reject the means, and turn to your sins:' Mark how Hope steppeth in, and saith, 'Nay, whatsoever I am and do, whatsoever my condition is, I will use the means; I am sure all my help is in Christ, all my hope is in the Lord Jesus, and if I must perish, I will perish seeking him, and waiting upon him.'

Why, this is hope, and I warrant that soul shall never go to hell; *I will wait for the Lord, yea though he hath hid himself from the house of Jacob*, Isa. viii. 17.

Use 4. The last use is of Exhortation: I desire you, I intreat you (I will not say, I command you, tho' this may be enjoyed) If you have any hope of heaven, if you have any treasure in Christ, labour to quicken this affection above all: the means are these.

1. Labour to be much acquainted with the precious promises of God, to have them at hand, and upon all occasions: these are thy comforts, and will support thy soul; as the body without comfort is unfit for any thing, so it is here, unless a

man hath that provision of God's promises, and have them at hand daily, and have them [so to speak] dished out, and fitted for him, his heart will fail.

2. Maintain in thy heart a deep and serious acknowledgment of that supreme authority of the Lord, to do what he will, and how he will, according to his pleasure: alas, we think too often to bring God to our bow, [or will]; 'We have hoped thus long, and God hath not answered, and shall we wait still?' Wait! Ah wait, and bless God that you may wait: if you may lie at God's feet, and put your mouths in the dust, and at the end of your days have one crumb of mercy, it is enough; therefore check those distempers, 'Shall I wait still?' It is a most admirable strange thing, that a poor worm, worthy of hell, should take up state, and stand upon terms with God; 'He will not wait upon God;' who must wait then? must God wait, or man wait? It was the apostles question, *Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* To whom our Saviour answered, *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons*; As who should say, *Hands off*, [ask no such questions] it is for you to wait, and to expect mercy, it is not for you to know. If you begin to wrangle and say, 'How long, Lord? When, Lord? And why not now, Lord, Why not I, Lord?' Now check thy own heart, and say, 'It is not for me to know, it is for me to be humble, abased, and to wait for mercy.'

S E C T. IV.

A Desire after Christ.

WHEN the soul is humbled and the eye opened, then he begins thus to reason; 'O happy I that see mercy, but miserable I, if I come to see this, and never have a share in it? O why not I, Lord? Why not my sins pardoned? And why not my corruptions subdued? My soul now thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land, my affections now hunger after righteousness both

both infused and imputed: Now this desire is begotten thus.

When the soul is come so far, that after a thorough Conviction of sin, and found Humiliation under God's mighty hand, it hath a timely and seasonable revelation of the glorious mysteries of Christ, of his excellencies, invitations, truth, tender-heartedness, etc. of the heavenly splendor, and riches, of *the pearl of great price*; then doth the soul conceive by the help of the holy Ghost, this desire and vehement longing: and lest any couzen themselves by any misconceits about it, as the notorious sinner, the mere civil man, and the formal professor, it is then known to be saving:

1. When it is joined with an hearty willingness and unfeigned resolution, 'to sell all, to part with all sin,' to bid adieu for ever to our darling delight; it is not an effect of self-love, not an ordinary wish of natural appetite (like Balaam's, Numb. xxiii. 10.) of those who desire to be happy, but are unwilling to be holy; who would gladly be saved, but are loth to be sanctified; no, if thou desirest earnestly, thou wilt work accordingly; for as the desire is, so will thy endeavour be.

2. When it is earnest, eager, vehement, extremely thirsting after Christ, as the parched earth for refreshing showers, or the hunted hart for the water-brooks. We read of a Scottish penitent, † who a little before his confession, 'freely confessed his fault, to the shame, as he said, of himself, and to the shame of the devil, but to the glory of God; he acknowledged it to be so heinous, and horrible, that had he a thousand lives, and could he die ten thousand deaths, he could not make satisfaction: notwithstanding, *said he*, Lord, thou hast left me this comfort in thy word, that thou hast said, Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you: Lord, I am weary, Lord, I

am heavy laden with my sins, which are innumerable, I am ready to sink, Lord, even into hell, unless thou in thy mercy put to thine hand and deliver me: Lord, thou hast promised by thine own word out of thy own mouth, that thou wilt refresh the weary soul.' And with that he thrust out one of his hands, and reaching as high as he could do towards heaven, with a louder voice and a strained, he cried, 'I challenge thee, Lord, by that word, and by that promise which thou hast made, that thou perform and make it good to me, that call for ease and mercy at thy hands, &c.' Proportionably, when heavy-heartedness for sin hath so dried up the bones, and the angry countenance of God so parched the heart, that the poor soul begins now to gasp for grace, as the thirsty land for drops of rain; then the poor sinner, (though dust and ashes) with an holy humility thus speaks unto Christ; 'O merciful Lord God, Thou art Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; thou sayest it is done, of things that are yet to come; so faithful and true are thy decrees and promises, that thou hast promised by thine own word out of thy own mouth, that unto him that is athirst, thou wilt give him of the fountain of the water of life, freely, Rev. xxi. 6. O Lord, I thirst, I faint, I languish, I long for one drop of mercy: as the heart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God, and after the yearning bowels of thy wonted compassions; had I now in possession the glory, the wealth and pleasures of the whole world; nay, had I ten thousand lives, joyfully would I lay them all down and part with them, to have this poor trembling soul of mine received into the bleeding arms of my blessed Redeemer. O Lord, my spirit within me is melted into tears of blood, my heart is shivered into picces; out of the very place of dragons

† See the preface written by G. Abbot, D. D. before the examination of George Sprat, p. 23.

and shadow of death, do I lift up my thoughts heavy and sad before thee; the remembrance of my former vanities and pollutions, is a very vomit to my soul, and it is sorely wounded with the grievous representation thereof; the very flames of hell, Lord, the fury of thy just wrath, the scorplings of my own conscience, have so wasted and parched mine heart, that my thirst is insatiable, my bowels are hot within me, my desire after Jesus Christ, pardon and grace, is greedy as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame: and, Lord, in thy blessed book thou callest and criest, Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, Isa. lv. 1. In that great day of the feast, thou stoodest as the grave; with thine own mouth, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink, John vii. 37. And these are thine own words, Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, shall be filled, Matth. v. 6. I challenge thee, Lord, in this my extremest thirst after thine own blessed self, and spiritual life in thee, by that word, and by that promise which thou hast made, that thou perform, and make it good to me, that lie grovelling in the dust, and trembling at thy feet: Oh! open now that promised well of life, for I must drink, or else I die.'

The means to obtain this desire, are these three.

1. Be acquainted thoroughly with thine own necessities and wants, with that nothingness and emptiness that is in thyself: a groundless presumption makes a man careless; see into thine own necessities, confess the want of this desire after the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Labour to spread forth the excellency of all the beauty and surpassing glory, that is in the promises of God: couldst thou but view them in their proper colours, they would even ravish thee and quicken thy desires.

3. After all this, know it is not in thy

power to bring thy heart to desire Christ, thou canst not hammer out a desire upon thine own anvil, dig thy own pit, and hew thy own rock as long as thou wilt; nay, let all the angels in heaven, and all the ministers on earth provoke [i. e. encourage] thee, yet if the hand of the Lord be wanting, thou shalt not lift up thine heart, nor step one step towards heaven; then go to him who is able to work this desire in thy soul. It is the complaint of a Christian, O they are troubled, because they cannot fetch a good desire from their own souls, and one falls, another sinks, a third shakes, and they are overwhelmed with discouragement: 'What a wretched heart have I? (saith one) I grace? No, no; the world I can desire, the life of my child I long for, and I say with Rachel, Let me have honour or else I die: but I cannot long for the unconceivable riches of the Lord Jesus Christ; and will the Lord shew any mercy upon me?' Is it thus? Remember now, desires grow not in thy garden, they spring not from the root of thy abilities: O seek unto God, and confess, 'In truth, Lord, it is thou from whom come all our desires, it is thou must work them in us as thou hast promised them to us; and therefore, Lord, quicken thou this soul, and enlarge this heart of mine, for thou only art the God of this desire.' Thus hale down [derive] a desire from the Lord, and from the promise, for there only must thou have it: *The smoking flax God will not quench*, Matth. xii. 20. Flax will not smooak, but a spark must come into it, and that will make it catch fire and smooak; thus lay your hearts before the Lord, and say, 'Good Lord, here is only flax, here is only a stubborn heart, but strike thou by thy promise one spark from heaven, that I may have a smooaking [ardent] desire after Christ, and after grace.

S E C T. V.

A Love of Christ.

WE have run through two affections, Hope and Desire, and the next is

Love:

Love: a possible good stirs up Hope; a necessary excellency in that good, setteth Desire; and a relish in that good settled, kindles Love. Thus is the order of God's work: if the good be absent, the Understanding saith, 'It is to be desired, O that I had it!' Then it sends out Hope, and that waits for that good, and stays till it can see it; and yet if that good cannot come, then Desire hath another proper work, and it goes up and down wandering, and seeketh and sueth for Christ Jesus. After this, if the Lord Jesus be pleased to come himself into the view of the heart, which longeth thus after him, then Love leads him into the soul, and tells the Will of him, saying, 'Lo, here is Jesus Christ the Messiah, that hath ordered these great things for his saints and people.'

The motive or ground of this Love, is God's Spirit in the promise, letting in some intimation of God's love into the soul; thus Psal. xlii. 8. *The Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day-time*: this is a phrase taken from kings and princes, and great commanders in the field, whose words of command stand for laws: so the Lord sends out his loving-kindness, and saith, 'Go out, my everlasting love and kindness, take a commission from me, and go to that humble, thirsty, and hunger-bitten sinner, and go and prosper, and prevail, and settle my love effectually upon him, and fasten my mercy upon him; I command my loving-kindness to do it. Thus the Lord doth put a commission into the hands of his loving-kindness, that it shall do good to the poor soul, yea though it withdraw itself, saying, 'What, I mercy? will Christ Jesus accept of me? No, no; there is no hope of mercy for me: indeed if I could pray thus, hear thus, and perform duties with that enlargement, and had those parts and abilities, then there were some comfort, but now there is no hope of mercy for me.' We demand, Is this your case? is it thus and thus? are you thus humbled? and have you thus

longed for the riches of his mercy in Christ? Lo then, the Lord hath put a commission into the hands of his loving-kindness, saying, 'Go to that poor soul, and break open the doors upon that weary, weltring heart, and break off all those bolts, and rend off that veil of ignorance and carnal reason, and all those arguments: go (I say) to that soul, and cheer it, and warm it, and tell it from me, That his sins are pardoned, and his soul shall be saved, and his sighs and prayers are heard in heaven; and I charge you do the work before you come again.'

Here is the ground of love; God's love affecting the heart, and settled upon it, it breeds a love to God again; *We love him, because he loved us first*, 1 John iv. 19. The burning-glass must receive heat of the beams of the sun before it burn any thing; so there must be a beam of God's love to fall upon the soul, before it can love God again: *I drew them with the cords of a man, even with the bands of love*, Hof. xi. 4. God lets in the cords of love into the soul, and that draws love again to God; *He brought me into the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love; stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love*, Cant. ii. 4.5. When the banner of Christ's love is spread over the soul, the soul comes to be sick in love with Christ.

Now this Love of God doth beget our love in three particulars:

1. There is a sweetness and a relish which God's love lets into the soul, and warms the heart with; you shall see how the fire is kindled by and by: As when a man is fainting, we give him *aqua-vitæ*; so a fainting sinner is cold at the heart, and therefore the Lord lets in a drop of his loving-kindness, and this warms the heart, and the soul is even filled with the happiness of the mercy of God; *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth* (saith the spouse, in the Canticles, chap. i. 2.) *for his love is better than wine*: the kisses of his mouth, are the comforts of his word and Spirit;

the soul faith, 'O let the Lord refresh me with the kisses of his mouth, let the Lord speak comfort to my heart;' and this is better than wine.

2. As that sweetness warms the heart, so the freeness of the love of God let in and intimated, begins even to kindle this love in the soul, that it sparkles again: God setteth out his love towards us, *seeing that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*, Rom. v. 8. This commends the love of God; the Lord sends to poor and miserable, sinful, broken-hearted sinners, and saith, 'Commend my mercy to such a one, and tell him; that though he hath been an enemy to me, yet I am a friend to him, and though he hath been rebellious against me, yet I am a God and Father to him: when the poor sinner considers this with himself, he saith, 'Is the Lord so merciful to me? I that loved my sins, and continued in them, had it not been just that I should have perished in them? but will the Lord not only spare his enemy, but give his Son for him? O let my soul for ever rejoice in this unconceivable goodness of God!' be thy heart never so hard, if it have but the sense of this, it cannot but stir thee to humiliation.

3. The greatness of the freeness of this mercy of God, being settled upon the heart, inflames it; the Sweetness warms the heart, this Freeness kindles the fire; and when the greatness of the sweetness comes to be valued, this sets the heart all on a flame; the apostle desires, that the Ephesians, *being rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and height of the love of God in Christ*; Eph. iii. 17, 18. as if he had said, The unmeasurableness of God's mercy will blow up the soul, and inflame the heart with admirable love of God again, and will make the soul say, 'What, I that have done all I could against this good God? O, it breaks my heart to think of it! there was no name under

heaven that I did blaspheme and tear in pieces more than this name; no command under heaven I so much despised as the command of God, and of Christ; no spirit I grieved so much as the good Spirit of God; and therefore, had the Lord only given me a look, or spoken a word to me, it had been an infinite mercy, but to send a Son to save me, it is incomparable; I could not conceive to do so much evil against him, as he hath done good to me: O the breadth of that mercy beyond all limits! O the length of that mercy beyond all time! O the depth of that mercy below a man's misery! O the height of that mercy above the height of my understanding! if my hands were all love, that I could work nothing but love, and if mine eyes were able to see nothing but love, and my mind to think of nothing but love, and if I had a thousand bodies, they were all too little to love that God that hath thus unmeasurably loved me a poor, sinful hell-bound: I will love the Lord dearly, (saith David) O Lord, my strength, Psal. xviii. 1. Have I gotten the Lord Jesus to be my comfort, my buckler, and my shield? If I have any good, he begins it; if I have any comfort, he blesteth it; therefore, I will love thee dearly, O Lord, my strength, O how should I but love thee!

Use 1. Methinks there is a poor, sincere soul that saith, 'My understandings are not so deep as others, my tongue runs not so glib as such and such; I cannot talk so freely of the things of grace and salvation, I have meaner parts, and cannot enlarge myself in holy duties and holy services; I cannot dispute for a Saviour, or perform such duties as others can do:' yet, sweet soul, canst thou love Christ Jesus, and rejoice in him? 'O yes! I bleis the name of the Lord, that all I have, all my friends, and parts, and means, and abilities, are but as dung, and dross in comparison of Christ Jesus; it were the comfort of my soul, if I might be ever with him.'

him.' Say you so? Go thy way, and the God of heaven go with thee: this is a work of God that will never leave thee, it is a badge and proper livery that the Lord Jesus gives only to his saints; never a mere professor under heaven ever wore it, never any hypocrite under heaven to whom God did intend it, but only to those whom he hath effectually called, and whom he will save; therefore though thou wast all, thou hast this to comfort thee in the want of all; and thou mayest say, 'I can say little for Christ, my tongue falters, and my memory is weak, yet the Lord knows, I love the Lord Jesus.' This is enough, David desired no more, but what God was wont to do to his children that loved his name, *Do to me* (saith the text, Psal. cxix. 432.) *as thou ushest to do unto those that love thy name*: 'I know thou lovest them that love thee, and wilt save and glorify them in the end; I desire no more but this; *do us thou ushest to do unto those that love thy name*. And doth David, a king, desire no more? sure then, if thou, poor soul, hast so much as he had, it is enough, be quiet with thy child's part; 'Thy lot is fallen into a marvellous fair ground.'

Object. 'Some may say, this is all the difficulty: how may I know whether my love be a true love, or a false love? How may I know that my love is of the right stamp?'

Answer. Let every man put his love upon the trial, and examine thus, 'Whether dost thou welcome Christ and grace according to the worth of them?' if thou dost, it will appear in these particulars: 1. Observe the root and rise from whence thy love came; canst thou say, 'I love the Lord, because he hath loved me?' Then thy love is of the right metal, and know it for ever, that that God which cannot but love himself, he cannot but like that love which came from himself: is thy soul affected and enlarged in love to the Lord, because thou hast felt and retained the relish and sweetness of his grace? Canst thou

say, 'The Lord hath let in a glimpse of his favour: and the Lord hath said in his wrath, he looks or him that trembles at his word; the minister said it, and the Spirit saith it, that my mercy is registered in heaven: O how should I love the Lord! my sins are many, which I have bewailed; my sighs and sobs I have put up to heaven, and, at the last, the Lord hath given me a gracious answer: O how should I love the Lord my strength dearly?' If it be thus with thee, thy love is sound, and will never fail.

2. If thou entertain thy Saviour, as it becoms him, thou must entertain him as a king, and that is thus; give up all to him, and entertain none with him upon terms of honour, but such as retain to him, or be attendants upon him; love all in Christ, and for Christ, but express thy love and joy to Christ above all: he is as a king, and all the rest are but as retainers; he that loves any thing equal with a Christ, it is certain he did never love Christ; to set up any thing *cheek by jole* with Christ, it is all one as if a man did put a slave into the same chamber with the king, which is, upon the point, to drive him away.

3. The soul that rightly entertains Christ, and studies wholly to give him contentment, he is marvellous wary and watchful, that he may not sad that good Spirit of God to grieve him, and cause him to go away as displeas'd: see this, Cant. iii. 4, 5. the spouse sought long for her beloved, and at last brought him home, and when she had welcomed him, she gave a charge to all the house, *not to stir or awaken her love till he please*. When a prince comes unto the house of a great man, what charge is there given to make no noise in the night, lest such and such a man be awakened before his time? The soul, when it hath received the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, doth thus; he gives a peremptory charge to keep watch, and ward, and gives a charge to Hope, and Desire, and Love, and Joy, and the Mind, and all, not to grieve

grieve and molest the good Spirit of God. Let there be no motion but to entertain it, no advice but to receive it, and do nothing that may work the least kind of dislike unto it.'

4. He that truly entertains Christ, rejoiceth in the good and glory of Christ; when Mephibosheth had been wrongfully accused to David, and when David, who had taken away all the inheritance from him, was returned in safety; then said David, to comfort him, *Thou and Ziba divide the land*: 2 Sam. xix. 29, 30. Nay, said Mephibosheth, *let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace*, 'It matters not for inheritance, and for myself and my life, I pass not, sith the king is returned in peace; it is enough that I enjoy thy presence, which is better to me than goods, life, or liberty;' so it is with a kind, loving heart, which cannot endure to see Christ's honour and glory laid in the dust, but if his praise be advanced, then is he glad, 'Lord, I have enough,' saith the soul, 'that Christ is mine, and that his honour and glory is magnified, whatsoever becomes of me it matters not; let the world take all, if I may have Christ, and see him praised and magnified:' let this try any man's spirit under heaven, and labour to bring the soul to this pitch: a minister in his place, and a master in his place, and every christian in his place; let it be our care to honour God, not ourselves; and let it be our comfort, if God may be better honoured by others, than by ourselves: this is our baseness of spirit, we can be content to lift up Christ upon our shoulders, that we may lift up ourselves by it; but we should be content to lie in the dust, that the Lord may be praised; and if any of God's people thrive and prosper more than thou, let that be thy joy.

5. He that welcomes Christ truly, covets a nearer union with Christ: love is of a licking and gluing nature, and will carry the soul with some kind of strength and

earnestness, to enjoy full possession and fellowship of the thing that is loved; it cannot have enough of it: 'Nothing' (saith the soul) 'but Christ, still I desire more of that mercy, and holiness, and grace, and love in Christ Jesus. As it is with parties that have lived long together in one house, and their affections are linked together in way of marriage, they will ever desire to be talking together, and to be drawing on the marriage; so the soul that loves Christ Jesus, and hath his holy affection kindled, and his spirit enlarged therein; when the Lord hath let in some glimpse of his love, he thinks the hour sweet when he prayed to the Lord Christ, he thinks the Lord's day sweet wherein God revealed, by the power of his holy ordinances, any of that rich grace and mercy of his: it is admirable to see how the heart will be delighted to recount the time, and place, and means, when and where the Lord did reveal it; 'Oh this is good,' saith the soul; 'Oh that I might be ever thus cheered and refreshed!' Or, as the spouse contracted thinks every day a year, till she enjoy her beloved, and take satisfaction to her soul in him: so the soul that hath been truly humbled, and enlightened, and is now contracted to Christ Jesus, 'Oh when will that day be,' saith it, 'that I shall ever be with my Jesus!' He takes hold of every word he hears, every promise that reveals any thing of Christ; 'But oh! when will that day be, that I shall ever be with Christ, and be full of his fulness for ever! Phil. i. 23.'

Use 2. And now let me prevail with your hearts, and work your souls to this duty, *Love the Lord, all ye his saints*; Psa. xxxi. 23. whom will you love, if you love not him? Oh, you poor ones, love you the Lord, for you have need; and all you rich ones, love you the Lord, for you have cause; and you little ones too, (if there be any such in the congregation) he knocks at every man's heart, and persuades every man's soul, love ye the Lord.

The means are these, 1. Labour to give attendance daily to the promise of grace and Christ; drive away all other suitors from the soul, and let nothing come between the promise and it; forbid all other bands, that is, let the promise confer daily with thy heart, and be expressing and telling of that good that is in Christ, to thy own soul. If all things be agreed between parties to be married, and there wants nothing but mutual affection; the only way to fix their affections upon one another, is to keep company together, so as they meet wisely and holily; so let the soul daily keep company with the promise. And this is the first way.

2. Labour to be thoroughly acquainted with the beauty and sweetness of Christ in the promise. Now there are three things in the promise we must eye and apprehend, that our hearts may be kindled with love in the Lord; 1. The worth of the party in himself, Christ is worthy of it. 2. The desert of the party, in regard Christ deserves it. 3. The readiness of the party in himself to seek our good, Christ seeks it.

(1.) Christ is worthy in himself: if we had a thousand hearts to bestow upon him, we were never able to love him sufficiently, as Nehemiah said, *The name of the Lord is above all praise*. Will you let out your love and affections? you may lay them here with good advantage: what would you love? wouldst thou have beauty? then thy Saviour is beautiful, *Thou art fairer than the children of men*, Psal. xlv. 2. Wouldst thou have strength? then is thy Saviour strong, *Cast thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty*, Psal. xlv. 3. Wouldst thou have riches? thy Saviour is more rich (if it be possible) than he is strong, *He is heir of all things*, Heb. i. 2. Wouldst thou have wisdom? then thy Saviour is wise, yea, wisdom itself; *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. Wouldst thou have life eternal? Christ is the author of life and happiness to all

that have him; and he hath not only these in himself, but he will infeof thee in them, if thou wilt but match with him.

(2.) Christ deserves our love, in regard of benefits to us. Be man never so worthy in himself, yet, if he hath wronged, or expressed the part of an enemy, a woman saith, 'I will not have him though he have all the world;' this takes off the affection: it is not so with the Lord Jesus; as he is worthy of all love in himself, so he hath dealt mercifully and graciously with you: In your sickness, who helped you? in wants, who supplied you? in anguish of heart, who relieved you? It was Jesus Christ. Oh therefore love him, deal equally with him, and as he deserves, so enlarge your hearts to him for ever.

(3.) Christ seeks our love. Here is the admiration of mercy, that our Saviour, who hath been rejected by a company of sinful creatures, should seek their love: for shame refuse him not, but let him have love ere he go: Had the Lord received us, when we had come to him, and humbled our hearts before him; had he heard, when we had spent our days, and all our strength in begging and craving, it had been an infinite mercy: but when the Lord Jesus Christ shall seek to us by his messengers (it is all the work we have to do, to wooe you, and speak a good word for the Lord Jesus Christ; yea, and if we speak for ourselves, it is pity but our tongue should cleave to the roof of our mouth) when the Lord Jesus shall come and wait upon us, and seek our love, O this, this is a wonder of mercies! think of this, O ye saints! the Lord now, by us, offers love to all you that are weary and have need; what answer shall I return to him in the evening? shall I say, Lord, I have tendered thy mercy, and it was refused: brethren, it would grieve my heart to return this answer; O rather let every soul of you say, Can the Lord Jesus love me? In truth, Lord, I am out of love with myself, I have abused thy majesty, I have

have loved the world, I have followed base lusts, and can the Lord Jesus love such a wretch as I am? Yea, saith the Lord, *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely*, Hof. xiv. 5. He looks for no portion, he will take thee and all thy wants: get you home then, and every one in secret labour to deal truly with your own hearts; make up a match in this manner, and say, Is it possible that the Lord should look so low? that a great prince should send to a poor peasant? that Majesty should stoop to meanness; Heaven to earth? God to man? hath the Lord offered mercy to me? and doth he require nothing of me but to love him again? Call upon your hearts, I charge you, and say thus, Lord, if all the light of my eyes were love, and all the speeches of my tongue were love, it were all too little to love thee: O let me love thee dearly! If thou wilt not say thus, then say hereafter, you had a fair offer, and that a poor minister of God did wish you well. Alas be not coy and squeemish, the Lord may have better than you; lie down therefore and admire at the mercy of the Lord, that should take a company of dead dogs, and now at the last, say as the Psalmist did, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates! and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in*, Psal. xxiv. 7.

S E C T. VI.

A Relying on Christ.

WE are now come to the work of the will, which is the great wheel and commander of the soul. The former affections were but as hand-maids to usher in Christ and the promises; the Mind saith, 'I have seen Christ.' Hope saith, 'I have waited.' Desire saith, 'I have longed.' Love saith, 'I am kindled.' then saith the Will, 'I will have Christ, it shall be so.' And this makes up the match; the spawn and seeds of faith went before, now faith is come to some perfection, now the soul reposes itself upon the Lord Jesus,

And this reposing or resting itself, discovers a five-fold act:

1. It implies 'a going out of the soul to Christ.' When the soul seeth this, that the Lord Jesus is his aid, and must ease him, and pardon his sins, then, Let us go to that Christ, saith he, It is the Lord's call, *Come to me, all ye that are weary*: now this voice coming home to the heart, and the prevailing sweetness of the call overpowering the heart, the soul goes out, and falls, and flings itself upon the riches of God's grace.

2. 'It lays fast hold upon Christ;' when the Lord saith, *Come, my love, my dove; O come away*, Cant. *Behold, I come*, saith she, and when she is come, she 'fasteneth upon Christ,' saying, *My beloved is mine, and I am his*: faith lays hold on the Lord, and will not let mercy go, but cleaves unto it, though it conflict with the Lord; *Should he slay me*, (saith Job, ch. xiii. 15.) *yet will I trust in him*. The case is like Benhadad's, who being overcome by Ahab, his servants thus advised him; *We have heard that the kings of Israel are merciful kings, we pray thee let us put ropes about our necks, and sackcloth on our loins, and go out to the king, peradventure he will save thy life*, 1 Kings xx. 31, 32, 33. Thus the servants go; and, coming to Ahab, they deliver the message; *Thy servant Benhadad saith, I pray thee, let me live*: and he said, *Is he yet alive? he is my brother*: Now the men diligently observed whether any thing would come from him, and did hastily catch at it, and they said, *Thy brother Benhadad and they went away rejoicing*: this is the lively picture of a broken-hearted sinner, after he hath taken up arms against the Almighty, and that the Lord hath let in justice, and he seeth (or hath seen) the anger of God bent against him; then the soul reasons thus, 'I have heard, though I am a rebellious sinner, that none but sinners are pardoned, and God is a gracious God, and therefore

unto.

unto him let me go: with this he falls down at the footstool of the Lord and cries, 'O what shall I do? what shall I say unto thee? O thou Preserver of men! O let me live, I pray thee, in the sight of my Lord! the soul thus humbled, the Lord then lets in his sweet voice of mercy, and saith, 'Thou art my son, my love, and thy sins are pardoned: these words no sooner uttered, but he catcheth thereat, saying, 'Mercy, Lord? and a son, Lord? and love, Lord? and a pardon, Lord?' The heart holds itself here, and will never away.

3. It slings the weight of all its occasions and troubles, guilt and corruptions, upon the Lord Jesus Christ: *He that walks in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God*, Isa. l. 10. That is, if a man be in extremity, hopeless in misery, and walks in desperate discouragements, yea, and hath no light of comfort, *let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God*: as when a man cannot go of himself, he lays all the weight of his body upon another; so the soul goes to a Christ, and lays all the weight of itself upon Christ, and saith, 'I have no comfort, O Lord, all my discomforts I lay upon Christ, and I rely upon the Lord for comfort and consolation: *Who is this, saith Solomon, that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?* Cant. viii. 5. The party coming is the church, the wilderness is the troubles and vexations the church meets withal, and the beloved is the Lord Jesus Christ; now the church leans herself all upon her husband, she walked along with him, but he bare all the burden: *Cast all your care upon him*, saith Peter, *for he careth for you*, 1 Pet. v. 7. The original is, *Hurl your care upon the Lord*: The Lord will not thank you for carrying your cares and troubles about you, he requires that you *hurl them upon him, for he careth for you*.

4. It draws vertue, and derives power from the Lord Jesus Christ for succour and

supplies, and here is the especial life of faith, it goes for mercy, and grace, and comfort in Christ; he knows 'tis to be had from him, and therefore he fetcheth all from him; *With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation*, Isa. xii. 3. The fountain of salvation is Christ, and all the waters of life, of grace and mercy, are in Christ Jesus: now it is not enough to let down the bucket into the well, but it must be drawn out also; it is not enough to come to Christ, but we must draw the water of grace from Christ to ourselves: *They shall suck and be satisfied*, saith Isaiah, *with the breasts of her consolations, that they may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory*, Isa. lxvi. 11. The church is compared to a child, and the breasts are the promises of the gospel; now the elect must suck out, and be satisfied with it; the word in the original is, *Exact upon the promise, and oppress the promise*: as the oppressor grinds the face of a poor man; so with an holy kind of oppression, you should exact from the promise, and get what good you may from it.

5. Faith leaves the soul with the promise: yea, notwithstanding all delays, denials, discouragements, from God, faith brings on the heart still, it will be sure to lie at the gate, and keep the soul with the promise, whatever befalls it. Excellent is that passage, Gen. xxxii. 26. when the Lord and Jacob were wrestling, *Let me go*, saith the Lord, 'I will leave thee to thyself, I care not what becomes of thee: *no, I will not let thee go, until thou hast blessed me*, saith Jacob: so the faithful soul lays hold upon the Lord for mercy, pardon, power and grace, and though the Lord seem to give him up to the torment of sin and corruption, yet the soul saith, 'Tho' my soul go down to hell, I will hold here for mercy, till the Lord comfort and pardon, and subdue graciously these cursed corruptions, which I am not able to master myself.' As it is with a sun-dial, the needle is

is ever moving, and a man may jog it this way and that way, yet it will never stand still, till it come to the north-point: so when the Lord leaves off a believing heart with frowns, and with the expression of displeasure, and the soul turns to the Lord Christ, and will never leave till it go Godward, and Christ-ward, and grace-ward, and faith, 'Let the Lord do what he please, I will go no further, till he be pleased to shew mercy.' Thus the soul once come to Christ, it will never away, but ever cleaves to the promise, and is turned towards God and Christ, whatsoever befalls it.

Use 1. Poor soul! art thou yet shut up in unbelief? do then as the prisoners in Newgate, what lamentable cries do they utter to every passenger-by? So do thou, look out from the gates of hell, and from under the bars of infidelity, and cry, that God will look on thee in mercy, and say, 'Spare, Lord, a poor unbelieving wretch, lockt up under the bars of unbelief: good Lord, succour, and deliver in due time. David could say, *Let the sighing of the prisoner come up before thee*, Plal. lxxix. 11. That indeed was meant of bodily imprisonment, yet the argument prevails much in regard of the spiritual: 'Good Lord, let the sighing of prisoners come up before thee; let the sighing of poor distrustful souls come up before thy majesty: O send help from heaven, and deliver the soul of thy servant from those wretched distempers of heart.' Is there not cause thus to pray? *He that believeth not*, saith our Saviour, *is condemned already*, John iii. 18. He is cast in heaven and earth, by the law and gospel, there is no relief for him abiding in this condition; lay this under thy pillow, and say, 'How can I sleep, and be a condemned man? What if God should take away my life this night? Alas! I never knew what it was to be enlightened, or wounded for sin; I can commit sin, and play with sin, but I never knew what it was to be wounded for sin; I never knew what it was to be

zealous in a good cause; O I confess I have no faith at all!' Beloved! would you yield this, then were there some hopes that you might get out of this condition and state; to have a sense of its want, to go to the Lord by prayer, and to ask hearty counsel of some faithful minister, are the first steps to obtain it. And to help a poor wretch in this case, O you that are gracious, go your ways home, and pray for him: brethren, let us leave preaching and hearing, and all of us fall to praying and mourning: in truth, I condemn my own soul, because I have not an heart to mourn for him; we reprove his sin, and condemn him of his sin; and we must do so: but where are the heart-blood petitions that we put up for such a one? Where are 'the tears that we make for the slain of our people?' You tender-hearted mothers, and you tender-hearted wives, if your children or husbands be in this woful case, O mourn for them, let your hearts break over them, and say, 'O wo is me for my children! O wo is me for that poor husband of mine!'

Use 2. Or *Secondly*, Hast thou gotten faith? then labour to husband this grace well, and to improve it for thy best good. It is a marvellous shame, to see those that are born to fair means, I mean the poor saints of God, that have a right and title to grace and Christ, and yet to live at such an under-rate: I would have you to live above the world, for the Lord doth not grudge his people of comfort, but would have them live chearfully, and have strong consolations, and mighty assurance of God's love? Is there not cause? Why; saith, if it be right, will make the life of a Christian most easie most comfortable. Unfaithful souls sink in their sorrows upon every occasion, but faith gives ease to a man in all his conversation: 1. Because faith hath a skill, and a kind of slight to put over all cares to another; we take up the cross, but faith hurles all the care on Christ; an easie matter it is to lie under the burden,

when

when another bears all the weight of it. Look how it is with two ferry-men, the one hales his boat about the shoar, and cannot get off, but tugs and pulls, and never puts her forth to the tide; the other puts his boat upon the stream, and sets up his sail, and then he may sit still in his boat; and the wind will carry him whither he is to go: just thus it is with a faithful soul, and an unbeliever; all the care of the faithful soul is to put himself upon the stream of God's providence, and to set up the sail of faith, and to take the gale of God's mercy and providence, and so he goes on cheerfully, because it is not he that carries him, but the Lord Jesus Christ: whereas every unfaithful soul tugs and pulls at the business, and can find neither ease nor success: alas! he thinks by his own wits and power to do what he would. 2. Because faith sweetens all other afflictions, even those that are most hard and full of tediousness; and howsoever it apprehends all troubles and afflictions, yet withal it apprehends the faithfulness of God, ordering all for our good: and that's the reason why all our troubles are digested comfortably, without any harshness at all: when the patient takes bitter pills, if they be well figured they go down the easier, and the bitterness never troubles him: so it is with faith, it takes away the harshness of all inconveniencies, which are bitter [as] pills in themselves, but they are sweetened and figured over by the faithfulness of God, for the good of the soul; and therefore it goes on cheerfully.

You will say, if faith bring such ease, how may a man that hath faith, improve it to have such comfort by it? I answer, the rules are four:

1. Labour to gain some evidence to thy own soul, that thou hast a title to the promise: the reason why poor Christians go drooping, and overwhelmed with their sins and miseries, is, because they see not their title to mercy, nor their evidence of God's love; *To the word, and to the testimonies,*

Isa. viii. 20. Take one evidence from the word, 'tis as good as a thousand; if thou hast but one promise for thee, thou hast all in truth, though all be not so fully and clearly perceived.

2. Labour to set an high price on the promises of God: one promise, and the sweetness of God's mercy in Christ is better than all the honours or riches in the world: prize these at this rate, and thou canst not choose but find ease, and be contented therewith.

3. Labour to keep thy promises ever at hand. What is it to me if I have a thing in the house, if I have it not at my need? If a man ready to swoon and die, say, 'I have as good cordial water as any in the world, but I know not where it is;' he may swoon and die before he can find it: so when misery comes, and thy heart is surcharged, 'O then some promise, some comfort to bear up a poor fainting, drooping soul, my troubles are many, and I cannot bear them:' Why, now Christ and a promise would have done it; but thou hast thrown them in a corner, and they are not to be found: now for the Lord's sake let me intreat thee be wise for thy poor soul; there is many a fainting and anguish fit and qualm comes over the heart of many a poor Christian; persecutions without, and sorrows and corruptions within; therefore keep thy cordials about thee, and be sure that thou hast them within reach, take one, and bring another, and be refreshed by another, and go singing to thy grave, and to heaven for ever.

4. Labour to drink an hearty draught of the promise; bestow thyself upon the promise every hour, whensoever thou dost find the fit coming; and this is the way to find comfort: *Eat, O friends, and drink ye abundantly, O well-beloved,* Cant. v. 1. The original is, *in drinking drink.* Ye cannot be drunken with the Spirit, as you may with wine, *drink abundantly;* were dainties prepared, if an hunger-starved man comes

in, and takes only a bit and away, he must needs go away an hungred: think of it sadly, you faithful saints of God; you may come now and then, and take a snatch of the promise, and then comes fear, and temptation, and persecution, and all quiet is gone again; it is your own fault, brethren, you come thirsty, and go away thirsty, you come dis-comforted, and so you go away. Many times it thus befalls us ministers; when we preach of consolation, and when we pray, and confer, we think we are beyond all trouble; but by and by we are full of fears, and troubles, and sorrows, because we take not full contentment in the promise, we drink not a deep draught of it: of this take heed too; 1. Of cavilling and quarrelling with carnal reason. 2. Of attending to the parlies of Satan's temptations; if we listen to this chat, he will make us forget all our comfort.

C H A P. VII.

The growing of the Soul with Christ.

HITHERTO of the first part of the soul's implantation; to wit, of the putting of the soul into Christ: we are now come to the second, which is, the growing of the soul with Christ. These two take up the nature of ingrafting a sinner into the stock Christ Jesus. Now this growing together is accomplished by two means.

1. By an union of the soul with Christ.

2. By a conveyance of sap or sweetness (or all the treasures of grace and happiness) that is in Christ to the soul.

1. Every believer is joined unto Christ, and so joined or knit, that he becomes one spirit. 1. He is joined, as a friend to a friend, as a father to a child, as an husband to a wife, as a graft to a tree, as the soul to a body: so is Christ to a believer, *I live, yet not I, but the Lord Jesus liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20. Hence the body of the faithful is called Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12. 2. So joined, that the believer comes to be one Spirit with Christ; this mystery is great, and be-

yond the reach of that little light I enjoy: only I shall communicate what I conceive, in these three following conclusions. 1. That the Spirit of God, the third person in the Trinity, doth really accompany the whole word, but more especially the precious promises of the gospel. 2. The Spirit, accompanying the promise of grace and salvation, it doth therein, and thereby leave a supernatural dint and power, a spiritual, and over-powering virtue upon the soul, and thereby carries it, and brings it unto Christ: it is not so much any thing in the soul, as a spiritual assisting and moving, and working upon the soul, by virtue whereof it is moved and carried to the Lord Jesus Christ. 3. The Spirit of grace in the promise working thus on the heart, it causerh the heart to close with the promise, and with itself in the promise; and this is to be *one Spirit*. As it is with the moon (the philosopher observes, that the cbbing and flowing of the sea, is by virtue of the moon) she flings her beams into the sea, and not being able to exhale as the sun doth, she leaves them there, and goes away, and that draws them, and when they grow wet, they return back again; now the sea ebbs and flows not from any principle in itself, but by virtue of the moon: so the heart of a poor creature is like the water, unable to move towards heaven, but the Spirit of the Lord doth bring in its beams, and leaves a supernatural virtue by them on the soul, and thereby draws it to itself.

Use 1. Hence an use of instruction: this may shew us that the sins of the faithful, are grievous to the blessed Spirit; not only because of mercies, bonds and engagements which the believer hath received, but because a man is come so near to Christ and the Spirit, to be one Spirit with Christ. Should a wife not only entertain [receive] a whoremonger into the house, but also lodge him in the same bed with her husband, this were not to be endured: and wilt thou receive a company of base lusts, and that in the

very face and sight of the Lord Jesus Christ? What? lodge an unclean spirit, with the clean Spirit of the Lord! the holy Ghost cannot endure this; *Let no filthy communication come out of your mouth*, Eph. iv. 29. *What if there do?* (you may say) What? a Christian and a liar? a Christian and a swearer? *O grieve not the holy Spirit of God, because by it you are sealed unto the day of redemption*, Eph. iv. 30. The good Spirit of the Lord hath sealed you unto redemption, and knit you unto himself, and will you rend yourselves from him and grieve him? O grieve not the holy Spirit!

Use 2. For examination: If thy heart be therefore estranged from such as walk exactly before God, because they are humble and faithful, it is an ill sign; when they are made one spirit with Christ, wilt thou be of two spirits with them? I confess a godly heart will have his fits and excursive now and then, but all this while this is poison, and the soul of a godly man sees this, and is weary of it, and is marvellously burdened with it, and saith, 'O vile wretch that I am, what would I have? and what is he that I cannot love him? Is it because the good Spirit of the Lord is there? shall I resist the good Spirit of the Lord? and so commit the sin against the holy Ghost? away thou vile wretched heart, I will love him:' thus the soul labours and strives for that exactness, and would fain have that goodness which he sees in another.

2. As there is an union with Christ, so there is a conveyance of all spiritual grace from Christ, to all those that believe in him: if you would know the tenor of this covenant, and how Christ conveyeth these spiritual graces unto us, it discovers itself in these particulars: 1. There is fully enough in the Lord Jesus Christ for every faithful soul. 2. As there is enough in Christ, so Christ doth supply or communicate whatsoever is most fit. 3. As the Lord doth communicate what is fit, so he doth preserve what he doth bestow and communi-

cate. 4. As the Lord doth preserve what he communicates, so he quickens the grace that he now doth preserve. 5. As the Lord quickens what he preserves, so he never leaves till he perfects what he quickens. 6. As the Lord perfects what he quickens, so in the end he crowns all the grace he hath perfected. And now may I read your feoffment to you, you poor saints of God, you live beggarly and basely here: oh, if you have a Saviour, you are made for ever; it is that which will maintain you, not only Christianly, but triumphantly; what you want, Christ hath, and what is fit, Christ will bestow; if you cannot keep it, he will preserve it for you; if you be sluggish, he will quicken it in you; what would you have more? he will perfect what he quickens; and lastly, he will crown what he perfects, he will give you an immortal crown of glory for ever and ever.

Use. Hence we see whither the saints of God should go to fetch succour and supply of whatsoever grace they want, yea increase and perfection of what they have already. Christ is made all in all to his servants; why then, away to the Lord Jesus; he calls and invites, *I counsel thee to buy of me eye-salve*, Rev. iii. 18. If thou be an accursed man, buy of Christ justification; if thou be a polluted creature, buy of Christ sanctification. *With thee is the well-spring of life*, saith David, *and in thy light we shall only see light*, Psal. xxxvi. 9. It is not with us, but with thee; it is not in our heads, or hearts, or performances, 'tis only in Christ to be found, only from Christ to be fetched: I deny not but we should improve all means, and use all helps, but in the use of all, seek only to a Christ, with him is the well of life; away to Christ; wisdom, righteousness, etc. all is in him, and there we must have them.

You will say, 'what are the means to obtain these graces from Christ?' I answer, 1. Eye the promise daily, and keep it with-

in view. 2. Yield thyself, and give way to the stroke of the promise, and to the power of the Spirit: for instance, imagine thy heart begins to be pestered with vain thoughts, or with a proud, haughty spirit, or some base lusts and privy haunts of heart, how would you be rid of these? you must not quarrel and contend, and be discouraged; no, but eye the promise, and hold fast thereupon, and say, 'Lord, thou hast promised all grace unto thy servants, take therefore this heart, and this mind, and these affections, and let thy Spirit frame them aright according to thine own good will: by that Spirit of wisdom, Lord, inform me; by that Spirit of sanctification, Lord, cleanse me from all my corruptions; by that Spirit of grace, Lord, quicken and enable me to the discharge of every holy service: thus carry thyself, and convey thy soul by the power of the Spirit of the Lord, and thou shalt find thy heart strengthened and succoured by the virtue thereof upon all occasions.

For conclusion, to dart this use deeper into your hearts; If every believer be joined with Christ, and from Christ there be a conveyance of all spiritual graces unto every believer; then above all labour for a Christ in all things, never let thy heart be quieted, never let thy soul be contented until thou hast obtained Christ. Take a malefactor, on whom sentence is passed, and execution to be administred, suggest to him how to be rich, how to be honoured, or how to be pardoned, he will tell you, 'Riches are good, and honours are good, but O pardon, or nothing:' ah, but then should you say, he must leave all for a pardon; he will answer again, 'Take all, and give me a pardon, that I may live, though in poverty; that

I may live, though in misery: so it is with a poor believing soul; every man that hath committed sin, must suffer for sin, saith justice; the sentence is passed, *Every man that believeth not, is condemned already*, saith our Saviour, John iii. 18. What would you have now? Thou sayest thou wouldst have a pardon, but wouldst thou not have riches? Alas! 'What is that to me, saith the soul, to be rich, and a reprobate? honoured, and damned? let me be pardoned, though impoverished; let me be justified, though debased, yea, though I never see a good day.' Why, then labour for a Christ, for there is no other way under heaven; get a broken heart, get a believing heart; but, O, above all, get a Christ to justify thee, get a Christ to save thee: if I could pray like an angel, could I hear and remember all the sermon, could I confer [or speak] as yet never man spake, what is that to me, if I have not a Christ? I may go down to hell for all that I have or do: yet take this along, and understand me aright, 'Christ is not only a Saviour of all his, but he is the God of all grace; as he is the God of all pardoning, so he is the God of all purging and purifying unto the soul of each believer: grace therefore is good; and duties are good; seek for all, we should do so; perform all, we ought to do so; but, oh, a Christ, a Christ, a Christ, in all, above all, more than all. Thus I have shewed the way to the Lord Jesus, I have shewed you also how you may come to be implanted into the Lord Jesus; and now I leave you in the hands of a Saviour, in the bowels of a Redeemer; and I think I cannot leave you better.

Soli Deo Gloria.

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M E D I A;

T H E

M I D D L E T H I N G S.

In Reference to

The First and Last Things;

O R, T H E

Means, Duties, Ordinances,

Both Secret, Private, and Publick;

For Continuance, and increase of a Godly life, once begun, till we come to Heaven.

Wherein are discovered many blessed MEDIUMS, or DUTIES, in their right Method, Manner, and Proceedings; that so a Christian (the Spirit of Christ assisting) may walk on in the holy Path, which leads from his *New-Birth*, to *Everlasting Life*.

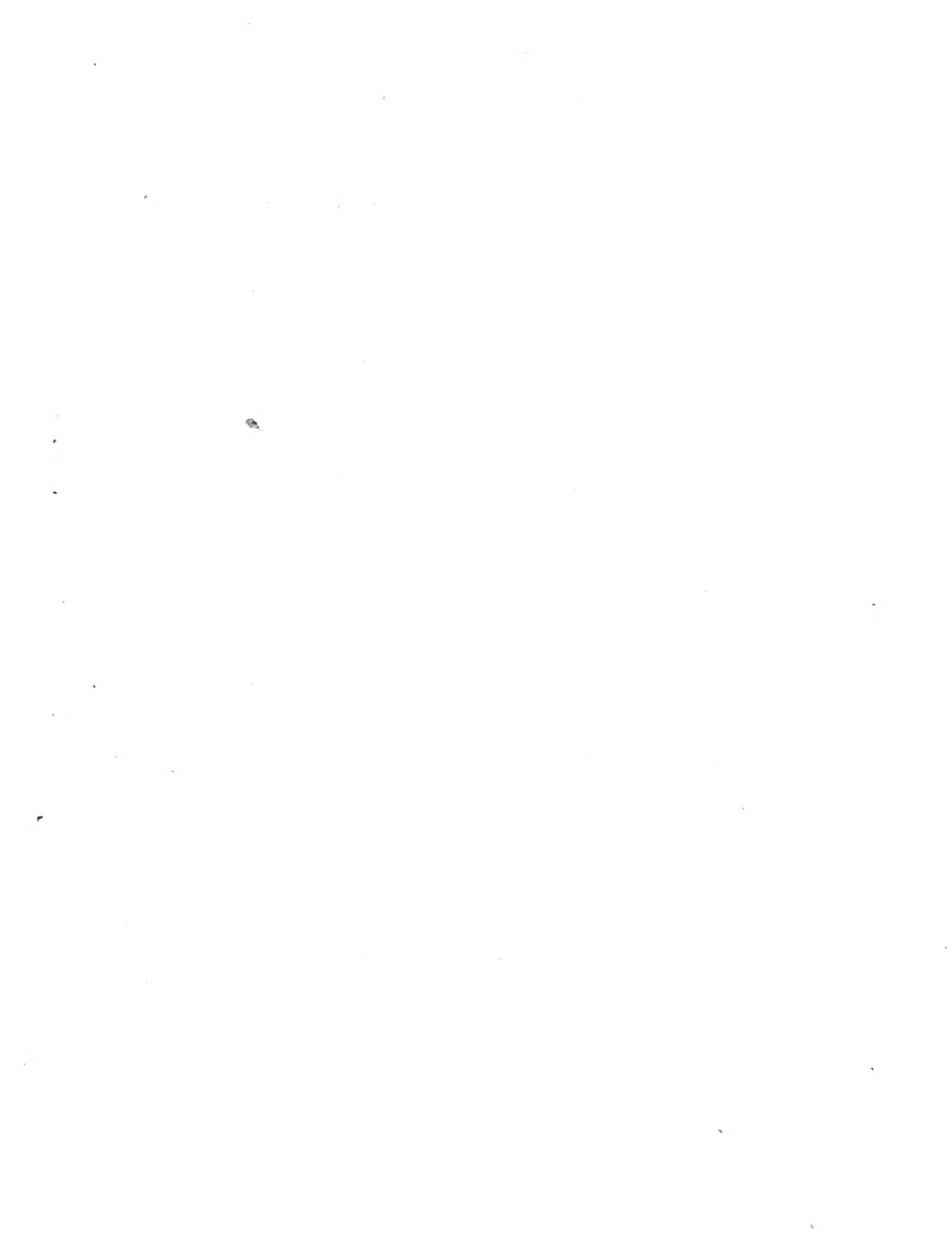
Drawn, for the most Part, out of the most eminently pious and learned writings of our Native Practical Divines: With the Author's own Additionals.

Matth. xii. 50. *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.*

John xiii. 17. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

John xv. 14. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

Luke xvii. 10. *When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.*



BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGES.

CHAP. I. SECT. I.

The Proem, or Entrance into the Book.

YOU have heard in my First Things the doctrine, precepts, and the pattern of a man in his Second or New Birth: now remains what follows all his life; and therein is considerable,

1. His privileges. 2. His duties.

1. His privileges (as he is now a believer in Christ) are, Justification, Reconciliation, Adoption, Sanctification, Glorification.

Of these some of our worthies have written largely; and among the rest, that watchful soul-rouzing, soul-searching Shepherd*: I shall not therefore dwell on them, but sum what he hath delivered in these following sections.

SECT. II.

Of the first privilege, viz. Justification.

THE first privilege which immediately follows our union with Christ, is, Justification; which consists in these particulars, *Imputation of Christ's righteousness, and remission of sin.*

To prevent erroneous misconceits, which spring from the confounding of things that differ, understand, That a man may be said to be justified, either intentionally, or, virtually, or actually; either in God, or in Christ, or in himself.

1. Intentionally in God, *i. e.* in God's purpose and decree: this is from all eternity, but this decree and intention doth

not put any thing into an estate of actual being, but in the fulness of time.

2. Virtually in Christ: and this is from the day of Christ's passion, and in the virtue of his satisfaction; yet this intendeth no more, but that satisfaction is made, and remission purchased by the blood of Christ.

3. Actually in himself: when a man hath the possession of Justification, immediately after his Union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Now this Justification considered, as it is a state of favour, a covenant-state with God, which a man at his first believing is put into, is not reiterated, no more than a wife, after that first entrance into the relation, is frequently made a wife; yet, the particular acts of pardon, and imputation of Christ's righteousness, are continually by God communicated unto the believer. In this respect, this actual justification, or particular acts of pardon, hath its degrees of progression: the beginning thereof is laid in our first union and incorporation into Christ; the consummation of it is not till the Judge at the latter day hath solemnly pronounced the sentence of final absolution, and so set us in full possession of entire remission: between both these, there is a progressive work of justification, by the constant actings of the Spirit, applying the blood of Christ by the hand of faith, to the quiet and comfort of the soul: the

first we may term, initial justification, the second progressive, the last, perfective: the second is the fruit of the first, and the prelude assurance of the last: the first is wrought and sealed in the first sacrament, the second is wrought and sealed in the second sacrament; and both these branches of sacramental justification are, to us, the pre-assurance of that complemental and perfective justification, the sentence whereof putteth an end to all fears, changing our faith and hope into fruition and full possession.

It hath been commonly said by some of our best divines, That justification is transfused in our first union and incorporation into Christ; at which time it is conceived, That the pardon of all sin is sealed to the believer at once. But I fear the misunderstanding of this point (not untrue in itself, if not mistaken and misapprehended) hath laid the ground upon which some build that unhappy structure, which *turneth the grace of God into wantonness*; who knoweth not that justification, in the proper acceptation of the word, according to the scripture phrase, is, 'The act of a judge pronouncing a judicial sentence, wherein he absolveth the person of a sinner from all sin and punishment due to him for sin, and that for the alone righteousness of the surety Christ, freely imputed, and by faith received of him?' And according to this, I suppose we shall not err from the truth, if we say, 1. That the main work of justification, is even as yet to us future, *viz.* at the great and last day of judgment, when we shall receive a final *quietus est* and discharge, and when God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes: and yet, 2. That in our first union with Christ, there is a work of justification, *viz.* actual imputation of Christ's righteousness, and actual remission of what sin for the present

the soul stands guilty of, at that time when it is first united to Christ. I dare not say, that justification, *quatenus* it comprehends imputation, and remission of sin, is one individual act; or, that all sins past, present, and to come are remitted to the believer at once; but this I say, That in our first union, all our sins, past, and present, are actually pardoned; and this favour received, is a pledge of assurance, That in future also, by applying ourselves to Christ, we may and shall receive the forgiveness of our daily sins, and that at the last day we shall at once be absolved from all accusations and charges laid in against us; and that justification (besides those particular acts of pardon, and imputation of Christ's righteousness) doth connote a state that the subject at his first believing is put into, *viz.* 'A state of grace, and favour, and reconciliation with God, for the imputed righteousness of Christ, without apostacy from it either total or final.'

O glorious privilege! especially in these respects:

1. By this a sinner is righteous; a wonder that may astonish angels, for a man accursed and sinful in himself, to be at that very instant blessed and righteous in another: our own duties, works, and reformation may make us at the best but less sinful, but this righteousness makes a sinner sinless. †

2. By this a sinner is righteous before the judgment-seat of God: *It is God that justifies, who shall condemn?* Rom. viii. 33, 34. Not Christ, he is our advocate; not sin, for Christ was made sin for us; not the law, for Christ hath fulfilled the law for us; not Satan, for God is his judge, and if he have acquitted us, what can the jaylor do?

3. By this we have perfect righteousness: we are as perfectly righteous, as

† *Quod rectum.* i. e. as to his guiltiness, or being called in question.

‡ *Christ*

† *Christ the righteous. Little children, let no man deceive you, he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.* Indeed our own righteousness, though it be the fruit of the Spirit of grace, is a blotted, stained righteousness, very imperfect, and very little; but by this, the faith of David, Peter, and Paul, was not more precious than ours is, because we have the same righteousness as they had: what sincere soul but esteems of perfect holiness more than of heaven itself? O consider, we have it, in the sense I now speak of, in the Lord Jesus.

4. By this we have continual righteousness: do we complain because we feel new sin, or old sins confessed, lamented, subdued, returning upon us again, and the springs in the bottom filling our souls again, that we are weary of ourselves? O but remember, this is not a cistern, *but a fountain opened for us to wash in*, Zech. xiii. 1. *As sin abounds, so grace*, in this gift of righteousness, *abounds much more*: the Lord hath *changes of garment* for us, Zech. iii. 4. by means whereof there shall never enter into the Lord's heart one hard thought towards us, of casting us off, or of taking revenge upon any new occasion, or fall into sin, so as for final destruction.

5. By this we have eternal righteousness, that never can be lost: if the Lord should make us as perfectly righteous as once Adam was, or as the angels in heaven are, we might be in danger of losing this; but now the Lord hath put our righteousness into a safer hand, which never shall be lost: Christ hath obtained an *eternal redemption for us*, Heb. ix. 12.

He hath made an end of sin, and brought in an *everlasting righteousness*, Dan. ix. 24.

6. By this we please God more, than if we had a perfect righteousness in ourselves: do not say, 'This is a poor righteousness, which is out of myself in another:' suppose it were in ourselves, such a righteousness at best would be nothing but man's righteousness, but this is called, *The righteousness of God*, 2 Cor. v. 21. Now what is angelical righteousness, when compared to the righteousness of God? 'Tis but as a glow-worm before the sun; the smell of Esau's garments (the robes of this righteousness of the Son of God) are of sweeter odour than ours can be, or ever shall be.

7. By this we glorify God exceedingly: *Abraham believed, and gave glory unto God*, Rom. iv. 20.: So when we believe, we glorify God, we advance his mercy and free grace, and triumph in it.

8. By this we have peace in our consciences: for *Christ's blood is sprinkled on them*, Heb. ix. 14. and that cools the burning torments of them: none of our duties can pacify conscience, but as they carry us hither to this righteousness; only if this rainbow appear over our heads, it is a certain sign of fair weather, and that there shall be no more deluge of wrath to overwhelm us.

9. By this all miseries are removed: when our sins are pardoned, there is something like sickness, shame and death, but they are not; *The inhabitant of Zion shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity*, Isa. xxxiii. 24. 'Tis no sickness in

† *Non formalis et intrinseca iustitia, sed relativa, non quoad quantitatem, sed veritatem, sit enim parva applicatio infinitæ iustitiæ. Si aliter, œque iusti essent ut Christus, possimus alios salvere ut Christus; si non, iustus a Christi sit veluti, non quoad universalium valorem, sed particularem necessitatem, et imputatur nobis, non ut causis saluationis, sed ut in jectis salvandis iustitia Christi est vere meritoria, nostra autem ex mera gratia, iustitia Christi est subjective inherens nobis in tantum communicativa quoad virtutem et efficaciam.* i. e. "We are as perfect (ly) righteous as Christ the righteous;" but not by a formal and intrinsic righteousness, but relative, not as to quantity, but verity, for there is made a finite application of infinite righteousness. If it were otherwise, we would be as righteous as Christ, we might live others as Christ; but far from that, for Christ's righteousness becomes ours, not as to universal efficacy, but particular necessity, and it is imputed to us, not as causes of salvation, but as subjects to be saved, Christ's righteousness is truly meritorious, but ours is of mere grace; the righteousness of Christ is subjectively inherent, and communicative to us, only as to its own virtue and efficacy upon us.

a manner, nor sorrow, nor affliction, if the venom, sting, and curse be taken away by pardon of sin, this is the blessedness of all believers. *Blessed is he whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity*, Pf. xxxii. 1, 2. Here's a blessing pronounced; what should we do but believe it, and rejoice in it?

SECTION III.

Of the second privilege, viz. Reconciliation.

THE second privilege is Reconciliation: this I called the state or condition which a believer in his justification is put into; and here I consider it as a privilege, which in order of nature follows pardon of sin, as pardon of sin in order of nature follows imputation of Christ's righteousness; *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*, Rom. v. 1. (*i. e.*) Christ's righteousness being imputed, and our sins pardoned, we have peace with God; not only peace from God in our consciences, but peace with God in our reconciliation to him, and in his favour towards us; in our imputation and pardon the Lord accounts us just, in our reconciliation the Lord accounts us friends: indeed our meritorious reconciliation is by Christ's death: as the king's son, who procures his father's favour towards a malefactor, who yet lies in cold irons and knows it not; and this is before actual pardon, or actual being: but actual and efficacious reconciliation, whereby we come to the fruition and possession of it, is, to my weak conception, after pardon of sin. Now this reconciliation consists in two things: 1. In our peace with God, whereby the Lord lays by all acts of hostility against us. 2. In the love and favour of God: he now loves us not only with a love of good-will, as in our election, but with a love of complacency and delight. O consider what a blessed state is this!

1. That God should be pacified with us after anger, after provocation by sin, after such wrath, which like fire hath consumed thousand thousands, and burnt down to the bottom of hell, and is now, and ever shall be burning upon them in hell.

2. That God should be pacified wholly and thoroughly, that there should be no consuming fury left for us to feel: *Fury is not in me*, saith God, Isa. xxvii. 4. Indeeds briar and thorns, *i. e.* obstinate sinners, that prick and cut him to the very heart by their impenitency, he will burn them together. God out of Christ *is a consuming fire*, but in Christ he is Love, 1 John iv. 16. And though there may be fatherly frowns, chastisements, reproofs and rods, though he may for a time hide his face, shut out our prayers, defer to fulfil promises, yet all these are out of love to us in some sort, and we shall see it, and feel it so in the latter end.

3. That the Lord should be pacified eternally, never to cast us off again for any sins or miseries that we fall into: this is wonderful. Those whom men love, if their love be abused, or if their friends be in affliction, they many times forsake, but the Lord's love and favour is everlasting: *The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee*, Isa. liv. 10. Nay, that which is something more, the abounding of our sin, is now the occasion of the abounding of his grace, Rom. v. 20. Our very wants and miseries, are the very objects and occasions of his bowels and tender mercies: O what a privilege is this! did the Lord ever shew mercy to the angels that sinned? Did not one sin cast them out of favour utterly? and yet that so many thousand thousands of sins should gush out of my heart, and thy heart that reads it, against the mercy, love and kindness

of our good God, and for all this he not be incensed; that the Lord who poured out all his anger upon his own Son for us, cannot now pour out, nay hath not one drop left, though he would, to pour out upon us for any one of our sins! stand amazed, ye angels, and all the host of heaven at this!

4. That the Lord should be thus pacified with enemies: a man may be easily pacified with one that offends him but a little, but with an enemy that strikes at his life (as by every sin we do at the living God,) what can we say to this?

5. That he should be pacified by such a wonderful way as the blood of Jesus Christ: this is such a love, as one would think the infinite wisdom of a blessed God could have devised no greater: it is enough to burst the heart with astonishment and amazement, to think that the party offended, who therefore had no cause to seek peace with us again, should find out such a way of peace as this: wo to the world that despise this peace.

6. That being thus pacified, we may come into God's presence with boldness at any time, and ask what we will; I wonder what he can deny us, if he love us: *This is the confidence that we have in him, That if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us,* 1 John v. 14.

7. That all creatures should be at peace with us: *Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee,* Job v. 23. As when the captain of an army is pacified, none of the soldiers must hurt or strike that man: so no creature must hurt us, nay all the creatures that seem our enemies, shall be forced to do us good: *O death, where is now thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* 1 Cor. xv. 55. All our wants will make us pray the more, our sorrows humble us the more, our temptations make us exercise our graces, our spiritual desertions make us long for heaven,

and to be with Christ; not only *Paul and Apollos, and the world, and life, but death itself is ours,* to do us good: we may now *sleep, and none shall make us afraid,* Job xi. 19. We shall not be afraid of *evil tidings, our hearts are fixed, trusting in the Lord,* Psal. cxii. 7.

S E C T. IV.

Of the third privilege, viz. Adoption.

THE third privilege is Adoption, which in order of nature follows Reconciliation; whereby the Lord accounts us sons, and gives us the spirit and privilege of sons: *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,* 1 John iii. 1. The Lord accounts us just in our justification, friends in our Reconciliation, sons in our Adoption: now this Adoption is either begun here in this life, or perfected in the world to come, when we shall receive all the privileges of sons, not one excepted. For this latter Adoption, to wit, *The redemption of our bodies,* Rom. viii. 23. we wait; but of the former we speak, the manner of which is thus:

1. God loves Jesus Christ with an unspeakable love, as his only Son, and our elder brother.

2. Hence when we are in Christ his Son, he loves us with the same love as he doth his Son.

3. Hence the Lord accounts us sons, *having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,* Eph. i. 5. O the excellency of this privilege! it appears in these respects.

1. That the Lord should prize us as his sons: a man that hath sons, esteems them more than all his goods and servants; so the Lord esteems of the poorest, unworthiest believer, more than of all his household-stuff; more than of heaven, earth, and all the glory of it, more than of all the kings and great men in the world.

2. That the Lord should take care for

us as for sons: in times of want we are ready to question, *What we shall eat or drink?* 'how shall we live?' Mat. vi. 31. O consider, are we the sons of God? then he that feeds the ravens, and clothes the lillies, will provide for us; or suppose we continue in the want of temporal things, why the Lord is therein plotting our eternal good: *No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them who are exercised thereby,* Heb. xii. 11.

3. That the Lord should love us as his sons: sometimes we think that the Lord loves us not, because we do not feel his love, or know his love; but do not we love our sons because while they are young, they know not their fathers, or because their fathers are sometimes out of sight, and have not them always in their arms? *Zion said. The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me: Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee,* Isa. xlix. 14, 15. We may think, because we have so many sins, or so many afflictions, that therefore the Lord loves us not; but judge we righteously? Have our children no love from us, because they are sick, and we keep them under a spare diet? 'God knows our mold, and that we are but dust:' he hath freely chosen us to be his sons, and therefore, notwithstanding all our sins and sufferings, he loves us still: if he sees *Ephraim bemoaning his stubbornness, as well as sickness,* the Lord cries out, and cannot hold, *Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will*

surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord, Jer. xxxi. 20.

4. That the Lord should make us heirs and co-heirs with Christ, Rom. viii. 17. Sons by nature are not always heirs, but all sons by Adoption are; we are heirs 1. *Of the visible world,* 1 Cor. iii. 22. 2. *Of the other world,* 1 Pet. i. 4. 3. *Of all the promises,* Heb. vi. 17. And herein Jehovah himself comes to be our inheritance and portion for ever: O that such vessels of wrath, fire-brands of hell by nature, should thus become the children of God by grace, and heirs of heaven!

5. That the Lord should give us the spirit of sons, *The spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father,* The spirit of assurance, *witnessing with our spirit, that we are the children of God,* Ro. viii. 15, 16. It doth not only witness to our spirits, but with our spirits, i. e. with our renewed consciences, thus, 'All believers are sons, 'but I am a believer, therefore I am a son:' herein the Spirit bears witness with us in every part, premises, and conclusion; only it testifies more clearly, certainly, comfortably, sweetly, ravishing the soul with unpeakable joy, and peace, in the conclusion: sometimes indeed it may be suspended, and sometimes we may not hear it; or if we do, we may object against it, through the unbelief in part remaining in us; yet † 'if we want it in the witness and comfort of it, we have it in the holiness of it:' hence it is called, *The holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption,* Eph. iv. 30.

S E C T. V.

Of the fourth privilege, viz. Sanctification.
THE fourth privilege is Sanctification, which in order of nature follows adoption. no sooner are we sons, but we receive the image of our heavenly Father in

† *Quando actus intermittitur, habitus non amittitur.* i. e. When the act is discontinued, the habit is not lost.

Sanctification; The manner of it is thus:

1. The Spirit works in us a principle of spiritual life: the scripture sometimes calls it a *seed*, 1 John iii. 9. sometimes a *spring*, or *fountain*, John iv. 14. sometimes *the life of Christ*, 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11. because it is conveyed unto us by the Spirit of Christ, by means of our inseparable union with Christ. What name soever we give it, we may conceive it to be a new faculty added unto those which are in men by nature, but an improvement of those abilities to work spiritually, as they did naturally before regeneration. Hence it is that a regenerate man in scripture, is said *To walk after the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 1. *To be led by the Spirit*, *To walk in the Spirit*. Gal. v. 18. 25.

2. From this fountain spring all those habits of spiritual grace, which are severally distinguished by the names of Faith, Hope, Love, &c. although to speak properly, they are but the diversifications of that spiritual principle within us, distinguished by these names.

From these habits of grace abiding in us, ordinarily proceed spiritual motions and operations according to those habits. And as it is with natural habits, so it is with spiritual, they are much increased and strengthened by their motions, operations, &c. by the use and exercise of them, and are as much weakened by disuse, and neglect of such an exercise. I deny not but for all this, there is within us a woful, sinful nature, cross and contrary unto holiness, and leading us daily into captivity: yet here's our privilege, even Sanctification in part; surely the Lord hath given us another nature, a new nature: there is something else within us, which makes us wrestle against sin, and shall in time prevail over all sin: *A bruised reed shall be not break, and smoking flax shall be not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory*, Mat. xii. 20.

The excellency of this privilege appears in these particulars:

1. This is our glory, and beauty, even glorification begun: what greater glory than to be like unto God? *We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Every degree of grace is glory, and the perfection of glory in heaven, consists chiefly in the perfection of grace.

This will give us abundance of sweet peace. For whence come troubles, and doubts of God's favour and love? Is it not some guile, or decay here? Is it not some boldness to sin? Is it not our secret dalliance with some known sin, continued in with secret impenitency? On the other side, what was Paul's rejoicing? Hezekiah's peace? The one cried, *That in all sincerity and simplicity he had his conversation amongst men*; the other, *Lord, remember, I have walked before thee uprightly*; not that this was the ground of their peace, for that is only free grace in Christ, but the means of their peace, 2 Cor. i. 12. Isa. xxxviii. 2, 3. That is a cursed peace, that is kept by looking to Christ, and yet loving our lusts.

3. This will make us fit for God's use: a filthy unclean vessel is good for nothing, till cleansed; a man must first purge himself, and then he shall be *a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work*, 2 Tim. ii. 21.

By this we have a sweet and comfortable evidence of our justification: nor is this a running upon the covenant of works: Is not Sanctification (the writing of the law in our hearts) a privilege of the covenant of grace, as well as justification? and can the evidencing of one privilege by another, be a running upon the covenant of works? O consider, how many evangelical promises are made to persons invested with such and such graces! as, of Poverty, Mourning, Meekness, etc. Mattha.

Matth. v. 3, 4, 5, 6. and to what end? but that every one may take, and be assured of his portion manifested particularly therein? surely none are justified, but they are sanctified; or if not sanctified, they are not justified.

S E C T. VI.

Of the fifth Privilege, viz. Glorification.

THE fifth privilege, is, glorification, which is the last, in execution, of God's eternal purpose towards all his beloved and chosen ones: and hereby are we

made partakers of those endless and unutterable joys, which *neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor the heart of man conceived*: but of this you have several sermons in my *Last Things*, enough to cheer up all those precious hearts that have any title to, or interest in the Lord Jesus Christ: my meaning therefore, is, to pass by those privileges, and, Secondly, to come to the Duties, which gracious spirits, in all faithful and thankful obedience unto him that hath called them, are ready to fall upon.

C H A P. II.

Of DUTIES in General.

S E C T. I.

Of the Equity of Duties.

NO sooner is the soul translated into the state of grace, and crowned with those glorious privileges, but immediately it cries out, 'O Lord, what shall I now do for thee? how shall I now live to thee?' Good reason, the soul should now give up herself to Christ, for she knows, she is not her own, but Christ's. Can there be such an heart in any Christian, as now to cast off duty, and continue in sin, because so much grace hath abounded? O no! *The love of Christ constraineth us*; (saith the apostle) *because we thus judge, that he died for all, that they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again*, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. There is a principle of love now in the hearts of believers, and this love of Christ constrains them to live to Christ, *Ye are now a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of Christ, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. What blessed titles are these? and to what end? but that they who are so enobled by Christ, may now adorn the gospel

of Christ, and *shew forth the praises of him who hath called them*? Dearly beloved, (saith the apostle) *I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain now from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul: having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation*. But what duties must they fall on? 1. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*. 2. *Honour all men*. 3. *Love the brotherhood*. 4. *Fear God*. 5. *Honour the king*. 6. *Suffer wrongs*, 1 Pet. ii. 11, 12, 13, 17, 19. You have herein Christ for example, and you must do all for Christ's sake; or, if these duties will not contain all, Zachary tells us, *that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we must serve him without fear, in holiness*, (in all the duties of the first table) *and righteousness*, (in all the duties of the second table) *all the days of our life*, Luke i. 74, 75. Indeed, how can we love Christ, and neglect duty to Christ? *If you love me*, saith Christ, *keep my commandments*, John xiv. 15. the love of Christ will constrain us to embrace his commandments, as a most precious treasure. 'I hope assuredly, that the God of grace

grace and mercy will keep, by his power to salvation, all those persons he doth deliver; and that he will sow the seeds of grace in their hearts, that they may not sin presumingly. And I hope also, God will meet with such as are disturbers of the truth of Christ, and peace of the gospel, by their base and vile conversations: and I shall recommend to them the reading of the epistle of Jude, where they may see the fearful wrath of God upon such persons as abuse the grace of God to sin. O let not the love of Christ thus manifested, be so basely requited at your hands, seeing the Lord hath so freely loved you, and given Christ to you, that you might be to the praise of the glory of his grace, in a godly christian conversation, whereunto you are ordained*. For you are God's workmanship, saith the apostle, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that you should walk in them, Eph. ii. 10. And I beseech you always to remember, that you cannot answer the free love of God towards you any other way, but by shewing it in a fruitful conversation in the world; considering that one end of your redemption, that Christ, who gave himself for you, might redeem you from all iniquity, and purify you unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. ii. 14. Here's good equity for duties: the soul cannot consider her deliverance by the blood of Christ, and by the spirit of Christ, but she cries, *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord: I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people: O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds.* For a man that hath a touch of the loving-kindness of

Christ, and therefore stands ready to speak forth the praise of the glory of his grace, that hath so freely saved him, it must needs be an acceptable service to God in Christ.

S E C T. II.

Of the Insufficiency of Duties.

BUT alas, what are these duties to my Lord? Or what are these duties in themselves?

1. All the duties of man, they are nothing at all unto God: *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?* Job. xxii. 2. 3. *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he from thine hand?* Job xxxv. 7. *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord,* Psal. xvi. 2. And what then? what recompence to God for this propriety? Nay, David is here non-pluss'd, *My goodness extendeth not to thee.* All the services of men and angels, though they run parallel with the longest lines of eternity, are an insufficient recompence for my soul's deliverance: *When we have done all we can, still we must say, We are unprofitable servants,* Luke xvii. 10.

2. All the duties of man, as they are done by man, are, in that respect, sinful. What is duty, but man's tye to that which is due? or, if we follow the Latins, what is duty, but obedience commanded by God, to be performed by man? Now wherein any thing is to be done as of man, therein is some mixture of sin: *All our righteousnesses is as filthy rags, as a menstruous cloth,* Isa. lxiv. 6. How? *All our righteousnesses?* Is it true, whilst a believer's heart is overcast with gross vapours, and is more than ordinarily dull in hearing, whilst it lies

* An ingenuous confession of Dr. Crisp, an open adversary of good works: some that extoll him, may do well to remember it. See Dr. Crisp's Assurance of Faith.

low and slow in praying, and is somewhat stiff, and untoward in fasting above measure, such righteousness goes usually for sin: but if a foul gets under full sail; if it be filled with a stiff gale of the Spirit of Christ; if floods of meltings flow from it, if it cry mightily, be swift to hear, be greedy in sucking in divine truths, and be somewhat exact in observing practical righteous means, to mourn, and pray fervently, being helped by the Spirit herein: are such prayers, mournings and other divine exercises in any sort sinful? yes, as there is some mixture of man's infirmity in them; and in our best duties there is some such mixture; for *all our righteousnesses is as filthy rags, as men's rous cloths*. I know who hath said it, and yet I know not wherein to contradict it: 'Christians may distinguish between that which is the Spirit's, in works after renovation, and the whole work after they have done it: now although the motions and assistance of the Spirit be pure, holy, and without scum in the spring, to wit, in itself; yet, by that time these motions and assistance have passed through the channels of their hearts, and have been mixed with their manifold corruptions in doing, even the whole work thereby becomes polluted †'. With him agreeth one truly orthodox; saying, 'Albeit our good works are perfect in respect of the Spirit, from whom they first flow, yet are they polluted, when they pass from us, because they run through our corrupted hearts and wills, as fair water runs through a dirty channel ‡'. If this be so, that our best recompence to Christ, for his loves, be unprofitable to him, and sinful, as done by man; what shall I say? how must I carry, saith the soul, to my Redeemer?

I Dare not disobey; tho' all the duties in the world are insufficient to recompense those bowels of God's mercies in Christ, I must not therefore cast away duties. It is true, I cannot but sin in all I do, my best duties (nakedly and barely considered in themselves) are tainted, poisoned, and mingled with sin*: But will it follow, that, because I cannot be more clean, therefore I must be more filthy than needs? Nay, O my soul, if thou art married to that bridegroom Christ, duties and all things else are clean to thee; 'The whole filth and dung of our works, through faith in Christ, is extracted by Christ, and he presenting the same purged by himself alone, they are accepted with God?' In this respect there is an healing of duties, if we be in Christ. Certainly, that fruit which cometh from a root of faith, must needs be good fruit; *I believe, therefore I speak*, saith the Psalmist, Psalm cxvi. 10. O my soul, canst thou say thus? I believe, therefore I pray; I believe, therefore I sanctify the Lord's day; I believe, therefore I do all duties of obedience: thy obedience then is the fruit of paradise, for it grows on the very tree of life. Christ is *The Sun of righteousness that ariseth with healing in his wings*, Mal. iv. 2. Christ is that sun, that by his heat of love extracts all the filth of sin out of thy duties performed; and so thy duties are healed, and the spiritual part of them being presented by the intercession of Christ, and the carnal defects covered by the righteousness of Christ, in whom the Father is always well pleased.

§. 1. *Of the Manner of healing our Duties.*

NOW the manner, O my soul, how Christ heals our duties, it is thus:

† Dr. Crippin his sermon on Philip. iii. 8. A known adversary to the pure doctrine of duties.

‡ Luke's high-way to heaven.

* Dr. Crippin in his sermon on Philip. iv. 3.

1. He takes our persons, and carries them into God the Father, in a most unperceivable way to us; he knows, that if our persons be not first accepted, our duties cannot be accepted: Love me, and love my duty; hate me, and hate my duty. It is true, that in the covenant of works, God first accepted of the work, and then of the person; but in the covenant of grace, God first accepts of the person, and then of the work: now therefore, that our works (our duties) may be accepted, Christ Jesus our great High Priest first takes our persons, and carries them into the presence of God the Father. This was plainly shadowed out to us by that of the high Priest, who *went into the holy of holiest, with the names of all the tribes upon his breast, Exod. xxviii. 29.*

2. As Christ takes our persons, and carries them in to God the Father: so, when we perform duty, he observes what evil or failing there is in that duty, and draws it out before he presents it to God the Father: as a child that would present his father with a pomegranate, he goes into the garden, and gathers flowers and weeds together; but coming to his mother, she picks out the weeds, and binds up the flowers by themselves, and so it is presented to the father. Thus we go to duty, and we gather [as it were] weeds and flowers together, [i. e. sin and duty] but Christ comes, and picks out the weeds, [or sin] and so presents nothing but flowers [or pure duty] to God the Father: *Who may abide the day of his coming* (said the prophet of Christ, Mal. iii. 2, 3, 4.) *and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and shall purifie the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness, then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord: Mark, Then shall their offerings be pleasant:*

Then? when? *when he had purged their sacrifices and their offerings.* Thus it was in the days of his flesh, and much more now.

3. As Christ takes away the iniquity of our holy things, so he observes what good there is in any of our duties, [not that there can be any good in them, until his own Spirit work it; but, after he hath done so, he observeth what good there is in these duties] and with that he mingles his own prayers, intercessions, and incense, [and he had much need, because tho' the good put into these duties by himself was at first pure, as being derived from the Fountain of purity, yet these duties have contracted a sinful mixture of imperfection, by running through the channel of corrupt nature, that is to say, by our manner of performing them] and presents all as one work mingled together unto God the Father: *And another angel* (viz. the angel of the covenant) *came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne: and the smook of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the angel's hand, Rev. viii. 3, 4.*

§. 2. *The Soul's Queries in this Case.*

Quest. 1. **I**F this be so, O my soul, what is thy case? Are not most of thy duties performed with many failings, infirmities, hardness of heart, straitness of spirit, distracting thoughts? and is there any healing for such a duty as this?

Ans. O yes! For, 1. In every duty we perform, there are two things; there is the sacrifice, and there is the obedience in offering of the sacrifice; the sacrifice may be imperfect, and yet our obedience in offering the sacrifice may be perfect with gospel perfection. 2. God deals with our duties as with our persons; though he had a great deal of ungodliness in them, yet he

imputes his righteousness unto them, and so he justifies our duties, which, in our eyes, are most ungodly. This indeed is a wonder; did we ever hear or read of any seal, that, when it was set upon the wax, would change the wax into its own mettall? Or, did we ever hear or read of any stamp, that being set upon brass, it would change the brass into silver; or, being set upon silver, it would change the silver into gold? O, but when Christ comes unto a duty, and sets his own stamp, and his own righteousness upon a duty, that which was brass before, *i. e.* full of failings and much unrighteousness, he changes it into silver, into gold: he only hath the philosopher's stone (as I may so speak) and all that Christ toucheth, it presently turneth into gold; [that is,] he turns all our duties into golden duties, and so presents them unto the Father.

Quer. 2. 'But how should I know that Christ thus takes my duties and heals them, and mingles them with his own incense, and carries them in unto God the Father?'

Ans. Consider, didst thou ever find a spiritual fire come down (as it were) upon thy heart in duty, or after duty? In the time of the Old Testament, if they offered up a sacrifice, and a material fire came down from heaven, and burnt upon the sacrifices to ashes, it was a certain testimony that the sacrifice was accepted: now in the times of the gospel, we must not expect material fire to come down upon our duties: but hath the Lord at any time caused an inward and spiritual fire to fall down upon thy heart, warming thy spirit in duty? there the Lord speaks thus much to thee, That thy sacrifice is turned into ashes, and it is accepted by Jesus Christ.

Quer. 3. 'O but whence comes this fire now in these gospel times?'

Ans. It issues from the blood and intercessions of Christ *our great High Priest*; it is the efficacy of his blood, and power of his glorious intercession, that when thou

feelest any good in duties, doth that very instant prevail with God the Father for what thou feelest: Say then, 'Do I now in this ordinance, or in this duty, feel my heart warmed, or savingly affected? O I see, I am bound to believe, that the Lord Jesus who sits in glory at the right hand of God, now, now he remembers me a poor worm on earth; now I feel the fruit of his death, and intercession in heaven; now I feel his spirit, power, grace, comfort, presence, sweetness; now I taste, I drink, I enjoy, and am abundantly satisfied with his rivers of pleasures: and if this presence of Christ be so sweet, what is himself then?' O my soul, if ever thou dost thus relish the blood and Spirit of Christ upon thy spirit in duties, go thy way, and give glory to God.

S E C T. IV.

No resting in Duties.

AND yet be wary, O my soul: it was Luther's saying, 'Take heed not only of thy sins, but also of thy good duties;' they are apt (by reason of our corruption) to bring men into themselves, and this is very dangerous. Certainly a man may not only exclude Christ from his soul by gross sins, but by self-confidence; *You are they who justify yourselves*, said Christ, to the pharisees, Luke xvi. 15. Take a profane man, what makes him drink, swear, cozen, game, whore? Is there no God to punish? Is there no hell hot enough to torment? Are there no plagues to confound him? Yes: Why sins he then? Oh! he prays to God for forgiveness; he sorrows and repents in secret (as he saith) and this bears him out in his lewd pranks. Take a moral man, he knows he hath his failings, and his sins, as the best have, and is overtaken sometimes as the best are; why doth he not remove these sins then? Why is he not more humbled under his sins? the reason is, he constantly observes evening and morning prayer, and then he craves forgive-

giveness for failings, by which course he hopes to make his peace with God: and hence he sinneth without fear, and riseth out of his fall into sin without sorrow; he maintains his sins by his duties. Take a professor, such a one as may be exceedingly troubled about his sins, as endeavours very much after mourning, repenting, reforming, and others commend him for a diligent Christian; Do you not see how he mourns, and weeps, and prays? and now the wind is over, the tempest down, and there is a great calm in his soul, how comes he to this quiet? Oh! his afflictions were enlarged, he hath reached so high, as to a very proportion of repentance, and tears, and sorrow, and fasting, etc. and this hath given him ease, this hath taken away the burden, and laid his soul at rest: O poor soul, is this all the remedy to rid thee of the sting and guilt of sin? Hast thou no more pantings, but only after bitterness, heaviness, mourning, melting, extraordinary enlargements? Why then, let me tell thee, all thy righteousness, though it were more perfect than it is, is but as a *filthy rag*, Isa. lxiv. 6. Couldst thou weep thy heart out, should thy heart melt like wax, dissolve into water: 'Couldst thou desire and pray till heaven and earth shook, till thou hadst worn thy tongue to the stumps: couldst thou fast till thy skin and bones cleave together; couldst thou promise and purpose with full resolution to be better; couldst thou reform thy heart, head, life, tongue, *some*, nay, *all* sins; couldst thou live like an angel, shine like a sun, walk up and down the world like a distressed pilgrim; couldst thou die ten thousand deaths, lie at the fire-back in hell for many millions of years as there be piles of grass on the earth, or sands on the sea-shore, or stars in heaven, or motes in the sun; I tell thee, not one spark of God's wrath against

thy sins can be quenched by all these duties, nor by any of these sorrows or tears. †

It was Austin's saying, though it sounds harsh, 'That repentance damns more than sin;' meaning, that thousands did perish by resting therein: It is not digging within ourselves, for power to leave sin, to be more holy, and humble, and religious, and conscientious, and so to think to work out ourselves in time out of this state: the words which the prophet put into Israel's mouth, if they would truly turn unto God, were these, *Assur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses*, Hof. xiv. 3. *q. d.* We will trust no more to these outward means, we will not save ourselves by our graces, or abilities.

'But how shall any man know that he rests in his duties?'

I answer by these signs following ‡.

1. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he never found it a hard matter to come out of his duties: examine, if thou never yet sawest, if thou canst not tell the time when thou didst rest in duties, and then didst groan to be delivered from these intanglements, thou hast just cause to fear.

2. It is a sign that a man rests in duties, if he exceedingly prize the bare performance of duties; those duties that carry thee out of thyself unto Christ, make thee to prize Christ: now tell me, dost thou glory in thyself? Dost thou say, 'Now I am somebody? I was before ignorant, forgetful, hard-hearted, but now I understand better, now I can sorrow for my sins, I can pray with some life, now I have done very well.' Alas poor soul! if thou retest here, if thou thus inhancest the price of duties, that thou beginnest to dote on them, then do I pronounce from God, 'That thou dost rest in duties:' *These things*, saith Paul, *I accounted gain* (*i. e.* before his conversion) *but now I account them loss*, Phil. iii. 8. This

† Shepherd's Sincere Convert.

‡ *ibid.*

is the reason why a child of God commonly after his prayers doubts much of God's love towards him; whereas another man that falls short of him, never so much as questions his estate: the first seeth much rottenness and vileness in his best duties, and so adjudgeth meanly of himself; but the other is ignorant of any such vileness, and therefore he prizeth and esteems highly of them.

3. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he never came to be sensible of their poverty, and utter emptiness of any good in them. Didst thou never feel thyself in this manner? 'Oh I am as ignorant as any beast, as vile as any devil; what a nest and litter of sin and rebellion works in my heart? I once thought, at least, my heart and desires were good, but now I feel no spiritual life; O dead hear, I am the poorest, vilest, basest and blindest creature that ever lived!' If thou never seelest thyself thus, thou never camest out of thy duties.

4. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he gain no evangelical righteousness by duties, *i. e.* if he prize not, desire not, delight not in union with the Lord Jesus Christ; hence a child of God asks himself after sermon, after prayer, after sacrament, 'What have I gained of Christ? Have I got more knowledge of Christ? more admiring of the Lord Jesus Christ?' On the contrary, a carnal heart, that rests in his duties, asketh only, 'What have I done?' *I think God*, said the pharisee, *I am not as other men are; I fast twice in the week. I give tythes of all that I possess*, Luke xviii. 11, 12. So 'I pray, and hear, and reform, and sorrow for sin, therefore I think verily I shall be saved?' No such matter; let a man have a bucket of gold, doth he think to get water, because he hath a bucket; no, he must let it down into the well, and draw up water with it: so must thou let down all thy duties into the Lord Jesus Christ, and draw life, and light from his fullness, otherwise, though thy duties be golden duties, thou shalt perish without Christ.

S E C T. V.

Of the Use and End of Duties.

AND canst thou not, O my soul, be saved by thy duties? to what end shouldst thou pray, or hear, or sorrow, or repent, or meditate, or examine, or confer? I answer, There are many ends and purposes, for which Christians may, and must perform duties.

1. That herein, and hereby, they may express their obedience to God's will: *Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you*, saith the apostle, 1 Theff. v. 16, 17, 18. And this was the ground of David's inference, *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently*: and what then? *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes*, Psal. cxix. 4, 5.

2. That God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may be honoured by the performance of these duties: *Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit*, John xv. 8. And as the apostle, *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*; 1 Pet. ii. 9. *Abraham believed, and gave God glory*: so we should pray, and meditate, and hear, and all should tend to the glory of God. Indeed, hypocrites aims are at other ends, by *giving alms, and praying, and fasting, that they may have glory of men*: *That they may be seen of men: that they may appear unto men*, Matth. vi. 2, 5, 16. But the child of God aims at the glory of God. I confess 'tis God's grace to account of man's duty as his glory, seeing it is so defective.

3. That duties may be as evidences of God's everlasting love to them who are in Christ Jesus: They cannot save, but they let the soul into Christ, and follow, and accompany such a man as shall be saved. 'We hear of some that boast of joys, feel-

ing, gifts, spirit, and grace; † but if they walk in the commission of any one sin, or in the omission of any one known duty, or in the slovenly ill-favoured performance of duties, they can have no assurance (say what they please) without flattering of themselves: *If these things be in you, (saith Peter,) and abound, they will make you that ye shall neither be barren, or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: and he that lacketh these things is blind: Wherefore, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure,* 2 Pet. i. 8, 9, 10. Duties bring you in to Christ, and are evidences when you are in Christ, that the Lord and mercy is yours, even as at the sacrament, the elements of bread and wine are outward signs to bring Christ and the heart together; indeed the heart must not rest in these signs, but when the soul is let in to Christ, then faith must let go the outward elements, and close, and treat immediately with the Lord Jesus Christ. So grace and duties are inward signs, and whiles men make use of them only, as signs and means to let them come in unto Christ, and their rejoicing is not in them, but in Christ; their confidence is not pitched upon them, but upon Christ; there is and will be no danger at all in making such use of signs; especially seeing in nature, the effect is a sign of the cause: Neither is it more derogatory to free-grace, or to Christ's honour, for God to make such effects signs of our union with him, than it was to make outward signs of his presence: 'Tis true these are not full testimonies without the Spirit of Christ.

4. That they that use and exercise duties may obtain the promises: *Godliness is profitable unto all things,* saith the a-

postle, *having promises of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,* 1 Tim. iv. 8. There are many promises scattered up and down in the word, and hereby if God be not a debtor unto thee, yet he is to himself, and to his own faithfulness. *Reddis debita, nulli debens,* cried *Austin;* 'Thou Lord payest debts, and owest to none; it was free for thee before thou hadst promised, whether to give me heaven or no: But now the word is out of thy mouth, I use duties as means, tho' I adhere only to thee, and to thy faithfulness, who hast promised.' To prevent mistake, duties are considered in a double relation: 1. As services, in respect of the command; and 2. As means to obtain blessings at God's hands in relation to his promise. Now the most in the world perform duties as acts of obedience only, and so rest in the present performance; but if we do them in faith, we ‡ shall have an eye to the promise, and look on duties as means to obtain some mercy; yea, salvation itself at God's hands, Phil. ii. 12. Rom. x. 10. 2 Cor. vii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 9.

But is not this to be saved by duties?

No such thing: for herein we speak not of Duties originally, or *per se*, but instrumentally, and with relation to the Lord Jesus Christ; not as meritorious causes, but as subordinate means of our salvation in the name of Christ. The best of duties carry not such lustre, beauty and energetical virtue in their own faces and natures; they are but mere empty pits, and dry channels, of themselves, though never so curiously cut out, but Christ fills them (and as some desire ministers to do) so I am willing for my part to 'say and express thus much of Christ, that the people may clearly understand and remember so much,

† Shepherd's Sincere Convert. ‡ Certainly duties are not only as signs, but they are means, ways and qualifications, which God hath appointed antecedently to grace and salvation; Tho' still we say they have no merit or condignity in them to purchase salvation, yet they are used as means whereby heaven is obtained. *Borges* of the true doctrine of justification,

and be guided explicitly to the fountain itself, Christ alone. †

5. That these duties may turn to our comfort: not so, as to put confidence in them, to take comfort from them as a cause; that cannot be, for who can look upon any thing he doth with that boldness? but as the testimony of God's eternal love to us. Thus Hezekiah, not as a proud pharisee, but as a thankful acknowledger of what was in him, prayed, *I beseech thee, O Lord, remember me, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight*, 2 Kings xx. 3. Some suppose, 'That such a temptation as this might fall on Hezekiah, that when he had laboured to demolish all those superstitions, and now became dangerously sick, that he had not done well; and therefore he comforts himself in his heart, that he did those things with a perfect heart, not absolutely, but comparatively perfect: we may therefore take comfort from duties, not so as to rest in them, but so as to praise God thereby. 'Tis a good way, *nesciends scire, in not knowing to know*, that so we may praise God for them; and *sciends nescire, in knowing, not to know*, that so we may be humble in ourselves.

6. That others might receive good, and thereby be occasioned to glorifie God: *These things are good, and profitable to men*, saith the apostle, Tit. iii. 8. and, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father who is in heaven*, Matth. v. 16. Christ doth not here encourage vain-glory, but he propounds the true end of our visible holiness; for godliness being light, it ought not, in suitable duties, to be hid under a bushel: *My goodness extendeth not unto thee, but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all*

my delight, Ps. xvi. 2, 3. Jerom said of Austin, 'That he loved Christ dwelling in Austin; so ought we to walk, that others may love Christ dwelling in us. There's an exhortation to wives, *so to walk that their husbands may be won to the Lord*, 1 Pet. iii. 1. 'Sweet soul! it may be thou prayest for thy husband, in a carnal condition, thou desirest him to go to hear such a minister, such a sermon; go on in these duties, adding this to the rest, see that thy life also may convert him.'

7. That duties may carry us to the Lord Jesus, the only Saviour; he alone is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, Heb. vii. 25. *i. e.* in the use of the means: hear a sermon to carry thee to the Lord Jesus: fast and pray, and get a full tide of affections in them, to carry thee to the Lord Jesus Christ, *i. e.* to get more love of him, more acquaintance with him, more union in him, and communion with him; use thy duties, as Noah's dove did her wings, to carry thee to the ark of the Lord Jesus Christ, where only there is rest: if she had never used her wings, she had fallen in the waters; and if she had not returned to the ark, she had found no rest: so, if thou shalt use no duties, but cast them all off, thou art sure to perish; and if they convey thee not to Christ, thou mayest lie down in sorrow: Or as it is with a poor man, that is to get over a great water for a treasure on the other side, tho' he cannot fetch the boat, he calls for it, and useth it to carry him over to the treasure: so Christ is in heaven, and thou on earth, he doth not come to thee, and thou canst not get to him, now call for a boat; though there is no grace, no good, no salvation in a pithless duty, yet use it to carry thee over to the treasure, The Lord Jesus Christ: when thou comest to hear, say,

† Dr. Crisp on Phil. iii. 8.

• Shepherd's Sincere Convert.

‘Have

‘Have over, Lord, by this sermon,’ when thou comest to pray, say, ‘Have over, Lord, by this prayer to a Saviour:’ but this is the misery of people, like foolish lovers, when they are to woo for the lady, they fall in love with her handmaid, that is only to lead them to her: so men fall in love with and dote upon their own duties, and rest contented with the naked performance of them, which are only hand-maids, to lead the soul unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

8. That the Lord Christ may be exalted, and advanced by duties. The main end of duties, is the glory of him who hath redeemed us with the price of his blood, and the power of his Spirit; this sets the crown on his head: *Behold king Solomon, with the crown, wherewith his mother crowned him*, Cant. iii. 11. How many perform duties, not to set the crown on Christ’s head, but to set the crown on their own heads? So do hypocrites, that seek their own praise, and credit and profit; so do all, especially that do any thing with a conceit of meriting at God’s hands. Now this is the main end of right obedience, that the crown may be set on Christ’s head, that he who is king of saints, may have the honour given him, due to his kingly office. In this respect, I cannot blame them who blame others, for crying up, and magnifying man’s works in their own name. To say, That Christ is always supposed as principal, is no sufficient apology: for why only supposed? why not be named, as well as duties and righteousness? Certainly, it is not good manners, to say no worse, to forget him, while his poor instruments are so highly remembered. When servants bring presents from their masters to any, they do not say, ‘I bestow such and such a thing on you,’ but, ‘My master sends it you;’ if he should take it on himself, he should go for an ar-

rogant fellow: nor will it save the matter, when he is taxed for such arrogance, to say, ‘My master should have been supposed,’ when he gave no hint of him. ‘Methinks it were comely (saith the Author * rightly in this) in extolling of man’s righteousness, explicitly to ascribe all the praise to the glory of Christ, and his grace:’ and I see not (saith † another ingeniously) but that ministers may be humbled, that they have pressed religious duties, but not so as to set up Christ: and hereby people have been content with duties, and sacraments, tho’ no Christ in them, but as vessels were to be of pure gold in the temple, so ought all our duties to be of pure and mere Christ for acceptance.’ Again, ‘if Bernard said, ‘He did not love to read Tully, because he could not read the name of Christ there; how much rather may we say, That in many sermons, in many a man’s ministry, the drift and end of all his preaching is not, that Christ may be advanced.’ And again, ‘Let Christ be the matter of our righteousness and comfort, more than he hath been; you know the posts that were not sprinkled with blood, were sure to be destroyed, and so are all those persons and duties that have not Christ upon them. How sweet is the harmony of dissenting brethren? Methinks, I would not lose a shred of that gold which both authors (so strongly my heart beats and pants after unity) give out to be weight in the balance of the sanctuary: it is observed by the former, That when the church grew into credit, then, *Religio peperit divitias, et filia devoravit matrem* ‡: I as truly say, *Christus peperit justitiam, et filia devoravit matrem* §: just as if a king should promote a favourite, and then he should be so applauded for his usefulness to the subjects, that the king must be dethroned, and he crowned in his place. In all exigences,

* Dr. Crisp on Phil. iii. 8. † Mr. Borges *Uindicie legis*. ‡ *That is, Religion brought forth riches, and riches [the daughter] devoured her mother [Religion]*. § *That is, Christ brought forth righteousness, and righteousness abused Christ, who gave it being.*

wants and extremities, how few followers hath Christ himself? how rarely are men sent to shelter themselves under the shadow of his wings? In the mean while, what hideous outcries for prayers, mournings, fastings, &c. to help men at a dead life? What sending and posting to them in extremities, as if they kept a court by themselves? For Christ is seldom heard of, at least not set up so high as to do all; and that this righteousness is but merely his ministering servant: what the apostle said of himself, I may as truly say of the best righteousness best assisted, *What is prayer, mourning, fasting, hearing, but ministers by whom ye believed, and received mercy?* 1 Cor. iii. 5. And if but as ministers at best, shall they be greater than the Lord? Let me not be mistaken, 'I intend no derogation to righteousness, but the bringing of it into its own place, namely that it is to be used as that, where according to Christ's directions we may meet with him, from whose hands alone we may expect whatever we pant after, according to his will; reserving a submission to be disposed of otherwise, if he see fit.' † Again, 'It is not the spiritualness, nor the fervency in the performance of duties that carries it, but when duties are performed as to the Lord, and for the Lord, and not to and for ourselves.' O my soul, in respect of all these ends, use and exercise duties, and be sure of Christ in all, above all, more than all. O let Christ have the crown set on his head, give him all the glory. Cast not away duties, but cast them down at the feet of Jesus Christ, as the twenty four elders cast their crowns, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, (all duties) and for thy pleasure they are and were created,* Rev. iv. 11.

S E C T. VI.

Of the Saints abilities, or power to do duties.

Object. 'BUT alas, how should I perform my duty? by nature I am dead, and except God give me an heart and strength, what can I do? Psa. lxxvii. 10. There is no power in my hands, I am nothing in myself, and therefore till God come, or naked Christ come, I will sit down in discouragements; let God do all, I see I have no ability at all, etc.'

Ans. What sayst thou, O my soul? surely this is thine infirmity; these conclusions are ill drawn from a true principle; it is true, all is of God, and by nature I am dead: but it is ill urged in this case, for that the regenerate have in them a seed, a spiritual principle, a power to do good; 1. Because such are living, and all life is a power to act. 2. Else there is no specific difference betwixt a man, regenerate and unregenerate, if both were still dead, and without strength. 3. Grace is a renewing of *that image of God and holiness*, which we lost in Adam, Eph. iv. 24. But that was a power to do what God required, therefore so far as that image is repaired, so far there is power. 4. Else we should not have as much benefit by the second Adam, as we had by the first; for the first would have communicated his power to do good, and being corrupted, doth communicate power to do sin; therefore much more by Christ have we a life, a power to do good in our measure.

Obj. It may be objected, *Without me ye can do nothing.*

Sol. The meaning is, 'Except ye be implanted into me, ye can do nothing;' The word (*choris emou, without me*) signifieth, *Separate from me, or apart from me*; and intimateth this only, 'That till

we are knit unto Christ, we are but dead and barren branches; and so Christ explains himself, *As the branch cannot bring forth fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me*, John xv. 4.

Obj. It may be objected again, 'It is God that worketh both to will and to do of his good pleasure.'

Sol. This denies not that the saints have in them, 'A seed, a spring, a principle of life, a power;' but on the contrary, it affirms, That they have a power, only that this power is of God; we should work out our salvation in humility, not boasting in our own selves, for all is received of God: more fully, God is said *To work the will and the deed*; 1. By giving a principle of spiritual life, habitual grace, a renewed frame of heart. 2. By exciting and strengthening this grace; and both these are ever afforded to the saints, only the latter is more or less, according to his pleasure; so that in the worst times a believer hath power to do good, though not alike at all times; and this power we must use, and put forth ourselves as we are able, or we cannot with reason expect his help. A ship hath instruments of motion, though not an internal principle, and if the mariner would have help by the winds, he must loose his cables, and hoist his sails; so must we, or else we may lie still.

Now that which we are to do, is,

1. To stir up ourselves; for God hath promised to meet us, and to reach out his hand to help us, if we be not wanting to ourselves: it is certain, a godly man cannot by his own endeavours alone raise up his soul, nor recover his loss, though he should lay mountain upon mountain, and pile endeavours upon endeavours; yet as endeavours without God cannot, so God without endeavours will not help us herein; and therefore labour we to quicken ourselves, *i. e.* work we upon our own

hearts, by our understandings; as the striking of the flint and steel together begetteth fire, so the meeting of these two faculties having an internal life in them, do quicken the soul. Thus we see David pleading with himself, sometimes chiding, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?* Psal. xlii. 5. Sometimes exciting himself to duty, *Praise the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name*, Psal. ciii. 1. Sometimes comforting himself in God, *Return to thy rest O my soul, for God hath dealt bountifully with thee*, Psal. cxvi. 7. It was an usual thing for him to talk with himself, and he found so much good in this way, that he puts all upon it, *Commune with your own hearts upon your beds, and be still*, Psal. iv. 4. The understanding is to the heart, as the stomach to the body, all is fed by it: set therefore upon our hearts with quickening thoughts: for as rubbing and chafing the hands with hot oils, is a means to recover them when they are benumbed; so the plying of the heart with stirring thoughts, and enforcing arguments is a means to revive it: and amongst all thoughts, there are none more prevalent, than 'of sins past, of heaven, hell, eternity, love of Christ;' these are strong cordials to cheer up the spirits.

2. To fall on the duty; for if we be doing, he will work 'with us, in us, and for us. Is it thus, O my soul, that thy heart is stirred, roused, revived? then set to thy hands: idle beggars must be whipped; he that will not work must not eat;' Remember, we have a life in us if we be in Christ: and as we have a life, so there is a never-failing presence of the Spirit, to attend that power which we have: if then we put forth ourselves to that we are able, and as far as our power extends, God will draw near to us. It is true, that which we want is out of our reach, we are not able to make crooked things to become straight, to lay those swelling mountains of corrup-

ruption level, but yet we must set to the work; Joshua could not with the strength of Rams horns sounding cast down the walls of Jericho, but yet he must set upon the work: when the Midianites fall, there must be, *The sword of the Lord, and Gideon*, Judg. vii. 18. The father holdeth an apple to the child, the child cannot reach, yet his short arm must be put forth, and then the father whose arm is long enough will reach it to him; we must be doing, and yet when all is done, our hearts must learn habitually to say, *Not I, but Christ in me*: let us still interest Christ in all we do, as the efficient, final cause.

S E C T. VII.

Of the saints delights in duties.

MY yoke is easy, and my burden is light, saith Christ, Matth. xi. 30. And that which makes it so, is, The delights which the saints have in God's service: Psal. cxix. 14. *I have delighted in the way of thy testimonies*, saith David: *I have?* v. 16. yes, and *I will delight in thy statutes*, v. 24. *I will?* yes, and *thy testimonies are my delight: they are?* yes, and v. 47. *My delight shall be in thy commandments: they shall be?* how long? even to perpetuity itself; v. 117. *I will delight continually in thy statutes*. These are the strings David beats upon, and they make heavenly musick: musick even chearing him in the midst of his sorrows; v. 143. *Trouble and anguish are upon me, yet are thy commandments my delight*; and v. 92. *Unless thy law had been my delight, I should have perished in my affliction*.

Now the reason why God's people find such delight in duties, is, 1. Because in duties they come to see the face of God in Christ: hence duties are called, *The face or presence of God*; the worship of the Jews was called, *An appearing before God*, Exod. xxiii. 17. David breathes out his desires in the same expression, *When shall I come and appear before God*, Ps. xlii. 2.

The queen of Sheba counted it a high favour to stand before Solomon: what high favour then is this to stand before Jesus Christ, and to hear Wisdom itself speak to our souls? 2. Because in duties they have converse, and communion with God, who is the God of all consolation; and with the Spirit of God, who is called the comforter: now as a man that walks amongst perfumes, must needs smell of the perfume; so they that converse with the God of all joy, must needs be filled with all joy: and therefore David calls God, *His exceeding joy*, Psal. xliii. 4. The saints look upon duties (the word, sacraments, prayers, &c.) as bridges to give them a passage to God, as boats to carry them into the bosom of Christ, as means to bring them into more intimate communion with their heavenly Father, and therefore they are so much taken with them. When they go to the word, they go as one goes to hear news of a friend; when they go to pray, they go to talk with a friend; when they go to read, they go to read a letter from a friend; when they go to receive, they go to sup with a friend; they look upon duties and ordinances, as those things whereby they have to do with God and Christ, and therefore are duties so precious. Indeed, to them who have to do with nothing but duty in duty, but prayer in prayer, but hearing in hearing, to them duties are dead and dry, and spiritless things; but they that have to do with God and Christ in duty, to them duties are passing sweet and precious. This seems a riddle to unregenerate men, they wonder what the saints find in duties, where the sweetness, what the comfort is, what secret golden mines they find in these diggings, when themselves find nothing but burdensome stones and clay: oh the saints meet with Christ in duties, and therefore they cannot but find great treasure: David's soul was *at thirst*, not for a kingdom, but for God, for the living God, Psal. xlii. 2. It is the highest reward,

ward, the very wages which the saints look for in duties, to find God in them; *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.* Psal. lxxv. 4.

A good caveat in these days, when so many do cry down duties: what, my brethren, shall we look upon that as our burden, which is our delight? our bondage, which is our privilege? what is the happiness of a glorified saint, but that he is always under the line of love, ever in the contemplation of, and converses with God? and shall that be thought our burthen here, which is our glory hereafter? Take heed of this; take heed you do not think it an hell, a pain, a vexation to be in God-approaching, and Christ-meeting duties. I know weariness may be upon the flesh, there are weaknesses and distempers there, but chide them away, entertain them not; number it among your choicest privileges, comforts, delights, to converse with God in Christ; consider if there be an heaven, it is the very presence of this God in Christ. Hence they who meet with God in duty, usually find their hearts sweetly refreshed, as if heaven were in them, *For in thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* Psal. xvi. 11.

Object. 1. But if there be such delight in duties, what is the reason that wicked men account it a wearisomness, and burthen, and snuff at it: *behold, what a weariness is it, and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord,* Mal. i. 13.

Answer. A wicked man cannot delight in God's service, because it is above his capacity: whiles he is at duty, he is like a fish out of his element; the duty is heavenly and spiritual, but he is worldly and natural, no wonder therefore he delights not in it. But more particularly, a wicked man delights not in duties,

1. Because of his ignorance of the worth and excellencies of duties, he cannot possibly delight in what he knows not: so much as we know, so much we desire and delight, and no more.

2. Because of his infidelity: faith is the main organ of comfort, and therefore no wonder, as it was said of the Jews, *if the word preached do not profit him, not being mixed with faith in him that heard it.*

3. Because of the absence of the all seeing and quickening Spirit: *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak to you are spirit and life,* John vi. 63. As the body is dead without the spirit, so duties, without Christ's quickening Spirit, are dead and lifeless.

Object. 2. But if there be such delight in duties, what is the reason that the saints themselves do miss of their comforts in duties?

Answer. I answer, 1. There are none of God's people but they do, sometimes or other, find comfort, either in duties, or from duties. 2. If at any time they miss of comfort, it is because they do not meet with God, whom they came to converse withal: as when a man goes to meet with a friend, and meets him not, he comes away sadded in his spirit; so when a child of God comes to some duty, hoping to enjoy sweet communion with God in it, and then fails of his expectation, this must needs fill him full of sadness. It was an excellent speech of Bernard, *Nunquam abs te recedo Domine, sine te; I never go from God without God.* Happy Christian, that when he goes to converse with God in some duty, can say, 'I never go from God without God: I never go to God, but I meet with God; and I never go from God, but I carry God with me.'

Object. 3. But if no comfort, no delight without God in our duties, What then is my case, that have no sense, no feeling of God's presence in duties? When I have done

done all I can, methinks I cannot find God, I cannot meet with Christ.

Ans. I answer, Hast thou indeed no sense of God's presence, and yet hast thou a sense of God's want? It is good then to observe the different effects of God's presence, or else thou mayest wrong God, as well as thyself; to say he was not with thee, when yet he was: As, 1. There are manifest and evident fruits of God's presence in duties: as, much liberty of spirit, much joy, much peace, assurance of faith. 2. There are more inward and reserved fruits of his presence; as, sense of want, sorrow for want, desire of enjoyment, willingness unto further duties, to find that which we want in some other: In the former, God is with us, and we know he is with us; in the latter God is with us, and we know not so much: This was the case of the two disciples going to Emmaus, *Their eyes were holden, that they could not know Christ*, Luke xxiv. 16. yet afterwards when they did know him, they remembered, that they had sufficient evidence of his presence, even when they knew him not. *Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and opened to us the scriptures?* Luke xxiv. 32. Now whence was that fire, but from the Spirit of Christ conveyed in his word?

Object. 4. But what is the reason that God's people do sometimes miss of God's comfortable presence in duties?

Ans. I answer, They miss of God's comfortable presence, 1. Because, it may be, they bring not at all Vessels to hold the Consolations of God; I mean, no hunger after God's presence in the ordinance: Or, 2. Because they bring Vessels so little, and so narrow-mouthed, that they will hold but very little water; I mean, they bring so little hunger after God, that God will not vouchsafe to satisfy it: Or, 3. Because they bring their ordinary hearts, their carnal and worldly hearts to heavenly and spiritual duties, hearts unsuitable to the duties,

hearts insensible of the duties: Thus a man finds no sweetness in his meat; the reason is not, because his meat is unflavoury, but because his taste is distempered; the ordinances are sometimes sweet, and would always be so, were the soul's palate always in the same temper: Or, 4. Because there is some Achan unstoned, some sin unrepented of, that eclipseth the light of God's countenance, some spiritual obstructions; these, and such like are the causes, why the saints sometimes miss of their comforts. But the fault is never in the duty, which is brim-full of rare and ravishing comfort; that as Bernard relates the story of himself; *Beatum me praedicarem, etc. Sed rara hora, brevis mora, oh si duraret;* 'Sometimes when he went to his prayers, he found himself dull and heavy; but after he had struggled a while with his dulness, all on a sudden he was visited with the visitations of the Almighty: I should account myself happy, said he, if these visitations would always last; but oh, it continues but a while!'

And Austin relates this story of himself, 'That upon a time when he and his mother Monica were discoursing together about the joys of heaven, and the comforts of God's Spirit, they were so filled with joy, that Austin useth these words, *Quam mundus eviluit cum omnibus suis delectationibus;* 'Lord, thou knowest in that day, how vilely we did esteem of the world with all his delights.' The comforts of the world are not worthy to be named that day that we speak of these comforts: O the pure, the undefiled comforts and delights that are to be found in duties, when God is found in them: Can a man who is cold, come to the fire, and not be warmed? Can he that is in the dark, come into the open sun, and not be enlightened? God is the spring of comfort, and therefore surely our hearts will be comforted, if we meet with God in our duties.

S E C T. VIII.

Of the essential Requisites in Duties.

BUT what are they we call duties? or what are those essential Requisites (O my soul) in duties? Many by duties intend nothing but that which is external and sensible, as coming to the church, and receiving of sacraments, *etc.*

I answer, These are like clothes upon a dead man, that cannot warm him, because there is no life within: The soul of all duties is that which is internal, or essential; In which respect three ingredients are necessary, *viz.* That they be, 1. From God. 2. Through God. 3. To God.

1. From God: It is of the very essence of duty, that it be commanded by God. Hence in one chapter we read thirteen several times, *I am the Lord*, Lev. xix. *q. d.* such and such commands I enjoyn you: Would you know the grounds? *I am the Lord*, a God of sovereign power and authority, and my will it is that such duties be done. Look to this, O my soul, in thy duties, know the commands, and do them, because they are commanded: If thou dost them, and yet knowest not that God commands them, this is no true obedience; or if thou knowest they are commanded, but yet dost them not because they are commanded, or in conscience to his command, neither is this obedience to God. In all duties rightly performed, there must be a knowledge of, and an eye to the will of our God, Rom. xii. 2. Eph. v. 17.

2. Through God, *i. e.* 1. Through the Spirit, who doth spiritualize them. 2. Through Christ who presents them, and makes them acceptable to God.

(1.) Through the Spirit of God: Now the Spirit works on our spirits, stirs up the regenerate part to the performance of our duties: and therefore look how much there is of the inner man, of the regenerate part, of the holy Spirit in duty, so far it is sanctified, so far it is accepted, and no

further. *God is my witness*, saith Paul, *whom I serve with my spirit, in the gospel of his Son*: In every service we perform, our spirit stirred up by God's Spirit, must needs have a hand in it, or it is but the body and carcase of a right service: The soul, will, and affections, must go together with our duties, (that I mean by our spirit) or the vitals are wanting. *Ex. Gr.* If a man come to confess his sins, and yet slights them inwardly in his heart; if a man pray for reconciliation with God, and yet have no longing, and sighing in his heart after it; if he earnestly ask grace, or the Spirit of mortification, and yet his heart doth not inwardly seek it, now he prays not in the Spirit, and therefore God will not accept it; *For God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit, and in truth*, John iv. 24. In spirit, *i. e.* not only in the understanding and mind, (prayer is not a work of wit or of memory) but also in will and affections; when all within us is opened, and explicate, and exposed to the view of the Lord; when we call in all our thoughts and affections, and recollect them together, as the lines in the center, or as the sun-beams in a burning-glass, that makes prayer to be hot and fervent; whereas otherwise, it is but a cold and dissipating thing, that hath no strength nor efficacy in it.

Quest. If this spiritualness in duties be so necessary, how is it that the saints have so much of earth and flesh ordinarily in their duties?

Ansiv. I answer, In every regenerate man there is both flesh and spirit; It may be the flesh lies uppermost, and the spirit lies in the bottom, so that a man, though a saint, may hear carnally, receive carnally, pray carnally, that is, when the flesh hath gotten upper-hand, as in some fits it may, when the mind is filled with worldly sorrow, worldly rejoicing, and worldly desires; such duties the Lord regards not, be the man never so holy: but if the regenerate

rate part be acted and stirred up by God's Spirit, and the flesh, that always hinders, be removed by the same Spirit, then are the saints able to do their duties to God in Christ Jesus spiritually.

2. Through Christ: For Christ perfects, perfumes, and presents our duties to his heavenly Father: as duties come from us, they favour of flesh, but the Angel of the covenant *minglcth much incense with them, and so he offers them upon the golden altar which is before the throne*, Rev. viii. 3. Here is sweet comfort, O my soul, 'What though thy duties are weak, and cold, and confused, full of distempers and damps? yet, through Christ they are fortified, and enlivened with his pacifying perfection, and intercessory Spirit: Through Christ they are perfumed with the precious odours of his fresh bleeding merits, and blessed mediation, and so they are made acceptable to God, that he may receive them, that he may not refuse and reject them.

Observe here, a double intercessor:

One is the Spirit, that helps our infirmities.

The other is Christ, that makes them acceptable to God.

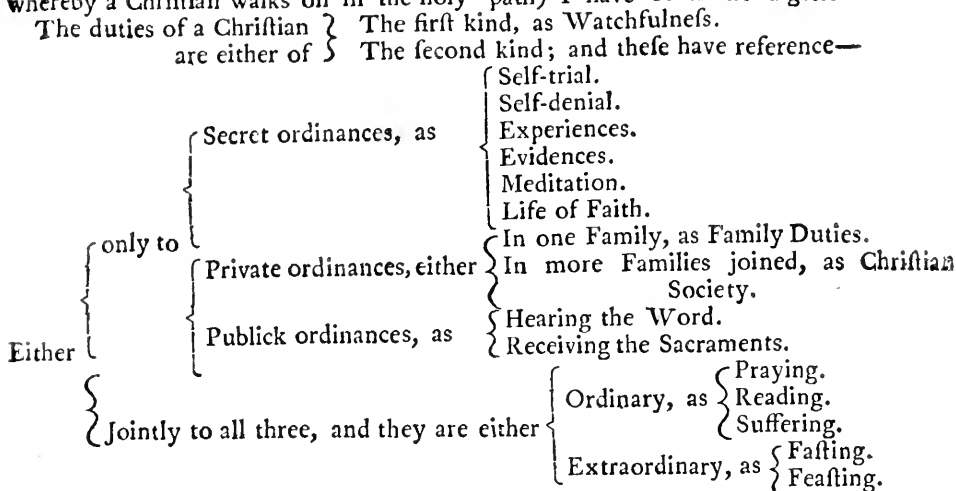
3. To God; *i. e.* to set forth his glory, and free grace; for as his name is blasphemed when we walk in wickedness, so it is glorified in doing our duties: this is the end of all our duties, indeed of all our doings; *Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. x. 31. One duty sanctifying Christ and free-grace in the heart, is more than a thousand. Young Christians it may be do more works, but not as works of grace; the more evangelical our works are, and the more to God, (for that is the end of the gospel, to honour Christ and free-grace) the better they are: *We are the circumcission, who rejoice in the Lord Jesus, worship God in the Spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh*, Phil. iii. 3.

S E C T. IX.

Of the Kinds of Duties in several Divisions.

THESE duties, some have distributed, according to their several objects, God, our Neighbour, and ourselves: 1. The Lord claims our Love, Fear, Honour, and Obedience. 2. Our Neighbour claims our Duty, Courtesy, Bounty. And for ourselves, we must, 1. Instruct the Understanding: 2. Bridle the Will: 3. Moderate the Affections. Others, in Retribution to Christ, give us another scheme of such duties, as they call mere gospel-duties. So it is our duty, 1. To think and muse much on Christ, and upon his loves towards us. 2. To speak much of Christ, and to commend him to others: When the spouse was asked, *What her Beloved was above others?* Cant. v. 9, 16. she sets him forth in every part of him, and concludes with this, *He is altogether lovely*. 3. To be oft in the company of Christ, and to grow up thereby in a familiar acquaintance with him. Now Christ is with us here, but these two ways, either, in his ordinances, or, his providences, by his holy Spirit: so that to be oft in Christ's company, is to be much in his word, in prayer, in sacraments, in Christian communion, in meditation, in examination of our hearts, in his providences of mercies, crosses and trials. 4. To do much for Christ, and that willingly; 1 John v. 3 *This is love indeed to keep his commandments, and these are not grievous*. 5. To suffer and endure any evil for Christ; *What tell you me* (saith Paul, Acts xxi. 13.) *of bonds and imprisonments? I am ready, not only to be bound, but to die for the sake of Christ at Jerusalem*. Rom. viii. 36. *My life is not dear to me, that I may finish my course with joy: For thy sake we are killed all the day long*. No question these heads will include all sorts of duties: but the method I shall prosecute (wherein I desire to confound Duties, Ordinances and Means, wherby

whereby a Christian walks on in the holy path) I have otherwise digested thus.



Object. It may be objected, 'That in this Analysis, there is not that express mention of Christ; and the reason why some vilisic duties, is because the very name of Christ is not in them.

Sol. But I answer, 1. If the name be wanting, yet Christ is not. 2. In the opening of them, we shall find the very name of Christ usually, frequently; only, observe by the way, I have heard of many that have stood much, in appearance for Jesus Christ, so that they would bow, and do homage to the very sound and syllables of his name; and yet none more enemies unto Christ than they, being the very limbs of Antichrist: *Many* (saith Christ, Matth. vii. 22, 23, 24, 25.) *will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we*

not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? (as if the name of Christ had been a spell?) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity; and thereupon he concludes, that he only is a wise man, and builds upon the rock, who hears Christ's sayings, and doth them. Hence learn, O my soul, that he that presseth to the practice of the word of Christ, he preacheth Christ, he sets up Christ, though he do not directly name Christ, or tho' his text be not literally of Christ; even as a man may have no other subject of his sermon but Christ, and yet betray Christ. Thus much of duties in general.

C H A P. III.

Of DUTIES in Particular.

S E C T. I.

Of the nature of Watchfulness.

Watchfulness is the first and principal help to all exercises of religion; it

is the eye to see them all well done and used, and therefore we set it in the front of all duties: We are to *watch unto prayer*, Eph. vi. 18. and we are to *watch unto*
hear

bearing, Luke viii. 18. and we are to watch unto fasting, Matth. vi. 18. and we are to watch to alms-giving, Matth. vi. 1. and we are to watch in all things, 2 Tim. iv. 5.

Now for our better direction in the exercise of this duty,

observe we the

}	Nature.
	Objects.
	Manner of it.

For the nature of it : ' Watchfulness is a continual, careful observing of our ways in all the passages and turnings of our life, that we still keep close to the written word of God.' *Keep thy heart in all diligence*, Prov. iv. 23. *I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue*, Psal. xxxix. 1. *Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way; by taking heed thereto, according to thy word*, Psal. cxix. 9.

SECTION II.

Of the objects of Watchfulness.

THE object of our watch is either, 1. Evil works, or sin. 2. Good works, or duties, or any thing, in its own being, good.

1. Watch we must over sin,

More general, { *Original sin, or, corrupt Nature.*
Actual Sin.

More special, as, { *Calling.*
Constitution.

2 Watch we must over any thing, in its own being, good; and herein if we look for the adequate object, including every thing that ought to be watched,

It is either { *Hearts,*
Tongues, } which
Actions,

howsoever good in themselves, yet, if we watch not, they will soon contract evil.

SECTION III.

Of the Manner of Watchfulness over Sin Original.

THAT we may watch over sin original, or that inward corruption we carry

about us, observe we these rules :

1. Let us take matter and motives to humble our souls under the sight and sense of this inherent pollution. And to that purpose, consider we the rueful complaints of the holiest saints against it; *O wretched man that I am*, (saith Paul, Rom. vii. 24.) *who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Behold, I was shapen in iniquity*, (said David, Psal. li. 5.) *and in sin did my mother conceive me*. Did not God in Christ accept of our complaining, striving, grieving, and hating this, how could we find any comfort?

2. Let us pray against it, that tho' it be in us, yet it may not hurt us, nor be imputed to us: That God would give us his Spirit to bridle our corruption, and especially that he would give us the Spirit of sanctification, that he would cleanse us from this filth more and more, that he would season the fountain, and at last dry it up.

3. Let us strive after contrary holiness, and endeavour the reformation of our natures and lives; *Put we off the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and be we renewed in the spirit of our mind*, Eph. iv. 22, 23.

4. Let us consider the promises of remission, and those privileges which the saints have in the blood of Christ; and let us actuate and exercise our faith in respect of such promises: *I knew that thou wouldst deal treacherously* (saith God) *and that thou wast called a transgressor from the womb; yet for my name's sake, will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off*, Isa. xlvi. 8, 9.

SECTION IV.

Of the manner of Watchfulness over Sins Actual.

THAT we may watch over actual sins, observe we these directions:

1. Avoid we all occasions of evil: Be afraid not only of the fire and flame, but of the very smoak of sin: it is dangerous

to approach near the whirl-pit, or, to *play about the hole of the asp, or the den of the cockatrice*; and therefore prayed David, *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity*, Pſal. cxix. 37. not my heart only from affecting it, but my eyes also from beholding it: There is a shutting of the eyes from beholding evil, brought in, amongst other duties, by the prophet Iſaiah, ch. xxxiii. 15, 16. to which is affixed this promise, that such a one *shall dwell on high, his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks*.

2. Resist we the temptations to sin: It may be, notwithstanding of all our care, temptations will offer themselves, and urge us to evil, but then we must constantly resist, and this is praise-worthy; if a man keep himself sober, when he cannot come to wine, or strong drink, it is nothing; but for a man to be careful not to break the bounds of sobriety, when he shall be in a place where wine is plenty, and no restraint of it, and where company will be urging him to take more than is meet, that is true temperance indeed: If a man live chaste, when he wants his leud company, it is nothing; but for a Joseph, (sued and sought to by his mistress, yea, urged and sollicitated day after day to condescend to her adulterous desires) to refuse then, and to choose rather loss of present liberty by not sinning, than to gain further preferment by consenting to sin, this is true chastity indeed. Away then with those idle apologies, 'I was urged to sin, I was provoked to leudness,' &c. Neither man nor devil can compel you to sin, unless you will your own self: † 'The devil may persuade, intice, suggest, and provoke, but he cannot enforce nor constrain'; nor, unless your own hearts

give consent, can he cause you to sin.

3. Confess we our sins, mourn we for sin, and especially labour we for hatred of sin; *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*, Prov. viii. 13. not only to forbear it, but, as the apostle speaks, to *abhor it*, Rom. xii. 9. as the meat that sometimes we have surfeited of, our stomach nauseates and goeth against it: so should our hearts rise against sin: And to this purpose, consider we
1. The foulness of sin; it is fouler than the foulest fiend in hell. 2. The illness of sin: it is a greater ill than the damnation of a man's soul, or than the destruction of all the creatures in the world. 3. The infectiousness of sin, it is of that pestilential property, that it pollutes every thing it comes near. 4. The perniciousness of sin; it deprives us of God's favour, of our part and portion of the blood of Christ, of the providence of that blessed Trinity; of the guard of angels, of the communion of saints, of heaven's joy; and it brings upon us infinite sorrows, as blindness of mind, hardness of heart, deadness of spirit, desperate thoughts, horror of thoughts, vexation of spirit, and, without repentance, all the terrors of hell. 5. Christ's sufferings for sin; shall we not hate him, that kills our friend, brother, father? how much more sin, that put to death the Lord of life, who is indeed our dearest friend, brother, father, Saviour? Look on Christ crucified, and see if this will not make us hate sin.

4. Believe, and by faith expect victory over our sin; yea, by that faith in which we have confessed, mourned, prayed, let us rest persuaded, That such means shall not be used of us in vain: O lift we up the hand of faith towards heaven, and lay

† Suedere & sollicitare potest, cogere omnino non potest. Aug. Hom. 5. Il. bet aſlatiam ſua lendi, non poteſta tan. cogendi. Idem in Pſalm xci, & in John xii.

hold on the promises of pardon, on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

SECT. V.

Of the manner of Watchfulness over special Sins.

THAT we may watch over our special sins, our Dalilah sins, our darling delights, observe we these rules :

1. Endeavour we the mortifying of this sin : Some one sin there is in every soul of us that is most predominant. Now it is the main work of a Christian, as to fall out for ever with all sin, so especially to improve all his spiritual forces and aid from heaven, utterly to demolish and to beat down to the ground this hold, this bosom-sin.

2. Lay we load of deepest groans, and strongest cries for mortifying grace against this domineering sin ; especially every morning and evening strive with God in our prayers for a comfortable conquest over it, inforce and enlarge that passage with an extraordinary pang of fervency, cry we mightily to God for power and strength against this lust, that continually wars against the soul.

3. Bend we ourselves against the special acts, occasions, and opportunities of this sin ; as, suppose Rash-anger, the sin which a man sitteth and pursueth to the extirpation of it ; in this case, he should resolve with himself not to speak harshly, nor to look fiercely, nor to use any churlish behaviour, whether his servant displease him with negligence, or his friend offend him with unfaithfulness, or his enemy provoke him with ill language, or some malicious dealing.

4. As oft as we find any motion of this sin to stir, and shew itself in us, it will be convenient, not only to withhold our consent, but withal, to exercise some act of contrary holiness ; As, suppose Desire of Revenge be the sin, which stirreth up our blood, and boileth within us, we must not

only forbear to avenge ourselves, but also bend ourselves to pray for him that hath offended us ; and, *if he hunger, to feed him ; if he thirst, to give him drink.*

5. Settle we in ourselves a purpose of heart to forbear it for time to come : In undertaking of which purpose, it will be expedient to set ourselves some short space of time, in which we may force ourselves to the forbearance of it, as for a day, or a month, or the like : and when the prefixed time is come, we should then question ourselves, ‘ How well we have performed ? or how, or wherein we have failed ? ’ And then begin a new purpose, and prescribe ourselves a like time, for shunning of the same sin ; and so on from time to time, till we have gotten a full victory.

6. If in our daily or monthly review we find that we have been defective in performing of what we had proposed, then with an holy revenge we should correct our former errors, beg pardon for our defects, and punish ourselves for such slothfulness, or willfulness, by abstinence from meat, ease, recreation ; *Keeping under your bodies, and bringing them in subjection,* 1 Cor. ix. 27. by mulct, or forfeiture of some portion to the poor, whereby we may feel smart : This holy revenge is commended by the apostle, 2 Cor. vii. 29. as a worthy fruit of serious repentance.

7. Above all, without which all the rest are nothing. ‘ Believe the promises of pardon in the blood of Christ ; ’ It is faith in the promises which will be able to cleanse, and purge the heart from this sin : *If the blood of bulls and of goats, saith the apostle, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God ?* Heb. ix. 13, 14. The sense is, When a man hath once ap-
plied

plied the blood of Christ for his justification, this effect will follow it, that there will accompany it a certain vigour, virtue, power, and strength, which will also purge his conscience from dead works; there will go a power of the Spirit together with this blood, that shall not only forbid him, and shew him that he ought not to do such and such evil things, but it shall cleanse his conscience from those roots of dead works, those corrupt lusts and sinful affections, that are in him, and that dispose him to that evil: Now this power is gotten by applying the blood, *i. e.* by applying the promise of pardon and forgiveness by the blood of Jesus Christ: Let no man think by his own strength to prevail against any lust; it is not our endeavouring, praying, bending ourselves against the special acts and occasions, exercising some acts of contrary holiness, purposing to forbear it, punishing ourselves for it (if gone about by our own might, and power, and strength) will ever kill this sin: No, no, we must do all these at the feet of Christ, and draw virtue from Christ; we must believe the promises, get assurance of pardon, get assurance of God's love to us in Christ; we must labour to delight in God, to get communion with Christ, and then our hearts will grow to an application of the commandment; and whereas before they resisted it, rebelled against it, they will then cleave to it, and love it and delight in it, and receive an impression from it. This, I take it, is the meaning of that text, 2 Pet. i. 4. *Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world thro' lust; q. d.* By believing the promises we are made partakers of the godly nature, and we overcome our corruptions and lusts: Consonant to which, is that of the apostle, *Know ye not, that as many as are baptised into Christ, are baptised into his death?* Rom. vi. 3. *q. d.* as many as are

baptised into Christ, for reconciliation with God, must needs be baptised into his death; they must be dead to sin, as he was dead: We cannot be baptised into him for reconciliation or justification, but we must be baptised likewise for mortification of the flesh, and for resurrection to newness of life. To wind up all in a word, he that hath the strongest faith, that believes in the greatest degree, 'the promises of pardon and remission;' he hath the holiest heart, the most mortified life: Sanctification and mortification arise from that root of justification. The blood of Christ hath not only a power to wash us from the guilt of sin, but also to cleanse us, and purge us from the power and stain of sin: And therefore I say, the best way to get a great degree of sanctification, the best way to get a greater measure of the graces of the Spirit, the best way to mortify our sinful lusts, the best way to watch over our special sins, is to labour to grow in faith, in the 'belief of those promises of the gospel of Christ;' and this would be well observed by those that are a little legally by-assed, or carried to mortify sin only by vows, promises, shunning occasions, removing temptations, strictness and severity in duties, fear of hell and judgments, scarce rising so high for their mortification, as Christ. Now these in themselves are but empty weak means of prevailing against sin, like the mighty sails of a ship without wind and tide; no question but shunning occasions, strictness and severity in duties, watchfulness, &c. dwell in their place and order, like oars in a boat (See Saltmarsh, Free-grace, page 68.) which tho' it be carried with the tide, if well managed, yet they may help it to go the faster: Howsoever, it is Christ crucified which is the power of all in all; it is Christ lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent, which strikes more soundness into the wounded beholder, than any other way; wherein some have toiled all their time for power over

corruptions, and like Peter have caught little or nothing, because Jesus Christ was not in the company.

SECT. VI.

Of the manner of Watchfulness over our Hearts.

THAT we may watch over our hearts, observe we these directions.

1. Guard we the windows of our souls, the senses : *I made a covenant with mine eyes, said Job, why then should I think upon a maid ? Job xxxi. 1. Turn mine eyes from beholding vanities, said David, and quicken thou me in thy way, Psalm cxix. 37.* It is incredible what a deal of pollution and ill the devil conveys insensibly into the heart, thro' these flood-gates of sin, and therefore we had need to watch over the senses.

2. Go we down into our hearts, and consider well all our thoughts ; these if good, will bring forth good fruit ; and if evil, they are the parents and begetters of all sins, the first plotters and contrivers of all treasons and rebellions of our life, the bellows as it were and incendiaries of all inordinate affections, the panders to all other lusts, that 'take thought to provide for the satisfying of them ;' the disturbers of all good duties, that interrupt, and foil, and sty-blow all our prayers, that they sink in the nostrils of God ; and therefore consider and weigh well all our thoughts ; for as our thoughts are, so be our affections, prayers, speeches, actions.

3. Let us make conscience of our thoughts : By them especially do we sanctific, or sin against God ; by them especially do we evidence ourselves, to be sincere-hearted Christians, or dissembling hypocrites ; by them especially, will the Lord judge us at the last day, *when he will make manifest the counsels of our hearts, 1 Cor. iv. 5.* By them especially, if we will not make conscience of them, will God lash us in hell to all eternity, even by *Thoughts*

accusing, Isa. xxxiii. 14. 18. There shalt thou meditate terrors, and study God's wrath, together with thy own sins and miseries, for ever and ever.

4. Resist and crush we every exorbitant thought which draws to sin, at the very first rising : Is the temptation strong ? Encounter it with this dreadful Dilemma ; 'If I commit this sin, either I must repent, or not repent ; If I repent, it will cost me more heart-break and spiritual smart, before I can purchase assurance of pardon and peace of conscience, than the sensual pleasure can be worth ; If I never repent, it will be the death and damnation of my soul.'

5. Lodge we not so much as light thoughts, unprofitable or vain thoughts in our hearts ; they will still be entering in, whilst we are in these houses of clay, yet lodge they must not. Hence the apostle, Eph. iv. 26. *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath ; q. d.* If thoughts of anger come in, in the morning or day time, they must be turned out ere night ; or if idle thoughts offer to come to bed to thee, let them not lodge with thee. I deny not but many good thoughts and motions may pass, as strangers thro' a bad man's heart, and multitudes of vain thoughts and motions may make a thorough-fare of a believer's heart, and disturb him in good duties, by knockings, and interruptions, and breakings in upon his heart, but still they lodge not there, they are not there fostered and harboured.

6. Forget and stifle we all thoughts of sinful actions already passed. The mind is very apt to run over the passages and circumstances of the same sins, long since committed, with a new and fresh delight ; this argues wickedness of heart, and such as when it is ordinary with the heart to do so, is not compatible with grace : *What fruit had ye of those things whereof ye are now ashamed ? Rom. vi. 21.* All that the saints reap out of such fruits, is shame

shame and sorrow, and many a sad sigh : *When Ephraim remembered his sins, he was ashamed and repented ; a truly sanctified soul will hate the appearance of his former sins, and will have his heart inflamed with a zeal and revenge against it. What, do you repeat to your selves your old sins with delight ? This provokes God exceedingly, you thereby stand to, and make good your former act ; you shew a delight to rack in those wounds you have given Christ already ; and therefore in hell it will prove the greatest gall, to remember your old sins: every circumstance in every sin then, will be as a dagger in your hearts. O study not these thoughts, forget them, stifle them !*

7. Entertain all good motions put into your hearts, by the blessed Spirit, howsoever occasioned ; whether by the ministry of the word, mindfulness of death, christian admonition, reading some good book, some special cross, or extraordinary mercy ; feed, enlarge and improve them to the utmost, so shall we preserve our hearts in a soft, comfortable temper, and heaven-ward, which is a singular happiness.

8. Endeavour we to preserve and keep up lively, holy and spiritual affections, and suffer them not to cool ; or if we have grown remiss, endeavour to recover those affections again. Thoughts and affections are mutual causes of each other ; *Whilst I mused, the fire burned,* said David, Psa. xxxix. 3. And again, *How love I thy law ? It is my meditation day and night,* Psa. cxix. 97. ' 1. His thoughts were the bel- lows that kindled and inflamed his affections : And 2. His affections inflamed, made his thoughts to boil, and to meditate on God's law day and night. Hence it is that men newly converted to God, having new and strong affections, can with more pleasure think of God than any else can.'

9. Let us captivate and conform all the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts, to the rules and sovereignty of grace ; *Bring*

into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 5. If thy change in words, actions, and all outward carriage were angelical, yet if thy thoughts be sinful and un sanctified, thou art a limb of Satan still : Purity in the inward parts is the most found evidence of our portion in the purity and power of Christ. *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved : How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee ?*

Jer. iv. 14. *God seeth,* saith the Psalmist, *and understandeth our thoughts afar off,* Psa. cxxxix. 2. And hence it is that many humble souls, sensible of their secret sins, in the presence of God's pure eye, are more grieved (setting aside ill example, and scandals) for the rebelliousness of their thoughts, than the exorbitancy of their actions, for of these the world sees the worst ; but concerning the other, it cuts them to the heart, that they are not so well able to preserve their inward parts in purity, towards the all-searching eye of God, as their words and actions in plausibleness towards man.

10. Get we our hearts possess'd with deep, strong and powerful apprehensions and impressions of God's holiness, majesty, omniscience : If any thoughts be of power to settle, fix and draw in the mind of man, they are thoughts of him. What is the reason that saints and angels in heaven have not a vain thought to eternity, but that their eye is never off him ? We find, by experience, a blessed means to avoid distractions in prayers, to enlarge a man's thoughts in his preparations before, or at the beginning, if with a consideration of God's attributes and relations to us, he sets on the duty.

11. Let us elevate, and often lift up our hearts towards heaven : Consider the blissful depths of God's boundless mercies in Christ ; consider the glory, the everlastingness, the unutterable excellencies of that immortal shining crown above, which af-

ter this life (and this life is but a bubble, a smock, a shadow, a thought) shall be set on our heads by the hand of God; a very glimpse whereof is able to sweeten the bitterest griefs that can be, and to dispel those mists of fading vanities, which the world (heated by the fire of inordinate lusts) is wont to evaporate and interpose betwixt the sight of mens souls, and the bliss of heaven.

12. Let us spend some thoughts, yea many thoughts, about the saving excellencies of Jesus Christ; consider the wonder of our redemption, the most admirable, and most astonishing plot of the blessed Trinity, sitting in council about the saving of our souls; a mystery which the angels stoop down to pry into, an orient pearl, that will out-shine all the sparkling jewels of the whole creation; consider the love-letters of Christ in his glorious gospel, the love-tokens he hath sent to our dear souls. 'And ah! What flames of divine affection? What raptures of zeal? What ravishments of delights? What brinish sorrows, and great indignation against sin? What extasies of obedience can be enough for our blessed Lord, and dearest redeemer?'

SECTION VII.

Of the Manner of Watchfulness over our Tongues.

THAT we may watch over the tongue, two things must be heeded: 1. That it be not unseasonably idle.

2. That it be not sinfully exercised.

'That it be not unseasonably idle;' and herein observe those generally, and much neglected duties of christian reproof, and of heavenly discourse.

1. For christian reproof, observe these Directions:

1. If a brother be overtaken with a fault, or some less offence, *admonish him in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted,* Gal. vi. 1.

2. If he offend more grievously, then

reprove him freely, *and suffer not sin to rest upon his soul,* Lev. xix. 17.

Object. But in this case, when, or how must we reprove?

Sol. This case is clothed with such variety of circumstances, and constancy of alterations, that we cannot give any particular Directions; only, the christian that is perplexed what to do, let him consult with these bosom-counsellors:

1. With his spiritual wisdom; it is that must suggest to him, when, and how to reprove, whether presently upon it, or sometimes afterwards; whether directly and downright, or indirectly and by intimation; whether personally, or in the general; whether in a fair and milder manner, or with a more bold and resolute spirit; whether only by discountenance, or by discourse, &c.

2. With his heart: a reproof must not spring from any imperious humour of censuring, and meddling with his brethren; from any secret ambitious desire, to purchase an opinion and reputation of holiness to himself, or from any other by-end, but from an heart truly humbled with a sight and sense of its own infirmities, graciously resolved into compassion and commiseration of the offender, and lifted up in a secret supplication for the success of the reproof, and salvation of the party, all at once to God's throne of grace.

2. For spiritual and heavenly discourse, observe these Directions.

1. Apprehend all opportunities and occurrences which may minister matter of digression from worldly talk, into divine discourse. It is pity that professors should ever meet, without some talk of their meeting in heaven, or of the blessed ways and means that lead thereunto; and therefore by some wise transition, turn thou the current of the discourse towards some heavenly good: it was the practice of our Saviour, upon mention of bread, he prest upon his disciples a dissuasion from the *hu-*

ven of the Pharisees, Mat. xvi. 5, 6. And upon occasion of drink being denied him by the Samaritan woman, John iv. 10. he (forgetting his weariness, hunger and thirst) labours to allure her to the well-head of everlasting happiness.

2. Have ever in a readiness some common heads of more stirring and quickning motives to mind heavenly things; as the cursed condition of our natural state, the dear purchase of Christ to redeem our souls, the incomparable sweetness of christian ways, the vanity and vexations of earthly things, the uncertainty and misery of this short life, the everlastingness of our state in another world, the terrors of death, the dreadfulfulness of that great and last day drawing on now apace, the horrors of damned souls, &c. Mention of these things many times may strike full cold to the heart of the most sensual *Belsbazzar*, and drive him into his dumps; and by God's blessing may sometimes prepare the hardest hearts, for some thoughts of remorse, and more heavenly impressions.

3. Get we into our hearts a habit of more heavenly-mindedness, by much exercise, and intercourse, and acquaintance with God, by often contemplation, and forecast of the sweetness, glory and eternity of those mansions above, by reflecting on time past, how long thy soul was detained in the state of darkness, what bitterness and terrors it passed thro' in the pangs of its new birth, what relapses and desertions it hath been incident to, ever since that time to this; and being thus busied at home in our own hearts, we shall find ourselves much more pregnant and plentiful in holy talk when we come abroad: men for the most part speak most, and most willingly of those things they mind most; such provisions within, will make the tongue so ready, that it cannot be unseasonably idle.

2. Watch we must over the tongue, that it be not sinfully exercised: and herein observe these directions.

Be dumb to all unfavoury communication; as lying, swearing, cursing, &c. O how do these sins wound the heart of Christ, *and crucifie again the Lord of glory?*

2. Be silent from slandering, backbiting, false accusing, censuring: A true heart is ever most angry and displeas'd with, most eagle-eyed, and watchful over, most strict and severe against its own sins; which home-bred employment haply hinders, and moderates a man from too much meddling abroad.

3. *Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you*, Mat. vii. 6. By dogs are meant those obstinate enemies, that maliciously revile the ministers of the word, and the messengers thereof: by Swine are meant those sottish, scurrile wretches, who scornfully and contemptuously trample under foot all holy instructions, reproofs, admonitions, tendered unto them by any christian out of the word of truth. Now if accidentally such a son of Belial, or scoffing Ishmael, be in our company, we are commanded by Christ to say nothing, at least of the consolations of Christ, of the special promises of Christ, of the gentle entreaties of the gospel of Christ. Consider this, and tremble, all ye that are scornful, and furious opposites to the purity and power of the word; is it the Lord's will that you should run furiously towards the pit of hell, and that nobody should stay you; not a man must call and cry unto you, to tell you of such things as are peculiar to the saints, in way of application to you; *But he that is filthy, let him be filthy still*, Rev. xxii. 11. 'Let him drink, be drunk, despair, and be damned: All this while not a word of comfort belongs to you.'

Of the Manner of watchfulness over our Actions.

OUR actions are either natural, civil, or religious.

In all which observe these directions.

1. Concerning natural actions, as Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, Visitations, recreations, etc. no constant rule can be prescribed, † because it is much diversified by health, sickness, age, constitution; and every one hath either learned by his own experience, what seasons, and proportions of such natural helps are fittest for his temperament, or he is most unworthy of that precious thing (an understanding soul) which he bears in his bosom; only let me inform christians, ‘That they may sin in any of these actions, and therefore let them beware and watch over themselves in the use and enjoyment of these things, which howsoever lawful in their own nature, yet by our corruption are capable of inordinateness and excess.’ Some are of opinion, ‘That christians are in more danger of being spiritually undone, by a sly insinuation and insinuation of licentiousness and immoderation in such lawful things, than by the gross assaults of foul sins and temptations; their hearts may rise against any work of darkness, as adultery, murder, swearing, profaning the Lord’s day, speculative wantonness, &c. which yet may too often be insensibly seized upon, by an excessive sinful delight, in things un sinful in themselves; and therefore we had need to watch over our natural actions.’

2. Concerning civil actions, as Bargains,

Contracts, Covenants, Dealings, negotiations, etc. observe these directions.

1. Think we seriously and solemnly of that principle, ‘Do as thou wouldst be done by: in a fellow-feeling real conceit, put thyself into the place, and impartially put on the person of the party with whom thou art to deal, and then returning to thyself, deal out and proportion unto him that measure in every particular, which thou wouldst be willing to receive at another’s hand, if thou were in his case: *Whatsoever (saith our Saviour) ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets,* Matth. vii. 12.

2. Abhor with an infinite disdain, to get any thing by any wicked means, wrong doing, or unconscionable dealing. We may assure ourselves in such cases, ‘That besides the secret grumbling of our self-accusing consciences, the angry eye of God sees secretly our doings, and will shortly, and most certainly revenge.’

3. Let our desire and delight never fasten itself immoderately upon any earthly thing, tho’ never so excellent: exorbitancy and error this way, brings many times with it either a loss of the thing so doted on, or it may be a cross, or howsoever a curse. O consider we the vanity of these earthly things! consider we the glories above! Methinks this one preservative would be powerful enough to keep the heart of every christian from doting upon the world, or suffering it to be possessed thereof, it is this, ‘Every christian by a fruitful faith, may be assured of a crown of life, either by assurance of adherence, or evidence, or

† Only we may, in general, (according to Hierocles, in his excellent commentary) advise every man to use such drink, meat, and exercise, as will render the body obedient to the commands of virtue, and as will not provoke the sensual and brutal part to be refractory and unwise against reason that guides it: every man ought to abstain from all high feeding, because it makes the body heavy and sluggish, and drags the soul into all sorts of earthly and carnal affection.—As to the quantity and time of eating &c. every one is, or ought to be, the fittest judge himself. Moderation in such things is best. This condemns all excess in these sort of things, and excludes whatever is hurtful, and that debases and drags down the soul, which aspires towards the intelligence, that is, towards God.—Hierocles’ commentary upon the Golden Verses, 2d. Edition, p. 126, 130.

both: Now if that once a day he should take a serious survey of the glory, everlastingness, and unutterable excellencies of that immortal crown, which our dear Redeemer holds for him in his hand, ready to set upon his head, when he shall be dissolved from this vale of tears; methinks it were able so to dull the edge, and dissolve the drossiness, of all earthly desires, that they should never be able to heat or harden his heart any more.

3. Concerning religious actions, as meditating, hearing, reading, fasting, praying, almsgiving, &c. observe these directions. 1. in general. 2. in special.

1. In general, observe, 'That we draw and derive from Christ by the attractive force of faith, special abilities, 1. To perform all duties. 2. To exercise all graces. 3. To resist and overcome all temptations and corruptions which shall beset us.' To this purpose are those promises of grace and strength, Isa. xlv. 3. Ezek. xxxvi. 27. Zech. x. 12. John i. 16. And these are securities, given us from God, that we shall receive grace through duties, which are the conduit-pipes or instruments of conveying the same into the soul from Christ. This is to do all in the strength of Christ, and to take forth a great deal of Christ into the soul, so that *not I, but Christ may live in me*, Gal. ii. 20.

2. In special, observe these directions.

1. That before the doing of duties, we remove all lets and impediments which may hinder, and improve all occasions which may forward us thereunto.

2. That in doing of them, we behave our selves well and wisely, performing them rightly and religiously.

3. After all is done, that we be careful all be not lost through our own vileness, and viciousness, privy pride, or secret hypocrisie.

For instance, would we *watch unto*

prayer, as the apostle enjoins us, Eph. vi. 18.

1. Then, before we fall on our knees, let us shake off three impoisoning and heavy hindrances, which otherwise will clog and clip the wings of our prayers, that they will never be able to ascend up into heaven; as Sin, Anger, and Distrust; and let us possess ourselves of three excellent helps and inflaming furtherances; the First is a right apprehension of God's dreadful-ness, purity, power, &c. The Second is, a true sense of our own vileness, abominableness, nothingness, &c. The Third is, an hearty survey of the infiniteness, and unexpressibleness of God's bounty, blessings and compassionate forbearance towards us.

2. After we are down on our knees, 1. Repel with an undaunted spirit, Satan's blasphemous injections. 2. Watch over the world with care and timely opposition, that if it be possible, not an earthly thought may creep into our heart all the while. 3. Strive to hold our hearts in heat, as well in confession as deprecation, in deprecation as petition; as well for purity of heart, as for pardon of sin throughout: prayer is the creature of the holy Ghost, every part whereof we should heartily wish, and earnestly wrestle, that he would proportionally animate and enliven, even as the soul doth the body.

3. After we are risen off our knees, 1. Take heed of resting in the duty, take heed of privy pride, and secret hypocrisie, take heed of returning with the dog to his vomit. 2. Pursue and press after the things prayed for, by a timely apprehension, fruitful exercise, and utmost improvement of all occasions, and heavenly offers, which may any ways concur to the compassing of them: but of this I shall speak more largely, when I come to the duty of Prayer. Thus much of Watchfulness.

C H A P. IV. S E C T. I.

Of the Nature of Self-trial.

WE have done with Watchfulness, the eye that oversees and directs all other duties. Now to the duties themselves; wherein we shall follow this method: 1. To consider them as in reference to private persons. 2. As in reference to families. 3. As in reference to publick assemblies. The philosopher in his method of practical philosophy, first handles Ethicks, in reference to particular persons; and then he proceeds to his Oeconomicks, in reference to families; and, lastly, to his Politicks, in reference to cities and countries. Of many particulars arise a family; of many families is constituted a city; the same order shall we follow in these divine arts of our Ethicks, Oeconomicks, and Politicks. And we shall first handle duties in reference to particular persons; of which sort are these:

1. *Self-trial.* 2. *Self-denial.* 3. *Experiences.* 4. *Evidences.* 5. *Meditation.* 6. *Life of Faith.*

The first duty is *Self-trial*: and for our better direction in the exercise of this duty, observe we 1. *The Nature.* 2. *The Objects.* 3. *The Manner.* 4. *The Time of it.*

For the nature of it; *Self-trial* 'is a kind of judiciary proceeding, in which a man keepeth private sessions at home, passing a sentence on his thoughts, words and actions.

Or, for more distinct knowledge, two sorts of actions are implied in this duty of trial, viz. some *Essential*, some *Accidental*.

1. Of the former sort, or of *Essentials*, are these three, viz. 1. *Discussion.* 2. *Application.* 3. *Censure.*

1. *Discussion* is a shifting of our life and dealings, by which we pull things out of the heap, where before they lay confused, and unseen, and by which we set every fact

of ours in open view, that it may be scanned, and seen by itself what it is.

2. *Application* is a laying of these acts, thus searched and found out, to the rule of God's law, which is the touchstone of all our doings, according to which God will judge at the last day.

3. *Censure* is the judgment that our minds and consciences give upon our thoughts, words and deeds, according to the rule of the law. These three laid together, make up the nature of this work of Examination, or *Self-trial*; so that we may not unfitly describe it out of its own principles, thus;

'*Self trial* is a discussion of a man's life, that his thoughts, words and deeds may be seen, and censured according to the rule of God's law.'

2. Of the latter sort, or of *Accidentals*, are these two, viz.

The one going before, *Self-trial*. The other following after it.

1. That which goes before it, is a purpose to better a man's spiritual estate, viz. by correcting what is amiss, and confirming what is right.

2. That which follows after, is a practice of such rules as may back our trial, and make it more effectual to us: I shall mention only these three rules;

1. That after we have tried, we then compare our present with our former estate, and consider whether we have increased or decayed in grace.

2. That if we have profited in grace, we then consider by what means we have profited, that so we may make more constant use of such means; or, if we have decayed in grace, we then observe by what temptations we were overcome, that so our

more

former errors may make us more wary, and more resolute against them for the future.

3. That as we meet with many occasions of moment concerning which we had a purpose to better our spiritual estate, we then recall home our thoughts, and make use of our former resolutions, and practise what we did purpose. Out of all these laid together, we may more fully describe it thus:

‘Self-trial is a discussion of a man’s life, for the finding out the true estate of a man’s soul towards God, accompanied with a purpose and practice of whatsoever upon trial shall appear requisite for the salvation and good of a man’s soul.’

S E C T. II.

Of the Objects of Self-trial.

THE object of our trial is either 1. *evil works, or sin; or, 2. good works, or duties.*

1. We must examine or try our sin in *General and Special.*

In *General*, whether of omission or commission: For, as in the last judgment, our Lord will not only give sentence against murders and oppressions, but against uncharitableness, and unmercifulness, in not feeding the hungry, in not lodging the stranger, in not clothing the naked, in not visiting the sick; so when we judge ourselves, we must censure not only our robbing the poor, but our not relieving the poor; not only our commissions of evil, but our omissions of good.

2. In *Special*, whether of our calling or nature: these sins may breed special danger, because we are ready to drop into them of our own dispositions; and therefore, in the daily care of our souls, we had need to try ourselves concerning these sins.

2. As we must examine and try our evil works, so our good works.

1. Because we are many times deceived with shews, thinking that good which is evil: thus Paul thought he shewed much zeal, when he persecuted the churches of Christ, Phil. iii.

6. And Micah thought he highly merited God’s favour, when he kept a priest for idolatrous service, Judg. xviii. 13.

2. Because in the very works which are truly good, we do many times intermingle corruptions of our own, sometimes evil ends, and sometimes evil thoughts, and sometimes we perform them in an evil manner; but always in our best devotions there are many imperfections and failings. Indeed this trial is a duty necessary to all duties; if we believe, we must do it *with the heart*, Rom. x. 7. if we sing psalms, we must do it *with the Spirit*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15. if we come to the Lord’s Supper, first *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat*, 1 Cor. xi. 28. if we pray, we must therein examine: and hence, as some observe, the same Hebrew word signifies to pray, and to judge a man’s self.

But because duties are of several sorts, - 1. *Inward*, of the heart. 2. *Outward*, of the tongue, and actions. In trying these three, we shall inclusively try all sorts of duties that are in reference to them.

S E C T. III.

Of the Manner of trying, or, examining our sins in general.

THAT we may try, or, examine our sins of all sorts, observe these rules.

1. Procure we a catalogue of our sins, both before, and since our conversion; and to that purpose, go we through the commandments one by one, and in each of them consider what sins are condemned, and what duties are enjoined: and hereupon question with our own hearts, ‘Whether have I committed this or that sin? 2. Whether have I neglected this or that duty?’ and as the heart answers, be ready to note down these sins whereof we stand guilty.

2. The sins thus found out, make we a solemn confession to God, with deep humiliation; let them be dolorous confessions, with grief and sorrow for sin and from a sight and sense of it: Thus Ephraim did, and God was fain to acknowledge it, *I have*

fully heard Ephraim bemoan himself, Jer. xxxi. 18. O the Lord loves to hear such bemoaning Ephraims, and such bemoaning confessions.

3. The sins thus confessed and bewailed, let us judge and condemn ourselves: this is that duty instanced in by the apostle, *If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged, 1 Cor. xi. 31.* There is a tribunal that we should every one erect within us, where conscience is the accuser, reason the judge, fear the jaylor, sorrow the executioner.

4. After we have thus judged ourselves, let us then appeal to God's throne of grace; let us desire of God salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ; let us cast all our confidence on him, who never fails them that put their trust in him, and in his precious merits.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Manner of trying, or examining our special sins.

THAT we may try, or examine our special sins, our Dalilah sins, observe we these rules:

1. Endeavour we to find out this sin; and in our scrutiny we may discover it by these marks:

1. 'That is the Dalilah, which thy own conscience and the finger of God in the ministry many times meets with, and chiefly checks thee for.'

2. 'That which thou art lothest to leave, hast least power to resist, and which most hinders the resignation and submission of the soul and body to the word and will of God.'

3. 'That which God often corrects in thee, even in the interpretation and guilty acknowledgment of thy self-accusing heart; and, if ever the sword of the Spirit shall cleave it from thy bosom (which is infinitely to be desired) it will cost the bitterest tears, and deepest groans.'

4. 'Thoughts, plots, and projects about

it (a thousand to one) ordinarily seize upon thy heart at thy very first waking, if they have not broken thy sleep, and troubled thee in thy dreams.'

2. The sin once found out, do we pursue it, and make we a solemn confession to God of it: mourn we under it, and desire we help from God for his mortifying grace.

3. Settle we in ourselves a purpose of heart, to forbear it in time to come: in undertaking of which purpose, it will be expedient to set ourselves some short space of time, as for a day, or month, &c. and when the prefixed time is come, we should then question ourselves, how well we have performed, or how, or wherein we have failed; and then begin a new purpose.

4. Be we ever jealous of ourselves, and of our infirmity and proneness to this sin. Now we have two grounds of this jealousy:

1. Left we be deceived about it.

2. Left we be overtaken with it.

1. We may be deceived, in supposing that we are utterly divorced, and quite delivered from this bosom-sin, when it is nothing so; as thus:

1. We may change only in the outward form, and not in truth: for instance, 'whereas the same sin of covetousness doth utter and express itself by usury, simony, sacrilege, bribery, grinding the faces of the poor, detaining ill gotten goods, without restitution; we may perhaps insensibly glide out of one gulf of gripping cruelty into another, or, it may be, from one of these more notorious, to some other less observed, and less odious in the world, and yet still abide in the chambers of death, and under the tyranny of this reigning sin.'

2. We may surcease, and refrain from the outward gross acts of such hateful villainies, and yet our inwards be still defiled with insatiable sensual hankerings after them: for instance, 'whereas the foul sin of uncleanness doth actuate itself by fornication, adultery, self-pollution, immoderate abuse

abuse of the marriage-bed, speculative wantonness, we may, perhaps, forbear the external acts of uncleanness, and yet ly and languish in the delightful revolvings of them in our mind; in adulteries of thought.

3. We may change the kind of our bosom-sin, in respect of the matter, form, object, every way; and yet upon the matter itself, it is but the exchange of one foul fiend for another. For instance, 'wantonness may be our sweet sin in youth, and worldliness in old age; Hypocrisy may reign at one time, apostacy at another; Furious zeal for one while, profane irreligioufness for another †.

4. We may for a time pull our necks out of this strong yoke of Satan (out of a melancholic pang of slavish terror, serious fore-thought of death, lying everlastingly in hell) but because it is not the work of the word, humbling us soundly under God's mighty hand, planting faith, and infusing mortifying power, anon will this unclean spirit return, and rule in us again far more imperiously than before. I know it is not impossible, but that a man after his conversion, by the sudden surprisal of some violent temptation, and cunning train of Satan, may be haled back to commit his sweet sin again (tho' it be an heavy case, and to be lamented, if it were possible, with tears of blood) yet he never doth, nor never can return to wallow in it again, or to allow it: Here is the difference, The temporary man, after his former enforced forbearance, engulphs himself again with more greediness into the sensuality and pleasures of his bosom-sin, he lies in it, and delights in it, and hardens himself more obstinately in it: But the sound convert, after a relapse, his heart bleeds afresh with extraordinary bitterness, and he cries more mightily to God

for the return of his pleased countenance, and he prays, and fortifies the breach with stronger resolution, and more invincible watchfulness against future assaults. Observe then, if our change be but formal, outward, mistaken, temporary, we are utterly deceived, and therefore we had need to be jealous of ourselves.

2. We may be overtaken with this sin, before we be aware; our nature is very apt to take fire, our corrupt heart is like tinder, or gun-powder: This sin is called, *Peccatum in deliciis*, 'Our darling pleasure, our minion delight;' it is ever ready at every turn to allure us, tempt us, persuade us; and the soul, by a secret sensual inclination, is apt to follow it, to feed upon it with much affectionate sweetness: It may be, we have sometimes given it a death's wound, by the power of his might who is our *All in All*, and yet, as it is said of the first beast, *this deadly wound is ready to be healed again*, Rev. xiii. 12. it is an Hydra with many heads, and if we be not still hacking and hewing, it will revive and recollect strength, and at last rage more than before; and therefore what need have we to this holy jealousy!

5. Above all, without which, all the rest are nothing, believe we the promises of pardon, and of sanctification. The promises of the first sort, I spoke to in our watchfulness over this sin, and therefore now I shall speak of the latter. The Lord hath *promised to deliver us from all our enemies, that we may serve him in righteousness and holiness all the days of our life*, Luke i. 72, 74, 75. The Lord hath *promised to write his law in our hearts*, Heb. x. 16. and that can never be, except he obliterate all the old writing: Now then believe these promises, and press the Lord with them, or we shall never be able

† Proud of an easy conquest all along,
She but removes weak passions for the strong.

So, when small humours gather to a gout,
The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.

to outwrestle our lusts. What tho' we find out our sweet sins, confess them, resolve against them, be jealous over them? unless we go to God and Christ in the promises for strength, we shall ly down in sorrow. Could we of ourselves subdue our corruptions, God would not take this upon him, 'to give us new hearts, and new spirits, to sanctify us, to make us new creatures, to crucify the flesh, to weaken the dominion of sin:' Alas! he knows our weakness, and he knows all is in his own power; and therefore, if we would mortify these lusts, we must go to him, and beseech him to do it. When a man is once in Christ, he lives by a principle without himself; *I live by the faith of the Son of God*, saith Paul, *who loved me, and gave himself for me*, Gal. ii. 20. If we ask, Why will the Lord have our strength out of ourselves? Why may not a man have sufficient habitual strength in himself, by which he may be able to outwrestle lusts, and overcome temptations? The reason is, 'Because no flesh shall rejoice in itself, and therefore Christ is made sanctification unto us:' O let us believe these promises, and have continual dependance on the Lord Jesus Christ.

S E C T. V.

Of the manner of trying, or examining our Hearts.

THAT we may rightly try, or examine our hearts, observe we these rules.

1. Use we retiredness when we fall on this work: To this purpose, saith the Psalmist, *Commune with your own hearts, upon your beds, and be still*: Psa. iv. 4. When we get alone purposely to study our hearts, our hearts will then come to us, they will be more apt to discourse with us privately than in a croud; and therefore set we some time apart out of our public or particular occasions to deal with our hearts, as David, *who after the public business was done, returned home to visit, and*

to bless his own house, 2 Sam. vi. 20.

2. Try what thoughts are within, and which way runs the stream of our thoughts: the heart is an house of common resort, into which multitudes of thoughts, like so many guests enter, and have free and open access; only, if it be sanctified, it ordinarily distils holy, sweet and useful meditations, out of all objects: as the bee sucks honey out of every flower, and a good stomach sucks sweet and wholesome nourishment out of what it takes to itself; so doth a holy heart (so far as sanctified) convert and digest all into spiritual and useful thoughts: But on the contrary, if it be wicked, then a world of vain, light, wanton, profane and dissolute thoughts lodge there, and defile those rooms they lodge in; which made the Lord say to Jerusalem, *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved: How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. iv. 14.

3. If upon trial we find a lothness to entertain holy thoughts, and unsteadiness in them, a misplacing of them (which disorder is a vanity and sin, be the thought materially never so good) or, if we find in us many times a taking *thought to fulfill the lusts of the flesh*, Rom. xiii. 14. a representing, or acting over sin in our thoughts (O how much of that precious sand of our thoughts run out this way!) then let us humble ourselves for them; and thus Agur teacheth, *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thine mouth; i. e.* be humbled, be ashamed of these thoughts.

4. After humiliation, we must proceed to judgment: And to that end, consider what will be the subject of that great inquest at the last day? The apostle answers, *the counsels of the heart*, 1 Cor. iv. 5. And who will be the executioner? even thoughts accusing. O then let us prevent this doom, and this execution, by our own judgment and self-condemnation; let us

sentence our hearts, and whip out our evil thoughts, and give them their pass.

5. Let us watch over, and observe our hearts ever after. Thoughts will be crowding in, when we have done all we can, yet let them know, that they pass not unseen: Where strict watch and ward is kept, where magistrates, and marshals, and constables are diligent to examine vagrant persons, you shall have few of them there: The reason that such swarms of vagrant thoughts make their rendezvous, and pass in our hearts, is, Because there is no strict watch kept, we observe not our hearts, *with all diligence.*

6. Set our thoughts in order every morning, strengthen and perfume our spirits with some gracious meditations on God's holiness, majesty, omnipresence, omniscience: *My soul waiteth for the Lord* (said David) *more than they that watch for the morning,* Psal. cxxx. 6. Observe it, if you please, when we first open our eyes, there stand many suitors attending on us to speak with our thoughts, even as Clients at Lawyers doors; but speak we first with our God, and he will say something to our hearts, and settle them all the day after.

7. Now and then propose we to our hearts these two questions: 1. Heart, how dost thou? a few words, but a very serious question: You know, this is the first question, and the first salute that we use to one another, How do you, sir? I would to God we would sometimes thus speak to our hearts, 'Heart, how dost thou? how is it with thee for thy spiritual estate?' 2. Heart, What wilt thou do? or, Heart, what dost thou think will become of thee

and me?' as that dying Roman once said *Animula, vagula, blandula, &c.* 'Poor, wretched, miserable soul, whither art thou and I going, and what will become of thee, when thou and I shall part?' This very thing doth Moses propose to Israel, though in other terms, *O that they would consider their latter ends!* Deut. xxxii. 29. And O that we would propose this question constantly to our hearts to consider and debate upon! *Commune with your own hearts,* said David, Psal. iv. 4. *q. d.* debate the matter betwixt you and your own hearts to the very utmost: Let your hearts be so put to it in communing with them, as that they may speak their very bottom. *Commune,*] or, hold a serious communication, and clear intelligence and acquaintance with your own hearts: It was the confession of a Divine, sensible of his neglect, and especially of the difficulty of this duty, * 'I have lived (saith he) forty years, and somewhat more, and carried my heart in my bosom all this while, and yet my heart and I are as great strangers, and as utterly unacquainted, as if we had never come near one another:— Nay I know not my heart, I have forgotten my heart; Ah my bowels, my bowels! that I could be grieved at the very heart, that my poor heart and I have been so unacquainted!' We are fallen into an Athenian age, spending our time in nothing more than in *telling or hearing news,* Acts xvii. 21. 'How go things here? How there? How in one place? How in another?' But who is there that is inquisitive, 'How are things with my poor heart?' Weigh but in the balance of a serious consideration, what time we have spent in this duty, and

* Mr Lighfoot in his sermon before the House of Commons on *Psal. iv. 4.* Where observe that I set not the author here under the confession of a wilful neglect of that main duty till that very time that he was exhorting, orers to it; I rather look upon it as his daily confession, both before and since: Which argues not an impious, voluntary, wilful neglect; but rather a tender, humble, watchful, soft, and sensible spirit, truly sensible of that neglect which is infirmity. *Isaac Ambrose.*

what time otherwise? and for many scores and hundreds of hours or days that we owe to our hearts in this duty; can we write fifty? or where there should have been fifty vessels full of this duty, can we find twenty, or ten? O the days, months, years we bestow upon sin, vanity, the affairs of this world, whiles we afford not a minute in converse with our own hearts, concerning their case.

S E C T. VI.

Of the manner of trying, or examining our Tongues.

THAT we may rightly try, or examine our tongues, observe we these rules:

1. Search we into our dispositions, whether we are men of few words, or given to much speaking? The tongue may offend both ways, but especially if we are wordy.

2. Peruse with a broken heart and bleeding affections, the many kinds of those sins of the tongue, whereof (no doubt at one time or other) we have been deeply guilty. Some number them in thirty particulars; as 'Blasphemy, murmuring, defence of sin, swearing, forswearing, lying, equivocating, slandering, flattering, cursing, railing, brawling, scoffing, giving ill counsel, sowing seeds of discord amongst neighbours, double-tonguedness, boasting, discovering of secrets, hasty or indiscreet threatening, rash promises and vows, idle words, loquacity or immoderate talkativeness, filthy talking, scurrility or foolish jesting, tale-telling, raising of rumours, sinful silence, rash censuring, malicious informing, whispering.'

3. Consider we the last judgment, when men shall give *account for every idle word; for by our words we must be justified, and by our words we must be condemned,* Math. xii. 36, 37. Will it not be a fearful bill, wherein must be written every word that we spoke all our life long? O let us tremble to think of it, and judge and condemn ourselves, and seal up our lips

with amazement, as if we were struck dumb.

4. Let us ever after set a watch at the door of our lips: *I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle,* Psa. xxxix. 2. It is storied, that when this verse was read, or lectured upon to a religious person, he cried out, 'Stay there, and I will hear the rest when I have learned that verse,' [Tripart. lib. cap. 1.] A long time after, being demanded, Why he returned not to his old master, he answered, that 'as yet he was not perfect in his first lesson:' and hence the apostle could say, *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body,* Jam. iii. 2. It is an hard work to bridle the tongue, and therefore we had need to watch over it.

5. Pray we the Lord for the guidance of his Spirit in the right governing of our tongue; *The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord,* Prov. xvi. 1. and therefore prayed David, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips,* Psa. cxli.

3. *O the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity,* Jam. iii. 6. as the fire flies about, so the tongue is said to have wings; as the fire assimilates, and turns every thing into its own nature, so the tongue assimilates the hearts of men to whom it speaks; we had need therefore to pray, that God would order this fire in our mouths, lest we kindle such a fire in the breasts of others as we shall never live to quench again, and so kindle the fire of God's wrath, which shall smoke to our destruction.

S E C T. VII.

Of the manner of trying, or examining our Actions.

THAT we may rightly try, or examine our actions (I mean such actions as are matters and concerns of the soul, whether the work of saving grace, or the individual companions of this

this saving work, as duties and graces) observe we these rules :

1. For the work of saving grace or conversion, try, (1.) Whether ever our souls were wounded by a clear discovery and wide opening of our many ulcerous secret corruptions? Whether ever they were affected and pressed with a through sense and feeling of the fierce wrath of God, ready to break into unquenchable flames of vengeance against us?

(2.) Whether, after these bruifings and breakings, our souls ever cast their eyes upon that infinite sea of God's mercy, gloriously streaming thro' the infinite bleeding wounds of Jesus Christ upon every truly broken, contrite and wounded heart? Whether ever they settled and fastened their sight stedfastly upon their blessed Redeemer, as he was hanging on the cross, struggling with his Father's wrath for our sins, and crying out at last, *It is finished.*

(3.) Whether, after this sight, and consideration of the work of our redemption, our souls ever hungered and thirsted after the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, far more greedily, and insatiably, than ever the panting hart thirsted after the rivers of water? Whether ever with strong cries, prayers, groans and sighs, they threw themselves with some comfort and confidence into the bleeding and blessed bosom of our dear Redeemer, and there hid themselves sweetly and deeply in his sacred wounds, and goared side, from the eager pursuit of the wounding law, the rage of Satan, and stings of their own consciences?

(4.) Whether after this fast hold upon the passion and merits of Christ, our souls ever received this comfortable news, 'That we were pardoned, justified, intituled by the covenant of grace, unto a crown of immortality, and endless joys in the heavens?' Whether this ever melted us into an evangelical repentance, 'to bewail heartily all our sins, and former wretchedness of life, for having so vilely and rebelliously

grieved and offended so gracious and loving a Father?'

(5.) Whether, after these comforts and sorrows, our souls ever resolutely abandoned the practice of every gross sin, and threw out of their affections the liking and allowance of every the least infirmity? Whether we have ever since settled our selves to holiness of life, universal obedience to all God's commandments, though not in perfection and height of degree, yet in truth and sincerity of heart.

It may be every soul, truly converted, cannot speak affirmatively to every of these queries in intention, or height of measure, tho' for the substance they can; and if so, we may conclude, there is 'the work of saving grace.'

For the individual companions of this saving work, as Duties and Graces.

1. For duties, try, 1. How we manage them before, in, and after the work? Of this we shall inform more particularly in most of the duties, as we handle them in order. 2. What sensible and quickening communion we have with Christ in our duties? This is the main business and end of all the ordinances of Christ. It is ordinary with us to terminate our devotions with a circular course of praying morning and evening, or of coming to church every Lord's day; we look no further, but only to the exercise of the body, we see not any thing of the power of Christ shining out in strength in these duties: and therefore try we particularly,

1. 'Whether we have, in the use of any divine ordinance, an intimate, tender and effectual presence of Christ himself with us?'

2. 'Whether we have a constant influence, a quickening power of spiritual refreshing, a sensible spiritual taste of divine love, or of God himself by this presence of Christ?' In right performance of duties, we come to have fuller union with Christ, and by this coming to him, we come to and see the Father by him: and hence fol-

lows by this presence of Christ, these three things, 1. Peace with, and a spiritual joy in God. 2. A strength communicated to walk with Christ, and in his power with God. 3. A sealed assurance of eternal communion with God in glory.

2. For Graces, examine, (1.) The truth of our graces. (2.) The growth of our graces. (3.) The wants of our graces: all which we shall discuss at large in the Sacrament of the Lord's supper.

S E C T. VIII.

Of the time of our Self-trial.

THE scriptures have determined no set time, yet some rules there are, partly in scripture, and partly prescribed by holy men, which we may make use of, as thus.

1. There is no danger of surfeiting upon too much; the oftener we reckon with our souls, the fewer things we shall have to reckon for every time; and the fewer things there be, the more readily will they be called to mind, and more exactly be scanned: this made Bernard say of this work, 'If we will do it as often as we need, we must do it always.' (*Serm.* 48.)

2. The time that learned and devout men commend to us, is once every day: So 'Chrysoſtom, Let this account be kept every day; have a little book in thy conscience, and write therein thy daily transgressions; and when thou layest thee down on thy bed, then bring forth thy book, and take an account of thy sins.' (*Ex. on Ps.* 4.)

3. The time that especially scripture holds forth to us, is at evening or at night: *I call to remembrance*, said David, *my song in the night; I commune with my own heart, and my spirit made diligent search,*

Psal. lxxvii. 6. And thus he bids us, *Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still*, *Pf.* iv. 4. Upon which words says Chrysoſtom, 'What means this that he saith, Commune with your own hearts upon your beds? *q. d.* after supper, when you lie down, and are ready to sleep, and have great quietness and silence, without presence or disturbance of any, then erect a tribunal for your own consciences.' †

4. Other times may be as occasion requires: when the church of Israel was in distress, and sighed to God, then they encouraged each other, *Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord*, *Lam.* iii. 40. When Christians purpose to receive the Lord's supper, then, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat*, *1 Cor.* xi. 28. When we observe days of fast for humiliation of our souls; or when we observe a sabbath of feasts, or especially when we are cast down upon our sick-beds, and in expectation of our dissolution, then 'tis time to *examine, and to judge ourselves, that we be not judged*, *1 Cor.* xi. 31.

5. Besides those daily and casual times, it is convenient also, after some good space of time, to try our selves over again, *ex. gr.* After a month or a year, to consider our selves for the month or year past, that we may see how we have profited or decayed for that space of time; for as our members grow, and our shape every day changeth, and our black hairs turn gray, while we perceive it not, yet after some space of time, we may easily discern; so it is in our souls, besides the manifest changes which sometimes appear at the instant, there are certain insensible alterations, which are not to be discerned, but after some continu.

† Let not the stealing God of sleep surprize,
Nor creep in slumbers on thy weary eyes,
Ere ev'ry action of the former day
Strictly thou doist and righteously survey.
With reverence at thy own tribunal stand,
And answer justly to thy own demand.
Where have I been? in what have I transgress'd?
What good or ill has this day's life express'd?

Where have I fail'd in what I ought to do?
In what to God, to man, or to myself, I owe?
Inquire severe what'er from first to last,
From morning's dawn 'till ev'ning's gloom, has past,
If evil were thy deeds, repent and mourn,
And let thy soul with strong remorse be torn.
If good, the good with peace of mind repay,
And to thy secret self with pleasure say,
Rejoice, my heart, for all went well to-day. *Ps.* }
Ps. }

ance of time : and for rectifying of these, it is necessary to take a more general view of our souls, in a monthly or yearly trial ; by this means we shall see wherein we are better or worse, how our zeal is increased or decreased ; if we are bettered since our last general account, we shall have occasion to praise God ; if otherwise, we must therefore be humbled, and blow the coals of zeal, and stir up the grace of God in us, that we may *strengthen the things which remain, and are ready to die*, Rev. iii. 2.

To this purpose we read of many ancients that were accustomed to keep diaries or day-books of their actions, and out of them to take an account of their lives : Such a register (of God's dealings towards him, and of his dealings towards God in main things) the Lord put into a poor creature's heart to keep in the year 1641. ever since which time he hath continued it, and once a year purposes, by God's grace, to examine himself by it. The use and end of it is this ;

1. ' Hereby he observes something of God to his soul, and of his soul to God. 2. Upon occasion he pours out his soul to God in prayer accordingly, and either is humbled or thankful. 3. He considers how it is with him in respect of time past, and if he hath profited in grace, to find out the means whereby he hath profited, that he may make more constant use of such means : or wherein he hath decayed, to observe by what temptation he was overcome, that his former errors may make him more wary for the future.'

Besides many other uses, as of his own experience and evidences, which he may, by the Lord's help, gather out of this diary.

S E C T. IX.

The daily register of a weak unworthy Servant of Christ for some Years.

IT may be expected, that I give some example hereof, wherein if I might any way advance Christ or benefit his church, though I lay in the dust, I should willingly

publish and subscribe the daily register of a poor unworthy servant of Christ, indeed one of the meanest of his Master's family, for some space of time : As thus,

1651. *MAY* 13. I retired myself to a solitary and silent place to practise, especially the secret duties of a Christian : my ground is that of Cant. vii. 11, 12. *Come my beloved, let us go forth into the fields, etc. there will I give thee my loves.* 'The bridegroom of our souls, said Bernard, is bashful, and more frequently visits his bride in the solitary places.'—*MAY* 14. In a pleasant wood, and sweet walks in it, the Lord moved and enabled me to begin the exercise of secret duties : and after the prolegomena, or duties in general, I fell on that duty of Watchfulness ; The Lord then gave me to observe my former negligence, and to make some resolutions. I found the Lord sweet to me in the conclusion of the duty ; Allelujah.—*MAY*

15. I fell on the duty of Self-trial, and in the morning confessed my sins before and since conversion, wherein the Lord sweetly melted my heart. In the evening I perused my diary for the last year, wherein many passages of mercies from God, and troubles for sin, &c.—*MAY* 16. In the morning I went through the duty of Experiences, and felt some stirrings of God's Spirit in my soul. In the evening I fell on the duty of Evidences, when I acted faith, and found my evidences clear. Oh how sweet was my God !—*MAY* 17. This day in the morning, I meditated on the love of Christ, wherein Christ appeared, and melted my heart in many sweet passages. In the evening I meditated on eternity, wherein the Lord both melted, and cheered, and warmed, and refreshed my soul. Surely the touches of God's Spirit are as sensible as any outward touches. Allelujah.—*MAY* 19. In the former part of this day I exercised the Life of Faith, when the Lord strengthened me to act faith on several promises, both temporal,

poral, spiritual, and eternal. I had then sweet, refreshing and encouraging impressions on my soul against all the fearful, sinful, and doubtful dreams I had the night or two before dreamed. In the evening I considered the duty of Prayer, observed some workings of God's Spirit in my pursuing the rules, and afterwards in the practice of this duty. Blessed be God.—*MAY 20.* In the morning I fell on Reading the word, perused the directions, and then searched into the 'common places and uses of my corruptions in nature and practice; of my comforts against the burdens of my daily infirmities; of establishing my heart against the fear of falling away: of directions in my calling; of comforts against outward crosses; of my privileges in Christ above all the wicked in the world:' In every of these Christ appeared in some measure suitably to my soul. In the evening I proceeded in the common places and uses of sweet passages that melted my heart; of sensible comforts, and of places hard to be understood: In the first my heart was sweetly melted, in the second cheered, in the conclusion the Lord struck me with a reverence of his majesty and presence, filled my soul with spiritual refreshings, enlarged my heart with praises of him, and desires to live unto him, who hath given me in this time of love so many sweet

visits, and kisses of his mouth, Allelujah.—*MAY 22.* Occasionally, though not in course, I fell on some parts of the duty of Self-denial: The Lord in mercy wrought in my soul some suitability to that spiritual gospel-duty; 'Lord keep this fire up in a flame still. Oh it is a sweet, but a very hard lesson.—*MAY 31.* I practised, as the Lord enabled, the duty of Saints-sufferings; into which condition as I was cast, so the Lord gave me to see my sin wherefore, and to bewail it, and to pray for the contrary grace and God's favour. The Lord was sweet to me in the preparations to, but especially in the improving of sufferings. Now the Spirit left in my soul a sweet scent and favour behind it. Allelujah. Amen, Amen.

I had proceeded in this diary, but that I doubt whether the knowledge of many such particulars may not prove offensive either to the weak or wilful. And I would not willingly occasion any matter of offence to those that are within or without the church. Thus much, only for edification and imitation, I have written. And though with David I declare what God hath done for my soul, Psalm lxxvi. 16. yet with Paul, I ever desire to correct my self; *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

C H A P. V. S E C T. I.

Of the Nature of S E L F - D E N I A L .

IF any man will come after me, said Christ, *let him deny himself,* Mat. xvi. 24. The word in the original is a compound, noting more than a single, ordi-

nary Self-denial. * It signifies to 'deny utterly, totally, not at all to spare, or regard a man's self:' It imports a perfect, or universal Self-denial; it is as much as to re-

* Abneget, i. e. omnino neget, Leigh critica sacra. Perneget, & prorsus neget. Reynolds.

ject and cast off a man's self, as a man doth a graceless son whom he will not own any more for his. From the word opened, we may discover the nature of it, which diverse give in, though with some variety, as thus. 'To deny a man's self, say some, it is to forsake the motions of our own corrupt reason and will,' which is the very same with mortifying of the old man, and crucifying the flesh. 'To deny a man's self, say others, it is to refuse to be subject to, or to work for a man's self, as if it were our master : ' And this description is taken from the similitude of a servant who renounceth to be under the government of such a Lord. 'To deny a man's self, say others, it is not to deny himself to be a man, or to put off human affects, but to humble himself.' This likewise is true, but 'tis not full enough for a Christian Self-denial. And therefore 'to deny a man's self, says others, it is to put himself and all that he hath in hazard, rather than to neglect the glory of Christ.' This Antithesis much enlargeth it ; and in this sense a man is said to deny himself when he comes up to that height of the apostle, as to say, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20. *q. d.* 'The life that I live in respect of the original, it is not of nature, but of grace ; not of myself, but of Christ : in respect of the rule ; it is not after my own fancy, but according to the will of Christ ; not after my own lusts, but after the Spirit ; in respect of the end : It is not to myself, but to Christ, not to exalt or magnify my self, but to be all that I am unto Jesus Christ : In respect of opinion, it is not to make my self my own Lord and master, but to prostrate all at the feet of Christ ; not to suffer any thing in me to exalt it self, but to make all veil and bow to Christ.' And hence I shall give this description of it, 'that Self-denial is a total, through, utter abnegation of a man's own ends, counsels, affections ; and a whole prostration of himself and of all that is his,

under Christ Jesus.' And thus we have the meaning of Christ, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself*, i. e. Let him lay aside his own wisdom as an empty lamp, his own will as an evil commander, his own imagination as a false rule, his own affections, as corrupt counsellors, and his own ends as base and unworthy marks to be aimed at. *Let him deny himself*, whatsoever is of himself, within himself, or belonging to himself as a corrupt and carnal man ; let him go out of himself, that he may *come to me* ; let him empty himself of himself, that he may be capable of me, and that I may reign and rule within him. As in Joseph's vision, *the sun, moon, and the eleven stars* did obeysance to him, and all *the sheaves in the field veiled to his sheaf*, Gen. xxxvii. 7, 9. So in the life, way, work and soul of a regenerate man, all the supernatural gifts and graces, all the moral endowments and abilities, all the natural powers and faculties of the soul, with all the members of the body, and all the labours of the life, and whatsoever else, must do obeysance, and veil, and be made subject and serviceable unto Jesus Christ. And this is true Self-denial.

S E C T. II.

Of the Distribution of Self, and of the Manner how every Self is to be denied.

BUT for the better understanding of this duty of Self-denial, we must first distinguish of Self, and then apply it accordingly.

1. There is a threefold Self, viz. a sinful Self, a natural Self, and a moral, virtuous, or renewed Self.

The first Self, which is sinful Self, or corrupt Self, is that which the apostle calls *the old man*, Eph. iv. 22. *the earthly Adam*, 1 Cor. xv. 47. *the body of death*, Rom. vii. 24. *the carnal mind*, Rom. viii. 7. In which sense, to deny a man's Self, it is, in the apostle's phrase, *To deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts*, Tit. ii. 12.

The Second self, which is natural Self, is either considerable in regard of being, or of well-being. 1. In regard of being and substance, and so it imports our life, which is the continuance and preservation of our being, together with the faculties and powers of nature, our understanding, will, affections, senses, fleshly members. 2. In regard of well-being, or the outward comforts of life, and they are either, 1. External relations, as betwixt husband and wife, parent and child, brother and brother, friend and friend. Or, 2. Special gifts and endowments, as learning, wisdom, power, or any other abilities of mind and body. Or, 3. Common ends, which naturally men pursue and seek after, and they are by the apostle comprized under three heads, of profit, pleasure and honour; *The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life*, 1 John ii. 16. Of this kind are, ' Houses, lands, possessions, fleshly, worldly, natural, unnatural, artificial delights; liberty, praise, favour, applause, any thing from which a man doth draw any kind of content or satisfaction in order to himself.'

The third Self, which is moral Self, or virtuous Self, or renewed Self, it is a man's duties, holiness, obedience, righteousness, the graces of his Spirit, the image of Christ, Col. iii. 10. Rom. viii. 29. For as the first Adam begets us after his image, so the second Adam regenerates us after his image; from the one we receive lust for lust, and from the other grace for grace.

Now according to this three-fold Self, there are three branches of Self-denial; for some things are to be denied simply and absolutely, some things conditionally, and upon supposition; some things comparatively, and in certain respects.

1. Some things are to be denied simply and absolutely, and so a man is to deny the sinful self; 1. *Generally* as it imports the whole body of corruption and concupiscence, which we are to *mortify* and *subdue*.

to crucify and to revenge the blood of Christ against it, Col. iii. 5. Rom. viii. 13. 2. *'Specially* in regard of those personal corruptions, which we in our particulars are more notably carried into, *which David calls the keeping of himself from his own iniquity*, Psal. xviii. 23.'

2. Some things are to be denied conditionally, and upon supposition of God's special call, and so a man is to deny his Natural Self, whensoever it stands in opposition unto, or in competition with Christ, his glory, kingdom, or command. And this we are to do. 1. *Habitually*, in preparation of the soul, and that always. 2. *Actually*, whensoever any thing dear unto us is inconsistent with the conscience of our duty to God: And thus Paul regarded neither liberty nor life in comparison of the gospel of grace, and of the name of the Lord Jesus, Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13. Thus Micaiah regarded not his safety or reputation in Ahab's court, 1 Kings xxii. 14. Thus Levi regarded not his father, or mother, or brethren, or children in the zeal of God's honour, Deut. xxxiii. 9. Thus Ezekiel regarded not his dear wife, the delight of his eyes, when God took her away with a stroke, and forbade him to mourn for her, Ezek. xxiv. 16, 17, 18. Thus Matthew regarded not his receipt of custom, Luke v. 27. nor James and John their nets, their ships, their father, when they were called to follow Christ, Matth. iv. 21, 22.

3. Some things are to be denied comparatively, and in some respect; and so a man is to deny his 'renewed self, his very duties, virtues, graces.' I deny not but in the nature and notion of duties we are bound to seek, to pray, to practise, to improve, to treasure up, and exceedingly to value them; but in relation unto righteousness, in order to justification in the sight of God, and in comparison of Christ, we must esteem all these things but as *less and dung*, Phil. iii. 8.

S E C T. III.

Of the denial of Sinful Self; and first of Cautions.

FIRST, we must deny Sinful Self, and this we are to deny simply and absolutely, whether it be the whole body of corruption and concupiscence; or those personal corruptions which we in our particulars are more notably carried into. Concerning both these, I shall give some cautions, and directions.

The cautions in general are these.

1. That the denial of sinful Self is still imperfect in this life, even in the most excellent servants of Christ: the best of us feel in ourselves *another law* and power of sin, *rebelling against the law of our mind, and leading us into captivity to the law of sin that is in our members*, Rom. vii. 23, 24. Howsoever self-denial is as a deadly wound given unto sin, whereby it is disabled to bear rule, or commanding power in the heart of a regenerate man, yet self-denial is not perfect; it doth not so slay sin, as that we have no sin at all in us, or that we cease to sin; there is still the sap of sin in the heart of the most regenerate and holy man; hence self-denial is not for a day only, but it must be a continual work; as we have denied sin to-day, so we must deny it to-morrow, for sin is of a quickening nature, it will revive, if it be not deadly and continually wounded.

2. As this self-denial is imperfect, so it is unequal, every man having a *portion of grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, Eph. iv. 7. The same measure of the Spirit is not to be expected in all; all have not the same measure of sorrow for their sin that others have, yet it may be true and unfeigned, and so accepted of God; the fruits of repentance are *in some thirty, in some sixty, in some an hundred-fold*, Matth. xiii. 8. Tho' every true believer have the Spirit, Rom. viii. 9. and be a spiritual person, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. yet some truly spiritual

are so weak, that in comparison of others they are not spiritual, 1 Cor. iii. 1. And therefore ought not any for this to be discouraged if they find themselves inferior unto others.

3. As this self-denial is unequal, so it is in some respects unlike in the faithful; as there are diverse measures of it, so there are diverse manners of it: Hence some that have not so strongly denied the outward actions of sin, may have striven more in the self-denial of their inward lusts and affections: And some that have not denied themselves for a time in respect of more heinous sins, may yet exceed others in self-denial which never fell into such gross and heinous transgressions. It is hard for any to determine whether it was greater grace in Joseph resisting the temptation, and not committing adultery with his mistress, or in David after his fall to humble himself so far as being a glorious king to shame himself by publick confession of his adultery; for as God magnifies his mercy by sin in forgiving it, more than if no sin had been, Rom. v. 20.: so the godly may sometimes manifest their grace, by open and effectual repentance, more than if that special sin had not been committed by them, Luke vii. 44, 45, 46, 47.

4. Howsoever this self-denial is in the best saints imperfect, unequal, unlike; yet we must endeavour absolutely and simply to deny sinful-self: We must ever be hacking and hewing at this tree till it falls: we must grieve at it, strive against it, and thus continue grieving and striving all the days of our life. Say not now, I have grace enough, but, as that great apostle, still press forward to have more virtue from Christ: If we have prevailed against the outward act, rest not, but get the rising of lust mortified, and that rowling of it in our fancy; get our hearts deadened towards it also: and rest not there, but get to hate it, and the thought of it: The body of death must not only be crucified
with

with Christ, but buried also, and so rot, and molder away more and more after its first death's-wound, Rom. vi. 4. 6.

S E C T. IV.

Of the manner of denying our natural Concupiscence.

THE directions have respect either to our natural concupiscence, or to our personal corruptions.

1. We are absolutely to deny the whole body of corruption and concupiscence; we are to mortifie and subdue, to crucifie and to revenge the blood of Christ against this sin. This is the meaning of the apostle, *Mortify your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence*, Col. iii. 5. Now for the denying or mortifying of this concupiscence, observe these directions.

1. Be sensible of it, cry out with Paul, Rom. vii. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

2. Endeavour we to get a willing heart to have this sin mortified. *Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled*, Matth. v. 6.

3. Be we peremptory in denying the requests of concupiscence, bar up the doors, give it no audience; nothing is better than a peremptory will if it be well set, nothing worse if it be ill. When Abihai would have persuaded David to slay Shimei, David gives him a peremptory denial, *saying, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?* 2 Sam. xvi. 10. and xix. 22. So Christ gave Peter a peremptory denial when he would have dissuaded him from his passion, *saying, Get thee behind me, Satan*, Matth. xvi. 23. The old man is of our old acquaintance that hath been born and bred with us, and therefore is ready to deceive us; look to it, and whensoever it suggests, give it a peremptory denial.

4. Take we pains to mortify this sin. *I run not in vain, as one that beats the air,*

1 Cor. ix. 26. that is, I take pains, but not in vain, I take no more pains than I must needs, if I took any less, I could not come to that I aim at: The less pains we take in subduing this corruption, the more will it increase; but what pains? I answer, We must use the means God hath appointed, as the Word, and Prayer, and Fasting, and Watching, and Weeping, and Mourning, to these, I may add Covenants and Vows: Provided that, 1. They be of things lawful. 2. That we esteem them not as duties of absolute necessity. And 3. That we bind not ourselves perpetually, lest our vows become burthens to us; if we will vow, let us but vow for a time, that when the time is expired, we may either renew, or let them cease, as necessity requires.

5. Let us intermix these means, duties or services one with another. Christ hath variety of blessed employments for us, and we should flee from slower to slower; as sometimes hear, other whiles pray, frequently meditate, and be not seldom in godly company. When our lustings sollicite us to this or that object; ask our souls the question that the prophet did Ahaziah's messengers, *Is there not a God in Israel, that thou shouldst go to Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?* 2 Kings i. 2. Is there never a promise in the scripture? never a faint of my acquaintance? never a mercy to be thankful for? no beauty and glory in heaven to be panting after?

6. Labour we to get the assistance of the Spirit of Christ. This you may think strange, *The wind bloweth where it listeth*, John iii. 8. *i. e.* the Spirit worketh where it listeth; yet this hinders not, but that the Spirit may list to blow in the use of the means: Surely there are means to get the Spirit, and to hinder the Spirit; the Spirit may be won or lost in the doing or not doing of these things.

1. If we would have the Spirit, then we must know the Spirit; we must so know him, as to give him the glory of the work
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of every grace: The want of the knowledge of Christ's Spirit is the very reason why men receive not the Spirit. *I will send unto you the Comforter, whom the world cannot receive, because they know him not*, John xiv. 17. The world knows not the preciousness of the Spirit, and therefore they lightly esteem of him. The first means to have the Spirit, it is to know the Spirit, that we may give him the glory of every grace.

2. If we would have the Spirit, take heed that we *quench not the Spirit*, 1 Theff. v. 19. I mean not by quenching the Spirit, *a quite putting of it out*: But, 1. A growing careless and remiss in the duties of religion. 2. A not cherishing every good motion of the Spirit in our hearts, either to pray, or to hear, &c.

3. If we would have the Spirit, take heed that we *grieve not the Spirit*; let us not drive him by our sins out of the temples of our souls, disturb him not in his gracious and comfortable operations there, but so demean ourselves that he may stay in our spirits, and manifest without any eclipses or interruptions his sweet and powerful presence within us. Surely the Spirit is a clean spirit, as he loves a clean habitation: It is sin makes the Spirit loath the soul of a man: Evil speeches, and evil actions grieve the Spirit of Christ.

4. If we would have the Spirit, take heed that we *resist not the Spirit*, Acts vii. 51. Now we may be said to resist the Spirit, 1. By not doing the good required, when we hang off from that good to which we are strongly moved by the inward pulsations and persuasions of the Spirit of God. 2. By sinning against light; in this respect, the sins against the second table resist more than sins against the first, because these are sins against a multiplied light, against the light of the word, and light of the Spirit, and light of nature. 3. By falling into foul sins, such as are *the manifest deeds of the flesh, as, adultery, fornication, un-*

cleanness, lasciviousness, Gal. v. 19. Indeed these sins are not fit to be named amongst Christians. *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh saints*, Eph. v. 3. This last is called *idolatry*, Col. iii. 5. Now the name Idol, in scripture, doth sometimes signify an image, or sculpture, or representation; sometimes an heathen god under the notion of a false God, and sometimes an heathen God, under the notion of filthy, unclean, and abominable, 1 Pet. iv. 3. 1 Cor. x. 7, 8. Isa. lvii. 5. 1 Cor. vi. 9. The reason whereof was, because in their idol feasts and idol-worships they used those heathen villainies of filthiness and uncleanness, Rev. ii. 14. or at least their idol-feasts were wont to be previous, and preparatory to fornications, Acts xv. 20. Rev. ii. 14. O these are foul sins, which were a shame for Christians to name, or speak out, much more to commit. But why is covetousness unfit to be named? And why is it called idolatry? Some criticks observe very well, that the word in the original is *Pleonexia*, which is not Covetousness properly, but inordinate Desire, not only of wealth, but also of lusts, those *nefanda*, that were common to the Gentiles. O take heed of thus resisting the Spirit; this is a desperate, and a dangerous sin.

5. If we would have the Spirit, let us pray for the Spirit: This was the means that Christ used, *I will pray the Father*, (saith he concerning his apostles, John xiv. 16.) *and he will send the Comforter to you*. And this was the means Christ puts us upon, *For if your earthly parents can give good things unto their children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Ghost to them that ask him?* Luke xi. 13. Prayer is prevailing with God, it is restless and pleasing to God, it will have no denial.

6. If we would have the Spirit, then let us walk in the Spirit, do the actions of the

new man: We know some physick is for restoring, to preserve the strength of the body, and such is this walking in the actions of the new man; it preserves the strength of the soul, it preserves spiritual life in a man, it enables him to fight against corruptions and lusts, *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*, Gal. v. 16.

But the saints may object: 'All this we have done in our measure, but still we find a body of death, many lusts yet remaining and rising up in us, and rebelling against the law of our mind, yea, sometimes captivating and leading us away to the minding and seeking of ourselves, and serving our own base affections.'

I answer, It may be so, nay, I told you it would be so, in the first caution; and yet if we pray against them, if by an holy, gracious and constant contestation we fight and war against them, if by a godly grief and sorrow of heart, we mourn and are troubled for them, then here is our comfort, though we are not fully freed from them, yet we have truly denied them. There the lusts of a man are denied, where they do not reign, and bear dominion, where they have not the full and peaceable possession. Paul was one that in a very high measure denied himself, and though he complained of sin, and of a law *in his members rebelling against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin and death*; yet this being his trouble, the Lord thereupon comforts him with the sufficiency of his grace, *My grace is sufficient for thee*, 2 Cor. xii. 9.

S E C T. V.

Of the Manner of denying our personal Corruptions.

2. **W**E are absolutely to deny those personal Corruptions which we in our particulars are more notably carried unto. Now for the denying or mortifying of this sin (whatsoever it may be) ob-

serve these Directions.

1. Labour we to see the disease; No man will seek for cure, except he see the disease: The sight of the disease is half the cure of it. O then endeavour we to find out what is our special sin, our Dalilah sin, let us be persuaded and convinced of it. See the marks whereby to discover it, in Chap. 4. Sect. 4.

2. Observe the baseness of this condition, which appears, partly in the nature of it, and partly in the evil it brings. 1. For its nature, it is the basest slavery in the world. Israel's bondage in Egypt was but a shadow to this: Men that will not deny their corruptions, they are servants to sin, and servants to Satan, *they walk after the prince of the power of the air*, Eph. ii. 2. nay, they are servants to their own corrupt mind, *they are led by their lusts as a fool to the stocks*. 2. For the evil that comes by it, it deprives us of God's favour, and brings upon us infinite sorrows, as, Blindness of Mind, Hardness of Heart, Deadness of Spirit, Horror of Conscience, and, without repentance, all the Terrors of Hell.

3. Abstain we from all beginnings and occasions of this sin: Quench it at first; if we cannot put out a spark, how should we put out a flame? If we get not the mastery over the first motion to sin, how shall we overcome it when it is brought to maturity in action? As a stream riseth by little and little, one shower increasing it somewhat, and another making it bigger still, so sin riseth by degrees, James i. 14, 15. And therefore take heed of the beginning of our affections, look we to the beginning of this inordinate lust; if we perceive but a glimpse of it, let us quench and resist it; if we hear it knocking at the door of our hearts, do not presently let it in, but ask his errand, plead the cause with it, consider the hinderance and inconveniences that come by it.

4. Proportion the remedy to the disease.

As the lust is greater, so use we greater abstinence; make stronger vows against it; if the tide beat strongly, keep the bank good; repair it by new renewals of our graces in us; make we new covenants against it. What though we are weak and frail, and subject to break our promises in this kind? Yet, remember that they are God's ordinances, and he will put to his helping hand to enable us.

5. Turn we our delights to God, and Christ, and heavenly things: There is no true self-denial that is only private; a man cannot leave his earthly-mindedness, but presently he must be heavenly-minded; as a man cannot empty a vessel of water, but presently air will come in its place, so a man cannot deny sinful-self, but grace will immediately enter, and take possession of his heart. And, Oh! when it is thus, when the intentions of our mind (as our morning thoughts, &c.) which we spent upon vanities, are now drawn unto prayer by holy meditations, then lusts wither, then doth corruption shole off more and more.

6. Maintain in our souls the authority of God's truth. Either Self or Christ will rule in the soul; and therefore set up truth, and let that be the spring of all our actions; he that will free himself from being an hired servant to this or that master, he must hire himself. When David went to Achish, he was free from Saul; if we would not have Saul and sinful Self to rule in us, we must give up ourselves to the command of God and his word.

7. Labour to thwart that particular corruption to which we are inclined: *Ex. Gr.* Are we given to wrath? Endeavour we to be humbler and meeker than other men: Are we given to the world? Look after that better and more enduring substance in heaven? Consider that *the reproaches of Christ are greater riches than the treasures of Egypt*, Heb. xi. 26. Contraries in nature do expel one another, cold is expelled

with heat; darkness with light: thus it is with grace.

8. Pray that Christ would *baptize us with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*, Matth. iii. 11. that like fire he would heat the faculties of our souls, and inflame our loves unto God; for as our love to God is stronger, so our love to holy things will be more earnest, and consequently our hatred to sinful Self will be more strong and perfect. O pray for the Spirit, and wait for the Spirit, and labour to be *baptized with the Holy Ghost* more and more fully. If we be left to ourselves, it is impossible for us to deny Self, to mortify Self; and therefore we are to pray to God to give us his Holy Spirit. It is he that is *the refiner's fire, and fuller's soap*, Mal. iii. 2. Now, as in refining and purifying, use what means you will, except you use fire you can never refine silver; so if a man be left to his own spirit, he will run into a thousand noisom lusts; but when God's Spirit is clothed in a man's heart, then he is kept from sin.

9. Labour after further discoveries of Christ. Believe more, and depend more upon Christ, yea, let us trade immediately with Christ, for Christ is the only agent in the work of Self-denial. Mistake not, I do not say, that we are mere passives in Self-denial; indeed at that first habitual beginning of it at conversion, and at that final perfecting and finishing of it, and carrying away all sin at death, I believe we are mere passives; but now in our progress, we are workers together with Christ: And therefore it is said that *we purge ourselves*, 2 Tim. ii. 21. and that *we purify ourselves*, 1 John iii. 3. and that we *by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh*, Rom. viii. 13. because Christ still going on to purge us, purify us, and mortify our lusts, he doth it by stirring up our graces, and useth therein acts of our faith, and love, and many motives, and considerations to do it. Let us therefore use all means required,

but above all, let us bring our hearts more and more acquainted with Christ. It is Christ is that great ordinance appointed by God to get our lusts mortified; how many souls have gone puddring on (as I may so speak) in the use of other means? And though in them Christ hath communicated some vertue to them, yet, because they did not trade with him, they had little in comparison: The more distinctly a man understands Christ, and how to make use of him, the more easily he will deny himself, and get his lusts purged; such a one as trades immediately with Christ, will do more in a day, than another will in a year. Now this is as God opens our faith to see him, and know him, and to be acquainted with him: Hence it was Paul's desire, Phil. iii. 10. *That I might know him, and the power of his resurrection*: That I may know him as a prophet instructing me, as a priest sanctifying me, as a king reigning spiritually in me; that I may know the power of his resurrection in the vivification of my soul, in the abolition of my sin, and especially of mine own iniquity, Psal. xviii. 23. It was Christ that Paul made use of in this work. *By Christ the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world*, Gal. vi. 14. Thus much for the denial of sinful Self.

S E C T. VI.

Of the denial of our external relations; and first of Cautions.

SEcondly, we must deny Natural Self; and this we must deny only conditionally, and upon supposition of God's call, whether it be in regard of our being or well-being. I shall begin with the latter, and that contains either *External Relations, Special Gifts, or common Ends*.

1. We are conditionally to deny our external relations; to this purpose, saith Christ, Luke xiv. 26. *If any man cometh to me, and hateth not father and mother, and children, and brethren, and wife, and sisters, he cannot be my disciple*. Not that

religion teacheth or commandeth, or endureth a saint to break the ties of religion or nature; you see it puts in a plea against such unnaturalness, *Honour thy father and mother, is the first commandment with promise*. Eph. vi. 2. *And the ravens of the valleys shall pick out their eyes that mock and despise their father and mother*, Prov. xxx. 17. God's commandments do not interfere, the gospel in this case gives no superfeedas to the law [or superledes the obligation of it:] and therefore in the denial of relations, I shall lay down some cautions, and directions.

The cautions are these.

1. That relations are the blessings of God: they are God's gifts, and bestowed on the saints in a way of promise; *Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways*: How may that appear? *Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house, thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord*, Psal. cxxviii. 1, 3, 4. Now thus we must not deny, but love and cherish, and dearly esteem of our relations: they are the gifts of God's bounty, of his gracious covenant, proceeding from the free undeserved love of God, they are the tokens of God's special good-will and favour in Jesus Christ: they are love tokens which Christ sends to our souls, that so he might draw our loves to him again; and hence it is lawful and commendable to rejoice in them in their way, and especially to lift up our souls in thanksgiving to God for them, *For every creature of God is good* (much more the children of our loins, and wives of our bosoms) *if received with thanksgiving*, 1 Tim. iv. 4.

2. Notwithstanding they are the blessing of God, yet we must deny them for God, as in these cases:

1. If they retard us in the way to Christ, if they intice us to make haltings in our runnings through fire and through water

to the Lord Jesus. Thus as it was said of Levi, so should it be said of every saint, *He said unto his father and mother, I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own children*, Deut. xxxiii. 9. This is meant, either of the priest's continual duty, who, if his father, mother, brother or child died, he might not mourn for them; but carry himself as if he did not respect, know, or care for them; or, it is meant of that fact of the sons of Levi, who being commanded of Moses, *they killed every man his brother, friend, neighbour, and son*, that had sinned in making and worshipping the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 27, 28. and to this latter the Chaldee refers it, translating thus, *Who had no compassion on his father, or on his mother, when they were guilty of judgment, and accepted not the persons of his brother, or of his son*. If our dearest relations should beckon us out of the way, or retard us in the way to Jesus Christ, [in that case] we must not respect father or mother, we must not acknowledge our brethren, nor know our own children. And Christ gives the reason, *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me*, Mat. x. 37. A man should love father and mother, and a man will love son and daughter, for love descends rather than ascends; *but if any man love father or mother, or son or daughter more than Christ, he is not worthy of Christ, he is not fit to be a disciple of Christ, or to be saved by Christ*.

2. If they draw contrary ways to Christ, if their ways be cross, Christ drawing one way, and relations drawing another way. Now in this case, as Christ said, *If a man hate not father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple*, Luke xiv. 26. *If a man hate not,* i. e. if a man renounce not all carnal af-

fection, if a man be not disposed (where these loves are incompatible) to hate father and mother, and all for the love of Christ, he cannot belong to Christ. These two cases may be summed up thus; if our relations do either retard our way to Christ, or draw us from Christ, in this sense they ought to be forgotten, yea, to be hated. Christ, in this case, called Peter Satan; we must not love father, or mother, or wife, or daughter, or child more than Christ; so Mat. x. 37. expounds that place of Luke xiv. 26. This is plain, for we must love Christ with all our heart, and with all our soul; and tho', by the second commandment, we must love our neighbour as ourself, yet we must not love our neighbour as our Christ.

S E C T. VII.

Of the Manner of denying our external Relations.

THE directions of Self-denial, in respect of our relations, are these.

1. Let us have them as if we had them not. This is the expression of the apostle; *The time is short*, saith he, and, *What then? it remains that both they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as tho' they wept not, and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not*, 1. Cor. vii. 29, 30. *The time is short*: the apostle here alludes to sea-faring men that have almost done their voyage, and begin to strike sail, and to fold them up together, and are even putting into harbour: so it is with us, our time is short, as soon as we begin our voyage, we are ready to strike sail presently. 2. *It remains that both they that have wives be as though they had none, &c. q. d.* You that are ready to cast anchor, trouble not yourselves about these things, but rather be ye stedfast, gird up the loins of your minds, let your care be greatest for heaven; and as for these outward relations, be as if you had none, or think, as soon as you are ashore, you shall have none;

do not giut yourselves, but moderate your hearts in all such comforts as these.

2. Let us resign up all to God. This we have done, and this we must do still.

1. This we have done in that day when we have made up our bargain for Christ. Every soul that comes to Christ, he parts with all to buy that pearl, and in selling all he sells not only his corruptions and lusts, but his father, mother, wife, children, all relations conditionally.

3. This we must do still; we must give up all to God; we, and they, and all must be at the command of Christ, at the pleasure of God and Christ; indeed nothing is properly called our own but God and Christ; all other things are God's gifts, lent of God, and therefore of due (as occasion is) we must give all to God again.

4. In all things, yea, above all things, be we filled with the Spirit. This will take off our thoughts from other things that are inferior: if our souls be once filled with the things of a better life, then wife, children, parents, friends will never draw away our hearts. O that our souls would but mount up, and take a view of those rare things that are provided for us in another life! what? to have God our father, angels our keepers, to be the children, brethren, companions of angels? weigh these things daily, and then we shall deny our relations here: these on earth may be comforts, but what is earth to heaven? what are these joys to joys eternal?

5. Let us muse on the many relations betwixt Christ and us; he is our creator, we the work of his hands: he is our shepherd, we the flock of his pasture; he is our father, the great father of the family, who provides all things necessary for them that be under his government, and we are his children; he is our bridegroom, we his spouse: now if Christ be instead of all relations, how should we but leave all for Christ? As a woman leaves her father's house, and her own people, to cohabit

with her husband, so should we 'leave our country with Abraham,' Gen. xii. 1. 'leave our friends with Levi,' Deut. xxxiii. 9. 'leave our possessions with the disciples,' Matth. iv. 22. yea be 'ready to leave our life with Paul' for the testimony, honour and service of Christ. The soul that is related to Christ, hath enough in Christ to please and delight itself. Tho' all friends according to the flesh become strangers, or prove enemies, yet Christ is instead of all friends.

6. Let us imitate them (as occasion is) who for Christ's sake have not only in will, but actually parted with their dearest relations. Thus *Moses refused that relation, to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*, Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26. Thus the apostles of Christ refused not some, but their all relations; *Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee: to whom Christ answered, Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my names sake, shall receive an hundredfold*, (which Christ gives them in bestowing himself on them) *and shall inherit everlasting life*, Matth. xix. 27, 29. It was Jerom's saying, 'If the Lord Christ should call me to him, tho' my father should ly in the way, and my mother should hang about my neck, I would go over my father, and shake off my mother, and run to my Christ.' But this was only said; if you would know a greater matter than this done and practised, I shall give you one notable instance, enough to inflame all our hearts towards Christ and his truth in the very publishing of it.

I have read a notable story of one Galeacius Caraccioli, the noble marquis of Vico: This Vico was one of the paradises of Naples, and Naples was the paradise of Italy, and Italy is the paradise of Europe, and Europe the paradise of all the earth: yet, this marquis being brought to hear
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a sermon of Peter Martyrs, God pleased so to work upon his spirit that he began to enter into serious thoughts, whether his way of popery wherein he was trained, was right or not. At last, having further light let into his soul not only of seeing truths, but likewise of delivering himself from that idolatry which he apprehended himself defiled withal; his resolutions were strong to leave the court, and his honours, together with his father, wife and children, and whatsoever was dear to him. Many grievous combats he had betwixt the flesh and the spirit when he resolved of his departure, but the greatest troubles were his relations; for,

1. As often as he looked on his father, which he almost did every hour, so often he was stricken at the heart with unpeakable grief; his thoughts run thus, 'What? and must I needs forsake my dear and loving father? and cannot I else have God my Father? O unhappy father of my body which must stand in competition with the father of my soul!'

3. No less inwardly was he grieved in respect of his noble wife; for having no hope that she would renounce popery, and go with him, he resolved also for Christ's sake to leave her, and to follow Christ, whereupon his thoughts run thus: 'And shall I so, yea, so suddenly, and so unkindly leave and forsake my dear loving wife, the only joy of my heart in this world, and shall I leave her not for a time, but for ever? Poor lady! how many doleful days without comfort, how many waking nights without sleep shall she pass over? What will she do, but weep and wail, and pine away with grief?'

These two cogitations of his father and wife greatly tormented him, and the more because he laboured to keep close this fire which burned and boiled in his heart; he durst not make known his departure, lest it should have been hindred, which he would not for a world.

3. There was yet a third and special care that pinched him, and that was for his Children; which were six in all. It was the more grief in that they were so young, as that they could not yet conceive what it was to want a father; the eldest was scarce fifteen, and the youngest scarce four years old: towards them, saith the story, his thoughts run thus: 'And shall I within these few days utterly forsake these sweet babes? shall I leave them to the wide and wicked world, as though they had never been my children, nor I their father? and you, poor orphans, what shall become of you when I am gone? your hap is hard, even to be fatherless, your father yet living. And what can your woeful mother do when she looketh on you, but weep and wring her hands, her grief still increasing as she looks upon you? yet thus must I leave you all confounded together in heaps of grief, weeping and wailing one with another, and I, in the mean time, weeping and wailing for you all.'

This noble spirit thus resolved, at last he left his family, and went to Geneva, who no sooner gone, but his friends and family were so astonished, that nothing was heard or seen amongst them but lamentations. The story is large: I shall wind up all in this one passage. By his father's commands, and his wife's intreaties he was perswaded to see them once in his life, and to take his journey from Geneva to Vico; thither come, and having staid a while, and now ready again to return to his dear Geneva, his father at his farewell 'gave him many an heavy and bitter curse;' his wife embraced him, and took him about the neck, beseeching him in a most loving and pitiful manner, that 'he would have care of himself, of his dear wife and children, and not so willingly cast them all away; his young children all upon their knees with arms stretched out, and hands holden up, and faces swollen with tears cried unto him 'to have pity on them his own bowels,

and

and not to make them faithless before the time: his friends with heavy countenances and watry eyes looked ruefully on him, and though for grief they could not speak a word, yet every look and every countenance and every gesture was a loud cry, and a strong intreaty that 'he would stay, and not leave so antient and noble an house in such a woeful and desolate case.' But above all, there was one most lamentable sight: among all his children, he had one daughter of twelve years old, who crying out amain, and wallowing in tears, fell down, and catching fast hold about his thighs and knees, held him so hard as he could by no means shake her off, and the affection of a father wrought so with him as he could not offer with violence to hurt her; he laboured to be loose, but she held faster; he went away, but she trailed after, crying to him 'not to be so cruel to her his own child, who came into the world by him: this so wonderfully wrought with his nature that he thought, as he often reported, that 'all his bowels rowled about within him, and that his heart would have burst presently, and there instantly have died.' But notwithstanding all this, he being armed with a supernatural and heavenly fortitude, he broke through all those temptations, and for Christ's sake denied all, and so returned to Geneva, (where Mr. Calvin then lived) a glorious self-denier, or a glorious denier of his natural self. And thus much of denying our relations.

S E C T. VIII.

Of the denial of our special gifts; and first of cautions.

WE are conditionally to deny our special gifts and indowments; as learning, wisdom, power, or any other abilities of mind and body. In prosecution of this I shall give some cautions, and directions.

The cautions are these;

1. That learning, wisdom, abilities are

in themselves excellent things. Aeneas Sylvius, in his Epistle to Sigismund Duke of Austria said, that 'if the face even of human learning could but be seen, it is fairer, and more beautiful than the morning or evening star.' How much more may be said in respect of divine, spiritual, theological learning, whose subject is God, and Christ, and the things of God? in this respect therefore we must deny them.

2. Notwithstanding the excellency of learning, wisdom, or other abilities, yet must we deny them, as in these cases.

1. In respect of any high thoughts of ours, of any overweening conceit of our own excellencies. *Be not wise in our own conceits*, saith the apostle, Rom. xii. 16. To which agrees that of Solomon, *Lean not to thine own understanding; be not wise in thine own eyes*, Prov. iii. 5, 7. It is a sad thing to see in these times how all our debates, differences, controversies, even in spiritual matters, do almost savour nothing else but of the affectation of natural wisdom, subtilty, eloquence; how doth pride move men to outstrip one another, either by shewing their parts, as wit, language, reading, philosophy, history, and other learning; or by lashing, and smiting one another with the tongue, to seek a conquest rather by the infamy of others than by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left? by these unchristian and unconscionable ways the more able men are, the more destructive they make themselves to the comforts of their brethren, and the nearer their debates relate unto religion, the further off they set themselves and others from the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The respect which is had to gain credit with men, to lose no ground in the debate, and to be thought leaders in the cause, together with the fear lest they should be foiled in any thing, doth even strip them of all christian simplicity. *With the lovely is wisdom*, saith Solomon, *whereas from pride cometh shame*, Prov. xi. 2. That

wit-

wisdom cannot be true, which brings us nearer to our own wit, and further off from the simplicity and humility which is in Christ Jesus. I suppose this is one cause why so much contempt is now cast upon the name of learning, tho' it may be wrongfully by men, yet deservedly as from God; and I believe God will not cease to stain the pride of all their glory, and their greatness, by a full discovery of their shame, till they that are learned do shew themselves willing to be reformed herein.

2. In respect of any use of them according to the world, according to man, or according to the flesh. Of this God speaketh when he saith, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent,* 1 Cor. i. 20. And thus the apostle triumphed over the wisdoms of the world, saying, *Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?* hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 1 Cor. 19. Worldly wisdom usually scorns and disdains the great mysteries of godliness, foolishness of preaching, simplicity of the saints; but this *wisdom descendeth not from above,* saith the apostle, James iii. 15. 'This wisdom is but earthly, sensual, devilish.'

1. Earthly, it minds only earthly things; though a man be to pass perhaps the next day, the next hour, the next moment to that dreadful tribunal of God, yet it so glues his hopes, desires, projects, resolutions to earthly, transitory things, and things of this life, as if both soul and body, at their dissolution, should be wholly and everlastingly resolved into earth or nothing. 2. It is sensual; it prefers the pleasure of sense, and pleasing the appetite, before the peace of conscience and sense of God's favour; it provides a thousand times better for a body of earth, which must shortly turn to dust, and feed the worms, than for a precious immortal soul that can never die; it highly prefers a few bitter-sweet pleasures for an inch of time in this vale of

tears, before unmixed and immeasurable joys through all eternity in the glorious mansions of heaven. 3. It is devilish, for it imitates the devil in plotting and contriving mischief and ruin against the glory of God, the ministry of the word, the passage of his gospel, the plantation of his grace in the hearts of men: or it is devilish, because the devil usually sets those on work that have a little more wit to do him service? he knows they are more able, and active to quarrel, rail, slander, disgrace the truth of God, or ministry of Christ. O poor souls! how do you bark and snatch at those hurtless hands, which would heal and bind up your bleeding souls! O poor ideots, what wisdom is it for you to endeavour their extirpation, who are as *stars in the right hand of Christ?* Rev. i. 16. They that would do Christ's ministers any deadly harm, they must pluck them hence. I could wish those worldly, earthly, sensual, devilish-wise, that employ their wits, their power, their malice, their friends, their underhand dealings, to slander, disgrace, hinder, stop the passage of a conscientious ministry, but to remember those few texts; *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye,* Zach. ii. 8. and, *He that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me,* Luke x. 18. Surely there is something in it that God so strictly chargeth, Psalm ciii. 15. *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*

S E C T. IX.

Of the manner of denying our special gifts.

THE directions of Self-denial in respect of our special gifts are these.

1. *Think we soberly of our selves according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith,* Rom. xii. 3. We were not sober in the apostle's phrase, if either we took that upon us which we have not, or bragged of that which we have.

2. Mind the true ends of learning, wisdom,

and abilities, etc. and aim at them. 1. What are those ends? I answer, 1. To do God more excellent, and more glorious service. * 2. To furnish the soul for an higher degree and a greater measure of sanctification. 3. 'To do more nobly in Ephrata, and to be more famous in Bethlehem.' What a shame and sin is it for men by their abilities to hunt after certain secondary prizes, as pleasure of curiosity, ability of discourse, victory of wit, gain of profession, inableness for employment and business, and so (by the abuse and misapplying of it) to put their great engine of gifts into the devil's hands for the enlarging and advancement of his kingdom? O consider those more noble ends, and seek after them.

3. Endeavour to walk before God in humility and lowliness of mind. 'What? are thy gifts more eminent than others? it is the Lord that makes thee differ; and as God hath been favourable to thee, so should his favours be as obligations to obedience, humility, meekness in thee.

4. Remember it is not the greatness of the gift, but the well-using of the gift that is the glory of the receiver; it is not the having of any thing whether much or little, but the having of Christ with it, that makes it full and satisfactory, sweet and comfortable, useful and beneficial unto man.

5. Secure and be assured, that whatever we have, if it puff us up, and make us swell, it is not food but poison, no mercy but a curse, no evidence of divine

favour but of severe anger to our souls.

6. Observe and weigh well that the issue and event of all depends not upon the abilities of man, but upon the all-disposing hand of God. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding*, Eccl. ix. 11. All our abilities are under God's providence, who puts an efficacy into man's abilities even as he pleaseth.

7. Esteem we all abilities, gifts, knowledge as *dung and dross in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord*, Phil. iii. 8. Thus Paul determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified, 1 Cor. ii. 2. All knowledge, art, learning, is nothing to Christ; there is no fulness, no divine excellency in that man's knowledge that knows not Jesus Christ. *Si Christum nescis*, etc. 'If we know not Christ, it is nothing if we know never so much.' *Si Christum discis*, etc. 'If we know Christ, it is enough though we know nothing more;' enough indeed, for in knowing him we have all knowledge; *In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. Among wise men he is the choicest that knows most of Christ; it is Christ that puts a fulness into our knowledge, as the shining of the sun in the air puts a fulness of light into the eye; hence Paul made Christ crucified the center and circumference of his knowledge, *the breadth, the length and depth, and height of his knowledge*,

* And we do so most effectually, when we apply all our talents, our gifts, and possessions to those uses for which our kind Creator did bestow them, namely the promoting our own good and that of others. It is then only we glorify God in all these things, when, by the proper application of them, we render ourselves public blessings: as, when the rich employ their wealth in feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, rewarding worthy men, or in doing acts of charity and generosity;—when the great employ their power to protect the innocent, to relieve the oppressed, and punish the oppressor, to encourage a spirit of liberty, religion, and virtue (which are the glory, the riches and the strength of any people) and to suppress and discourage vice and immorality, that are the disgrace, and ruin of all;—when the learned employ their wisdom to instruct the ignorant, to be a faithful counsellor either in public or private, to be a director to youth: and other good purposes. — In a word, when all men employ their talents, whatever they be, in such a manner, as to do good to themselves, and to that body politick, whereof they are members. Dr. SWIFT.

Eph. iii. 18. This was the full latitude of his knowledge to know Jesus Christ, and this is *excellent knowledge*, Phil. iii. 8. excellent for the author, matter, subject, fruits, and effects of it; this is *saving knowledge, this is life eternal to know thee and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*. O never speak of learning, wisdom, gifts, abilities, in comparison of Christ. Bernard could say, *Si scribis non sapit mihi, nisi legero ibi Jesum*, etc. 'If thou writest, it doth not relish with me, unless I read Jesus there; if thou disputest or conferrest, it doth not relish with me, unless Jesus sound there.' All learning is but ignorance in comparison of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Come then, and down with all carnal knowledge in this respect; come then, and submit to that true, spiritual, applicatory, experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ. *Henceforth*, saith the apostle, *we know no man after the flesh, yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more*, 2 Cor. v. 16. We know him not after an earthly carnal manner, but after a divine and spiritual manner agreeable to the state of glory whereunto Christ is exalted.

8. Consider that gifts and abilities are the stay, and staff, and strength only of hypocrites; they only lean on these, they only secure themselves in these: are they not hypocrites that dare to plead thus with God himself? Mat. vii. 22. *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and done many great wonders?* They trusted upon, *Have we not prophesied? have we not prayed? have we not done wonders?* q. d. 'God hath opened the secrets of heaven to us, and do you think he will shut the gates of heaven upon us? We have preached, we have been instruments of saving others, and shall not we be saved ourselves? We have cast out devils, and shall we be cast to the devil? We have not walked in an ordinary tract

of profession, but we have trad'd in wonders and done miracles, we have amazed the world with reports of the great things we have done, is all this nothing?' Thus they plead with Christ, as if he were bound to save them by the law of these services; yet Christ tells them, *Depart from me, I know you not*. One of the ancients represents them in such an amazement, 'What means this strange unexpected answer from Christ, Depart, etc. Must we depart, who have lived so near thee? must we be damned, whom thou hast thus honoured?'

9. Conclude hence, 'Though a man have never such parts and gifts, yet if he have not grace withal, he may go to hell and perish to all eternity; for by his gifts he is not united to Jesus Christ, nor made the child of God, nor estated into the covenant of grace.' You see how it is with children playing together in the day, when night comes, one child goes to his father, and the other to his father; it may be all the day they are so like, that you cannot say, whose child is this or that: but, when night comes, the father then comes to his child, and saith, 'Come my child, come in at doors:' and if the other offers to go in there, 'No child, you must go home to your father:' so while we are living, grace and gifts are mingled together; some men have gifts, and some men have graces, and they look very like: ah but when night comes, and when death comes, then saith God to those that have grace, 'Come my children, enter in;' but if those that have gifts only come, he sends them away. And if a man do go to hell and perish, the more gifts he hath, the deeper will he sink into hell; as it is with a man that is in the water, sinking in the water, the more he is laden with gold, the more he sinks; and as he is sinking, if he have any time to cry out, he saith, 'Oh take away these bags of gold, these bags of gold will sink me, they will undoe me.' So I say, 'These golden parts, and golden gifts will undoe men; when men

come to hell, and shall perish indeed, the more golden gifts and parts they have had, the deeper they shall sink into hell.' And thus much of denying our special gifts.

S E C T. X.

Of the denial of our worldly profits: and first of cautions.

3. **W**E are conditionally to deny our common ends, which naturally men pursue and seek after, as profit, pleasure, and honour. I shall begin with the first, viz. Profit; in prosecution of which I shall give some cautions, and directions.

The cautions are these.

1. It must be granted that worldly profits, such as houses, lands, possessions, are a blessing of God, and useful in their kind and places; namely because they serve for the refreshing, comforting, supporting of our frail weak bodies, while we live in this world. And hence it is that God of his infinite bounty and free-grace hath undertaken and promised to make competent provision for his children. *O fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him; the young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace,* Psal. xxxiv. 9, 10. and xxxvii. 3, 11. *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you,* Matth. vi. 33. All these argue that earthly enjoyments are in themselves mercies, and the blessings of God to godly men.

2. Notwithstanding this, we must deny them, as in these cases.

1. As temptations and snares, 'when they are either baits unto sin.' Thus Simon Magus offering money for the gifts of the Spirit, Acts viii. 20. the apostle doth abhor so abominable a negotiation. Though an idol be made of silver and gold, yet being

an idol it must be thrown away with detestation like a menstruous cloth, Isa. xx. 22. Even the brazen serpent when it became a snare by the abuse of men, it is no longer preserved as a monument of mercy, but broken in pieces as Nehushtan, a piece of brass, 2 Kings xvi. 4. Or, 'when they are themselves the fruits and wages of sin.' Thus Zacheus denies himself in all his unjust gain which he had gotten by sycophancy [or false accusation] and by defrauding; and when Christ offered to come into his house, he would not suffer mammon to shut the door against him: restitution as it is a most necessary, so it is one of the hardest parts of Self-denial; when a covetous heart must be forced to vomit up all his sweet morsels again, unjust gain is like a barbed arrow, it kills if it stay within the body, and pulls the flesh away if it be drawn out.

2. As oblations and sacrifices, when Christ calls us to dedicate them unto him, then we must deny them. Thus when Abraham was called from his country into a land of sojourning which he knew not; and when Daniel was called from a king's court to a den of lions; when Moses was called from the honours of Egypt to the afflictions of God's people; when the disciples were called from their nets and ships to follow Christ, 'immediately they consulted not with flesh and blood,' but willingly left their own comforts to obey God's commands.

'All we are, or have, we have it on this condition, to use it, to leave it, to lay it out, to lay it down, unto the honour of our Master, from whose bounty we received.'

S E C T. XI.

Of the manner of denying our worldly profits.

THE directions of Self-denial in respect of our worldly profits are these.

1. Look we on worldly profits as vanity, nothing; *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not,* saith Solomon, *for riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away*

away as an eagle, Prov. xxiii. 5. Observe 1. The Holy Ghost says that riches are not, they are nothing: those things that make men great in the eyes of the world, are nothing in the eyes of God. 2. Observe the Holy Ghost would not have us so much as set our eyes upon riches, they are not objects worth the looking on. 3. Observe with what indignation he speaks against those that will set their eyes upon them, *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? q. d.* 'What a vain, unreasonable, sottish, senseless thing is this?' 4. Observe that he says, their parting from us is by way of flight, that is a sudden, swift, and irrecoverable motion. 5. Observe that this flight is by the wings of an eagle, which of all birds hath the most sudden, the most swift, and the most irrecoverable motion. 6. Observe that none needs to put wings upon them to flee away, for they make themselves wings, there is matter enough in themselves to work out their own corruption, and to put themselves into a flight. We think when we are called to deny our profits, that we are called to deny some great things; but the truth is, had we eyes to discern the vanity of them, we should see that we are called to deny nothing but a mere fancy, a thing of nought, and that which is not. Oh that the glory of the world were darkened in our eyes as once it shall be, that it might not be so dear unto us as it is!

2. Consider them as instabilities, uncertainties; and all worldly things whatsoever are mutable, changeable, transitory; and hence the apostle styles riches *uncertain riches*, 1 Tim. vi. 17. Witness Zedekiah who was deprived of his kingdom, honour, estate, nobles, wives, children, liberty, and his sight in one day, 2 Kings xxv. and witness Job, who of the richest became the poorest man in one very day. History tells us of one Bellisarius, a noble and successful captain under Justinian the emperor, that upon some displeasure he was turned out of his office and estate, and had his

eyes put out, and so was forc'd to beg from door to door; *Date obolum Bellisario*, 'give one half-penny to Bellisarius, whom fortune made great, and envy hath made blind.' All worldly things are like the sea, ebbing and flowing; or like the moon, always increasing or decreasing; or like a wheel, always turning up and down. Such a story we have of Sesostris king of Egypt, who would have his chariot drawn with four kings, and one of them had his eyes continually on the wheel; whereupon Sesostris asked him, 'What he meant by it?' He answered, 'It put him in mind of the mutability of all earthly things; for I see, said he, that part of the wheel which is now up on high, is presently down beneath, and that part which is now below is presently up on high:' whereupon Sesostris being moved, considering what mutability might be in his own estate, he would never have his chariot drawn after that manner any more.

3. Consider them as snares: To this purpose cried Solomon, *All is vanity, and vexation of spirit*, Eccl. ii. 26. Worldlings! do you not feel this true? Mark but how your worldly cares do rush upon you in the morning as soon as you awake, mark but how they accompany you in the day, mark but how they follow you to your beds at night, mark but how they hinder your sleeps, and afflict you in your dreams; O what fears? what suspicions? what underminings of one another? what disappointments? what vexations? what a clutter of businesses crossing one the other? what snares and temptations ly in your way at every hand? You *walk all the day long upon snares*, Job xviii. 8. upon dangerous snares that bring much sin and guilt, and will bring much sorrow and misery. Hence some give the reason why Joseph, although he had power to have advanced his brethren in court, yet he would not have them live there, but by themselves in Goshen tending their sheep; for himself he had an extraordinary call to be there,

but

but he fo knew the encumbrances and cares of the court, that he fought it not for his brethren.

4. Consider them as fading in regard of use, which yet may prove eternal in regard of punishment. O what a dreadful noise is that in hell, ' We have lost eternity for setting our hearts upon things that were but momentary.' A strong motive to work in us a self-denial of these profits: ' What? shall I lose eternity for things momentary? shall I while away that time that I have to improve for eternity, to seek after you, and to take content and pleasure in you?' This is no ordinary motive or argument. Indeed the knowledge of this in some general notion may be ordinary, but to know it powerfully indeed, and effectually indeed, it is a parable, a riddle to the world, Psal. xlix. 4. Some observe, That when God works any saving work upon the soul, he begins in this way, to settle upon the soul this truth, that all things here are fading, and what is a year or two to enjoy all the contentments in this world, if then I must be gone, and bid farewell to all? Have not I an immortal soul? and when shall be the time that I shall provide for eternity? To help on such a soul, (now I am upon this subject) consider, whosoever thou art, these two or three questions. 1. What is thy heart upon? I urge this question as in the name of Christ, and answer thou that readest, ' What is thy heart upon?' It is either upon things momentary, or things eternal: If thou lookest upon things eternal as high notional things, and fitter for some thoughts hereafter: then, 2. What will be thy thoughts at the hour of death; it may be these: ' Now are all my hopes at an end, now I must bid farewell to all my comforts, I shall never have mirth and jollity any more, the sun is set, the season is at an end for all my comforts; now I must see before me an infinite vast ocean of eternity, and of necessity I must launch in-

to it; O Lord, what provision have I for it? O there's a thought that will rent the heart in pieces! O what a dreadful shriek will that soul give, that sees before it that infinite ocean of eternity, and sees no provision that it hath made for it? What will it think, but ' here's an ocean of hot scalding lead, and I must launch into it, and I must swim naked in it for ever and ever.' I know not how this word may work, but if it be trampled under foot, it may be within this year, or two, or three, it will be said of thee; ' Such a one was at such a sermon, or such a one read such a book, and learned, that worldly profits were but momentary, but now he is gone:' Or it may be thou wilt say on thy death-bed, ' Such a book, and such a thing I read, that all worldly profits were but momentary, and that I had not only a little river to swim over, but an infinite ocean to launch into, and yet I would not be warned, and now my season is gone, and I am launching into eternity, the Lord knows what shall become of me.' And if thou perish indeed, then, 3. What will be thy thoughts in hell? (I speak only to such as go on resolvedly in their sin, or will take no resolutions of better courses). It was the sad expression of one Lyfimachus, who lost his kingdom for one draught of water, ' O for what a short pleasure have I lost a kingdom?' O consider what a soul-sinking thought will this be to think hereafter, ' O God, for how short a pleasure have I lost a kingdom? the kingdom of heaven?' And again, ' For what a short pleasure have I made myself a bond slave to hell and devils for ever? It is reported of pope Sextus the V. that ' to enjoy the glory and pleasure of the popedom for seven years, he sold his soul to the devil.' What infinite folly possesseth the hearts of the children of men, who were made for eternity, to venture eternal miscarryings for a few years, yea, a few hearts contentments to the flesh.

5. Compare Christ, and the things of Christ, with riches, or worldly profits in the particulars forementioned, and thence draw out conclusions: as, Worldly Profits are Vanities, but Christ and the things of Christ are Realities, they are true, real, substantial, solid things, John vi. 27. 2. Worldly Profits are Instabilities, Uncertainties, but Christ and the things of Christ are *stable things; they are things that perish not: an enduring substance; eternal things*, Heb. x. 34. So the apostle, *The things which are seen are temporal, viz. Riches, honours, houses, but the things which are not seen, as Christ, grace, holiness, God's favour, heaven, are eternal*, 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. 3. Worldly Profits are Thorns, Vexation of spirit, but Christ and the things of Christ are full of Joy and Comfort; not like the joys of earth, that blaze for a time, that are like *the crackling of thorns under a pot*, but yield no durable, solid heat; no, no, they are inward, sound, substantial, lasting joys, and when we come to heaven, they shall be unmixed joys, pure comforts without any mixture of discomfort, or grief of any kind. 4. Worldly Profits are but momentary, and of a fading, perishing nature; but Christ and the things of Christ are all durable, and lasting, yea, everlasting: *Christ is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever*, Heb. xiii. 8. And heaven (wherein Christ is) *is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. i. 4. Spiritual joy is an everlasting joy, and salvation is an everlasting salvation, Isa. xlv. 17: Upon these premises may we not resolutely conclude? What? are we not willing to do or suffer any thing for Christ? to part with all for Christ? to make an absolute choice of Christ before the world? We read much of the primitive Christians, that when riches, preferments, ease, liberty, were offered to them to deny but some truth of Christ, they refused it with disdain, they embraced the stake, they kissed it, they cried out, ' Wel-

come death, and none but Christ, none but Christ.' Yea, some, with Paul, have said, *To me to live, is Christ, and to die is gain. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 23. I know it is an hard lesson to flesh and blood; many have their hearts so glued to the world, that they are as unwilling to part with their wealth, as Lot's wife was to leave Sodom. Oh, but muse on these differences betwixt Christ and profits! What wise man would make it his business to fill his coffers with pebbles, when he may have pearls, gold or silver? *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Matth. xvi. 26.

6. Go on in the ways of godliness, though all our profits be hazarded; keep on your way, and pass not for them, trust God with them; if we do still enjoy them, so it is; if not, yet maintain a constant strong resolution of keeping on in the ways of God's fear: Thus did Daniel, chap. vi. 10. notwithstanding the princes and nobles watched him in the matter of the Lord his God, yet he abated not one whit, he went on in his course for all the hazard he was in, the constant ways of godliness, in communion with his God, was more sweet and precious to him than all his court-preferments. Thus did Nehemiah, chap. vii. 1. notwithstanding the opposition he had, notwithstanding the conspirings, complaints, and many letters sent to inform against him, yet he went on in the work of the Lord. Thus David professeth, *Though princes spake against him, yet he did, and he would meditate on God's law*, Psal. cxix. 23.

7. Appear for God and his cause, his truth and people, tho' the issue may seem dangerous, and when none else will. Thus Esther, chap. iv. 16. died with that brave resolution of hers, *If I perish, I perish*. Thus Nehemiah did, chap. ii. 4, 5. who, though he was something afraid at first to speak to that heathenish king in the behalf of his religion and people, yet having lift

up his heart to God, he spake freely unto him. Oh let not a publick good cause be dashed and blasted, and none have an heart to appear for it, for fear of the loss of worldly profits: Christians should have that nobility of mind which the prophets had, and the apostles had, and which they that serve riches cannot have. What? do publick causes for God and his people call you out to venture your estates? Surely it is beneath true nobleness of spirit to provide only for your ease and safety. We should value duty, more than safety.

8. Consider that our hearts are not perfect with the Lord till we come to a disposition to let go every thing for the Lord. Look under the whole heaven, if there be any thing we would not forsake, or any thing we would not suffer for the Lord, our hearts are not perfect with God. Whosoever he be that forsakes not all (in vote, or act) for Christ, he cannot be a disciple of Christ; if thou art born to a thousand pound lands a-year, yet, if God, and a good conscience to witness the truth, call for it, thou must forsake all. As Christ said to the young man, *If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven*, Matth. xix. 17. Were Christ now on earth, he might say as much to any man, and we were bound upon pain of damnation to obey him. O get our hearts into this habitual frame! these thoughts, if well meditated on, would much abate us, and keep us from contemning any man for his mean condition in the world, for we know not how soon a good conscience may bring us into the like condition. Certainly, to have these loose and dying affections to the enjoyments of the world, are greater mercies than the enjoyments themselves.

9. Let all go indeed, rather than be brought to the committing of any sin: it is better to endure all the frowns and anger of the greatest of the earth, than to have an angry conscience within our

breast; it is better to want all the profits and pleasures that earth can afford, than to lose the delights that a good conscience will bring in: O let the bird in the breast always be kept singing, whatsoever we suffer for it; it is better we lose all we have, than to make shipwreck of a good conscience: In this case, we must be willing to lose all, or else we are lost in the enjoyment of all. I confess it is no little matter for them who have much of the world, to deny themselves in those things that give content to the flesh, considering the corruption that is in the hearts of the children of men; it is an hard thing, and seldom hath success, to give rules for the ordering of life to men who are in great prosperity in this world; 'For a man to be set on high, and yet to have the heart kept down, it is hard and unusual,' says Bernard, *Ep.* xlii. But the more unusual, the more glorious; the more hard, the more honourable; the more rare, the more comfortable it is to yield unto it.

S E C T. XII.

Of the Denial of our worldly Pleasures, and first of Cautions.

THE next common end which naturally men pursue and seek after, and which we must deny, it is Pleasure: In prosecution of this, as in the former, I shall give some Cautions and Directions.

The Cautions are these.

1. That pleasures, delights, recreations are, in some sense, laudable, namely, as in a sober, moderate, seasonable use of them they serve for the refreshing, comforting and supporting of our frail, weak bodies, whilst we live here in this world. In which respect the preacher could say, *There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat, and drink, and delight his senses*. And again, *I perceive there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his portion*. And again, *To every thing there is a season, and a time*

to every purpose under the sun : A time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance, Eccl. ii. 24. iii. 22. iii. 1, 4. Thus, and in this sense, and in their season we need not to deny them.

2. Notwithstanding the lawfulness, and laudable use of pleasures, yet we must deny them, as in these cases.

1. When they are baits to draw us unto sin ; thus it is said of the wicked, *They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ, they spend their days in mirth.* And then it follows, *Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways ; and what is the Almighty, that we should serve him ? and what profit shall we have, if we pray unto him ?* Men given to pleasure are very ready to cast off their God.

2. When they are sin, or the concomitants of sin, or the fruits and wages of sin. Thus Solomon found them, and therefore denied them, *I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure ; and behold this also is vanity : I said of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth, what doth it ?* Eccl. ii. 1, 2. The sum of that book is this, When Solomon forsook God, then he ran to pleasures and vanities, and sought every thing that should please his carnal eye, and tickle his vain fancy ; but he no sooner returns to himself (as the prodigal did) but he says of pleasure, *This is vanity, and of mirth, This is madness, and of laughter, What is this thou dost ?*

S E C T. XIII.

Of the manner of denying our worldly pleasures.

THE directions of self-denial, in respect of our worldly pleasures, are these ;

1. Look on pleasures as vanity and nothing. Thus Amos, ch. vi. 4, 5, 6. charging the courtiers of riotousness. he tells them, *They lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and*

eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall ; they chant to the sound of the vial, and invent to themselves instruments of musick like David ; they drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

This their life might appear to some a most brave and desirable thing, but mark what the holy Ghost says of it, *Ye who rejoice in a thing of naught, q. d.* all these pleasures put together were, in a true judgment, *but a thing of naught,* they had nothing, no reality in them.

2. Look on pleasures not only as vain, but as vanishing ; they are soon gone from us, or we are soon gone from them,

1. They are soon gone from us, *The fashion of this world passeth away,* 1 Cor.

vii. 31. Solomon compares all the prosperity of the wicked to a candle ; and *how soon is the candle of the wicked blown out ?* Prov. xxiv. 20. All pleasures are but like a mountain of snow that melts away presently.

2. We are soon gone from them, it is but a while, and then we, and all our pleasures must together vanish ; if death draw the curtains, and look in upon us, then we must bid a farewell to them all, never laugh more, never have merry meeting more, never be in jollity any more, now all is gone, as Adrian said, when he was to die, ' Oh my soul, whither goest thou ? thou shalt never jest it, sport it any more.' Oh, when we are called to eternity, then all our delights will leave us, and bid us adieu for ever, and how doleful will this found be then to all the sons and daughters of pleasure, your season is done, you have had your time, it is gone, it is past, and cannot be recalled.

3. Consider this is not the season that should be for pleasure. *Son, remember in thy lifetime thou hadst thy pleasure ;* Luke xvi. 25. it should not have been then : the apostle James, ch. v. 5. lays it as a great charge upon those in his time, that they *lived in*

pleasure on earth and were wanton. This is a time for virtuous actions, to do the great business for which we were born; Oh, did we think that our eternity depended upon this little uncertain time of our lives, we would not say, that sensual pleasures are now in season. Surely this time should be spent in seeking to make our peace with God, in humbling our souls to get off the guilt of sin; this is a time of suing out our pardon, of mourning and sorrow, and trouble of spirit; and no time for jollity and fleshly delights. If a condemned man had two or three days granted him that he might sue out his pardon, were that a time for pleasures and sports? Thus it is with us, the sentence of death is upon us, only a little uncertain time is granted us to sue out a pardon, let us know then, what is our work we have to do, and let us apply ourselves to it.

4. Meditate upon that last and strict account that must be given for them all. *Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes,* Eccles. xi. 16. *q. d.* Live after thy lusts, and do what thou wilt; it is an ironical concession; but *remember withal, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.* For all these things: there is not one merry meeting, not one hour spent in pleasure, not one pleasurable act or thought, but an account must be given for it. There are three heads upon which the enquiry at the day of judgment will be concerning our pleasures. 1. What kind of pleasures they were, whether wicked in their own nature or not? 2. What time was spent in them? 3. How far the heart was let out upon them?

5. Weigh the fearful end of these deli-
 ghtful things; those morsels which are
 sweet in going down, they must come up
 again as bitter as gall; hence Solomon ad-
 viseth, *Look not upon the wine it is red,
 when it giveth his colour in the cup, when
 it moveth itself aright; at the last it biteth*

like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder,
 Prov. xxiii. 31, 32. The young man that
 follows the enticing of a whore, *he goeth
 as an ox to the slaughter, and as a fool to
 the stocks, till a dart strike through his li-
 ver,* Pro. vii. 22, 23 Sensual pleasure leads
 to, and fits for destruction; *Hell hath en-
 larged herself, and opened her mouth with-
 out measure; he that rejoiceth shall descend
 into it,* Isa. v. 14. *They take the timbrel
 and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the
 organ, they spend their days in wealth, and
 in a moment go down into hell,* Job xxi. 12,
 13. And it was said of Babylon, *How
 much she hath glorified herself, and lived
 deliciously, so much torment give her,* Rev.
 xviii. 7. O how grievous will eternal pain
 be to them who are now altogether for de-
 light and pleasure? now they cannot en-
 dure any sad thoughts, O they make them
 melancholy, but how will they endure the
 dismal thoughts of an accusing, tormenting
 conscience everlastingly? Now their flesh
 is dainty, delicate and tender, it must ly
 soft, and fare deliciously, but how will it
 endure those everlasting burnings? if after
 every intemperate draught there should be a
 draught of scalding lead poured down, how
 grievous would it be? the end of mens in-
 temperate pleasures will be worse; for, as
 Job says, ch. xxi. 20. *They shall drink of
 the wrath of the Almighty, this shall be the
 portion of their cup;* they who delight in
 long sittings at it, they shall drink of this
 eternally, those cursed delights in burning
 lusts shall end in eternal burnings.

6. Ponder the carriage of the saints be-
 fore us. You know the mean provision
 that John the Baptist, the forerunner of
 Christ had, *his fare was locust and wild
 hony,* Matth. iii. 4. and yet there was not
 a greater born of woman before. Daniel
 was afraid of taking liberty to his flesh in
 eating the king's meat, and the time he had
 most heavenly vision, *He ate no pleasant
 bread, neither came flesh nor wine into his
 mouth, neither did he anoint himself at all,*
 Dan.

Dan. x. 3. Paul was careful to *beat down his body*, 1 Cor. ix. 27. to club it down, even till it was black and blue, so the word *Upotiazō* signifies. Timothy, though he was sickly, yet would not take liberty to *drink a little wine*, but only water, till Paul wrote to him, and in that liberty there was but a little granted, and that *for his stomach's sake, and his often infirmities*, 1 Tim. v. 23. If I should speak of the mean provision for the flesh that many of the ancients were contented withal, and that before the superstition of popery prevailed, it would seem incredible unto you. Basil, in an epistle to Julian mentions the mean fare he, and others with him, lived withal, he ate no flesh, they had no need of cooks, all their provisions was but the leaves of plants, and a little bread: and Hierom reports of Hilarion, that he never ate thing before the sun went down, and that which at any time he ate, was very mean: and Hierom himself lived so abstemiously, that he had nothing daily but a few dried figs with cold water.

7. Do we in some measure for Christ, as Christ out of measure hath done for us. What? was he content to part with the pleasures of heaven, the bosom of his Father to redeem poor man? and shall we not part with the pleasure of a little meat or drink for him; What? was he content to part with his blood for us: and shall not we be content to part with our lusts for him? Is not all his glory revealed in his word and work sufficient to shew him worthy of our loves, and to make us willing to part with such empty, poor, slight things, as a deal of sensual pleasures? Surely the daughters of pleasure must undress; if ever they will be beautiful in Christ's eyes, they must lay aside their paintings and dressings, their curlings and perfumings of the hair; *Their ornament must not be the outward adorning,*

of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

8. Keep on in the ways of godliness; by this means we shall not lose, but change our pleasures for the better: if things may be rightly scanned, there is more pleasure in the very act of self-denial, than in all the pleasures of mens lives; and if such pleasure be in the denial of false pleasure, what is there in the enjoying of true? Surely God hath pleasure enough for us, if we had an heart to trust him with our pleasure, we shall hereby only lose our sin, but not our pleasure. Bernard * hath a notable expression to the purpose, 'If you be willing, say he, to sacrifice your Isaac, which signifies laughter, your Isaac, your pleasure shall not die; it is the ram, your stoutness of spirit, your self-willedness that shall die, but Isaac shall live, you shall have your pleasure still.' Do not harbour ill thoughts of God, do not think God is an enemy to your pleasure; if you would trust him with your pleasure, you should have pleasure enough, it may be, in this world, or howsoever, in the world to come. Augustin hath some expressions to the like purpose, † 'How sweet was it to me of a sudden, said he, to be without those sweet vanities! thou Lord, who are the true sweetness didst cast them from me, and instead of them didst enter in thyself, who art more delightful than all pleasure, and more clear than all light.' Keep on therefore in God's ways; 'if we would not be sad, let us live well,' § said Bernard.

9. Understand what are the ways of Godliness, and what is in the ways of Godliness to cause delights. Nothing more deadens the deart to false delights than rightly to

* Bernard de Bonis differendis. † Aug. Confess. l. 9. c. 1. § Bern. de Intern. dom. c. 45.

know what it is in God's way that causeth true delights. Now it is the love of God that appears upon our souls in every duty, which causeth delight, it is the presence of God and the glory of God that appears in every gracious action which makes it delightful; let us therefore thus look upon the ways of godliness. Many go on in duty haled by conscience, but they little understand of the pleasantness of God's ways, and for want of the sense of those spiritual pleasures, no wonder if they fall in the denial of outward, sensual, carnal pleasure.

10. Meditate on these pleasures above, and say (you that have the experience of the pleasantness of God's ways) if the nether springs be so sweet, what will the upper be? If the lower Jerusalem be paved with gold, surely that upper Jerusalem is paved with pearls. It is an excellent speech of Bernard, 'Good art thou, O Lord, to the soul that seeks thee; What art thou to the soul that finds thee? If grace be pleasant, how pleasant is glory?' Therefore the saints die so pleasantly, because there is a meeting of grace and glory; grace is delightful, glory more delightful, but when both these meet together, what delight will there then be? It is a speech of one speaking of carnal delights, 'None can go from delight to delight;' but it is not so spiritually; the more delight we have here, the more we shall have hereafter: And therefore let this be all our prayer, 'Lord, give us evermore this pleasure, satisfy our souls with this pleasure;' if the drops be sweet, the rivers of pleasure and joy that are at Christ's right hand, How sweet are they?

11. Above all, *Ob taste and see how sweet the Lord is even in the want of all outward pleasure; this will bear up the heart when all is gone. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat be flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and*

there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation, Hab. iii. 17. 18. When all is dark abroad in the world, then let our souls rejoice in God alone, yea, then let us expatiate our joys to the utmost. As it is a work of grace to moderate all carnal pleasures, and to keep them down, so it is a special work of grace to expatiate the soul to the utmost in all spiritual pleasures, and rejoycings in the Lord. And to this purpose we should exercise our faith in the work and office of the Holy Ghost: Look upon the Holy Ghost as designed by the Father and the Son to bring joy and delight to the souls of his people. O what a vast difference is betwixt the comforts of a carnal heart, and the comforts of the godly? The one comes from a little meat and drink, &c. but the other comes from the exercise of faith about the office of the Holy Ghost, who is designed by the Father and the Son to be the comforter of his saints. What say we then? Are all outward pleasures gone? let them go: only by the help of the Spirit, *rejoice in the Lord, and again, I say, rejoice in the Lord.* Oh taste and see how good the Lord is even in the want of all outward pleasures.

S E C T. XIV.

Of the Denial of our Honour, Praise, Favour, good name among men: and first of Cautions.

TH E next common end, which naturally men pursue and seek after, and which we must deny, is Honour, Praise, Favour, good Name.

In prosecution of this, as in the former, I shall give some cautions and directions.—*The Cautions are these.*

1. That Honour, Praise, Favour, good Name as the gifts and blessings of God. Moses was honourable; and before Moses was gathered unto his people, the Lord bade him to put some of his honour upon Joshua, *that all the congregation of the chil-*

children of Israel might be obedient unto him, Numb. xxvii. 20. And God blessed the children of Israel themselves with honour, he made them high above all nations in praise, and in name, and in honour, Deut. xxvi. 19. And because Solomon begged wisdom of God, the Lord told him that he would give him riches and honour to boot, 1 Kings iii. 13. Yea, that these are God's gifts, David in his prayer speaketh expressly, both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all. 1 Chron. xxix. 12. and for a good name, which is true honour indeed, the Lord hath made a promise to his, that he will give them in his house a place, and a name better than of sons and of daughters: an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off, Isa. lvi. 5. Yea, he will make them a name and a praise among all the people of the earth, Zep. iii. 20. Surely these are the blessings of God, yea, comparatively, far above all other blessings. A good name is better than precious ointment, Ecclef. vii. 1. Yea, a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold, Prov. xxii. 1.

2. Notwithstanding they are blessings of God, yet we must deny them for God, as in these cases.

1. When they are as snares or baits unto sin. And in all those, *sc.* Honour, Praise, Favour, good name, there are dangerous snares: how prone do they make a man to those sins of vain-glory, self-exaltation, self-admiration, self-estimation? Surely it is a great mercy of God, if any man be preserved from these sins that enjoys these blessings. And hence it is, that a few honourable men prove Self-deniers, because they are most prone to those sins which are most formally opposite unto Self-denial: What is more opposite to Self-denial than Vain-glory, Self-love, Self-seeking, Self-advancing, Desire of mens praise? In this respect Bildad truly speaks of such men, that *they are cast into*

anet by their own feet, and they walk upon snares, Job xviii. 8. Take heed of these snares: in this respect we had need to deny them.

2. When we are called by God to dedicate them to God. The Lord never gave us these things, Honour, Praise, good Name upon any other terms, but that we should be willing to part with them for the honour of his name; God never made us owners, but stewards of them for his service, and if ever we were brought to Christ, into covenant with God in him, we then resigned up all to him, we professed to part with all for him, we entered into bond that we would give up whatsoever we were or had to the Lord when it should be called for. And good reason, for whatsoever honour or excellency we have it is he that gives it; it is he that made the difference betwixt us and others; the rain-bow is but a common vapour, it is the sun that gilds it, that enamels it with so many colours; the best of us are but a vapour; and if any of us be more glorious, more honourable than others, it is the Lord that hath shined upon us, and hath put more beauty, more lustre upon us than upon other vapours. The Honour, Favour, good Name we have, God hath put upon us, and seeing it is of him, the glory of it is infinitely due to him; if he calls for it, good reason we should deny it.

S E C T. XV.

Of the Manner of denying our Honour, Favour, Praise, good Name among Men.

THE directions of Self-denial, in respect of our Honour, Favour, Praise, good Name among men, are these.

1. Look on Honour, Praise, Favour, Applause, as vanity, nothing. *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity, Eccl. i. 2.* Observe his expression, 1. Vanity, not only vain but vanity itself. 2. Excellivè vanity,

for it is vanity of vanities. 3. An heap of vanities, for it is in the plural number, vanity of vanities. 4. All is vanity, not only Profit, and Pleasure, but Honour too; Solomon had an experience of them all, and all is vanity. 5. He adds his name to that he saith, *Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher.* The word signifies the soul that hath gathered wisdom. There is no reality in Honour, Praise, Favour, Applause of men, which are so much admired and magnified by the most. Honour is but a shadow, a fancy, a wind, a breath †, an external additament, for there is no internal excellency in it; a mere fable, as Augustus Caesar could say on his death-bed, 'Have not I seem'd to have acted my part sufficiently in this fable of the world? now then, Farewel.'

2. Beware of those attendants, or companions of Honours, as Vain-glory, Self-love, Self-exaltation, Self-admiration. *Let us not be desirous of vain-glory,* Gal. v. Let us not exalt ourselves above others, let us not strive or study to be magnified by others, let us not please and bleis ourselves in the vain applause of others. It is not human applause, but God's approbation which ministers matter of true honour to a Christian ‡. We should rejoice to see God honoured, but fear to hear ourselves applauded, lest either we be idolized, our hearts elevated, or God's honour obscured. Certainly shame will be at last that man's portion that exalts himself. O how should Christ put the crown of glory on

his head, who takes the crown of praise from the head of Christ? *Them that honour me, saith God, I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed,* 1 Sam. ii. 30.

3. Be convinced, that of all vices, Vain-glory, Self-admiration, Self-exaltation, hunting after men's praise, is the most invincible. The roots thereof are so deep and strong, and so largely spread in the heart of man, that there is no disease in the soul so hardly cured, no weed in the garden of man's heart so uneasily plucked up §: It is the hardest task that ever man undertook, to deny himself, and fully to proftrate, and put himself under God and Christ's yoke. Pharaoh did many things in the way of love and honour to Joseph, he put his ring upon his hand, he arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and set him over his house, but he reserved this to himself, to be greater in the throne than Joseph; so man may do much in the way of outward zeal for God, he may exalt God very far, above his profit, above his pleasure, above his peace, yea, above his life, and yet still reserve to himself a preheminance above God, to be greater in the throne than God: A man may clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and give his body to be burnt too, in the cause of God, and yet do all this for himself more than for God; for his own applause, for his own name, more than for honouring of God's name. Of all conquest this Self-conquest is the most difficult, the most excellent,

† What's fame? a fancy'd life in ether's breath,
A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.—
All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes and friends. *Ff. on man.*

§ To moderate our desire of fame, let us consider not only the vanity of it in itself, but its inefficacy to render us wiser, better or happier persons, than we were before. Let men also distinguish betwixt false and true glory. Let them consider too that true glory may be obtained in the lowest station of life as well as in the highest:

Thus the mechanic, and the plowman, by excelling in his art, and performing his duty, may, and undoubtedly will, acquire as real and solid glory, as the minister of state, the general, or the scholar can obtain by excelling in theirs.

Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

‡ All fame is foreign, but of true descent,
Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart;
One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
Of stupid flatters, and of loud buzzars. *Ff. on man.*

the most noble, the most glorious. *He that ruleth his own spirit*, saith Solomon, *is better than he that taketh a city*, Prov. xvi. 32. The overcoming of a kingdom is nothing in comparison of a man's overcoming his own corruption. O this Self-exaltation will stand it out like a mighty champion in the heart, when all other lusts seem to fly, as Shammah was said to *stand it out, and to defend the field when the people fled*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 12. Other lusts may go out like fire that wants fuel, yet this lust will still put forth, and soar aloft, and strive to climb up into the throne of God so long as any thing of the old man remains in man. Of all the evils that are within us, we have most cause to be convinced, yea, to watch and pray against this evil of Vain-glory, Self-exaltation, Self-admiration.

4. Learn inwardly, by heart, this gospel-truth, That man's honouring of Christ, or being honoured by Christ, is the truest honour of man. *If any man serve me, him will my Father honour*, John xii. 26. As the honouring of the father, husband, sovereign, is the honour of a son, a wife, a subject; so the honouring of Christ, and especially being honoured by Christ, it is the glory of them who are the children, spouse, and subjects of Jesus Christ. Vain and carnal men think no honour comparable to the honour which men give, as it was said of the chief rulers in Christ's time, *They love the praise of men more than the praise of God*, John xii. 43. and therefore they strive more to have the testimony of man applauding them than the witness of God's Spirit sealing them up unto the day of Redemption. O but this honour should darken the other in our eyes; what great matter is it though the glory of the other be lost, so that God do highly honour us with this? Whosoever knows himself to be the Son of God, he never wonders more at that which is human. Surely he debases himself from the height

of true generousness, who admires at any thing besides God and Christ himself; all other honour is but of nature, but this honour is of grace; it is a sparkle of the divine nature, a ray of the very glory of God himself shining into the souls of his saints.

5. Let us herein conform ourselves to Christ. He came from *the bosom of his Father*, and from that infinite glory he had with him before the world was; for so he prays, that *the Father would glorify him with that glory he had with him before the world was*, John xvii. 5. He left the riches and pleasures of heaven, and that honour which he might have had from all the angels, and all to save poor wretched sinful creatures; he that was equal with God so emptied himself that he became man, nay he was made a scorn of man, he was called the carpenter's son, as one that was contemptible, *he made himself of no reputation*, he came in the form of a servant, yea, of an evil servant that was to be beaten, *he was made a curse*, as if he had been the vilest of men living; and yet this was the honour of Christ himself, because it was all for God and good of souls. O then who is he that knows any thing of Jesus Christ, that can think it much to lay down all his honour, or any outward dignity under heaven for him? What can be more unworthy? What more detestable than that a man should magnify himself after he hath seen God humbled? It is intolerable impudency, that where majesty hath emptied itself, a worm should be puffed up and swell.

6. Let us submit to the meanest service of our God, though it darken our honours never so much in the eyes of the world. Thus Jerom wrote to Pamachus a godly young nobleman, that 'he would have him to be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, hands to the weak, yea, if need were, to carry water, and cut wood, and make fires; for what are all these, saith he, to bonds,

bonds, buffetings, spittings, whippings, death? † To this purpose Constantine, Valentinian, Theodosius, three emperors, called themselves the vassals of Jesus Christ, as Socrates reports of them : and Theodosius especially did manifest it in the work of his humiliation, when in the face of a full congregation, he cast himself down upon the pavement, weeping and lamenting for his sin ; which many haughty spirits, though inferior to him, would have scorned to have done.

7. Let us willingly join with those of lower degree in any way of honouring God. *Mind not high things, saith the apostle, but condescend to men of low estate,* Rom. xii. 16. Thus Jerom advised Pama-chius to ' equal himself with the poor, to go into the cells of the needy.' Who knows but that the poorest creature may be far more honourable in the eyes of God and of his saints than we ? Where greater graces sit below us, let us acknowledge their inward dignity. *My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him ?* James ii. 1. 5. It may be some of them were in Christ before us, and others of them are in Christ as well as the best of us, and if we must differ in glory as we do differ in grace, who can tell but they may be in heaven as the stars of a bigger magnitude, and of a greater glory ?

8. Let us bear or suffer the most disgraceful thing that can be put upon us for the cause of Christ ; yea though all the world should frown upon us, and cast us off, and scorn us, and account us as a disgrace unto them. As Theodoret reports of Hormisdas a nobleman in the king

of Persia's court, because he would not deny Christ, he was put into ragged clothes, deprived of his honours, and sent to keep the camels ; after a long time the king seeing him in that base condition, and remembering his former estate, he pitied him, and caused him to be brought into the palace, and to be clothed again like a nobleman, and then he persuades him to deny Christ ; at which he presently rent his silken clothes, and said, ' If for these you think to have me deny my faith, take them again,' and so with scorn he was cast out. We must be content to be made a by-word and reproach for Christ : But this is an hard lesson, and for which I had need to give other more particular directions in another section.

S E C T. XVI.

Rules how to bear Reproaches for the name of Christ.

THE directions for reproaches I shall reckon up negatively and positively.

1. Negatively thus,

1. We must not bear Reproaches Stoically, insensibly, for in some sort they are afflictions. *A good name is better than a precious ointment. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold,* Eccl. vii. 1. Prov. xxii. 1.

2. We must not bear them desperately as many desperate wretches do, who usually say, ' Let men speak the worst, I care not, I must appeal unto God.' Tho' it be true that innocency is a good bulwark, and a good conscience is a brazen wall ; yet we are not only to care to approve ourselves unto God, but to men also ; we are to provide things honest before all men, especially amongst the people of God, and the churches of Christ.

3. We must not carry ourselves pas-

† Hieron. *Epist. to Pamach.*

sionately under Reproaches; there are many evils follow upon this distemper of heart, as, 1. Thereby we greatly disturb our own spirits. 2. We discover a great deal of evil within us. 3. We show the baseness of our spirits to be so soon put out of frame. 4. We feed the humours of reproachers, and we make others think we are guilty of those reproaches they lay upon us. It is true we should be more sensible of the wrong done to our names, than of any wrong done to our estates, yet neither are the wrongs of the one or the other to be born passionately.

4. We must not carry ourselves revengefully under reproaches. To this purpose saith the apostle, *Being defamed, we intreat*, 1 Cor. iv. 13. It is unbecoming Christians to revile again, and to speak evil for evil. It is said of Christ, that *when he was reviled, he reviled not again*, 1 Pet. ii. 23, and if we profess ourselves to be Christ's, we must not revile again when we are reviled; there is no contending this way where the overcomer is the loser: When Demosthenes was reproached by one, 'I will not, said he, strive with thee in this kind of fight, in which he that is overcome is the better man.'

5. We must not be hindered in our way, or break off our course of christianity when we are reproached. What though filth be cast in our way, shall we decline the way? What though the clouds do arise and darken the light of the sun, doth the sun cease shining, because it is darkened? no, it goes on in its course, and *shines till it breaks forth*; Psalm xxxvii. 6. So you that are shining in a good conversation, go on, and in time you will break through the clouds.

2. Positively thus,

1. We must bear our reproaches wisely. Though we should not be insensible, yet we should not take too much notice of every reproach. Christ himself was silent in this case, so that the rulers wondered, Matth. xxvi. 63. David could say, *They*

speak mischiefous things, but I as a deaf man heard not, Psal. xxxviii. 12, 13. But how then shall we stop their mouths? I answer, 1. Let us walk innocently; Innocency will clear all, and will overcome all in time. 2. Let us labour to be eminent in that which is quite contrary to that we are reproached for. Perhaps you are reproached for a dissembler, labour for the greatest eminency of plainness of heart and sincerity; perhaps you are reproached for covetousness, labour to be eminent in liberality, in heavenly-mindedness, in doing good wisely; perhaps you are reproached for pride, clear up yourselves (not by yielding to their humour, but) by eminency of humility, that those that can judge right, may see there is humility in you.

2. We must bear reproaches patiently. What are we? or what is our names that we should think much to bear reproach? Consider, have not others of God's servants, far holier than we are, been under exceeding reproach? Nay, how is God and Christ reproached? how is the name of God slighted? how is the majesty, and sovereignty, and authority of God contemned in this world? how are the dreadful threatenings of God, and the revelation of God's wrath scorned in the world? What reproaches indured Christ in his own person, in his preaching? how was he contemned when he preached against covetousness? the pharisees *scorned* at him, Luke xvi. 14. the word signifies, they blew their noses at him. He was called a devil, a Samaritan, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; What worse can be imagined than was cast upon Christ? They spat on his face, that blessed face of his that the waves of the sea were afraid of, and that the sun withdrew his light from, as not being fit to behold it: They put thorns upon his head, and bowed to him in reproach. This argument should, methinks, move us to bear reproaches patiently. But how should

we do it? How should we bear reproaches patiently?

1. Be we sure to keep conscience clear. O let not that upbraid us; be we careful of what we do, and then we need not be much careful of what men say: if conscience doth not reproach us, reproach will not much move us; one of conscience's testimonies for us is more than ten thousand slanders against us. As the storms and winds without do not move the earth, but vapours within cause the earthquakes: so all the railings of all the Shimei's in the world cannot much trouble us, if our consciences within do abound with good works; if I can but say with Job, ch. xxvii. 6. *My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live; I am safe enough from the evil of reproach.*

2. If we are failing in any thing, let us begin with our selves before any others begin with us: let us accuse ourselves first. So some interpret that place, Pf. cxix. 98. *I am wiser than mine enemies*; q. d. 'Tho' mine enemies are witty, and do plot, and their malice helps on their invention, yet I am wiser, I can find out the ways of mine own heart, and mine own evils better than all mine enemies.'

3. Let us exercise ourselves in great things, in the things of God and Christ, and eternity. Labour to greaten our spirits in an holy manner, and be above reproach. Surely if our spirits were but truly greatened (I mean not with pride, but with the exercising of our spirits in things that are above the world) reproaches would be nothing in our eyes. It is a notable expression that John hath against the evil tongue of Diotrephes, *He prates against us with malicious words*, 3 Joh. 10. in the original it is, *he trifles*. Altho' his words were malicious, and Diotrephes a great man, yet all was but trifles, so high was John's spirit above them. The sinking of the heart under reproaches argues too vile a pusillanimity, such a poor low spirit, as

is not consistent with the true magnanimity of a true Christian.

4. Make we our moans to God, and lay our case before him, as Hezekiah (when Rabsheka came and reviled God, and the people of God) he went and spread the letter before God, and made his moan to God: so if we can but do likewise, we shall find unspeakable refreshments to our souls, and that will be a great argument of our innocence. *My friends scorn me*, said Job, ch. xvi. 20. *but mine eye poureth out tears unto God: and the mouth of the wicked, (saith David) and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. But I gave myself unto prayer*, Psal. cix. 2. 4.

5. Get our hearts quietly and kindly to lament the condition of our reproachers. Their folly should cause us to pity them, to be patient towards them, and to pass by the wrongs they do to us. This was one of the arguments that Abigail brought to David to quiet his spirit that was so stirred against Nabal, because of his reproaches, *O*, said she, *Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*, 1 Sam. xxv. 25. q. d. It is his folly, David, and therefore rather pity him, David, it is too low a thing, for such a spirit as David's to be stirred with folly. Indeed instead of being troubled with reproachers, our spirits should be most troubled for their sin; alas! they sin by their reproaches, and God hates them for it. *Pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate*, Prov. viii. 13. If we have any love, we should think thus; 'This poor man, what hath he done? he hath brought himself under the hatred of God.' O this should mightily affect the hearts of the godly.

3. We must 'bear reproaches fruitfully.' Christians should not think it enough to free themselves from reproach, but they must improve it for good; and to that end;

1. Consider what ends God aims at by it,

it, and labour to work them upon ourselves that we may attain to those ends.

[Which ends are, To humble our pride; to make us circumspect in our walk; to lead us to self-acquaintance, and an examination into our temper and conduct; To raise in us a spirit of moderation and charity, patience and forbearance; To wean us from this world, and to raise us to the hopes of a better; and excite our trust in God, the clearer of our good name.]

2. Draw what good instructions we can from the reproaches of others, as thus; when I hear men reproach and revile, 'Oh, what a deal of evil is there secretly in the heart of man that is not discovered till it have occasion?' Again, 'Do I see another so vigilant over me to find out any thing in me to reproach me? how vigilant should I be over myself to find out what is in me to humble me?'

3. Set upon what duty God calls for at the present; 'The less credit I have in this world, the more credit let me desire after in heaven; if there be a breach of my name here, let me seek to make up my name in heaven. [To which may be added, That the more we are reproached for what is bad, we ought to excell in what is good. It is the duty, and will tend to the honour, of a man, whenever he is calumniated, to study to be quite the reverse of what his enemy represents him to be. To this purpose the apostle Peter exhorteth, 1 Pet. iii. 16. *Having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.*]

4. We must bear reproaches joyfully and triumphantly. *We glory in tribulation*, said Paul, Rom. v. 3. *And if I must needs glory, I will glory in things concerning mine infirmities.* 2 Cor. xi. 50. By infirmities, we are not (say some) to understand the infirmities of sin, but his weakness and evils that he endured for Christ. Therefore *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches,*

in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, 2 Cor. xii. 10. Jerom upon that, *Blessed are you when men shall speak evil of you, and revile you,* Matth. v. 11. 'O, says he, who would not be willing to suffer? who would not wish to be persecuted for righteousness sake? who would not desire to be reviled? Oh that all the rout of unbelievers would persecute me for righteousness sake; I would this foolish world would all rise up against me to reproach me.' (Hierom. Epist. to Ocean.) When Christ appeared to Saul, he cried, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Who art thou, Lord?* answered Saul. *I am Jesus of Nazareth,* replied Christ, Acts. xxii. 7, 8. *But why Jesus of Nazareth? doth any good come out of Nazareth?* Surely there is something in this; he saith not, I am the Son of God, the second person in the trinity, the king of the church; no, but *I am Jesus of Nazareth;* that was a reproach cast upon Christ, and Christ glories in that. Reproaches are the ensigns of heavenly nobility, Christians therefore should not fear them, but *bear them joyfully.*

5. We must *return good for evil,* and then we come to the top of Christianity. This is a sign of great progress in religion: 'If I be weak, saith one, perhaps I may pardon one charging me falsely, but if I have profited, although not altogether perfect, I hold my peace at his reproaches, and answer nothing; but if I am perfect, I then bless him that reviles me, according to that of Paul, being reviled we bless.' (Ambros. offic. l. i. c. 48.) If we can do thus, if we can heartily pray for our reproachers, and desire good to them, and so *heap coals of fire upon them,* this is a great sign of grace. *Bless them,* saith Christ, *that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you, that you may be the children of your Father,* etc. Mat. v. 44, 45. Why? were they not children before? yes, but this declares it, now God owns them for his children indeed. And thus much of 'denying our

our common ends, Profit, Pleasure, and Honour.

S E C T. XVII.

Of the denial of our very being, our life, for Jesus Christ; and first of cautions.

I Have done with the Denial of Natural Self in regard of Well-being. I shall now consider the denial of Natural Self in regard of very being, and so it imports our life, together with the faculties and powers of nature, our Understanding, Will, Affections, Senses, fleshly Members; all within us must be 'captivated to the obedience of Christ,' and all without us must endure to suffer for the name of Christ.

For them we call faculties or powers of nature, as the Understanding, Will, Affections, Senses, I shall dispatch in a word.

1. The Understanding must be captivated as it hinders from Christ. Suppose the word of Christ be contradicted or check'd by way of reason or understanding, as in the business of the trinity, union of two natures, resurrection of the body; in this case I must deny my reason, and believe Christ; I must bow down and worship, I must captivate my understanding to the obedience of faith. We see by experience, those are soonest brought to Christ who for the most part are foolish, simple, and of weak conceits; whereas those who have been most famous for worldly wisdom and understanding, they have been hardly brought to the subjection of God's wisdom and truth. [Not that Christianity is a religion for fools, and persons of an easy faith; no, it is wise in itself, has had men of the greatest abilities, and most distinguished for wisdom, for its professors, and solemnly requires the exercise of wisdom and mens rational faculties, towards their

embracement of it, nay, and commends a free inquiry into it, as in the example of the Bereans; but the meaning of our author is, That simplicity of mind and an honest heart with a weak head, will better dispose a man for the reception of the gospel, than much knowledge and wisdom, without sincerity and probity of heart.] This is that which the apostle doth teach, *Not many wise, not many mighty are called, etc. We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Grecians foolishness.* 1 Cor. i. 23. 26.

2. The will must be renounced in reference to Christ. Servants must not follow their own will, but their masters directions; how much more ought we who always may justly suspect our selves, and can never suspect the will of Christ, it being the square of right? For therefore is a thing good, and just and equal, because God wills it; hence † our will, if good, yet sometimes it must be denied; that if evil, and contrary to the will of God, it must be subdued. It is meet that Hagar should stoop to Sarah, our will to Christ's will.

3. 'Our affections and senses must be denied,' both as good, and as they are cherishers of evil, or opposers of good. This latter is that *crucifying of the flesh, with the lusts and affections*, which the apostle mentions, Gal. v. 24. But all these being within the compass of natural life, I shall only insist on that Self which we call Life. And concerning which, as in the former, I shall give some cautions and directions.

The cautions are these. 1. That our being, or life 'is in itself the gift of God and the blessing of God.' It was God that *breathed into man the breath of life*, Gen. ii. 7. *The Spirit of God hath made me*, said Elihu,

† *Voluntates non solum malas, sed & bonas abnegamus, neque enim in Christo fuerunt nisi bonae, & nihilominus eam illas abnegasse legimus.* Job. v. 30. Luke xxii. 42. *Non mea voluntas, sed tua fiat.* That is, We must deny our own will not only when bad, but even, sometimes, when good: for, though Christ's will was perfectly good, yet we read that he denied it, saying to God, *Not my will, but Thine be done.* John v. 30. Luke xx. 42.

and the breath of the Almighty bath given me life, Job xxxiii. 4. He gives it, for he is the fountain of it. *With thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light shall we see light*, Pſal. xxxvi. 9. This was the ſum of Paul's ſermon to the Athenians, *He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*; and to this purpoſe he cites Aratus, one of their Greek poets, *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, Acts xvii. 25, 28. And as it is the gift, ſo it is the bleſſing of God: hence the promiſe of life, and of long life is made to *obedient children*, Exod. xx. 12. and this turned into a prayer by the believing parents, it is uſually called by the name of Bleſſing.

2. Notwithſtanding it is the bleſſing of God, yet we muſt deny it for God. As in theſe caſes.

1. As a ſacrifice. If God will rather be honoured by the death, than by the life, by the ſufferings, than by the ſervices of his ſaints, in this caſe we ſhould be willing to ſubmit to God. Thus many of the martyrs who had opportunity of flight, yet tarried to witneſs the truth, and gave their lives to the flames for it. It is not what I, or others may think, that God will be honoured this way or that way, but we ſhould obſerve what is God's will, and which way God will be honoured. All our intentions and aims at the glory of God are nothing, God cares not for them, if they be out of his way. It was an excellent reſolution of David, *If I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back again; but if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee, behold here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him*, 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26.

2. As a temptation. Thus rather than ſin, the primitive Chriſtians, when apprehended, chooſe willingly to die. We have a notable ſtory of that heroic mother, and her ſeven ſons, 2 Mac. vii. who rather than they would break God's law in eating forbidden meats, they died one af-

ter another, the mother in the mean while being content to ſee them all butchered before her eyes, and laſt of all the dying alſo. Surely life is nothing in compariſon of thoſe glorious inviſible rarities which ſin may hinder us from; and therefore if it be on this condition, that we may avoid ſin, that we may be ſure of the main, that by loſing life we may go to Chriſt, in whom we ſhall find, with an infinite overplus, whatſoever we can loſe for his ſake; then we muſt deny life itſelf.

S E C T. XVIII.

Of the Manner of denying our natural Life for Jeſus Chriſt.

THE directions of ſelf-denial in reſpect of our natural being, or life, are theſe.

1. Apprehend God's love to our ſouls in his Son: He thought nothing too good for us, *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, John iii. 16. and this he did for us *when we were enemies*, Rom. v. 8. Nay, God hath not only given us his Son for a ſaviour, but he hath given us himſelf for an huſband; now as the huſband loves all his family, but gives himſelf to his wife, ſo God beſtows his ſun to ſhine, and his rain to fall on the good and bad, but he gives himſelf only to his ſaints. O let us apprehend this love, let us often by ſad and ſolemn meditation renew the ſenſe of this love to us in Chriſt, and we cannot but give up all we have, and all we are, to God.

2. Get we a ſovereign love to God again. It was from this ſovereign love that thoſe admirable Self-denials of the martyrs ſprung; we muſt not think they had bodies of braſs, or muſcles of ſteel, or that they were not as ſenſible of torments as others were; Oh no, it was their love to God did ſwallow up all; as the heat of a fever ſwallows up the heat of an ulcer, or as the heat of a fire ſwallows up the heat of a fever; ſo the heat of the martyrs love

to God swallowed up the heat of all fires, together with the heat of all loves to their wives, children, friends, and their own lives. I deny not but we may love these comforts with a subordinate love, as an husband will allow that his wife should love her friends with an inferior love, only the prime love must be kept for him; nor will it be sufficient that the love her husband better than many thousands, if there be one in her affections before him; so it will not be sufficient that we love the Lord better than many things, but we must love him better than every thing. Such a love was in Paul, Phil. iii. 7. and *in the brethren who loved not their lives unto the death*, Rev. xii. 11. We must love the Lord above all, not subordinately as a creature, but sovereignly as a Creator.

3. Let us cleave to God with steadfastness and resolvedness of spirit, come what will come. Thus Barnabas exhorts the brethren, *that with purpose of heart they would cleave to the Lord*, Acts xi. 23. Thus Daniel was purposed not to defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, tho' it cost him his liberty or life, Dan. i. 8. David could say, that the princes spake against him, and the princes persecuted him, yet he was resolved, and his resolution was as strong as an oath, *I have sworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments*, Psal. cxix. 23, 161, 106. This is the nature of Christian resolution, that it chooses that which the Spirit reveals to be good, notwithstanding all oppositions that come betwixt. When credit, and profit, and vain fears put in, and suggest that the witnessing of such truths may cost us our life; resolution answers all, 'It matters not, so I can retain Christ, tell me not of the difficulty of the way, only let me know which is the way; I am resolved to follow the Lamb whithersoever he calls me; I know there is no threatening so terrible as Christ's is, no promise so sweet as Christ's is, no command so holy as Christ's is, and therefore I am resolved to expose myself

to drink that cup, how bitter soever, which my Father shall give to drink.'

4. Endeavour after a disposition or habit to lay down life for a good conscience. It is a true saying, that 'None are saved but martyrs;' I mean, martyrs either actually or habitually, having faith enough to encourage, and love enough to constrain them to be martyrs, if the honour of their profession should require it. This takes away their objection who say, 'It is harsh and unreasonable to trouble us now with any thorny discourse of martyrdom.' 1. We must know that the habit of martyrdom is included in the most fundamental principles of Christianity, and therefore they deserve no answer but silence, who think a discourse of it at any time harsh and unreasonable. 2. The church never enjoys such a calm, but a terrible storm may unexpectedly dash it away, and therefore there is no man, though born in the most peaceable time of the gospel, but ere the glass of his life be run out, he may be overtaken with a fiery trial. 3. There is no professor of the gospel, though he live and die during the publick tranquillity of it, but he may privately be brought to that plunge, that either he must hazard his life, or else in some fearful horrible manner, against his conscience, dishonour Christ; as, suppose a ruffian, that had no religion of his own, should pull any of us into a corner, and with a naked blade, either make us forswear our religion, or lose our life. 4. As the prophet Ezekiel forewarned the Jews, *We have had mischief upon mischief, and rumour upon rumour*, Ezek. vii. 37. and if mischief and rumours continue, and multiply upon us as fast as they have done of late, the days may be sooner upon us than we are aware, when there may be too much occasion to practise this point of self-denial, and no time to preach it; howsoever, let us seek of God for the habit or disposition of it, for that is fundamental.

5. Maintain a godly jealousy and fear
of

of our own hearts; for want of this all the disciples fainted, especially Peter, and shamefully denied Christ. Memorable is that story of Pendleton and Sanders; Sanders was fearful he should endure the fire; Pendleton seemed resolute, 'Be not fearful,' said he to Sanders, 'for thou shalt see me, and this fat flesh of mine fry in the fire before I will yield.' Yet he that was so strong in his own strength fell away, and the other, so fearful, was enabled by God to burn for his truth. To fear martyrdom, and to pray against it, with submission to God's will, is warranted by our Saviour's own example, *He prayed earnestly, that if it were possible, the cup might pass away from him; but still with submission to his Father's pleasure.* That place concerning our Saviour, is very remarkable, *Who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cries and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard, in that he feared,* Heb. v. 7. Heard? how was he heard? Not in removing the cup from him, but in strengthening him to drink it with victory. If we pray as Christ prayed, the cup shall be removed from us, or sweetened unto us.

6. Resist wherein we can, fleshly impediments; for the flesh will be ready by all means to hinder us from offering this sacrifice to God. As, 1. By distinctions. Is a man resolved to hold his estate, liberty, life, come on what will? such a one never wants a distinction to mock God withal; so the teachers of circumcision at Galatia. *As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, these constrain you to be circumcised, only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ,* Gal. vi. 12. They did not see, but to avoid persecution, they might preach circumcision, being they did it *pro abundantia cautela*, 'in a cautious manner,' not to overthrow the faith of Christ crucified, but for their security. Such distinctions many use at these

times. 2. By persuasions. Thus carnal reason pleads the case, 'Give a little to the times, save thyself and thine.' Or thus, 'What, are you the only quickfisted men; wiser than a church, than a state? May there not, will there not, a law come out in a moment, whereby you may be defranchized, or exiled, or banished, or burned?' But to answer these reasonings, remember Christ's answer to Peter, *Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savour'est not the things of God, but of men,* Matth. xvi. 23. A certain person persuading another to recant the truth, told him that he spoke to him out of love. 'O yes,' said the martyr, 'I confess it, but there is something in you that is mine enemy, meaning the flesh.' And it is said of Mr. Hooper, than when a box was brought, and laid before him on a stool with his pardon from the queen in it, if he would recant; he being now at the stake, at the very sight of it cried out, 'If ye love my soul, away with it, away with it.' 3. By terrors. Thus when the Spirit of God had suggested unto Spira to suffer, or if he doubted of the issue to go away though never so far rather than deny the Lord of life, presently the flesh begun in this manner, 'Be well advised, fond man, consider reasons on both sides, and then judge. Dost thou not foresee what misery this rashness will bring upon thee? Thou shalt lose thy substance, thou shalt undergo the most exquisite torments that malice can devise, thou shalt be counted an heretick of all, and thou shalt die shamefully. What thinkest thou of the stinking dungeon, the bloody ax, the burning faggot? Wilt thou bring thy friends into danger? thou hast begotten children, wilt thou now cut their throats?' It concerns us in this case to outwit the flesh; if it tells us of prisons, let us tell it how much more terrible is the prison of hell; if it present to us the condemnation of tribunals, do we present to it that great condemnation of

the great tribunal; if it threaten us with displeasure of friends, present to it the displeasure of God, and of glorified spirits.

7. Consider, and peruse the acts and monuments of the church in the case of martyrdom. Others sufferings cannot but beget some resolutions in us. And herein if we begin with the beginning of the world; As soon as we hear of any work of religion, we hear of the persecution of Abel. Noah's ark on the waters was a type of the condition of the church of Christ in afflictions? What hard things did Abraham, and the rest of the patriarchs endure in their generations? History tells us, that Isaiah was sawn asunder with a wooden saw; Jeremiah was put into a dungeon, sticking in the mire, as some stories say, even up to the ears, and after was stoned to death; Ezekiel was slain in Babylon; Micah was thrown down from a steep place, and his neck broke; Amos was smitten with a club, and so brained. The story of the persecution of the Maccabees, prophesied, Dan. xi. 36. and recorded by the apostle, Heb. xi. 35. is exceeding lamentable; The Text says that *they were tortured, mocked, scourged, imprisoned, stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword, wandered up and down in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, they wandered in deserts, and mountains, and dens, and caves in the earth.* And for the Christian church, we know what Christ himself, the great leader of his people, suffered: When Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was stoned, Doratheus witnesseth that two thousand of others who believed on Christ were put to death the same day. That many suffered in those very times, is plain to me from those very texts, *And Saul made havoc of the church: And Herod vexed the church,* Acts viii. 3. and xii. 1. *Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why then are they baptized for the dead?* 1 Cor. xv. 19. This place is difficult, and many in-

terpretations are given of it; but this I prefer, as being most agreeable to the scope of the apostle; *Else what shall they do* (what shall become of them, in what miserable condition were they) *who are baptized* (with their own blood, not only suffering grievous torments, but even death itself) *for the dead* (for the cause and quarrel of the dead, for the faith of them that now are dead, and in special, for maintaining this very article of the resurrection of the dead). The force of this argument is very evident, and it well agreeth with the argument of the apostle, that encludeth, ver. 30, 31, 32. *Why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by our rejoicing which I have in Christ, I die daily. And if I have fought with beasts at Ephesus after the manner of men, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not at all?* As for the word Baptizing, it is only so taken frequently by the fathers, and schoolmen, who usually distinguish baptism into *Baptisma fluminis, fluminis, et sanguinis, Of the Spirit, water, and blood;* but also in sundry places of scripture, as Matth. xx. 22. Mark x. 38, 39. Luke xii. 50. *I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitned till it be accomplished.* All the apostles, after many sore and grievous afflictions, suffered many violent deaths, John only excepted, who yet was banished into Patmos, and by Domitian thrown into a tun of scalding lead, though by a miracle delivered. Brightman, speaking of the stories of those times, says, 'That every page and leaf is, as it were, all red coloured in blood.' The covenant of grace is a bloody covenant, both in regard of the blood of Christ first sealing it, and the blood of the blessed martyrs adding likewise their seals in confirming it.

It is a most heart-breaking meditation to consider the ragings, madness, and fury of the heathen against the Christians in those times. Hierom, in an epistle to Cromatius, says, 'that there was no day in a whole year, unto which the number of five thousand

and martyrs cannot be ascribed, except only the first day of January.' All the policy, wit, strength and invention of men and devils were exercised and stretched out to the utmost, for the devising the most miserable torments, and exquisite tortures; as plates of iron burning hot, laid upon their naked flesh; pincers red hot pulling off the flesh from the bones; bodkins pricking and thrusting all over their bodies; casting into lime-kilns, and into caldrons of scalding lead; whipping until almost all the flesh was torn off their bodies, and their bones and bowels appeared, and then laid flat upon sharp shells and knives; their skins were head off alive, and then their raw flesh was rubbed with salt and vinegar, their bodies were beaten all over with clubs until their bones and joints were beaten asunder; they were laid upon gridirons, roasted and basted with salt and vinegar; one member was pulled from another; by fastening them to boughs of trees, they rent their bodies asunder; they were tossed upon the horns of bulls, with their bowels hanging out; they were cast among dogs to be devoured; they were put under the ice naked into rivers; they were tortured on the rack, on the wheel, and on the gibbet with flaming fire under them; they made it their sports to see them devoured by wild beasts; and in the night, instead of torches, they burn'd the bodies of the saints to give them light for their pastimes. In after-times antichrist began to rise, and to bring a fearful darkness over the face of the church; of which times the Holy Ghost prophesied, Rev. viii. 12. *The moon, and sun, and stars were smitten.* Never will be forgotten these lamentable extremities that God's poor people then endured; large volumes are extant, the reading whereof might cause the hardest heart that lives to break. O let us warm our hearts at these fires! Let us peruse and consider those acts and monuments of the church in the case of martyrdom.

8. Be acquainted with the promises of Self-denial; have always a word at hand to relieve ourselves withal in the worst of sufferings. Now these promises are of several sorts. 1. *Of assistance*, Psa. ix. 18. Ps. xxxvii. 24. Psa. xlvi. 1. to the end. 2. *Of acceptance*, Exo. ii. 24, 25. Exo. iii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 20. 3. *Of reward*, Mat. xix. 29. Luke xviii. 30. And again the *promises of reward*, are, 1. *Of this life*, *He that forsakes all for Christ shall receive an hundred fold*, saith Matthew: *Manifold more in this present time*, saith Luke; the joy, the peace he shall have in his conscience shall be many times an hundred times better than the comfort of all these outward things. 'O but (may some say) what will become of my posterity? Peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost redounds only to my self, but for my children, I shall leave them fatherless and helpless.' To this by way of answer; God often styles himself the *Father of the fatherless*, and if of any fatherless, then surely of those whose parents have lost their lives for Jesus Christ. *Leave thy fatherless children*, saith the Lord, *I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me*, Jer. xlix. 11. 2. *Of eternal life*, such *shall inherit eternal life*, Matth. xix. 29. Mark x. 30. Luke xviii. 30. 'Be of good comfort,' (said Bradford to his fellow martyr,) 'we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night.' Christians! What would we have? the soul indeed is of a large capacity, all things here below can never satisfy it, but eternal life; the inheritance above will fill the understanding with knowledge, and the will with joy, and that in so great a measure, that the expectation of the saints shall be exceeded; *for he shall be admired of them that believe*, 2 Thess. i. 16.

9. Mind the principle that must carry us through death, and make death itself honourable. We read Heb. xi. 34, 35, 37. *that by faith some quenched the violence of fire; Others were tortured.*

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword; and all this by faith. Faith is the grace that enables us to deny ourselves, yea, life itself; other graces may do much, but faith hath the principal work in this. *By faith ye stand,* said the apostle to the Corinthians, chap. i. 24. it is faith that makes a man stand in his greatest trials, and therefore when Christ saw how Peter should be tempted, he tells him that he had *prayed that his faith should not fail,* Luke xxii. 32. noting that while his faith held, all would be sure; faith in this case is like the cork that is upon the net, though the lead on the one side sink it down, yet the cork on the other side keeps it up on the water: David *professed, that he had fainted, unless he had believed,* Psalm xxvii. 13. Believing keeps from fainting in the time of trouble.

10. When sufferings come, then stir up, and put forth the grace of faith in the exercise of it: Look up to God for strength and assistance, commit ourselves and cause wholly to him, plead the promise, plead our call that he hath called us to this, plead the cause that it is his. Mr. Tindal in a letter of his to Mr. Fryth who was then in prison, hath four expressions of the work of faith in the time of suffering; 'If you give yourself, cast yourself, yield yourself, commit yourself wholly, and only to your loving Father, then shall his power be in you, and make you strong, he shall set out his truth by you wonderfully, and work for you above all your heart can imagine.' But because faith is the root, or principle of Self-denial in this case of sufferings, I shall therefore propound two questions in the following paragraphs.

Quest. 1. What are the differences betwixt faith and pride of heart in sufferings?

I answer, 1. If pride be the principle, a man is ready to put forth himself though

he be not called: It is true that in some extraordinary cases, a man may have an inward calling by some extraordinary motion of God's Spirit, as some of the martyrs had; but in an ordinary way, a gracious heart fears itself, and dares not venture till God calls, it depends more upon God's call, than any strength it hath to carry it thro'.

2. If pride be the principle, a man cares not for God's name any further than he is interested in it; should God use others to honour his name, and he no way come in, he regards it not.

3. If pride be the principle, a man doth not so much strengthen himself with the consolations of God; or the sweet of the promises, as he doth with his own self-proud thoughts; the heart is not so much taken up with the glorious reward of God in heaven, as with some present self-good here: whereas faith is altogether for spiritual and supernatural good, it carries the soul beyond all present things.

4. If pride be the principle, there is no good got by sufferings, the soul doth not thrive under them, it doth not grow in grace by them, it grows not more holy, more heavenly, more savoury in all the ways of it, the lustre and beauty of godliness doth not increase upon such a one, he is not more spiritual, he doth not cleave closer to God, he is not more frequent with God in secret, he doth not enjoy more inward communion with God than formerly; but if faith be our principle in suffering, there is never such thriving in grace as then, then the Spirit of glory and of God useth to rest upon God's servants; a godly man's service prepares him for sufferings, and his sufferings prepare him for service; the church never shined brighter in holiness than when it was under the greatest persecution.

5. If pride be the principle, there is not that calmness, meekness, quietness, sweetness of spirit in the carriage of the soul in sufferings, as where faith is: Pride causeth

eth the heart to swell, to be boistrous and disquiet, to be fierce and vexing, because it is crossed ; but faith brings in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and that was a quiet and meek Spirit in sufferings, *as the sheep before the shearer*, Acts viii. 32. *When he was reviled, he reviled not again*, 1 Pet. ii. 23. Where is reviling and giving ill language, there is pride stirring in that heart. Cyprian speaking of the martyrs contemning death, saith, ' We see not that humble loftiness, or that lofty humility in any but in the martyrs of Jesus Christ.'

6. If pride be the principle, there is joined with that man's sufferings a desire of revenge ; he would, if he could, return evil for evil, and doth as far as he dares ; but those who have faith to be their principle, they commit their cause to God ; ' though men curse, they bless ; they can heartily pray for their persecutors, as Christ and Stephen did for theirs : ' The Banner over a gracious heart, in all troubles that befalls it, is love ; and therefore whatsoever the wrongs be that are offered to such, there is still a spirit of love preserved in them.

Quest. 2. Wherein lies the power of faith to carry us through sufferings and death ?

I answer, 1. Faith discovers the reality of the beauty and excellency of spiritual things, which before were looked upon as notions, conceits, and imaginary things ; hence Faith is described to be the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence or demonstration of things not seen, Heb. xi. 1. The things of Christ, of grace, of heaven, what poor empty notions were they to the soul, what uncertain things, before faith came in ? But faith makes them to be glorious things ; Faith discovers such real, certain excellencies in them, and is so sure, that it will venture soul and body, it will bear any hardship, yea it will venture the infinite loss of eternity upon them.

2. Faith makes the future good of spiritual and eternal things to be as present to the soul, and works them upon the heart as if they did now appear. This comes to pass, because faith sees things as the word makes them known, it pitches upon the word in that way that it reveals the mind of God ; now the word speaks often of mercies that are to come, as present things. *Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem*, Isa. liii. 9, 10. Thus the prophet speaks of the deliverance of the church from captivity, as a thing already done, which was not fulfilled many years after. As soon as Jehosaphat had received the promise, he falls on praising the Lord, as if the mercy were already enjoyed, *Praise ye the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever*, 2 Chron. xx. 17, to 22. Christ saith of Abraham that he *saw, and rejoiced, and was glad*, John viii. 56. Christ's day was unto him, as if it had been then. And it is said of the godly who lived in former ages, that *though the promises were afar off, to be fulfilled, yet they embraced them*, Heb. xi. 13. The word in the original signifies, they saluted them. Now salutations are not but betwixt friends when they meet together. *Faith takes hold upon eternal life*, 1 Tim. vi. 19. it takes present possession of the glorious things of the kingdom of God ; it makes the soul to be in heaven conversing with God, and Christ, his saints, and angels already : That which is promised, Faith accounts it given, *And the land which I gave to Abraham, to thee will I give it*. It was only promised to Abraham, but Abraham's faith made it to him as given, Gen. xxxv. 12.

3. Faith makes use of things past as if they were present. 1. It makes use of God's mercies to our forefathers ; thus the church makes use of the mercy of God to Jacob, when he wrestled with him, and prevailed, as if it were a present mercy

to themselves. *He had power over the angel, and prevailed, he wept, and made supplication unto him, he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us,* Hof. xii.

4. not only with Jacob, but with us, *q. d.* Whatsoever mercy God shewed to him,

we make it ours. *God spake with us.* Thus David and his people did, when he said, *He turned the sea into dry land, they went through the flood on foot, there did we rejoice in him,* Psalm lxi. 6. The comfort of the mercies of God for many years past to their fore-fathers, they make as theirs, *there did we rejoice in him.* 2.

Faith makes use of all the promises that God hath made to any of his people, tho' never so long ago, yea, it fetcheth out the comfort of these promises, as if they were made now to us. Compare Joshua i. 5. with Heb. xiii. 5. *God saith to Joshua, I will be with thee, I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* This Paul applies to the believers in his time, as if it had been made to them, *Be content, saith he, with such things as ye have, for he hath said, I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Upon this one instance, whatsoever promise God ever made to any of his people since the beginning of the world for any good, if our condition comes to be the same, faith will make it her own, as if God had but now made it to us in particular. 3. Faith makes use of God's former dealings with ourselves; when all sense of God's mercies fails, that God seems to be as an enemy, faith will fetch life from his former mercies as if they were now present. *I have considered the days of old (saith David) the years of ancient time, I call to remembrance my song in the night. I said this is my infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most high,* Psalm lxxvii. 5, 6, 10. He checks himself for doubting of God's mercies, because of his former mercies, and he recovers himself by bringing to mind the former dealings of God with him. Now in this work

of faith what abundance of strength doth it bring in from former mercies, former promises, former dealings? O this must needs wonderfully strengthen the heart to any suffering whatsoever.

4. Faith carries the soul on high, above sense, above reason, above the world; when faith is working, Oh how is the soul raised above the fears and favours of men? 'I care not (saith Ignatius, a little before his suffering) for any thing visible or invisible, so that I may get Christ; let fire, the cross, the letting out of beasts, breaking of my bones, tearing of my members, the grinding of my whole body, and the torments of the devils come upon me, so that I may get Christ,' Euseb. l. 3. c. 39. Faith puts an holy magnanimity upon the soul, to slight and overlook with an holy contempt whatsoever the world profers or threatens: faith raises the soul to converse with high and glorious things, with the deep and eternal counsels of God, with the glorious mysteries of the gospel, with communion with God and Jesus Christ, with the great things of heaven and eternal life. Men, before faith comes into their souls, have poor low spirits, busied about mean and contemptible things, and therefore every offer of the world prevails with them, and every little danger of suffering scars them; but when faith comes, there is another manner of spirit in a man, a princely spirit (as Luther calls it) that dares to adventure the loss of life for the name of Christ. When Valens the emperor sent his officers to Basil to turn him from the faith, they first offered him great preferments. But Basil rejected them with scorn, 'Offer these things (says he) to children;' then they threatened him most grievously; 'Nay, threaten (saith Basil) your purple gallants, that give themselves to their pleasures.' What great spirits did faith put into those worthies, who *through faith subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, of weak were made strong,*

strong, etc. Heb. xi. 33, 34. Certainly faith is as glorious a grace now as ever it was, and if it be put forth, it will enable the soul to do great things; the raising of the soul above reason and sense, is as great a thing as any of these; the faith of Abraham was most glorious, for which he is stiled the *father of the faithful*, and yet the chief thing for which he is commended, is, *that he believed against hope*, Rom. iv. 18. When the soul is in some strait, it looks up for some help, and sense says, it cannot be; reason says, it will, wicked men say, it shall not be; yea it may be, God in the ways of his providence seems to go cross: as if he would not have it to be; yet, if faith have a word for it, it says, it shall be: Yea, when God seems to be angry, when there appears nothing to sense and reason, but wrath, yet even then, faith hath hold on God's heart, that his hand cannot strike.

5. Faith gives the soul an interest in God, in Christ, in all those glorious things in the gospel, and in the things of eternal life: Faith is an appropriating, an applying, an uniting grace; it is a blessed thing to have the sight of God, there is much power in it; but to see God in his glory, as my God, to see all the majesty, greatness, and goodness of God, as these things that my soul hath an interest in, to see how the eternal counsels of God wrought for me to make me happy; to see Christ, in whom all fulness dwells, in whom the treasures of all God's riches are, and all these are mine; to see Christ coming from the Father for me, to be my redeemer; Oh what a blessed powerful thing is this! What is all the world now to such a soul? Where is all the bravery of it, or the malice and opposition of it? the loss of outward things, liberty or life, are great evils to those who have no interest in better, but to such as have interest in higher things, there is no great matter though they lose all work.

6. Faith sets all God's attributes on work

for the good and relief of a believer; it is one thing to have interest in God and Christ, and another thing to have God and Christ working for us. I will not deny but God and Christ are working still; yet when faith lies still, and is not active, although we do not lose our interest in God, yet we cannot expect such sensible manifestations of God's workings for us. We have a notable expression of God's stirring up his strength and wisdom for those whose hearts are right with him. *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, to shew himself strong for those whose heart is perfect towards him*, 2 Chron. xvi. 9. Although we be in the dark, and know not how to order our steps, yet there is an infinite wisdom working for us; although we have but a little strength, yet if we have faith to set God's strength on work, *we shall* (as the church of Philadelphia) *keep God's word, and not deny his name*, Rev. iii. 8. Thus much for the denial of natural Self.

S E C T. XIX.

Of the Denial of religious, gracious, or renewed Self; and first of Cautions.

I Must now direct in the last place how we are to deny religious, gracious, or renewed self; as a man's own Duties, Holiness, Righteousness, the graces of the Spirit. In prosecution of which (as in the former) I shall give some cautions, and directions.

The cautions are these.

1. That graces, duties are the special gifts and blessings of God. It is *of the fulness of Christ that all we have received, even grace for grace*, John i. 16. And the apostle tells us, *That God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*, Eph. i. 3. Methinks here I see the transcendent excellency of the saints, the betterness of their condition above all the men of the world; if God have given a man grace, he hath the best and choice-

choicest of all that which God can give; God hath given us his Son, and God hath given us himself, and God hath given us his spirit, and God hath given us the graces of his spirit; these are the finest of the flower, and the hony out of the rock of mercy; they that have this gift need not to be discontented at their own, or envious at the condition of any other; they have the principal verb, the one necessary thing. *O blessed be the God, and father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath thus blessed us: How? with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, Ephes. i. 3.*

Notwithstanding they are God's special gifts, yet we must deny them comparatively, and in some respects, as in these cases.

1. In point of Justification, in relation to righteousness, in comparison of Christ, in the notion of a covenant of life and salvation. It is a dangerous thing to hang the weight of a soul upon any thing which hath any mixture of weakness, imperfection or corruption in it, as the purest and best of all our duties have; it is a dangerous thing to teach, 'That faith, or any other evangelical grace as it is a work done by us, doth justify us: there is nothing to be called our righteousness, but the Lord our righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. Faith itself doth not justify habitually, as a thing fixed in us, but instrumentally, as that which receives and lets in the righteousness of Christ shining thro' it upon us; as the window enlightens by the sun-beams which it lets in, or as the cup feeds by the wine which it conveys. So then in point of justification 'we are to renounce all our duties and graces.'

2. In point of sanctification: for so we are to attribute the strength, the power, and the glory of all our graces and duties unto Jesus Christ, and nothing to ourselves. And yet understand we aright, tho' every believer is thus to deny himself, in spiritual things, even in the point of sanctification, yet he is not to speak evil of the grace of God within himself; he may not

miscall his duties and graces, saying, 'these are nothing but the fruits of hypocrisie,' for then he should speak evil of the Spirit whose works they are; neither is he to trample or tread on these graces of God: a man tramples and treads upon the dirt, but he will not trample upon gold or silver; why? because that is a precious mettal, and the stamp or image of the prince is upon it: Now our 'duties and graces, our righteousness and holiness,' as to the matter of justification, they are nothing worth, and so we trample upon all; but as to the matter of sanctification, they are precious mettal, and they have the image of Christ upon them, and therefore for a man to tread on them, for a man to say, 'All this is nothing but hypocrisie,' that is not self denial; properly self-denial in spiritual things, as to the matter of justification, 'it is to renounce all;' and as to the matter of sanctification, it is to attribute the strength, the power and glory of all unto Jesus Christ, and nothing to ones self.' This is true self-denial.

S F C T. XX.

Of the manner of denying our religious, gracious, or renewed self.

THE directions of Self-denial in respect of our religious, gracious, or renewed self, are these.

1. 'Be we sensible of, and humbled for our pride in spiritual things.' There is nothing that a christian is more apt to be proud of than spiritual things. Before he takes up profession, possibly he is proud of his cloaths, or friends, or honours, or professions; but afterwards there is nothing that he is more apt to be proud of than of his parts and gifts, and graces, and spiritual things; for look, where a man's excellency lies, there his pride grows; now the excellency of a Christian lies in spiritual things, and therefore there his pride grows, and there he is most apt to be proud; O be we sensible of this, and mourn for

for this! It was Mr. Fox his speech, 'As I get good by my sins, so I get hurt by my graces.' It is a dangerous thing to be proud of a man's duties and spiritual gifts, we had better to be proud of clothes, or friends, or honours; for this pride of spiritual things is directly opposite to a man's justification. The first step to humility is to see one's pride; the first step of Self-denial is to be convinced of one's inclination or desire after Self-exalting, Self-admiring, Self-advancing. 'O what a proud heart have I? what a self-advancing heart have I?' There is no believer but he hath something of self; be he never so humble, yet he hath something still that tastes of the cask; there was never any that was so transformed, melted or changed into the mold of the gospel, but there was still some savour of self remaining in him: we had need therefore to be jealous of ourselves, and to watch over ourselves; and if at any time self break out, if at any time the soul begins to be advanced in regard of duty or spiritual things, 'let us fall down before God, and humble ourselves for the pride of our hearts.'

2. 'Look up, and consider the glory, purity and holiness of God.' This consideration will humble a soul, and cause it to 'deny itself in spiritual things.' See this in Job, no sooner had he a great prospect of the glory of God, but he denies himself concerning his own righteousness, which before he stood much upon to his friends. *I know it is so of a truth, but how should man be just with God? if he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.* Job. ix. 2, 3. God's fullness will convince us abundantly of our emptiness, his purity will shew us our spots, his all-sufficiency our nothingness. When Job was brought a little nearer unto God, he was more humbled before God. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee.*

Job xlii. 5, 6. (i. e.) 'I have a clearer and more glorious manifestation of thee to my soul than ever: I now perceive thy power, thy holiness, thy wisdom, thy faithfulness, thy goodness, as if I saw them with my eye, wherefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes.' He could not go lower in his thoughts of himself than this expression laid him; abhorrence 'is a perturbation of the mind arising from vehement dislike, or extreme dislike;' abhorrence strictly taken 'is hatred wound up to the height;' and 'to abhor, repenting in dust and ashes,' is the deepest act of abhorrence: thus low Job goes. not only to a dislike, but to the furthest degree of it, abhorrence of himself when he saw the Lord. See this in Isaiah, when God came near him, and he saw much of God, then he cried out, *Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips.* Isa. vi. 5. How knows he that? Why, *mine eyes have seen the king the Lord of hosts.* What did not Isaiah know he was a man of polluted lips till then? yes, but he was never so sensible of it as then: he saw his pollution more than ever by the light of the glory of God that shone round about him; he never saw himself so clearly as when the majesty of God dazzled his eyes. When the sun shines bright in a room, we may see the least mote in the air; so when the glory of God irradiates the soul, we see all the motes and atoms of sin, the least spot, and unevenness of our hearts and lives.

3. 'Have Christ in eye.' The more we see an humble Christ, a self-denying Christ, the more shall we learn humility and self-denial. Now Christ was the most eminent, transcendent example of self-denial that ever was. *He thought it no robbery to be equal with God, and yet he humbled himself and took upon him the form of a servant,* Phil. ii. 6, 7. O what self-denial is here? was there ever such a self denial as this? 'Christians! consider your Christ, and the

more will you learn to deny your selves even in spiritual things.'

4. 'Acknowledge we ourselves debtors to Christ for all our gifts, and for all our graces.' Possibly a man may wear brave apparel, but he owes for them at such a shop, while he is abroad he swaggers, and is proud of his cloathes, but when he comes into the shop, and looks upon the book, and considers what he hath to pay, he strikes sail then: thus the gospel is the great shop, and from Christ in the gospel we have all our gifts and graces, and tho' I may be proud in spirit at another time, yet if I come into the gospel, and see what an infinite debtor I am to Christ, and to free-grace for all that ever I have, then I think, 'What? shall I be proud? what? shall I not deny myself in spiritual things?'

5. 'Study the gospel, and the way of the gospel.' Where shall we see an humble Christ but in the gospel? where shall we see the rich and free grace of God in Christ, but in the gospel? where shall we get faith in Christ, but in the preaching of the gospel, and in the studying of the gospel? Surely this grace of self-denial in spiritual things grows only in the garden of the gospel: I deny not but there is a common-field humility, or Self-Denial, as I may so speak; such a self-denial I mean, as grows among the heathen, and among moral men: but betwixt that and this we may observe these differences.

1. Take a moral, civil man, and though he may seem to be humble and to deny himself, yet he is proud of his humility. A philosopher coming into Plato's house, and seeing it very neat, 'I trample upon Plato's pride,' said he. 'But, said Plato, 'not without your own pride.' Now, a believer doth not only deny himself, but he is sensible of his own pride in that very thing wherein he is humble.

2. Take a moral, civil man, and though he may seem to deny himself, yet it is but in this or that particular thing; but a be-

liever denies himself in every thing. *Account all things but dung and dross,* saith the apostle, *for Jesus Christ,* Phil. iii. 8.

3. Take a moral, civil man, and though he may seem to deny himself, yet it is but the artifice of his reason and resolution; 'if I go on in such and such a way,' says he, 'I am undone.' Hence he denies this pleasure, and that company. But now a believer 'denies himself in spiritual things by the beholding of Jesus Christ.'

4. Take a moral civil man, and though he may seem to deny himself, yet there is no mystery in it; but there is ever a great mystery of grace in a believer's self-denial. As thus, he ever cries, *what shall I do to be saved?* And yet he professeth that he doth not expect to be saved by his doing; here's a mystery. Again, he counts himself *less than the least of all God's mercies,* and yet he thinks God hath done more for him than if he had given him all the world; here's a mystery. Again, he looks upon himself as the greatest sinner, and thinks of every one better than himself, and yet when he looks upon a drunkard, or a swearer, or the like, he professeth that he would not change his condition with such a man for all the world; what a mystery is this?

5. Take a moral, civil man, and though he may seem to deny himself in temporal things, which devils themselves may do, yet he cannot, as the believer, 'deny himself in spiritual things.' One makes mention of a certain godly man that was fore tempted by Satan in his time, the godly man was much in duty, to whom satan said, 'why takest thou this pains? thou dost watch, and fast, and pray, and abstainst from the sins of the times; but O man, what dost thou more than I do? art thou no drunkard, no adulterer, says Satan? no more am I. Dost thou watch, and fast, says Satan? I never slept, I never ate, nor drank; what dost thou more than I?' I will tell thee,' said the godly man, 'I pray, I serve the

the Lord, I walk humbly, I deny myself; ' Nay then, says satan, thou goest beyond me, for I am proud, and I exalt my self, and therefore herein thou goest beyond me.' And thus we may difference betwixt true self-denial and false.

6. ' Rest not on any thing below Jesus Christ.' Neither grace, nor duties, nor holiness are to be trusted upon. We must hold them fast in point of practice and obedience, but it is our sin and danger to hold them fast in reliance and confidence. I desire to be rightly understood in this truth. Some because they need not to rely on duties, they let go their duties, they let prayer and repentance and sorrow for sin go, they say, ' It is no matter for duties, they need not to trouble themselves, Christ hath done all.' This is to ' turn the grace of God into wantonness.' We must let go both our graces and duties in point of justification, but hold them we must as our lives in the tenour and conversation of our lives. Prayer, hearing, fasting, repenting must not die whilst we live; do them we must, but glory in them we must not: we must not rest in any thing whatsoever below Jesus Christ. I shall instance in these particulars.

1. We must not rest upon our own preparations for duties. It is a commendable thing to prepare our heart; we must pray that we may pray; we should have secret communion with our God, before we come to seek communion with him in a sermon; but we must not rest upon our own preparation when we have prepared; if we advance that into the throne of Jesus Christ, and rest upon that when we should only rest upon him, it is the way to make all our preparations miscarry.

2. We must not rest upon our enlargements in duties. It may be we have a spring-tide of assistance comes in; a minister preaches with great presence of the Spirit of God, and a saint prays, as we

find it, *in the Holy Ghost*, Jude 20. *i. e.* He finds the holy Spirit of God leading him from petition to petition, melting him with brokenness when he is confessing sin, filling him with rejoicing when he is remembering mercy, raising him with an high wing, as it were, of importunity, when he is begging of favour (as it was an admirable temper in holy Bradford, that he was not content till he found God coming into his spirit with several dispensations according to the several parts of his prayer); and now as soon as the duty is done, it may be he goes away, and stroaks himself. ' Oh what an admirable prayer was here! surely I shall do well this day, I shall be able to wrestle with all temptations,' this is the very way to miscarry, thousands have found it; so that when he comes to pray again, it may be he prays most dully and flatly, the Spirit is grieved, and gone, and he can say little or nothing.

3. We must not rest upon the comforts we have *in duty*, or *after duty*. It may be when we have been at duty and have had some soul-ravishments, O now we think our nest is built very high, and our rock is firm, and we shall go on vigorously; Chrysostom hath a saying to this purpose, ' Methinks, saith he, a saint when he comes from a sacrament, should be able to sife in the face of a devil, and tho' he walk in midst of snares, yet he should be able to encounter with them all.' Comforts are very sweet things, and indeed strengthening things; *The joy of the Lord is our strength*, saith Nehemiah, ch. viii. 10. Nothing more animates souls than joy, only here is the danger, if we rest on these joys and comforts; surely if so, we provoke God to withdraw them. The Spirit of God is a most choice and tender thing, it dwells in none but a clean pure temple moil cleanly swept; if any pride spring up in our hearts we lose our comforts.

4. ' We must not rest upon graces.' This was Peter's fault, he was full of con-

ceit and self-confidence, he had grace, and he rested on it, *Lord, though all forsake thee, yet will not I*, Mat. xxvi. 33. Yet soon after Peter did forsake and deny his master, and we do not find Peter so confident afterwards: when Christ said to him, *Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these?* no comparative words now; no more that *Lord thou knowest I love thee*, John xxi. 15, etc. Peter was whipped with self-confidence, and the woeful fruits of it, and now in a good degree it was purged out of him. Surely it was a lesson well worth the learning though it cost the whipping. We must not rest on graces, nor on any thing else on this side Jesus Christ.

7. 'Be often putting forth new actings of faith in Jesus Christ.' The more we believe, the more do we deny religious self. Hence it is that 'self-denial in spiritual things' is not to be found in the law, but in the gospel; the law though it hath its use (and we dare not but make use of it) yet properly it will not make a man to deny himself, but rather to seek himself in spiritual things: 'Obey and live;' saith the law, 'but if thou failest in any one point, thou art lost for ever:' in this case (if there were no other way) who would deny his own righteousness? nay who would not seek to save himself by his own righteousness? but now says the gospel, 'By works thou canst not live, but if thou wilt throw down all thy own righteousness at the feet of Christ, and believe on him, and rest only on him, thou shalt be saved.' O this will make a man to deny his own righteousness, and to 'deny himself in spiritual things.' Go we therefore to Christ, let us maintain believing apprehensions of the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone is the humble self-denying person that seeks justification not by works, but by faith only.

8. Let it be the joy of our souls to exalt and set up Christ within our souls. Though in order to justification we must deny our graces, eye Christ without us; yet we must have a care to see and feel Christ's kingdom within us, to set up Christ in our hearts, and to discern him ruling and commanding there as a king in his throne. And there is true self-denial in this, for wheresoever Christ reigns there sin goes down. As the people would have all the men put to death which would not have Saul to reign over them, 2 Sam. xi. 22. so doth a true believing soul mortifie whatsoever opposeth Christ's kingdom, he removeth whatsoever may hinder Christ's spiritual dominion, he makes all veil and stoop for Christ's exaltation within him. O then let Christ reign over all within us, in our understandings as a prophet enlightening us, in our wills as a king commanding us, in our affections as a priest mortifying us, in our loves as an husband marrying us; let the whole man be subject unto whole Christ. This is the character of a true self-denier, Christ rules within him, he every way subjects himself to Christ, in his understanding to know Christ, in his will to choose and embrace Christ, in his thoughts to meditate upon Christ, in his fear to serve and honour Christ, in his faith to trust and depend upon Christ, in his love to affect Christ, in his joy to delight in Christ, in his desires to long after Christ, in his endeavours to exalt Christ, in all his 'duties, graces, gifts, abilities, to make them serviceable unto Christ:' why this is to attribute the glory of all our duties and graces to Jesus Christ, and nothing to ourselves. Now is Christ all in all, now we truly 'deny ourselves, our sinful selves, our natural selves, our religious selves.' Thus much of Self-denial.

C H A P. VI. S E C T. I.

Of the Nature of Experiences.

'EXPERIENCE (say some) is a knowledge and discovery of something by sense not evident in itself, but manifested by some event or effect.' This description contains both natural and spiritual experience; but my purpose is to speak only of the latter, and in that respect I look strictly at Experiences, as 'real proofs of scripture-truths.' When I mark how true every part of God's word is, how all the doctrines, threatenings and promises contained therein, are daily verified in others, and in myself, and so improve or make use of them to my own spiritual advantage, this I call Experience.

S E C T. II.

Of the gathering of Experiences.

THAT our experiences may further us in the way to heaven, we must learn, 1. To gather them. 2. To improve them.

1. For the gathering of them, the only way is,

1. 'To mark things which fall out;' to observe the beginnings and events of matters, to eye them every way, on every side, that they may stand us in stead for the future: this observation and pondering of events, with the causes that went before, is the ripener of wit; *Who among you will give ear to this? who will hearken for the time to come?* Isa. xlii. 23. *Whoso is wise, and will observe those things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord,* Psal. cvii. 43.

2. 'To treasure up, and lay in these observations, to have ready in remembrance such works of God as we have known and observed.' The philosopher saith, that Experience is *multiplex memoria*, i. e. *Amul-*

tiplied memory; because of the memory of the same thing often done, ariseth Experience: *I remember the days of old,* saith David; Psal. cxliiii. 9. I remember how thou didst rebuke Abimelech, and overthrow Nimrod, and Pharaoh, and Achitophel: and thus would we treasure up Experiences, the former part of our life would come in to help the latter, and the longer we live, the richer in faith we should be; even as in victories, every former overthrow of an enemy, helps to obtain a succeeding victory. This is the use of a sanctified memory, it will lose nothing that may help in time of need, or in the evil day; it records all the breathings, movings, stirrings, workings of a soul towards Christ, or of Christ towards a soul.

3. To cast these things thus marked and laid in under several spiritual heads, of Promises, Threats, Deceits of the heart, Subtilties of Satan, Allurements of the world, etc. I might enlarge the heads into any thing that is *good* or *evil*. 1. Into any thing that is *good*, whether it be *God*, or *the things given us by God*, his Spirit, his counsels, his ordinances, his work of sanctification, and all the fruits of the Spirit. 2. Into any thing that is *evil*, whether it be *sin*, or *the fruits of sin*, as corruptions, inability to good, vanity of all the creatures, the judgments of God. Thus we must sort our experiences, as the apothecary sorteth his drugs.

S E C T. III.

Of the improving of experiences.

2. **F**OR the improving of Experiences, 1. We must consider what scripture truth is verified thereby in others, or in our selves.

1. In *others*, as if we consider how God blefseth and cheareth the religious; wherein that text is verified, *Blessed are the righteous, for it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings*, Isa. iii.

10. Or if we observe how God punisheth the carnal and hypocritical; wherein that text is verified, *Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with them, for the reward of their hands shall be given them*, Isa. iii. 11.

2. In *ourselves*, as if by a spiritual Experience we taste God to be good; wherein that text is verified, *If ye be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious*, 1 Pet. ii. 3. If we find the things given us of God to be good; as that his Spirit is good, according to that text, *Thy Spirit is good*, Ps. cxliii.

10. That his ordinances are good, according to that text, *It is good for me to draw near to God*, Psal. lxxiii. 28. and, *This is my comfort in affliction, for thy word hath quickened me*, Psal. cxix. 50. That sanctification, and the fruit of the Spirit, are good; according to that text, *It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord*, Lam. iii. 26. *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High*, Psal. xcii. 1. *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing*, Gal. iv. 18. *It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace*, Heb. xiii. 9. or if by experience we discern the evil of sin itself out of measure sinful; according to that text, *Sin by the commandment is become exceeding sinful*, Rom. vii.

13. If we find out the corruption of our own nature; according to that text, *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*, Ps. li. 5. If we discover the abomination of our own righteousness; according to that text, *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*, Isa. lxiv. 6. If we see our own inability to do any good; according to that text, *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which*

is good, I find not, Rom. vii. 18. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves, to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. iii. 5. If we have trial of the vanity of all creatures, as of riches, honour, wisdom; according to that text, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity*, Eccles. i. 2. O how will these blessed Experiences, backed by scripture truths, kindle our affections! I deny not, faith works more steadfastness, and firmness of adherence, but experience usually breeds the greater strength of affections: *I love the Lord*, faith David, and why so? *because* (of this Experience) *he hath heard my voice, and my supplications*, Psal. cxvi. 1.

2. We must endeavour to produce that fruit, that frame of heart, which the Lord requires, directs, and looks for in such and such cases. Thus the sanctification of experiences is evidenced by the dispositions answering God's mind, which are left upon the heart, and brought forth in the life afterwards; namely, when divine discoveries are the more strongly believed, the heart by threats more kindly awed; adherence to the promises more strongly confirmed; the deceitful heart more narrowly watched; Satan's suggestions more watchfully resisted; the bewitchings of the world kept at a greater distance from the soul; in a word, when by this experimental application of God's works to his word, God is more advanced, and self more abated, the honour of the Lord is more studied, and the edification of his people endeavoured, holy love encreased, service quickened, faith strengthened, Christ improved; then is this business christianly managed indeed: but of these more largely in the next section.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Sanctification of Experiences in their several Uses.

THE sanctification of experiences is evidenced, as we said, by such dispositions as these.

1. When

1. When divine discoveries are more strongly believed; this is one fruit of experience, it wonderfully strengthens our faith: When the Israelites saw the Egyptians drowned, then *they believed the Lord, and his servant Moses*, Exod. xiv. 31. When we find all things in the event to be as we believed, this confirms our faith, as David *knew that God favoured him, by his deliverances*, Psalm xli. 11.

2. When the heart by threats is more kindly awed: this is another fruit of experience; *The righteous also shall see and fear*, Psalm lii. 6. first *see*, and then *fear*: when the primitive Christians saw *Ananias fall down, and give up the ghost, then great fear came on them that heard these things*, Acts v. 5. This holy fear many a time possesseth the saints: *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee*, saith David, *and I am afraid of thy judgments*, Ps. cxix. 120. *When I heard, my belly trembled*, saith Habakkuk, *my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble*, Hab. iii. 16. As the child quaketh when he seeth his father correct a servant, so the faithful tremble when they observe the severity of God's wrath against impenitent sinners.

3. When the deceitful heart is more narrowly watched: hath it couzened us once and again? Experience hereof will breed in us a godly jealousy and suspicion over our hearts; we are now conscious of our own weakness, and of the snare that is in every creature to take and entangle us; and this will make waking believers circumspect and careful how they entertain evil motions, how they keep up holy thoughts, how they perform holy duties, how their affections move towards that which is above, lest they should miscarry upon the sands.

4. When Satan's suggestions are more watchfully resisted; this is the voice of experience in such a case, 'Doth Satan fu-

riously assail us? be not dismayed: are his temptations most fierce? be we most diligent in the means of grace, the practice of holiness, the labours of an honest calling; pray earnestly, exercise faith, stick faster to the word of promise, stop our ears against scruples and doubtings; draw nigh to God, for Satan will then cease to vex thee with his temptations any more?' *Resist the devil, and he will fly from you*, James iv. 7. It is true, the believer is too weak of himself to withstand the least assault, but if we rely on the Lord, we may thro' his power be made victorious in the greatest assaults whatsoever; and here is the comfort of experience, 'That a soul having once returned with victory, through the power of his might, he will abide in the secret place of the most High for ever.'

5. When the bewitchings of the world are kept at a great distance from the soul: this was Solomon's case and cure, after all his travels and great delights, he no sooner returns, as to himself, but he fills the world with this news; what news? *Vanity*: and what more? *Vanity of vanities*: and what more? *All is vanity*. Experience of its vanity, weans him from the love of this earth, it takes him off the creature, and lifts him unto the Lord his Creator; so should we, if ever we were charmed with such Syren songs, be more careful, lest we be drawn away with the pleasant delights of things transitory, and keep them at a greater distance from us.

6. When the Lord Jesus is more studied and advanced: the man that feels Christ's gracious power and virtue, will be sure to exalt Christ, and set him up on high; when Israel saw the mighty work of David in overthrowing Goliath, then David was much set by: the believer's experience of Christ's mighty and gracious working, makes Christ very precious to him, then he cries, as the soldiers of David, *Thou art worth ten thousands of us*, 2 Sam. xviii. 3. Hence it is, that God's people value him above all their

profits, friends, ease, credit, and lives. Matthew left the receipt of custom, James and John their ships and nets, and father, and followed him: yea, many for his sake loved not their lives unto death, Rev. xii. 11. no wonder, for they had many sweet experiences of Christ: Christ to their apprehension was *the fairest of ten thousand*, none but Christ, none but Christ.

7. When the peoples edification is endeavoured: have we tasted of the goodness of God? let us then provoke others to believe, and to serve the Lord together with us; this is one end of experience, and that use we should make of it towards others. When Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, he worshipped, and turned into the host of Israel, and said, *Arise, for the Lord hath delivered the host of Midian into your hands*, Judg. vii. 15.

8. When a man's own self is more abused: do we live the life of grace and true holiness? this will teach us to deny ourselves wholly: *If any man* (saith Christ) *will come after me, let him deny himself*, Luke ix. 23. *q. d.* If any man will come after me in the knowledge of my will, in the belief of my promises, in the love of my truth, in the obedience of my precepts, let him deny himself, let him lay aside his own wisdom, his own will, his own imagination, his own affections, his own ends, as base and unworthy marks to be aimed: *let him deny himself*; whatsoever is of himself, or belonging to himself, as a corrupt, and carnal man; let him go out of himself, that he may come to me; let him empty himself of himself, that he may be capable of me, that I may rule and reign in him, and that he may wholly subject himself to me and my service: this the apostle styles, *A living, not to ourselves, but unto him that died for us*, 2 Cor. v. 15. he alone understands, and hath experience of the end of Christ's death, that makes

Christ's glory the end of his life, and lives not to himself, but to Christ.

9. When holy love is more increased: *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice, and my supplication*, Psalm cxvi. 1. We cannot taste of the Lord, but we must have an hearty love to the Lord: will you hear the voice of experience? 'tis this, *O taste, and see how good the Lord is*, Psalm xxxiv. 8. and then, *O stay me with flaggons, and comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love*, Cant. ii. 5. such a one truly affects Christ, and all that follow Christ; such a one loves the person of Christ, without his privileges; a naked Christ, as well as Christ clothed with all his robes, in all his glory and resplendent beauty; Christ in a prison, as well as Christ on a throne; thus John (after all his experiences of Christ's love to him) could love Christ on the cross, when others forsook him, as well as in the temple, when he was working miracles.

10. When hope is quickened: such times may come, that death and darkness may surround us, and we may grovel in the dust: but here is our comfort, *that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope*, Rom. v. 4. Have we any experience of God's gracious dealings with us in former times? have we sometimes been refreshed by his hand? hath he sometimes helped us? was he found of us, when we sought him? nay, often unfought for? hath he come to our souls, and renewed our stock, and filled our becalmed spirits with fresh gales of grace? how should we then but hope? As it was in this respect, it is, and ever shall be; if new temptations arise, and new lusts break in, and spoil, it is the voice of Experience, *I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion, and the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever*, 2 Tim. iv. 17. And, *We have the sentence*

of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver us, in whom we trust he will yet deliver us, 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

11. When joys of the Spirit are raised and stirred up: Who is he that hath not been delivered out of some miserable exigents? and if we have, we may well say with David, *Thou hast shewed me great troubles and adversities, but thou wilt return and revive me, thou wilt come again, and take me from the depths of the earth, and comfort me*, Psal. lxxi. 20. Former comforts are [if I may say so] as a bill obligatory under God's hand, to assure us that he will not forsake us: *Whom God loves, he loves unto the end*, John xiii. 1. *Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice*, Psal. lxiii. 7.

12. When faith is more and more strengthened, experiences should be turned into confidences: Thus David improved his experiences, *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hands of this Philistine*, 1 Sam. xvii. 36, 37. In like manner should we take notice of God's dealings, and after we have once tried him and his truth, let us trust him for the future; Tried truth, and tried faith unto it, sweetly agree, and answer one another. Hence it is that experience of God's love should refresh our faith upon any fresh onset; *So let all thine enemies perish*, said Deborah, Judg. v. 32. 'The heart of that blessed woman was enlarged, as it were prophetically; 'when one falls, they shall all fall;' there is the like reason, *So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord*. Experience in ourselves or others, will enlarge our faith to look for greater matters still from our gracious powerful God: Hath the Lord given us a victory over the Philistines? then awake, awake Deborah, awake, and be enlarged, O

my faith! Every new experience is a new knowledge of God, and should fit us for new encounters: I deny not but we ought to trust God upon other grounds, though we had never tried him; but when he helps our faith by former experiences, this should strengthen our confidence, and shore up our spirits, and put us on to go more cheerfully to God, as to a tried friend. It was the speech of one eminent in holiness, upon the occasion of the accomplishment of a great request made to God by him, 'I have tried God often, now I will trust him indeed.' If we were read in the story of our lives, we might have a divinity of our own, drawn out of the observation of God's particular dealings towards us; we might say, 'This, and this truth I dare venture upon, I have found it true, I dare build all my happiness upon it;' as Paul, *I know whom I have trusted, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day*, 2 Tim. i. 22. *q. d.* I have tried him, he never yet failed me, I am not now to seek how faithful he is to all those that are his.

13. When scruples and doubts are removed, 'O, (cries the soul) I have many experiences, but no comfort as yet.' Thus David, after the remembrance of his songs in the night, left his soul still in doubt; and he goes on to say, *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* Psal. lxxvii. 7. In this case, it is the duty of Christians, to call to mind their former experiences of faith and joy again and again: for though they comfort not at one time, yet they may at another. Have we found a promise, which is a Breast of Consolation, milkless? yet again suck, comfort may come in the end: If after we have impanelled a jury and grand inquest to search, and our first verdict condemn us, or they being in an *ignoramus*; yet do, as wise judges often do, send them about it again, they may find it the next time: Jonah looked once, it seems, and found no comforts:

comfort; for he said, *I will look again toward thine holy temple*, Jonah ii. 4. So some have looked over their hearts, by signs, at one time, and have, to their thinking, found nothing but hypocrisy, unbelief, hardness, self-seeking, &c. but not long after, examining their hearts again by the same signs, they have espied the image of God drawn fairly upon the tables of their hearts, and so found a world of comfort.

‘O but (cries the soul) I have tossed and tumbled over my heart, I have searched into the registers and records of God’s dealings, and methinks, I can call nothing into remembrance betwixt God and me.’ What, nothing? Look again: Did God never speak peace to our hearts? Did Christ never shed his love abroad in our souls? Have we at no time found in our heart pure strains of love to Christ? Pure drops of godly sorrow for offending Christ? Have we never an old tried evidence, which hath been acknowledged and confirmed again and again in open courts? What, not one? Surely, if we can now call to mind one, if in truth, it may support us: If one promise do belong to us, all do; for every one conveys whole Christ, in whom all the promises are made, and who is the matter of them: As in the sacrament, the bread conveys whole Christ, and the wine conveys whole Christ; so in the word, every promise conveys whole Christ; if we can but say as the church of Ephesus, *This thing I have, that I hate sin*, Rev. ii. 6. We may plead this to God, yea, though it be in a lesser degree, if in truth and sincerity; (for God brings not a pair of scales to weigh, but a touch-stone to try our graces) if it be true gold, though never so little of it, it will pass current with him: *He will not quench the smoking flax*, Isa. xlii. 3. though it be but a smook, not a flame; though it be but a wick in the socket, as it is in the original, likelier to die and go out, than to continue, which we use to throw away, yet he will not quench it, but

accept it. O let us comfort ourselves with these words!

‘O but (cries the soul again) I have searched all crevases for light, but alas, I cannot see the least beam of it: What help now remains?’ If it be thus, poor soul, *Be not faithless, but believing*. Christ helps some to live above glorious manifestations; sometimes in absence of these manifestations, just ones may live, and rejoice in the invisible essence of God: Christians may live waiting on God, when his face is wholly hid from them; or Christians may live depending on God, when all other subordinate stays or helps are lost: In such a soul there may be this resolution, ‘Let God do what he will with me, I’ll hang on him still: Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him;’ and there is comfort in this.

‘If so, (saith the soul) then what need of experiences, so long as I have the promises, and may live by faith?’ O but for all this, be not careless of experiences: For, 1. It is the goodness of God, that besides the promise of good things to come, he is pleased to give us some present evidence and taste of what we believe: This heightens his mercy, that besides faith, he should train up his children by daily renewed experiences of his fatherly care. 2. Though it be one thing to live by faith, another thing to live by sight, yet the more we see, and feel, and taste of God, the more we shall be led to rely on him, for that which as yet we neither see nor feel: This is the very meaning of God, that by that which we feel, we might be strengthened in that we look for.

S E C T. V.

The Consideration of Experiences in a practical Course; or, some practical Rules to be observed.

IT were good for Christians, intending the practical part, to observe these or the like rules. Some Cautionary. Some Directory.

1. The cautionary rules may be these.

1. In gathering experiences, beware of misprision of God's providences. There are many mistakes now a-days, and therefore it is our best and only course, for our security, to interpret all God's works out of his word: we must make the scriptures (as we said before) a construing book to the book of God's providences: Judge neither better of prosperity, nor worse of adversity, than God's word warrants us. This was the Psalmist's cure, his experience put a *probatum est* to this prescription, *When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end*, Psal. xxxvii. 16, 17. God may prosper a wicked man, and he may construe this as an argument, and note it as experience of God's gracious dealing with him, and dear love unto him: O take heed! *To the law, and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*, Isa. viii. 20.

2. In improving experiences, beware how we argue from one experience to another: Judgments threatened, are not always inflicted after one and the same manner; God meets with the wicked sometimes in this life, and sometimes he reserves their plagues for another. In like manner the gracious providences of God are not always dispensed after one and the same manner; indeed David could say, *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine*; 1 Sam. xvii. 36, 37. And Paul could say, *I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion, and the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work*, 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18. and so we may say, that God many times hath delivered us, and doth deliver us, and therefore that he will deliver us still: but this manner of arguing, as it is demonstrative, so it hath some limitations, which we must carefully take notice of; as,

1. That besides a mere providence, we take notice of some promise of God on which we build: Thus Paul, delivered from death at one time, argueth that God would deliver him at another time; but, in his arguing, he eyes the promise, he hangs on God, *which*, saith he, *raiseth the dead*, 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

2. That we consider the manner of the promise, because,

(1.) Some promises are disjunctive; as when God in his mercy conveys any thing to us, either in particular, or in the equivalent, by way of commutation and compensation with spiritual things. Thus a Christian's experience *works hope*, Rom. v. 4. but not always of the self-same outward issue, and manner of deliverance out of his trouble, which he hath before-time found; no, we must hope according to the word, or according to the quality of the promise: Paul's hope, after experience of many deliverances, was not expressly or peremptorily, that the prick in his flesh should be removed, but that God's grace should be sufficient, and so he had the fruit of his former experience, because he obtained an equivalent supply, but not otherwise. (2.) Some promises are conditional, in respect of us; as when God promiseth protection from contagious sickness, and from trouble and war: *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land*, 2 Chron. vii. 14. In these or the like promises, God may give us the experience of his word at one time, but deny it at another, because we fail in the condition of the promise on our parts. Observe, Christians, would we conclude a deliverance as formerly, be sure then to look to the frame and disposition of our spirits: If we are in the way of the promise, then we may conclude it for certain; if we meet God in the course of his providence,

or in the improvement of the means he hath appointed, then we may set it down, that God will do whatsoever he hath promised to give, in his own way, or otherwise not. (3.) Some promises are indefinite; as that in James v. 14, 15. *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* In this case God may sometimes, yet doth not always perform promise according to the letter, tho' a man may be truly qualified with the conditions specified in that promise, *toties quoties*, again and again. It only intends thus much; That God may, and sometimes will save the sick, and raise him up at the church's prayers, but he will not ever do so. Now as God doth not always perform, so neither are we absolutely, or infallibly, or universally to conclude; the promise is not universal, but indefinite, and accordingly our conclusions should not be universal, but indefinite: We should indeed, because of the promise, adventure ourselves upon God in such a condition, not knowing but in his outward dispensations he may make it good to us, yet with submission to his pleasure, if otherwise he dispose of us: And as this is all we must do, so this is all we can say, or conclude in such a case as this is.

2. The directory rules may be these.

(1.) Let us communicate our own experiences to the good of others. David, in his deliverances, invites others to have recourse unto him. *Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name, then shall the righteous compass me about, when thou shalt deal bountifully with me,* Psalm cxli. 7. Conceal not within our bosoms these things, the communicating whereof

may tend to publick profit; surely it were a course much tending to the quickening of the faith of all, if we would impart to one another our mutual experiences.

(2.) Let us trade [or improve] others experiences to our own particular profit. Thus David, in desertion, hath recourse to God's gracious dealings with his forefathers; *Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them; they cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded,* Psalm xxii. 4, 5. What favour God shewed to any one, he will vouchsafe to every one that seeketh him diligently, if it may be for his good. Thus we find in scripture, that sometimes a personal experience was improved to an universal advantage, James v. 11. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

(3.) Let us cast our experiences under several heads, and make the word and works face one another, and answer one to another; or, to make the work complete, it were not amiss to distribute the frame into three columns; and in the first to set down experiences, in the second the texts, in the third dispositions answering God's mind, in such and such a case, to be left on the heart afterwards.

(4.) Let us pray with fervency, whenever we set a time apart to view our experiences, that those dispositions answering God's mind in every particular experience may be written in our hearts, and brought forth in our life afterwards. This will be the chief use, and choice comfort of the soul in this duty. And this method a poor creature and servant of Christ hath followed in his own particular practice; whereof I shall give you a taste in the following section.

S E C T. VI.

The Experiences of a weak Christian, cast into the Method propounded.

§. 1. *Judgments on the Wicked.*

Experiences.

1643.

FEB. 9. Preston was taken by the parliament's forces; several papists slain in it, some naturally of a good disposition, and therefore many mourned for their untimely death, but rejoiced in the accomplishment of the promise.

1648.

Oct. 29. This day a soldier was slain in Preston, in the open fair, and not long after, another soldier was slain in the very act of drunkenness; it is reported that he was drunk the night before, and that he threatened that very morning, before night either to kill, or be killed.

Experiences.

1641.

MAY 20. This day the Lord cast one into a spiritual, heavenly, ravishing love-trance; he tasted the goodness of God, the very sweetness of Christ, and was filled with the joys of the Spirit above measure. O it was a good day, a blessed foretaste of heaven, a love-token of Christ to the soul.

1647.

July 1. This day R. M. lying on his death-bed, was filled with the comforts of the Spirit, and sweet assurance of faith; at last driving nearer his end, he proclaimed 'God's goodness and sweetness and mercy,' which were his last words; and after in the midst of our prayers he gave up the ghost.

§. 3. *Several Chastisements, or Afflictions on myself, and others.*

Experiences.

1648.

JAN. 14. One had a grieved and troubled heart by reason of some opposition of wicked people: at night he read a feeling passage of Mr. Rogers

gers

Texts.

Rev. xvi. 6, 7. *They have shed the blood of saints, and thou hast given them blood to drink. Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

Rev. xix. 2. *He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, &c.*

Texts.

Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.*

Texts.

Cant. ii. 3. *I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

2 Cor. vii. 4. *I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.*

Acts xiii. 52. *And they were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.*

Texts.

Psal. cxvi. 15. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*

Rev. xiv. 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

Texts.

John xv. 20. *Remember the word that I have said unto you, The servant is not greater than the lord: if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.*

C c 2

Dispositions required in this case, and to be prayed for.

Rev. xviii. 4. *Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Rev. xviii. 20. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.*

Dispositions, &c.

Gal. v. 16. *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.*

Gal. v. 24. *They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. 1 Cor. vi. 20. Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

Dispositions, &c.

1 Pet. i. 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom tho' now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Rev. xxii. 17, 20. And the Spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and let him that is athirst come: He who thirsteth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly, Amen. Even so, &c.*

Dispositions, &c.

Deut. xxxii. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!*

Job xiv. 14. *All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.*

Rev. xxii. 20. *Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus.*

Dispositions, &c.

Mat. v. 12. *Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Mat. v. 44. Pray for them which despitefully*

1 Cor.

Experiences.
gers on Judges xiii. thus, 'I have often thought it God's mercy, to keep the knowledge of such discouragements from them that are to enter into the ministry, lest they should be deterred wholly from it, till by experience they be armed against it.'

§. 4. Performances of gracious Promises to myself, and others.

Experiences.

1642.

JAN. 6. This day a private fast being observed, the Lord gave some that exercised, the very spirit and power of prayer, to the ravishing of hearers: Surely it was the Spirit spake in them, Christ manifesting his presence in those very enlargements. To him only be the glory.

Texts.

Zech. xii. 10. *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.*

Rom. viii. 26. *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, it maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

Dispositions &c.

fully use you, and persecute you. *Rom.* viii. 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution? &c. *Rom.* xii. 14. Bless them who persecute you; bless, and curse not.

Dispositions, &c.

Jer. xxix. 12, 13. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Jer. xxxi. 9. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them.

§. 5. The Temptations of the worldensnaring, of Sin prevailing, of Satan cheating.

Experiences.

1647.

MARCH 27. Ones heart was overpowered, and exceedingly troubled with the cares of this life. O base world, how dost thou vex them that intermeddle with thee!

Texts.

Eccles. i. 2, 14. *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

Dispositions, &c.

Luke xxi. 34. Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with the cares of this life.

1 John v. 4. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Experiences.

1648.

April 4. and 17. A poor creature in his dreams, with devils and torments, and Satan's power over his soul; he apprehended strongly that Satan was with him, and very busie to ensnare him, which at his very first awaking struck him with trembling and horror of heart.

Texts.

2 Cor. ii. 11. *We are not ignorant of his devices.*

Eph. vi. 11. *Of the wiles of the devil.*

Rev. ii. 24. *Of the depths of Satan.*

1 Thef. iii. 5. *By some means the tempter hath tempted you.*

1 Pet. v. 8. *Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom to devour.*

Dispositions, &c.

Eph. vi. 12. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. *Jai.* iv. 7. Resist the devil, &c. *2 Pe.* v. 9. Whom resist, &c. *2 Pe.* ii. 9. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations. *Eph.* vi. 16. Above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

§. 6. Victories of the World, Lusts, Temptations, Corruptions, Satan.

Experiences.

1647.

MARCH 27. A poor soul being mightily ensnared with the world, and finding by experience its vanity and vexation, he resolv'd against it; desiring thereforeth pioufly to make his soul to rejoice in God's blessings and his own labours, and to give himself to the Lord wholly for the remainder of his days; This desire he makes at the feet of Christ,

Texts.

Eccles. ii. 14. and iii. 22. and v. 19. *There is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works for that is his portion: Every man also to whom God hath given riches, and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour, this is the gift of God.*

Dispositions, &c.

Phil. iv. 11. I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God: that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute.

1 Tim. vi. 8. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

Experi-

Experiences.

1648.

MARCH 6. This night in his sleep a troubled soul was by Satan tempted to sin, but the Lord stood by him, put prayers into him tho' asleep, whereby he overcame the temptation; then awaking, he deeply apprehended Satan's approach and basic temptations: it struck him into fears, but praising God for his assistance he received boldness, and then slept again.

Texts.

2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9. *There was given to me a thorn in the flesh: for this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me; and he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*

Dispositions, &c.

1 Corinthians xv 57. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians xii. 9. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

James iv. 5, 6. The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy: but he giveth more grace.

§. 7. *Observations of God's Providences.*

Experiences.

1648.

MARCH 1. This day one musing on God's providences, he occasionally took up a book, and read in it, 'That the recording of providences is not the least portion of God's praise, of our duty, of posterity's patrimony.'

Texts.

J. b. v. 27. *Lo this we have searched, so it is, hear thou it, and know it for thy good.*

Job xlii. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee.*

Dispositions, &c.

Psaln xxxiv. 8, 9. O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him: fear the Lord, ye his saints. *Psal. xlviii. 8, 9.* As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of our Lord: we have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God.

§. 8. *The Breathings of the Spirit in others and my own Soul.*

Experiences.

1648.

MAY 7. This day one felt many sweet impressions of God's Spirit in his heart, sometimes melting, & sometimes chearing his soul in the public ordinances of the word and sacraments: this could not but be the breathings of Christ.

Texts.

Cant. i. 5. *I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse, I have gathered my myrrhe with my spice: I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey, I have drunken my wine with my milk.*

Dispositions, &c.

Psaln lxxxix. 15. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

Cant. v. 1. Fat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.

§. 9. *The Withdrawings of Christ from the Soul.*

Experiences.

1648.

JULY 1. or thereabouts, one gave me a relation of her sad desertion thus: That one night as she sat by the fire, she thought the saw the ground open, and a gulf of fire appearing; whereupon she cried, I am damned, I am damned: If at any time, she saw any fire, she supposed that the must go into it, & that the devils would fetch her into it. Once wringing her hands, she cried out, O what was I born into this world for? One standing by, answered, to glorify God; to whom she replied, you say true, for God shall be glorified in my damnation: if any offered to pray, or read; she usually cried out, it was too late to

Texts.

Job xiii. 24, 26. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thy enemy? Thou writest bitter things against me.*

Psaln lxxxviii. 14, 15, 16, 18. *Lord, why castest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted, and ready to die;—while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted, thy fierce wrath goeth over me, thy terrors have cut me off. Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.*

Prov. xviii. 14. *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?*

Dispositions, &c.

Psaln lxxxvii. 5, 6, 7, 10. I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times: I call to remembrance my song in the night; I commune with my own heart, and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? And I said, This is my infirmity.

Isaiah l. 10. Who is among you that searcheth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

2 Corinthians xii. 8, 9. For this thing

Experiences.

pray for her, and they should not read that pure word of God by her, for it belonged not to her. At last God appeared, & she felt marvelous comforts.

Texts.

Isaiah liv. 8. *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, &c.*

Dispositions, &c.

thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me, and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee.

§. 10. *Deceits of Heart-beguiling.*

Experiences.

1648.

OCTOBER 24. One that took notice of the slipperiness of his heart in the very act of performance: 'Sometimes it slyly steals away after idle and wandring imaginations: Sometimes it lets in vain thoughts of Praise, Vain-glory, &c. Sometimes it raiseth up many good and holy motions, meditations, desires and affections, which yet are nothing to the present performance; and therefore come not from the Spirit of grace, but from Satan.' O cheating, cozening heart!

Texts.

Jer. xvii. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?*

Rom. vii. 21, 22, 23 *I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me: for I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.*

Dispositions, &c.

Gen. xv. 11. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abraham drove them away.

Mat. xxvi. 41. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Rom. vii. 24, 25. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord: So then, with my mind I myself serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin.

1 Pet. iv. 7. Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

I had gathered more Experiences; but that all Offence, though but taken, may be removed, let these suffice.

C H A P. VII. S E C T. I.

Of the Nature of EVIDENCES.

THE scriptures set out the ways of discovering things spiritual by sight and by taste: by taste, experience is meant; and by sight, faith and assurance of faith is intended: Peter speaks of *tasting that the Lord is gracious*, 1 Pet. ii. 3. and *Moses by faith saw him who is invisible*, Heb. xi. 27. David joins both together, *O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him*, Psal. xxxiv. 8. We have done with tasting; the next is seeing, which I call assurance, or evidence: would we know what these evidences are? I look on them as 'inherent and habitual observations of the Spirit's actings in the soul;' of which the beloved

apostle speaks so often, *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life*, 1 John ii. 3. and iii. 14. and v. 2. 13. And the apostle Paul, *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 12.

S E C T. II.

Of the gathering of Evidences.

NOW for the Evidences, it is our duty 1. To gather them. 2. To keep them. 3. To improve them.

For the gathering of them, observe we 1. A right season. 2. The right way.

1. Seasons must be observed; for when thick mists surround us, and black clouds cover us, we cannot so well judge either of our selves, or of our own concerns: David in desertion refuseth to be comforted, Psal. lxxvii. he spilt all the cordials and physic that was brought him, he was not only void of comfort, but refused it: 'What? bring me promises' (will a soul then say) 'you may as well carry them to one in hell; What? are these the evidences of God's love? I see no such thing, here's nothing but scruples, and doubts, and flaws: O how apt is such an one at such a time, to forsake his own mercy, Jon. ii. 8. to take Satan's part, to plead against his own title, his own interest, in the best things he can have interest in. Now therefore, if we will draw a book of evidences, it is good to observe times and such precious opportunities of comforts and refreshings as God vouchsafeth upon us.

2. The right way must be observed, and that consists in eying, 1. The precious promises of Christ. 2. The inward graces unto which those promises are made. 3. The truth of those graces written in our hearts. 4. The testimony of the 'Spirit, witnessing with our spirits, that we are the children of God.'

1. We must eye the precious promises, and yet not so as we must close with them, or rest on them alone, without seeking for, or closing with Christ in those promises; the promise is but [as] the casket, and Christ [as] the jewel in it; the promise is but [as] the field, and Christ [as] the pearl hid in it, and to be chiefly look'd at; the promises are the means by which we are

assured, not the things on which we are to rest: it were folly for a man to think he hath an interest in an heir's lands, because by some means or other he hath got the writings of her estate into his hands; all know that the interest of her lands goes with her person, and with relation of marriage to her, otherwise, without a title to herself, all the writings may be justly fetched out of his hands again: so it is with the promises, they hang all upon Christ, and without him, there is no interest to be had in them.

2. We must eye the inward graces to which the promises are made, not that we must be too much carried away with the signs of Christ in our hearts, and not after Christ himself; as pleasures that are lawful in themselves, may be unlawfully used, when our thoughts and intentions are too long, or too frequent, or too vehement in them; so as to deaden the heart either to the present delighting in God, or pursuing after him with the joint strength of our souls, as our only chiefest good; so an immoderate recourse unto signs, barely considered as such, is as unwarrantable, when thereby we are diverted, and taken off from a more constant actual exercise of daily thoughts of faith towards Christ immediately, as he is set forth to be our righteousness; and yet the minds of many are so wholly taken up with their own hearts, that, as the Psalmist says of God, *Christ is scarce in all their thoughts*: let these consider, what dishonour this will be to Christ, that his train and favourites, our graces, should have a fuller court, and more frequent attendance from our hearts than himself, who is the King of glory: now to rectify this error, the way is not wholly to reject all uses of such evidences, but to order them rightly; as thus,

1. Let not the use of graces go before, but follow after an address of faith first renewed, and acts of faith first put forth upon Christ himself. Thus whensoever we would

would go down into our own hearts, and take a view of our graces, let us be sure first to look wholly out of ourselves unto Christ, as our justification, and to close with him immediately, as if we had no present or by-past grace to evidence our being in him; and if then, whiles faith is thus immediately clasping about Christ, we find either present or by-past graces coming in, as handmaids, to attend and witness to the truth of this adherence unto Christ, this will derogate nothing from Christ's honour, or the doctrine of free-grace.

2. 'Let us in the closure of all, begin afresh to act faith upon Christ immediately, with a redoubled strength.' As faith should give a leading to the use of graces, so the sight of our graces should be as a back-door to let faith in again, to converse with Christ: even as at the sacrament, the elements of bread and wine, are but outward signs to bring Christ and the heart together, and then faith lets the outward elements go, and closeth and treats immediately with Christ: so grace is an inward sign, and whiles men make use of it, only as of a bare sign to let them come into Christ, and their rejoicing is not in it originally, but in Christ; their confidence is not upon it, but upon Christ: there is no danger at all in making such use of signs; for thus we make our graces subordinate and subservient to faith, whilst it makes Christ its *Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all*. I know it is strongly objected against Christians, That many forget, and seldom use an intire, immediate close with Christ, whilst in the mean time the stream of their most constant thoughts and deep-

est intentions, are ever running upon their graces, and the gracious workings thereof in duties towards Christ: others on the contrary run all on Christ, despising the graces of the Spirit, because, say they, *Christ is all in all to them*: so that if we ask such, Have you any grace, change of heart? &c. 'Tush, what do you tell them of repentance, holiness, &c. they have Christ, and that is sufficient; they have the substance, and what shall they now do with shadows of ordinances, duties, graces? they have all in Christ, what should they look for evidences, from any graces inherent in themselves?' O let those mourn over themselves, that have with much affection been seeking after Christ's benefits, peace of conscience, holiness of heart and life, but have not sought first and last to embrace, and have the person of the Lord Jesus Christ himself; and let such tremble, who in advancing Christ himself, and free-grace, will needs abolish and despise those heavenly graces which flow from him unto all the elect*: *The law of God is written on the heart of Christ*, Heb. x. 7. with Psal. xl. 8. And if ever he wraps us up in the covenant of grace, *He will write his law on our hearts also*, Heb. viii. 10. The right way for both, is to order their evidences aright; and by this course graces will have their due, and the life of faith will still be actually maintained and kept upon wing, in its full use and exercise towards Christ alone for justification.

Quest. 'Why would not some men have grace or sanctification an evidence?'

Ans. In some it ariseth from their lusts, which they have a mind to live quietly in,

* Such as truth, justice, charity, temperance, humility, and the like.—These persons, who think meanly, or speak contemptibly of these excellent virtues, ought to remember, that the practice of them is secretly required by our Saviour: that they are strongly recommended by his example: that they are made by Christ himself, as the only test of our love to him, and counted not only as the brightest ornament of our nature, but as the chief glory of God himself; and therefore they ought to consider, that no soundness in the faith, no solemnity of worship, no external observances, no flushes of devotion, no pretended inward manifestations, no zeal how warm fervor for publick matters, can ever compensate for the want of these essential ingredients of the spiritual life.

desirous to keep their peace, and yet unwilling to forsake their lusts; and hence they exclude this witness of water or sanctification, to testify in the court of conscience; in others, I think, it doth not arise from want of grace; but because the Spirit of grace and sanctification runs very low in them; it can speak little, and that little very darkly and obscurely for them, therefore they have no great mind that it should be brought in as any witness for them; others I think may have much grace, yet for a time they cast it by as an evidence unto them, because they have experience how difficult and troublesome it is to find this evidence, and when 'tis found, how troublesome to read it, and keep it fair, and thereby to have constant peace and quietness: and hence arise those speeches, 'Why do you look to your sanctification? It is a blotted evidence, you may have it to-day, and lose it to-morrow, and then where is your peace?' These men, because they feel not that measure of sanctification they would, do therefore vilify and deny that they have; because they *feel a law of sin in their members, leading them away captive*, therefore they will not take notice of the law of their minds, whereby that *inner man delights in the law of God*, and mourns bitterly under *the body of death*, by which they might see with Paul, that *there is no condemnation to such*, Rom. viii. 1. But I shall propose one thing to conscience: Suppose thou wert now lying on thy death-bed, comforting thyself in thy elected and justified estate; suppose the Spirit of God should now grapple with thy conscience, and tell thee, *If thou art justified, then art thou sanctified*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. Is it thus with thee? What wilt thou answer? If thou sayest, 'Thou art not sanctified,' the word and Spirit will bear witness against thee, and say, 'Thou art not then justified?' If thou sayest, 'Thou knowest not, thou lookest not to sanctification, or the fruits

of the Spirit;' they will reply, 'How then canst thou know or say thou art elected or justified?' For it is a truth as clear as the sun, 'None are justified, but they are sanctified, and if they are not sanctified, they are not justified.' O bless God for any little measure of sanctification, so it be in sincerity; do not scorn or secretly despise this Spirit of grace, knowing that without it thou shalt perish, but if thou hast it, thou hast an evidence of thy part in Christ; surely grace is 'the image of Christ stamped upon the soul,' and they who reflecting upon their souls, see the image of Christ there, may be sure that Christ is theirs; Christ hath given all himself to those, to whom he hath given this part of himself. Upon the view of thy evidences, say, 'All those great and heavenly things could not be in my soul, were not Christ and his Spirit there; this rich and glorious furniture could not be in my soul, were not the king of glory there; the flowers of this garden would not smell so sweetly, did not the wind blow upon them.'

3. We must eye the truth of those graces thus written in our hearts: there is a great deal of counterfeit grace in the world; a true Christian can have nothing, as discernable to others, but an hypocrite may have and do for the outward semblance as much as he; it is good therefore to try the truth of our graces, and herein the rise, manner and end of our motions carry much manifestation in them. But of this more largely in the duties of Self-examination, and Receiving of the Lord's supper.

Only in this place, I think it most suitable to add a little further concerning this truth of graces, as (1.) There is, and may be truth of grace, though not perfection of grace; and hence it is that we may have infallible assurance; but for any perfect certainty in degree, it cannot be attained in this life. One [viz. Dr. Crisp] arguing against universal obedience as an evidence,

because no man could perform it, or if it should be limited to purpose of heart, yet none hath such a constant purpose, because of many corrupt suggestions and concussions within, by lusts; herein he sheweth his error; for we look not for perfection of grace, but only for truth; the least grace discovered in the soul that is sincere and upright, tho' it be not grace to satisfy the desire of a Christian, yet it ought to be a sure evidence to confirm his judgment of his interest in Christ. It is observed that many of God's children may make sad wounds for themselves, in not distinguishing between the truth and essence of grace, and the degree of grace; whereas the scripture makes them blessed that *hunger and thirst*, yea it doth often describe the godly by their desires, *and seeking of his face*; now this error is the more fastned upon them, because when they read in books of the nature and property of any grace, they are not able to find it in such a vigorous and powerful manner in themselves; whereas they ought to know it is one thing to speak of grace in *idea, in se*, 'in its own nature and definition', another thing to speak of it as in *subjecto*, 'as the subject partakes of it;' for so it is much debilitated. We do not argue assurance, from perfection of grace, from a full and perfect obedience unto God's law, but only from the truth and sincerity of grace, with many defects that are washed away by Christ's blood. (2.) The scripture attributes blessedness and salvation to several graces; and we cannot deny, but that all the graces to which those promises are annexed are good and proper evidences: thus sometimes *fear of God*, sometimes *poverty of spirit*, sometimes *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*, sometimes Repentance, sometimes Love, sometimes Patience, sometimes Faith, is a sign or evidence. And if a godly man can find any one of these, or the like in himself in truth or sincerity, he may conclude of his salvation and justification,

though he cannot see all these in himself; and many times the people of God perceive one evidence in themselves, when they cannot see another; in this case suppose doubts and temptations arise about the truth of this or that evidence, yet I may argue from that which is more known to that which is less known; I may proceed from those that are more easy to those that are more difficult: if I can but say, here is one evidence in truth or sincerity, I may assuredly gather all the rest are there, because of the harmony and connection of graces. (3.) As faith is the root of all other graces, and so in some sense more hidden than they are, as the root of the tree is more hidden in the earth, than the body of the branches, yet if we consider faith as an inward grace planted in our hearts, as well as any other sanctifying grace which springs therefrom; and as the condition of the covenant expressed directly in the conditional promises, all other graces being only brought in, as accompanying faith, and flowing from faith, faith shewing itself by them; in these respects there cannot be a more direct, certain, and infallible evidence than faith. This is so sure a way of trial, that the apostle himself directs us thereunto, *Prove yourselves whether ye be in the faith*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. If we would know ourselves to be such as are not *adokimoi*, to be 'disallowed or rejected,' there is no better way to know it than by our faith: a weak believer inquiring how he may know that he shall be saved, the apostle answers his doubt, not by ascending or descending hither or thither, but by looking to his faith, *for if thou believest with thine heart in the Lord Jesus, thou shalt be saved*, Rom. x. 9.

Object. 'But the especial act of faith is to look wholly out of our selves unto Christ, as if we had no grace within us: and the reason why some mistake evidences is, because Christ without us is no more looked upon.'

Ans.

Anfw. The ſoul of man hath two kinds of acts or workings; the former are direct acts, ſuch as go immediately to their object; as when by faith I take Chriſt, and adhere to him; the latter are reflex acts, which are only in reaſonable ſubjects, and this is when a man doth perceive or diſcern thoſe direct acts in him, as when I perceive that I do thus adhere to Chriſt: now our evidence, certainty or aſſurance is properly in this latter way, when we know that we believe, and therefore this aſſurance is called by ſome *ſenſus fidei*, 'the feeling or perceiving of faith.'

Object. 'But what is this reflex act but an human testimony, which is ſubject to falſhoods and deluſions? and how incongruous is that to witneſs the things of God?'

Anfw. An human testimony may be an introductory preparation to believe that which is divine. 2. The feeling of faith is efficiently from the Spirit of God, and ſo it is not a mere human ſenſe or diſcerning, but divine and inſallible, even as faith is; in this reſpect we fear no deluſion, for as the Spirit of God cannot externally witneſs any thing that is falſe, ſo neither can it inwardly in the ſoul of a man perſuade that which is falſe.

Object. 'How is it then that the ſaints are uſually ſo full of doubtings?'

Anfw. Because there is nothing in us perfect in this life; in all our honey there is ſome gall. Such an aſſurance as excludes all doubting is only proper to the glorified: not but that God is able to give us perfect grace, and perfect aſſurance, but he may do what he pleaſeth with his own, and accordingly he hath thought good in this life to exalt imputed righteouſneſs rather than inherent.

Object. 'To what purpose then is aſſurance by the ſenſe and evidence of imperfect grace? doth not this derogate from that relying act of faith, and from the promiſe of grace, as if they were not enough?'

Anfw. No, in no wiſe; we prefer faith

of dependance and adherence, and belief in the promiſe, as a more noble and excellent way; and yet the evidence of graces in us is not in vain; for it hath pleaſed God to multiply thoſe things which may confirm our faith. Thus, although every word of God hath immutable verity in it, yet he confirmed it alſo with an oath, after the manner of men, to end all thoſe controverſies, which diffidence and diſtruſt may raiſe between God and us, Heb. vi. 6. And although God hath given us his promiſe, and nothing can be ſurer than that, yet he addeth ſervants to ſeal and confirm his promiſe to us; ſo although we do well, chiefly to depend and rely immediately on Chriſt; yet there is great uſefulneſs of the reflex act of faith, and of all other evidences. For, (4.) We muſt eye the testimony of the Spirit, witneſſing with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God, Rom. viii. 16. As God hath ſet up a frame of holineſs in every believer, ſo he hath given unto us *the earneſt of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. v. 5. The graces of the Spirit are a real earneſt of the Spirit, yet they are not always an evidential earneſt, therefore an earneſt is often ſuperadded to our graces.

There is a threefold work of the Spirit.

1. To convey and plant grace in the ſoul.
2. To act and help us to exerciſe the graces which are planted there.
3. To ſhine upon and enlighten thoſe graces, or to give an earneſt of thoſe graces.

This laſt work the Spirit fulfilſ two ways. 1. By arguments and inferences, which is a mediate work. 2. By preſence and influence, which is an immediate work.

Theſe the apoſtle calls Witneſs-bearing, 1 John v. 8. the Spirit *brings in the witneſſes of the water, and of the blood*, which is his mediate work; but beſides and above theſe, he gives a diſtinct witneſs of his own, which is his immediate work, and is, in a way of peculiarity and tranſcendency, called, *The witneſs of the Spirit*:

rit : Concerning both, is that of the apostle : *We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God,* 1 Cor. ii. 12. The things freely given us, may be received by us, and yet the receipt of them not known to us ; therefore the Spirit, for our further consolation, doth, as it were, put his hand and seal to our receipts : whence he is said, *To seal us up unto the day of redemption,* Eph. iv. 30.

Quest. ‘ But how may a man discern between the testimony of the Spirit, and the illusion of Satan ? ’

Ans. I answer, There is ever an harmony and sweet accord between the inward and outward testimony, between the Spirit of God and the word of God, and therefore we may discern the testimony of the Spirit by the word. Thus in the old testament, all revelations were to be examined by the word, Deut. xiii. 1. Isaiah viii. 20. And in the new testament our Saviour tells us, *That the Spirit shall lead you into all truth,* John xvi. 13. How so ? *For he shall not speak of himself, but what he shall hear, that shall he speak :* And what is that which the Spirit heareth ? is it not that which is already contained in the scriptures ?

Object. ‘ Nay then (say some) the credit of the voice of the Spirit must depend upon the word, but this must not be allowed, that any thing should be of such credit as to give credit to the Spirit.’ (Dr. CRISP’S *Affurance of Faith.*)

Sol. I answer, Why not ? the scripture we know is already known and received as the word of God, and therefore what cometh after it, must needs borrow credit from it : indeed, the truth of what the Spirit speaketh doth not depend upon the word, yet the credit of it doth.

Object. ‘ But there is no more evidences (say they) save only the revealing evidence, the Spirit of Christ, and the receiving

evidence, which is faith ; the Spirit within thee saith, *Thy sin is forgiven thee,* and faith receiveth it, and sits down satisfied ; now here is thy evidence, if thou hast only these two, thou hast thy portion, thou needest no more. (Dr. CRISP’S *Affurance of Faith.*)

Sol. I answer, 1. In this way, what profane person is there in the world, who may not conclude for himself, if he will but force upon himself this persuasion, ‘ That the Spirit saith it, and I believe it ? ’

2. The revealing and receiving evidence, *i. e.* The word of the Spirit, and subscription of faith, do not lay the ground of perfect peace, except there come in also the evidence of inherent qualifications. For the better understanding of this, observe, That the evidence of the Spirit is either mediate, when it enables the soul to frame a syllogism, wherein the *Minor*, *sc.* the dictate of the conscience so far maketh to this evidence as our graces are witnessed to by the Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 12. Or immediate, which is indeed without any such discourse of our conscience, and wherein our spirit is merely passive or receptive ; it is an act of irradiation or impression of God’s love, or (as some call it) a transcript of the decree of God’s election set upon the conscience ; the scripture calls this especially, a seal of the Spirit, which imports the mere passiveness of the heart to it, as of the wax to the seal ; and this evidence is solitary, without reference to inherent graces ; yet howsoever it excludes them not, nor cometh in till that mediate evidence precede, Eph. i. 13. Hence I infer, the mediate testimony of the Spirit, that ordinarily concludes for *hic & ille*, ‘ for this or that man,’ doth not speak according to the word, but where a text of scripture hath a *quicumque* ‘ a whosoever’ for the proposition, and a work of the sanctifying Spirit for the assumption ; as thus, the scripture saith, *They that repent and believe, they that are led by the Spirit of God, are*
the

the sons of God, Mark i. 15. Rom. viii. 14. Hereupon the renewed and sanctified conscience saith, 'I do repent and believe, I am led by the Spirit: therefore I am the child of God.' Now this conclusion deduced, if afterwards the immediate testimony of the Spirit, manifested by a heavenly impression and irradiation upon the soul, comes in with his attestation to confirm it, we may not doubt either of this or the former testimony, because now they both speak according to the word and work of grace in the heart: the ground of all this is in the nature of this testimony of the Spirit, which is rather an attestation than a testimony; a secondary, not first deponent: is not this rightly concluded (so far as it implies the immediate testimony) from that of * Rom. viii. 16. *The Spirit witnesseth with our spirit?* where we have two witnesses joining together their testimonies to assert this truth, 'that we are the sons of God;' Two, I say, viz 'our spirit,' and the 'Spirit of God:' the witness of our spirit, *i. e.* of our renewed conscience, is the first; the Spirit of God is the second: his work is not *Marturein*, but *Summarturein*, *to witness together with our spirit;* *i. e.* To confirm and ratify what that hath asserted; so that indeed the evidencing of this testimony of the Spirit, is after the testimony of our own conscience; if this do not first speak and conclude, that other of the Spirit speaks not at all: now the testimony of the conscience is the conclusion of the practical syllogism, and the certainty of this conclusion depends upon the verity of the assumption which mentioneth the work of grace in the heart:

so then let it be the care of the christian, to make good the verity of the assumption, that he may truly say, 'I do repent, I do believe, I am led by the Spirit;' and this shall not only afford him comfort by the conclusion, but also (when the immediate testimony of the Spirit comes in with his attestation to confirm it) it will assure him, that he is not misled by the suggestion of Satan, but guided by the Spirit in this point of assurance: 'Surely (will he say) this is the Spirit of God, for now he speaks according to the word of God, and according to the work of his own grace within me.'

S E C T. III.

Of the keeping of Evidences.

IF in eying the promises, and graces, and truth of those graces written in our hearts, the Spirit shall come in, and shine upon our graces, either mediately by way of argument from sanctification, or more immediately by way of presence, then labour to keep our evidences clear and fair; maintain that which we have gotten, and keep it as the best treasure under heaven. Christians, we had need to preserve our evidences clear and bright, that they may be seen and read upon all occasions.

But how should we keep thus our evidences?

1. Hearken to the word, and hearken to the Spirit, and hearken to our own consciences. What say all these to our souls? *Ex. gr.* The word saith thus, *Whosoever loves the brethren, he is translated from death to life*, 1 John iii. 14. now doth thy conscience tell thee, that 'so do I, in truth and sincerity?' Then here is the word and

* I know some by our spirit, understand the gift of regeneration, and that God's Spirit, by or in that gift which he befloweth on us, witnesseth with and to our spirits. *q. d.* The Spirit of God beareth witness unto us, with these gifts and graces that are the fruit of the same Spirit; so that in this sense he speaks not immediately, but mediately by and with our spirits, being enlightened and sanctified. For my part I shall not contend against this exposition; and the rather, because I grant that the testimony which is by the effects and fruits of God's Spirit, is the ordinary, safe and sure way; yet as I dare not deny the immediate testimony, so neither dare I exclude it out of his text.

thy conscience for thee; and doth the Spirit come in, and witness with thy conscience that it is so indeed? then it is well with thy soul, thou keepest thy evidences to purpose.

2. Be daily renewing our faith in Christ, especially that act of faith, by which our souls knit, or tie themselves to Christ for salvation: cause your souls every day in solemn manner to act that part: put forth this primitive act of faith in our souls; the daily exercise of this will increase and strengthen the divine habit of faith in the soul, and make the soul sensible of every act of it. By frequent believing we shall feel at our very hearts-root that we do believe, and so *we shall have the witness in ourselves that we are in Christ*, 1 John v. 10. we shall knowingly carry in our hearts the counterpart of all the promises.

3. Perform all those duties and exercises of religion, which God hath ordained for this very purpose: As, 1. Reading the word, *These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full*, 1 John i. 4. 2. Hearing the word; for therefore is the ministry of Christ, *to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins*, Luke i. 77. 3. The sacraments; for they are *the seals of the righteousness of faith*, Rom. iv. 11. 4. Prayer: *Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full*, John xvi. 24. To this purpose is God's promise, *I will bring my people to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer*, Isa. lvi. 7.

4. Maintain holiness and purity of life. *The effect of righteousness is quietness, and assurance for ever*, Isa. xxxii. 17. and *to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God*, Psal. l. 23. The saints, while they keep their sincerity, enjoy assurance; for the Spirit of God, which is in them, *sheds abroad the love of God in their hearts, enabling them to cry,*

Abba father; and bear witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, Ro. viii. 15, 16. But when they fall into wilful transgressions, and grieve the Spirit of God, assurance is gone. This made David, after his foul sins to cry out so vehemently, *Make me to hear joy, and gladness. Restore me to the joy of thy salvation*. O take heed of spotting our evidences, of defiling our evidences by any sinful acts.

5. Take heed of yielding to any base doubts or fears, or objections of Satan and our own hearts; deny not the work of grace in us, lest we *grieve the Spirit of God*; if any shall yield so slavishly to the misgivings of their own hearts, or to the temptations of Satan, that they shall conclude against themselves, 'they have no faith, no love,' though all other Christians can see these in them, what dishonour is it to God, and to the Spirit of God? What, hath God written thy name in heaven? and wilt thou attempt to raze it out; and to write thy name on the doors of hell? fy upon these injurious, if not blasphemous thoughts. What shall a dark humour, a melancholy thought prevail on thy soul more than the word, and more than the testimony of thy own conscience enlightened by the Spirit? Take heed of this, as of a great pride in thy heart: what, to yield more to a sturdy, dark, unsubmitted humour, than to evidence itself? O take heed! O hearken not to what fear says, or to what humour says, or to what Satan says, or to what the world says; but hearken to what the truth itself says, and hearken to what conscience says, when it is enlightened by the Spirit, as in good times, when we are at the best; †Hearken to these, and so get our hearts and wills overpowered with the evidence, and yield and subject ourselves unto it.

6. Keep the graces of the Spirit in contin-

* Get alone, and question with thyself, bring thy heart to the bar of trial, force it to answer the interrogatories put

tinual exercise upon all occasions; habits are not felt immediately, but by the freeness and facility of their acts; the fire that lieth still in the flint, is neither seen nor felt; but when you smite it and force it into act, it is discerned. Many question their evidences, they know not whether they have repentance, or faith, or love, or joy; but if they were more in the acting of these, they would easily know. Christians, draw forth an object for godly sorrow, or faith, or love, or joy, and lay your hearts flat unto it, and take pains to provoke it unto suitable action. Sometimes grief for sin is in us, when we think there is none, it wants but stirring up by some quickening word; the like we may say of love, and of every grace: how can we doubt whether we love God in the very act of loving? or whether we believe in the very act of believing? If we be assured whether this sacred flame be kindled in our hearts, blow it up, get it into a flame, and then we shall know: believe, till we feel that we believe; and love, till we feel that we love; for grace exercised both brings and maintains certain comfort: It may be with a Christian in his feelings, as with the worst man living, but he may thank his own negligence, his own dulness, his not stirring up the graces of God's Spirit in him; O therefore it is, that he hangs the wing [is discouraged] upon every petty cross, upon every petty occasion: labour to have an heart ready to exercise grace suitable to every condition, for then grace will reflect sweetly, then we shall maintain and continue our comforts. The soul that is best furnished with grace, when it is not in action, is like a lute well stringed and tuned, which, while it lieth still, doth make no more music

than a common piece of wood; but when it is taken up, and handled by a skilful lutenist, the melody is most delightful.

S E C T. IV.

Of the improving of Evidences.

FOR improving of Evidences, we must endeavour to produce that fruit, that frame, that disposition of heart which the Lord requires, directs, and looks for in such a case; as, the admiring of God's unsearchable grace in Christ Jesus; a sober, moderate and self-denying use of our evidence-comforts; a fiducial pleading of all the precious promises of the gospel; a cheerful bearing of crosses; a holy contempt of creature-comforts; a bold approaching to the throne of grace upon all occasions; a valiant adventuring for Christ; longings for the appearing of the Lord Jesus; a confident contest with sin, a courageous resisting of temptations: I may add, humility, love to God, fear of offending, zealous labours to advance Christ in the power of grace, &c. all which are the fruits of legible evidences in true Christian hearts: and our evidences thus improved, then is the whole business christianly managed indeed. But of these in the next section.

S E C T. V.

Of the sanctification of Evidences, in their several uses.

THE sanctification of evidences is manifested (as we said) by several dispositions. To enlarge myself: No sooner is the soul settled in its scripture-persuasions, and Spirit-persuasions, that God hath translated it unto Christ, but immediately there follows,

I. A deep admiring of God's unsearchable grace in the Lord Jesus Christ: 'hath

put to it; set the conditions of the gospel, and qualifications of the saints on one side; and thy performance of those conditions, and the qualifications of thy soul on the other side, and then judge how near they resemble.
Author's Everlasting Rest,

the Lord assured me that I am his? O my soul, stand amazed at this endless, boundless love of the Lord; it is of his grace that ever I did bethink myself of the danger of my sinful course I was formerly in; it is of mere grace that the Lord Christ died for my sins, and rose again for my justification; it is of his special grace, that the Spirit of Christ should thus whisper to my spirit, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' O the bountifulness and love of God to man! O I am swallowed up in this depth! It is a mystery which may astonish angels, an orient pearl which out-shines all the sparkling jewels of the whole creation.' When the Jews heard of the proclamation of king Cyrus, by which they were set free from their long and tedious captivity, they were rapt with joy, they *were like to men that rather dreamed*, Psal. cxxvi. 1. than possessed the things that their souls longed after: how much more will assurance that we are set free from the perpetual bondage of sin, and restored to the everlasting freedom of righteousness and life, make us wonder at the infinite wisdom, and unspeakable goodness of our heavenly father? The saints considering the goodness of God towards man in his creation, brake forth into holy admiration, *Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?* Psal. viii. 4, 5. The prophet calling to mind long after, what God had done for his soul, cannot pass it over without fervent praise, *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?* Psal. cxvi. 12. How much more ought and will that man that is assured of God's favour and love towards him, for ever admire the mighty power, unspeakable goodness and rich mercy of God, who hath delivered him from the pit of hell, from the power of Satan, from the curse of the law, and from the waiting for of all the wicked devils and damned spirits, and withal, 'hath translated him into the kingdom of his dearest Son?' O needs must

his heart be inflamed with love, and enlarged in praises?

2. A sober, moderate and self-denying use of evidence-comforts; I speak not herein against the frequent actings of graces, or against the simply looking on them, or comforting ourselves in them, especially under sad hours; but against the excessive, overflowing, over-loving way of evidence-comforts, against the abuses thereof: which may be in these particulars; as, 1. When we pore more frequently upon the comforts of our own gracious actings than upon Jesus Christ and his death; when we live too much upon the sight of a new-created birth in ourselves, and the image of the second Adam, though indeed we have Christ himself to live on. 2. When we wonder so much at what is done in ourselves by the grace of Christ, that we begin to make a mixture of self therewith, 'and immediately we sit down and write of ourselves, an hundred instead of fifty.' 3. When we think graces and comforts so rooted in ourselves, that we neglect God and Christ for the upholding, encrease and exercise of them. 4. When we rest upon, and too much confide in the power of inherent grace, former revelations, and witnesses of God's Spirit, which are all but creatures, acts of God upon us, and in us; and therefore in doing thus, we make an idol of inherent grace, and put that trust in it, which we should repose in the Lord alone; and so, as the Lord speaketh, *We go a-whoring after our own heart*, Num. xv. 39. Now all these flow from the corruption of our nature, and not from the nature of assurance; the product of true evidences, is a praising of God for them, and a comforting ourselves in them, as in the fruit of his eternal and unchangeable love: *Our rejoicing is this, even the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world*, 1 Cor. i. 12. but not a making of them the only or chief grounds of our hope

hope and comforts, for God in this case may leave us to ourselves, *That no flesh should rejoice in his presence*, 1 Cor. i. 19.

3. A fiducial pleading of all the precious promises of the gospel: 'And hath the Lord indeed given me a kiss of his mouth, a sure sign of his love? Why then, O my soul, arise, and lay hold on all the promises, which God of his mercy in Christ doth offer in the gospel: be not dismayed by reason of thy unworthiness, for the promise is of grace freely offered, and freely given, to them that be most unworthy in their own eyes: thou art unworthy of the least crum of mercy, but of the riches of his grace God hath given thee the promises of highest advancement, if thou wilt but embrace them. *I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* 2 Cor. vi. 18. *And it shall be in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, that there they shall be called, The children of the living God,* Rom. ix. 26. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son,* Rev. xxi. 7. Surely, Lord, I will lay hold on these promises, I will yet draw nigher to thee, and put my trust in thy mercy; I will henceforth flee to the throne of grace, to get my title made surer and surer to my conscience. *O Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.*' Thus the soul pleads with God, and God is well-pleas'd with such pleadings; the soul is assur'd of salvation, and yet prayeth in the midst of assurance, 'Who am I, Lord, that thou shouldest make such ample and free promises unto thy poor servant? Of thy free mercy, and according to thine own heart hast thou spoken all these great things, to make thy servant know them;' and now, *O Lord God, establish, I beseech thee, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant,* 2 Sam. vii. 25.'

4. A cheerful bearing of crosses: hence Paul eyeing that object of assurance, that

weight of glory, he counts all his afflictions light and momentary, 2 Cor. iv. 17. he sung in the dungeon, and reckon'd it a special favour to be a sufferer for Christ; the fire of divine love so inflames Christians in this condition, that much water of persecution cannot quench it; yea, such is the nature of this fire, that it feeds on those waters, and grows more fervent by that which would quench it: no wonder; it is but a *light affliction, but it causeth unto us, a more excellent and eternal weight of glory*; and part of this glory, the Christian now receiveth afore-hand, as earnest of the whole: this makes him to rejoice (even in the midst of crosses and losses) with a joy unspeakable and glorious: and hence it is that a Christian despiseth the sufferings for the joys, yea, the sufferings are so overcome by the joys, that the sufferings do not turn his joys into sadness, but his assurance turns the sadness of his sufferings into joys, *for he rejoiceth in his sufferings*, Phil. ii. 17.

5. An holy contempt of creature comforts: this is another fruit of assurance, it will make a man endeavour to rid himself from such feculent matters here, to contemn them, to trample them under his feet, and out of the greatness and goodness of his spirit, ambitiously to long after the presence of the Lamb. Do I speak or write to the denizens of heaven? 'Tell me then, you that carry the evidences of heaven in your hands and hearts, is it not thus with you? Hath not God wrought your hearts to this frame and divine disposition?' if not, he will do it first or last; for citizens of heaven set not much by the best things on earth, when they are themselves, and act like their Saviour. It was a good speech of an emperor, whatsoever he himself was, 'You (said he) gaze on my purple robes, and golden crown, but did you know what cares are under them, you would not take them up from the ground for them;' but suppose there had been no cares, but plea-

sure in them, yet Moses when he had this assurance of faith, *He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward,* Heb. xi. 25, 26.

6. A bold approaching unto the throne of grace upon all occasions: because we are assured, therefore we beg any thing of God with greater assurance: 'Prayer is nothing else but the stream and river of faith, and an issue of the desire of that which we joyfully believe.' Our Saviour knew that *his sheep should never perish*, and yet he prayeth, *Holy Father, keep them in thy name*, John xvii. 28. and xix. 11. Paul knew assuredly, *that the Lord would deliver him from every evil work*, yet without ceasing he prayeth to be delivered from evil, 2 Tim. iv. 18. Assurance adds fervency to prayer; the firmer our faith, the more free is our access with boldness and confidence to the throne of grace, the more fervently and boldly can we pray, *Abba, Father*: assurance hearkeneth what the Lord speaketh, and speaketh back again in fervent groans and desires; it hath the promise of God, and therefore is bold to pray, and will not keep silence, 2 Sam. vii. 27. *Thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee*: nay, assurance puts on the soul to ask any thing it wants; these be the times when the Spirit moveth the waters, therefore, 'Now, faith assurance, cast in your petition, and whatsoever grief it hath in it, you shall be cured of it.' Now the king holds out his golden scepter, 'And therefore, faith assurance, let the queen come in boldly with her request, though it be for a kingdom;' yea, this king likes it best, if *first we seek a kingdom, and the*

righteousness inseparably annexed to it, for then we shall have all other things with it, Matth. vi. 33.

7. A valiant adventuring for Christ. Is a man assured of God's love in Christ? such a one fears not any troubles, he knows all comes thro' his Father's hands, and that man and devil cannot do what they would, and therefore he goes on comfortably 'to day, to morrow, and to the end;' he is like one of David's worthies, or like David himself, that having got experience, fears nothing; he walks up and down the world like a giant, higher by head and shoulders than most men, he holds in his hand a strong shield that the devil himself cannot pierce, but it *quencheth his fiery darts*: he gets a victory against the world by his faith, and, Samson-like, breaks all bands of temptation as straw, he *leaps over a wall, breaks a bow of steel, lays heaps upon heaps*.

8. An earnest longing for the *appearing of the Lord Jesus*: as he adventures and conquers in life, so he can think of death without any prevailing fear; he can say with Paul, *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 23. and with Stephen, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*, Acts vii. 59. and with the spouse in the Canticles, ch. viii. 14. *Come away, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of spices*. It is the voice of assurance, 'My life is hid with thee, O Christ, and therefore appear quickly, my life, my Jesus, that I may quickly appear with thee in glory; let the day of gladness quickly come, wherein both soul and body, even my whole self, may eternally enjoy thee: I cannot be still put off with these tastes and earnest, my love and longing is rather inflamed by them to the fruition of thee; The very voice of these earnest is, *Come*; yea, they scarce know any other language but *Come*; therefore again and again they say *Come*; yea after they have said *Come*, as if that were not enough,

enough, they say, *Come quickly*; and now, what can the soul say more to her Lord? only as before she still said, *Come*, so now will she still say, *Amen*; even so, *Amen and Amen*.

9. A loathing of sin, indignation for sin, contest with sin, and a continual watch against the baits and allurements of sin: how can it be conceived that a man should be assured of the pardon and forgiveness of many sins, but it will work a greater loathing and detestation of sin, unfeigned abatement for former weakness, and continual watchfulness, to keep himself pure for the future, that he lose not his comfort, nor dishonour God, who hath done so great things for him? It is Satan's cavil against the saints, that 'Assurance begets security:' assuredly, if it be true assurance, it will through Christ mortify our lust, and quicken us to more sincere, settled and constant obedience; nor is it possible that a Christian should hold his assurance any longer, than whiles he follows, cherishes, and feeds in himself this heavenly affection.

Object. But some may object, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves*, 1 John i. 8. *Who can say his heart is clean?* Prov. xx. 9. *There is no man just, that sinneth not*, Eccl. vii. 20. 'And how can these two stand together, sin and assurance?'

Sol. I answer, gross sins, grievous sins, are not compatible with the hope and assurance of a Christian, especially reigning sins committed with delight, or indulgence; and yet such sins, as we call infirmities, blemishes, remainders of original corruption, under which the regenerate must labour so long as they live: These are not altogether incompatible with assurance, nor do they hinder the lively workings of faith, in receiving the promises; it is good therefore to distinguish betwixt sins, which administer matter of humiliation, and such as may give occasion to the soul to question its regenerate estate: as 1. There are sins of simple ignorance, unavoidable in-

firmity, sins of forgetfulness, inconsideration, passion, pettishness, inordinate fear, whereto there is no advised consent, and these may stand with assurance. And 2. There are soul sins, enormous crimes (not to speak of sins wilfully committed with full consent, delight and contentment to the utter extinguishing of the Spirit of grace, which shall never beset them that are called according to the purpose of God:) and those sins hinder assurance, so that the sinner cannot for the present lay actual claim to any one privilege of grace formerly enjoyed: I deny not but he may still retain his right and title to eternal life, but he is in this condition suspended from actual claim, until he rise again by repentance, and so recover not a new right and title, but a new claim by virtue of the old title.

10. A courageous resisting of doubts, scruples, temptations; not but that doubts will come after assurance: we see the sun is one day bright, and the next day is covered: evidences may be lost, though interest be continued: yet assurance and evidences rightly improved and sanctified to us, may help us against all the shakings, and shiverings, and doubtings of the soul, and of their own nature they do resist them: hence the best cure and remedy of doubtings, is to perfect and strengthen our assurance; the more purely the fire burns, the less smoke it hath; when the light and heat of the sun are greatest, then the clouds and misty vapours are fewest: assurance and doubting are like a pair of scales, where the weight of the one bears away the other.

Quest. 1. 'But how should assurance be strengthened?'

Answer. 1. Go we to God, for God who gave it can strengthen it: every grace depends upon him, not only for birth, but also for complement; his strength must lead us on from strength to strength, and therefore if we would have strong assurance, we must go to a strong God, and beg of him for it; say, 'O Lord, my knowledge is dim; light-

ten that candle, open mine eyes yet more and more, that I may see thy truth; my affents many times shake, but do thou establish and confirm my heart in thy truths; my embracings, applications, are very trembling, and broken, and interrupted, but do thou guide my eye to look upon my Saviour, and do thou guide my hand to lay hold on him, do thou enable my will and affections to embrace all the goodness of thyself, of thy Christ, of thy word; my faith is but weak, but Lord, I would have more faith, even full assurance of faith, and thou canst work it, O do it for thy weak servant.'

2. Be in the way of strength: there are ways in which God doth reveal his arm, *i. e.* his ordinances; he that is too good for the ordinances, will ever be too weak in his faith. *One thing* (could David say) *have I desired of the Lord, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life*, Psalm xxvii. 4. and to what end? *that I may behold the beauty of the Lord, and enquire in his temple*: what this beauty is, he himself expounds, *We thought of thy loving kindness in the midst of thy temple*, Psalm xlvi. 9. The loving kindness of God, his mercy and countenance upon his own servants, that is the Lord's beauty, that is it which makes him amiable to his own people.

3. Let assurance know its privileges, and then it will grow stronger. *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. They who descended from the blood of Abraham had more privileges than others; and have not they greater who come of the blood of Christ? The priests of the law had singular exemptions; and kings, of all men are most highly privileged; and do believers come short, who are not prophane, civil, typical priests, but royal priests? who are

not priests only, nor kings only, but both kings and priests: *a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*. If we did once thoroughly know our privileges, the grants of favour, the free access, the singular acceptance we have with God in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, how might we keep down our fears, and our doubtings, and with fullest eagerness embrace our God, our Christ, our promises?

4. Observe, and call to mind our former experiences of God's favour and love: *I will remember* (saith David) *the years of the right hand of the most High*, Pf. lxxvii. 10. *i. e.* the years and times of my life, wherein I had sweet experiences of God's mercies and love: why, what of that? he tells you, *Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice*, Psalm lxiii. 7. But of this point in the last chapter.

Quest. 2. 'But what if after all these means used, no sun appears, our evidences are quite lost, God suspends all comforts.'

Ansiv. In such a case, we must endeavour to live above evidences, by working the soul to close with, and depend upon an absolute promise: to this purpose, it pleaseth the Father of mercies, sometimes to convince and persuade the soul, that he will supply what is wanting, heal backslidings freely, work both will and deed fully, whereby he sustains the soul in life, and raiseh it up as it were from the grave of despair and dismal distress. Thus David expected to receive his assurance, when he cried, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? — Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance*, Psalm xlii. 5, 12. And if at our first conversion, when we had nothing but the offer of free grace to look upon, we cast ourselves on God, why not now, when our assurances wholly fail?

§. VI. *The evidences of a weak unworthy Servant of Christ laid down according to the rules afore-mentioned.*

THE life of all we have said, is Practice: Hence I make bold to lay down the evidence of a poor creature, not worthy to be named, much less to have his name written in the book of life.—He

gives them thus:—Wherein howsoever he speaks in the first person, as intending them for his own use; yet he desires to correct himself therein as Paul did, *Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20. On every evidence he desires this to be written, and thus to be understood, *I live, yet not I*.

1. The Texts containing promises.

2. The graces to which promises are made; or my particular evidences.

3. The truth of these graces examined.

4. The Testimony of the Spirit:

After Acts of Faith first put forth upon Christ himself, and closing with him immediately, as if I had no present or by-past grace to evidence my being in him. I now bring in these graces or workings of the Spirit of Christ in me, as hand-maids to attend, and to witness to the truth of this adherence unto Christ, which I call my evidences.

See in the duty of Self-examination and receiving of the Lord's supper.

Which is either by arguments and inferences from the word and work of grace in the heart, or by presence and influence, manifested by an heavenly impression and irradiation upon my soul.

1. John iii. 5, 8.
- 1 Pet. i. 23.
2. John i. 11, 12.
- 2 Pet. i. 3, 4.
3. Gal. ii. 20.
4. Psa. cxix. 6, 7.
5. Psalm cxix. 5, 128.
6. 2 Cor. vii. 10.
7. Ezek. ix. 4, 6.
- Psa. cxix. 136.
- 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8.
8. Rom. x. 1.
9. John iv. 19.
- Psa. cxix. 165.
- 1 John iii. 10.
14. 1 John iv. 7.
10. Rom. vii. 23.
- Gal. v. 17.
11. Psa. xix. 12.
12. 1 John iii. 3.
- Rev. xv. 3.

1. My conversion from corruption to Christianity, the time whereof (I bless God) I remember.
2. My desire and endeavour to rely on the promises of Christ, both for this life and that to come.
3. My experience that I could act faith, and lay hold and rest upon the promises of God in divers cases and conditions.
4. The chief aim and bent of my heart, which for the main is God-ward and Christ-ward.
5. My respect to all God's commandments, desiring that I would give up myself wholly to God, to do all his will.
6. My renewed repentance for all my often failings, and sins committed against God.
7. My grief for the sins of the times and places where I lived.
8. My earnest desire and prayer to God for Israel, and for all I know, That they might be saved.
9. My love to God in Christ, to his word, services, saints, and all things that belong to him.
- 10 My sense and feeling of the fight and combat between the flesh and the Spirit.
11. My watch to strive against secret sin, or evil thoughts, which no eye sees, as well as against publick, notorious, scandalous sins.
12. My desire after Christ for his holiness, as happiness; taking him for my king and husband, as for my Jesus and Saviour.

1. The Texts containing promises.	2. The graces to which promises are made; or my particular evidences.	3. The truth of these graces.	4. The testimony of the Spirit:
13. Mt. x. 39. Mark x. 21. Luke ix. 23, 24.	13. My willingness to suffer shame and disgrace, and (if my heart deceive me not) persecution and death for Christ my Saviour.	See in the duty of Self-examination and receiving of the Lord's supper.	This is either by argument and inference from the word & work of grace in the heart, or by presence and influence of the Spirit, manifested by an heavenly impression and irradiation upon the soul, by a sweet motion & feeling of God's goodness, and mercy, and saving presence to me, without any reference to inherent graces.
14. Ps. lxxix. 15. Isaiah xii. 3. John xv. 11. Rom. xiv. 17. Gal. v. 22. 1 Pet. i. 8.	14. The unspeakable joy of God's Spirit, which sometimes I have felt in and after ordinances; and especially once, when for the space of two days I was carried away into an extasie and ravishment: This was when I began to see spiritual things, and upon which followed more desire and endeavours after grace.		
15. Mal. iv. 2. Eph. iv. 15. 2 Pet. iii. 18.	15. My sensible growth in the measures of God's sanctifying graces, as, in knowledge, and faith, and hope, and patient expectation of God's presence and assistance in all things to come.		
16. Ps. cxix. 67. Heb. xii. 7, 8. 11.	16. My patience under infirmities and afflictions, with an earnest desire that I may be bettered by my afflictions.		
17. Col. ii. 2. Heb. vii. 11. 19. Heb. x. 22. 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. v. 22. Rom. viii. 15, 16.	17. My assurance of faith, and of my spiritual safety, which is, 1. Both by the evidences of internal vision or reflection, for I know that I believe, as certainly as I know that I live: And 2. By application of the promises of the gospel. And 3. By the effects and fruits growing from the root of grace: And 4. By the testimony of God's Spirit, which sometimes (after prayer especially) hath suggested to my spirit that I am God's child.		
18. Ps. xxvii. 14. Psalm xl. 1.	18. A desire to wait upon God, if at any time he delay to hear prayers.		
19. Ps. xxviii. 6. Ps. lxxvi. 18, 19. Ps. cxvi. 1, 2.	19. The returns of my prayers which many a time God hath graciously made sensible and known to my soul.		
20. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Rev. xxii. 20.	20. My sincere and hearty longing for the time of restoring, and for the appearing of Christ, who is my chiefest treasure, and my All in All.		
21. Phi. i. 10, 11.	21. My conscience hath born witness with me, that my heart was sincere towards God.		
22. Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24.	22. I rest not in the approbation of men, unless I can approve my heart unto God.		
23. Rom. vii. 24. Rom. viii. 13. Gal. v. 17. Col. iii. 4, 5, 8, 9.	23. Besides these and the like, I may fetch (say some divines) as good, if not better evidences from mortification, in denying myself, in overcoming my passions, in crucifying my corruptions, as from any graces whatsoever.		
Tit. ii. 11, 12.	But, O my soul, rest not in these inward graces of the Spirit; now when all is done, begin again to act faith upon Christ immediately with a redoubled strength.		
	His evidences thus gathered in, the prime and especial work of the soul is the keeping and improving of evidences in their several uses. But of that before, Sect. 3, 4. And thus much of evidences.		

C H A P. VIII. S E C T. I.

Of the Nature and Kinds of MEDITATION.

Meditation ' is a deep and earnest musing upon some point of Christian instruction, to the strengthening us against the flesh, world and devil, and to the leading us forward toward the kingdom of heaven;' or, ' Meditation is a steadfast bending of the mind to some spiritual matter, discoursing of it with ourselves, till we bring the same to some profitable issue.'

Now this meditation is either *sudden*, or *set*; *occasional*, or *solemn*, and *deliberate*.

1. Sudden, occasional, or external meditation ariseth from such things as God, by his providence offers to our eyes, ears and senses. *When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained: What is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?* Psalm viii. 3, 4. This meditation of David's was occasional.

2. Deliberate, set, or solemn meditation ariseth out of our own hearts, when purposely we separate ourselves from all company, and go apart to perform this exercise more thoroughly, making choice of such matter, time and place as are most requisite thereunto. Now this meditation is double, for it is either conversant about matters of knowledge, for the finding out of some hidden truth, or about matters of affection, for the enkindling of our love unto God: The former of these two we leave to the schools and prophets; the latter we shall search after, which is both of large use, and such as no Christians can reject as unnecessary, or over-difficult.

§. 2. *The circumstantial of Meditation.*

THE circumstantial of our meditation, are Time and Place; I shall add

to these (though I cannot call it a circumstance) the Subject-matter, which by way of preparation to the duty, we may take notice of.

1. For the *Time*: no time can be prescribed to all men; for neither is God bound to hours, neither doth the contrary disposition of men agree in one choice of opportunities; some find their hearts most in frame in the morning; others learn wisdom of their reins in the night season; others find Isaac's time the fittest time, *who went out in the evening to meditate*, Gen. xxiv. 63. No practice of others can prescribe to us in this circumstance, it is enough that we set apart that time wherein we are aptest for that service.

2. For *Place*: we judge solitariness and solitary places fittest for meditation, especially for set and solitary meditation: thus we found Jesus meditating alone in the mount, John Baptist in the desert, David on his bed, Daniel in his house, Isaac in the field. ' The bridegroom of our soul, the Lord Jesus Christ is bashful, saith Bernard, and never comes to his meditating bride in the presence of a multitude: ' hence was the spouse's invitation, *Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field: let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves*, Cant. vii. 11, 12. We must in this case abandon worldly society, both outward and inward; many sequester themselves from the visible company of men, who yet carry a world within them: both these societies are enemies to this meditation.

3. For the matter of our meditation, it must

must be divine and spiritual; *viz.* God's word, or some part thereof: it is woful to think how some meditate on sin, contrary to God's word, studying to go to hell with the least noise in the world; others bend their thoughts only with the search of natural things; as, the motion of the heavens, the reason of the ebbing and flowing of the seas, the kinds of simples that grow out of the earth, and the creatures upon it, with all their qualities and operations; but in the mean while, the God that made them, the vileness of their nature, and the danger of their sin, the multitude of their imperfections, the Saviour that bought them, the heaven that he bought for them, &c. are as unregarded as if they were not. The matter of our meditation must be something divine; *I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee: I will meditate of all thy works, and talk of all thy doings*, Psal. lxxvii. 12.

§. 3. Of occasional Meditation.

Occasional meditation ariseth from such things as God in his providence offers to our eyes, ears, or senses. Examples of this sort are infinite: for a taste, take these few:

1. Upon our first awaking in the morning, meditate how the Lord can at the last day as easily raise up our dead bodies from the dust, as he hath now awaked us out of sleep; and, as now we rise from the grave our bed, so then we must arise from that bed our grave.

2. Upon sight of the morning-sky, meditate, 'That if one sun make so bright a morning, what a shining morning will that be, when Christ the *sun of righteousness* shall appear, attended with all his bright angels, archangels, cherubims, seraphims, bodies and souls of saints? When there shall be as many suns on a day, as there are stars on a bright winter's night.

3. Upon the occasions of the day, meditate, how the Lord seeth us, and under-

stands all our ways: *the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards him*, 2 Chro. xvi. 9. And therefore we should do all things as in the awful presence of God.

4. Upon our particular callings we may accordingly meditate; as

1. A magistrate, thus; 'As I judge others, so will the Lord judge me; it will not be long ere death arrest, and I must go without bail: methinks I hear that found in mine ears, Psal. lxxxii. 6. *I have said, ye are gods, but ye shall die like men.*'

2. A minister, thus; 'The time I have to spend is not mine, but the peoples; methinks while I idle it away, I hear them crying after me, *To your closet, and there pray for us that we perish not; study for us, that we may learn of you how to walk in his paths; for if we perish, and you will not give warning, then must our blood be required at your hands*, Ezek. iii. 18.

3. A tradesman, thus; 'What is that balance in my shop, but a *memento* of distributive and communicative justice? if my dealings be not just to a point or pin, I shall then be weighed in God's balance, and be found too light, Pro. xi. 1. *A false balance is an abomination to the Lord*, and so is a true balance without true dealing with all men.'

4. A husbandman, thus; 'As I sow in spring, so I reap in harvest; and God hath said, *He that soweth iniquity, shall reap vanity*, Prov. xxii. 8. *but they that sow in tears shall reap in joy*, Psal. cxxvi. 5. Lord, whiles I sow in tears, give me April showers of repentance, that when the harvest comes, and the angels must reap, they may gather me into thy barn in heaven.

5. A soldier, thus; 'What trade is this I follow? what devices are these I carry about to murder afar off? whose image do I bear in this killing disposition, but his, whose true title is, *The destroyer*?'

I had

I had need to look about me that I be in a righteous cause; I am sure, all the titles of God sound of mercy and gracious respects to man; God the Father is his Maker and Preserver, God the Son his Saviour and Redeemer, God the holy Ghost, his Sanctifier and Comforter: O Lord, that my enemies may be thy enemies, and my cause thy cause, or that I may leave this calling.'

5. Upon night approaching, meditate, *That seeing our days are determined, and the number of our months are with the Lord, and our bounds are appointed which we cannot pass*, Job xiv. 5. that one day more of our limited time is gone and past, and we are now nearer to our end by a day, than we were in the morning.'

6. Upon occasion of lights brought in, meditate, 'If the light of a poor candle be so comfortable, which is nothing but a little inflamed air gathered about a moistened snuff, what is the light of that glorious sun, the great lamp of heaven? but much more, what is the light of that infinitely resplendent sun of righteousness who gave that light to the sun, and that sun to the world?'

7. Upon the sight of a bright sky full of stars, meditate, 'How worthy a science it is to see and observe these goodly spangles of light above our heads, their places, qualities, motions? But the employment of a Christian is far more noble, heaven is open unto him, and he can look beyond the veil, and see farther above those stars than it is thither, and there discern those glories, that may answer to so rich a pavement: I see indeed those glittering glorious stars with my bodily eyes; but I see withal, by the eyes of my faith, that this is but the floor of that goodly fabrick, the outward curtain of that glorious tabernacle: I see within that incomprehensible light, which none can see, and not be blessed: how many are these stars before mine eyes! but Oh! what millions of pure and

majestical angels? what millions of happy and glorified souls? how many mansions of my Father (one of them being my own) do I see by faith? Come down, no more, my soul, after thou hast once pitched upon this heavenly glory; or, if this flesh force thy descent, be unquiet till thou art let loose to immortality.'

Thus from our up-rising to our down-lying, we may upon every object presented to our senses, frame a sudden or occasional meditation.

§. 4. *Of deliberate meditation, and the parts thereof.*

Deliberate meditations arise, and are wrought out of our own hearts: now every such meditation consists of these parts, *viz.* the Entrance, the Proceedings, and the Conclusion.

I. The entrance is either Common, or Proper.

1. The common entrance is some short, yet pithy prayer, that God may guide and direct us therein, by the gracious assistance of his holy Spirit.

2. The proper and particular entrance, is the choice of some theme or matter, and settling ourselves on that which we have chosen.

II. The proceedings of our meditation are in this method. (1.) To begin in the understanding. (2.) To end in the affections.

1. Concerning that part which is in the understanding; it is good to keep that course which the common places of natural and artificial reason do lead us unto; as, to consider the matter of our meditation, 1. In its description. 2. In its distribution. 3. In its causes. 4. In its effects. 5. In its Ubi. 6. In its properties. 7. In its opposites. 8. In its comparates. 9. In its scriptural testimonies. Only, in these heads, observe these cautions.

(1.) That we be not too curious in prosecution of these logical places; the end of this

this duty is not to practise logic, but to exercise religion, and to kindle piety and devotion. Besides, every theme will not afford all these places; as, when we meditate of God, there is no room for causes or comparisons; it will therefore be sufficient if we take the most pregnant and voluntary places.

(2.) That if we stick in the disposition of any of these places (as of meditating of sin, we cannot readily meet with material and formal causes) we rack not our minds too much with the inquiry thereof, but quietly pass over to the next.

2. Concerning that part which is in the affection, it is good to follow that course which the common places of rhetoric do lead us unto: these are six, *viz.* 1. A relish of what we have meditated on. 2. A complaint bewailing our wants of this relish. 3. A wish of the soul for what it complaineth to want. 4. A confession of our inability to effect what we wish. 5. A petition for the supply of our inability. 6. A confidence of obtaining what we petition for.

III. The conclusion of the work contains these parts: 1. A thanksgiving. 2. A recommendation of our souls and ways to God.

I shall add no more, but only wish the soul, thus concluding, to lift up the heart and voice to God, in singing a Psalm answerable to its disposition, and matter meditated on; and by this means shall the soul close up itself with much sweetness and spiritual contentment.

§. 5. *An example of the Soul's love to Christ.*

After entrance by prayer, and choice of this theme, the soul may proceed thus:

I. *Description.* O my soul, what is this soul's love to Christ, whereof thou studiest? 'It is a spiritual fire kindled from above in the hearts of his darlings, towards

their bridegroom the Lord Jesus Christ.' 'Or, it is a sparkle of that fire of the holy Ghost, struck into the tinder of our souls, which immediately smokes, and sends up the flame thitherward, whence it first had its rise.' Or, 'it is the soul's rest or reposal of itself in the bosom of Christ, with content unspeakable and glorious, being persuaded of her interest in that song of the spouse, *I am my well-beloved's, and my well-beloved is mine,* Cant. vi. 3.' This, O my soul, is the nature of thy love to Christ.

II. *Distribution.* There is a twofold love, one of Desire, which is an earnest longing after that which we believe would do us much good, if we could attain to it; another of Complacency, when, having attained that which we desire, we hugg and embrace it, and solace ourselves in the fruition of it: Now the first of these loves is an introduction to the second, and both of them (in relation to Christ) issue from a proportionable act of faith precedent. 1. That affectionate longing, and thirsty love, wherewith we pant and gasp after Christ, proceeds from the first acts of faith, whereby we assent to all gospel-promises, as true and good in themselves, and better unto us than any thing in the world, could we but once be assured that they belong unto us. That other love of complacency, when with the Psalmist, *we return unto our rest, because the Lord hath dealt bountifully with us,* Psalm cxvi. 7. when sweetly we repose ourselves in the lap of our Saviour with content unspeakable, and full of glory, it proceeds from the last act of faith, whereby we are actually persuaded by those welcome whispers of the Spirit of adoption, that certainly Christ is our Saviour, and that our debts are cancelled to the very last mite; only observe, O my soul! these two things of this love. 1. That 'tis subject to all variations or changes, ebbs and flowings of that persuasion; sometimes in a violent temptation, or in a sensible desertion, our persuasion fails, and so this

love

love of complacency is either stupified, or it falls back into that thirsty anxious love of desire. 2. That this love of complacency admits of degrees, proportionable to the degrees of our persuasion; if that be clear and strong, this love is more chearful and pleasant; if that be weak and obscure, this love is more cold, with many fears and jealousies; whence this love of complacency may not unfitly be subdivided into an ordinary, and heroical love; ordinary love proceeds from a weak degree of that last act of faith; heroical love springeth from a more eminent and transcendent pitch of persuasion, concerning our own reconciliation in particular: it is called ordinary, because most Christians, though effectually called, do ordinarily feel but such a timorous love in themselves; it is called heroical, because it is constantly only in such, as either, besides the evidence of the word and Spirit, have had some special revelation to put them out of all doubt, concerning their estate to God-ward; or in such as by a certain close walking with God, have been long exercised in a Christian course, have often entertained Christ Jesus at supper in their hearts, and habituated themselves unto a more familiar acquaintance with that holy Spirit, which brings all the good news from heaven, to those diligent souls which carefully wait for it.

III. *Causes.* But whence is this love, O my soul? The apostle is plain, *We love him, because he first loved us,* 1 John iv. 13. When the Spirit of God in the promises lets in some intimation of God's love into the soul, then she loves him again: that expression of the Psalmist, *The Lord will command his loving kindness in the day-time,* Psalm xlii. 8. is pertinent to this; it is a phrase taken from kings and princes, and great commanders in the field, whose words of command stand for laws; so the Lord sends out his loving kindness, saying, 'Go out, my everlasting love and

kindness, take a commission from me, go to that humble, thirsty soul; go and prosper, and prevail, and settle my love effectually upon him; I command thee to do it.' It may be at the first visit, the poor soul cries out, 'What, I love? What, I mercy? will Christ Jesus accept of me? Oh, I am the worst of sinners; could I pray, or perform duties as some others do, I might have some hopes of mercy; but what? is it possible that the Lord of heaven should love me?' 'Yes, thee, even thee, saith the Lord: go out my loving kindness to that poor soul, break open the doors of that weary, weltring heart, knock off those bolts of carnal reason, and all base arguments, and clear and warm that broken, bruised, humbled soul, and tell him from me, that his sins are pardoned, his sighs and prayers are heard, and he shall be saved; I charge thee to do the work before thou comest in again.' Here, O my soul, is the immediate cause, God's love thus affecting the heart, it breeds a love in the heart to God again: *I drew them,* saith God, *with the cords of a man, even with the bands of love,* Hos. xi. 4.

IV. *Effects.* And what are the effects, O my soul! of this love? O this love hath many holy gracious effects, it will make the soul to rejoice in Christ's presence, to grieve in his absence, to please Christ in all things, to desire union with Christ, tho' it never see a good day, though it have no other wages; to bestow readily and freely any thing it hath on the Lord Jesus Christ; to deny itself, or any thing that may come in competition with Christ, to part with her Isaac's, her dearest things, *to count all things as dung and loss, that she may win Christ,* Phil. iii. 8. to be content with nothing, but love again from the party beloved, to be ever and anon thinking and musing on the Lord Jesus Christ, to be ordinarily and frequently speaking of Christ. Love is full of eloquence in the praises of her beloved, so is the soul's love to the Lord Jesus Christ. O

how that spouse of Christ runs on in a description of his rarities and transcendencies, *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand* (or, as it is more elegantly in the original, *He is an ensign-bearer among ten thousand*) *He is altogether lovely, or he is all entire, he is all composed of loves?* Betwixt those verses [10. and 16.] there's a description of Christ, so stuffed [so filled up] with choicest delicacies of expression, that thou canst not match it, O my soul! out of any of those poets which have flown highest in amorous inventions; at last she concludes with a triumphant epiphonema, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem*, Cant. v. 10. 16. Nay love will make the soul not only speak but do any thing for the Lord Jesus Christ: O then she cries, 'How may I please Christ better? what duty must I do? and what sins must I avoid? if there be any of the bed-chamber of the bridegroom, tell me I beseech you, how may I hear, and pray and walk, and approve my heart to my Christ and king, that nothing may displease him.' Lastly, love will make the soul suffer for Christ, and to *rejoice in such sufferings*, Acts v. 41. *It is a fire that much water of persecution cannot quench*; nay it feeds on those waters, and grows hotter by them: as opposition riseth against it, so it riseth against opposition, yea, it riseth

by it, until it rise above it.

V. *Opposites*. Now what are the contraries to this love of Christ, but an hatred of Christ? One would wonder there should be such a thing in the world, as hatred of Christ: but why then should the apostle threaten, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha?* 2 Cor. xvi. 22. *i. e.* If any man hate Christ, let him be accursed with all manner of execrations or curses in the most desperate manner, expecting *due vengeance from the Lord, when he cometh with his holy millions, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly*, Jude 14, 15. No question there is a world of wicked men, that are under this curse; I speak not of poor Indians *, and other savages of the unchristian world, whose souls are overclouded with the blackest mists of irreligion, that the prince of darkness can possibly inwrap them in, who come into the world, not knowing wherefore, and go out of the world, not knowing whither *: an heavy case, which cannot be sufficiently bewailed with an ocean of tears and blood; but of those that live within the paradise of the christian church, that have nothing to distinguish them from those Indian miscreants, but an outward conformity, outward formalities, the charity of other men, and their own slight imaginations: as, 1. All open enemies, gross, hainous and grie-

* Since our Author's days many nations of the Indians have been converted to the Christian religion: So that the case (thanks be to God) is altered; and we can now indulge ourselves in charitable hopes concerning many of them, instead of giving way to harsh and gloomy fears about their state in another world. It must be acknowledged, however, that there are still many parts of the world sitting in darkness and in the region and shadow of death: But what is our duty in this occasion? What ought the thoughts of their misery to lead us unto? Surely not to rejoice in their misfortunes, but, out of hearty pity, to pray our gracious God to send forth the light of the glorious gospel among them; to dispel their ignorance, reform their corrupt lives, and save them at last; and to be thankful to our God, for the gospel of Christ, (so full of blessings) which we ourselves enjoy in so great purity and plenty.

O BRITAIN, praise thy mighty God,
And make his honours known abroad;
He bid the ocean round thee flow:
Not bars of brass could guard thee so.
—But he hath nobler works and ways
To call the BRITONS to his praise.

To all the isles his laws are shown;
His gospel through the nation known;
He hath not thus reveal'd his word
To every land: Praise ye the Lord.

WATTS.

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vous sinners, swearers, blasphemers, drunkards, railers against God, his ministers, his people, these and the like love sin more than Christ, they love the devil more than Christ. 2. All fawning hypocrites, that profess, it may be, a marvellous affectionate love unto the Lord Jesus Christ, but they are inward haters of Christ.

VI. *Comparison.* But to inflame thy love, O my soul, upon Christ, consider whereunto it is like, or to what it may be compared; the scripture hath described the out-goings of such a soul, 1. By the parched ground: *My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is,* Psalm lxi. 1. 2. By the pantings of a chafed hart; *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God,* Psalm xlii. 1, 2. 3. By the longings of a teeming woman; *I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord, and thy law is my delight,* Psalm cxix. 174. 4. By the fainting and swooning of one that is in good earnest sick of love; *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love,* Cant. v. 8. Such souls are commonly cast into an agony, into pangs of love, that love Christ indeed.

VII. *Testimony.* And doth not the scripture express the loves of the soul to the Lord Jesus? *If God be your Father, said Christ to the Jews, then will ye love me.* Joh. viii. 42. And *Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee; and, we will remember thy love more than wine; the upright love thee,* Cant. i. 3, 4. *We love him,* saith the apostle, *because he loved us first,* 1 John iv. 19. *I will love thee,* saith David, *O Lord my strength,* Psal. xviii. 1. *I will cause those that love me,* saith Wisdom, *to inherit substance,* Prov. viii. 21. *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and I will manifest myself unto him.* John xiv.

21. *Look upon me,* saith David, *and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name,* Psalm cxix. 132.

Thus for information of judgment, now for the stirring up, O my soul! of thy affections.

I. *Relish.* O divine love! O the pleasures, O the joys of this love! O honey and sweetness itself! it is the love of Christ that sets a price on all other duties; the least service (even a cup of cold water, or a widow's mite) if it have but a grain of this love in it, is a most acceptable sacrifice to God; it is love to Christ that hath the promises of this life and that which is to come: *I will cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures,* Prov. viii. 21. *Yea, there is a crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him,* Jam. i. 12. It is love to Christ, that by Christ assures to us all the glorious privileges, flowing from Christ, as reconciliation, adoption, forgiveness of sins, justification, righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, redemption, possession of all things. *All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's,* 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. O who can think of this love of Christ, and not be ravished therewith! had I a thousand hearts to bestow on Christ, they were all too little, they were never able to love him sufficiently; it is the Lord Jesus that is all strength, and all wisdom, and all honour, and all beauty; the fountain of all graces, and virtues, and qualities in men: whatsoever grace, or virtue, or quality is in us, they are but so many rays that come from this *Sun of righteousness; he is fairer than the children of men, and grace eminently is poured into his lips,* Pl. xlv. 2.

II. *Complaint.* But alas! where is my soul? how dull is my understanding? how dead my affections? how careless, how peevish is my soul, in a business which concerns it so much? how prejudicate is my opinion?

how

how vain are my conceits? O my soul! how ignorant art thou of the incomparable worth, and delightful sweetness that is in the Lord Jesus? how secure and sleepy, and senseless art thou? O this hard heart of mine! thou canst mourn for losses and crosses of this life, but for the loss of Christ, thou canst not mourn one jot: didst thou, O my soul, truly affect Christ, the pillow would be washed with thy tears for thy want of Christ, and for thy want of assurance: wo, and alas, that my mind is taken up with a confluence of worldly lusts, worldly cares, and worldly desires! O it is this that quencheth the conjugal love of my soul to her bridegroom; my loves are now become very adulterous loves: wo and alas, that *I have loved the world, and the things that are in the world*, 1 John ii. 15. that I have followed my base lusts, and adulteries, and abominations; that instead of loving Christ, I have loathed him, and whipt him, and scourged him, and crucified him, and preferred the vilest lust (any sin whatsoever) before the Lord Jesus. And now I am musing of this love of Christ, alas, I feel it not, or if I feel a little, little love of desire, yet I have no sense, no taste, no relish of that love of complacency; there is no such fire, no flames in my breast towards the Lord Jesus.

III. *Wishing.* And yet, O that I could love the Lord Jesus! O that he had my heart? O that now I could bid adieu to all other lovers! O that the Father of love, and the Spirit of love would strike one spark of love from the promise, to kindle it in the heart of this poor creature! O that I felt a dilatation of my desires after Christ! that God would stretch them, and widen them to the utmost, that I might love Christ with all my heart, soul and might! O that I were even sick of love! O that I were cast into the melting pangs of a divine Christian love! O my soul, consider the want of Christ, and the worth of Christ! O consider the benefits of Christ's death,

the sweetness of Christ's promises, the pleasantness of his commands, the preciousness of his graces, and above all, the infiniteness of his love, and thou canst not but love him! consider that soul ravishing text, *God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus*, Eph. ii. 4. &c. and thou canst not but cry out with the ardency of affection, with the strength, the zeal of love, O! *To him, unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father, To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.* Rev. i. 5, 6.

IV. *Confession.* O my soul, these are sweet motives: but alas, how dull is thy understanding, how dead thy affections? I clearly see there is no strength at all in thee. O how cold, and weak, and faint, and heartless are these thy wishes! O Christ! I would love thee, but I cannot; I find no ability in myself to love thee; I am no more able to love thee, than cold water is able to heat itself. O where be those scalding [those ardent] affections to Christ Jesus, which holy men have felt in all ages, and striven to express in their soliloquies? O where is this holy, constant, conjugal love? O where are those swellings, and throwings, and wrellings which others have felt in their bowels? O where be those holy fits, those pangs of love, those love-trances, those seraphical flames of conjugal affection, which made the spouse cry out, *I am sick of love?* Cant. ii. 5. Alas, I feel a distemper in my affections; I find it not so easie to love Christ, as many men think; surely it is a very hard and difficult thing to love the Lord Jesus.

V. *Petition.* Come then, blessed Lord, and

and shew thy own self to me, *I beseech thee if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me the way that I may know thee; I beseech thee shew me thy glory*, Exod. xxxiii.

13. 18. *Give me the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ*, Eph. i.

17. Let me see thy beauties and glorious excellencies, and by this means blow my love into a pure flame, yea advance it to a degree of angelical sublimity. Surely, Lord, I cannot love what I see not, and therefore anoint mine eyes with thy eye-salve, that I may see thy loveliness, and love thee with my best loves: O kindle, inflame, and enlarge my love that it may rest largely in thee; enlarge the crany which the Spirit hath bored through the flesh into my spirit that I may largely see thee, and so largely love thee; enlarge the arteries and conduits-pipes, by which thou the Head and Fountain of love flowest into thy members, that, being abundantly quickened and watered with the Spirit of love, I may abundantly love thee; and do not only come much, but come often into me, and let my spirit often be one spirit with thee, in communicative and fruitive unions; for such often unions with thy Spirit, will make my spirit more spiritual, and the more spiritual she is, the more will she love thee, the God of all spirits. Blessed Lord, wilt thou love the image, and shall not the image much more love the pattern? *O that I were sick of love!* that my understanding, will and affections were all overflown, overcome and amazed, that my faintings were inflamed towards thee, and even melted into thee! O sweet Jesus, touch my soul with thy Spirit, that virtue may go out of thee into me, and draw me unto thee; let the favour of thy ointments, whose very breath is love, be ever in my nostrils: 'Give me flaggons of the new wine of the kingdom,' which may lift up my soul above my self in my loves; give me to forget the low and base loves of this world, and by an heavenly excess, transport me into an heavenly

love, that I may embrace Christ who is the Lord from heaven with a love like himself: O give me to believe; for faith and love grow together, and the stronger my faith, the greater will be my love.

VI. *Confidence*. And this (sweet Jesus) I am fully persuaded thou wilt do; *I believe, Lord, help my unbelief*; surely thou art God, who canst not lie, and thou hast promised, that the *upright shall love thee*, Cant. i. 4. O how should I but believe thee? and now thou hast in some sweet measure convinced me, now thou beginnest to warm my heart, and to cast me into a love-trance; now that my spirits are somewhat raised, my heart in some sort enlarged, my mind in some measure fixed upon thee; I make bold, Lord, to conclude with this spiritual *Epithalamium*, *Blessed Lord*, I am thine, only thine, ever thine, all that I am is at thy command, and all that I have is at thy disposing; be pleased to command both it and me; I know whatsoever I adventure or lose for thy sake, I shall receive with infinite advantage in thy blessed self. I dare trust my Lord with the best thing that ever he gave me, my precious soul. O my bleeding heart and broken spirit doth languish, in a thirsty love, panting and gasping after thee, my blessed Saviour: O let me taste how gracious thou art, by some real experiments in my own heart, smile upon me from heaven, answer me with some assuring whispers of the Spirit of adoption; *Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth, for thy love is better than wine*, Cant. i. 2. O let me bathe my soul in the delicious intimacies of a spiritual communion with thee my God, that I may for ever adhere unto thee with a sincere constancy, and rest in thee with a love of complacency: for I feel, I find my soul cast into a longing sweat for thee, and nothing can satisfy the importunate longing of my perplexed soul, but thy own self; for thou art my Lord, my love, my life; and thou art altogether lovely; O my dear Jesus!

O my

O my dearest husband! O these holy fits!
O these sweet pangs of love grow upon me
apace! Upon a sudden, my king, my Saviour,
I am even sick of love!

Conclusion. And now, O my soul, return
unto thy rest, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee, Psal. cxvi. 7. The reason of thy love is Christ's love; *Thou lovest him because he first loved thee.* Is it thus, O my soul? hath the Lord Christ indeed discovered his will, to take thee for his spouse? What, he that is so holy, to marry such an impure wretch as thou art? O how should this but melt thee into a flame of love? What stirrings of love shouldst thou now feel in thy bowels? How shouldst thou now value him, and prize him, and praise him? How shouldst thou *glory now sing praises to him, and not be silent?* How shouldst thou admire and wonder, that thou couldst endure to be without Christ so long? that thou couldst so slightly think of Christ heretofore? O my soul, henceforth cling to thy Saviour, go out of thyself, and creep to him, and affect not only union, but very unity with him; bathe thyself hereafter again and again, many and many a time in those delicious intimacies of thy spiritual marriage: and to that purpose, O my soul, if sometimes thy love to thy Saviour shall cool, 'O then sweet Saviour, look upon me in mercy; one look of thine will awaken my love, and make me weep bitterly, that I have loved thee so little, whom to love sufficiently, my best and mightiest loves are most insufficient: prevent my seeking with thy seeking, be thou present with me in thy providence and power, when thou seemest to be far from me, in the taste of thy sweetness and fruition of thy loves; and then when I have regained thee, I will hold more hardly, and keep more fastly, and love thee more vehemently, by thy power assisting: and provide a stock of loves in the summer, against winter, if it return any more; come, Lord Jesus, and

be as the roe on the mountains: my life is hid with thee, O appear quickly, that I may quickly appear with thee in glory, and in the happiness of a consummate marriage: even so come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen, Amen. Rev. xii. 20. Psalm xviii. to ver. 7.'

§. 6. *Another Example; Of Eternity.*

AFTER entrance by prayer and choice of this theme, the soul may proceed thus:

I. *Description.* O my soul, what is this eternity whereof thou studieth? 'It is the intire and perfect possession of a life (together and at once) that never shall have end; The description may be imperfect; and no wonder: for how can that be defined, which hath no bounds or limits? whatsoever is said of eternity, comes infinitely short of it; no words can utter it, no figures number it, no time can measure it. Eternity is of this nature, that, take from it what you will, it is still the same; it is neither increased by addition, nor diminished by subtraction. What is eternity? 'It is a circle running back into itself, whose center is always, and circumference without all end.' What is eternity? 'It is a duration always present, it is one perpetual day which is not divided into that which is past, and that which is to come.' What is eternity? 'It is an age of ages, never expiring, but always like itself, without all change.' What is eternity? 'It is a beginning without beginning, middle or ending, always beginning.' And this, O my soul, is Eternity.

II. *Distribution.* There is a two-fold eternity, an eternity of wo, and an eternity of joy. I. Of wo: O wo that never shall have end! *The worm shall not die, the fire shall not be quenched,* Isa. lxvi. 24. After a thousand thousand millions of years, there are still as many more to come, and when those many more are come and gone, the woes are yet as far from the last as they

they were at the first : it is now above four thousand years since Esau, who hated Jacob, was cast into this pit of woes, and yet the number of his years of torments are as many as at the first day of his torment.

2. Of joy : O joy *above all the joys in heaven* ! Isa. ix. 3. they are the joys of heaven † : there joys the understanding, by a perfect knowledge of God, [the best and most perfect being] and by the [infinitely transporting, and transforming] vision of God ; there joys the memory, by a perfect remembrance of all things past, [especially, of all good thoughts, words, and deeds ; which must needs afford unspeakable delight to the reflecting soul, in the future world, since we know that the remembrance of any good thought, word, or deed affordeth such a vast pleasure even in this life ;] there joys the will, by enjoying all manner of good without fear of evil. In this joy there is no corruption, no defect, ‡ no old age, but solemn glory, and continual solemnity ; there is an everlasting spring, there is always the flower, and grace of youth and perfect health : *With thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light shall we see light*, Psal. xxxvi. 9. [There, perfect happiness endureth for ever : for heaven, as it is an *exceeding*, so it is an *eternal weight of glory*. And this is that which crowns the joys of heaven, and banisheth all fears and trouble from the minds of the blessed.]

III. *Causes*. Whence are these two eternities, O my soul, but from Him that is only eternal ?

1. Eternal wo is from him, *For he hath prepared Topbet of old*, Isa. xxx. 33. God

is the efficient, but sin the meritorious cause of this wo, *The wages of sin is death*, Rom. vi. 23.

2. Eternal joy is from him : the Father bestows it, the Son merits it, the holy Ghost seals and applies it : God hath given thee a Saviour, O my soul, to give this eternal joy to thee, and God hath given thee faith whereby thou mayest attain to this Saviour ; and God hath given thee his word, whereby thou mayest attain to this faith : look up, therefore, to him as the beginner and finisher of this eternity, and whilst thou magnifiest the author, be ravished with the glory of the work ; there is nothing that is good that is not comprehended herein ; *In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore*, Psal. xvi. 11.

IV. *Effects*. What are the effects, O my soul, of this eternity ?

1. Of eternity in hell, these amongst others ; ‘ heavy, heavy, most sad and heavy thoughts,’ when the damned shall consider their doom, *Go ye into everlasting fire*, then shall they cast their deep thoughts on time past, and eternity to come.

1. For the time past, they shall remember, ‘ That sometimes they lived, at least some of them, in a glorious Goshen, enlightened with the fairest noon-tide of the gospel that ever the sun saw, and that they heard many a powerful sermon, any one passage whereof, had they not suffered fatan to blindfold and baffle them, might have been unto them the beginning of the new birth ; that many times they were told of this danger by God’s faithful ministers ; that they had many calls and of-

† The chief ingredients of the happiness of heaven, so far as the scripture hath thought fit to reveal it to us, are the perfection of our knowledge, and the height of our love, and the perpetual society and friendship of all the blessed inhabitants of those glorious mansions ; and the joyful concurrence of all these in cheerful expressions of gratitude, in the incessant praises and admiration of the fountain and author of all this happiness.— And if there were no other, as there may be ten thousand more for any thing I can tell, yet generous and virtuous minds will easily understand how great a pleasure there is in the improvement of our knowledge, and the exercise of love ; and in a grateful and perpetual acknowledgment of the greatest benefits.

‡ In the felicities of heaven these two things shall be reconciled which never met together in any sensual or worldly delight, long and full enjoyment, and yet a fresh and perpetual pleasure.

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fers of falvation, and the Spirit of God many a time cried behind them, *This is the way, walk in it*; that sometimes they were half perfuaded to be Chriftians, and they were near falvation, and they had a golden opportunity for it; but alas! they revolted again, and perferred their lufts, and paffed by thefe offers and opportunities with an inexpiable neglect, and horrible ingratitude, and now they ly drowned and damned in that lake of fire and brimftone, which they might have fo eafily and fo often efcaped.' O what a ftrick will this caufe in hell? whiles at every of thefe confiderations the worm of confcience fhall give them a deadly bite, even to the heart? That the memory of things here on earth, remains ftill with all fpirits in the world of hell, is manifef, *Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedft thy good things, and Lazarus evil; now therefore he is comforted, and thou art tormented*, faid Abraham to that rich man in hell, Luke xvi. 25.

2. For eternity to come, they fhall confider, 'that this eternity is another hell in hell'; might they endure thofe horrible pains, and extreme horrors no more millions of years, than there are creatures both in heaven and earth, they would comfort themfelves with this thought, My mifery will at laft have an end; but this word eternity, it rents their very hearts in pieces, it rents their very throats with hideous roarings, it gives a new life to their unfufferable forrows. O my foul, doft thou not tremble at this confideration? Imagine thou heareft Judas roaring in hell's flames, 'I have now fuffered above one thoufand fix hundred years, fince I betrayed Chrift, and through the extremity of torment, I have thought thefe one thoufand fix hundred, to have been a thoufand thoufand thoufand thoufand years: O when will be an end of thefe fufferings?' When? Couldft thou tell *ftellas cœli, ftillas roris, undas aquae flumi-*

nis, &c. i. e. 'All the ftars of heaven, ftills of dew, drops of rain, fleeces of fnow, flowers of the fpring, colours of flowers, fruits of the earth, grains of corn, leaves of trees, beafts of the field, motes of the fun flying in the air, hairs on thy head, fand on the fea-fhore, piles of grafs growing on the earth; and fhouldft thou add to thefe, all the thoughts of men, the motions and mutations of all the creatures, and number all thefe by all the additions and multiplications of arithmetick, enough to fill volumes reaching from earth unto heaven, as yet thou haft not meafured the length, the middle of eternity!' O Judas, here is thy lot, thou haft fryed in hell above a thoufand years, thou muft be tormented in thofe flames, a hundred thoufand years, ten hundred thoufand years, a thoufand million of years of ages; and when all thofe years and ages are gone and paff, thou art as far from the end of thy torments as thou wert at the beginning, when thou hangedft thyfelf and firft wentft down to hell. O my foul, here's a meditation able to ftartle thee from the fleep of fin; no queftion, at thefe thoughts, Judas, and all the damned in hell take on with infinite anguish and enraged indignation: Hence comes that horrible hatred and perpetual blaſphemies which the damned utter againft God: O how they tear their hair, and bite their nails, and gnafh their teeth, and dig furiously into the very fountain of life, defirous (if they could do it poffibly) to fpit out their very bowels. O my heart, well mayeft thou tremble in the midft of this meditation! O eternity! eternity! eternity!

2. Of eternity in heaven; thefe, amongft others, are the effects, rowzing, raifing, and moft ravifhing thoughts, when the bleffed fhall confider their doom, *Come, ye bleffed of my Father, inherit the kingdom*: Then fhall they caft their thoughts on time paff and eternity to come.

1. For time paff. They fhall remember,

ber, 'That sometimes they were in troubles, in sorrows, in sicknesses, in content of others, in dangers by sea and land ; that sometimes they were ready to perish, and to cast away their souls by this or that sin, but that God still held his special hand over them, and gave them grace, and brought them into the port and haven of security, where is no shadow of miseries, [neither sickness, nor sin, nor death, but all is health, and peace, and purity, and life immortal :—They shall also remember, and look back with pleasure, on all their pious thoughts towards God and their Saviour, and on their expressions of love, desire, hope, and trust in him ; on all their inward and outward acts of justice and charity towards man ; on all their pure and chaste, on all their humble and self-denied thoughts and deeds, with reference to themselves.] O what ravishing of spirit will the souls of the just be cast into at their recalling of time past ! Now that the memory of things here below remains still with the spirits of the just made perfect, is manifest [from scripture,] *Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom*, said the good thief to Christ, Luke xxiii. 42. [and it is also manifest from reason ; for memory, or consciousness, being essential to the human soul, it may as soon cease to be, as cease to remember, or lose the remembrance of things past ; The soul therefore, the immortal soul, *must* and *will* in another state call to remembrance things past, and remember them much better than it doth, or can do, now.']

2. For eternity to come, they shall consider, that the joy they enjoy they shall enjoy for ever : *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever. They shall shine : how ? as the firmament, as the stars*, Dan. xii. 9. or *as the sun*, faithful Saviour, Matth. xiii. 45. Not so, saith Chrysolom,

'as they should not surpass the brightness of the sun, but the sun being the most glittering thing in the world, he takes a resemblance towards expressing their incomparable glory :' But to heighten this glory, observe the auxesis, it shall be for ever, *i. e.* for eternity, or for ever and ever, *i. e.* for eternity and eternity ; or, as the Latins, *in perpetuas æternitates*, for 'perpetual eternities :' If one eternity be without end, what are two ? What are ten ? What are an hundred ? What are infinite ? O what a life is this that knoweth no end ? What a glory is this that never fadeth ? What a love is this that never cooleth ? What a joy is this that never ceaseth ?

V. *Opposites.* Why then, O my soul, dost thou set thy rest on this side Jordan ? What are those few short pleasures thou here enjoyest ? What is this brittle life on which depends eternal bliss or woe ? What is earth to heaven ? What a minute to eternity ? If any thing be contrary to eternity, what is it but this punctilio of time we have here to spend ? This brittle life ? What is it but an ell, a span, an inch, a point ? O dear penny-worth, to buy the merry madness of one hour, with ages of pangs infinite and eternal ! O dearest bargain that ever was, to sell away heaven, our everlasting inheritance, with Esau, for a sip of momentary pleasure. [Oh ! vain and foolish souls ! that are so little concerned for eternity ; that for the trifles of time, and the pleasures of sin which are but for a season, can find in their hearts to forfeit an everlasting felicity.] I see this world and the other are mere opposites ; my life is so short, and eternity so long, that I cannot tell what is more contrary than these two : My life is nothing but a *now*, this instant is properly my own, I cannot promise to myself any thing future, and therefore my life and eternity are as contrary as may be. [On my present con-

conduct, in this moment of life, an eternity of happiness or misery depends.]

VI. *Comparisons.* But to what shall I compare this eternity? *As a drop of water is unto the sea, and a gravel stone is in comparison of the sand, so are a thousand years to the day of eternity,* Eccl. viii. 9. Nay, if we multiply a thousand years a thousand times, it would not amount to the least fraction of the numberless number of eternity. They say, that the eighth celestial orb or sphere is moved wondrous leisurely, for though it be daily wheeled about by the rapid motion of the *Primum mobile*, 'the first mover,' yet it finisheth not its own proper circuit, but once in thirty six thousand years; and this space of time they call the great year, or Plato's year: But compare this with eternity, and it will appear but as a moment, a very nothing at all: To what then mayest thou compare this eternity? O my soul, 'it is like an orb every way round and like itself; or like a wheel that turns and turns, and doth never cease turning; or like a year, continually wheeling about, which turns again to the same point whence it began, and still wheels about again; or like an ever-running fountain, whither the waters, after many turnings, flow back again, that they may always flow; or like a snake bowed back into itself orbicularly, holding the tail in her mouth, which in its end doth again begin, and never ceaseth to begin; or like a ring, or a globe, or like a sphere, or like the circuit of the moon without all end.'

VII. *Testimonies.* Is not the scripture, O my soul, frequent in the mention of eternity? *These shall go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal,* Matth. xxv. 46. *Their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,* Mark ix. 44, 46, 48. Matth. xxv. 41. *Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water*

that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life, John iv. 14. *We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,* 2 Cor. v. 1. *Surely he shall not be moved for ever, the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance,* Psa. cxii. 6. *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever,* Dan. xii. 3.

Thus far, O my soul, for the information of thy judgment: Now for the stirring up of thy affections.

I. *Relish.* O eternity, whether of joys or woes! O that thou wert written in a book, that thou wert graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! Job xix. 22, 23. O that my heart were the book! that my meditation were the iron-pen and lead! and that this word *Eternity* were so imprinted and engraven in my heart, that I might still have it in my mind, when pleasure fawneth, when lust provoketh, when the flesh rebelleth, when the Spirit faileth! O eternity how is it I forget thee! [consider, O my soul, that thou art an immortal spirit. Thy body dies, but thou, *thou* must live for ever. O! do nothing now, but what thou mayest with pleasure look back upon a million of ages hence.] O my soul be established, and say with David, *my heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed,* Psalm lvii. 7. Set thyself in a sure place, and stand a while; and standing, admire at this eternity which always stands, and never passeth away; and that thou mayest taste and relish, that thou mayest be affected and moved with this eternity.

1. Consider the never-dying worm, and the everlasting fire. O the bitterness of this eternity! there's a man in the fire, and a worm at his heart; the fire burns him, and the worm bites him, yet neither of these makes an end of him; there he roars, and yells, and howls, and cries, O

wo is me for ever ! A man, said I ! alas, *broad is the way, and many there are that walk hell-ward.* It were enough indeed to make all tremble, though there were but one amongst all the sons of Adam to suffer eternally ; but that *Hell should enlarge herself, and open her mouth without measure, and their glory and their multitude and their pomp should descend into it,* Isaiah v. 14. That there should be millions of men of the same flesh and blood that I am, chained together in hell, where one roars and another answers, and all bear this burden, *Wo, and alas for ever !* In one nook of hell, there's a lamentable shriek, *Wo for ever,* in another corner far remote there's another fearful shriek, *Wo for ever :* in all the corners of the smoky vaults there's a cry, or an echo of this cry, *For ever, for ever, for ever, for ever.* O my soul, how is it thou canst sleep in the night, or be merry in the day, whilst thou thinkest attentively, or considerest throughly of this meditation ? Lefs matters have sometimes put men out of their wits, and bereaved them of their lives. [Oh that I might avoid these wicked courses of impiety, injustice and intemperance, that lead down to death and eternal perdition ! Oh that I would now mind the things that belong unto my peace before they be for ever hid from mine eyes ! O wretched man, darest thou to live one moment longer in sin who knowest not but the next moment may be thy last !]

2. Consider the eternity of joys : It may be the former consideration is too legal, and it will not suit every spirit so well. ' Every thing is received according to the receiver ; a legal spirit, say some, doth relish and savour most of those arguments which are drawn from hell ; but an evangelical spirit doth best relish them that are drawn from heaven.' Come then, O my soul, and in the close of this meditation dwell on, and consider only the sweetness of this eternity : But how should I con-

sider of this eternity ? *For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him,* Isaiah lxiv. 4. When Christ shall come again, he shall be admired of his saints, 2 Thess. i. 10. And why admired ; but because something shall be seen then that was never thought of before ? The saints cannot think there is so much glory in Jesus Christ, as then they shall find, and therefore they shall stand admiring at him ; but yet because the Lord is pleased to let out a beam of this light unto us in his blessed word, go on, O my soul, as the Lord shall enable ; *forget a while thy own people, and thy father's house,* go out of this flesh and world, and, by a deep, and sad, and serious meditation get into heaven ; and to make way for entrance, *lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors,* that a mortal, miserable wretch may enter in.

When Paul was caught up into paradise, he heard unspeakable words. And now by contemplation I am in heaven, methinks I see invisible sights ; what happiness is here of saints ? I shall reduce all to these heads, (1.) Their Duty ; and (2.) their Glory ; which last appears especially in their Joy, and in the Object which they see and enjoy.

I. The duty of these saints consists in the keeping of a perpetual sabbath ; consider it, O my soul, in these particulars.

1. They are exercised in the highest employments that any creature can be exercised in : *Hearken the high praises of God are in their mouths ; besides the high contemplation of God and of the Trinity are in their minds ; they are always singing praises to God, and to him that sits upon the throne,* [for all his works of wonder, for the effects of that infinite goodness, and admirable wisdom, and almighty power which are clearly seen in the creation and government of the world, and of all the creatures in it ; particularly for

his favours to mankind, for the benefit of their beings, for the comfort of their lives, and for all his merciful providences towards them in this world: But above all for the redemption of their souls by the death of his Son, for the free forgiveness of their sins, for the gracious assistance of his holy Spirit, and for conducting them safely through all the snares and dangers, the troubles and temptations of this world to the secure possession of that glory and happiness which they then shall be partakers of, and are bound to praise God for to all eternity.] Psal. cxlxi. 6. Surely this is the highest employment, for this is the highest glory that God hath, not only from his works here, but from all the councils of his wisdom about the great mystery of redemption, from all his works in heaven, and from all the communications of himself to the saints in heaven; the end of all that God does in the world is for his glory, and the end of all that God does in heaven, is for the actual working of the souls of his saints upon himself.

2. The hearts of saints are always up and sit for these high praises of God, they are not sometimes enlarged, and sometimes straightened; no, no, their souls are always up, always upon the highest pin, enflamed with heat continually.

3. There is no intermission of these high praises of God; the saints continue day and night, they go not to duty, and break off again; and go again, and break off again; no, no, there's no other employment here, there's nothing else in heaven to spend one moment of that time in to all eternity.

4. There is no weariness in these saints, though they are praising of God millions of years, yet they are as fresh at the end of them as at the first moment; O eternity! O eternal duty!

II. The glory of these saints is both in their souls and bodies, but because their bodies are not yet in heaven, let pass, O my soul, that glory, and consider the glo-

ry of these souls of saints; in each soul there is, the understanding, will and affections: for the affections, consider only their joy; for the understanding and will, consider their object they see, which is, *the vision of God*; and the object they enjoy, which is the *fruition of God*, that relates to the understanding, this to the will.

(1.) For the joy of saints, it is a pure joy without any mixture of sorrow or sin; it is a spiritual joy, flowing especially from this, that God is their portion; it is a full joy, for they 'joy in God, they joy in the glory of God, they joy in the communication of God to them, they joy in the glory of one another; look how many saints are in heaven, so many joys have the saints; for they rejoice in every one's happiness as their own, this doubles and trebles and multiplies their joys: O it is a full joy; but that which is more than all the rest, it is a divine joy, for it comes from God, and it is in God, and it is with God. 1. It comes from God being caused by the Spirit of God. 2. It is in God, and that is another manner of joy than is in meat, or drink, or in the creature. 3. It is with God, it is the same joy that God himself hath; carnal hearts rejoice in sensual things, but God rejoiceth not in these things they rejoice in; now the saints in heaven are exercised in the same joy that God himself hath; the beams of their joy are mingled with the beams of God's joy. O glorious joy! and yet the happiness of saints consists not in this joy, for the enjoyment of God is above this enjoyment; proceed then, O my soul, wade further, and bathe thyself in these delicious rivers of their heavenly paradise.

(2.) For this vision of God, the understanding, or the mind of saints see God; in this happiness of heaven are inclosed these particulars.

1. The saints know God, for seeing is put for knowing, 1 Cor. xii. 12. *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face,*

face; now we know in part, but then shall we know as we are known. Every saint in heaven understands all things, and knows all persons so far as it may any way conduce to his happiness; there is no simplicity, no shallowness in heaven, all the saints there have sharpness of wit, conformity with God in knowledge, which is indeed the very image of God.

2. The saints understand so clearly as that they need no help of faith; no help of means to see those glorious things of heaven, except that means we call the light of glory. Indeed there is a light in heaven above all the brightness of this world, a light that would dazzle the eye of man, and dim it; hence, in this frail condition, no man can see God, and live; when God, or but an angel appeared, how were men affrighted? but in heaven, the souls of the just are elevated, and enabled to see with joy those things that are manifested, *In thy light shall we see light*, Psal. xxxvi. 9. It is called *the inheritance of the saints in light*, Col. i. 12.

The saints in this light see not only the attributes of his God, mercy, justice, truth, and wisdom; but the very simple pure essence of God; which yet is not separated from his attributes; there is a clear vision on their part, and a clear manifestation on God's part; both are from God, to make them able to see him, and to be willing to be seen of them: and thus God shews himself, not darkly, as to the patriarchs of old, not terribly, as on mount Sinai; not afar off, as to Balaam; not for a short time, as in the transfiguration; the saints now dwell upon the contemplation of him, they have time enough to take a full view of him, even eternity itself.

(3.) For the fruition of God, the will of the saints enjoys God. In this happiness of heaven are involved these things.

1. The saints have God, and they know they have God by a reflex act.

2. As they know they have God, so they

make what use they will of all the attributes of God, and of all that is in God; they have as much use as they will of the wisdom of God, and of the power of God, and of the mercy in God, as one friend usually says to another, 'Make use of all I have as your own;' so God bids the saints make use of all his riches, and glory, and excellency, as they will.

3. As they make use of God, so they have the sweet and comfort of what they use; hence God is said *give us all things richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. vi. 17. He gives the things, and he gives the comfort with it; he gives himself to the saints in glory, the use of himself and the comfort of himself in the use thereof.

4. As they enjoy God, so they enjoy themselves in God, they live in God continually; the fish doth not more truly live in the water, and move in the water, than the souls of saints do live in God, and move in God; *Your life is hid with Christ in God*, Col. iii. 3. The life of saints upon earth is an hidden life, and it is hid in God, but in heaven it is a revealed life, and revealed in God, and enjoyed in God. Such a speech is that of Christ, *Enter into your master's joy*, Mat. xxv. 23. it enters not into you, but ye must enter into it; and what is it? *Your master's joy*; not only that joy that your master gives, but the same joy that your master has, it is your master's own joy that you must enter into, and that you shall live in. So, *I was in the spirit on the Lord's day*, saith John, Rev. i. 10. it is not said *the spirit was in him*, but *he was in the spirit*; surely this was a beginning of the glorious condition of the saints of God; they are in the Spirit of God, not only God in them, but they in God. And this, O my soul, is the spiritual part of heaven, doth it not re-lish? *O taste and see that the Lord is good!* O here is the pure, spiritual, quintessential joys of heaven! the saints are so swallowed up in God, as that they cannot any further mind themselves, but altogether God;

may their minds, and wills, and affections, are all set on God and nothing else. 1. Their minds are so immediately set on God, as if they were wholly emptied of the creature, and had nothing to do but with an uncreated good, even God himself. 2. They will not any thing to themselves nor to any creature, but all to God; O their will is wholly taken up with God. 3. Their affections are wholly set on God; they rejoice in the Lord always, and again rejoice in the Lord, Psalm. iv. 4. They love the Lord with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, Mat. xxii. 37. and though they love themselves, yet so as that they love themselves for God: in this world we love God for ourselves, which is but a natural love, or for himself, which is a gracious love; but in heaven the saints love themselves for God, which is a glorious love. And in this kind of love of God, and enjoyment of themselves in God, the saints are ravished with God, and are in a kind of extasie eternally. 'O the sweetness of this eternity! O blessed estate of saints in the kingdom of heaven! O glory not to be expressed, even by those who are glorified! There is that perpetual spring, which through the fresh and sweet breathings of the Spirit of God, shall flourish ever; there is time, if it be time, always after one sort, not distinguished into evening and morning, but continued with a simple eternity. O eternity of joys, worthy of continual songs of saints and angels to celebrate thy praise! O eternity of joys! how should I extoll thee, desire thee, love thee, and hate all this world for thee!' [O blessed time! when all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and

death and sorrow shall be no more; when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and we shall enter upon the possession of all that happiness and glory which God hath promised, and our faith hath believed, and our hopes have raised us to the expectation of; when we shall be eased of all our pains, and resolved of all our doubts, and be purged from all our sins, and be freed from all our fears, and be happy beyond all our hopes, and have all this happiness secured to us, beyond the power of time and change: when we shall know God, and other things without study, and love him and one another without measure, and serve and praise him without weariness, and obey his will without the least reluctancy; and shall still be more, and more delighted in the knowing, and loving, and praising, and obeying God to all eternity.]

II. *Complaint.* But alas! where is my love, my longing after this eternity? what little taste and savour have I of this sweetness? My soul, what dulness and heaviness is this that hangs upon thee? How hath the world bewitched thee that thou art become so carnal, so corporal, so senseless of spiritual things? Thy thoughts run after riches, and they are uncertain; thou art ambitious after honours, and they are slippery; thou art in love with pleasures, and their end is sudden, and there is bitterness in the end; thou art daily conversing with men, but death shall dissolve all knots of friendship with others. O preposterous care! what, all on the world*? and now Eternity is thy meditation, (on which thou shouldst taste largely, and be affected deeply) art thou now all a mort? O what dulness, what drowsiness, what se-

* When we come to die, and eternity shall present itself to our serious and waking thoughts, then things will put on another face, and those things which we valued so much in this life will then appear to be nothing worth; but those things which we neglected, to be of infinite concernment to us, and worthy to have been the care and endeavour of our whole lives. And if we would consider these things in time, while the opportunities of life and health are before us, we might be convinced at a cheaper rate, and come to be satisfied of the vanity of this world before we despaired of the happiness of the other. — TILLOPSON.

curity is this? if thou hast in thee any spark of that heavenly fire first breathed into thee by the Spirit of God, awake, awake, O my soul, away, away with this dull, senseless security, and consider there's but a step between thee and Eternity of joys. What hast thou not seen? hast thou not heard? and when all is done, art thou so careless of thy home, so senseless of spiritual delights? A gracious heart takes not the things of heaven as guesses and imaginary things, but looks upon them as certain, substantial realities; and this is a sign of grace, O my soul, if thou art able to look at the things of heaven, as the only real, substantial, excellent things, and so as to darken all the things of the world. Carnal men look upon these heavenly things as conceits and imaginations, they have not faith, nor do they know within themselves that there are such things, but the saints *know within themselves, that they have a better and an enduring substance*, Heb. x. 34. Luke xvii. 21. the kingdom of heaven is within them, and therefore they are usually quick and active, and lively, and cheerful in their services or sufferings. O my soul, how should I bewail thy wants? Dost thou doubt whether there be an heaven or whether thou hast a God and a Saviour there? Oh far be it from thee this atheism, wo to thee if thou believest not; but O thou of little faith, dost thou believe there is such an happiness, and an happiness for thee, and yet thou desirest it not, and yet thou delightest not in it? Alas, how weak and unbelieving is thy belief? How cold and faint are thy desires? Tell me what such goodly entertainment hast thou met withal here on earth that was worthy to withdraw thee from these heavenly joys? Or what cause of dislike findest thou above? Oh none! my soul, it is only thy miserable drowsiness, only thy security. Oh what shall I say? What aileth thee, O my soul? As Jonathan said to Amnon, *why art thou lean from day to day, being*

the king's son? So, why art thou heavy, O my soul, and why walkest thou so dumphily in the ways of God, being the King of heaven's son?

III. *Wish.* O that I could mind this eternity! that I could taste or relish this eternity! that I were fitted and prepared for eternity! *O that I were wise, that I understood this, that I considered my latter end!* Deut. xxxii. 29. *O that now while it is called to day, while it is the accepted time, and the day of salvation,* 2 Cor. vi. 2. I had a diligent and intent eye upon this Eternity? O that I could still reason thus, What if I endure hunger and thirst, emptiness and injuries, sickness and poverty? *What if I were beaten with rods, or suffered shipwreck? what if I were stoned to death?* 2 Cor. xi. 23. all these are nothing to that eternity of woes. On the contrary, What if I had Cresus' riches, Solomon's wardrobe, Eclhazzar's cup-board, Samson's strength, Abshalom's beauty? What if an angel *should take me up into an exceeding high mountain, and shew me all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and say unto me, All these will I give thee?* all these are nothing to eternal glory. O Lord, that I could wait and long for thy salvation! O that I could mind the things above! O that my eyes, like the eyes of thy first martyr, could by the light of faith see but a glimpse of heaven! O that my heart could be rapt up thither in desire! O that I could see heaven with a discerning, experimental, spiritual, fixed, believing eye! O that my mind were raised to look after that communication of God that I shall have hereafter! O that my conversation were in heaven! O that my soul were at this very time and moment to receive the influence of heaven's joys into it! How then should I trample upon these poor vanities of the earth! how willingly should I endure all sorrows, all torments! how scornfully should I pass by all pleasures, all

pomps! how should I be in travail of my dissolution! O when shall this day come that I shall perform that duty, and partake of the glory of the saints? When shall this day come, that I shall possess that pure, and spiritual, and full, and divine joy which comes from God, and is in God, and is with God? When shall this day come that I shall have 'the vision of God, and the fruition of God;' when shall I see God, and enjoy God, and enjoy myself in God? Oh, when shall this day come, that I shall enter into these confines of eternity, and solace myself in God? *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: O when shall I come and appear before God?*

IV. *Confession.* I desire Lord, but alas, how weakly, how dully, how heartlesly? I am not able, 'Not sufficient of myself to think any thing as of myself, but my sufficiency is of God:' it is nature that pulls me from this holy meditation; nature favours itself, loves the world, abhors death and eternity in another world: it is my misery that I dote on nothing, or on sin, that's worse than nothing; how long shall these vanities thus besot me? *How long shall these vain thoughts lodge within me?* Jer. iv. 15. Why Lord? there is no strength in me, I can neither will nor do; *It is thou only must work in me both to will and to do* (both to meditate on, and to prepare for eternity) *of thy good will and pleasure,* Phil. ii. 13.

V. *Petition.* To thee, Lord, I make my moan, to thee I tender my humble petition, and pour out my soul: O give me a taste and relish of this eternity; O give me 'this water, that I need thirst no more;' O give me such a taste or relish of this water, *that it may be in me a well of water springing up into eternal life:* O in-

flame my soul with a love of these thoughts, with a longing desire after this eternity of joys. O let me not always be thus dull and brutish, but thou that hast prepared eternity for me, prepare my soul for eternity*; teach me so to carry on this earth, that I be not shut out of those eternal mansions in heaven; open my eyes that I may see; draw aside this veil, that I may know what eternity is; give me so to live as one that labours for eternity, contends for eternity, suffers for eternity, [lives for eternity;] let me never be so foolish as to settle myself on vanity, and to neglect this eternity that never shall have end. *Oh, Father of glory, give me the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, that the eyes of my understanding being enlightened, I may know what is the hope of thy calling, and what the riches of the glory of thy inheritance is in the saints,* Eph. i. 17, 18. Lord, here is the summary of my suit, *that I may know, not only the inheritance of the saints, but the inheritance in the saints,* and the glory of the inheritance, and the riches of the glory; nor would I have my understanding to know this, but I desire *that the eyes of my understanding may be enlightened;* and let this come from 'the knowledge of Christ, from the spirit of wisdom and revelation, and from the Father of glory.' O Lord, my meaning is, and my prayer is, that I may find some experimental, sweet and spiritual good in myself as the beginning of that eternal good which I expect; others may know what this eternity is in sermons, in books, in the written word; but the saints only *know in themselves that they have a better and enduring substance,* Heb. x. 34. O Lord, that I may know in myself what this eternity is, that I may know it by that experimental sweetness of the beginning of

* There cannot be a better preparation for death and eternity, than a good life. Whosoever therefore lives well, that is, *whosoever loves God and his neighbour,* is prepared for eternity.

glory, that I find in myself, and what is glory begun but grace and holiness? thou seest, Lord, that it is no strange favour that I beg of thee, it is no other than that which thou hast richly bestowed upon all thy valiant martyrs, confessors, servants from the beginning, who never could so cheerfully have embraced death and torments, if thro' the midst of their flames, and pains they had not seen their crown of glory. *We faint not in sufferings, because we look at things that are not seen*, 2 Cor. iv. 16. Why Lord, one drop of heaven within me would darken all the glory of the world without me; O let me see heaven in the reality of it with a clear, spiritual, fixed eye; let into my heart one sweet and saving thought of eternity, and then when thou wilt, *Lord, let thy servant depart in peace*. My times are in thy hand, I am no better than my fathers; my life is a bubble, a smoke, a shadow, a thought, I know there is no abiding in this thorough-fair: oh suffer me not to be so mad, as while I pass on the way, to forget the end; it is that other life that I must look after; with thee it is that I must continue; Oh let me never be so spiritually foolish as to settle myself on what I must leave, and neglect eternity. I have seen enough of this earth, and yet I love it too much. Oh let me see heaven another while, and love it so much more than the earth, by how much the things there are more worthy to be loved. Oh God, look down on me, and teach me to look up to thee, and to see thy goodness in the land of the living; thou that boughtest heaven for me, guide me thither; and for thy mercy's sake, in spite of all temptations, enlighten thou my soul, direct it, crown it, that so at last I may do that duty, and receive that glory of thy saints, in joying, seeing, and enjoying God to all eternity.

VI. *Confidence*. Behold, O my soul, and do not merely crave, but challenge this favour of God, as that which he owes

thee; he owes it, because he hath promised it, and by his mercy he hath made his gift his debt: is there not a promise made, *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk in the light of thy countenance, O Lord*, Psal. lxxxix. 15. and is it not an experience tried, *I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste*, Cant. ii. 3. O what is this but the taste of eternity? What is this but a glimpse of unspeakable joy? O Lord, let me taste this sweetness by some real experiments in my own heart! give me, Lord: what wilt thou give? give me a spiritual eye that I may look at this eternity as a spiritual thing; a carnal heart looks at it carnally; Oh the flashes of joy to have a crown and a kingdom! but a spiritual heart looks at eternity spiritually. O give me to look to heaven with a right eye, and in a right manner to look at the spiritual part, and spiritual excellency in heaven, which consists in 'the vision of God, and fruition of God; in the image of God, and communion with God.' O give me thus to see, and to know the reality of this eternity. Give me Lord, what wilt thou give? Give me an heavenly principle that will carry me heaven-ward: the church is compared to *pillars of smoke that ascend upward to heaven*, Cant. iii. 6. tho' the church be black and dark in regard of her infirmities, yet she hath a principle to carry her upward to heaven: and the faint sare compared to eagles that *fly aloft towards heaven*, though their bodies are not there, yet their hearts and souls are there: why, Lord, my treasure is in heaven, Oh let my heart be there! Oh, where should it be but there? Is not heaven the place and center of my heart? and have not all things in nature a principle to carry them to their proper place? Experience tells me that as the place of fire is on high, so fire hath a principle to carry it on high, and as the place of earth is below, so earth hath a principle to carry it below: and if the

place and center of my heart be in heaven, must it not have a principle to move naturally thither? O the consciences of many tell them their souls work downward to Vanity and sensuality: But, O Lord, let my soul work heaven-ward! O Christ, let my soul move towards thee! though I have weights of corruption that would weigh me down, yet give me and assure me of that principle that does work to heaven. Give me, Lord; what wilt thou give me? give me some beginnings of eternal life wrought in me here, give me the first-fruits of heaven. The Scripture saith, that *whom he hath justified, them he hath glorified*, Rom. viii. 30. *i. e.* they have the glory of heaven begun in them: Why Lord, give me this earnest; give me an heart enlarged with God's image; now is the image of God begun, and in heaven the image of God shall be renewed: Oh give me this image, give me *righteousness and holiness, for that is the image of God*, Eph. iv. 24. give me thy presence, give me the visions of God, and fruitions of God; such things are in heaven; and, as the earnest of my inheritance, give me the first fruits, give me some acquaintance of thy blessed Self in every ordinance; let there be a stronger union betwixt God and my soul; let me enjoy God in the creature, and God in the ordinances, and God in all things; yea, let me enjoy God in myself, and myself in God: O let the sabbaths be my delight as a beginning of that eternal sabbath that I shall keep in heaven: and thus before I go into heaven, let heaven come into me: let me taste of eternity by these real experiments in my own soul. And now Lord, that thou hast in some sweet measure assured me, in that thou beginnest to warm my heart, and to persuade my soul that I have a right and interest to this eternity; how should I but grow bold and confident? Cheer up, O my soul, cheer up my love, Christ's fair one, 'for lo the winter is almost past,

and the time of the singing of birds is almost come.' It is but a while, and I shall be free from the body of sin and death; it is but a while, and the image of God shall be made perfect in me; it is but a while, and I shall behold the blessed face of God, and shall live to the praise of that blessed God without any intermission, and shall join with those blessed creatures, that are eternally blessing and praising God; those tastes thou hast formerly had, assure thee of this. Believe it, believe the promises; be content to venture all those great things of eternity upon that bare word of God, Psal. lxxxix. 15. Cant. ii. 3. and iii. 6. Rom. viii. 30. Eph. iv. 24. What? dost thou believe! surely this one work of God to make thee close with the promise, and to venture all on the promise, doth of itself interest thee in this eternity; for this is an immediate work of the Spirit, it is from a divine principle to be able to do this; and yet stay not here; press on, O my soul, and do not only believe a taste, but a hearty draught of eternity; these tastes are but earnest, but there is a promise of everlasting fruition: hath he not given his word for eternal life, John iii. 16. for an *eternal inheritance*, Heb. ix. 15. for *everlasting righteousness*, Dan. ix. 24. for an inheritance *incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. i. 4. Awake, arise, O my soul, and lay hold on the promises of this blessed Eternity; be not dismayed by reason of thy unworthiness, for the promise is of grace, freely offered, and freely given to them that be unworthy in their own eyes. Christ hath purchased righteousness and everlasting life; believe in him, and live to all eternity. O my soul, why art thou dull and sluggish, wherefore dost thou not put forth thyself to embrace and receive this promise of eternity? 'God's promises are ever certain, never less, but rather more in accomplishment than in tender;' why dost thou not cast thyself upon this blessed issue, If God be 'merciful, I am eternally?' It is the sure

promise of God, *That he that believeth hath eternal life*, John iii. 16. therefore if I believe, I am already a free denizen of the new Jerusalem; Eternity of joys is already reserved for me: why Lord, I believe, come glory, come eternity, and welcome glorious eternity, eternal glory.

Conclusion. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee, Psalm cxvi. 7. And yet before thy rest, 1. Dwell a little in admiring at the goodness of God, at the infinite treasures of the riches of the glory of the grace of God towards the children of men! After the apostle had spoken of glorification, he cries out, *What shall we say to these things?* Rom. viii. 30, 31. Now, O my soul, thou hast been discoursing of eternity, what dost thou say to these things? *O the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the loving-kindness of the Lord! How unsearchable are his mercies! and his grace past finding out! O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought before the sons of men!* If ever God wrought about any thing, it was about the communication of his goodness to man: This was the work of God, and great design of God from all eternity; Nay, the chief of the deep infinite councils of God, and the works of the wisdom of God have been, and yet are exercised about this; O my soul, admire, admire! if in any part of this Meditation thou hast had a true spiritual sight of the riches of the goodness of God, in the way of his communication of happiness and glory to the children of men; if thou hast seen into the great design of God, into the deep councils of the wisdom of God; if the Lord hath in some sweet measure laid open his heart to thee, and brought thee into the treasures of his riches, and

given thee a view of them, admire at this! 2. Break forth into praises, join with those blessed elders, that fell down before the lamb, having all harps in their hands and golden vials full of odours, and who sung, *Worthy art thou who wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood, to receive honour, and blessing, and glory*, Rev. v. 8, 9. Make melody with all those creatures in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, who say, *Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*, Rev. v. 13. Be raised, be enlarged, O my soul! is there not cause? why Christ was the *Lamb slain for thee*; and Christ by his blood hath redeemed thee unto God. O the incomparable love and favours of the Lord! Was it ever found that any king or potentate should adopt the blind, the lame, the deaf, the dumb, to succeed him in his inheritance? and shall such an one as I (the vilest, the worst of sinners) inherit everlasting life, a crown that never withereth, a durable treasure, which can never fade? O what shall I give unto the Lord for this eternity? *My soul, rejoice thou in the Lord, and bless his holy name*: Now begin that hallelujah on earth, which in heaven thou shalt sing more sweetly to all eternity, Hallelujah! and again Hallelujah! Amen Hallelujah!

And now, O my soul, give up thyself to God, and repose thyself wholly on thy maker and redeemer; be abundant in service, there shall not be one tear, nor one sigh, nor one prayer lost. Wait patiently on God, for the full possession of this eternity, and walk cheerfully in the way that he leads thee thereunto. Say at the parting of this meditation, O Lord, O eternity * itself! O thou first and last, *Alpha and Omega, without beginning and without all end, I*

* Our auth^r must be understood here as invoking God almighty by the name of Eternity, and not as addressing himself, like the poets, to eternity itself.

recommend my soul, my ways to thee ; for eternity through Christ thy only Son, take me to thy keeping, and prepare me my only Saviour, Pſal. xvi. 8.

CHAP. IX. SECT. I.

Of the Nature of the Life of FAITH.

TO live by faith, 'is by faith in Christ to assent and adhere unto and to possess the whole word of God as our own in all estates and conditions, resting quietly upon his gracious and faithful promise, and yielding ourselves unto his good pleasure, in sincere, universal, and constant obedience :'
 Or, to live by faith, 'is to feed upon the several promises of God made in his word, and to apply them to our own selves, according to our needs, and so to uphold, comfort and encourage ourselves against all temptations, and unto every good duty.' This life of faith is a very heaven upon earth, a sweet sanctuary to any hunted soul ; hereby our hearts will be cheered, our life will be sweet to us, God will be glorified, and the glory of his truth will be mightily advanced. O blessed duty !

§. 2. *Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in general.*

OUR directions for this life of faith are either general or particular.

In general, that we may live by faith, we must endeavour two things.

I. To get matter for our faith to work upon.

II. To order our faith aright in the work.

I. That we may provide matter for our faith to work upon, we must observe three things. (1.) That we store up all the good promises of God, and our own experiences seasonably : It is good to lay up in a good time aforehand. (2.) That we lay in promises of all kinds : We had better leave than lack ; it is the wisdom of a man, that he may not live feebly and poor-

ly, but to have somewhat to spare. (3.) That we so lay them up that we may have them at hand : It is folly to say, I have as good provision as can be, but I have it not here : *Let the word of God dwell in you plentifully and richly in all wisdom*, Col. iii. 16.

II. That we may order our faith aright in the work, observe these directions.

I. Take possession of the promises, and value them as our own. The prophet, recording a promise in Isaiah liv. 17. adds thus, *This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord*. So that there's no godly man or woman but is a great heir. Whensoever they look into God's book, and find there any promise, they may make it their own : just as an heir that rides over divers fields and meadows, he saith, this meadow is my heritage, and this corn-field is my heritage : and then he sees a fair house, and saith, this fair house is my heritage ; and he looks upon them with another manner of eye, than a stranger that shall ride over those fields : So a carnal heart reads those promises, but merely as stories, not as having any interest in them ; but a godly man every time he reads the scripture (remember this note when you are reading the scriptures) and there meets with a promise, he ought to lay his hand upon it, and say, this is a part of my heritage ; it is mine, and I am to live upon it.

2. Expect nothing from the promise but that which is suitable to the nature of it : To this purpose some promises are absolute, which God hath simply determined to accomplish ; as the promise of the Messiah, Isaiah vii. 14. and of the calling

calling of the Gentiles, Rom. xi. 26. Some promises are conditional, which God will accomplish in his own time, and in his own manner and measure; in a word, they are no further promised than God seeth in wisdom to be most meet for his glory, and our good; as, all temporal blessings, less principal graces, and the measure of all sanctifying graces: now in all these expect nothing from them, but that which is suitable to the nature thereof.

3. That done, then eye that particular good in the promise which we stand in need of, and set God's power and faithfulness and wisdom awork, to bring it about; for instance, thou art in persecution, and either thou wouldst have deliverance out of it, or comfort and refreshment in it: In this case see all this in the promise (referring the order, and time and manner to God) and then set God's power and faithfulness awork that can do it, and his wisdom awork to contrive it, which way he knows best: This is the meaning of that text, *Commit thy ways unto the Lord, trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass*, Psalm xxxvii. 5. *and cast your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you*, 1 Pet. v. 7.

4. By faith wait upon God, in that way he hath appointed; it is true, God will work that good for us, yet we must use the means, and meet God in the course of his providence, otherwise we live not by faith, but tempt God, and throw away his promises and all.

5. Set it down and conclude, that God will do whatsoever he hath promised, and

we shall receive it in the ways of his providence: This is the very work of faith itself, thus it draws sap and virtue from the promise, when it concludes, That according to the good in the promise, it is sure to be done.

6. But imagine the Lord delays and doth not suddenly accomplish, then must faith take up its stand, and stay till it come. *He that believeth, maketh not haste; the vision is for an appointed time, and therefore wait for it*, Isaiah xxviii. 16. so the Psalmist, *As the eyes of a servant look to the hands of his master, and the eyes of a maiden to her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us*, Psalm cxxxiii. 2. *not until we will, nor until we see it fit, but until He will have mercy upon us*.

7. Imagine further that the Lord not only delays, but seems to frown, and to say, He will not hear: In this case, labour with an holy humility to contend with our God, and by strong hand to overcome him, for the Lord loves to be overcome thus. † When Jacob wrestled with God, *Let me go*, saith the Lord; *I will not let thee go*, saith Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 6. So do we catch the Lord Jesus, and strive with him, and leave him not, till we have those comforts he hath promised, and which we have begged: Surely this is the glory and victory, and triumph of faith, when the Lord is fain to lay down his weapons, and to yield himself as conquered, *Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel, because thou hast prevailed with God*, Gen. xxxii. 28.

† We must not imagine that God almighty alters his measures and conduct, because of our importunity. No: he is God and changeth not. The meaning therefore of our author, when he saith, *The Lord loves to be overcome*, must be this, That he loves to hear us earnest and importunate in our requests for spiritual and divine things, because such earnestness increaseth our esteem and relish for them, and makes us fit to receive and enjoy them. And therefore God, who loves all his creatures, but particularly mankind, and who knows how to make them happy, has been pleased to require of us the utmost importunity in our petitions for good things, before we receive them; and, the better to accommodate himself to our weak capacities, has thought fit to signify his readiness to bestow all good things on persons properly disposed to receive them, by those strong figures of speech, *wrestling* and *prevailing with God*, and the like phrases, frequent in scripture.

Two cautions concerning promises, and the life of faith, are mainly to be observed in the general.

1. That not barely the promises, but the person of Christ, is the object of faith : We are not to rest on the promises alone, but to clofe with Christ in those promises ; and therefore in receiving of, or having recourse unto a promise, we are first to seek out for Christ in it, as being the foundation of it, and so to take hold of the promise in him : Thus Philip directs the eunuch, *Believe on the Lord Jesus*, Acts viii. 31. The promise is but the casket, and Christ the jewel in it ; the promise but the field, Christ is the pearl hid in it, and to be chiefly look'd at : Thus it is said, the promises of pardon are not as pardons of a prince, which merely contain an expression of his royal word for pardon ; but God's promises are made in his Son, and are as if a prince should offer to pardon a traitor, upon marriage of his child, whom in, and with that pardon he tenders : The reason hereof is, because Christ is the grand promise, in whom all the promises are *Yea and Amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20.

2. That promises in things temporal and spiritual (not absolutely necessary to salvation) are not universal, but indefinite, *i. e.* he makes such promises, because sometimes, though not always, he grants accordingly. For instance, that promise of *healing the sick*, cannot be universal, for it might then be supposed that sick men should never die, seeing *the elders*, James v. 15. may at all such times of danger of death, still come and pray with them ; but we all know *it is appointed for all men once to die*, Heb. ix. 17. the manner thereof is, that prayer is an ordinance to which God hath made such a gracious promise, and he often doth restore the sick at their prayers ; and therefore upon every such particular occasion, we are to rely upon God for the performance of it by an act of recumbency, tho' we cannot with an act of full assurance, the promise

not being universal, but indefinite. Of like nature are all other promises of things temporal or things spiritual, not absolutely necessary to salvation ; as long life, riches, honour, assurance of evidence to them that fear him ; the tenor and purport of which promise is not as if absolutely, infallibly, and universally God doth always perform these to those that are truly qualified, with the conditions specified in those promises ; the contrary, both scripture, instances, and common experience shews, they are therefore indefinitely meant, and so to be understood by us ; because whenever God doth dispense any such mercies to any of his, he would do it by promise : and he requires answerably an act of faith suitable to that his meaning in the promise ; that as he intended not in such promises, an absolute, infallible, universal obligation of himself to the performance of them to all that fear him ; so the act of faith, which a man is to put forth towards this promise, in the application of it for his own particular, is not required to be absolute, infallible persuasion and assurance, that God will bestow these outward things upon him, having these qualifications in him, but only an indefinite act, as I may call it, of recumbency and submission, casting and adventuring ourselves upon him for the performance of it to us, not knowing but he may in his outward dispensations make it good to us ; yet with submission to his good pleasure, if otherwise he dispose it ; and if he grant, to consider then, That whatsoever we have, it is not by a mere providence, but by virtue of a promise.

§. 3. *Of the manner of this life of faith in particular, as in temporal evils.*

IN particular, that we may live by faith, observe we, 1. The promises. 2. The exercises of faith concerning the promises.

And both these are considerable either in regard of ourselves, or of others.

1. In regard of ourselves, and therein we shall

shall consider matters Temporal, Spiritual, Eternal.

Things temporal are either Evil, or Good.

We shall begin first with Temporal Evils; and concerning them, 1. Give you the promises: and 2. The exercise of faith in respect of these promises.

1. The promises that concern temporal evils have reference to those evils, either in General, or in Special.

(1.) Evils general, are afflictions and dangers, concerning which we have promises, some to Prevent, some to Qualifie, and some to Remove these afflictions.

1. The promises to prevent afflictions, you may read in the word, and they are these, and the like, Psalm xci. 10. Psalm cxxi. 7. Job v. 19. Zech. ii. 5. where the Lord promiseth *to be a wall of fire to his people*; (not of stone or brass, saith Theodoret) that it may both fray afar off, and keep off too at hand, protect them, and destroy their enemies.

2. The promises to qualifie evils, are these, and the like; Psalm ciii. 13, 14. Isa. xlix. 13, 14, 15. Hof. xi. 3, 9. In this last promise, God imitates parents, saith Theodoret, when any misery is upon their child, their bowels yearn more; never sits the child so much upon the mother's lap, never lies so much in her bosom, as when he is sick: so the spouse being sick of love, *i. e.* in some misery, *Christ stayeth her with flaggons, comforts her with apples, his left hand is under her head, and his right hand doth embrace her*, Cant. ii. 5, 6. where we may read God's compassion to his children in their calamities, that he narrowly observes every one of them: *Thou tellest my wanderings*, Psalm lvi. 8. yea, he makes for precious a reckoning of their griefs and sorrows, that not a tear falls to the ground, but he keeps it, preserves it, as precious liquor, in his bottle; *put my tears in thy bottle*; yea, he keeps them in memory, he notes them and writes them

in his book, as if he would chronicle our tears for everlasting remembrance; *Are they not in thy book?* 2 Cor. iv. 17. Is there, or can there be any richer or fuller expression of Tully, than there is in the Greek; where there is both an elegant Antithesis, and double Hyperbole, beyond Englishing, *Kath' uperbolen eis uperbolen*, for *affliction, glory*; for *light affliction*, heavy, massie, substantial glory, *a weight of glory*; for *momentary affliction, eternal glory*; nay, the apostle adds degrees of comparison, yea, goes beyond all degrees, calling it *more excellent, far more excellent*, an hyperbole, hyperbole exceeding excessive, *eternal weight of glory*.

3. The promises to bear them, or, in due time to remove them, are these, and the like; Psalm xxxvii. 24. Jer. xxix. 11. Nic. vii. 8, 9. Psalm xcvi. 11. as sure as harvest follows seeding, so to the righteous, comfort follows mourning, John xvi. 20. 1 Cor. x. 13.

(2.) Evils special, are sickness, poverty, famine, war, captivity, witchcraft, possession, oppression.

1. For sickness, we have promises, some to Prevent, some to Qualifie, and some to Remove Sickness. (1.) The promises to Prevent, are these, and the like; Exod. xv. 26. Deut. vii. 15. Psalm xci. 10. (2.) Promises to Qualifie sickness, are these, and the like, Psalm xli. 3. Heb. xii. 6, 7, 8. (3.) Promises to Remove sickness, are these and the like; Exod. xxiii. 25. Deut. vii. 15. Isa. xl. 31.

2. For poverty, we may store up these promises, Psalm xxiii. throughout, Psalm xxxv. 9, 10. Psalm xxxvii. 25. Heb. xiii. 15. The wicked indeed may have more abundance than the christian; but here's the difference. The wicked hath all by a providence, the christian hath all by a promise; and this distinction the poor christian would not part with for a world of gold.

3. For famine, we may store up these promises, Job v. 19, 20. Psalm xxxiii. 18,

19. Prov. x. 2, 3. Psalm xxxvii. 18, 19. Isa. xli. 17, 18. Some martyrs being cast into prison, and denied necessary food, they had faith to return this answer, 'If men will give us no meat, we believe God will give us no stomach.' When Christ was an hungered, and Satan tempts him to *command stones to be made bread*, he answered, *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*, Matth. iv. 4. *q. d.* A man may feed on a promise, he must depend on God's allowance, and when provision fails, then not to distrust the provision of God, is a notable trial of faith.

4. For war, we may gather up these promises, and the like, Job v. 20. Prov. iii. 24, 25, 26. Jer. xxxix. 17, 18.

5. For captivity, gather in these promises, and the like, Deut. xxx. 3, 4. which very promise Nehemiah sueth out, Neh. i. 9. Psal. cvi. 46. Ezek. xi. 16.

6. For witchcraft or possession, consider that promise, Numb. xxiii. 23.

7. For oppression, we have these promises, Psalm xii. 5. Psalm lxxviii. 5. Psalm cxlvi. 7, 8, 9.

II. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, — go to Meditation, and Prayer. 1. For meditation, and the matter of it, consider these things, and let your faith feed on them.

(1.) That all affliction comes from God; *Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? I form the light, and I create darkness; I make peace, and I create evil: I the Lord do all these things*, Amos iii. 6. Isa. xlv. 7. *I know, O Lord, (saith David) that thy judgments are right, and that thou in thy faithfulness hast afflicted me*, Psalm cxix. 75.

(2.) That as God sends it, so none can deliver us out of it but God alone; *O our God, wilt thou not judge them? We have no might against thy great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee*, 2 Chr. xx. 12.

This meditation draws the heart from carnal repose in means or friends; it expels vexatious and distracting cares, and preserveth from the use of unlawful means of deliverance; *The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord.*

(3.) That the cause of all miseries and sorrows is sin, and therefore 'tis time for us to examine our ways, to humble ourselves, and set upon reformation: *I thought on my ways (saith David, Psalm cxix. 59.) and turned my feet unto thy testimonies*. When Manasse was in affliction, *He besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers*, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12. *Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement, I will not offend any more: that which I see not teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more*, Job xxxiv. 31, 32. The end of chastisement, is amendment of life, whence it receives the name of correction, which signifieth, *to set aright or straight*.

(4.) That God now trieth our faith, patience, contentation, and meekness of spirit: he hath said unto Crosses, 'Go ye to such a man, not to weaken his faith, or to waste any grace of the Spirit, but to purge him, refine him, try him, exercise him, to breed the quiet fruits of righteousness, to confirm his patience, to support his hope, etc.'—Hence God's servants by their faith have been enabled to say, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me*, Micah vii. 9. And if he lay thus, *I have no pleasure in thee: behold, here am I, let him do to me, as seemeth good to him*, 2 Sam. xv. 26. This meditation makes the heart willingly, freely, and constantly to resign itself to the good pleasure of God in all things.

(5.) That 'tis God's will, after we have gone to the promise, to use all lawful means of help which God in his providence affords;

affords; but in point of dependence, that we solely rest on God's promises: faith coupleth the means and the end, but looketh to the promiser (whose truth, and wisdom, and power, and mercy never fails) and not to the probability of the thing promised; *Abraham against hope, believed in hope, That what God had promised, he was able to perform,* Rom. iv. 18, 21.

(6.) That the promises are in Christ, *Yea and Amen,* and therefore set it down and conclude, that God will do whatsoever he hath promised, and we shall receive it in the way of his providence; it may be not yet; what then? *He that believes will not make haste:* Isa. xxviii. 26. Daniel waited seventy years for deliverance out of captivity in Babylon, and may not we wait seventy weeks, seventy days?

2. For prayer, and the parts and manner of it, observe this method:

(1.) Lay open our sorrows before the Lord, pour out our complaints into his bosom; *I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of thine anger; thou hast brought me into darkness, but not into light,* Lam. iii. 22. *Lord, how am I beset with miseries! how do my sorrows increase daily! how are they increased that trouble me!* Psalm iii. 1. Psalm xxxviii. 18.

(2.) Confess our sins with hatred, and godly sorrow; *I will declare my iniquity, I will be sorry for my sins,* Hosea v. 15. For want of this, God threatened the Israelites, *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.*

(3.) Importune the Lord, and direct we our supplications to our God; *Lord, how long wilt thou look on? O rescue my soul from their destruction, my darling from the lions; look upon mine affliction, and my tears, for I am brought very low,* Psalm xxxv. 17.

(4.) Then press we the Lord with his promises; Lord, thou hast said, *The rod of the*

wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous: Thou hast said, Yet a little while, and the indignation shall cease: Thou hast said, In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer, Psalm xii. 5. Isaiah x. 25. and liv. 8. O these are thy promises, Lord make them effectual to my poor soul.

(5.) For conclusion, tell we the Lord, whatever becomes of us, we will trust in him; *Though thou shouldst slay me, yet will I trust in thee,* Job xiii. 18. *For what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee,* Psalm lvi. 3.

These are the acts of faith by which it puts forth, and exerciseth itself in time of afflictions.

§. 4. *Of the manner of this life of faith in temporal blessings.*

Concerning temporal blessings, or good things, consider we, I. The promises.

II. The exercise of faith in those promises.

I. Promises that concern temporal blessings, have reference to those blessings, either in General, or in Special:

(1.) The general promises are these, and the like, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Psalm. xxxiv. 8, 9. and lxxxiv. 11. Phil. iv. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 21. all things are yours, we are heirs of the world.

(2.) The special promises have a relation, some to our name, some to our bodies, some to our estates, some to our callings.

1. Those promises that have a relation to our good name, are such as these, 1 Sam. ii. 30. Prov. iii. 16. Prov. iv. 8. and xiv. 19. Isa. lvi. 3, 4, 5.

2. Those promises that have a relation to our bodies, are either for long life, concerning which, Deut. v. 16. 33. Prov. iii. 1, 2. or for health, concerning which, Pro. iii. 8. Psalm ciii. 3, 4, 5. or for safety, concerning which, Pro. i. 33. Job i. 18. Hof.

ii. 18. Job v. 23. or for peace, concerning which, Lev. xxvi. 6. Psalm xxix. 11. and xxxvii. 11. Pro. xvi. 16. or for sleep, concerning which, Job xi. 19. Pro. iii. 24. or for food, concerning which, Ps. xxxvii. 3. Ps. cxi. 5. Joel ii. 26. or for raiment, concerning which, Deut. x. 18. Matth. vi. 25. xxx. 32. or for posterity, the fruit of the body, concerning which, Deut. vii. 12, 13, 14.

3. Those promises that have a relation to our estates, are these, Job xxii. 24, 25. Prov. viii. 18, 19. Psal. xxxviii. 5.

4. Those promises that have a relation to our calling, are either for plenty, concerning which, Prov. x. 4. and xii. 11. and xiii. 3. and xxviii. 19. or for protection, concerning which, Psalm xci. 11. or for promotion, concerning which, Prov. xii. 24. and xxii. 29. or for good success, concerning which, Prov. xii. 14. Isa. lxxv. 21, 23. I deny not but the wicked may enjoy all these temporal blessings by a general providence, but only the just have a spiritual right to them; they only have them as rewards of their righteousness, as testimonies of God's love and care over them, and by virtue of a promise.

II. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, observe that we may live by them, either in the want of these temporal mercies, or in the enjoyment of them.

1. In the want of them, go we to Meditation, and Prayer.

1. For meditation, and the matter of it, consider these things:

(1.) That faith in this case doth ransack, and scan the soul narrowly to find out and remove whatsoever doth offend: *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put iniquity far from thy tabernacles: then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks*, Job xxii. 23, 24. This advice faith digests, and labours the reformation of what is amiss, and whatsoever hinders the promise.

(2.) That faith is painful, provident and

frugal; it shakes off idleness, takes the opportunity, husbands thriftily, and observes God's providence in all affairs; otherwise we live not by faith, but tempt God, and throw away his promises and all.

(3.) That faith preserves from the use of all unlawful means: the believer consults ever what is just, not what is gainful; or what may be compassed by honest courses, not what may be gained by fraud, deceit, cozenage, or the like carnal dealings: *Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right*, Pro. xvi. 8.

(4.) That faith leans upon the providence of God, who will keep back nothing from us, but what is hurtful and pernicious: here's a sweet act of faith, it submits to God's wisdom, and rests on providence, after the use of all lawful means; and this maintains a Christian in some measure of contentment.

2. For prayer, and the parts or manner of it, observe this method.

(1.) Confess our sins, especially those sins which upon search we are persuaded hinder prosperity: 'O Lord, I have thought on my ways, and I find this or that sin in my bosom, this or that corruption hath gotten head, and hinders thy blessings: O Lord, how should I expect needful things? What have I to do with thy promises, that have committed such and such sins?'

(2.) Importune the Lord for his temporal blessings, at least so far as he seeth them to be for our good, and for the glory of his great name: thus Bildad tells Job, ch. viii. 5, 6, 7. *If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty, surely now he would awake for thee, and mak. the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous: though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase*. Thus Jabez prayed, *Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast*, etc. 1 Chron. iv. 10. and God granted him that which he requested. In like manner was Jacob's prayer, *If God will*

will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, Gen. xxviii. 20, 21. And thus may we importune the Lord, and make our supplication to the Almighty.

(3.) Then press the Lord with his promises as with so many arguments: Lord, thou hast said, *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come.* Thou hast said, *Fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him,* &c. O these are thy promises, make them good to us as it stands best with thy wisdom.

2. In the enjoyment of these temporal blessings, go we to Meditation and Prayer.

1. For meditation, and the matter of it, consider these things.

(1.) Faith in prosperity, keeps the heart in a holy temper and disposition, *i. e.* in humility, meekness, tenderness and compassion towards others, in thankfulness, obedience, and in the fear of the Lord. Satan himself could reply to the Lord, *Doth Job fear God for nought, hast thou not made a hedge about him?* Job i. 13. in this case, faith will remember man of his duty, and persuade him to be so much the more serviceable, as God's mercies are more plentiful upon him.

(2.) That faith makes a man heavenly-minded in the use and possession of a prosperous estate; as it receives all earthly blessings from God, so it winds and pulls up the soul to God again; and if it be rightly considered, prosperity is the fittest season for heavenly contemplation; the less trouble lies upon our estate, the more liberty we have to think of heavenly things: howsoever, faith considers these things as pledges of God's love, as parts of our child's portion, and so it makes us look at the better part, those never-fading riches which God hath reserved in heaven for

all that fear him.

(3.) That faith breeds a godly jealousy and suspicion, lest the heart should be drawn away with the pleasing delights of things transitory, for by grace it is that we are made conscious of our own weakness, and of the snare that is in every creature to take and intangle us: prosperity is pleasing, but dangerous; a man may quickly surfeit of sweet meats. This makes the waking believer circumspect and watchful, and jealous and suspicious of his own heart, lest he miscarry in prosperity, considering there is a snare in it.

(4.) That faith minds a change, even when our mountain seems strongest: *The thing I greatly feared* (saith Job, chap. iii. 25.) *is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me;* by this it appears, that Job always thought upon a change: 'There is no wind (saith the proverb) that may not blow rain, if God so please.' *Riches have their wings, and take their flight like an eagle;* now faith minds this, and prepares for this; *The prudent man foreseeth evil, and hideth himself,* Pro. xxii. 5. and xxvii. 12.

2. For prayer, and the manner of it, observe this method:

(1.) Confess and acknowledge God's mercy, both in his promises and performances; say, 'Lord, thou hast promised, *that no good thing wilt thou withhold from them that walk uprightly;* and surely thou art true in thy sayings, I believe by virtue of thy promise I enjoy this land, and those goods, &c. I have nothing, Lord, but merely of free-grace, and by virtue of a promise.'

(2.) Pray, and importune the Lord for sanctification of prosperity, and for God's blessing upon the means: the more we prosper, the more earnest should the prayers of faith be; for of ourselves we have no power to wield a good estate well, no ability to preserve or keep it; in greatest wealth we ly open to many temptations,

and

and if we pray not earnestly that God may sanctifie all his temporal blessings to us, we shall cool in grace.

(3.) Praise God for his mercies, and devote ourselves unto him from whom we have received all: *What shall I render unto the Lord* (saith David) *for all his mercies towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord*, Psalm cxvi. 12, 13. Men look for thanks for a small kindness, and shall not we magnifie God for all his favours and loving-kindness towards us? *O praise the Lord, bless the Lord, O my soul!* Pf. ciii. 1.

§. 5. *Of the manner of this life of Faith in spirituall evils.*

THINGS spiritual are either Evil, or Good.

We shall begin with spiritual Evils; and concerning them, 1. Give you the promises; and, 2. The exercise of faith in respect of those promises.

Evils spirituall arise either from the devil, or the flesh, or the world, or from man, or God, or from ourselves.

1. Those evils that arise from *the devil*, are temptations of several sorts, and the man, whose heart is upright, shall find strength enough against every temptation: to that purpose, consider these promises, Mat. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. x. 13. 1 Joh. v. 18.

2. Those evils that arise from *the flesh*, are lusts, or temptations of uncleanness; and for strength and ability against such a temptation, consider these promises, Prov. ii. 10, 11. 16. Eccles. vii. 26. 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

3. Those evils that arise from *the world*, are covetousness, cares, evil company, &c. and for strength against such, consider these promises, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. Gal. i. 4. 1 John v. 4. Heb. xiii. 5. there are five negatives together in the original that strongly affirm; *q. d. I tell thee, I will never, never, never, never forsake thee.*

4. Those evils that arise from *men*, are

either oppositions against truth, concerning which, Mat. x. 19. Acts xviii. 9, 10. or, oppositions against goodness, Matth. v. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 14. or, opposition against both: and so they fall either on our good name, concerning which, Psal. xxxvii. 6. where, howsoever thy innocency be at some times covered, as it were, with a thick and dark mist of slander and oppression, yet the Lord will in his good time scatter and dissolve the mist, and so make thy innocency apparent to the world; yea, he will make thy righteousness as evident as the sun when it ariseth, yea, as noon day when it is at highest, and shines brightest, Psalm lxxviii. 13. Mat. v. 11, 12. 1 Pet. iv. 14. etc. or, they may fall on us, in respect of our liberty, concerning which, Psalm lxix. 32, 33. and cii. 19, 20. Rev. ii. 20. or, they may deprive us of our goods, concerning which, 2 Chro. xxv. 9. Matth. xix. 29. Hab. iii. 17, 18. or, they may take away life, concerning which, Mat. x. 39. John xii. 25. Rev. xiv. 13.

5. Those evils which arise from *God*, are desertions; and for comforts against them, consider these promises, Isa. xlix. 14, 15, 16. and liv. 7, 8. and l. 10.

6. Those evils that arise from *ourselves*, are sins and infirmities, and they are either spiritual blindness, concerning which, Luke iv. 18. 1 John ii. 27. Isa. xxxv. 4, 5. or, spiritual lameness, concerning which, Isa. xxxv. 6. and xl. 31. or, heaviness of mind, concerning which, Isa. xxxv. 1, 2. Jer. lxvi. 12, 13, 14. or, weakness of memory, concerning which, John xiv. 26. or, fears of losing God's love, concerning which, Isa. xl. 15. and liv. 10. Jer. xxxiii. 20. Psalm lxxxix. 33, 34, 35. John xiii. 1. Rom. xi. 29. or, fear of falling away from God, concerning which, see the impossibility in regard of God, 2 Tim. ii. 19. in regard of Christ, Luke xxii. 32. in regard of the holy Ghost, John xiv. 16. Eph. iv. 30. in regard of the promises, Psalm xciv. 14. 1 Cor. i. 8, 9. or, indisposition, distraction,

traction, defects in our best performances, concerning which, Numb. xxiii. 21. Cant. ii. 14. or particular falls, daily frailties and infirmities, concerning which, Isa. lv. 7. Jer. iii. 1. Psalm xxxvii. 24. and cxlv. 14. Hosea xiv. 4. 1 John i. 9.

2. For the exercising of faith, concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to Meditation, and Prayer.

1. For Meditation, and the matter of it, consider we these things.

(1.) That of ourselves we cannot resist these spiritual evils; all our comfort is, that neither the devil, nor the world, nor the flesh, nor sin can oppose any further than God will give them leave; not the devil himself can tempt whom he will, nor when he will, nor how he will, nor how long he will, but in all these he is confined by the providence of God. A legion of devils could not enter into a Gadarene hog till Christ had given them leave: Satan could not touch one bleat pertaining to Job, till he had obtained liberty; nor after lay a finger on his body, until his liberty was renewed: O meditate on God and his power, who hath all our enemies in a chain; as for ourselves we have no ability to resist any of these evils.

(2.) That faith fortifies the soul against all oppositions; the more they rage, the more faith heartens the soul to believe, and to keep close under the shadow of the Lord's wings; as the child affrighted, clings faster to the mother; so the poor soul pursued by the devil, or world, or flesh, or man, or God, or our own corruptions, it runs to Christ, the everlasting rock, and in his name resists all these evils, and in his name gets the victory.

(3.) That in the most forcible tempests, which God, devil or man raiseth against us (when to present sense and feeling all fight and hope of the grace and goodness in Christ Jesus is lost) then faith tells the heart, that a calm is at hand. The last temptation wherewith Satan set upon Christ,

was the most furious, and when he could not prevail thereby, *he departed for a season*: the Lord will not suffer us to be tempted above measure. This faith assures us of, and persuades us quietly to wait for the issue.

2. For prayer and the manner of it, observe this method.

(1.) Confess our sins of former ignorance, vanity of mind, self-confidence, solitary musings on the temptations of Satan, misinterpreting of the Lord's doings, &c. which set open the soul to all other spiritual evils: 'O my God, I have diseasted thy mercy, distrusted thy promises, harboured thoughts of unbelief, &c. and so have exposed my soul to the most violent, horrible, and fiery temptations of the world, flesh, devil, and my own lusts: my soul, which should have been ravished with the joys of heaven, and with the kisses of Christ, is continually pestered and assailed with the black and hellish thoughts of atheism, blasphemy, and soul-vexing fears; my heart trembleth, my strength faileth, my life is spent with grief, my spirit within me is overwhelmed, and prevailing fears so tyrannize over me, that I cannot speak, I am sore wounded and broken, I go mourning and desolate all the day long.'

(2.) Importune the Lord for pardon of sin, and for help against all oppositions: 'Pardon, O Lord, my yielding to the temptations of the devil, or flesh, or world, or sin; pardon, O Lord, the infidelity, doubtings, dejectedness, infirmities, and carnal excessive fears of thy poor servant: and for the future, deliver my soul from the snares, strengthen me in the combat against all mine enemies: arise, O Lord, disappoint Satan, cast him down, deliver my soul from the wicked one; O be thou my strength in my trouble, for I fly unto thee for help and for succour.'

(3.) Then press the Lord with his promises, as with so many arguments: 'Lord, thou hast said, *That the gates of hell shall*

not prevail against us: that *whofo pleafeth God fhall efcape the ftrange woman: that whofeever is born of God overcometh the world: that if we fuffer for righteousnefs fake, happy are we: that in a little wrath I hid my face for a moment, but with everlafting kindnefs will I have mercy on thee: that a good man though he fall he fhall not be utterly caft down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* O thefe are thy golden, fweet, precious promifes; now Lord, make them good to my foul, let me draw the fweet, and juice and virtue from every of thefe promifes; let not a word of thefe promifes fall to the ground, let me have my fhare, and part and portion in thefe comfortable promifes, through the Lord Jefus.

§. *An appendix of the manner of this life of faith, in oppofitions againft truth and goodnefs, and more particularly againft our good name, whereby an unworthy fervant of Chrift fometimes found abundance of fpiritual comfort.*

HIS innocency being fometimes overfhadowed with a thick and dark mift of flanders, reproaches, and defamations, he endeavoured, 1. To review the promifes; and, 2. To act his faith on them.

1. The promifes were thefe, Pfa. xxxvii. 5, 6. Matth. v. 10, 11, 12. 1 Pet. iii. 14. and iv. 14. Pfa. lxxviii. 13. *Tho' you have lien among the pots, yet fhall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with filver, and her feathers with yellow gold.* q. d. Tho' hitherto you have been as fo many abjects caft into the ends of the earth, as thrown amongst black and fmoky pots, oppreffed with mighty calamities, yet the time is at hand that ye fhall be made white as doves; your innocency and happinefs fhall appear, and your white fhall be intermixt with the colour of pure and yellow gold; i. e. you fhall come to the top of the higheft felicity, and ye fhall be freed from flander and obtain illuftrious glory.

2. In the actings of his faith, he endeavoured 1. To meditate. 2. To pray.

1. His meditations were thefe,

(1.) That we know not how to prevent it. Men may flander, and men will flander fo long as the world lafts; only we have thefe promifes for comfort, and it is the Lord who promifeth, and if he pleafe, he can hide us from the fcourge of tongues; or if he pleafe, he is able to reftore us double to our fhame, Job v. 21. Ifa. lxi. 7.

(2.) That true faith will fortifie the foul againft all reproaches; There is an encouraging voice of the Lord to this end, Ifaiah li. 7. *Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousnefs, the people in whofe heart is my law: fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.*

(3.) That if the wicked reproach more and more, yet it is the duty of Chriftians to exercife patience. Experience of their vanities, and God's gracious dealings with us, will fertifie our hearts: *Fear not thou worm (thou poor defpicable thing) I will help thee, faith the Lord thy Redeemer,* Ifaiah xli. 14. and as for thy reproachers, their doom is before, *Behold all they that are incenfed againft thee fhall be afhamed and confounded; they fhall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee fhall perifh,* ver. 11.

(4.) That faith makes the foul circumfpect, and in this cafe doth ranfack and fan the foul narrowly, to find out what is the matter, and rife of thofe flanders and reproaches: *If ye fuffer for righteousnefs fake, happy are ye,* 1 Pet. iii. 14. it muft be for righteousnefs fake, or there is no bleffing upon it; and fo the apoftle adds, *You muft have a good confcience, that whereas they fpeak evil of you as of evil doers, they may be afhamed that falfey accufe your good converfation in Chrift: for it is better, if the will of God be fo, that ye fuffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing,* v. 16, 17. We are ordinarily more impatient

tient at undeserved, than deserved sufferings; but it is better, saith the apostle, so to suffer, than otherwise. *Let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evil doer, but if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf,* 1 Pet. iv. 15, 16.

(5.) That true faith esteems all such slanders as the most honourable badges of innocence that possibly can be. *If mine adversary should write a book against me, surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me,* Job xxxi. 35, 36. 'I rejoice, said Luther, that Satan fo rages and blasphemes, it is likely that I do him and his kingdom the more mischief.' 'And they that reproach me, said Austin, do against their wills increase mine honour both with God and good men.' The more the dirty feet of men tread and rub on the figure graven in gold, the more lustre they give it: so the more causeless aspersions the wicked cast on the godly, the more bright do they rub their glory: And hence was that choice of Moses, *rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt,* Heb. xi. 25.

II. For prayer, his method was,

(1.) To complain to the Lord, as sometimes David did, Psalm lxxix. 19. *Thou, O Lord, hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee. Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.*

(2.) To petition to the Lord, as otherwhiles David did. *Let me not be ashamed, O Lord, for I have called upon thee, let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave: let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous. O how great is thy goodness,*

which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence, from the pride of men, thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues, Psalm xxxi. 17. &c. Thus, Lord, I beg at thy hands, or if otherways, thou knowest it best in thy wisdom: *Let them alone, and let them curse, it may be the Lord will look on my affliction, and thou Lord wilt requite good for their cursing this day,* 2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12.

(3.) To press the Lord with his gracious promises: as thus; Thou hast said, *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake,* Matth. v. 11. *And if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye: And if ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye,* 1 Pet. iii. 14. These are thy golden promises, now Lord make them good to my soul, let me draw the juice, and sweet, and virtue from every of these promises; let not a word of these promises fall to the ground, but let me have my part, and share, and portion in them.

(4.) To pray to the Lord to forgive all his enemies that trespassed against him, as sometimes Christ did, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,* Matth. vi. 12. Surely in these two things there is much matter of comfort. 1. That our hearts are well, and not ill-affected to any man. 2. That going alone we can humble ourselves, and pray for the authors of all the reproaches and slanders that are unjustly cast on us.

§. 6. *Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Blessings, as derived to us from God, and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ.*

Concerning spiritual blessings, or good things, consider we, I. The promises; II. The exercise of faith in respect of those promises.

I. The promises are of such blessings as arise either from God, from Christ, or from the Spirit of Christ.

I. From God proceeds his love of us, presence with us, and providence over us.

1. Concerning his love of us, we have these promises, Deut. vii. 7, 8, 13. Isaiah liv. 8. Jer. xxxi. 3. Hosea ii. 19. and xiv. 4. John iii. 16. Eph. ii. 4. 1 John iv. 19.

2. Concerning his presence with us, we have these promises, Gen. xxvi. 24. and xxviii. 15. Exod. iii. 12. Joshua i. 5. Jer. i. 8. 1 Chro. xxviii. 20. Isa. xli. 10. Mat. xxviii. 20. Rev. iii. 1.

3. Concerning his providence over us, we have these promises, Psalm xxxiv. 7. and xci. 11, 12. Job xxxvi. 7. Zech. ii. 8. whence (*He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye*) observe, that the Lord, to express the tenderness of his love, names the tenderest part of the body, nay the tenderest piece of the tenderest part, *The chrissal humour*, as the philosophers call it.

II. From Christ we have promises, 1. Of the person of Christ, 2. Of the benefits that flow from Christ.

1. Of the person of Christ, in Gen. ii. 15. where was the first promise, and the foundation of all other promises, because God intended to make good every promise in Christ.

2. Of the benefits that flow from Christ, whether Redemption, Vocation, Justification, Reconciliation, and Adoption.

(1.) Concerning Redemption, we have these promises, Tit. ii. 14. Eph. i. 7. Gal. iii. 13. Heb. ix. 12.

(2.) Concerning Vocation, we have these promises, Acts ii. 39. Rom. viii. 20.

(3.) Concerning Justification, we have these promises, Isa. liiii. 11. Acts xiii. 39. Rom. viii. 33.

Now this Justification consists of two parts: 1. In not imputing sin. 2. Imputing righteousness.

1. For not imputing (or forgiving) sin, we have these promises, Psalm xxxii. 2. Jer. xxxi. 34. Isaiah lv. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 8. Hither tend all those metaphors, Isaiah xliii. 25. and xlv. 22. and xxxviii. 18. Micah vii. 19.

2. For imputing righteousness, we have these promises, Rom. v. 19. 1 Cor. i. 30. Rom. x. 4. Isa. lxi. 10. Gal. iii. 6. This phrase is used ten times in one chapter, Rom. iv. 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24.

(4.) Concerning Reconciliation, we have these promises, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. Eph. ii. 14, 16. Col. i. 21, 22.

(5.) Concerning Adoption, we have these promises, Gal. iii. 26. John i. 12. Rom. ix. 26. Gal. iv. 4, 5, 7.

III. From the Spirit of Christ, we have promises, 1. Of the Spirit himself. 2. Of the operation of the Spirit.

1. Of the Spirit himself, in Joel ii. 28, 29. Acts ii. 17, 18. John xiv. 16, 17. Eph. i. 13. Gal. iii. 14.

2. Of the operation of the Spirit, and that. (1.) In general, as Sanctification. (2.) In special, as Spiritual Graces, and Spiritual Duties.

1. Concerning Sanctification, we have these promises, Mic. vii. 19. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Heb. viii. 10. and x. 16. 1 Thes. v. 23. 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5.

Concerning Grace and Duties, we shall handle them anon.

II. For the exercise of faith concerning the promises, that we may live by them, go we to Meditation, and Prayer.

1. For meditation, and the matter of it, consider these things:

(1.) That faith (considering the privileges of God's children) admires and adores, *O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men! How excellent is thy loving kindness, O Lord, therefore the children of men put their trust un-*
der

der the shadow of thy wings, Psal. xxxi. 19. and xxxvi. 7.

(2.) That faith, in consideration hereof, rests upon God, and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, to receive whatsoever may be good and profitable to the soul: Psalm xxiii. 1. *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.* Isa. xl. 11. *He shall lead his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.* What can they want, who have God for their Father, Christ for their Saviour, the Spirit for their sanctifier? *Thou Israel art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend: thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away: fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness,* Isa. xl. 8, 9, 10.

(3.) That faith hereupon sets an high price upon Christ, upon God in Christ, upon the Spirit of Christ: these promises are more worth than kingdoms, empires, the whole world, which made holy David say, *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul,* Psal. xciv. 19. *q. d.* I have multitudes of thoughts, some running this way, some running that way, some on this pleasure, some on that profit, but my soul is only comforted in the thoughts of thee: pleasures, profits, honours, all are vain and empty, and nothing is to be rested on, to be delighted in, but Jesus Christ; yea there's a full content in Jesus Christ; let the world be filled with trouble and sorrow, even now faith carries a merry heart.

(4.) Faith in these promises doth greatly enlarge the heart towards God, and stirreth up to an earnest study of holiness; if a christian be much in the meditation of God's

singular goodness in Christ, it will even constrain him to yield up himself wholly to God, in all manner of godly conversation: Psal. xxvi. 2, 3. *Examine, O Lord, and prove me, try my reins and my heart; for thy loving kindness is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth.*

(5.) Faith ever runs to these promises in all straits, and here it finds comfort: nature teacheth man and beast in troubles and storms to make to a shelter; the child runs to the arms of the mother, the birds to their nests, *the conies to the rock,* Prov. xxx. 26. so must the soul have a sanctuary, an hiding place, when danger and trouble comes, now where can it take up a surer and safer refuge, than with God and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ? indeed God it dares not look at, but in Christ; and the Spirit proceeds not but from Christ, to Christ therefore it runs immediately; it is Christ, *who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption,* 1 Cor. i. 30. 'Come, faith faith, let us out to Christ, and if he receive us not presently, let us stay a little; he is full of bowels and tenderness towards poor sinners, he keeps open house for all comers, he invites all, entertains all, old sinners, young sinners, great sinners, less sinners; his promise is sure too; *him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out,* John vii. 37.' Thus faith takes the believer off from self, civil life, estate, friends, and hangs the soul alone upon that true friend, the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath manifested the greatness of his love to poor sinners, by dying for them, and sending his Spirit to sanctifie and comfort them, John xv. 13.

2. For prayer, and the manner of it, observe this method:

1. Confess and acknowledge God's mercies both in his promises and performances: Say, Lord, thou hast said, *I will love thee freely: And I will be with thee, even to the end of the world. He that toucheth*

you, toucheth the apple of mine eye. And all is yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's, And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, etc. Hof. xiv.

4. Mat. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Joh. xiv. 16. Surely, Lord, thou art true in thy sayings; I believe by virtue of this and that promise, I have the love, and promise, and providence of God, I am redeemed, called, justified, reconciled, adopted by Christ; I have the Spirit of Christ, I am sanctified in some measure by that Spirit, I have all this of free grace, and by virtue of a promise.

(2.) Pray for this increase of faith, and for a sougher and further sight of this belief: 'Give me, gracious Father, to believe as thou hast promised; create in me the hand of faith, and make it stronger and stronger, that I may effectually receive what in mercy thou reachest forth; and then give me the spirit of revelation, that I may discern truly what thou hast given me, that my lips may sing of thy praise all the day long.'

(3.) Praise God for his mercies, and quietly rest in the promises: 'O Lord, thou hast freely loved, and redeemed, and sanctified my soul; O how should I praise thee, how should I advance and set thee up on high? Salvation, and glory, and honour, and praise be given to thy name, etc. I praise thee for my election, vocation, justification, sanctification, etc. but above all, for the fountain of all, the Lord Jesus Christ;' It is my Christ justifies, and my Christ sanctifies: Lord, thou hast given Christ for my wisdom and sanctification, as well as for righteousness and redemption: Lord, thou hast appointed Christ to be the beginner and finisher of my holiness, and surely he will not leave that work imperfect, whereunto he is ordained of the Father; were the progress of this building committed to my care and oversight, there might be cause of fear,

but since thou hast laid all upon Christ, my only and all-sufficient Redeemer; Lord, encrease my faith, that I may hold him fast and be safe, and so at last I may sing Hallelujahs to thee in heaven for ever.

§. 7. *Of the manner of this life of faith in spiritual graces.*

THE operation of the Spirit in general, we told you was Sanctification; now the operation of the Spirit in special appears in Spiritual Graces, and Spiritual Duties.

Spiritual graces we shall consider in their Kinds, and Degrees.

And of them both give, (I.) The promises. (II.) The exercise of faith in respect of those promises.

1. The kinds of graces are these, Knowledge, and Faith, and Hope, and Joy, and Love, and Fear, and Obedience, and Repentance, and Humility, and Meekness, and Patience, and Righteousness, and Uprightness, and Peace of Conscience, and Zeal, and Perseverance; sixteen graces in number: concerning which the Lord hath made gracious promises,

(1.) Of them, to give them.

(2.) To them, to reward them.

The 1st grace is Knowledge, and we find some promises, Of it, Psal. xxv. 14. Jer. xxxi. 34. Isa. ii. 2, 3. Mic. iv. 1, 2. Eph. iii. 5. Rev. xxi. 23. 2. To it, as Prov. iii. 14. Ps. xci. 14. 2 Pet. i. 2. Pro. iii. 18.

The 2^d grace is Faith, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Eph. ii. 8. John vi. 37. observe here these promises of assurance, the highest measure of faith, Psal. l. 23. Ezek. xxxiv. 30. Isa. lx. 16. Ps. xcvi. 11. 2. To it, as 2 Chr. x. 20. Pro. xxix. 25. Isa. xxvi. 3. Acts x. 43. Rom. xviii. 4. Acts xiii. 39. Job. i. 12. vii. 38. iii. 16, 36. v. 24. vi. 47.

The 3^d grace is Hope, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Ps. lvi. 5. Prov. iv. 32. Job xiii. 15. 2. To it, as Psalm xl. 4. Rom. iv. 8, 22. viii. 24.

The 4th grace is Joy, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Pf. xxxvi. 8, 9. lxiv. 10. lxxviii. 3. xcvi. 11. cxviii. 15. Isa. xii. 2, 3. xxxv. throughout. lvi. 7. lxxi. 13, 14. John xvi. 22. Rom. xiv. 18. 2. To it, Pf. lxxxix. 15, 16.

The 5th grace is Love, especially of God, and we may find some promises, 1. Of it, as Cant. i. 4. Deut. xxx. 6. 2. To it, as Pf. xci. 14. cxlv. 10. Pro. viii. 21. Deut. vii. 9. 1 Cor. viii. 3. ii. 9, 10. Jam. i. 12. and ii. 5.

The 6th grace is Fear, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. Hof. iii. 5. 2. To it, as Pf. ciii. 11. xxxi. 19. cxlvii. 11. Mal. iii. 16, 17.

The 7th grace is Obedience, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Ezek. xi. 19, 20. xxxvi. 26, 27. 2. To it, as Deut. xxviii. 1. to 14.

The 8th grace is Repentance, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Acts v. 30, 31. Ezek. xi. 19, xx. 43. xxxvi. 31. 2. To it, as Mal. iii. 7. 2 Chro. vii. 14. Isa. i. 16, 17, 18. Job iii. 27, 28. Jer. iv. 14.

The 9th grace is Humility, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Gal. v. 22. 2. To it, as Prov. xv. 53. xxii. 4. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5. Isa. lvii. 15. Matth. v. 3.

The 10th grace is Meekness, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8. Gal. v. 22, 23. 2. To it, as Psalm xxxvii. 11. cxlvii. 6. Isa. xxix. 9. Psalm xxv. 3. Zeph. ii. 3. Mat. v. 5. xi. 29. Pf. cxlix. 4.

The 11th grace is Patience, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as James i. 5. 2. To it, as Heb. x. 36. James v. 11.

The 12th grace is Righteousness, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Rev. xix. 7, 8. 2. To it, as Pf. xi. 7. Isa. xxxii. 17, 18. Pro. xiv. 32. Pf. cxii. 6. Mat. xxv. 46.

The 13th grace is Uprightness, or sincerity of heart, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Jer. xxxi. 53. l. 5. 2. To it, as Pf. lxxxiv. 11. Pro. xiv. 11. Pf. cxii. 2.

2 Chro. xvii. 9. Psalm cxii. 4. lxxxiv. 11. xxxvii. 37. xv. 1, 2. Gen. xvii. 1, 2. 1 Chro. xxix. 17. Prov. xii. 22. xxxviii. 18.

The 14th grace is Peace of conscience, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as John xiv. 27. Gal. vi. 16. Isa. lvii. 19. liv. 10. 2. To it, as Phil. iv. 7.

The 15th grace is Zeal, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Jer. xx. 9. 2 Cor. vii. 11. 2. To it, as Num. xxv. 12, 13. Rev. iii. 10, 20.

The 16th grace is Perseverance, and we find some promises, 1. Of it, as Pf. lxxxix. 28. Prov. xii. 3. Isa. xlvi. 4. 2. To it, as Matth. x. 22. Rev. ii. 26.

The degrees of graces follow, and we find some promises, 1. Thereof, as Isa. xlv. 3, 4. Mal. iv. 2. Pf. lxxxiv. 7. Pro. iv. 18. 2. Thereto, as Rom. xiii. 11. 2 Pet. i. 8.

II. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to Meditation, and Prayer.

1. For meditation, and the matter of it, consider these things :

(1.) That of ourselves we have no ability to attain any of these graces: every one can say, *I purpose well*, but the question is, whether they build not on their own strength: many a man, especially in time of his sickness, danger, disgrace, will make fair promises of amendment, but when the rod is removed, all is forgotten: what may be the reason? he stands on his own feet, he presumes to go alone of himself, and by his own strength, and then no marvel if he falls and catcheth many a knock: if we will have any of these graces, then deny we ourselves: *I will keep thy statutes*, said David, Psalm cxix. 8. but immediately upon his resolution he cries, *O forsake me not utterly*: Purposes thus grounded, bring forth holy performances, but of ourselves we can expect nothing.

(2.) That God's Spirit will infuse these graces, and the increase of these graces into them that believe: many would fain have knowledge, and faith and hope and joy,

joy, &c. but they exercise not their faith to believe God and his promises: *I knew a man in Christ*, could Paul say concerning his revelation, 2 Cor. xii. 2. So, I know a man in Christ off and on, unstayed, dismayed at his manifold slips, strong corruptions, little prevailings against them, and (when all came to all) he could find no help till he went to a promise, and by faith believed that God would aid and assist, and do the whole work for him; it is good to believe that (according to his promise) God will sanctifie our natures, enable us to holiness, and bestow all his graces on us.

(3.) That for the degrees of these graces, it is necessary to improve them; graces improved, are the ready way to have them increased: God ever bestows the greatest measure, where he finds a care to put them forth to advantage: *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance*, Matth. xiii. 12. As men increase their substance by labour, and learning by diligence, so he that improves graces, shall more and more abound in them.

2. For prayer and the parts of it, observe this method:

(1.) Confess and acknowledge our inabilities: O Lord, I have no grace by nature, I have no power to cleanse my own heart: O Lord, I have defaced thine image, but I cannot repair it; I may say with the apostle, *When I would do well, evil is present with me*, Rom. vii. 21. But I find no means to perfect what I desire: I am not able to crawl about the doing of that which is good: O when shall I be set at liberty, that I might do the work of God, and run the race of his commandments! O that I had knowledge, and faith, and hope, and joy, and love!

(2.) Look we up to the power, and grace and truth of God, and press him therewith: Lord, I have heard of thy power, thou art God almighty, who callest the things that are not, as if they were;

thou canst, if thou wilt, work in me these graces, and create them in me, as thou didst gloriously create them in Adam, the first man: Lord, I have heard also of thy grace and truth, thou art as faithful to keep, as free to make these sweet precious promises; thy grace is unsearchable, thy word purer than silver seven times refined: O then make good thy promises, I press thee with thy power, grace and truth: O replenish me with thy graces, give me knowledge, and faith, and hope, &c.

(3.) Look we on the promises, and pray by them, or turn them into prayers: faith hearkeneth what the Lord speaketh, and speaketh back again in fervent groans and desires to whatsoever it hearkeneth: hence we can make no prayer in boldness, faith or comfort, but for things promised, and in that manner as they are promised. Thus Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 9.) and David (2 Sam. vii. 27. &c.) prayed by a promise, and thus should we pray by a promise, and then we may be sure we pray according to his will. In want of other rhetorick and oratory, let us urge God with this repetition: 'Lord, thou hast promised, Lord, thou hast promised;' Thou hast made many sweet precious promises of graces, and of degrees of graces: thou hast said, *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*; and, *all that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me*; and, *the righteous hath hope in his death*; and, *the righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him*; and, *they shall go from strength to strengths every one of them in Zion, appearing before God*, Psal. xxv. 14. John vi. 37. Pro. xiv. 32. Psal. lxxxiv. 7. O make these promises effectual to me, *blow upon my garden, that the spices (these graces) may flow out*.

§. 8. *Of the manner of this life of Faith in spiritual duties.*

AS spiritual graces, so spiritual duties, are of the operation of God's Spirit:

now the Duties are twenty, concerning which we shall give (I.) The promises. (II.) The exercise of faith in respect of the promises.

The 1st duty is Prayer, to which are affixed these promises, Psalm v. 3. x. 17. lxxv. 2. l. 15. xii 17, &c. Prov. xv. 29. Zech. xiii. 8, 9. Rom. viii. 13. James v. 15.

The 2^d duty is Praises, to which are affixed these promises, 1 Sam. ii. 30. Psalm l. 23. lxxvii. 5, 6.

The 3^d duty is Preaching, to which Mat xxviii. 20. John v. 25.

The 4th duty is Reading the word, to which Psalm xix. 8. Prov. i. 4.

The 5th duty is Loving the word, to which Psalm cxix. 165. and cxii. 1.

The 6th duty is Waiting on the word, to which Prov. viii. 34, 35.

The 7th duty is Harkening to the word, to which Isa. lv. 2, 3, Acts v. 20, xx. 22. xiii. 26.

The 8th duty is Sacraments of, (1.) Baptism, to which Acts ii. 38. xxii. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

(2.) Lord's Supper, to which Isaiah xxv. 6. Prov. ix. 5, 6. Matth. xxvi. 26.

The 9th duty is A lawful oath, to which Jer. xii. 16. Psalm xv. 4.

The 10th duty is Fasting, to which Jam. iv. 9, &c. Mat. vi. 18.

The 11th duty is Meditation, to which Psalm i. 2. Prov. xiv. 22. Phil. iv. 8, 9.

The 12th duty is Self-examination, to which 1 Cor. xi. 31. Gal. vi. 4.

The 13th duty is Sanctification of the Lord's day, to which Isaiah lviii. 13, 14. lvi. 2. Jer. xvii. 26.

The 14th duty is Watchfulness, to which Mat. xxiv. 46, 47. Luke xii. 37, &c. Rev. xvi. 15.

The 15th duty is Conference, to which Prov. xii. 14. xvi. 13. Mal. iii. 16. Luke xxiv. 32.

The 16th duty is Reproof, to which Prov. xxiv. 25. xxviii. 23.

The 17th duty is Almsgiving, to which

Psalm xli. 1, 2, 3. Luke xiv. 13, &c.

The 18th duty is Seeking of God, to which Psalm xxxiv. 10. Ezra viii. 22.

The 19th duty is Waiting on God, to which Isaiah xl. 31. lxxiv. 4. xlix. 23.

The 20th duty is Delighting in God, to which Psalm xxxvi. 4

II. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to Meditation, and Prayer.

1. For meditation, and the matter of it, consider these things:

(1.) That God deals graciously with his people: he might out of his absolute sovereignty over us, command only, and we were bound to obey in every of these Duties; but he is pleased (the better to quicken us to obedience) to annex these gracious promises.

(2.) That as he is gracious to us, so we should be cheerful in our duties to him: this cheerfulness of service is the very fruit of faith; *By faith Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof, an offering to the Lord, Gen. iv. 4. By faith David went with the multitude into the house of God, with the voice of joy and of praise, Psa. xlii. 4.* It is the voice of faith, I will sing and give praise with the best members I have.

(3.) That to make us cheerful, we should rouse ourselves to awaken to the work of our God: 'arise, O my soul, why sleepest thou? stir up thyself with readiness to obey the charge of God in the duties prescribed; look on the saints who have gone before thee; they endured imprisonment, loss of liberty, spoiling of their goods, hazard of life. Thou art not yet called to suffer, but to obey, why dost thou delay, or goest forth unwillingly? wouldst thou reign with them, and not labour with them? receive the prize, and not run the race? divide the spoil, and not fight the battle? look on the promise annexed to the duty: *I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek me in vain, faith God, Isa. xlv. 19.* O my soul, arise, contend forward towards the

the mark, heaven is worth all thy labour.'

(4.) That to remove all Remora's the Lord hath promised to assist us in these duties by his own Spirit: besides the promises to duties, we have promises of duties, God deals with us (as we do by way of commerce one with another) propounding mercy by covenant and condition, yet his covenant of grace is always a gracious covenant; for he not only gives the good things, but helps us in performing the condition by his own Spirit; he works our hearts to believe and repent, &c. and he gives what he requires: For instance, in one place he commands, *Cast away from you all your transgressions, and make you a new heart, and a new spirit*; and in another place he promiseth, *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. In one place he commands them, *Circumcise the foreskin of your hearts*, Deut. x. 16. and in another place he promiseth, *That he will circumcise their hearts*, Deut. xxx. 6. in one place he commands us, *To keep his commandments*, Eccl. xii. 13. in another place he promiseth to cause us, *To walk in his statutes*, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. in one place he commands us, *To fear him*, Eccl. xii. 13. and in another place he promiseth, *To put his fear into our hearts*, Jer. xxxii. 40. in one place he commands us, *To pray, to ask, to seek, and knock*, Matth. vii. 7. and in another place he promiseth, *To pour upon us the Spirit of grace and supplication*, Zech. xii. 10. These promises and duties are the foundation of all our performances, and those promises to duties are the rewards of his free grace and good pleasure; we do not by working cause him to fulfill his promises, but he by promising doth enable us to perform our works, and so he rewards us accordingly.

2. For prayer, and the parts of it, observe this method.

(1.) Acknowledge the goodness and free-grace of God in these promises; 'O Lord, why shouldst thou allure me to that which I am every way bound to? If I had none of these promises, I have already in hand a world of mercies, which do infinitely bind me to duty; and wilt thou yet add this and that promise, to this and that duty? O miracle of mercies! O the goodness of God!'

(2.) Bewail our own dulness and sloth to the duty; 'And yet, O Lord, how dull, and remiss, and slighty am I in the practice of this or that duty? thou hast said, *Cursed is the man that doth the work of the Lord negligently*, Jer. xlviii. 10. and, *cursed be the deceiver, that hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing*, Mal. i. 14. O then what is my portion, who have sacrificed that which is torn and sick unto the great king, and Lord of hosts, whose name is dreadful among the heathen? No marvel if I feel no power, no sweet in the ordinances of grace, whilst I deal partially, hear perfunctorily, pray coldly, labour not to feed on the promise, and to suck vigour out of it: O Lord, thou lovest a cheerful giver, but my services are maimed, and corrupt, and dead, and superficial, and very uncheerful.'

(3.) Importune the Lord to revive and quicken our dead hearts to the duty; so prays David, Psalm cxliii. 10. *Teach me to do thy will, thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness*; so prays the church, Cant. i. 4. *Draw me, and we will run after thee*; and so let us pray, 'Give me a cheerful heart in thy service, animate and enliven my heart by thy blessed Spirit, give me to do what thou requirest, *incite my heart to thy statutes, and not to covetousness*. Psalm cxix. 36.'

(4.) Implore the assistance of God's Spirit

rit to every good duty, beg acceptance of our persons and performances in the Lord Jesus Christ, press him with his promises to set on duties, and to reward duties; and whatever duty we do, press him with that especial promise belonging unto it: Thus if we meditate and pray, and pray and meditate, we may live by faith, in reference to spiritual duties.

§. 9. *Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in Things eternal.*

THINGS eternal are either *Evil*, as *Damnation*; *Good*, as *Salvation*.

Concerning both, we shall I. Give you the promises; and, II. The exercise of faith in respect of these promises.

1. Concerning *Damnation*, or eternal confusion, we have these promises against it, Isa. xlv. 17. Rom. viii. 1.

2. Concerning *Salvation*, we have these promises for it, Rom. vi. 23. 1 Theff. iv. 17. *God hath promised us a kingdom*, Matth. xxv. 34. *An heavenly kingdom*, Matth. vii. 21. *An eternal kingdom*, 2 Pet. i. 11. *A crown of life*, James i. 12. *A crown of righteousness*, 2 Tim. iv. 8. *An unaccessible crown of glory*, 1 Pet. v. 4.

II. For the exercise of Faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to *Meditation*, and *Prayer*.

1. For *meditation*, and the matter of it, consider these things:

(1.) That faith in the precious promises of eternal life quiets and cheers the heart in the midst of discouragements: This we see in the lives and deaths of God's faithful servants, Heb. x. 34. *who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves, that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance.*

(2.) That faith strives to enter into the possession of this kingdom, by degrees: Men that purchase an inheritance to come in hereafter, they are glad if any part fall into their hands for the present: Fulness of glory is reserved for the life to come, but the beginnings of glory (as peace of

conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, sanctification of the Spirit) are vouchsafed here; *Grace is the beginning of glory, and glory is the perfection of grace*; now as grace grows, so we enter upon the possession of our inheritance: Hence lively grace covets grace more and more, and that we may get heaven by degrees, and by parcels.

(3.) Faith earnestly desires and longs after the full accomplishment of glory, *Ourselves also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body*, Rom. viii. 23. *I am in a full strait* (said Paul) *betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better*, Phil. i. 23. *Salvation is the end of faith, heaven is the home of believers: Now all would be at home, all things desire perfection in their kind, this makes the believer to long after glory.*

2. For *prayer*, and the parts of it, observe this method:

(1.) Confess we our former carelessness to enter upon this inheritance: 'O Lord, I have slighted thy promises, I have neglected the motions of thy holy Spirit, I have not carefully improved the gifts received, I have not laboured more and more to be sealed with the promised Spirit: Ah! Lord, what a dwarf am I in holiness and sanctification? by reason of my sloth, the powers of grace are so enfeebled that I can scarce breath or sigh, or crawl in the way to heaven: O that I have not so earnestly sought, as I might, to make heaven sure to myself, that I have not entered possession thereof, so far as in this life is given me of grace.'

(2.) Pray that the Lord would increase our faith, seal us by his Spirit, lead us in the way of peace, cause us to grow up in holiness, make us wise to prize and value, to taste and relish the very joys of heaven; and above all, that he would assure our consciences of our right and title thereto: O it is God that scaleth, and makes us to read

the sealing; it is God that promiseth heaven, and afflicts the heart with the goodness and worth of the thing promised; it is God that, by the pledges of his favour, and earnestness of his Spirit, doth testify our adoption, and causeth us certainly to apprehend what he doth testify; pray then, 'Who am I, Lord, that thou shouldst make such ample and free promises to thy poor servant? it is of thy free mercy, and according to thine own heart. *And now, O God, establish, I beseech thee, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant,* 2 Sam. vii. 25. O seal unto me the promised inheritance, and make me assuredly know what those hopes are which thou hast reserved for me in heaven: of thy free-grace thou calledst me to this hope, therefore is thy servant bold to intreat the sense of thy love, the knowledge of this hope, the increase of grace, the assurance of thy mercy.'

(3.) Praise God for his promises of eternal life: 'O Lord, thou hast looked on my base estate, and visited me with mercy from on high; of a stranger and foreigner, thou hast made me a free denizen of the New Jerusalem: now, I see, I read it in thy precious promises, that my name is registered in heaven; an eternal weight of glory is reserved for me; heaven is my home, my hope, my inheritance: O where should my heart be but where my treasure is? where should my thoughts be, but where my hope is? Now all glory, and honour, and praise be given to my God. O the incomprehensible love and favour of my dear Lord! what a mercy is this? what promises are these? my soul rejoiceth in thee my God, my spirit shall bless thy name for ever and ever.'

§. 10. *Of the manner of this life of faith in regard of others.*

WE have done with the promises that concern ourselves: now follow such special promises as we find in holy writ

concerning others; and they have reference I. To our own family, II. Godly society further enlarged, III. The church of Christ particular, and general.

I. The members of our family are, either husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant.

1. For the husband and wife, if godly, they have a promise from the Lord, Psalm cxxviii. Prov. xxxi. 28. and xi. 16. Job v. 25.

2. For parent and child, God hath made a gracious covenant with them, Gen. xvii. 7. 9. Acts ii. 39. Jer. xxxii. 39. Pro. xx. 7. Good parents (though poor) leave their children a good patrimony, for they have laid up many prayers for them in heaven, and they leave God's favour for their possession, and his promises for a sure inheritance, Psalm xxxvii. 25, 26. cxii. 2. xxv. 13. xxxvii. 29. Prov. xi. 21. xiii. 22. Isa. xlv. 3, 4. liv. 13. and children, obeying their parents, have these promises, Ez. xx. 12. Eph. vi. 2. Jer. xxxv. 18, 19. Prov. i. 8, 9. and vi. 20.

3. For master and servant, they have sweet promises, Prov. iii. 33. and xiv. 11. Job viii. 16. especially the servant that is truly obedient, Col. iii. 23, 24. 1 Pet. ii. 19. here consider (1.) Magistrates, Deut. xvii. 19, 20. Psalm cxxxii. 18. (2.) Ministers, Psal. cv. 15. Rev. ii. 1. Isa. xlix. 4.

II. Godly society (out of our own families) hath precious promises, as, Pro. xiii. 20. Mal. xvi. 17. Matth. xviii. 20.

III. The church of Christ, whether particular, as publick assemblies, hath blessed promises, Isa. xxxiii. 20, 21. and lix. 21. Matth. xviii. 20. 1 Cor. v. 4. Rev. ii. 1. Psalm xxvi. 8. and cxxxiii. 3. Mic. iv. 4, 11, 12. or whether general and universal, it hath glorious promises, as, Mat. xvi. 8. If. xxvii. 3. Psalm cxxv. 2. Zech. ix. 16. Here comes in all the promises, *1st*, Of calling the Jews, as, If. lix. 20. Rom. xi. 23, 26. Hof. xiii. 14. and xiv. 2, to 8. *2^{dly}*, Of bringing in the Gentiles, as, Isai. xlix.

22, 23. Rev. xxi. 24. John x. 16. Isa. lx. 3. 5. 8. Acts x. 14. Eph. ii. 12, 19. 3dly, Of the destruction of antichrist, as, 2 Th. ii. 8. Rev. xvii. 16. and xviii. 21. where each word hath almost a gradation, in that *an angel, a mighty angel, taketh a stone, and a great stone, even a millstone, which he letteth not barely fall, but casteth into the sea,* whence nothing ordinarily is recovered, much less a millstone, thrust from such a hand, and with such force.

Now for the exercising of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to Meditation, and Prayer.

1. For Meditation, and the matter of it, consider these things.

(1.) That we have had the performance of many of these promises in hand; and this may persuade us that the residue (especially of the church's flourishing, and of antichrist's downfall) is as sure as that part already accomplished, which we see with our eyes: experience should strengthen faith, and breed an assured hope in God's people, of the Lord's most glorious appearing, and this hope shall not make us ashamed.

(2.) That the time is now for the church's restoring, and for bringing in more kingdoms from antichrist to Christ; what else mean all these shakings in all the kingdoms of the world at this time? therefore study we this time of God, and in our places and callings work with providence, now we have a season to help up the church, God's holy mountaine.

2. For prayer, and the parts of it, observe this method.

(1.) Confess our former neglect in our several relations: 'O Lord, I have not done my duty in my own family, nor among christ-

tians in the churches of Christ; I have not performed my vows, served my generation, helped onward the building of Zion: and now, Lord, what shall I say, but confess, to thy glory, and my own shame, my disrespect of others good, or of the communion of saints.'

(2.) Pray for a blessing on others, as on our own selves, forget not our relations to others in our best prayers; be importunate with God more especially for Zion, *O look upon Zion, the city of our Solemnities,* Isa. xxxiii. 20. *let thine eyes see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; let not one of the stakes thereof be removed, nor any of the cords be broken.*

(3.) Press we the Lord with all his precious promises, either to our families, or christian societies, or to the churches of Christ: we have a promise that *The Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smock by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defence,* Isa. iv. 5. Now Lord, make good thy word, &c.

Conclude with, 'I believe, that whatsoever God hath said in any of these respects, he will fulfil it in his own time: *heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot, one tittle of God's word shall fail,* Matth. v. 18. It may be for the present, things seem contrary, yet God hath said it, (should a soul say) and that's enough for me: If I can but really acknowledge and believe, that God is able to do it, he will then speak from heaven, as he did once on earth, *According to your faith, be it unto you,* Matth. ix. 28, 29.' Thus much of *The Life of Faith.*

CHAP. X. SECT. I.

Of the Nature of FAMILY-DUTIES.

Hitherto of the duties which concern every man in his own particular;

next to them succeed Family duties; and they are such duties as ought to be jointly

or respectively observed by the families and houses of the people of God. This is implied by that threat, Jer. x. 15. *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name*; and by that example of Joshua, Chap. xxiv. 15. *But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*; and by that promise of God, Jer. xxxi. 1. *At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.*

§. 2. *Of the preparatives to Family-duties.*

NOW that we may comfortably carry on these Family-duties, observe we, I. Our entrance into them. II. Our proceedings in them.

I. For entrance, we must lay a good foundation for tractableness unto religion in those that belong to this family, as, (I.) In the governor. (II.) In the governed.

I. In the governor whose duty it is;

(1.) To endeavour in a special manner for knowledge in God's word, and for holiness of conversation in a christian walking; this would tend much to the preservation of his authority, which otherwise would be slighted and disregarded, thro' an aptness in inferiors to take occasion therefrom.

(2.) To marry in the Lord, 1 Cor. vii. 39. and then to live chastly in wedlock, that there may be an holy seed, Mal. ii. 15. Now that he may marry in the Lord, 1. Let piety be the mover of his affection; and personage, parentage and portion be only as a comfortable accessory, considerable in a second place: christianity and grace is the chief golden link and noble tie, which hath the power and privilege to make marriage a lovely and everlasting bond. 2. Let him ply the throne of grace with fervency of prayer; a good wife is a more immediate gift of God: whence Solomon could say, *houses and*

riches are the inheritance of fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord, Prov. xix.

14. Such a rare, and precious jewel is to be sued and sought for at God's mercy-seat with extraordinary importunity and zeal; and if she be procured at God's hand by prayer, he shall find a thousand times more sweetness and comfort, than if she be cast on him by an ordinary providence. 3. Let him observe and mark these six points in his choice; as, 1. The report: 2. The looks: 3. The speech: 4. The apparel. 5. The companions: 6. The education: These are like the pulses, that show the fitness and godliness of any party with whom he ought to marry.

3. To beware whom he admits to dwell with him, that they be tractable to religious courtes: See David's resolution herein, Psalm ci. 6, 7. *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way shall serve me; he that worketh deceit, shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies, shall not tarry in my sight.*

2. In the governed; whose duty is both to join together in the performance of Family-duties with their governor, and to submit to his government, Prov. i. 8, 9. *My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother; for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*

These preparatives I pin upon the front or porch of this family: now to the family duties themselves, and how they must be exercised.

§. 3. *Of the duties of governors in general.*

IN the proceedings of these family duties, we are to consider the Duties I. Of the governors. II. Of the governed.

I. The governors, if (as it is in marriage) there be more than one; as, *First*, The chief governor, to wit, the husband; *Secondly*, The helper, to wit, the wife; both

both these owe Duties to their families, and Duties to one another.

1. The Duties they owe to their Families, are either in general, to the whole, or in particular, according to their several relations.

1. That which in general they owe to the whole family, is either to their bodies, or their souls.

(1.) To their bodies; concerning which, saith the apostle, 1 Tim. v. 8. *He that provideth not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.* Now as the Spirit of God chargeth us with this duty, so he setteth us about such things whereby this may be compassed; as, 1. That every one should have some honest and good calling, and walk diligently in it; *Let him that stole, steal no more, saith the apostle, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good,* Eph. iv. 28. 2. That he bear a low sail, and keep within compass; remembering that of Solomon, *He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread,* Prov. xii. 9.

2. To their souls; concerning which, some duties they are to perform to the family, and some to require of the family.

I. The duties they must perform to them are

1. To provide that they may live under the publick ministry, for otherwise, how should they be brought into the sheep-fold of Christ, if they hear not the voice of the chief shepherd speaking unto them by those whom he hath sent?

2. To oversee the ways of their families, that they serve God; and as in all other duties, so especially in sanctifying the Sabbaths: to this the very words in the fourth commandment do bind all masters of families; *Remember thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man servant and thy maid;* Where the Lord speaks by name

to the governors, as if he would make them overseers of this work of sanctifying his sabbaths.

3. To set their house in order for the service of God, to offer prayers and praises to the Lord morning and evening. To this purpose, *pray continually* (saith the apostle) 1 Thess. v. 17. which we must not understand of uninterrupted and incessant pouring out of prayers, as the Massilians or Euchitæ did; but of morning and evening prayers, the apostle here speaking in reference and in analogy to the continual, or daily sacrifices. This was David's practice, *Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall bear my voice;* Psal. lv. 17. and this was Job's practice, who sent for, and sanctified his sons and daughters, *and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: thus did Job continually,* Job i. 5. And this was Abraham's practice wheresoever he came, *to build an altar to God,* Gen. xii. 17. and xiii. 4. and xxi. 33. where God should be worshipped jointly of him and his family: and this was Christ's practice for himself and his family, Mat. xiv. 19. and xxvi. 30. John xvii. 1.

4. To instruct their families privately in matters of religion, that they may not only profess, but feel the power of religion in their lives and conversations: this duty hath these specials belonging to it;

(1.) A familiar catechizing of them in the principles of religion; thus were parents commanded of old, Deut. vi. 7. *Thou shalt teach these words diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up,* Deut. vi. 7.

(2.) A daily reading of scriptures in their hearing, directing them to mark and to make use of them: so Timothy was trained up by his parents, and that from his childhood, 2 Tim. iii. 15.

(3.) A careful endeavouring that they may profit by the publick ministry: to this end, 1. They must prepare them to hear the word, by considering God's ordinances, promises and their own necessities. 2. They must remember them to look in the word for a Christ, and for communion with Christ. 3. They must examine them after the ordinances, what they have learned, and what use they can make of it; thus Christ, after he had preached a parable to his disciples, he said unto them, *Know ye not this parable, and how then will ye know all parables?* Mark iv. 13. and then he expounds the parable to them.

II. The duties they are to require of the family, are both carefully to frequent the publick ministry, and diligently to be conversant in the private worship of God, and constantly to practise all holy and Christian duties comprised briefly in the commandments of God; and they are to require these things, not only by telling them, calling on them, catechising them, admonishing them, but, if they be negligent, by correcting them.

Now this correction must be ministred in Wisdom, and in Patience.

1. In Wisdom, whose property it is to find out the right party that committed the fault, to consider of what sort and nature the fault is, to weigh circumstances of age, discretion and occasions; and to look to the mind of the doer, whether negligence or mere simplicity brought him to it.

2. In Patience, whose property it is to make the fault manifest to the offender that his conscience may be touched therewith; to hear what the offender can say in his own defence, and accordingly to allow or disallow; to avoid bitterness, which sooner will harden the heart, than reform the manners of the offender: these rules being observed, and the heart lifted up in prayer to God for direction and blessing, this correction is necessary, as is evident in Gen. xxx. 2. Pro. xxiii. 14. and xix. 18.

These are the duties that governors owe to their families in respect of their souls; to correct them, catechize them, admonish them, call on them, read to them, pray for them, &c. only with these limitations.

1. That they presume not above their callings: this was Paul's exhortation, *That no man take this honour to himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron*, Heb. v. 4. The honour here, is the honour of the publick ministry, except that; and I know not but that every governour of a family, who hath special abilities, utterance, memory, may read scriptures, repeat sermons, pray, teach and instruct out of scriptures, 1 Pet. iv. 10. Thus Jacob said to his houshold, *Put away the strange gods that are among you*, Gen. xxxv. 2. *And without all contradiction, saith the apostle, the less is blessed of the better*, Heb. vii. 7. *And if the women would learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home*, 1 Cor. xiv. 35. Thus Origen (Hom. 9. on Lev.) would have the word expounded in christian families; and Austin saith, 'That which the preacher is in the pulpit, the same is the housholder in the house.'

2. That they presume not above their gifts: this was Paul's exhortation to every man, *Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith*, Rom. xii. 3. Yet I deny not but in some cases they may lawfully depute or substitute some one in the family, whom they judge fittest unto the service and employment, which they themselves should ordinarily perform, as in case of old age and weakness of body; Thus Samuel *being old made his sons judges*, 1 Sam. viii. 1. Or in want of good utterance or expression of what is to be said; thus Aaron was Moses his spokesman, and instead of a mouth, Exod. iv. 16. Or in want of a boldness and audacity, arising from a consciousness of weakness: thus the good centurion sent the elders

elders of the Jews to Christ to intercede for him, Luke vii. 3. Or in case that a minister of the gospel do sojourn in one's family, as Archippus did in Philemon his house, Philem. 2. Or in case of necessary absence; thus the apostle Paul made Timothy his deputy to the christian Thessalonians, 1 Thess. iii. 1, 2. Or in case the Lord hath bestowed more of his gifts and graces to one than another: I know not in this case, but that we may *covet earnestly the best gifts* in others, as well as in our own selves, 1 Cor. xii. 31.

§. 4. *Of the duties of parents to their children.*

THE duties in particular which governours owe to the family, according to their relations, are either as parents to their children, or as masters to their servants.

The duties of parents to their children, are either, I. To their bodies, or, II. To their souls.

I. The duties of parents to the bodies of their children, are in many particulars, but may be all comprised under this one head, 'A provident care for their temporal good;' and this extendeth itself to all times, as, (1.) To their infancy. (2.) To their youth. (3.) To the time of parents departure out of this world.

(1.) The first age of a child is his infancy; and the first part of his infancy, is while it remaineth in the mother's womb: here the duty lies principally upon the mother, to have an especial care of it, that it

may be safely brought forth. Why was the charge of *abstaining from wine, strong drink, and unclean things*, given to Man-noah's wife, but because *of the child she had conceived?* Judg. xiii. 4.

The next degree of a child's infancy, is while it is in the swaddling-band, and remain a sucking child; in this also the care more especially lies on the mother, whose duty it is to take all pains she possibly may, for the education of her child; and especially to give her child suck, if she be able thereto: this not only nature, but scripture sets forth; (1.) By consequence, Gen. xlix. 25. Hof. ix. 14. 1 Tim. v. 10. (2.) By example, Gen. xxi. 7. 1 Sam. i. 23. Pf. xx. 9. (3.) By grant, the word giving it as a ruled case not to be denied, Gen. xxi. 7. Cant. viii. 1. Luke xi. 27.

[The neglect of this duty, (which hath now become a reigning fault among the poorer as well as among the richer sort) is a thing very unnatural †, and attended with several great inconveniencies: (1st,) Strange milk; which is very disagreeable to the child, and with which to be sure the child sucks in the natural infirmities of the nurse, together with a great deal of her natural inclinations, and irregular passions ‡, which many times sicken by the child for a long time after: and, which is worse than all this, it sometimes happens that some secret disease of the nurse is conveyed to the child *†, (2dly,) A shameful and dangerous *neglect of the child*, especially by such nurses as make a trade of it, of whom

† It seems to me very unnatural, that a woman that has fed a child as part of herself for nine months, should have no desire to nurse it farther, when brought to light and before her eyes, and when by its cry it implors her assistance and the office of a mother. Do not the very crullest of brutes tend their young ones with all the care and delight imaginable? For how can she be called a mother that will not nurse her young ones? How unmerciful is it to see a mother, as soon as she is delivered, turn off her innocent, tender, and helpless infant, and give it up to a stranger to nourish?—SPECTATOR.

‡ Many instances may be produced from good authorities and daily experience, that children actually suck in the several passions and depraved inclinations of their nurses, as anger, malice, fear, melancholy, sadness, desire, and aversion.—*The same Author.*

*† How many children do we see daily brought into fits, consumptions, rickets, &c. merely by sucking their nurses when in a passion or fury?—*The same Author.*

there are great numbers. (3dly,) An *estrangement* and weakening of natural affection on both sides ; both on the part of the mother and of the child : Which what a great loss this must prove to both of them, is easy to see.]

2. The second age of a child is its youth, from the time it begins to be of any discretion, till it be fit to be placed forth : Now the duty of parents at this time, is (1.) To nourish. (2.) To nurture their children.

Under nourishment are comprised food, apparel, recreation, means for recovery of health when they are sick ; in which if parents provide not for their children, they are worse than infidels : And under *Nurture*, are comprised good manners, a good calling, frequent admonition, reprehension, correction, the last remedy, which may do good when nothing else can, Prov. xix. 18. and xxiii. 13, &c. and xxix. 17.

3. The last time to which parents provident care extendeth itself, is the time of their departure out of the world, and then they are to set their house in order, and to leave their estates to their children.

II. The duty of parents to the souls of their children extends itself also to all times, as (1.) To their infancy. (2.) To their youth. (3.) To the time of parents departure out of this world.

1. The first age of a child is his infancy ; and the first part of its infancy, is while it remaineth in the mother's womb. Now the duty of parents at that time are these : 1. That they pray for their children : Thus did Rebekah, while the children were quick in her womb, Gen. xxv. 22. Those parents that neglect this duty to their children, consider not rightly that they are conceived in sin : 2. That they make time (so much as in them lies) that their children be born under the promise or under the covenant, in respect of the spiritual part of it : How ? By making

sure that they be under the promise or covenant themselves : If God in Christ be their God, they may have a comfortable hope, that God will be the God of their seed, according to the promise, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*, Gen. xvii. 7.

The next degree of a child's infancy is when it is born ; And the duty of parents then is, to give up their children unto God, casting them into the hands of his providence, into the arms of his mercy, begging for them a gracious acceptation with God ; and to tender them to the ordinance, *The sacrament of baptism*, to get the seal of the covenant set upon them, to get them mark'd out for salvation.

2. The second age of a child, is its youth : Now the duty of parents to their children at this time, is to train them up in true piety, *To bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Eph. vi. 4. To this end,

1. When children begin to read, let them read the holy scriptures ; so was Timothy *trained up from a child*, 2 Tim. vii. 3, 15. and thus will children suck in religion with learning.

2. Let children be catechized constantly from day to day ; only with this caveat, that parents deal with their children, as skilful nurses and mothers do in feeding their children, *i. e.* not to give them too much at once : Overmuch dulls a child's understanding, and breeds wearisomeness to it ; it is most suitable to give them *precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little*, Isa. xxviii. 10. Thus shall they learn with ease and delight, and in time a great measure of knowledge will be gained thereby.

3. Let parents declare to their children, the admirable works that God in former times hath done for his church, especially such works as he hath done in their time : Outward sensible things do best work upon children,

children, and therefore this direction was given under the law, Joshua iv. 6, 21. [And the entertaining their young minds with such pleasing relations of the providence of God, (of which there are a great many instances in the holy scriptures) will be far better than filling their heads with frightful stories of witches, ghosts, and apparitions: The common entertainment which parents give their children in their younger years; the bad impressions whereof are hardly worn out afterwards, when they come to be men; insomuch that they are many times *in fear where no fear is*, and often frightened with they can't tell what.]

4. Let parents be to their children a good pattern in piety, leading them to Christ, by their examples: This will take place with children, more than all precepts or paternal instructions: *But as for me, (said Joshua, chapter xxiv. 15.) and my house, we will serve the Lord: He sets himself first, as a guide to the rest.* [And indeed, without a good example, the best instructions will signify very little, and the great force and efficacy of them will be lost. With what reason canst thou expect that thy children should follow thy good instructions, when thou thyself givest them an ill example? Whenever you swear, or tell a lie, or are passionate and furious, or come drunk into your family, you weaken the authority of your commands, and lose all reverence and obedience to them, by contradicting your own precepts.]

5. Let parents reprove and correct their children for sin; and pray that the Lord may sanctify this correction unto them: *Consider this, O ye parents; Do you observe such and such sins in your children? enter into your own hearts, examine yourselves, whether they come not from you: Consider how justly the hand of God may be upon you; and when you are angry with your children, have an holy anger with your own selves, and use this or the like meditation with your own souls;*

'Lord, shall I thus punish my own sin in mine own child? shall I thus persecute the corruptions of mine own ancestors? How then mayest thou be displeas'd with me for the too carnal conception of my own child? It may be, I then lay in some sin, or I asked it not of thee by prayer: Be merciful to me, O Lord, and in thy good time, shew thou pity on me, and on my child!'

6. As children grow in years, and in the knowledge of Christ, and of justification by Christ, let parents train them up in the exercise of all duties, as, prayer, meditation, self-examination, watchfulness, and all means public and private: [Especially let them breed them up, (1.) To a serious and unaffected *Piety* and *Devotion* towards God, still and quiet, real and substantial, without much shew and noise. (2.) To *Justice* and *charity*: To defraud and oppress no man, to be as good as their word, and to perform all their promises and contracts. And also to pity and compassionate the distressed; and to wish well unto all men, more especially to the people of God, and to do all men all the good that lies in their power. In order to cherish and preserve this goodness and tenderness of nature in them, let them be kept as much as is possible out of the way of *bloody fights* and *spectacles* of cruelty, and restrained from all cruel and barbarous usage of creatures under their power; otherwise, their hearts will be hardened and alienated from the pity and compassion of human kind insensibly and by degrees. (3.) To *modesty* and *chastity* in heart, speech, and behaviour; and to stand in as much awe of God and their own consciences in private, as of a thousand witnesses: and to *sobriety* and *Temperance* in all their actions.] If all this be done, the world to come may reap the benefit of their education; such children as you bring up, such parents will they be, when you are gone, to their children; and such children shall they have, who are parents in the next generation, &c. You then are the very

making, or marring of the world : but on the contrary, if this be neglected, [that is, if you take no care to train up your families in the fear and love of God, and in the practice of their duty, you will lay the foundation of an infinite mischief ; for if no care be taken of persons in their younger years, they will almost necessarily be bad afterwards, in all relations ; undutiful children, slothful and unfaithful servants, scandalous members of the church, unprofitable to the common-wealth, disobedient to governors both ecclesiastical and civil ; and in a word, burthens of the earth, and so many plagues of human society †. Oh what an infinite train of evils doth the neglect of the right education of children and servants draw along with it ! Consider this, you careless parents, and heads of families ; Consider it for your own sakes ; consider it for the sake of your children and servants ; and consider it for the sake of posterity. If you still neglect your families, think how] the rich man shall rise up against you in the day of judgment and condemn you ; for he being in hell, had a care of his father's house, that they might be forewarned, he desired Abraham to send Lazarus to his brethren to testify to them that they came not to that place of torment ; but you will not admonish your children, you will not teach them *Moses and the prophets* ; you will not shew them the danger of God's heavy displeasure hanging over their heads ; you will not, whilst you live, lead a good example before them : O you may fear that your children shall be furies of hell to torment you. Now the Lord open your eyes, to foresee, and fly these judgments to come.

3. The last time to which the duty of parents extends itself, is the time of their departure out of the world, and then they

owe to their children two duties, good direction, and faithful prayer.

1. For Direction : When parents observe their time to draw near, it is their duty then especially to recommend some wise and wholesome precepts unto their children, the better to direct them in their Christian course ; so did Isaac, and Jacob, Gen. xlix. 1. &c. and David, 1 Kings ii. 2, 3. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. The words of a dying parent are especially regarded, and make a deeper impression.

2. For Prayer : Then is the most proper time for parents to pray and bless their children. As they commend their own souls into God's hands, so let them commend their children to God's grace ; God's providence and promises are the best inheritance in the world ; and if parents in their prayers leave these to their children, they can never want any thing that is good. O the faithful prayers of parents for their children, especially when they are leaving their children, and going to God, must needs, in, for and through Christ, prevail mightily with God.

§. 5. *Of the Duties of Masters to Servants.*

THE duty of masters to their servants is either to their bodies, or to their souls.

1. The duty of masters to the bodies of their servants consists in these particulars ; viz. In a due provision of food for them, Prov. xxxi. 15, and xxvii. 27. In a wise care for their clothing, Prov. xxxi. 21. In a well ordering of their labour, so as they may be able to undergo it : In their ease, rest and intermission from labour at seasonable times : In paying them sufficient wages, Deut. xxiv. 14, 15 : In a careful preserving of their health, and

using means for their recovery in case of sickness, Matth. viii. 6. and that, not of the servant's wages, but of the master's own charge, otherwise they *undo not the heavy-burden*, Isa. lviii. 6. but rather lay burden upon burden.

2. The duty of masters to the souls of their servants, consists in these particulars; *viz.* In teaching them the principles of religion, and all duties of piety: * in causing them to go to the publick ministry of the word and worship of God: in taking account of their profiting by the publick and private means of edification: in praying for them; and as they observe any grace wrought in them, in praising God for it, and praying for the encrease of it: nothing so much wins a servant's heart, or the affections of any gracious heart, as the edifying of it in grace.

§. 6. *Of the duties of the husband and wife.*

THE duties which the chief governor and his helper owe to one another, are either common and mutual, or proper and peculiar to each severally.

The common mutual duties betwixt man and wife, are either 1. such as are of *Necessity to the being of marriage*; as *Matrimonial unity*, Mat. xix. 6. Tit. ii. 5. and *Matrimonial chastity*, Mal. ii. 15. or 2. such as *conduce to the well-being of marriage*; as *Loving affection of one another*; and *Providential care of one for another*.

The former duties presupposed, there ought to be,

1. A sweet, loving and tender-hearted pouring out of their hearts, with much affectionate dearness into each others bosoms. This mutual melting-heartedness, being preserved fresh and fruitful, will infinitely sweeten and beautifie the marriage-state. Now for the preservation of this love, let

them consider (1.) The compassionate and melting compellations which Christ and his spouse exchange in the Canticles, *My fair one, my love, my dove, my undefiled, my well-beloved, the chief of ten thousand*: such a fervent and chaste love as this, all married couples should resemble and imitate. (2.) The command of God to this purpose, *Husbands love your wives*, Eph. v. 25. and *wives (or young women) love your husbands*, Tit. ii. 4. Methinks this charge oft remembered, should ever beat back all heart-rising and bitterness, all wicked wishes that they had never met together, that they had never seen one another's faces: when the knot is tied, every man should think his wife the fittest for him, and every wife should think her husband the fittest for her of any other in the world.

2. A provident care of one for another; which extends to the body; *No man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*, Eph. v. 29. and to the good name; *Joseph was not willing to make Mary a publick example*, Mat. i. 19. and to the goods of this world; in which if there fall out any cross providence, they are both to join with Job's Spirit, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken*, etc. Job i. 21. But especially to the soul; in praying together, for and with one another; in taking notice of the beginning and least measure of grace, and approving the same; in conferring about such things as concern the same, mutually propounding questions, and giving answers one to another; in maintaining holy and religious exercises in the family, and betwixt their own selves, in stirring up one another to hear the word. to receive the sacraments, and conscionably to perform all the parts of God's publick worship: in case the one prove unconverted, let the other wait, and

* If the seeds of true piety be sown in them, we shall reap the fruits of it: and if this be neglected, we shall suffer by it. If our children and servants be not taught to fear and reverence God, how can we expect that they should reverence and regard us: TILLOTSON.

pray, and expect God's good time : or in case the one be a babe in Christ, or weak in Christianity, let the other deal fairly, lovingly, meekly, and let our Lord Jesus his tender-heartedness to spiritual younglings, teach us mercy this way, who is said to *gather the lambs with his arms, and to carry them in his bosom, and gently to lead those that are with young*, Isai. xl. 11.

II. The proper and peculiar duties to each severally, are

I. Of the husband, whose duty it is,

I. That he dearly love his wife.

II. That he wisely maintain and manage his authority over her.

For the former, consider, 1. *The matter* ; 2. *The manner* of his love.

1. The matter of it is a dear love, a special love, and a more special than that common mutual love to one another : no question the wife is to love her husband, and a brother, to love his brother, and a friend to love his friend, but more especially, or with a more special love is the husband to love his wife. To this purpose she is called, *The wife of his bosom*, to shew that she ought to be as his heart in his bosom. He must love her at all times, he must love her in all things ; love must set on and sweeten his speech, carriage, actions towards her ; love must shew itself in his commands, reproofs, admonitions, instructions, authority, familiarity with her ; the rise of which love must not be from her beauty, nobility, or because she contents and pleaseth her husband ; but especially because she is his sister in the profession of Christian religion, and an inheriter with him of the kingdom of heaven ; because of her graces and virtues, as, Modesty, Chastity, Diligence, Patience, Temperance, Faithfulness, Secrecy, Obedience, etc. because she bears and brings him forth children the heirs of his name and substance, and the upholder of his family : and because of the union and conjunction of marriage. Love growing of beauty, riches, lust, or any other

slight grounds, is but a blaze, and soon vaniseth ; but if grounded on these considerations, and especially on this union of marriage, it is lasting and true : the want hereof is the fountain of strife, quarrelling, debate, which converts the paradise of marriage into an hell.

2. For the *manner of this love*, the apostle gives it thus, *Husbands, love your own wives, even as Christ also loved the church*, Eph. v. 25. Now the love of Christ to his church, is commended to us in these particulars :

(1.) In *the cause of his love*, which is his love : *He sets his love on you, because he loved you*, Deut. vii. 8. his love arose wholly and solely from himself, and was every way free : so should husbands love their wives, though there be nothing in wives to move them, but merely because they are wives.

(2.) In *the order of his love* : Christ began it to the church, before the church could love him : and as a wall is first smitten on by the sun-beams, before it give a reflection of its heat back again : so the church is first heated and warmed at heart by the sense of Christ's love, before she love him again : *We love him because he loved us first*, 1 John iv. 19. *Because of the savour of thy ointments, therefore do the virgins love thee*, Cant. i. 2. so should husbands begin to love their own wives : I know some wives prevent their husbands herein, and there may be reason for it ; but the greater is their glory. This pattern of Christ should rather stir up the husband to go before them.

(3.) In *the truth of Christ's love* : this was manifested by the fruits thereof to his church ; *He gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle*, Eph. v. 25, 26, 27. So must husbands love their wives in truth and in deed, by guiding them in the way of life, and path that is called holy, for this

is the trueſt character of a ſincere love.

(4.) In *the quality of his love*; Chriſt's love is an holy, pure, and chaſte love, as he himſelf is, ſo is his love, ſuch muſt be the love of huſbands, an holy, pure and chaſte love. Away with all intemperate, exceſſive, or any ways exorbitant pollutions of the marriage-bed! from which, if the fear of God, imitation of Chriſt, love of purity, awfulneſs of God's all-ſeeing eye cannot draw, yet that ſlavish horror, leſt God ſhould puniſh ſuch a couple with no children, or with miſhapen children, or with idiots, or with prodigious wicked children, or with ſome other heavy croſs, one would think ſhould be able to affright them.

(5.) In *the continuance of Chriſt's love*: *having loved his own, he loved them unto the end*, John xiii. 1. His love is a conſtant love, an everlaſting love: no provocations or tranſgreſſions could ever make him forget his love; *Thou haſt played the karlot with many lovers, yet return unto me*, Jer. iii. 1. Such muſt be the Love of huſbands, a firm Love, an inviolable Love: the ground of it muſt be God's ordinances, and the ſupport of it muſt be an inviolable reſolution, that no provocation ſhall ever change it, or alter it. Huſbands muſt paſs by all infirmities, endeavouring in love to redreſs them, if poſſibly they can, or if not, to bear with them.

II. The ſecond duty of an huſband, is, *Wiſely to maintain and manage his authority*: Now the managing of it conſiſts in two things. (1.) That he tenderly reſpect her. (2.) That he carefully provide for her.

1. He muſt *tenderly reſpect her*, Ezek. xxiv. 16. as his wife, companion, yoke-fellow, as his very delight, and *the deſire of his eyes*, and *never be bitter againſt her*. Col. iii. 19. This bitterneſs ordinarily turneth the edge of his authority: if therefore any matter of unkindneſs ariſe, (as ſometimes certainly will) then muſt he carefully with all lenity, gentleneſs and patience quiet all, and never ſuffer himſelf

nor his wife to ſleep in diſpleaſure: *Let not the ſun go down upon your wrath*; Eph. iv. 26. Or if he ſhall have occaſion to reprove her, he muſt keep his words until a convenient time, and not do it in preſence of others, and then utter them in the ſpirit of meekneſs and love. Surely if ſhe be not corrected by a word of wiſdom and diſcretion; ſhe will never amend by threats, or any haſty, rigorous carriage: and if ſhe once begin to loſe her ſhamefacedneſs in the preſence of her huſband, it is likely there will be often brawlings and quarrels betwixt them, and the houſe will be full of diſquietneſs: it is beſt therefore to deal wiſely with her, to admoniſh her often, to reprehend her ſeldom, never to lay violent hands on her; and if ſhe be dutiful, to cheriſh her, that ſhe may ſo continue; if wayward, mildly to ſuffer her, that the wax not worſe.

2. He muſt *carefully provide for her*; to this purpoſe he is called her head, and ſaviour, as *Chriſt is the head of his church*, Eph. v. 23. *And the Saviour of the body*: the *head* (you know) is the fountain of motion, quickening, life, ſenſe, and lightſomeſs to the body; ſo ſhould the huſband be as the well-ſpring of livelineſs, lightſomeſs, light-heartedneſs to his wife: ſhe hath forſook all for him, and therefore ſhe ſhould receive from him a continual influence of chearful walking, and comfortable enjoying of herſelf. And a *Saviour* (you know) both provides for, and protects the ſaved: Chriſt thus ſaved his church, he is every way a ſufficient Saviour, *able perfectly to ſave, even to the very uttermoſt*; Heb. vii. 25. He ſaves ſoul and body, he ſaves from all manner of miſery, from the wrath of God, the curſe of the law, the venom of all outward croſſes, the tyranny of Satan; the ſting of death, the power of the grave, the torments of hell, or if ſin be the greateſt evil, (as indeed it is) *he will ſave his people from their ſins*: Mat. i. 21. I cannot ſay
thus

thus of the husband; yet an husband carrieth a resemblance of Christ, and is after a manner a *Saviour* to his wife, to protect her, and to provide for her. David compares her to a *vine*, Psalm cxxviii. 3. intimating, that as a *vine* is underpropped and raised by some tree or frame near to which it is planted, so is the wife raised to the height of honour by vertue of her relation to her husband; by his wealth is she enriched; by his honour is she dignified: he is under God and Christ, *all in all to her*. In the family he is a King, to govern and aid her; a Priest, to pray with her, and for her; a Prophet, to teach and instruct her; a *Saviour* to provide for and protect her to *his utmost*, if not to the *utmost*, which indeed is proper and peculiar to the Lord Christ.

II. The duties proper to the wife are these.

1. That she be in submission to her husband.

2. That she be an helper to him all her days.

1. *Wives must be in subjection to their own husbands: Sarah obeyed Abraham, and called him Lord: Gen. iii. 16. Eph. v. 22. 2 Pet. iii. 1, 6.* But here's a case of conscience.—

1. What if her husband be a son of Belial, an enemy to Christ? must she then yield subjection?—Yes, because in his office her husband is as in Christ's stead: the church is compared to a *lily among thorns*, Cant. ii. 2. she remains *lily like*; white, soft, pleasant, and amiable, though she be joined with *thorns*, which are prickly and sharp: so a wife must be meek, mild, gentle, obedient, tho' she be matched with a crooked, perverse, prophane and wicked husband: she must in this case remove her eyes from the disposition of her husband's person to the condition of his

place, and by vertue thereof (seeing he beareth Christ's image) be subject unto him as unto Christ.

2. What if her husband command things contrary to Christ? must she therein be subject?—No: *Submit, &c.* Eph. v. 22. How? *as unto the Lord*: if she submits to things contrary to Christ, she submits not *as to the Lord*. Conscientious wives must remember they have an husband in heaven, as well as on earth, betwixt whom there is a greater difference, than betwixt heaven and earth, and therefore in case they bid contrary things, they must prefer God before man, Christ before all men.

2. *Wives must be helpers to their husbands, Gen. ii. 8, 10.* Now this helpfulness consists in these things.

(1.) That she be careful to preserve his person, in sickness or health, in adversity or prosperity, in youth or old age.

A most memorable and famous pattern for this purpose, is recorded by † *Vives*: 'A young, tender, and beautiful maid was matched (as he reports) to a man stricken in years, whom after marriage she found to have a very sulsome and diseased body, full of many loathsome and contagious diseases; yet, notwithstanding, out of sense and conscience, that by God's providence she was become his wife, she most worthily digested all with incredible patience: friends and physicians advised her by no means to come near him, and for their parts they utterly forsook him; but she (passing by with a loving disdain, those unkind dissuasions) becomes to him in their stead, Friend, Physician, Nurse, Mother, Sister, Daughter, Servant, every thing, any thing to do him good any manner of way. At last, by extraordinary expence, and excessive charges about him, she came to some want of some necessaries, whereupon she sold her ring, chains, richest attire,

plate, and choicest jewels: and when he was dead, and friends came about her, rather to congratulate her happy riddance, than to bewail her widowhood, she not only abhorred all speeches tending that way, but protested, if it were possible, she would willingly redeem her husband's life with the loss of her five dearest children.' Whence it appears that this worthy woman was wedded to her husband's soul, not to his body, seeing no infirmity or deformity thereof, could cool or weaken the fervency of her love.

(2.) That she learn and labour to forecast, contrive and manage household-affairs, and business within doors, as they say; for which see a right noble glorious pattern in Prov. xxxi.

(3.) That she help her husband, in setting forward the rich and royal trade of grace, in erecting and establishing Christ's glorious kingdom in their house, and especially in their own hearts: this is that one necessary thing, without which their family is but Satan's seminary, and a nursery for hell; this will marvellously sweeten all reproaches cast upon them by envenomed tongues: this will sweetly seal unto them their assurance of meeting together hereafter in heaven. Where the husband and wife perform these and the like duties, there's an happy family, there's a college of quietness; where these are neglected, we may term it an hell.

Thus much of the duties of governors: we come now to the governed.

§. 7. *Of the duties of children to parents.*

DUTIES of children to parents, are either inward, as, Love and Fear; or, outward, as, Reverence, Obedience, Recompence.

I. The inward duties which children owe to their parents, are Love and Fear: Love, like sugar, sweetens Fear; and Fear like salt, seasons Love; there must be a Loving-fear, and a Fearing-love. Hence

the fear of a child is opposed to the fear of a slave; for a child's fear, being mixed with love, hath a respect to the offence which the parent may take; but a slave's fear, which is ordinarily mixed with hatred, hath respect to nothing but the punishment which his master may inflict upon him. This love-like-fear is so proper to children, as that the awful respect which the saints bear to God, is called a *filial fear*: children have received their substance from the very substance of their parents, and therefore they are to perform this duty of love and fear to them.

II. The outward duties, or the manifestation of this love and fear in children, appears,

1. In their reverence *in speech and carriage*: they must give to their parents reverent and honourable titles, meek and humble speeches, obeysance, as becomes their age and sex: thus Joseph and Solomon bowed, the one to his father, the other to his mother. Contrary hereto is mocking and despising father and mother; of which said Solomon, *The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out*: a phrase that sets forth the end of a notorious malefactor, that is hanged in the air till the ravens pick out his eyes; Gen. xlviii. 12. 1 Kings ii. 19. Pro. xiii. 17.

2. In their obedience to their commands, instructions, reproofs, and corrections of their parents, Eph. vi. 1. Prov. i. 8, 9. the reason is, because of God, whom the Father represents: children must remember, that whatsoever they do to their parents, they do it to God; when they please them, they please God; when they disobey them, they disobey God; when their parents are justly angry with them, God is angry with them; nor can they recover God's favour (though all the saints of heaven should intreat for them) till they have submitted themselves to their own parents; only with this limitation, that they

they submit or obey them *in the Lord*, Eph. vi. 1.

1. In their Recompence: this is a duty whereby children endeavour, as much as in them lies, to repay what they can for the parent's kindness, care and cost towards them, in way of thankfulness: *If any widows have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew kindness at home, and to requite their parents*, 1 Tim. v. 4. In sickness they must visit them, in time of mourning they must comfort them, in want they must provide for them; as the children of Jacob, who visited, comforted, and went to buy food for their father, Gen. xlvi. 1. and xxxvii. 35. and xlii. 3. In time of danger, they must endeavour their protection, as David did, *Let my father and mother* (said he to the king of Moab) *I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. And he brought them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt with him, all the while that David was in the hold*, 1 Sam. xxii. 2, 4. If God please to take children out of this world before their parents, and their parents be succourless, they must, as they can, provide for their well-being after death: thus Christ commended his mother to his disciple John, a little before he gave up the ghost, John xix. 27. It is recorded of the stork, 'That when the dames are old, the young ones feed them; and when through age, they are ready to faint in their flying, the young ones help them; and when they are past flying, the young ones carry them on their weak backs.' Thus nature teacheth children their duty, how much more should grace?

§. 8. *Of the duties of servants to their masters.*

Duties of servants to their masters, are either inward, as, Fear; or outward, as, Reverence, and Obedience.

1. The inward duty is, *Fear*. *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, and account them worthy of all honour*, 1 Pet.

ii. 18. 1 Tim. vi. 2. So proper is this fear to a servant, as where it is wanting, there is a plain denial of his master's place and power: *If I be a master, where is my fear?* said God, Mal. i. 6. Observe, I mean not an excessive, slavish fear, as when a servant fears nothing but the revenging power of his master; such was the fear of that unprofitable servant, who could say to his master, Mat. xxv. 24, 25. *I knew that thou wert an hard man, and I was afraid*; but I mean an awful fear of provoking his master's wrath, so as it makes him cast every way, how he may please his master, and such a fear draws him on cheerfully to perform his duty.

II. Outward duties that issue from this fear, are Reverence, and Obedience.

1. Reverence, which is manifested in speech and carriage. Thus servants must give reverend titles to their masters, as Father, Lord, and Master, &c. They must yield obeysance to them; as *The children of the prophets, when they saw that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha, they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him*, 2 Kings ii. 15.

2. Obedience, which hath respect to the commands, instructions, reproofs and corrections of their masters, 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19, 20. But here's a case or two of conscience.

1. 'How far must they obey; or what is the extent of servants obedience to masters?' The apostle answers; *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh*, Col. iii. 22. It is not sufficient that servants perform well their duties in some things, they must do it in all things; yea, in things that may be against their own mind and liking, if their masters will have it so: this is clear in the example of Joab, *The king commands him to number the people*; Joab declares himself, that he thinks it a very unmeet thing, *Why doth my Lord the king delight, saith he, in this thing?* 2 Sam. xxiv. 2, &c. yet against his judgment he yields to the king's

king's peremptory command, *The king's word prevailed against Job*. Look, as Peter, when *Christ bid him launch out into the deep, and let down his net for a draught*, he answered and said, *Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net*, Luke v. 4, 5. So must servants say, when they have a peremptory command, though contrary to their own judgment, this or that in all humility, I suppose, or I propound to you, *Nevertheless, at your word, I will let down the net*, I will do as you please.

2. 'But what if God and master should command contrary things?' In such a case the apostle sets down an excellent limitation in these four phrases, 1. *As unto Christ*. 2. *As the servants of Christ*. 3. *Doing the will of God*. 4. *As to the Lord*; Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7. All these imply, 'That if masters command their servants any thing contrary to Christ, they may not yield to it.' Upon this ground the midwives of the Hebrew women, would not kill the Hebrew children, *They feared God* (saith the text, Ex. i. 17.) *and did not as the king commanded them*. In this case Joseph is commended in not hearkening to his mistress, and the servants of Saul are commended for refusing to slay the Lord's priests at their master's command. When masters command or forbid any thing against God and Christ, they go therein beyond their commission, and their authority ceaseth, so that servants may say, *We ought to obey God rather than men*, Acts v. 29.

3. *Object*. But some Anabaptists object, 'That all men are alike, and that there is no such difference as betwixt masters and servants, nay, it is expressly forbidden to be servants of men,' 1 Cor. vii. 23.

Sol. I answer, to be a servant, in that place, is not simply to be in subjection under another, but to be so obsequious to man, as to prefer him before God: hence the apostle elsewhere in the duties of ser-

vants, lays down this antithesis, *Not as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ's again; doing service as to the Lord, and not to men*, Eph. vi. 6, 7. The meaning is, that we must do duty to a master, not as merely to a man, but as to one in *Christ's stead*. Masters, by virtue of their office and place, bear the image of Christ; Christ communicates his authority unto them, and so, in performing duty to masters, we perform duty to Christ, and in denying duty to masters, we deny duty to Christ: Thus the Lord said to Samuel, when the people rejected his government, *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them*, 1 Sam. viii. 7. Consider this, all ye that are servants, tho' masters should neither reward your good service, nor revenge your ill service, yet Christ will do both: this is your prerogative that fear God, above all other servants; others may serve their masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, and with good will, but only christians and saints do service as to Christ, and this makes them not content themselves with doing the thing, but to endeavour to do it after the best manner they can, so as God and Christ may accept of it.

I have now run through the family, and informed you of the duties both of governors and governed. Christians, look within you, look about you, *that man is not a good man that is not good in all his relations*. The same God that requires us to serve him as private persons, requires us to serve him in our relations: and therefore though you be never so careful of your duty in the former respect, yet, 'you may go to hell for neglecting your duties as masters, servants, husbands, wives, parents, or children; nay, I'll say a little more, that though you should be good in one relation, yet if you endeavour not to be good in every relation, you shall never go to heaven: for the same God that commands you to serve him as a mas-

ter, commands you to serve him as a Father, as an husband,' etc. And he that keeps the whole law, and yet offends in one point, he is guilty of all, James ii. 10.

CHAP. XI. SECT. I.

Of the Preparatives to Christian Society.

Hitherto of secret duties, and private duties, so far as they concern every man in his own particular, and in his own family: now, as of many particulars consists a family, so of many families, may consist this Christian Society we are ready to treat of; and the rather do we fall upon it, because we hold it a Duty to keep a constant, endeared, and loving correspondence with the saints, to communicate with experimental Christians in their experiences of Christ working and dwelling in them, *To exhort one another, and so much the more, as we see the day approaching,* Heb. x. 24, 25.

Now that we may jointly and comfortably carry on this Duty, observe we I. Our entrance into it. II. Our proceedings in it.

I. For entrance we must, 1. Renounce all sinful and wicked society. 2. Entertain such graces as will fitly prepare us for this society.

1. We must renounce and discharge all wicked society: 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16. *For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? As melted gold will unite itself with the substance of gold, but not incorporate itself with dross; so if God by his Spirit melts the heart, and fits it for union with believers, then he separates it from that which is heterogeneous and disagreeing to it: Pf. xv. 1. Lord, who shall dwell in thy holy hill? saith David; the answer is given, Plal. xv.*

4. *In whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord: Understand the text soberly concerning Contempt of a vile person. David would not have us to deny him courtesies and civil behaviour: we may eat, and drink, and buy and sell, and shew kindness, and pity him, and pray for him, and carry ourselves with all wisdom towards him, though he be without; but as for holy communion we must say to him as Peter to Simon, Acts viii. 21. Thou hast neither part nor fellowship in this body; or as Nehemiah to Sanballat, Tobiah and Gesham, Thou have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem, Neh. 2. 20.*

2. We must entertain and abound in such graces as will fitly prepare us for this *Christian society*, and they are such as these:—

1. *Humility.* Humble men contend not, censure not, quarrel not, disdain not: they can meet with unequal respects of age, sex, state and parts; they can discern, even women, what is to be honoured, and if there be not always so profound a judgment, yet many times there is more holy, and more sweet affections: they have not the faith of Christ in respect of persons, but can say to the poor man (if he be of the poor whom God hath chosen, rich in grace, and an heir of the kingdom) *Sit thou here in a good place;* they can prefer grace before parts, and delight in the sweet scent of creeping violets: [that is, they can delight in the excellent virtues of the lowest people: they will honour merit even in the person of one in rags;] they can make use of, and improve all other mens gifts; *For in honour they prefer one*

another, Rom. xii. 10. and so they come to be kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love; they can spy out graces of all sorts, in all sorts and ranks of people: they observe the sweet affability and courtesy of some great ones, the honest diligence and patience of some poor ones, the blushing modesty and humility of some solidly learned, the chearful activity of God's worship in some illiterate, that love Christ in sincerity, though they cannot dispute for him: several sorts of men, have several lustres; now the humble learn of all, and so receive much benefit in communion from all. This grace then [of *humility*] gives him a fitness for this society.

2. *Acknowledgement, and the prizing of others gifts*: it is said of Apollus, *that though he were an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, yet he so far acknowledged and honoured the graces of God, and the gifts that were in Aquila, and Priscilla*, Acts xviii. 24, 25, 26. (a plain couple, an handy-crafts-man and his wife) *that he was content to learn of them*: O let not brethren envy and grudge at one another, but acknowledge and prize the gifts of others as their own gifts.

3. *Self-denial*: Phil. ii. 4. *Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves: look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others*: how goodly is it to see a man who hath parts, and gifts, and graces, to deny himself, and all for the edifying of the body? Paul could endeavour to please all men in all things. *Not seeking his own profit, but the profit of many*, 1 Cor. x. 33. He hath a true publick spirit, that prefers the [good of the] body of Christ, before his own private [interest]; that can deny himself, so that God may be glorified.

4. *Love*: a grace of such use and influence, that without love there can be no *Christian society*; it is love that joins hands

and hearts: so the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, 1 Sam. xviii. 1. *For Jonathan loved him as his own soul*. Love disposeth men to all spiritual offices, to pray together, sing together, talk, or confer together; on the contrary, all the gifts in the world, how excellent soever, are nothing worth without love: *Though I spake with the tongues of men, and angels; Though I had the gifts of all prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not love, I am nothing*. 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2.

5. *Amiability, facility, or condescension*: rugged stones unhewn and unsquared, cannot fitly ly and join together in one building; sovre, harsh and fullen spirits, are not fit for society: if there be a Nabal, who is such a son of Belial, that no man can speak to him, he may not be entertained: I know there are some good men of an harsh and rigid disposition, who make many a poor Christian to startle back, though he came with a resolution to consult and learn something of them: but there is in some others (whom I always prefer) an alluring facility, that doth call in the modest and blushing, who would otherwise step back: now this sweet disposition for gaining of souls unto the liking and relishing of the good ways of God, is a commendable grace.

6. *Sobriety of spirit*, in the suspending of all rashness of censures, and a patient bearing with some errors and offences, which unavoidably will sometimes fall out: the apostle had respect unto this, when he admonished the Colossians, chap. iii. 13. *to forbear one another, and to forgive one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, or a matter of complaint* (as the word signifieth) *even as Christ forgave you*. How quarrellous are some men? How loud and shrill, and thunder-stormy in their complaints? on the contrary, heavenly souls resolve to do good, and to suffer evil; such was David's carriage towards Shimei, when Shimei cursed him; *Come out thou bloody*

man, thou man of Belial: David said no more, but *Let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, curse David*, 2 Sam. xvi. 17.

7. *Innocency, harmlesness, or inoffensiveness of conversation*: nothing more destroys Christian-society, than frequent lying, flatteries, whispering, scoffs, calumnies, and invented slanders: hence James calls the tongue, *An unruly evil, full of deadly poison*; and *if this member be not tamed, all religion is in vain*, James iii. 8. i. 26. and consequently all religious society.

8. *An holy coveting of excellent gifts* emulation ordinarily engenders strife, and overthrows Christian-society; but this holy contention, this spiritual emulation, this zeal after more perfection of gifts and graces, the apostle enjoineth, *Covet earnestly the best gifts*, 1 Cor. xii. 31. *q. d.* affect, emulate, be zealous after a further growth or improvement.

9. *Wisdom*; both to discern where the rich treasure lies, and to be able to draw it forth: there lies many times a great deal of spiritual wealth in some obscure and neglected Christians, which many supercilious and conceited professors do pass by and neglect. One would not think what dexterity in scriptures, what judgment in controversies, what fervency and expressions in prayer, what acquaintance with God and his providence, what strength of faith, what patience, meekness, moderation, contentedness, heavenly-mindedness may be now and then found out and discovered in plain people, that have plain carriage, and plain speech: here then is the necessary use of wisdom, to discover those gifts and graces; and when we find such a vein, to dig it, and draw it forth: do you observe one of great dexterity in scriptures? propound to him some difficult place where you were fain to make a stand. Do you observe one well studied in controversies? desire him to untie a knot, where you have been a great while looking for an end. Do you observe one acquainted with cases of

desertion and foul-clouds? learn of him what experiments he hath collected, and which was his way out of the mist. Do you observe one powerful in prayer? get him to commend your suits with you unto God. All men would be dealt with in the proper way wherein they are versed, and wherein they excel.

§. 2. *Of a mutual exchange of gifts and graces.*

After the preparatives, we come to the duties themselves; which consist,

1. In a mutual exchange and imparting of gifts and graces.

2. In a mutual serviceableness to the bodies and souls of one another.

3. In a mutual walking together, and holding of hands in the ordinances of Christ.

1. There must be in Christian-society, 'a mutual exchange and imparting of gifts and graces': God hath dispensed variety of gifts unto his people; as Job was exemplary for patience and uprightness; Moses for faithfulness and meekness; Josiah for tenderness and activity in the cause of reformation; Timothy for ministerial diligence and care of the flock: The gift of Christ is grace, according to measure; he measures to one such gifts; to another such, to another such and such, as he pleaseth: *Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, Eph. iv. 7. God gave the Spirit without measure unto Christ, but we have it according to our scantling, and as he pleaseth to honour and entrust us: *To one is given the word of knowledge, to another faith, to another prophecy, to another the discerning of spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues*: Thus every man hath his proper gift of God, *One after this manner, and another after that*; 1 Cor. xii. 8. and 1 Cor. vii. 7. One hath quickness of parts, but not so solid a judgment; another is solid, but not so ready and presential; one hath a good wit, another a good

good memory, a third a good utterance ; one is zealous, but ungrounded ; another well-principled, but timorous ; one is wary and prudent, another open and plain-hearted ; one is trembling and melting, another chearful and full of joy : Now thus God freely gives, and most wisely disposeth, that we may be engaged to use his bounty to each others help : The knowing Christian is to impart to him that is weak in gifts, and the zealous Christian that hath fewer notions, is to impart his warmth and heat to his knowing friend : The Christian that hath collected experiences, or found out methods for the advancement of holiness, must not deny such knowledge to the body ; Christians must drive an open and free trade, they must teach one another the mystery of godliness : Tell your experiences, and tell your conflicts, and tell your comforts, make all that you have, the body's, and all that the body hath, your's : some say, the art of medicine was thus perfected, as any one met with an herb, and discovered the virtue of it by any accident, he would post it up in some publick place, and so the physician's skill was perfected, by a collection of those experiments and receipts. We must one day account how we have laid out our knowledge, our utterance, our spirit of prayer, our ability of discerning, our experience of God, our taste of the promises, our enlargements after prayer, our improvements by conference, our comforts after private humiliation, our strengthening by sacraments, or what else may be instanced in for the use of others ; how we got rid of such a lust, how we master'd such a temptation, how we attained to such a facility in this or that duty ; and there must be this commerce among them that are in this heavenly partnership.

§. 3. *Of mutual serviceableness to the bodies and Souls of one another.*

Here must be in this Christian-society, a mutual serviceableness : (1.) To the Bodies. (2.) To the souls of one another.

1. *To the Bodies of one another* : The primitive Christians excelled in this care, they put their estates (by reason of the persecution) into a *common stock*, Acts iv. 32, 34, 35. that all, even the poorest sort, that in those hard and uncertain times gave their names to Christianity, might be tended and looked on with equal care and respect : I know some have stretched this too far to make it a leading case and binding example ; but thus far it holds, that if the necessity of the faithful call for it, even all that we have must be serviceable in order, and in due respects :—The catalogue runs thus ; 1. The publick state wherein we live we must provide for. 2. Ourselves. 3. Our wives. 4. Our parents. 5. Our children and family. 6. The household of faith. 7. Our kindred. 8. Our nearest neighbours and common friends. 9. Our countrymen. 10. Strangers. 11. Enemies. It is truly an acceptable service to God, and a glorious ministry to tend the Lord's poor and sick ; therefore Paul sometimes took upon him the *fellowship of the ministring to the saints*, as he was desired by the churches of Macedonia, whom he commends for their charity, and whose example he wills the Corinthians to follow, 2 Cor. viii. 4, 7.

2. *To the souls of one another*, and this several ways :

1. *In watching over one another* : I know we have enemies that maliciously watch over us for our haltings, but it is the part of a friend to watch over his companion for good ; we are apt enough to neglect our own watch, we had need either to have prying enemies, or faithful friends to make us know ourselves.

2. *In admonishing and reprovng those that fall*: This is a great duty, but much neglected. Reverend Mr. Bolton, † speaking of that grave and religious judge Nichols (who desired him sometimes to deal plainly with him) confessed, after the judge's death, 'that he was grieved at his heart that he had done no more in that kind.' O count not admonitions an unnecessary meddling, we may through a foolish humour to be esteemed peaceable and quiet, suffer many to miscarry and be lost.

3. *In recovering those that are fallen, through a spirit of meekness*: Gal. vi. 1, 2. *Brethren, if any man be overtaken with a fault, ye who are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou be also tempted.* Christians should not triumph over them that are on the ground, and thrown down by temptation, but rather they should sit by them on the same flat, and mourn with them, and for them, and feel some of their weight.

4. *In instructing the ignorant, dull, and less capable*: To this purpose we should rather keep a slow pace, than willingly outgo the young and tender lambs: O despise them not here, with whom we shall have eternal company in heaven; it may be, they can reach no higher than the very principles of religion, without which they could not be safe: yet if they know and can say any thing of God in Christ Jesus, or if they would fain hear of him, be not too high for their society; neglect not the rear of the Christian army, but strive with their infirmity or unfitness, whatsoever it be.

5. *In encouraging weak beginners*; bid them welcome that stand upon the threshold, that linger in the porch of this so-

ciety, and would be glad to sit down among the disciples of Christ. It was prophesied of Christ, *A bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking fire shall he not quench*, Isaiah xlii. 3. It should be thus with Christians, they should not quench, but rather encourage the smoking flax into a flame; Do you perceive a poor soul to listen after Christ, and to hearken if some word of comfort may be let fall? open yourselves to him, and let him in to the pleasures and ravishments of the king's chambers. Take heed of making any one go back, or grow out of love with the order and government of Christ's family.

6. *In stirring up the spirits and gifts of one another*: Consider one another, saith the apostle, *to provoke unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, but exhorting one another*, Heb. x. 24, 25. A mean person by asking a question, may lay the first stone, whereupon a goodly frame of excellent and rich discourse may be reared. Christians must quicken one another in the ways of godliness; as the iron sharpeneth iron, as rubbing of the hands makes both warm, and as live-coals make the rest to burn, so let the fruit of society be mutual sharpening, warming and enflaming.

7. *In raising, chearing, comforting the dejected and dismayed spirit.* How did the martyrs in their prisons set one another at liberty from the bondage of fears? how did holy Bradford's sweet and chearful company make the very dungeons lightsome, and palace-like to his fellow-prisoners? An unbelieving heart, oppressed many times with foolish cares and fears doth sometimes, by a word duly spoken, or by a promise applied in the season of it, feel the load quite taken away.

† Bolton's Quartior novissima, Page 163.

§. 4. *Of a mutual walking together, and holding hands in the Ordinances of Christ.*

THere must be in Christian-society, A mutual walking together in the ordinances of Christ, as,

1. *In hearing the word*, by quickening one another unto it, by helping the negligent to apply it, by taking forth the several portions belonging to the several conditions and necessities of each, by praying for one another, that it may be useful and seasonable to all.

2. *In the sacraments, joying in one another, beholding their order and stedfastness of faith in Christ*, Col. ii. 5. How should they but rejoice together in the love of God, feeding at the same table as those that shall meet and sit down with Christ in his kingdom of glory? How should they but behold their order and stedfastness of faith, now renewing their covenant of love among themselves, and laying down all grudges, rancour, prejudice, uncharitableness, surmises for Christ's sake, and giving the right hand of fellowship, cordially and unfeignedly to one another, as those that find themselves to be all retainers to the same master, and provided for with the same care, and purchased by the price of the same blood.

3. *In prayer for and with each other* : In primitive times, they used to transact one anothers affairs in the court of heaven by prayer. *Pray always*, said Paul, *with all prayer and supplication for all saints, and for me*, Eph. vi. 18, 19. and, *pray one for another*, said James, ch. v. 16. *that ye may be healed* ; q. d. if the heart rankles or if there be any fallings out, any differences and jarrings among Christians, let them meet together, and humbly acknowledge where the fault lies, and make up the matter before God, who is both a witness of their mutual sincerity, and is only able to search the bottom of the wound, and to cure it. Sometimes Christians have

known blessed experiments of this, and can tell when a *probatum est* was written upon it.

4. *In fasting for the afflicting and humbling of the soul* ; so Ezra and his men, and Esther and her maids, maintained communion together : such fasting days, are soul-feeding days, and soul-curing days ; some diseases, some lusts will go out no other ways.

5. *In mutual bemoanings, confessions, and opening of our sores and wounds* ; it may be when the apostle saith, *Confess your faults one to another*, he means more than acknowledgement of offences, whereby a man hath sinned against his brother ; viz. that Christians should also bewail their failings, infirmities, deadness, unfavouriness, coldness, narrowness, unfruitfulness, to one another, to see whether others have been in the same case, and what course they took, and what remedy they procured. Many souls may perish through too much reservedness and modesty.

6. *In holy Conference* : This indeed is it that might much improve the meeting of Christians. In the Prophets time when proud scorers, and prophane-spirited men talked vainly and did even what they listed, then *they that feared the Lord met, and spake often one to another*, Mal. iii. 16. no doubt they spake of God and his counsels, of his works and ways, of his providence and goodness, of the baseness of atheistical thoughts concerning God : would Christians thus meet and exchange words and notions, they might build up one another, they might heat and inflame one another, they might strengthen and encourage one another, as the brethren did Paul, 1 Thess. v. 11. And have we not an express command for this duty of conference ? *Thus shall ye say every one to his brother, and every one to his neighbour, What hath the Lord answered ? and what hath he spoken ?* Jer. xxiii. 35.

And now I am fallen on this duty, give

me leave to lay down some experiments and proceedings of some Christians as willingly joined themselves in a Christian society, and by God's blessing thereby sweetly improved themselves.

§. 5. *Of some orders to which some Christians subscribed before conference.*

IN this conference of Christians,

1. Some orders were made, to which all subscribed.

2. Some questions were propounded, to which all answered.

1. The orders were these;

(1.) That every Wednesday, especially during winter, we will meet for conference about soul-affairs.

(2.) That if any difference in opinion shall arise amongst us, we will fully debate, and then submit to the judgment of the society, as it shall be made good out of the word.

(3.) If we observe any of the society to fall into any sin or scandal, he that observes it shall first warn the party thereof; and if he offend again in the same kind, the observer shall then join with himself one or two more to warn the same party; and if he will not bear them, the observer or any other shall then acquaint the society at our next meeting; and if he will not hear them, that then he be excluded till he repent, and be voted for his admission again.

(4.) That whatsoever is spoken amongst us (the telling whereof may tend to the prejudice of any one of us) shall be kept secret, upon pain of undergoing such censure as the major part of the company shall think fit.

(5.) That for admission of any into our society, we will not be too strict nor too large; not too strict in excluding any, in whom we have any good hopes of sincerity, and real desire to increase their knowledge, and mutual love, though they may be *but weak* in gifts, Rom. xiv. 1. nor too

large in admitting such, who may be either *heretical in opinion*, 1 Thess. iii. 6. or *inordinate in life*, Tit. iii. 10. And by this rule, those that are to be admitted shall be voted by the major part of us.

(6.) That for better regulating of this society, we will have a moderator. And what further orders we or any of us shall hereafter think upon, we shall propound the same to the society at our next meeting; and the same shall be confirmed or annulled, as it shall be agreed by the major vote of our society.

(7.) That the moderator shall propound the question and matter of our discourse the week before it be discussed; and at every meeting begin with prayer, and end with thanksgiving.

§. 6. *Of some questions of practical divinity, which at the conference were propounded and answered.*

THE questions propounded were of several sorts.

- I. Choice heads of practical divinity.
- II. Wholesome cases of conscience.
- III. Some controverted points.

The questions of the first sort, were these and the like :

§. 1. *What was the happiness of man's condition in the state of innocency ?*

1. GOD made man in his own image, Gen. i. 26, 27. ix. 6. Eccl. vii. 29. Eph. iv. 24. 2. Man was wonderfully and fearfully made, Psalm cxxxix. 14. 3. Man was made Lord of all the creatures, Gen. i. 26. 28. Pl. viii. 6. 4. Man had a perfect knowledge of God, Rom. i. 19, 20. and of the creatures, Gen. ii. 19. 5. Man had sweet and immediate communion and conference with God, Gen. i. 28, &c. iii. 8. 6. Man was placed in paradise, Gen. ii. 15. 7. Man was made a little lower than the angels, Pl. viii. 5. 8. Man laboured without pain, Gen. iii. 17. 9. Man lived without sin or shame, Gen. i. 31. ii. 25. 10. Man was crowned

crowned with glory and dignity, Pſal. viii. 5. 1 Cor. xi. 7. 11. Man was God's delight, Prov. viii. 31. 12. Man had a poſſibility not to die, Gen. ii. 17. and iii. 19. Man had a free choice of good and evil, not neceſſitated to either, Gen. ii. 16.

§. 2. *What are the miſeries of man in the ſtate of nature ?*

1. HE is impure in his conception, Pſ. li. 5. 2. He is born in iniquity, Pſalm li. 5. 3. He is defiled with ſin in the whole nature, Iſa. lxiv. 6. Ezek. xvi. 6. Rom. vii. 24. 4. His thoughts are corrupted with ſin, Gen. vii. 5. Eph. iv. 17, 18. 5. All the members of his body and powers of his ſoul are defiled with ſin, 2 Pet. iii. 2. 14. 6. His members are ſervants to unrighteouſneſs and to iniquity, Rom. iii. 13. 16. vi. 19. 7. He is ſpiritually blind, Rev. iii. 17. Jer. x. 14. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Eph. v. 8. 8. His mind is ſet on evil works, Eph. iv. 18. Col. i. 12. 9. His will luſteth after evil, Rom. viii. 7. 10. His heart is deceitful and deſperately wicked, Jer. xvii. 9. 11. His affections are inordinate, Iſa. lix. 7. 12. He hath a defiled conſcience, Tit. i. 15. 13. He hath an unſatiable deſire after ſin, Job xiv. 4. xv. 16. 14. He is full of ſin, Prov. xxii. 15. Rom. i. 24. vii. 5, 14. 2 Pet. ii. 19. 15. He is dead in ſin, Eph. ii. 1, 2. 16. His civil actions are ſin, Prov. xxi. 4. 17. His beſt ſervices are ſin, Pro. xv. 8, 9, 28, 29. 18. He is unable to any good, Ro. iii. 12. vii. 19. viii. 8. 2 Cor. iii. 5. Rev. iii. 17. 19. He is hated of God, Pſ. v. 5, 20. He is ſeparated from all fellowſhip with God, Iſa. lix. 2. Eph. ii. 12. 21. He is under God's curſe, Gal. iii. 10. Deut. xx. 16, 17, 18. 22. He is without Chriſt, Eph. ii. 12. and out of the communion of ſaints, Eph. ii. 12. He is a bond-ſlave of Satan, John viii. 34, 44. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Eph. ii. 2. Heb. ii. 15. 24. He is a child of wrath, Eph. ii. 3. 25. He is ſubject to all the calamities and curſes of this life, Deut. xxviii. 15, 16, etc. 26. His life is ſhort, and vain, and full of toil

and care, Gen. iii. 19. Ecl. v. 14. Pſalm ciii. 13, 15. 27. He is liable to death, Rom. v. 12. vi. 23. Gen. iii. 19. Deut. xxx. 28. Pſ. lxxxix. 48. 28. He is guilty of damnation, Rom. v. 17, 18. viii. 6. 2 Theſſ. ii. 11, 12. 29. He ſhall not, as ſuch, inherit the kingdom of heaven, 1 Cor. xv. 50. 2 Theſſ. i. 9. 30. He is an enemy to his children, Deut. xxviii. 18.

§. 3. *What means hath God appointed to come out of this miſerable ſtate ?*

1. WE muſt enquire after the means of ſalvation, Luke iii. 16, 12. Acts iii. 37. xvi. 29, 30. 2. We muſt lay hold on ſeaſons and opportunities of grace offered, John xii. 35. 3. We muſt hearken to, and entertain the motions of God's Spirit, Revel. iii. 18, 20. 4. We muſt ſeriously conſider of our own ways, Hag. i. 5. Luke xv. 20. 5. We muſt go to God by Chriſt, John xiv. 6. x. 9. 6. We muſt ſearch the ſcriptures, Deut. xvii. 19. Iſa. lv. 1, 2, 3. John v. 29. 7. We muſt wait on the word preached, John v. 24. Acts xxvi. 18. Rom. x. 14, 17. 1 Cor. i. 18, 21. 1 Pet. i. 23. 1 John iv. 6. 8. We muſt ſee our ſin, Rom. ii. 20. Gal. ii. 10. have a ſenſe and feeling of ſin, Mat. xi. 28. Acts ii. 37. 9. We muſt confeſs our ſins, Pro. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 9. 10. We muſt be grieved for ſin, Iſa. lvii. 15. Mat. v. 14. James iv. 9, 14. Zech. xii. 10. 1 Cor. vii. 10. 11. We muſt be inſtant in prayer, Acts viii. 22. Rom. x. 13. 2 Theſſ. i. 11, 12. Heb. iv. 16. 12. We muſt endeavour after regeneration, John iii. 3, 5. and mortification, Mat. vii. 13. Rom. viii. 13. 13. We muſt conſider the curſe due to us for ſin, Ezek. xviii. 28. Gal. iii. 10. Col. iii. 6, 14. We muſt remove all lets and impediments that hinder converſion, Deut. xii. 8. Eph. iv. 17. 15. We muſt conſider that by ſin we had an hand in crucifying Chriſt, Zech. xii. 10. Acts ii. 36, 37. 16. We muſt judge ourſelves, that we be not judged, 1 Cor. xi. 31. 17. We muſt

forfake our ways and thoughts, and turn to the Lord, Isa. lv. 7. Joel ii. 13. Acts ii. 38. 18. We must avoid evil society, 2 Cor. vi. 17, &c. 19. We must desire after Christ and his righteousness, Matth. v. 6. Rev. iii. 18. xxi. 6. 20. We must believe on the Lord Jesus, John iii. 15. vi. 35, 65. Acts xvi. 31. Gal. iii. 22. Eph. ii. 8. 21. We must rest on God's promises in Christ for conversion, Is. xliii. 45. xlv. 21, &c. Ezek. xxvi. 26. &c. 22. We must deny ourselves, Matth. xv. 24. Luke xiv. 26. 23. We must be doers of the word, and not hearers only, Jam. i. 22.

§. 4. *What are the signs of a sound and sincere humiliation?*

1. A Sorrow for sin, because God hates it, Ps. li. 4. 2. A breaking of the heart out of pure love to God, Rom. ii. 4. 3. A sorrow for sin, because it crucified Christ, Zech. xii. 10. 4. A free acknowledgement of our unworthiness, in greatest fulness of our worldly felicity, Gen. xxxii. 10. 5. A suffering of sorrow to abide on the soul, and not putting it off by worldly comforts, Isa. lviii. 5, 6. Joel ii. 13. 6. A mourning for lesser sins, as well as for greater; for the evil that cleaves to a man's best works, as for his other evil actions, Ja. ii. 10. 7. A submission to God's will, let him do what he pleaseth, Josh. x. 15. 2 Kings xx. 10. Jer. x. 19. 8. A throwing of the soul (being affrighted with the threats of the law, and accusations of his own conscience) wholly upon Christ and his promises, Luke xiii. 12. Acts xvi. 31. 9. A hatred against, and shunning of all sin, Job xlii. 6. Ps. cxix. 113. 2 Cor. vii. 11. 10. A leaving of all sin, and doing the contrary good things, Isa. lviii. 6, &c. Mic. vi. 8. 11. The seven marks of godly sorrow laid down, in 2 Cor. vii. 11.

§. 5. *What means hath God appointed for brokenness of heart?*

1. A N eyeing of the word as it is an or-

dinance for that very purpose, Jer. xxiii. 29. 2. Attendance unto, and hearing of the word powerfully preached, 2 Kin. xxii. 19. 3. A light and sense of our sins, Ezra ix. 6. Ps. xxxi. 9, 10. xxxviii. 3, 4, 17, 18. Jer. xxiii. 9, &c. 4. A consideration of the sins of our prophets, Jer. xxiii. 9. 5. A consideration of Christ crucified for and by our sins, Zech. xii. 10. Acts ii. 37. 6. A consideration of the hardness of others hearts, much more of our own, Mark iii. 5. 7. Prayer for contrite spirits, Psalm li. 10. 8. A remembrance of our affliction and misery, Josh. vii. 5. Lam. iii. 19, 20. 9. A consideration of God's withdrawing his comfortable presence from us, Lam. i. 16. 10. A consideration of God's infinite love and grace to our souls, Joel ii. 13. Rom. ii. 4. 11. A consideration of the death of God's saints, who are as the pillars of the places where they live and abide, Is. xxxviii. 2. Ivii. 1. 12. A consideration of God's judgments on others, who have been hardened in sin, Heb. iii. 8, &c. 13. An actuating of our faith in respect of the precious promises of softening hearts, Ezek. xi. 19. xxxvi. 26.

§. 6. *What are the means both for the obtaining and increasing of faith?*

1. THE preaching of the word, John iv. 42. v. 24. Acts xiii. 48. xiv. 22. xvi. 14, 32, 34. Acts xviii. 8. Rom. i. 16, &c. x. 8, 14, 17. Eph. i. 13. 2. The influence and assistance of the Spirit concurring with the word, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. 3. A forsaking of our own legal righteousness, Romans iii. 25. ix. 30, &c. Phil. iii. 8, 9. 4. Godly conference with others, John iv. 7, 29, 30. Acts xvii. 2, 4. 5. Due administration of the sacraments of [1.] Baptism, Rom. iv. 11. Heb. x. 22, 23. [2.] The Lord's supper, 1 Cor. x. 4, 16. Gal. iii. 1. 6. Fervent prayer and wrestling with God, Luke xvii. 5. xxii. 32. Eph. iii. 16, &c. 1 Thess. iii. 10. 7. A complaining of our own unbelief, Mark ix. 23, 24. 8. Experiences of

of God's former dealings, 1 Sam. xvii. 37. 2 Cor. i. 10. 9. A consideration of the faithfulness of God in his promises, Heb. xi. 11. 10. A drawing nigh to God with an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, Heb. x. 22, 23.

§. 7. *What are the signs of a true justifying Faith?*

1. THE blessed fruits of the spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23. 1 Tim. ii. 15. vi. 11. 2. All the graces linked together in that golden chain, 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. 3. A love of Christ, John xvi. 17. 2 Tim. i. 13. Phil. 5. 1 Pet. i. 8. 1 John v. 1. 4. A love of the saints, Eph. i. 15. Col. i. 4. 5. A love and peace with the brethren, Eph. vi. 23. 6. A love and hope of salvation, 1 Theff. v. 8. 7. A joy unspeakable and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8. Rom. v. 1, 2. 8. A patience in waiting for the promises, Isaiah xxviii. 16. Heb. vi. 12, 15. 9. Patience in enduring affliction, 2 Theff. i. 4. Jam. i. 3. Rev. iii. 10. 10. Hope in God, 1 Cor. xiii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 21. 11. Repentance from dead works, Heb. vi. 1. 12. Righteousness, peace, and charity out of a pure heart, 1 Tim. ii. 15. 2 Tim. ii. 22. 13. A heart weaned from the world, 1 John v. 4, 5. 14. Resistance of Satan, and his fiery darts of temptation, Eph. vi. 16. 1 Pet. v. 9. 15. A confidence in Christ, without being ashamed, Rom. x. 12. 2 Tim. i. 12. 16. A firm resolution to cling to Christ, maugre all discouragements, Matth. xv. 28. Rom. viii. 35, 36. 17. A relying upon God's power, when all worldly means fail, Rom. iv. 18, &c. 18. A relying on mercy, not upon merit, Rom. iv. 5. Phil. iii. 9. 19. A throwing ourselves on God, though he frown on us, Job xiii. 15. 20. A pure heart, and a good conscience, Rom. v. 1. 1 Tim. i. 5, 19. Heb. x. 22. 21. A sanctified life, or pure conversation, Acts xv. 9. and xxvi. 18. Heb. xi. 7. James ii. 17, &c. 22. Obedience to God in things contrary to, or above

human reason, Rom. xi. 7, 8, 11. 23. Fervent and hearty prayer, Rom. v. 1, 2. Eph. iii. 12. James i. 6. Mark ix. 24. 24. A contempt of the world in respect of the heavenly inheritance, Heb. xi. 24, &c. 25. The seal of God's Spirit, which is the earnest of God's inheritance, Eph. i. 13, &c. 1 John v. 6. 26. A glorifying of God for his grace and truth, and infinite power in overcoming all natural difficulties, and performing what he promiseth, though never so contrary to the course of nature, Rom. iv. 20. 27. An assenting, closing with, and embracing the promises afar off, as if they were already performed, Heb. xi. 13. 28. A disregard and defiance of the tyranny of man, Psalm lvi. 4, 11. 29. A sense of our own infidelity, and an earnest desire of the increase of our faith, Mark ix. 24. 30. A true, real, and cordial confession of faith, John xx. 28. Acts xix. 18. Rom. x. 10. 31. A constancy in our holy profession, 2 Cor. i. 24. 32. An earnest longing after the coming of Christ, 2 Cor. v. 7, 8.

§. 8. *What are the Motives to Evangelical Repentance?*

1. SIN laid open before us, to the conviction of conscience, Acts ii. 37, 38. 2. A consideration of God's judgments threatened, Ezek. xviii. 30. Jonah iii. 4, 5, Jer. iv. 3, 4. and vi. 26. and xxvi. 4. Amos iv. 12. Luke xiii. 3, 5. Rev. ii. 4, 5, 16. 3. A consideration of the Lord's chastisements and corrections on us, Lam. iii. 19, 20. Rev. iii. 19. 4. A fear of the enemy prevailing against us and over us, Judges x. 9, 10, 15, 16. 2 Chron. xii. 5, 6. Jer. vi. 26. 5. A fear of God's removing the candlestick from us, Rev. ii. 5. 6. A consideration of the great judgment day, Acts xvii. 30, 31. 7. A consideration of God's mercies and grace, Hosea vi. 1. Jer. xviii. 8. Joel ii. 13. Zech. i. 3. 8. A consideration of God's patience and goodness, Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pct. iii. 9. 9. A considerati-

on of God's travailings after our soul's salvation, Ezek. xxxiv. 11. 10. The approaching of God's kingdom, or of the beauty of religion, Math. iii. 2. 4. Mark i. 15. Acts xvii. 30. Ezek. iii. 10, 11. 11. A consideration of the promises of remission upon our repentance, Isaiah lv. 6, 7. Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. Acts iii. 19. 12. A consideration of the promise of life upon our repentance, Ezek. xviii. 32, 38. 13. A consideration of the promise of God's communion and fellowship with us, Isaiah lvii. 15. 14. A consideration of Christ crucified for us, Zech. xii. 10, 11. 15. A consideration of God's former dealings with us in mercy, Hosea xii. 3, 4, 5, 6. 16. A hope and belief of God's acceptance when we come to him, Jer. iii. 22. 17. The publication of Christ's marriage with our poor souls, Jer. iii. 14. 18. A consideration of those comforts that await repentance, Matth. v. 4. Luke xv. 7. 17, 18.

§. 9. *What are the signs of true and evangelical repentance?*

1. AN abhorring of sin, and of ourselves for sin, Job xlvi. 6. Amos v. 15. 2. A godly shame for sin, Ezra ix. 6. Jer. iii. 24, 25. and xxxi. 19. Ezek. xvi. 61, 62. 3. A mourning for sin, because God is offended, 1 Sam. vii. 2. Psalm xxxi. 4. Zech. xii. 10, 1, 2. 4. Sorrow mingled with hope, Ezra x. 1, 2. 5. Serious carefulness, 6. Judicious clearing. 7. Holy indignation. 8. Filial fear. 9. Eager desire. 10. Godly zeal, 2 Cor. vii. 11. 11. Impartial revenge on ourselves for sin, 2 Cor. vii. 11. 12. Works meet for repentance, Mat. iii. 8. Acts xxvi. 20. Isaiah i. 16, 17. Hof. xii. 6. 13. A forsaking of sin, Ezek. xiv. 6. and xviii. 28, 33. Rom. vi. 6. Heb. vi. 1. Isaiah xxx. 22. 14. Self-denial, Luke xv. 19. 15. A justifying of God, or giving him the glory, Hof. xiv. 1, 2. Luke vii. 29. 16. A disesteem of all worldly helps, Jer. iii. 23. 17. A submission to all offices of humility upon sense of sin, Luke

vii. 37, 38. 18. A dear love to God's ministers, whom God hath made instruments of our repentance, Acts xvi. 14, 15. 19. An endeavour after this work on ourselves, to work it on others, Psalm li. 13. Ezekiel xviii. 30. 20. An earnest longing after Christ's coming to judgment, 1 Thess. i. 9, 10.

§. 10. *How may a believer, redeemed by Christ, acknowledge his thankfulness to Christ?*

1. BY a continual remembrance of God's goodness to us, Psalm ciii. 1, 2, 3, 4. 2. By telling others what Christ hath done for our souls, Psa. xxxiv. 3, 4. Eph. i. 3. 3. By walking holily and without blame before Christ in love, Psalm cxvi. 8, 9. Eph. i. 4. Phil. i. 11. Col. ii. 6, 7. 4. By rejoicing in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Psalm xxxiv. 2. and lxiii. 7. Eph. v. 11. 5. By calling on God, and paying our vows, Psalm cxvi. 12, 13. 6. By endeavouring the conversion of others, Psalm li. 12, 13. 7. By administering to the necessity of the saints, Heb. xiii. 16. 8. By singing of psalms, making melody in our hearts unto the Lord, Eph. v. 19, 20. 9. By worthily receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. 10. By loving the Lord Jesus Christ, Cant. i. 3. Luke vii. 47. 1 John iv. 19. 11. By denying ourselves and highest excellencies in respect of Christ, Rev. iv. 10. 12. By a publick profession of Christ's sovereignty, Phil. ii. 11. 13. By suffering willingly for the name of the Lord Jesus, 1 Peter iv. 14, 16.

§. 11. *What are the signs of a sincere love to Christ?*

1. UPRIGHT walking with God, Cant. i. 3. John. xiv. 15. 21. 23. Eph. i. 4. 1 John xxv. 15. 2. A fainting and languishing desire after Christ, Cant. iii. 1, to 4. and v. 8. 3. A love to the members of Christ, 1 John iv. 12. 20. 4. A hating of evil, Psalm xlvi. 10. 5. A relieving of the poor

poor members of Christ, Matth. xxv. 45. 1 John iii. 17. 6. A full assurance of faith, Cant. vi. iii. Rom. viii. 38, 39. 7. A disesteem of all things in comparison of Christ, Mat. x. 27. Phil. iii. 8. 8. A conquering of all difficulties and discouragements for Christ, viii. 6, 7. Rom. viii. 35. 2 Cor. v. 14. 9. A heart and tongue enlarged in the praises of Christ, Cant. v. 10. to the end. 10. All the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. 11. A contemplation of Christ's love, and desires after further sense of it, Eph. iii. 17, to 19. 12. A restlessness of the soul in the non-enjoyment of Christ, Cant. iii. 1, to 4. 13. A contentedness to suffer censures, disgraces, and death for Christ, Cant. v. 6, 7, 8. Acts xxi. 13. 14. A rejoicing in Christ, whom we love, Psalm v. 11. John xiv. 28. 15. A patient waiting for Christ's appearing, 2 Thess. iii. 5.

§. 12. *What are the causes in us of Christ's withdrawing from us?*

1. Covenant-breaking, Deut. xxxi. 16. &c. 2. Idolatry, or spiritual whoredom, Deut. xxxi. 16, &c. Psalm lxxviii. 58. 60. Hosea v. 3, 4, 6. 3. The pride of our hearts, Hosea v. 5, 6. 4. Hypocrisy in God's service, Hosea v. 6. 5. Infidelity or frowardness of heart, Deut. xxxii. 20. 6. Leaving our first love, Rev. ii. 4, 5. 7. Carnal security, Psalm xxx. 6, 7. Cant. v. 3. 8. Carelessness of accepting the seasons of grace, whether Christ draw near in ordinances, or in inward dispositions, Cant. v. 3, 6. 9. A preferring of the creature before Christ, Isaiah lvii. 17. 10. A weariness of God's ordinances, Jer. xxxiii. 38, 39. Mal. iii. 7. 11. A withdrawing from God in the duties of our obedience, Deut. xxxii. 20. 2 Chron. xv. 2. Hosea v. 4. 6.

§. 13. *What are the causes for which Christ on his part withdraws himself from us?*

1. TO try us what is in our hearts, Deut. xxii. 20. 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. 2. To bring

us to an humble acknowledgement of our sins, Job xiii. 23, to the end. Hosea v. 15. Psalm xxx. 7. 3. To prevent spiritual pride in us, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. 4. To make us pray earnestly to him, Psalm iii. 7, 8. and xiii. i. and lxxviii. 1, 2, 3. and lxxxviii. 2, 2, 3, &c. 5. To exercise our faith in his name, Isaiah v. 10. 6. To make us seek him in the use of all means, Cant. iii. 1, &c. and v. 6, 8. 7. To make us prize him, and highly to esteem of him, Cant. v. 8. and viii. 1. 8. To make us hold him more surely when once we have found him, Cant. iii. 4. 9. To stir up and exercise in us all our spiritual graces, Cant. v. 6, 7, 8, &c.

§. 14. *What are the means for the recovery of Christ's comfortable presence?*

1. A search after, and an acknowledgement of those sins which caused his withdrawing, Psalm xxxii. 4, 5. Lam. iii. 40, 50. 2. An hearty bemoaning, shame, and repenting for sin, Jer. xxxi. 18, &c. Psalm xxxiv. 18. Isaiah lvii. 15. 3. A waiting upon God in the use of his ordinances, Psalm xxvii. 13, &c. Cant. i. 8. Isaiah viii. 17. Luke xxiv. 32. 1 John i. 3, 4. 4. A diligent enquiry after Christ, Cant. iii. 3, 4. 5. A moaning and weeping for his loss till he be found, John xx. 11, 13, &c. 6. A drawing nigh to God in the duty of prayer, Lam. iii. 57. Psalm li. 12. and cxlv. 18. James iv. 8. 7. A pressing of God in prayer with his word and promises, Psalm cxix. 49, 50. 8. A due receiving of Christ in the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. x. 16. 9. A feeding upon Christ spiritually by a true and lively faith, John vi. 56. Isaiah l. 10. 10. A recourse to our former experiences, Psalm lxxvii. 7, &c. 11. An hope that for all this we shall enjoy Christ, Psalm xliii. 5. 12. A listening and submitting to the voice of his Spirit, Rev. xxx. 20. 13. A walking in his statutes and keeping his commandments, Lev. xxvi. 3. 11, &c.

§. 15. *Of what use is Christ to a believer already justified?*

1. CHRIST is wisdom and sanctification unto us, 1 Cor. i. 30. 2. Christ is the satisfaction of all our desires, John vi. 35. 3. Christ is our example in forgiving of others, Eph. iv. 32. Col. iii. 12, &c. 4. Christ is our example in suffering injuries with patience, Heb. xii. 3. 1 Peter ii. 21. 5. Christ is our example in holiness, 1 Pet. i. 15, &c. 6. Christ is our example in love, Eph. v. 1, 2. 7. Christ is our example in meekness, lowliness, humility, Matth. xi. 29. John xiii. 13, &c. Phil. ii. 5. 8. Christ is the way and means of our access to God the Father, Romans v. 2. Heb. x. 19, 20. 9. Christ is both the representer and the granter of our requests, doing for us whatsoever we desire in his name, John xiv. 13, &c. Rev. viii. 3. 10. Christ is our consolation in sufferings, 2 Cor. i. 5. 11. Christ is our continual joy, Rom. v. 11. 12. Christ is the death of sin in us, Rom. viii. 10. 1 Cor. xv. 57. Heb. ix. 14. 13. Christ crucifies the world in us, Gal. vi. 14. 14. Christ is our freedom, the end of the law for righteousness, Rom. viii. 2. x. 4. Gal. v. 1. 15. Christ is our life, the very life of grace in us, John xiv. 6. Rom. viii. 11. Gal. ii. 20. Eph. iii. 17. 16. Christ makes intercession for us, Rom. viii. 34. Heb. vii. 25. 1 John ii. 1. 17. Christ is our upholder in temptations, Heb. ii. 18. 18. Christ is our harbinger for heaven, John xiv. 2, 3. 19. Christ is our master, Matth. xxiii. 8, 10. our Lord, Romans i. 4, 9. our head, Eph. iv. 15. our master and Lord, John xiii. 13. 20. Christ is our inabler to do all things, Phil. iv. 13. 21. Christ is both the author and finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2. 22. Christ is our Saviour, yea, salvation itself to us, Rom. v. 9, 10. 1 Thess. v. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 11, &c. 23. Christ is our very being, the food and soul of our souls, John vi. 55. Acts xvii. 28. 24. Christ is our All in All, Col. iii. 11.

S E C T. VII.

Of some questions or cases of conscience, which at the conference were propounded and answered.

THE questions concerning cases of conscience, were these and the like:
§. 1. *Whether a believer may profit more, or be more intent in publick, or in secret prayer?*

IT was answered, That this case might better be resolved by experience than scripture; and accordingly some preferred publick prayer for these reasons: 1. Because in publick they are stirred up by others; but in private or secret prayer, they had none others to join with them. 2. Because in publick they that exercised had more excellent gifts, which exceedingly tend to their edification; but in secret they found themselves weak, and dull, and dead-hearted ordinarily.

Others answered otherwise, and preferred secret prayer on these grounds: 1. Because in secret they could confess more inwardly and feelingly their own sins, than others could do it for them in publick, to whom they were not particularly known. 2. Because in secret they had fewer occasions of distraction, than in publick, and consequently they kept closer to God in the duty. 3. Because they found by experience that in secret their hearts were more up; and when they themselves were to perform in publick, the society whom they joined with did ordinarily more straiten them. 4. Because in secret they could take more pains with their heart; as in midst of prayer to prostrate, or by breaking off to meditate, &c. which conveniently they could not do in publick.

In conclusion this Case was resolved, That *some believers may profit more, or be more intent in publick, others in private:* and the reason rendered was, because the Spirit that helps us to pray, is a free agent, and works diversly in the hearts of his people,

ple, to shew the diversity of his gifts, and his diverse manner of working.

§. 2. *Whether a Christian in his own apprehension decaying in grace, may not yet grow in grace? and if so, What are the reasons of his wrong apprehensions?*

TO the first question it was answered affirmatively; as in case of temptation, Pf. lxxiii. 21, &c. or in a spiritual desertion, Psalm li. 12. lxxxviii. Isa. xlix. 14.

To the second question these reasons were given in; 1. The neglect of Self-examination. 2. The want of God's lively ordinances. 3. A too much eying of our afflictions. 4. A too much poring upon sin, without any thoughts of Christ or free grace. 5. The want of the light of God's amiable countenance. 6. The insensible-ness of grace, which is of a spiritual nature, and not so easily to be perceived. 7. A present deadness or dulness of spirit. 8. A misapplying of some one or more places of scripture, as Hebrews vi. 6, &c. 9. Weakness of knowledge, or want of judgment in such experimental passages, especially in the beginning of christianity. 10. The distemper of the soul, especially in desertion, when as in the distemper of the body, a man thinking or speaking idly, we say it is not he, but his sickness; so it is in this case.

In conclusion, these reasons were approved; but we agreed, *That all the succeeding answers or resolutions should be proved out of God's holy word.*

§. 3. *What signs of true grace, though for the present but small or weak grace?*

1. A willingness to be admonished, and to have our sins discovered, Job xiii. 23. Pf. cxli. 5. 2. A consideration of our sins, with endeavours to turn to our God, Psal. cxix. 59. Lam. iii. 40. 3. A feeling sin to be a burden, Matth. xi. 28. and a sorrow for sin, Zech. xii. 10. 4. A loathing of our sins, Ezek. xxxvi. 31. 2 Cor. vii. 11.

5. An hatred of the occasions of evil, Jude 23. 6. A resolution to relinquish sin, Psalm xvii. 3. Prov. xxviii. 13. Luke xv. 17, 18. 1 John i. 9. 7. A weak apprehension of the promises of God concerning forgiveness, Psalm xxxi. 22. 8. An importunate enquiry after Christ and salvation, upon sense of sin, Acts ii. 37. xiii. 12. xvi. 30. 9. An hunger and desire after Christ, Psalm xlii. 1, 2. cvii. 9. cxlv. 19. Mat. v. 6. 10. A precious esteem of Christ, John viii. 42. Phil. iv. 7, 8. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7. 11. A love of the word, Psalm cxix. 103. John x. 4, 27. 1 Pet. ii. 2. 12. A spiritual joy in the word, Psalm cxix. 77. 13. A receiving of the word with all readiness, Acts xvi. 14. xvii. 11. 14. A longing desire to keep God's commandments, Psalm cxix. 5. 15. A sorrow that others keep not God's law, Psalm cxix. 136. 2 Pet. ii. 8. 16. A love of the brethren, Psalm. xvi. 3. cxxxvii. 6. 1 John iii. 14. 17. A spiritual joy in the churches deliverance, Psalm lxxviii. 3. cvi. 5. Isaiah lsvi. 10. lxi. 10. 18. A reverence and fear of God, Heb. xii. 28. and trusting in God, Prov. xxx. 5. 19. A delight in doing well, Prov. xxi. 15. 20. An hatred of evil assemblies and wicked society, Psalm xxvi. 4, 5. cxxix. 21, &c. 21. A holy despair in ourselves, thro' our own abilities to attain heaven, Ezra ix. 6. Luke xv. 17. 22. A poverty of spirit, and purity in heart, Mat. v. 3. 8. Mark ix. 24. 23. An holy endeavour after growth in grace, Phil. iii. 13. 2 Pet. iii. 18. 24. A continual conflict betwixt flesh and spirit, Rom. vii. 22, &c. 25. A competent measure of spiritual knowledge, Acts xxvi. 18. Col. iii. 10. 26. A careful endeavour after perseverance, Psalm cxix. 111, &c. John viii. 31. Gal. iii. 3. 27. The unutterable sighs and groans of the spirit in prayer, Rom. viii. 26. 28. A sense and bewailing of the hardness of our hearts, Isaiah xliii. 17. 29. A pure love of God, and desire to fear his name, Neh. i. 11. Psalm xviii. 1. Isaiah xxvi. 8, 9. Rom. viii. 28.

30. A godly conversation, Psalm xvi. 8.
1. 23. Acts ii. 25.

§. 4. *Whether is a Christian always bound to reprehend an offender? or in what cases may he forbear?*

IT is answered, that a Christian is not bound ever to reprove, but he may forbear in such cases as these; 1. When the party offending is a scorner, and we perceive he will but scoff at it, Prov. ix. 8. xxiii. 9. Mat. vii. 6. 2. When the offender sins of infirmity, Gal. vi. 12. 3. When the offender is not able to convince the offender that it is a sin, Job vi. 25. Titus i. 9. 4. When there is no hopes to prevail in respect of the evil times. Amos v. 13. 5. When the offences are small, and but little, Prov. xix. 11. xx. 3. 6. When we know not certainly whether the supposed offence be a sin, or not, Joshua xx. 16. 7. When the reprehender is faulty in the same thing, Mat. vii. 3, &c. 8. When the party offending is not capable of reproof, as in case a man be an idiot, or drunk, or in the height of his passion, 1 Sam. xxv. 36, &c. 9. When our reproof may breed some dissention, or imminent and dangerous disturbance; as in case it be amongst rude, boistrous and desperate company, Mat. vii. 6. 10. When the offender is obstinately and wilfully bent to go on in sin, Mark xiv. 60, 61. xv. 4, 5.

§. 5. *How may we know whether we profit by afflictions?*

We may know by these signs: 1. If by affliction we come to be sensible of God's heavy displeasure, Deut. xxxi. 17. Ruth i. 13. Micah vi. 9. 1 Cor. xi. 37. 2. If by affliction we are drawn to search our ways, 1 Kings viii. 38. Ezra ix. 14. Psalm xxxii. 4, &c. Lamentations i. 5. iii. 39, &c. 3. If by afflictions we are soundly and sincerely humbled, 2 Kings xxii. 19, &c. Job i. 20. 1 Pet. v. 6. 4. If our afflictions work on us to make our peace with our God, Isaiah xxvii. 5. Hosea

v. 15. 5. If by afflictions we be drawn to make and pay vows of better obedience, Psalm lxxvi. 13, &c. 6. If in our afflictions we rest upon God, 2 Chron. xiv. 11. and wait on God, Psalm xxxvii. 7, 34. Micah vii. 9. 7. If in our afflictions we mind the promises, and roll ourselves on them, 1 Sam. xxx. 6. Psalm cxix. 74. 8. If in our afflictions we clear God when he is judged, Psalm cxix. 74. 9. If for our afflictions we bless God in his afflicting hand, Job i. 21. 10. If by afflictions our graces are stirred up and exercised, Job xiii. 15. Psalm xlii. 5. Jer. xxxi. 16. Rom. v. 3. 2 Cor. i. 10. Heb. x. 34. Ja. i. 3. 11. If by our afflictions our prayers become more fervent, Neh. i. 3, &c. Psal. lxxvii. 2. and cxvi. 3. and cxlii. 4, &c. 12. If in our afflictions we gather in some experiences of God's love and help, Psalm xxxiv. 46. and xlvi. 16, &c. 13. If in our afflictions we submit willingly and cheerfully to God's good will and pleasure, Levit. xxvi. 41. 1 Sam. iii. 18. 14. If in our afflictions we look more at the hand of God that strikes, than at the instrument, 1 Samuel iii. 8. and xvi. 11. 15. If in our affliction we reject all worldly sinful hopes and unlawful means of deliverance, and rest only on God, 1 Cor. i. 8, 9. Heb. xi. 25, 26. 16. If in present afflictions we gather assurance of deliverance from former experiences. 1 Sam. xvii. 37. Psalm lxxvii. 9, &c. 2 Tim. iii. 11. 17. If by afflictions we find corruptions to weaken, and to be mortified, Isaiah xxvii. 9. 18. If our afflictions beget assurance of our adoption, Heb. xii. 8. Sanctification, Heb. xii. 6, &c. Glorification, Matth. v. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 8.

§. 6. *How should a Christian fortify himself against all the Reproaches of wicked Men?*

1. LET him consider the command of God in this case, Matth. v. 44. Rom. xii. 19. 1 Pet. iii. 9. 2. Let him look on reproach

proaches as the very hand of God, 2 Sam. xvi. 11. 3. Let him consider what an honour it is to suffer reproaches for Christ, Acts v. 41. 4. Let him eye the blessedness of those that are reproached for Christ, Matth. v. 11, &c. 2 Tim. ii. 12. 1 Pet. iii. 14. and iv. 14. 5. Let him consider it is as the lot of God's servants to suffer reproaches, 2 Tim. iii. 12. 6. Let him consider that in his reproaches he suffers with and for Christ, John xv. 20. 7. Let him consider, that though the wicked reproach, yet God will in his time justify and approve, Psalm xxxvii. 33. and cxlviii. 11. 8. Let him consider, that the Lord in due time will both clear his servants and punish the reproachers, Micah vii. 8, &c. 9. Let him set before him the examples of Christ, his apostles, and prophets, Isaiah liii. 7. Matth. v. 12. John xv. 18. 1 Cor. iv. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 21. 10. Let him pray with fervency and faith, Job xvi. 20. Psalm cix. 1, &c. 1 Cor. iv. 13. 11. Let him be sure to keep a clear conscience within, 1 Pet. iv. 15. 12. Let him refer the issue of all unto God, 2 Sam. iii. 39. 13. Let him exercise that heavenly duty of the life of faith, and fasten it on these promises, Psalm xxxvii. 6. and lxxviii. 13. Isaiah lxi. 7. 1 Peter i. 7. and iii. 14. and iv. 14.

§. 7. *Whether a true believer may not sometimes doubt? and what are the several causes of doubting?*

IT was answered, that without controversy, and as the following texts will evince, a true believer may doubt of his salvation; and the causes are these:

1. The prosperity of the wicked, Psalm xxxviii. 17. and lxxviii. 2, &c. and xii. 13. 2. His own want of necessary provisions for this life, Numb. xx. 3, &c. 3. Suspension of divine favour, Job xiii. 24. Psalm lxxvii. 7, &c. 4. Imminent dangers and fears, Exod. xiv. 10, &c. Matth. viii. 25, &c. and xiv. 30, &c. 5. Apprehensions of God's denying his prayers,

Psalm xxii. 1, &c. 6. The afflicting hand of God lying sore on his soul, Psalm cxv. 10, &c. Lam. iii. 17, 18. 7. Mistaken apprehensions and weakness of judgment, Matth. xiv. 26. Mark vi. 49, &c. Luke 24. 37. 8. Relapses or re-entrances into former sins, Psalm li. 8, 12. 9. The littleness or smallness of faith, Matth. xiv. 30. Mark ix. 24. 10. A poring on, or studying too much the life of sense, Luke i. 18, 20. John xx. 5. 11. A want of the true understanding of some divine mysteries, John vi. 60. 12. A distrusting of God's promises upon human reports, Num. xiii. 32, 33. xxxiv. 1, &c.

§. 8. *What are the cures or remedies of doubtings incident to believers?*

FAITH in the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. xi. 20. xiv. 23. 2. A wary and filial fear, Heb. iv. 1. 3. A hope in God, Psalm xlii. 11. and waiting on God, Isa. viii. 17. Jer. xiv. 19, 22. 4. Earnest prayer: 1. Against doubting, Mat. xxi. 21, &c. Mark ix. 24. Luke xvii. 5. xxii. 32. 2 Cor. xii. 1, 8, &c. and, 2. To have our doubts resolved, Judges vi. 37, &c. 5. A depending on the faithfulness of God and his promises, Heb. x. 23. xi. 11. 6. A striving to keep down the life of sense, Matth. vi. 28, &c. 7. A recalling to mind the Lord's dispensations in our former afflictions, Lam. iii. 18, &c. 8. A recalling to mind God's former love to our souls. Psa. xx. 1, &c. Lam. iii. 22, 24. 9. Diligence in the use of all means, Psalm lxxviii. 17. Cant. iii. 1, &c. 10. A trusting in God's name, making him our stay and support, Psa. lxxviii. 26. Isa. l. 10. §. 9. *What are these hindrances that obstruct the growth of Christianity, or the spreading of the kingdom of Christ?*

Want of a pious and powerful ministry, Prov. xxix. 18. Rom. x. 14, &c. 2. Negligence of the ministry in place, Jer. i. 21, &c. Ezek. xxxiv. 4, &c. 3. A scandalous and vicious ministry, 1 Sam. ii. 17. Jer. xxiii. 1, &c. Mal. ii. 8. Mat. xxiii. 13. 4. The deceits and sophistry of false prophets,

phets, Jer. xxvii. 14. xxviii. 15. Ezekiel xiii. 6, etc. 2 Pet. ii. 18. 5. A presuming to teach others without God's call, Jerem. xxiii. 32. 6. A despising of the ministry of the gospel, Mark vi. 3. John viii. 57. 7. Envy and railing against the word and ministry, Acts xiii. 45, etc. 8. Persecution of God's messengers, Acts xii. 1, etc. 9. Ambitious, factious, and malicious spirits, 3 John 10. 10. Fomenters of division among the people of God, Rom. xvi. 17, etc. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 11. Enemies of the truth and power of godliness, 2 Tim. iii. 6. 12. The evil example of superiors, 1 Sam. ii. 23, 34. 1 Kings xiv. 16. John vii. 47, 48. 13. Seducing spirits, 1 Kings xii. 27, etc. Acts xiv. 19. xx. 30. 1 Tim. iv. 1. 14. Scandalous professors, Heb. xii. 14, etc. 15. Evil society, Psalm xviii. 26. Prov. iv. 14, etc. 16. Conspiracy of the wicked, Acts xix. 29, 34. 17. Satan and antichrist, Zech. iiii. 1. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Rev. viii. 10, etc. 18. Broaching and fomenting of errors, and especially of idolatry, 1 Kings xii. 30. Acts xix. 27, etc. 2 Pet. ii. 2. Rev. ii. 20. 19. Mistake in the matters of salvation, Hof. iv. 6. John vi. 66. 20. A profanation of holy things, 1 Sam. ii. 17. 21. A preferring carnal things before Christ, Matt. viii. 34. xix. 22. Acts xix. 26. 22. Obstinacy and unbelief, Jer. xlv. 16. Mat. xiii. 58. Heb. iii. 19. iv. 2. 23. Slavish fear, John ix. 22. 24. Abuse of christian liberty, 1 Cor. viii. 9, etc. 25. A giving offence in things merely indifferent, Rom. xiv. 13. 1 Cor. x. 32, etc. 26. Persecution of the church, Acts viii. 1, etc. Rev. xi. 7.

§. 10. *What are the means to preserve unity and amity amongst christians?*

Frequent and fervent prayer, Pf. cxxxii. 6. John xvii. 11. Rom. xv. 5, etc. Jam. v. 16. 2. Pithy and pious exhortations, Ro. xii. 10, 16. 1 Cor. i. 10. 1 Thess. v. 13. 1 Peter i. 8. iv. 8. 3. The spirit of meekness and lowliness, of long-suffering and forbearing one another in love, John xiii.

14, etc. Rom. xii. 10. xv. 1, etc. Eph. iv. 2, 3. Phil. ii. 3. 4. A not rendering evil for evil, 1 Pet. iii. 8, etc. 5. A restoring such as are fallen, in the spirit of meekness, Gal. vi. 1, etc. 6. A moderate reprehension of such as are contrary-minded, 2 Tim. ii. 24, etc. 7. A slighting of slanderous reports, Prov. xxv. 23. 8. A quelling of the spirit of pride, Prov. xiii. 10. 9. A seasonable visit of the brethren, with whom we have had spiritual commerce, Acts xv. 36. 10. Meetings and conferences about differences that have fallen out, Acts xv. 6. 11. A ready submission to the judgment of one another, according to the word, Eph. v. 21. 12. An endeavour to speak the same things, and to be of one mind, 1 Cor. i. 10. Phil. ii. 2. 13. A doing all things in charity, 1 Cor. xvi. 14. 14. A readiness to forgive, as Christ forgave us, Mat. xviii. 33. Eph. iv. 32. 15. A spirit of wisdom and discretion, Prov. xix. 11. Eccl. vii. 9. 16. A mortifying of lusts, and subduing of passions, 1 Cor. iii. 3, James iv. 1. 17. A loving carriage and deportment of the outward man, 1 Cor. xv. 1. xxv. 23. 18. A cheerful admission of the weak into christian society, and bearing with their infirmities, Rom. xiv. 1. xv. 1. 1 Thess. v. 14. 19. An avoiding of such as cause divisions amongst christians, Rom. xvi. 17. 20. An avoiding of all ill speeches one against another, 1 Pet. ii. 1, 21. A not thinking too highly of ourselves, but soberly, according to the measure of faith God hath given us, Rom. xii. 3, etc. 1 Cor. iv. 6. 22. A desire to do to others, as we wish others to do to us, Mat. vii. 12. 23. A study to be quiet, and not to meddle with another man's business, 1 Thess. iv. 7. 24. A solemn entering into covenant with God, and with one another, Jer. l. 5. 25. A consideration of the command, *Be of the same mind one with another*, Rom. xii. 16. 26. A consideration that *we all know but in part, and therefore that we should bear with one another's infirmities*, 1 Cor. xiii.

9. 27. A consideration that a passionate, peevish, and froward professor is seldom acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus, Psalm xxv. 9. Prov. xi. 2. and xxvii. 20. Isaiah xxviii. 9. Rom. xvi. 17. James i. 21. 26. 28. A consideration that unity in judgment is the promise and blessing of another life, and that unity in affection is our present duty, Eph. iv. 13. Phil. iii. 15, &c.

S E C T. VIII.

Of some questions or controverted points, which at the conference were propounded and answered.

THE questions of controverted points, were these and the like :

§. 1. *Whether doth God see sin in believers so as to be offended at it? and how may it appear?*

IT is answered affirmatively, that God doth see sin in his saints, as appears by these texts, Exod. iv. 14. 1 Sam. iii. 12, &c. 2 Sam. xii. 9, &c. Psalm cxxxv. 14. Jer. xv. 17, &c. Rev. ii. 4. 13, &c. though not in reference to their justification, yet in reference to their conversation and sanctification, which is but in part. 2. This appeareth, 1. From the Lord's complaining against believers for sin, Isaiah i. 2, &c. Jer. ii. 5, &c. 2. From his threats if they do not repent, 2 Sam. vii. 14. Psalm lxxxix. 30, &c. Isaiah i. 20. Rev. ii. 5. 16. and iii. 8. 3. From his chastisements of them for sin, 2 Sam. xii. 15. Ps. lxxiv. and xlix. 8. Amos iii. 2. Jer. xxx. 15. Luke i. 22. 4. From God's withdrawing the comforts of his Spirit for sin, Psa. li. 12. 5. From the prayers of believers to God, for the hiding of his face from their sins, and removing of his anger for their sins, Psalm vi. 16. and xxxii. 5, &c. and li. 9. 6. From the Lord's reproofing of his people for their sins, 2 Sam. xii. 7, &c. Mat. xvi. 23.

§. 2. *Whether are believers to repent of their sins? and upon what ground?*

1. Answered, That they are to repent, as appears, Job xlii. 6. Jer. xxxiii. 19. Rev. ii. 5. iii. 3.

2. The grounds or reasons are these following, 1. Because God looks for repentance from them, Zech. vi. 6. 2. Because God commands them to repent, Rev. ii. 5. 16. and iii. 3. 19. 3. Because it is God's pleasure that we should feel the bitterness of sin, as well as the sweet of sin, Jeremiah ii. 19. 4. Because believers sin as well as others, 1 Kings viii. 46. 1 John i. 10. 5. Because in believers there is a proclivity and disposition to all sin, Psalm li. 5. Rom. vii. 24. 6. Because repentance is a means for diverting of judgments from a land or a person, 2 Chron. vii. 14. Joel ii. 13. 7. Because repentance is a means for obtaining mercies, Judges xx. 26. Neh. i. 9. 8. Because repentance is a means, way or qualification to pardon, 1 Chron. vii. 14. and salvation, 2 Cor. vii. 10. 9. Because repentance is a necessary fruit of faith, Zech. xii. 10. Acts xix. 18. 10. Because after repentance we may expect comfort, Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6. Mat. v. 4. 2 Cor. vii. 9. 13. 11. Because that therein we shall give God the glory of his justice, Psalm li. 4. Rev. xvi. 9.

§. 3. *Whether are believers to pray for pardon of sin? and what are the reasons?*

1. Answered, That believers are to pray for pardon, as may appear from these scriptures, Num. xiv. 9. 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. Dan. ix. 19. Psalm xxv. 11. Mat. vi. 12.

2. The reasons are these, and the like, 1. Because Christ taught his disciples so to pray, Mat. vi. 12. 2. Because believers have renewed infirmities, Num. xiv. 11. 19. 3. Because God is ready to pardon them that pray for it, Psalm lxxxvi. 5. 4. Because God hath promised to pardon the sins of his saints, 2 Chron. vii. 14. Jer. xxxiii. 3. 8. 5. Because whatsoever we read in scripture of pardon, it is always in reference to sins past, Isaiah xlii. 25. Jer. xxxiii.

xxxiii. 8. Psalm lxxix. 8, &c. 6. Because yet the judge hath not solemnly pronounced the sentence of pardon, neither will he, till at the last day, Acts iii. 19.

§. 4. *Whether is it the duty of Christians to observe the Lord's day, now being the first day of the week, as a Christian Sabbath? and what grounds for it?*

Answered, That it is their duty; and proved from Mark xvi. 2. John xx. 19. 26. Acts i. 1, &c. and xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Rev. i. 10.

2. The grounds are these, and the like, 1. Because Christ as that day did perfect the work of redemption for our eternal rest. Matth. xxviii. 1, etc. 2. Because Christ did appear to his disciples upon that day more especially, John xx. 19, 26. 3. Because, as it is observed generally, the holy Ghost, as that day did fall upon the apostles, being met together in one place, Acts ii. 1. 4. Because on that same day the apostles ordinarily dispensed the word, sacraments, and other ordinances, Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. 5. Because such things as are named the Lord's in scripture, are ever of the Lord's institution; as, *The word of the Lord*, 1 Tim. vi. 3. *The cup of the Lord*, 1 Cor. xi. 27. *The supper of the Lord*, 1 Cor. xi. 30. and so *The Lord's day*, Revel. i. 10. 6. Because God doth seem to honour the first day of the week above any other day, as appears by his great works done upon that day; viz. In the creation he made that day the first fruits of time; and in it he created the highest heavens, the place of the eternal sabbath; and in it he brought forth the light of the world; answerable to which is the day of Christ's resurrection, wherein *the sun of righteousness*, the true light of the world rose up, and became the first-fruits of them that sleep, and by virtue thereof will bring all his saints into eternal rest, Gen. i. 1, etc. compared with Mal.

iv. 2. John i. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 20. Heb. iv. 9, etc.

§. 5. *Whether may not Christians lawfully sing David's, or Moses' Psalms, and how may it appear?*

1. Answered affirmatively; Ephes. v. 19. where, under those three heads of Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, David's psalms are contained.

2. This is proved by precepts, patterns and reasons. 1. By precepts, Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. James v. 13. 2. By patterns: 1. Of Christ himself and his apostles, Mat. xxvi. 30. 2. Of Paul and Silas, Acts xvi. 25. 3. Of the church, Rev. xv. 3. By reasons, as;

1. Because the people of God have used the very same words of David's psalms in singing, 2 Chron. xv. 13. compared with Psalm cxxxvi. and Ezra iii. 11. compared with Psalm cxviii. and Rev. xv. 4. compared with Psalm lxxxvi. 9. and Exodus xv. 2. compared with Psalm cxviii. 14. 2. Because Paul directing to sing psalms, gives the very same word or title as David gives in his psalms, James v. 13. compared with Psalm xcv. 2. 3. Because David's psalms were indited by the Spirit of God, as well as any others that confessedly may be sung, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.

§. 6. *Whether admitting of, or joining with scandalous Persons in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and not endeavouring to keep them back, whiles such, be not sin in the Admitters and Joiners? And how may it appear?*

1. Answered affirmatively, That it is sin, 1. In the admitters, Matth. vii. 6. 2. In the joiners, 1 Cor. v. 11. 2 Thess. iii. 6.

2. This appears to be sin, 1. In the admitters, by these grounds. 1. Because it is against the command of keeping unclean persons from such like holy thing, Numb. ix. 6, 7. 2 Chron. xxiii. 19. 2. Because

Because Christ cast out the man that came without his wedding-garment, Matth. xxii. 11. 3. Because this was the practice of the apostles, 1 Cor. v. 3, *etc.* 1 Tim. i. 20.

II. In the joiners, by these grounds, 1. Because they are forbidden expressly to join with such, 2 Theff. iii. 14. 2. Because scandalous persons ought to be censured, and so to be esteemed of the Joiners, as heathens and publicans, Matth. xviii. 17.

III. In both admitters and joiners, by these grounds, 1. Because God hath forbidden us to eat with such, 1 Cor. v. 11. 2 Theff. iii. 6. 2. Because by this means their sins would become ours, 1 Cor. v. 6, 7. Gal. v. 9, &c. 3. Because the ordinance of the Lord's supper is defiled thereby; which is not to be understood simply in itself, but in some sort, *i. e.* to them who are scandalous, and to them who join with such as they know to be scandalous: And this appears, 1. In that the temple, which had a sacramental signification of Christ, was polluted by the coming of profane persons into it, Ezek. xxiii. 38, 39. 2. In that the sacrifices of old were defiled by profane persons, Hag. ii. 11, *etc.* 3. In that the profane are as swine which trample the pearls under their feet, Mat. vii. 6. See these proofs enlarged in Gelaspie's Aaron's Rod blossoming, book 3d. chapter 15.

§. 7. *In such a case, what is the duty of Admitters and Joiners, to keep themselves blameless, and the ordinance undefiled?*

1. It is the duty of admitters,

1. To eye and observe the flock over which God hath given them charge, Acts xx. 17, 28. 2. If any be observed, or brought in as offenders, it is their duty, 1. To admonish them once or twice, Tit. iii. 10. 2 Theff. iii. 15. 2. If that prevail not, to suspend them, 1 Cor. v. 11. 2 Theff. iii. 6, 14, *etc.* 3. If that prevail

not, then to excommunicate them by the lesser excommunication, Matth. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. 2 Cor. ii. 6. 4. If that prevail not, then (in some cases) to excommunicate them by the greater excommunication, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Gal. i. 8, 9. 1 John v. 16. This is only when a man is visibly irrecoverable, or hath committed the sin against the holy Ghost; the case of Julian the apostate, whom the church would not pray for, but prayed against.

II. It is the duty of joiners, 1. To eye and observe one another's conversation, so much as they may, Heb. x. 24. and iii. 12, *etc.*

2. If upon observation they find any faulty, then, 1. The scandal being private, it is the joiners duty, 1. To admonish privately betwixt him and the offender alone, Matth. xviii. 15. 2. If that be not effectual, then to take one or two more with him, Matth. xviii. 16. 3. If that be not effectual, then to tell it to the church, Matth. xviii. 17. 4. If the church be corrupt, and neglect its duty, he is then to mourn for it, 1 Cor. v. 2.

2. The scandal being publick, it is the joiners duty immediately to bring it to the church, 1 Cor. v. 1. 2 Theff. iii. 14.

IT was the desire of some precious men, That I should revise this question about joining with the wicked in the supper of the Lord. For my own part, I am fully satisfied, that the mind of God is clearly delivered in it; and yet lest any may think that I am singular in this, I have lately consulted with those divines, to whom high, if not highest respect is given in the controversies of this nature; *viz.* Mr. Rutherford, and Mr. Gelaspie, to whom I may join the late assembly of divines convened at Westminster; and if you would know their opinions, consult but the authors, as I have cited them, where you may find them at large.

The question is, Whether admitting of,

or joining with scandalous persons in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and not endeavouring to keep them back, whilst such, be sin in the admitters and joiners? And how may it appear?

It is answered affirmatively: 1. That it is sin.

I. In the admitters, Matth. vii. 6. See Rutherford's divine right of Church government, page 254. and see Gelaspie's Aaron's Rod blossoming, page 548, 549, etc.

II. In the joiners, 1 Cor. v. 11. 2 Theff. iii. 6. See Rutherford's Divine Right of Church Government, page 238, 240, 250, 268, 256, 357. and see Gelaspie's Aaron's Rod blossoming, page 424, &c.

1. This appears to be sin; 1. In the admitters, by these grounds: (1.) Because of the command to keep unclean persons from holy things, Numb. v. 2. ix 6, 7. 2 Chron. xxiii. 19. See Rutherford's Divine Right of Church Government, page 241, 242. See Gelaspie's Aaron's Rod blossoming, p. 96. (2.) Because of Christ's casting out the man that came without his wedding-garment, Matth. xxii. 11. See Gelaspie's Aaron's Rod blossoming, p. 510. (3.) Because of the practice of the apostles, who cast out the scandalous from the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. v. 3, etc. see Ruth. Divine Right of Church Government, page 238, 240, 268, 346. Gelaspie's Aaron's Rod blossoming, page 239. and for, 1 Tim. i. 20. see Ruth. Divine Right of Church Government, page 354, 355. Gelaspie's Aaron's Rod blossoming, page 189.

II. In the joiners, by these grounds: 1. Because they are forbidden expressly to join with such, 2 Theff. iii. 14. Ruth. p. 250, 360. Gelaspie. p. 281, 282. (2.) Because scandalous persons ought to be censured, and so to be esteemed of the joiners as heathens and publicans, Matth. xviii. 17. Ruth. p. 303, 306, 223, 233. Gelaspie, p. 295, 296, 351, 361, 364.

III. In both admitters and joiners, by

these grounds; (1.) Because God hath forbidden us to eat with such, 1 Cor. v. 11. 2 Theff. iii. 6. Ruth. p. 238. 240, 250, 268, 356, 357. Gelaspie. p. 424, 427, 428, 429. (2.) Because by joining with such in the Lord's supper, their sin would become ours, 1 Cor. vi. 7. Gal. v. 9, 10. Ruth. p. 238, 239, 240, 339, 345, 349, 373. Gcl. p. 116, 117, 286. (3.) Because the ordinances of the Lord's supper is defiled thereby, which we understand not simply in itself, but in some sort; *i. e.* It is defiled to them who are scandalous, and to them who join with such whom they know to be scandalous: and this appears;

1. In that the temple, which had a sacramental signification of Christ, was polluted by the coming of profane persons into it, Ezek. xxiii 38, 39, Ruth. p. 452, 453, Gelaspie, p. 546, 547.

2. In that the sacrifices of old were defiled by profane persons, Haggai ii. 11, &c. Ruth. p. 272. Gelaspie, p. 547.

3. In that the profane are as swine which trample the pearls under their feet, Matth. vii. 6. Rutherford, p. 254, 255, 638. Gelaspie, 548, 549. It is confessed that the word is a pearl, and yet the profane may hear the word, and instead of defiling it, (if the Lord see good) be converted by it, Isaiah ii. 3, 4. xi. 4, 5, 6, 7. but the Lord's supper is such a pearl as they can make no use of it, but pollute it to their own destruction; no more than dogs and swine can make use of pearls to feed, but only to trample on them: the Lord's supper is such a thing as is ordained only for those who have saving grace, and not for dogs.

I hope these two witnesses (if they be thoroughly perused) will satisfy the scrupulous: but besides those two worthy pillars, our own assembly of divines affirms this truth, who grounding the suspension of scandalous sinners from the sacrament, though not yett cast out of the church, they gave in these proofs: 1. 'Because the ordinance itself must not be profaned.'

2. 'Be-

2. 'Because we are charged to withdraw from those that walk disorderly.' 3. 'Because of the great sin and danger, both to him that comes unworthily, and also to the whole church.' The Scriptures from which the assembly did prove all this, were Matth. vii. 6. 2 Theff. iii. 6, 14, 15. 1 Cor. xi. 27. to the end; compared with Jude, verse 23. 1 Tim. v. 22. see Gelaspie's Aaron's Rod blossoming, page 339. I have

no more to say, but the Lord lead us into all truth, and give us grace to walk humbly and obediently to every truth revealed: *And as many as be perfect, let them be thus minded; and if any be otherwise minded, God shall reveal it in his due time: Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things,* Phil. iii. 15, etc.

C H A P. XII.

Of the Hearing of the Word.

S E C T. I.

Of the necessity of preparation to the hearing of the word.

Hitherto of duties in reference to our spiritual *ethicks* and *oeconomicks*: now follow our divine *Politicks*; viz: such Duties as have reference to publick or church assemblies: and they are either, *Hearing the word preached, or receiving the sacraments.*

1. For our right, holy and conscionable importment, in and about the *Hearing of the word*, we must look to our preparation before we hear, our carriage in Learning, and our behaviour afterwards.

1. For *preparation*, it is of such necessity, that the want and neglect of it, is the cause that the word to many becomes the *favour of death unto death*; and to some professors, even of good hearts and affections, but a dead letter, without any life or power in it. Is it not a general complaint of the best Christians, that they are ordinarily possessed with much deadness of heart, and dulness of spirit at these holy exercises? alas, their zeal and fervency, which should be quickened and inflamed at every sermon, is dull and benumbed with senselessness and satiety; they do not tremble at divine comminations, and denuncements of God's judgments against sin; they are not

so refreshed with the gracious promises of life and salvation as they ought to be; they do not enjoy and reap the thousandth part of that delight, comfort and benefit, as they well might, by the ministry of the word; they do not with that cheerfulness receive, with that sweetness taste or relish, with that life and vigour digest the food of life; they do not so clearly see and discern the infinite beauty of the sacred majesty represented unto them, or that glorious grace shining unto us in the face of Christ Jesus; their hand of faith doth not with that feeling and fastness lay hold upon and clasp about the rich treasures revealed in the gospel; and why? because their hearts are not purged and prepared for hearing. This duty then is of great necessity, and special use for all those which look for benefit or blessing by the preaching of the word: *Take heed how ye hear*, saith Christ, Luke viii. 18. and, *Take heed to thy foot*, saith the preacher, *when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to offer the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil*, Eccl. v. 1.

But understand we aright: God would not have us make an idol of preparation, as if therefore 'God draws nigh to us, because we are prepared; no, no; though

preparation in ordinary course is a means to find God, yet doth God sometimes hide himself when his people are prepared; he would have us know, that if he be found of us at all, it is of mere mercy; he is not bound in justice (setting aside his promise) to reward this preparation; 'tis but our duty, and he can espy in it matter enough of displeasure, but ordinarily the godly find God according to their preparation; and hereto the current of the Scripture bears witness, *They that seek the Lord shall praise him: open your gates, and the king of glory shall come in. If any man open to me, I will come in to him. If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thy hands towards him, then shall thou lift up thy face without spot*: Psalm xxxii. 26. and xxiv. 7. Rev. iii. 20. Job xi. 13, &c.

§. 2. *Of the manner of preparation to hear the word.*

THE manner of this preparation consists in these particulars: (1.) In prayer. (2.) In meditation. (3.) In examination. (4.) In purging or cleansing our hearts. (5.) In a right disposition of our hearts.

1. In Prayer: *If thou criest after knowledge, and listest up thy voice for understanding; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find out the knowledge of God*, Prov. ii. 3, 5. Christ bids us *pray for our daily bread*, and a blessing upon it; much more should we pray for a blessing upon our spiritual food, for man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live, Deu. viii. 3. Mat. iv. 4. Now the particulars we are to pray for, are these:

1. For the minister, *that God would open unto him a door of utterance, to speak the mysteries of Christ; and that he may make it manifest as he ought to speak*: 'Direct him, Lord (should every soul say)

that he may speak fitly to me, somewhat for my understanding, somewhat for my affections, somewhat to help me against such or such a temptation, Col. iv. 3, 4.' (2.) For the congregation, 'that Christ may ride with triumph in the midst of them, that some may be converted, others may be confirmed and strengthened in their most holy faith.' (3.) For ourselves, 'that through God's assistance we may hear profitably, and be blessed in the hearing; that God would help us in our preparation, meditation, examination, in the purging of our hearts, and putting them into a right disposition and frame: *Open thou mine eyes*, said David, *that I may see the wonderful things contained in thy law*, Ps. cxix. 18.

2. In Meditation: *I thought on my ways*, said David, *and turned my feet unto thy testimonies*, Psal. cxix. 59. he first looked over his ways, before he would set his feet into God's ways. Now the matter of our meditation, is, 1. 'Who we are, to hear God's word: alas, poor handfuls of dust and ashes, base and vile; thus Abraham and Job in their converses with God confess: and this consideration will stir up our humility and repentance in us. 2. Into whose presence we come: is it not into the presence of an high, and holy, and powerful God? Is it not the Lord, a person both of greatest place, and supreme authority? This consideration will further our reverence and respect of God. When Job's eyes did see God, *he abhorred himself in dust and ashes*, Job xli. 16. 3. By whose assistance we come; we have no strength of our own to do any good, nor is there any thing in us, that can procure favour and acceptance with God; we must therefore by faith depend upon Christ for assistance and acceptance: this consideration will stir up our humility and faith. 4. With what affections we come; if we come to purpose, we must come with inward spiritual affections, with willingness,

hear-

cheerfulness, reverence, repentance, love, humility and faith. 5. To what end we come; whether it be to God's glory, and our own soul's good.

3. In Examination, *let us search and try our ways: commune with your own hearts*, Lam. iii. 40. and then offer to God *the sacrifice of righteousness*, Psalm iv. 4, 5. Now the matter of examination is, 1. The general frame and temper of our hearts, whether they be in a better or worse temper than formerly. 2. The special occasions, for which our souls at such or such a time desire to meet God: It is the complaint of some, I am weak in knowledge; of others, I want such and such graces; of others, I am like to encounter such and such temptations; of all these we are to examine ourselves, that we may accordingly receive supply. 3. Our sins, that we may have them slain by the sword of the Spirit in the ministry of the word. 4. Our graces, that we may have them strengthened and nourished by the spiritual food of our souls. But the handling of these at large, I shall leave to the Receiving of the Lord's Supper.

4. In the *purging or cleansing of our hearts*, 1. From sin; *Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls*, Jam. i. 21. with which agrees that parallel place, *Wherefore putting away all malice, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word*, 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. As it is with the body, when the stomach is foul and clogged with bad humours, we should first purge it, before we feed it, otherwise whatsoever we eat, will but nourish and increase the corrupt humours; so when the soul is stuffed or clogged with sin, whatsoever is heard in the ministry of the word, will but be abused by it, and wrested to the destruction of it. 2. From worldly cares and thoughts, which may draw away the heart: *The cares of the world, faith Christ, do choke the seed of*

the word, Mat. xiii. 22. When Abraham went up to the mount to sacrifice, he left his servants in the valley; and when we go up to the mount where God appears, we should leave all our servile affections, and worldly thoughts in the valley; or if any enter, we should do by them as Abraham did by the birds that would have eaten up his sacrifice, *chase them away*. It is said, that in the temple, tho' there was much flesh for sacrifice, yet there was not one flie appeared stirring: O that it might be so with us, that not one thought might arise upon our heart, unsuitable to the place or work at hand: but this is the misery, we have not spiritual hearts in temporal employments, and therefore we have carnal hearts in spiritual employments, the less of the sabbath in the week, the more of the week we find in the sabbath.

5. In a *right disposition of our hearts*: We must have hearts seasoned, (1.) With Softness, for if the heart be not soft, and flexible, the power of the word will not make any print or deep impression upon it; all holy admonitions, reproofs and instructions will be but as arrows shot against a stone wall. (2.) With Humility. *For them that be meek will he guide in judgment, and teach the humble his way*, Pl. xxv. 9. The proud heart is so swelled with the wind of vanity and vain-glory, of self-love and over-weening conceit, that there is left no room in it for the precious treasures of saving grace to enter. (3.) With Honesty; *For honest hearts are the profitable and faithful hearers*, Luke viii. 15. resembled by the good ground; hearts that have no manner of purpose to live and continue in any one known sin; hearts ready and resolved to serve and please God in all the ways of his commandments, and that sincerely and continually. (4.) With Faith; for this makes the word sink and soak into the soul with power and profit: *the old Jews heard the word, but it profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith*

in them that heard it, Heb. iv. 2. Faith animates and inspires the promises of the gospel with such a sovereign sweetness, that they are able to raise us from the depth of fears, yea to put us into a paradise of spiritual pleasures, and possession of heaven, as it were already. (5.) With Teachableness: *Sacrifice and burnt-offerings thou wouldst not, saith David, but mine ears hast thou prepared*, Psalm xl. 6. *q. d.* 'Thou hast boarded new ears in my heart, that I can now reverently attend unto, rightly conceive, and with an holy greediness devour, as it were, the mysteries of grace.'

6. With *openness or readiness to receive every truth that God shall teach us*: It is said of the Bereans, *That they received the word with all readiness of mind*, Acts xvii. 11. When there is such an holy disposition in us as to receive both in judgment and practice whatsoever God shall reveal to us out of his holy word, this is a precious disposition.

Thus much of *Preparation, before we hear*: 'What follows, but that we open our hearts and hands? Surely the windows of heaven will be set wide open, that all manner of spiritual comforts, all the blessings of peace and happiness, may in abundance be showered down upon us; the rich treasury of everlasting glory and immortality shall be now unlocked to us, and we may delight ourselves amidst those heavenly pearls, and golden pleasures, joys that no heart can comprehend, but that which is weaned from all worldly pleasures, and set apart, and sanctified for all holy services and business of heaven.'

§. 3. *The duties of the Soul in hearing the Word.*

OUR duties in hearing, consist in these particulars;

1. That we set ourselves in God's presence whiles we are hearing the word, and that we consider it is God we have to deal withal in this business, and not man, and

that it is God's word, and not man's: This was the great commendation of the Thessalonians, chap. ii. 13. *That they received the word as the word of God*; and it is the express saying of our Saviour, Luke x. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me*: The Lord himself is present in a special manner, where his word is preached; *Surely the Lord is in that place*, as Jacob said of Bethel, Gen. xxviii. 16. Now this apprehension of God's presence in the assemblies of his people, will preserve our hearts from roving and wandring thoughts: *I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love*, Psalm cxix. 113, yea, it will keep us in that awful and reverent disposition that is meet for the majesty of heaven.

2. That we diligently attend to that we hear; thus *all the people were very attentive to hear Christ*, Luke xix. 48. or as it is in the original, *They hanged upon him to hear him*; they so carried themselves, as if their ears and minds had been tied to his very tongue; Look, as a prisoner will hearken to the sentence of a prince, every word he speaks being life or death; or as the servants of Benhadad, when they were in their enemies power, observed diligently if any word of comfort would come from the king of Israel, and they did hastily catch at it; so should we with all diligence and attention hearken to the good word of God.

3. That we labour to understand what we hear; to this purpose, *Christ called to the multitude and said, Hear and understand*, Mat. xv. 10. Now the means to understand the word are these, 1. 'Come to the word with a willing mind to learn;' though the exact understanding not what he read, yet because he had a mind to learn, the Lord provided for him, and we know what a comfortable success Philip's sermon had with him: Men love to teach willing scholars, so doth God when we come with willing and ready minds to be taught of him. 2. Be well ac-

quainted with the grounds and principles of Christianity; it is the want of this that makes men dull in understanding; they that are not first well nourished with milk, will not be fit to receive and digest stronger meat; if the foundation be not well laid, it is in vain to build. 3. Walk according to the light revealed; *a good understanding have all they that do his commandments*, Psalm cxi. 10. If we employ well the little knowledge we have, there is a promise to give us more.

4. That we hear the word with all spiritual subjection, as that word which hath power to command the soul and conscience: God to this purpose looks into a congregation, to see what hearts will yield to his word; the Spirit of God hovers over the congregation, and here it waits and there it expects, to this man it comes, and knocks at the door of his heart, to that man, and the other man it goes, saying, *Open your hearts, you everlasting doors, that the king of glory may come in*: Surely now should we say, 'these are God's testimonies, this is the word the minister of God speaks to me in God's stead, I must give account of it, and therefore I will submit myself to it.'

5. That we hear the word, with application of it to our own hearts and lives; *Hear this, and know it for thyself*, Job v. 27. So did Christ's disciples when our Saviour told them, that one of them should betray him, *They were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say, Lord, is it I?* Matth. xxvi. 21, 22. As no plaister can do the patient any good, unless it be applied; and as no meat is able to do us good, unless it be eaten and digested, no more can the word preached profit us unless it be mixed with faith, one principal work whereof is to apply those things that are delivered in the word, and this is the meaning of the prophet, *Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good*, Isaiah lv. 2.

6. That in hearing, we look to our affections, that they be rightly exercised: Thus Josiah his heart is said to melt at the reading of the law, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27. Thus the Jews at Peter's sermon were *pricked in their hearts, and said, Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Acts ii. 37. Thus the hearts of the two disciples that went to Emmaus, *burned within them, when Christ opened to them the scriptures*, Luke xxiv. 32. Now the means to stir up these affections, are, 1. A belief of the word, as that which is undoubtedly true; *God cannot lie*, Titus i. 2. *Nor will he change his mind*, Numb. xxiii. 19. 2. A love to the word, for its purity, perfection, usefulness, and wonderful benefits to us. 3. An appropriation of the word unto ourselves; for that which affects us, is that which most nearly concerns us; without this means of quickening our hearts, they remain dead and senseless, and the word becomes utterly unprofitable. 4. A consideration of the nature of the word, which ever requires and calls for suitable hearts and affections; it is *a pure word*, Psalm cxix. 140. and therefore we must cleanse and purify our hearts for the receiving of it; it is *spiritual and heavenly*, Rom. vii. 14. and therefore we must labour for spiritual and heavenly minds to entertain it, Jam. iii. 17. It is a word of power and authority, the very voice of Christ, and therefore our hearts must submit and stoop to receive it with *meekefness and trembling of heart*, Jam. i. 21. *It is a sure word*, 2 Pet. i. 19. *A faithful word*, Titus i. 9. *A vision that will not lie*. Isaiah lxvi. 2. Heb. ii. 3. and therefore we must embrace it with faithful and believing hearts, without which the word cannot profit us at all, Heb. iv. 2.

7. That above all other affections, we make sure to delight in the word: It is said of Christ's hearers, *that they heard him gladly*, Mark xii. 37. and it is noted for an especial sign of grace, to hear the

word with delight; *I rejoiced at thy word* (said David) *as one that findeth great spoils*, Psalm cxix. 162.

Quest. 1. But whether may not unregenerate men have a delight in God's ordinances?

Ans. I answer, 1. Most of them have no delight at all in God's ordinances: *To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the Lord is to them a reproach, they have no delight in it*, Jer. vi. 10. and if this be our case, if we can hear sweet gospel-preaching, the free offer of Jesus Christ, with all his glories and excellencies, to poor sinners, to vile, lost, undone souls, and are no whit taken therewith; wo to our souls, can we sleep away such a sermon? can we slight or neglect such gospel offers? nay, do we attend them coldly? have we no heart-risings? no stirrings and workings? no longings and desires? and thus we pass sermon after sermon, and sabbath after sabbath? O then, we are wholly dead unto the life of grace, Jesus Christ as yet hath not given us his true light, no work of conversion doth at all appear in us: The end which Jesus Christ had in sending out preachers, was to discover his love to poor perishing sinners, that so they might be affected with him, and long after him, and if we have no such relish, our condition is sad.

2. Some unregenerate men may have some delight in the word: *They seek me daily*, said God, *and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness and serfseek not the ordinances of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice, they take delight in approaching to God*, Isaiah lviii. 2. *The second ground received the word with joy*, Matth. xiii. 20. and *Herod heard John Baptist gladly*, Mark vi. 20. Ungodly men may delight in God's word, as in these cases;

1. When the ordinances are a lead-

ing way unto some end that suits with corrupt nature: Thus Jehu shewed abundance of zeal in destroying the house of Ahab, and the idolatry of Baal, that thereby he might establish the kingdom to his posterity, and get himself a great name; *Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord*, 2 Kings x. 16. He was so full of vain-glory, that he could not hold in, but was forced to burst out.

2. When the manner of dispensation of the ordinances doth suit with their disposition: An understanding judicious man may love preaching that is judicious and understanding; a man of meekness may delight in a sermon of peace, peace; a temperate man may like a sermon that is tart and bitter against drunkenness, uncleanness; the liberal man may delight in severe preaching against covetousness; as a man mulicably affected, may delight in singing of psalms, because these things suit with their dispositions: The gifts of ministers may have an affecting pleasingness; they may express their minds in such fit terms, or so pathetically, or they may have such a grace in utterance, as may affect: *Lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but do them not*, Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

3. When there is a common work of the Spirit of God upon them for a time; *They may taste of the heavenly gift, and be made partakers of the holy Ghost; they may taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and yet fall away*, Heb. vi. 4, 5. But this work is rather a work upon them, than in them, a forced work, not natural, rather a flash, than a fire of affection; the affections are listed up, they cannot be altered and changed, acted only by an outward principle; the experience that the Spirit hath forcibly and powerfully wrought on them, not by an outward and inward principle also, both by the Spirit of God, and suitability

of affection to that which is good : It was otherwise with David, *I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart*, Psalm xl. 8. and otherwise with Paul, Rom. vii. 22. *I delight in the law of God after the inner man* ; Till the law of God be within us, we cannot from within taste the sweetness of God's ordinances : in true and solid delight, there must be a suitability betwixt the heart and the ordinances ; therefore saith the wise man, *It is joy to the just to do judgment*, Prov. xxi. 15. The justice that is in him, is suitable to the judgment to be done by him, and this makes the joy. Hence it follows, that so much grace, so much delight : were we more holy, spiritual, heavenly, as the ordinances are, we should be more affected therewith. Thus it is not with the wicked, they have no such delight.

Quest. 2. Why is the word so brim full of comfort to the dear saints of God?

Ans. Because in the word they have communion with God, who is the God of all consolation; and with the Spirit of God, who is called the Comforter : Now as a man that walks amongst perfumes, must needs smell of the perfume; so they that converse with the God of all joy must needs be filled with all joy; and therefore David calls God his exceeding joy, Psa. xliii. 4. The saints go to the word, as one that goes to hear news of a friend, they look upon the ordinances, as that whereby they have to do with God, and therefore it is precious and sweet to them. No wonder; can a man who is cold come to the fire and not be warmed? Can he that is in the dark come into the open air and not be enlightened? God is the spring of all comfort, and therefore sure their hearts must needs be comforted that meet with God in the ordinances; on the contrary, if they meet not with God, if they miss of their communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, then is comfort afar off: But we must argue against a general truth, from a particular temptation. The

position will stand, that God's word is brim-full of comfort to God's people, tho' every experiment comes not up to it.

§. 4. *The Duties required after Hearing.*

THe duties required after hearing the word, are these;

1. That we carefully remember, and keep that which we have heard; Prov. iv. 21. *My son, let thine heart retain my words, keep them in the midst of thine heart.* As a man that hath a jewel will be careful to lock it up in his safest chest, so should we keep the word in our hearts, in the midst of our hearts. Many hear the word desirously, but, as we say, it goes in at one ear, and out at the other; it stays not for any after-use, but a little present admiration: Others hear, and the word smites them a little on their consciences, and wounds them, and one would think some good thing would be wrought on them, but they go away, and the motion dies, like unto mettals which are soft and pliable whilst they are in the fire, but shortly after they become harder than before. *Take earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip; or, let them run out as a leaking vessel,* for so the original bears it, Heb. ii. 1.

2. That we meditate and seriously think of what we have heard; meditate upon these things (said Paul to Timothy, chap. iv. 15.) *give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all*: Thus *Mary pondered the words of the angel in her heart*, Luke ii. 19. and *David meditated all the day on God's law*, Psalm cxix. 97. Meditation is as the bellows of the soul that doth kindle and inflame holy affections: Meditation is of a separating and settling nature, it separates heavenly thoughts from earthly, for it often goes over with thoughts, and at last settles the heart on such thoughts as these; 'O this is the word of God, this is the law, the proclamation

mation of the great king, whereby I must be judged : This may be the last sermon that ever I shall hear while I live, such a gale of God's Spirit may never be offered to me again ; I will be wise therefore, and give way to the Spirit of God, I will not beat it back again, but yield to the blessed motions of the Spirit that this day have been made.'

3. That we repeat what we have heard, and confer of it, and examine the scriptures about the truth of it ; *My tongue* (saith David, Psa. cxix. 72.) *shall speak of thy word, for all thy commandments are righteousness* ; and *You shall lay up these sayings in your hearts* (saith God,) *and you shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house*, Deut. xi. 18. This is it for which the noble Bereans are commended to us, *They searched the scriptures daily, concerning the things that were delivered by Paul*, Acts xvii. 11, &c. A man that comes into a pleasant garden will not content himself with the present scent only, but will carry some of the flowers away with him : So after we have been in the garden of spices, and have felt the favour of Christ's ointments in church assemblies, let us take some of the flowers away with us and smell of them again and again. Repeating, conferring, examining the word, is, as the pounding of spices that will make them smell more.

4. That we put in practice whatsoever we hear ; *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls*. James i. 22. we must do it, we must bring it nearer to us, that it may be an unpractised word in our understanding and affections, that it may be written in our souls, and in the tables of our hearts, that it may be incorporated and naturalized into our inward man, that so we may speak and think, and do nothing but that which is divine ; and in so doing, observe we this frame of spirit, to be quick and speedy about it ; *I made haste and prolonged not the time, to keep thy commandments*, Psa. cxix. 60. This speedy, this immediate putting of the word into practice, is of much advantage to the hearer ; the affections of the heart are then lively and quick, which, with delays, die and decay suddenly.

5. That (when the word is heard, and we are returned home) we pray again for a blessing on that we have heard, and as our memories will bear, let us turn the word into prayer, especially the heads or principal parts of it : Prayer must be the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending of this spiritual duty ; we must pray in preparation, and pray in conclusion, and pray always. And thus much concerning our duties before, in, and after the hearing of the word, Luke xxi. 36.

C H A P. XIII. S E C T. I.

Of the Two Sacraments of the New Testament.

THE next duty of a Christian, as it hath reference only to the publick, or church assemblies, is, ' a right receiving of the sacraments,' which are two, Baptism and the Lord's supper : baptism is the sacrament of our incorporation into Christ,

of our initiation or investing into the glorious state of Christianity ; The Lord's Supper is the sacrament of our continuance in Christ, of our confirmation in spiritual life, and the power of grace already planted within us : by Baptism we are washed, we

are sanctified, we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God: by the Lord's Supper we grow in spiritual strength, we lay better hold by the hand of faith, upon the merits and mercies of Christ; we feel more soundly and sensibly the power and virtue of his blood, we see more clearly, and are more fully and feelingly ascertained of the forgiveness of our sins; concerning the former, it is to little purpose to give any directions, because infants (who only in our days are baptized) are merely subjects receptive, not active, and so far as concerns the parents, in relation to their infants, we have dispatched elsewhere. [See page 263.]

§. 2. *Of duties in general, before we receive the Lord's supper.*

I SHALL now therefore proceed to the second sacrament: and for a right receiving of the *Lord's supper*, there are duties of necessity required before, in, and after the sacrament.

My meaning is not to speak of the habitual dispositions, but of the actual dispositions of the heart, in reference to which—Before sacrament, the duty is *self-examination*, 1 Cor. xi. 28. *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread, and drink of this cup.* Of this self-examination, we have spoken before; but in reference to this sacrament we shall handle it more fully, and so consider of it, (1.) In its subject. (2.) In its object.

1. In the subject-matter, or the nature of this self-examination: 'Self-examination is a holy work of the soul, whereby it casts its eye, and reflects upon itself, and looks through itself, and takes a true scanning and estimate of its spiritual estate;' for instance, 'I find such and such sins forbidden in the word, such and such graces required in the word, whereupon comparing my present condition with the scriptures,' I examine, 'Am not I guilty of these sins? do I practise these duties? or am I possessed of these graces?' The

conscience being thus closely and sincerely examined, it will return a true answer to every question, whence it will be easy to give a true censure of our spiritual estate or condition.

2. For the object of our examination, it is generally our sins, and our graces.—Of which in order.

§. 3. *Of the manner of examining our sins before the Lord's supper.*

FOR the right examining of our sins, observe we these rules:

1. Procure we a double catalogue of our sins, the one *before*, the other *since* our conversion: *Let us search and try our ways* (saith Jeremiah) *and then turn again to the Lord*, Jer. iii. 40. If we will not, we may be sure God will: *Thou inquirest after mine iniquity* (saith Job, ch. x. 6.) *and searchest after my sin.*

2. Confess we our sins: bring we them out, as they brought *the vessels of the temple, by number and weight*, Ezra viii. 34. Aaron, confessing for the people, *he was to confess all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins*, Lev. xvi. 21. As *three make all*, so here's *three alls* to make up a right confession; not only must be confessed *All their iniquities, and all their sins*, but *all their transgressions in all their sins*: q. d. Aaron must number, and Aaron must aggravate their sins, by laying out how many transgressions were wrapped up in their several sins.

3. Labour we for grief and sorrow of heart for sin, otherwise all is to no purpose: *I will declare my iniquity* (saith David, Psalm xxxviii. 18.) *I will be sorry for my sin*: his confessions were dolorous confessions; he felt sin, and this wrought upon him, *as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me*, Psalm xxxviii. 4. there's nothing in the world can make an heart more heavy, than when it feels the weight and heaviness of sin.

4. Judge we and condemn ourselves for our sin : this is that duty instanced in by the apostle, 1 Cor. xi. 31. *If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged: O Lord, I am not worthy* (could the centurion say) *that thou shouldest come under my roof: but, O Lord, I am not worthy* (should every one of us say) that I should come to thy table.

5. Pray for mercy, pardon, and acceptance in, for and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

§. 4. *Of examination of the wants of graces, that should be feelingly in us.*

FOR the right examining of our graces, observe we this threefold search or scrutiny of, (1.) The wants, (2.) The truth, (3.) The growth of our graces.

1. That we may rightly examine the wants of our graces, practise we these particulars :

1. Procure we a catalogue of graces, such as that is Gal. v. 22, 23. *Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; or such as that in 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8. Add to your faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity: if these things be in you, and abound, they will make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2. This catalogue procured, set we the same before us, and consider which of these graces we have, and which of these graces we want; I know it is a question, 'Whether all graces are not so connex'd and chained together, that one of them cannot be severed from another? But howsoever we may distinguish *quantum ad habitum et actionem*; [with regard to *habit* and *act*] in respect of habit, we grant they are always connexed and chained together, but not in respect of act or exercise: *Add grace*

to grace, saith the apostle, *q. d.* a Christian at first doth not exercise all graces; but as a man lives first the life of a plant, then of sense, then of reason, though all were radically there at first: so it is in graces, there are many forms that Christians go through, as scholars at school do: the first form is to teach them their sins and miseries, and so they go to school to the law, and are set to study it; and then after they have learned that lesson thoroughly, they are led up higher, to have their faith drawn out, and to be exercised about free-grace, and about Christ, his person, and union with him, and about the art and way of drawing virtue from him, and doing all in him: nay after this, though a believer in his conversion hath the substance of all these taught him, yet he goes over them again throughout his whole life; and sometimes his thoughts dwell more about the emptiness of his own righteousness, sometimes about that fulness that is in Christ, sometimes about the spiritual strictness he ought to walk in; and this is to *add grace unto grace*: nay, there may be addition concerning one and the same grace, as when a man's grace and the fruits thereof grow bigger, and more plentiful, when there are new degrees of the same, *for example*, for Faith, when from a man's casting himself upon Christ, he comes to find sweetness in Christ, and from that grows up to an assurance of faith: so for Prayer, when we find our prayers to grow better; when more spiritual corruptions are put into our confessions, and stronger grounds of faith are put into our deprecations, or petitions for pardon; when we have more enlargedness to thankfulness, more zeal to pray for the churches, when we go to pray *with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit*, Eph. vi. 18. So for Obedience, 'when we abound more and more in the work of the Lord,' as it is said of the church of Thyatira, that their *lust works were more than their first*, Rev. ii. 19. when as the boughs are laden, and we

are filled with the fruits of righteousness, Phil. i. 11. This is to add grace unto grace, or one degree of grace unto another. Now if in this sense, there be an addition of graces, or an addition of degrees, examine, what is the grace? or what is the degree of any grace that we want?

3. Pray we fervently for a supply of those wants in this ordinance: imagine we saw Christ compassed with all his privileges, and promises, and pardons, and mercies, and merits; imagine we heard him say, 'Come hither poor souls, you that are sensible of your wants, and of your spiritual poverty, there is in me bowels of compassions, and pardons in store; it is I that am your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; what is it you want? what is it you would have me do for you? shall not these sugared words of your Saviour melt your hearts, and bring you low on your knees: 'O Lord' (should the soul say) 'I beg of thee saving knowledge, justifying faith, sincere repentance, fervent love: O Lord, I would fain have assurance of pardon, strength of faith, power against some special lust, healing virtues, to lance my bloody issues: O Lord, that thou wouldst bestow on me meekness, or temperance, or patience, or obedience, or quicknings in thy Spirit: Lord, that a pardon might be sealed for all my sins, that I might receive the virtue of thy death, the comforts of thy Spirit, the mortifying of such and such a lust: Lord, that my unclean heart may be sanctified, that I may be enabled with more strength to perform such a duty: O Lord, upon this very errand, and for this very end do I now come to thee, for help in this or that particular do I now come to thy ordinances: and, O Christ, I beseech thee, supply all my wants, and let me draw virtue from thee: if thus we would pray, and come to Christ, then would Christ out of his bowels and mercies, answer our souls: 'Receive,' would he say, 'the grace you feel the want of; receive my

Spirit, receive power against lusts, receive strength to obedience, receive all the graces of my Spirit, for I am all in all to you.'

4. Raise and rouse we up our souls, and go we to the ordinances, with strong expectations to receive the benefits and graces we have prayed for; never any came to Christ to be healed, but they came with a strong expectation to receive health; if a leper came, he came with expectation of cleansing; if a blind man came, he came with expectation of seeing; if a lame man came, he came with expectation of walking, and we never read that any coming with such expectation, was turned empty away: the cripple asking an alms of Peter and John, they said to him, *Look on us*, and then, saith the text, *he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them*, Acts iii. 4. If we would come to the sacrament, with our eyes on Christ, to his graces and promises, *Of his fulness* (for he is full of grace, a fountain overflowing) *we should receive grace for grace*, John i. 16. Say then, Christ hath promised to give in the sacrament his body and blood, the benefits of his death and precious bloodshed; he hath promised to seal pardons, to manifest himself, to give power against lust, I will now therefore go to this sacrament, with a particular expectation of such and such a blessing as my soul stands in need of.

§. 5. *Examination of the truth of our graces, and first of our conversion.*

OUR sins and want of graces thus examined, the soul is in good measure prepared, yet because the Lord Jesus abhors to be food to nourish, where he was not seed to beget, it concerns all who desire to taste of the sealing power of the second sacrament, first to prove the sealing power of the former sacrament, before they come to be nourished as saints, let them know whether they are begot and made saints: and to that end they must examine further, (1.) The truth of their graces. (2.) The growth of their graces.

1. For *the truth of their graces*, it is good to begin with the beginning; and first to examine their Conversion, and secondly, the individual companions of their conversion, as their Knowledge, and Faith, and Repentance, and Love, and Obedience, and Desires after this ordinance.

1. For Conversion: a man may by such marks as these, try and consider whether he be truly and soundly converted or not.

1. If he hath turned from Satan in all sins, and turned unto God in all duties, if he hath left all gross sins, as *Lying, swearing, usury, drunkenness, uncleanness, and the like.* (Ezek. xv. 5, &c.) in practice and in action, and all frailties and infirmities, at least in allowance and affection, so that with watchful resistance, and earnest groanings of spirit, he strive and pray against them, and be humbled and kept in awe by them, and that he perform obedience to all God's commandments, though not in perfection or height of degree, yet in truth and sincerity of heart.

2. If he be willing in all his purposes, desires, endeavours and actions to set himself in the presence of God, and in them to be wholly, unreservedly and intirely guided by his word, Psalm xvi. 8. Gal. vi. 16.

3. If he can with *an holy comfort, and humble triumph, think upon death, the law, the great judgment, hell, and those endless torments,* 1 John iv. 17, 18.

4. If he lovingly hunger and thirst after spiritual nourishment, *the growth in grace by the word, sacraments, Christian conference, sanctifying the sabbath,* and all other godly exercises, both publick and private, 1 Peter ii. 2.

5. If truly and heartily he *love and long after the coming of Christ, and love such as are true christians,* and that because they make conscience of sin, and serve God with singleness and sincerity of heart, Titus ii. 13. 1 John iii. 14.

6. If his chief *delight and best comfort be in holy duties and heavenly things, and*

that he infinitely prefer them before gold, honours, pleasures, yea, the whole world, Psalm i. 2. and xix. 10.

7. If he would not change his present station, though never so *base, poor, and neglected in the world* (yet accompanied with the state of grace, and Christianity) *for the most rich and glorious estate of the greatest man upon earth where there is nothing but profaneness and unregeneration; if all this whole great world about, were turned into gold, honour, and pleasures, and in respect of the comfort of grace, it were dung, vanity, nothing,* Heb. xi. 25, 26.

8. If he would not be in the state and case he was before, *though he then thought that good enough,* for any worldly good, for ten thousand worlds, Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9.

9. If he be truly humbled with consideration of the long time of his profaneness and impenitency, and *very sorry he began no sooner,* nor made greater haste into the royal and glorious state of christianity, Jer. xxxi. 19.

10. If those *sinful pleasures and vanities be most tedious, irksome and distasteful unto him, which formerly he pursued with greediness and delight,* Rom. vi. 21.

11. If he mourn for the abomination of the times; *grieve at the wicked courses of others, and be very glad, and heartily joyful when goodness and sincerity gets the upper-hand, and when any one is converted,* Psalm cxix. 136. 2 Pet. ii. 7.

12. If to the power of his gifts at all occasions, he be still plotting, working and labouring *the conversion of others, with zeal and sincerity, specially those that are nearest about him, any ways depend upon him, and belong to his charge,* Ezek. xviii. 30.

§. 6. Examination of knowledge.

NOW for the individual companions of sound Conversion; we must enquire within ourselves for those graces of knowledge, faith, repentance, etc.

The first of these graces which every wor-

worthy and fit receiver must necessarily find in himself, is Knowledge; and by such marks as these, he may try and consider, whether his knowledge be a saving and sanctifying knowledge or no.

1. If it beget humility and lowliness of mind; if the sight of God's purity, majesty, just indignation and vengeance against sin; if the sense of his own blindness, vanity, inward filthiness, and natural corruption, make him willingly entertain humility, and a lowly conceit of himself.

2. If it be drawn into practice, and joined with conversion of the heart from sin unto God, and with reformation of life from evil to good, otherwise knowledge without practice will increase the guilt of conscience, and the damnation in hell, Deut. iv. 6. Psalm cxi. 10. John viii. 5, 6.

3. If it be edged and sharpened with a longing desire and insatiable thirst after more of those rich and saving treasures: there issues from out of the sanctuary *waters of life*, (see their increase) first to the ankles, then to the knees, then to the loins, afterwards *a river that no man could pass: If we have once tasted how sweet the Lord is, there will be a desire to increase more and more*, Ezek. xlvii. 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3.

4. If it be diffusive and communicative of itself, if it shine round about, and work all the good it can in all places: *The lips of the righteous feed many: the lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the foolish doth not so*, Pro. x. 21. It is as new wine in vessels, desirous to vent; not to purchase a little vain-glory, or profane praises, but to work spiritual good, and for the conversion of others.

5. If it beget a reverence of that great majesty and love, to that holy truth it knows and apprehends in the word, and an holy estimation of it above all possessions, *Counting all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord*, Jer. ix. 24. Psalm cxix. 97, 98. Phil. iii. 8.

6. If by it the soul knows God in Christ, and knows Christ as his own Saviour, and knows the *power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death*, John xiv. 17. Phil. iii. 10.

7. If by it the soul knows *the things given it of God*, and especially the inhabitation of *the Spirit of Christ*, John xiv. 17. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

8. If it extinguish or greatly dull the favour of earthly things, and makes the soul heavenly-minded, *savouring of spiritual things*, 2 Cor. ii. 14.

§. 7. Examination of faith.

A Second grace which every worthy receiver must find in himself, is Faith; and by such marks as these, he may try whether his faith be a true and justifying faith.

1. If it sprung in the heart by the public ministry of God's holy word, Rom. x. 14. if the heart was broken, and bruised, and brought to an holy desperation, whereby it wholly *renounced, disclaimed, and disavowed itself*, Gal. iii. 24. as unworthy of life, of breath, or being: if then it began to lift up its eyes upon the precious promises of salvation, revealed in the gospel, and shining gloriously in the face of Christ: and if lastly it perceived some glimpses of comfort, hopes of pardon in the blood of Christ, whence arose an hungering desire, and longing thirst after the mercies of God, and merits of Christ Jesus; and so it cast itself with strong cries and prayers into the arms of Christ his blessed Redeemer.

2. If it grow and daily spring up towards height of assurance, and *fullness of persuasion*, Rom. viii. 38. Ordinarily faith is weak at first, full of many doubts and distractions, fears and tremblings, but after long experience of our own sincerity, godly life, and good conscience, it grows up in time and by leisure to be a *strong faith*, Rom. iv. 20, 21.

3. If it purifie the heart, Acts xv. 9.

Formalists may watch over their open outward actions, but true believers set themselves with special care, and all good conscience, to bridle and bring under all wicked stirrings of the heart: *The desire of the righteous is only good*, Prov. xi. 23. *i. e.* the main streams of his desires, the course and current of his heart is to godliness and goodness, though sometimes his corrupt nature and Satan's boisterous temptations, do unawares and violently carry his thoughts another way, for which he sends out many a prayer for pardon and purging.

4. If it bring forth a true and thorough *Evangelical repentance*, Zechariah xii. 10. Where God's comfortable favour shines, and is shed into the heart, it immediately melts and resolves into tears of sorrow and grief for former rebellions, and makes unfeigned and resolute vows, for ever after, by God's grace to throw out of his heart and life, those sins which have grieved so good a God.

5. If it beget in him whom it possesseth, a Sanctification of all parts, both in soul and body, tho' not in perfection, 2 Cor. i. 12. If the understanding be enlightened with knowledge in the great mysteries of godliness; if the will be bent with the best things; if the memory be a store-house of heavenly treasures: if the stream of our affections be turned from the world towards God's glory and good causes; if the heart be weaned from lusts, and fallen in love with eternal pleasures and heavenly things; if the conscience be watchful to discover, and sensible to feel the approach and prickings of the least sin, &c.

6. If it *work by love*, First towards God and Christ, in that all his sins are remitted, and he is eternally beloved of God in Christ. 2. Towards Christians, in that the saving graces of God's Spirit shine in them.

3. Towards himself, with relation unto God, and reservation of his glory. 4. Towards kindred, friends, not so much because they are of the same blood, as be-

cause of the mutual interest they have in the blood of Christ. 5. Towards enemies, because of the precious command of Christ, Gal. v. 6. Ps. xvi. 3. 1 John iii. 14. Mat. v. 44.

7. If it cause a forsaking the world: no man can do this if it be his sweet sin, until his soul have received by the hand of faith, from the Spirit of God, an assurance of an immortal crown in the heavens, sealed unto him by the blood of Christ: but then how willingly doth he bid the world farewell? how resolutely doth he cast out of his affections all greedy thoughts, and excessive desires of earth and earthly treasures? Heb. xi. 23. 1 John v. 4, 5.

8. If it speak *comfort in distress, joy in tribulation, glorying in afflictions*: faith teacheth that God casts us in the fire, not to burn us, but to refine us, and make us more orient in his sight: this is the beaten path to heaven, cries faith, which all the glorious saints have trodden before us, Ro. v. 1. Acts v. 41. 2 Tim. i. 12. Rom. viii. 18. 1 Pet. i. 7.

9. If it will maintain a christian in some measure of sufficiency and contentment in all estates: *The just shall live by faith*, Gal. ii. 20. not by friends, money, earthly hopes, or helps, &c. If it makes a man lay hold on God's promises, and work an inward trust in God's never-failing providence, so as he will leave the success of all his labours to the Lord.

§. 8. Examination and Repentance.

A Third grace which every worthy receiver must find in himself, is repentance; and by such marks as these, he may try whether his repentance be sound and sincere repentance.

1. *If it be ashamed of sin*: not as a thief is ashamed, which shame ariseth from the effect of sin, as punishment or disgrace; but as a son is ashamed (whence it is called a filial shame) out of a sight of the filthy and loathsomeness of sin; the impenitent glory in their shame, but the truly pe-

penitent are ashamed of such glorying, as of every sin, Jer. xxxi. 19. vi. 15. viii. 12. Ezek. xvi. 61, 63. Ezra ix. 6. Zeph. iii. 5.

2. *If it mourn for sin*: thus David mourned (not for the punishment, he is willing to bear it, but) for sin, as it was sin. I deny not but sorrow may be godly, even for judgments, and then our trial will be if we can mourn rather for spiritual judgments than for temporal; and especially if we can feel and bewail hardness of heart, mourning because we cannot mourn as we ought, Psalm xlii. 3. li. 3, 4. 2 Sam. xxiv. 10, 17. Isaiah lxiii. 17.

3. *If it cause a great mourning, at least so great as our mourning would be for outward losses*: Thus Zachary, ch. xii. 10, &c. instanceth, the Spirit of God should cause them to mourn, as in the family one would mourn for the loss of their only son, or as in the common-weal the subjects would 'mourn for the loss of a most worthy prince.'

4. *If it rest not without cleanness*: true repentance is not water, but washing, nor every washing, but such as maketh clean; could a man weep his eyes out, yet if he weep not his sins out, what is he better? *Sorrowing after a godly sort, what carefulness, what clearing hath it wrought? If I have done iniquity, I will do it no more,* Isaiah i. 16. Job xxxiv. 32. 2 Cor. vii. 11.

5. *If it bring forth fruits meet for repentance*, Mat. iii. 8. This was the sum as of John's, so of Paul's preaching, that *Jew and Gentile should repent, and turn to God, and do works worthy amendment of life*, Acts xxvi. 20. nay, it is the very sum of the gospel, *to mourn, to be comforted, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified*, Isaiah lxi. 3.

6. *If it be stirred up by the sense of God's goodness*: So that nothing more fires a man to abase himself in the sense of his own vileness, than to feel and find the gracious goodness and readiness of God

in Christ, to shew him mercy; *He feareth the Lord and his goodness*, Hosea iii. 5.

7. *If the same spiritual means assuage it, that first raised it in the heart*: repentance that can be healed by sports, merry company, &c. was never found; it is the voice of the church, *Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath smitten, and he will bind us up*, Hosea vi. 1, 2.

8. *If it be joined with a secret trust in the acceptance of God in Christ*: If no misery can beat thy soul from inward affliction, or hope of mercy; if in the very *disquietness of the heart*, the desire of the soul be to the Lord; if he be never so much cast down, yet he waits upon God for the help of his countenance, Psalm xxxviii. 9. xlii. 5, 11. and in some measure condemn the unbelief of his own heart, and supports himself with the hope of the never-failing compassions of God in Christ, wherein it differs from the repentance of Cain and Judas.

§. 9. Examination of love to the brethren.

A Fourth grace which every worthy receiver must find in himself, is *love to the brethren*: and by such marks as these, he may try whether his love be a true love.

1. If it be to the Saints as Saints; not because they are rich, learned, wife, but merely because they have God's image upon them: *Love one another with a pure heart*, 1 Pet. i. 22. Love must be pure, not mixt, and then it is pure, when it springs from no other fountain but grace and holiness, and love of God in Christ.

2. If it be to the saints above others: others may have love and honour according to their relations, qualities, worths; but true love bestows its Benjamin's portion (the specialty and choice of its affections) upon the saints, 1 Pet. ii. 17. Rom. xii. 10.

3. If it be to all the saints, Philem. v. if it love

love grace in rags, as well as in robes; if it love the absent, as well as present; if it love for the truth's sake those he never saw, yet this hinders not the difference of degrees of love, which by the special providence of God some christians may have to others, in some special eminency of respects.

4. If it extends as to all saints, so to all times, as well in adversity, disgrace, temptation, sickness, &c. as in prosperity, health, good estimation, &c.

5. If it delight in the *fellowship of saints*: such as find no need of, nor delight in the society of saints, may doubt their condition, and be humbled for it, Psalm xvi. 3. cxix. 63.

6. If it cause forbearance of one another, *Forgiveness of one another*, Gal. iii. 13, 14. If in case the person injuring desires no reconciliation, yet the person injured is willing to let fall all wrath, malice, or desire of revenge, Gal. iii. 13, 14.

7. If it make a soul *to honour them that fear the Lord*, Psalm xv. 4. This honour hath in it, (1.) An estimation of them, as the only excellent people in the world, Psalm xvi. 3. (2.) A free acknowledgment of their just praises in all places for their grace, 3 John 6. (3.) A willing proposing of them as examples to imitate, 1 Theff. i. 7, 8. (4.) An holy endeavour to cover their infirmities, taking things in the best part and sense, 1 Pet. iv. 8. (5.) An apology for them against the reproaches and scorns of the world.

§. 10. *Examination of obedience.*

A Fifth grace which every worthy receiver must find in himself, is obedience: and by such marks as these he may try whether his obedience be true.

1. If it arise out of love *to God in Christ Jesus*; if it be voluntary and not constrained; if the heart be inflamed with the sense of God's love in Christ; and if it be humbled when it hath done its best, that it can bring no more glory to God,

John xiv. 15. Josh. xxii. 5.

2. If it be in all things, with all respect to all God's commandments; if as Noah, *we walk with God, i. e.* if in a settled even course of obedience, we keep close to him all the days of our life, Psalm cxix. 12. John xv. 14. Gen. vi. 9.

3. If it submit against profit, pleasure, credit, liberty, ease, &c. if it prefer God's commandments *above all things, yea above life itself*, Heb. xi. 8. Acts v. 29. Mat. xvi. 25.

4. If it obey *the commandments of faith, as well as life*, submitting to the Lord by believing, as by doing, yielding to *the gospel as to the law*, Rom. xvi. 26. and x. 16.

§. 11. *Examination of our desires after this ordinance.*

A Sixth grace which every worthy receiver must find in himself, is 'holy desires after this holy ordinance;' and by such marks as these he may try whether his desires be holy.

1. If they carry the soul after Christ, Fellowship with Christ, Communion with Christ, a Fruition of Christ and his benefits, Psalm xlii. 1, 2. John vii. 37, 38.

2. If they spring from any sense of the want of Christ, or from sense of former sweetness or goodness in Christ, found in the use of the ordinances.

3. If there accompany them an holy kind of impatience in the want of the ordinance: *When shall I come and appear before God?* Psalm xlii. 2.

4. If nothing but Christ will content the soul: If Christ be desired for himself, and not for any base ends: If the soul be content with Christ, tho' he be cast into prison and banishment.

5. If there follow a great and sweet contentment in the use of the ordinances; if (as it was with Samson drinking of the water that God sent him out of the hollow of the jaw) our spirits come again and revive upon it; so that sometimes the heart

heart is filled with strange extasies, with excess of spiritual pleasures, with an heavenly kind of satisfaction, contentation and delight, Judges v. 19. Psalm lxxiii. 5. Jer. xxxi. 25.

6. If there follow after the ordinance holy vows and wishes of infinite and eternal thankfulness; as also a growth and springing up as among the grass, *or as willows by the water-courses*, Psalm lxxiii. 4, 5. Isa. xlv. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

§. 12. *Examination of the Growth of Graces.*

THE truth of graces thus found out; In the last place, examine we the growth of graces: *True grace is ever growing grace*, Mark iv. 27. and if a man grow, it will appear by these signs:

1. By his outward appearance; not that he can see himself grow, but that he may discern it (as the corn that springs and grows up) after some time, when he is grown in knowledge and faith, &c. or if he cannot find a growth upward in joy, peace, triumph of spirit, yet let him see if he grow not downward in humility, hungering, mourning, zeal; and let him see if all grace be not more and more rooted, and confirmed in him.

2. By his appetite to his spiritual food: young men have better stomachs than old men, because they are growing; and a gracious spirit hath ever an appetite *or desire after spiritual dainties*, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

3. By his spiritual strength; a Christian is at first weak, but if he grow, he is stronger and stronger, till at last he can wrestle with a spiritual enemy, with lusts, and corruptions, powers and principalities, and get the mastery over them. To this duty of examination, others add excitation, as thus, *There must be a new exciting of faith, and repentance, and love, and of desires after the ordinances*; but of that more fully in the ordinance itself. Rom. xiv. 1. Eph. vi. 12.

§. 13. *Of the duties in the sacrament, of the exercise of repentance.*

THUS far of the duties *before the sacrament*: now follow the duties *in the time of the sacrament*; viz. The exercise of our graces, I mean such graces as are suitable to the quality and nature of the sacrament, as Repentance, and Faith, and Thanksgiving, and Love, and Charity.

The first of these graces, which must be stirred up or exercised, is, Repentance: and this will be actuated, if we consider God's love in Christ, and Christ's sorrows and sufferings for sin: there are many things in the ordinance, which if but looked upon with the eye of faith, will open all the springs of true spiritual sorrow, or repentance in the soul; but we name only these two particulars:

1. Here is a discovery of the love and sweetness of God in giving his Son to die for us. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, John iii. 16. enough to cause us to mourn that ever we offended: 'O that God should be more tender to us, than to his Son, not sparing his Son that he might spare us; give him to die, that we might live: pour out the curse upon him, that the blessing might be poured upon us: who can think on this, and withhold from tears!'

2. Here is represented to us the sufferings and breakings of Christ, enough to break our hardest hearts: consider them, (1.) In themselves: what breakings, woundings, scourges, crownings, piercings did he endure in his body? what conflicts, struggles with the wrath of God, terrors of hell? what weight, burden, wrath did he undergo, *when his soul was heavy unto death*, when he drank that bitter cup, that cup mingled with curses, which if man or angel had but sipped of, it would have sunk them into hell? nay, it made him who was God as well as man, sanctified with the Spirit, supported with the Deity, comforted by angels, sweat such a sweat, as never

man swate, *Drops, very clods of blood.*

2. In the meriting cause of all our good, the procurers of all our peace, salvation, *He was wounded, that we might be healed; scourged that we might be solaced; he was slain, but not for himself; he was wounded for our transgressions, broken for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed,* Dan. ix. 16. Isa. liii. 5, 8.

3. As the effects of our sin, as those things our sins brought upon him, and this must needs melt and thaw our icy stony hearts: 'It was I (should every soul say) who was the traytor, murderer, Judas, Herod, Pilate; they were my sins which were the bloody instruments, to slay the Lord of glory: Lord, I have sinned, and thou sufferedst, 'twas I that ate the fowre grapes, and thy teeth were set on edge:' this consideration must needs fill the heart with sorrow: *They shall look upon him whom they have pierced;* and how then? *They shall mourn, and be in bitterness of soul, as one is in bitterness for their first-born,* Zech. xii. 10. O how should we look upon Christ, as wounded, scourged, pierced for us, and not be affected with, afflicted for our sins, the cause of it? 'If thou wilt be conformable to Christ (saith Bernard) as thou beholdest here a broken, bleeding Christ, so labour to behold him with a broken, bleeding heart:' O who can with the eye of faith look upon a broken Christ, but with a broken heart? a wounded Christ, but with a wounded spirit? a bleeding Christ, but with a bleeding soul? God hath made in nature the same organ for seeing and weeping; and in grace he who sees clearly, weeps thoroughly; *The eye will affect the heart,* Lam. iii. 5. 'O Christ, that my eye should affect my heart; that whiles I behold Christ shedding his blood for my sins, my heart would melt out at my eyes, and shed tears for those sins for which I see Christ shed his blood: That I could turn the sacrament of the sup-

per into a baptism of tears, that I could wash and baptize myself with tears of repentance.'

§. 14. *Of the exercise of faith.*

THE second grace, which in time of sacrament must be actuated and exercised, is faith; then should a communicant speak to his faith, as Deborah to her soul, *Awake, awake, Deborah, awake, awake, utter a song:* Judg. v. 12. 'So awake, awake, O my faith, bestir, and rouze up thyself, to receive Christ in this sacrament.'

But how, or in what manner is faith to be actuated, and set on work in the use of the sacrament?

In the sacrament we must consider three things: 1. Sacramental representations. 2. Sacramental offers. 3. Sacramental promises; all which are in the words of institution: *In the night that he was betrayed, he took bread, and brake it: he took the cup, and gave it, saying, Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you: and drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins,* Mat. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 22. Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24. 1. *He took the bread, and brake it, and the cup, and gave it,*] there is the Representation: 2. *He bad, Take, and eat, drink of this,*] there is the offer. 3. *He said, This is my body, which is given for you: this is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins*] there is the promise: now upon every of these must our faith be busied and set on work: as thus in order;

For sacramental representations:

1. In the breaking of bread, and pouring out of the wine, there is representation of Christ's death and passion, both of his body broken and wounded, and his blood poured and shed.

1. Of his body broken and wounded: *He was wounded for our transgressions, and with his stripes we are healed,* Isa. liii. 5.

6. What sweet comfort may faith fetch hence? Look now upon the wounds of Christ, as healing wounds, as a city of refuge, whither thy soul pursued by the avenger of blood, may fly for safety and sanctuary: indeed I am a grievous sinner, 'I have wounded my conscience with my transgressions, but behold my Saviour here wounded for my transgressions: I may well have a troubled conscience for the wounds my transgressions have made therein; yet my conscience needs not sink in a despondency of spirit, while I look at the wounds of Christ:' here are wounds for wounds, healing wounds for stabbing wounds, curing wounds for killing wounds: O what comfort is here for faith in the wounds of Christ crucified, the nails, the spear, the wounds, all preach unto faith a reconciled God, that *God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself*: the Lord's bowels are laid open by these wounds, so as through them, we may see the tender bowels of his mercy, and so as through them, mercy flows from those bowels unto us: *O my dove, that art in the clefts or holes of the rock*, Cant. ii. 14. Some of the ancients understood by these *clefts of the rock*, the wounds of Christ, in which *the dove*, the church, lies and shelters herself: this is one work of faith in the sacrament; when it sees *these clefts of the rock opened*, like a *dove* to betake herself thereunto for shelter, security against all fears that wrath and guilt may put their conscience to: do any fears of wrath trouble thee? doth any guilt of conscience disquiet thee? why now for thy comfort, behold the *holes in the rock*, where thou mayest shelter: *Dwell now in the rock, and be like the dove that makes her nest in the sides of the holes mouth*, Jeremiah xlvi. 28. See, and fully believe thy peace to be with God through Christ, and look upon him broken and wounded for thy transgressions: faith thus actuated, cannot but send the soul from the

sacrament with much comfort.

2. Of the blood poured and shed: and what is to be done now when I see this blood in the sacrament, but to activate my faith, and apply this blood to myself? *Christ's blood is a reconciling blood*, Rom. iii. 25. *A justifying blood*, Rom. v. 9. *A pacifying blood*, Col. i. 20. *A pardoning blood*, Eph. i. 7. *A sanctifying blood*, Heb. xiii. 12. *A purging blood from dead works*, Heb. ix. 14. *A cleansing blood*, 1 John i. 17. *A mortifying, crucifying blood*, Gal. vi. 14. *A blood that sets prisoners free*, Zech. ix. 11. *A blood that makes men kings and priests*, Rev. i. 5, 6. *A softening, mollifying blood, that makes the heart tender, a fleshy heart*, Zech. xii. 10. Goats blood, some say, breaks the adamant, which neither iron nor fire can do; but surely the blood of this Lamb breaks the adamant heart of a man, which nothing else can break: it is a quickening blood, that brings life and strength with it; it is a life-blood, blood full of spirit, that fills the soul with excellent vigour to holy performances, Heb. xiii. 20, 21. Now what a deal of comfort may faith draw from all this? 'True, my person is unrighteous, but O Christ, thy blood is justifying blood; my heart is unclean, but thy blood is sanctifying blood; my lusts are many and mighty, but thy blood is mortifying blood; my heart is wondrous hard, but thy blood is softening blood; my heart is exceeding dead, but thy blood is quickening blood; in this blood of thine I believe, this blood of thine I thirstily drink down; this blood of thine I heartily apply, with a comfortable expectation of all these blessed benefits: be of good cheer, O my soul, here is pardoning blood against thy guilt, sanctifying blood against the pollutions of thy nature, crucifying blood against thy lusts, softening blood against thy hardness, quickening blood to help thee against thy deadness.

2. For sacramental offers, in the words, *Take, eat, drink,*] Christ himself is offered with

with all his benefits: here then must faith actuate itself, and set itself on work, striving with all its might to take Christ, to eat and drink Christ offered: when Christ is offered to us, the act of faith then is that of the Psalmist, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors: and why must these gates and doors be lift up? that the king of glory may come in*, Psalm xxiv. 7. Christ makes offer to come into our hearts, and therefore we must open the gates, we must lift them up, even from off the books, that fair and foul way be made for ready entrance. If a great man, especially a king, comes to a man's house, he will not only open the small wicket, his little door, but he sets open his great gates, he throws them wide open, to make spacious way for his entrance; so if thus it be, that Christ in the sacrament offers himself to come to us, let our faith busily bestir itself in widening the passage, and opening our hearts to make Christ way, let us strive with might and main, 'to stretch open our hearts to such a breadth and largeness, as a fit way may be made for the king of glory to come in, let us hasten, open, clasp, imbrace, welcome and receive Christ offered to us.'

3. For sacramental promises; *This is my body which is given for you; this is my blood which is shed for you, for remission of sins*: Here's a precious promise of Christ's body and blood, which may abundantly set faith on work: for understanding whereof, I shall propound some questions; as

Quest. 1. What is meant by Body and Blood?

By the *body of Christ*, and by the *blood of Christ*, we mean whole Christ, God and man, as he is Mediator, Christ himself crucified, with all the benefits and graces flowing from him: in all which observe these four things;

1. The person of Christ, God and man; in which person are two natures, (1.) The

Godhead, which makes his manhood meritorious. (2.) The Manhood assumed into the Godhead, and hypostatically united to it.

2. His Merit, which is *Lutron*, the price and worthiness, and excellency of his person and sufferings: Christ's death was it that merited man's salvation, that there might be an infinite satisfaction for an infinite debt.

3. His Virtue, which is the power and efficacy of his Godhead, by which he freed both himself and all believers from death and imputations of sin.

4. His benefits both of grace and glory.

All these are included in the body of Christ, and in the blood of Christ; *viz.* The whole person of Christ, God and man, with his merits, and virtue, and benefits, into which we are incorporated, and made comforts, and joint-fellows with him in his divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. yet mention is made especially of the manhood and body of Christ.

1. Because we could not be partakers of his divine nature, but by means of his manhood; for the flesh of Christ is the conduit that conveys the graces of the Godhead, and the graces of the Spirit of Christ into our souls; they are given by the Spirit to Christ's manhood, without measure, that so they might be derived to us in measure by the same Spirit, which otherwise than by this body we could not receive.

2. Because Christ performed those parts of the work of man's redemption in his body, or human nature, which were not compatible to the Deity, or divine nature; and therefore mention is made more especially of Christ's body, which is symbolically in the sacrament, and really the soul.

2. And this begets another question: 'How should the body or blood of Christ, thus understood, be in the soul of a man?'

We answer, In the soul there is a double nature: 1. *An human nature*, as it is natural, defiled with sin. 2. *A Christian inward nature*, animated by the Spirit of Christ, which

which we call *the inward man, the new man*, which is sanctified by regeneration. For the First, the human nature, as it is natural, it is not in Christ, nor is Christ in it; it hath no being or existence in grace, or in Christ, but is altogether void and destitute of spiritual life; and hence it is called *the natural man, the old man, the fleshly carnal man*. For the Second, the Christian, inward nature, it is upholden in the children of God, by things answerable to its nature; and to this inner spiritual nature, indeed the Lord offers in his sacrament, *Christ's body and blood*, as its own proper food; Christ therefore is in the soul spiritually, in the spiritual part of it; it is *the inner man, the spiritual nature that receives Christ's body and blood*.

3. Our next question follows, 'How is faith here to be exercised for the drawing down of Christ's body and blood into our souls?' For answer of which,

1. Faith looks upon Christ as the treasury and common stock of grace, in whom dwells all fulness, all our fulness: faith looks on him as the universal principle of life, and the root of holiness: God gave not him the Spirit in measure, no, *It pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell*, Col. i. 16. There is in him fulness, and all fulness; whatsoever is to be required in a Mediator is fully in him, yea, in him doth all fulness dwell: he is not like a full vessel, that now is full, and anon is emptied, it dwells in him, it is an inhabitant, a resident, and a permanent fulness. so that Christ is full, and ever shall be full to the brim; there is in him a fulness of merit, for our justification, and a fulness of Spirit, and habitual graces for our sanctification, *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 2. vast heaps, for some pieces of silver and gold, are not treasures; *all the treasures*, all the heaps of knowledge and wisdom that are in the world, all are in him, *he is all in all*.

2. Faith casts its eye on the promise for

the conveyance of Christ, and grace from Christ: faith works by virtue of the promise; where there is no promise, there can be no faith, and therefore faith discovers the promise, *That of his fulness we shall receive grace for grace; that his body is given for us, that his blood is shed for us, and for many, for the remission of sins*, John i. 16. Hence the schools admit of a double fulness, i. e. *Of abundance, and redundancy*: the promise speaks not only of the fulness of abundance in Christ, whereby he is sufficiently full in himself, but also of a fulness of redundancy, by which he overflows and fills all his saints: he is the well-head or fountain, which is not only full itself, but springs and flows over to the filling of the streams below it.

3. Faith looks upon this ordinance, as an instrument, a means which God hath set up for the conveying of Christ, and nourishment from Christ: in Zachariah, ch. iv. 12. we find mention of two *olive-branches, which through two golden pipes, emptied the golden oil out of themselves*, Zech. iv. 4, 12. We may thus interpret Christ is the olive-branch, and the olive-tree, and from whom comes all the golden oil of grace and spiritual comfort, and he it is that empties it out of himself into our hearts; but how? it is by his ordinances, they be the golden pipes, by which this golden oil is conveyed unto us: Christ doth not immediately empty the oil into our hearts, but first into the golden pipes of his ordinances, and so thro' them into us.

4. Faith being steeled by such considerations as these, it goes over to Christ, and, by virtue of the promise, draws down his body and blood into the soul; this therefore is the main work to awaken, and to actuate our faith, to set it to work upon Christ, and so to draw forth the efficacy of Christ in the sacrament: 'Lord, I believe that thy body was given for me, thy blood shed for me: and for the remission of many sins: Lord, I cheerfully and gladly be-

lieve that I am now partaker of thy body and blood, and that my sins are pardoned in thy blood: I believe that Christ is mine, his death is mine, his resurrection is mine, remission of sins is mine, pardon and heaven are mine: Lord, I accept, I believe this sealed pardon of my sins; Lord, I believe that all Christ, whole Christ is mine from top to toe; Lord, I believe his person is mine, his Godhead is mine, his manhood is mine; Lord, I believe his merit is mine, his virtue is mine, his benefits both of grace and glory are mine; Lord, I believe that in Christ all fulness dwells, and that of his fulness we shall receive grace for grace: Lord, I believe that thro' this golden pipe of the Lord's supper, I shall receive the golden oil of grace from Christ, now be it to me according to my faith; Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief: O come down into my soul, and fill it full of the Lord Christ, of the body and blood of Christ.' In this manner, as one said of the tree of Christ's ascension, though the fruit were high, and above our reach, yet if we touch him by the hand of faith, and tongue of prayer, all will fall down upon us: so here, if we can but touch him with the hand of faith, though a palse hand, tho' a weak and trembling hand, if we can go to him with a praying heart, Christ can withhold nothing from us.

By the way, this may discover to us where the fault is; when we return home, our faith never the more strengthened, our hearts never the more warmed, our graces never the more nourished, our corruptions never the more weakened, our assurance never the more heightened, it is a shrewd sign faith did not play its part in the mount: faith was intrusted in this employment, to go over to Christ for these and the like benefits, but thy faith did fail in the undertaking; therefore God suspends the bestowing of these benefits, because thou suspendest thy faith. Well then, if thou see not the fruit and benefit

thou expectest, to come into thy soul in the use of this ordinance, charge thy faith with it, and bewail the weakness of it; and for the future, put it to its burden, let it have its full and perfect work, and thou wilt then find the comfort and fruit of it; never did faith touch Christ in any ordinance, but virtue came from him.

§. 15. *Of the exercise of Thanksgiving.*

THE heart being warmed, and growing hot with the sense of God's goodness, a man should then break out and give vent to his heart, in magnifying the mercy of God for the death of Christ, and the fruit thereof communicated to us. Now this duty of praise and thanksgiving is actuated,

1. By our private ejaculations: *Our souls should praise him, and all that is within us should praise his holy name*, Psalm ciii. 1.

2. especially our affections of joy and love should taste largely of God. We should to this purpose, now and then cast up such a dart as this to heaven, *We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord*, etc.

2. By our publick and joint praises: ministers and people should both lift up their voices with *Glory to God on high, on earth peace, good-will towards men*.

3. By our singing of psalms: Thus Christ and his apostles, after the celebration of the Lord's supper, they sung an hymn or psalm: and some say, it was one of David's psalms, which was to present purpose (the Jews at their passover used these psalms, Psalm cxiii. to cxix. which they called the great Allelujah) but others say it was a psalm composed by Christ himself, containing the mystery of his passion: howsoever, we learn our duty, as at other times, so at this especially, to sing unto God a great Allelujah.

4. By our obedience, by devoting and giving up ourselves to Christ to be at the will of him who is our sovereign Lord. The proof and life of thanksgiving, is, thanks-

thanks-doing ; the life of thankfulness, is the good life of the thankful : Do we praise God for his excellency ? that strictly is the object of praise. Or do we thank God for his goodness ? that strictly is the object of thanksgiving : O then let it appear that we acknowledge God in Christ to be such a one as we say in our praises ; and that we stand bound and beholden to him indeed, as we say in our thanks. Let us carry ourselves in our life towards him as to God, who only is excellent, who only is God, our God, the God of our life and salvation.

§. 16. *Of the Exercise of Love and Mercy.*

OUR love must be actuated,

1. In respect of all men, not only by doing them good, as we have opportunity ; but if they be wicked, by pitying their souls, and by unfeignedly desiring, even at this sacrament, the conversion of them, Gal. vi. 10.

2. In respect of our enemies, by forgiving and forgetting all injuries, by praying for them, as Christ hath commanded, Col. iii. 13. Matth. v. 44.

3. In respect of the saints, by delighting in them as the most excellent of the earth, the only true worthies of the world, worthy for ever of the flower, and fervency and dearness of our most melting affections and intimate love, by sympathizing with them in their felicities and miseries, *Rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with them that mourn*, Ps. xvi. 3. Rom. xii. 15.

Our mercy must be exercised to the poor, according to their necessities, and our abilities ; only with this caveat, that we give in faith and cheerfulness, and spiritual discretion, in preferring the saints.

§. 17. *Of Examination after the Sacrament, and the Result, if not a good Day.*

THUS far of the duties both before and at the time of the Lord's supper : Now follow the duties after the sacrament, and they are these, *viz.* Examination, Thankfulness, and Obedience.

1. A man is seriously and faithfully to consider after he hath been at the Lord's supper, what entertainment and welcome God hath given him ? What comfort ? What encreasing of faith and grace ? What quickening ? What refreshment ? What assurance ? What friendship, and what communion with Christ ? What virtue he hath found to flow out of Christ into his soul ?

Now, If upon such examination, a man hath found no joy, no comfort, no enlargement, no communion with nor answer from Christ : but on the contrary, his heart full of deadness, hardness, dullness, unfruitfulness, then two things are to be done :

1. Let such a one suspect himself that some miscarriage hath been in him, either in his preparations to, or in his performance of the duty ; and let him labour to find out where the failure was ; what it was that hindered the efficacy of that blessed sacrament, and having found out what hindered, let him judge himself for it, and be seriously humbled therefor : If he can but do thus, he needs not be overmuch dismayed, because this is one fruit of the life of Christ, which was undoubtedly received in the sacrament ; if he have not that which he would have, yet he hath that which was worth the going for : Let him construe this humiliation as a fruit of going to the sacrament, and be thankful for that.

2. Let him endeavour by after-pains in prayer and humiliation, to quicken and awaken the efficacy of the sacrament : Sacraments do not always work for the present, but the efficacy may come afterwards ; the actions of God are of eternal efficacy, though he put forth that efficacy in such times and seasons as he sees good. Physick doth not always work when it is taken, but sometimes afterwards : thus also it may be with the sacrament, when a communicant humbled for his unprofitableness

in the duty, endeavours by after-diligence and humiliation, to quicken and put life into it, it may work then. What hinders but it may be in the case of the Lord's supper as in the sacrament of baptism? the efficacy and force of baptism doth not presently appear, no not presently upon the years of discretion; many a one lives viciously in a sinful course, a swearer, adulterer, &c. yet afterwards when God gives a man the heart to be touched with the sense of sin, and he begins to bestir himself, to seek God by faith and repentance, the Lord then quickens his baptism, and makes it as powerful and efficacious as if it had been administered that very day: So in this case, possibly a man hath been at the Lord's table, and hath more than once been an unworthy receiver, yet, if he shall once come to be humbled for that unworthiness, God will make sacraments, so often received unprofitably, to become efficacious unto him: if then we have miscarried in our preparations, and dispositions so as we have found no benefit, no comfort, yet here is a remedy and help. Take this course by after-diligence, and after-humiliation, to fetch life into the ordinances in which we are dead, and which was dead unto us.

§. 18. *Of Thanksgiving, if a good Day.*

IF upon examination we find that we were refreshed, had our hearts enlarged, had virtue from, and communion with Christ, then must follow Thankfulness, and Obedience.

1. Thankfulness: Return home now, as with thy heart full of benefits, of the Lord, so with thy heart full of praises to the Lord: Angels employments are most suitable to angels food; shall we bless God for a crumb and not for a Christ? other mercies are but crumbs, in comparison of this rich mercy, and shall our hearts favour them so much, and not relish these? what's corn and wine to this? 'This is a mercy in which all other mercies are fold-

ed up: Christ doth eminently contain all other mercies, and in the want of all, Christ enjoyed is an exceeding great reward; nay, all mercies are not only folded up in him, and intailed to him, but he sweetens and sanctifies every mercy: Let us return home, as full of the blessing from on high, so full of praises to the most High: Thankfulness is the great grace to be exercised in, and thankfulness is the great grace to be exercised after; and therefore while the present sense of this mercy warms our hearts, let the heat of it burst forth into thankfulness towards God; it is the most suitable service, and the most suitable time to return it.

§. 19. *Of obedience and fruitfulness in our lives.*

THE second thing required in such a case is Obedience. 1. Get we our hearts now farther set against sin: let our souls say, 'Hath God been so gracious to renew and confirm my pardon, and shall I again dishonour him? Hath he wiped off my former scores, and shall I run on a-fresh to offend him? Hath he taken off my former burden, and cast it on the back of his dear Son, and shall I again lay more load on him? Hath he spoken peace to me in his ordinance, and shall I again return to folly? No, far be it from me: I have washed my feet, how shall I again defile them? I have put off my coat, how shall I again put it on?'

2. Get we our hearts further strengthened to service: in this ordinance is a mutual sealing of covenants between God and us: he seals to the first part of the covenant, Pardon, Mercy, Grace, and we must seal to the second part of it, Service, Subjection, Obedience. God gives Christ to us, and we are to give ourselves back again to Christ. As there is matter of bounty from God to us, so there is matter of duty from us to God: There was never any soul, to whom God said in this ordinance, *I am thine*, whose heart

heart did not echo again to the same God, *Lord, I am thine.* Let us then labour to get our hearts further strengthened to

service. And thus much concerning our duties *before, in, and after the sacrament of the Lord's supper.*

C H A P. XIV.

Of P R A Y E R.

S E C T. I.

Of Preparation to Prayer.

Hitherto of all the duties in reference only to Secret, Private or Publick Ordinances; now follow such duties, as have reference jointly to all three, and they are either Ordinary, as Praying, Reading the Word, and Suffering; or Extraordinary, as Fasting, and Feasting.

The first of these duties is Prayer, in which, as in the former, there is required some things, 1. Antecedent. 2. Concomitant. 3. Subsequent.

1. There is something required before, *viz.* Preparation; now this preparation consists partly in removing impediments, and in using the means.

1. The impediments to be removed are these: (1.) We must lay aside all carnal thoughts and worldly cares, which might distract our minds: *Keep thy foot when thou goest to God's house,* saith Solomon, Eccl. v. 1. *q. d.* look with what affection and disposition thou comest to God in prayer. (2.) We must put off our shoes, *i. e.* remove our pollutions and corrupt affections, as carnal lusts, anger and doubting: *I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting,* 1 Tim. ii. 8. (3.) We must avoid surfeiting and drunkenness, which makes the heart dull and heavy: *Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this world,* Luke xxi. 34, 35. With ordinary prayer we must join a moderate diet, and with extraordinary, fasting. (4.) We must cast off

our sins: *I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine altar, O Lord,* Psalm xxvi. 6. (5.) We must draw off from prayer, from resting in it, or trusting upon it; a man may pray much, and instead of drawing nigh to God, or enjoying sweet communion with Christ, he may draw nigh to prayer, his thoughts may be more upon his prayer, than upon God to whom he prays; and he may live more upon his cushion, than upon Christ: but when a man indeed draws nigh to God in prayer, he forgets prayer, and remembers God, and prayer goes for nothing, but Christ is all.

2. The means to be used, are prayer, and meditation.

1. Prayer: a little eating prepareth a weak stomach, and setteth an edge upon the appetite to eat more: to this purpose David prayed before prayer, *Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice: set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips,* Psalm cxli. 2, 3.

2. Meditation, (1.) On our own unworthiness, that so we may pray in humility: *I am less than the least of all thy mercies,* saith Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 10. *O my God, I am ashamed and confounded to lift up mine eyes,* saith Ezra, ch. ix. 6. (2.) On the glorious majesty of God our father: he that speaks to God, must remember that *God is in heaven,* Eccl. v. 2. nay, what is prayer, but a coming before God, an approaching to God, and a meeting of God? in prayer we have to do with God, and

this will teach us to speak to him in reverence. (3.) On the mediation and intercession of our Saviour Christ, which is the very ground of our faith in prayer: *Whatever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do.* (4.) On the promises of God in Christ, made to our prayers: *Thou O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee,* 2 Sam. ii. 27, &c. *And deliver me, I pray thee,* saith Jacob, *from the hands of my brother Esau; thou saidst, I will surely do thee good,* Gen. xxxii. 11, 12. Such promises have we all, *Ask, and ye shall have; seek, &c.* Mat. vi. 6.

§. 2. *General duties of the soul in prayer.*

THE duties in prayer, are either internal or external: the former are the duties of the soul, the latter are the duties of the body.

1. The duties of the soul we shall consider in general; and in particular:

The duty in general is to pray; and that 1. In truth: 2. By the Spirit: 3. In the name of Christ.

1. In Truth, *i. e.* in sincerity and uprightness of heart: *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him in sincerity and in truth.* Psalm clxv. 18. Hence two faults are to be avoided. (1.) Praying with feigned lips, this is to pray with an heart and an ear, as all hypocrites do: but 'tis otherwise with the saints: *Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry, give ear to my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips,* Psalm xvii. 1. (2.) Praying with wandering thoughts, arising partly from the flesh, and partly from the suggestions of Satan: the speech of the mouth must not go before, but always follow after the conceit of the mind; many times as a musician's fingers will run over a song which he hath been used to play, although his mind be otherwise occupied; so many a prayer will run over that form of words

that they have been used to utter, though their minds be roving about other matters: such a prayer is called Lip-labour: O let the absurdity of the fault, breed in us a loathing of it; do our minds wander in prayer? endeavour we to join in one speech, the prayer of the mouth, and the speech of the heart, both which sound in God's ears, and then consider whether we would make such a speech (I say not with Malachi, *To our Prince,* but) to any man whom we regard, which yet we are not ashamed to offer unto the Lord: I will not deny in such a case, if we be grieved for, and strive and pray against such wandering; this infirmity, through God's mercy, and the intercession of Christ, shall not be imputed unto us: it is good to distinguish of the cause whence these wandering thoughts may arise; if they come from weakness in ourselves, or from the temptations of Satan, the Lord will consider this, and deal mercifully with us; but if they arise from mere negligence, or voluntary admitting of loose thoughts, that is our sin, and we had need to repent and mourn for it.

2. By the help of the Spirit: *It is the Spirit that helps our infirmities,* saith Paul, *for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered,* Rom. viii. 26. *q. d.* when we put forth the graces of the Spirit in us, then the Spirit comes and helps, and what comes from us now, it comes from the breathings of the Spirit. This *helping of the Spirit*, is very emphatical in the original; as a man taking up an heavy piece of timber by the one end, cannot alone get it up, till some other man takes it up at the other end, and so helps him: so the poor soul that is a pulling and tugging with his own heart, he finds it heavy and dull, like a log in a ditch, and he can do no good with it, till at last the Spirit of God comes at the other end, and takes the heaviest end of the burthen, and so helps the

the soul to lift it up. In our prayers we should eye the Spirit of God, we should cast our souls upon the assistance of the Spirit, we should press the Lord with this promise, ' Lord, thou hast said, that thy Spirit helps our infirmities, when we know not what we pray for, nor how to pray for any thing as we ought: now make good this word of thine to my soul at this time, let me have the breathings of the Spirit of God in me; alas, the breathings of man, if it come from gifts and parts, thou wilt never regard, except there be the breathings of the holy Ghost in me.

Quest. But how should we know whether the Spirit of God comes in, or not?

Ans. We may know by this: the Spirit of God carries unto God, and it makes the prayer sweet and delightful, it leaves a favour behind it: O the breath of the Spirit of God is a sweet breath, and it makes sweet prayers; it never comes into the soul, but after it hath done any work it came for, it leaves a sweet scent behind; as civit that is put into a little box, though you should take out the civit, yet there will be a sweet favour left behind; so though the Spirit of God in respect of the present assistance, withdraws itself, yet it leaves a sweet favour behind it.

3. *In the name of Christ: for Whatsoever you ask the Father in my name, that will I do,* John xiv. 13. There is a necessity of praying in Christ's name, 1. In regard of admission: 2. In regard of assistance: 3. In regard of acceptance:

1. In regard of admission: *God is a consuming fire,* and we are dried stubble, there is no approaching to him, but in Christ, *in whom we have access with boldness to the throne of grace:* God will not look pleasingly on us, if we come without Christ, he is no throne of grace without him; it is Christ who makes that which was a bar of justice, a bench of mercy; in him we have admission: do we fall upon the duty of prayer? do it not in the strength of man, but in the strength

of Christ: say, ' Lord, I come alone in the merits of Christ, to partake of the merits of the Lord Jesus: I have endeavoured to prepare myself through thy grace, but I look not for admission through my preparations or dispositions, but through the blood and mediation of Jesus Christ.

2. In regard of assistance: we pray, but we have no strength to do it without Christ; we might as well be set to move mountains as to pray without the strength of Christ: *Without me,* saith Christ, *you can do nothing,* John xv. 5. Without union with Christ, without communion with Christ, we can do nothing; from Christ we must have both operating and co-operating strength: both inherent and assistant strength; otherwise though we have grace, we shall not be able to perform any work, nor exercise our own graces; it is he that must work all our works in us and for us, the inherent work of grace within us, and the required works of duty for us: and blessed be that God, who hath given to us what he requireth of us, and hath not only made precepts promises, but promises performances.

3. In regard of acceptance: our works, they are not only impotent, but impure too, as they come from us; it is Christ that must put validity into them; it is Christ that must put his own odours on them, it is Christ that must put both spirit and merit into them, his grace to work, and his blood to own them, for whatever comes from his Spirit, it is presented through his merits: here is great comfort; and do we look over our performances, and wonder that ever God should accept them? so much deadness, so little life, so much coldness? consider then, that God looks upon them, not as ours, but as Christ's, in whom not only our persons, but our performances are accepted; Christ gives us his Spirit, and is willing to own what we present by his Spirit, and God is willing to own whatever is presented to him by Christ his Son. To this purpose *there was given to Christ much in-*

cense that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne, and the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand, Rev. viii. 3, 4. This angel is Christ, this incense his merits, the mingling of the prayers of the saints with this incense is the supplying, or covering of the defects of their prayers with the merits of Christ, and the ascending of this incense and their prayers before God, is his acceptance of them thus covered with Christ's merits, and the reason why the prayers ascended was because the incense ascended; that was their *vehiculum*, the pillar of smoke in which they mounted up to heaven: this rightly considered, it will cause us in every petition put up, to think ourselves so much beholden to Christ, that we shall be ready to say in our hearts, when any petition is granted, *I may thank Jesus Christ for this.*

But what is it to pray in Christ's name?

I answer, 1. *To pray in Christ's name, is to pray with reliance upon the grace, favour and worthiness of the merits of Christ, in whom we have believed, and have access with confidence, by the faith of him, Eph. iii. 13.* Christ's satisfaction is the ground of our intercession; 'because Christ's blood hath purchased this (we pray) therefore, O Lord, grant this.'

2. *To pray in Christ's name, is to pray from his command, and according to his will; as when we send another in our name, we wish him to say thus, Tell him, I sent you, and that I desire such a thing of him; so when we take those things which the Lord puts into our mouths, Hosea xiv. 3.* and desire those things only that the Lord commands us to seek, whether absolutely or conditionally, this is to pray in his name.

3. *To pray in Christ's name, is to pray for his ends, for the sake and use of Christ: thus the phrase is used, To receive a prophet in the name of a prophet, Mat. x. 41.* i. e. for this end and reason, because he is

a prophet. Now let Christians observe, when they would have any thing of God, to what use and end, and for whose sake it is. *You ask, and have not, because you ask amiss, to spend it on your lusts, James iv. 3.* A lust is properly such a desire (though for lawful things) wherein a man must have a thing, because it pleaseth him: *Give us water that we may drink,* (was the brutish cry of Israel, Exod. xvii. 2.) not that we may live to him that gives it; holy desires or prayers, opposed unto lusts, are such desires of the soul left with God, with submission to his will, as may best please him for his glory.

§. 3. *The particular duties of the soul in prayer.*

THE duties of the soul in particular, are such as are, in the *mind, and heart*

I. In the *mind*, two things are required, viz. *knowledge and faith.*

I. Knowledge of God to whom we pray. and 2. Knowledge of that for which we pray.

1. *We must know and acknowledge Jesus Christ whom he hath sent:* Christ told the Samaritans; *Ye worship ye know not what,* John iv. 24. far be it from Christians thus to do: without this knowledge we shall wander into will-worship, and superstitious inventions; *And therefore know thou the God of thy fathers* (said David to Solomon) *and serve him with a perfect heart,* 2 Chron. xxviii. 9.

2. *We must know and understand what we pray for,* otherwise we are subject to our Saviour's reproof, *You ask you know not what,* Matth. xx. 22. Two sorts of men are here condemned. 1. Those that pray in an unknown tongue. 2. Those who pray in a known tongue, but understand not what they pray.

II. Faith, and that either more *general*, or more *special*.

1. *Faith more general,* 'is such a faith, as apprehends the main promise of the gospel concerning salvation by Christ.'

2. *Faith more special,* 'is such a faith

as apprehends the precious promises made to our prayers, whereby we are persuaded that our particular requests shall be granted unto us,' only with this distinction; 'in matters spiritual, necessary to salvation, we are to ask absolutely, as being persuaded that God hath subordinated our salvation to his own glory; and we are to believe absolutely, that the Lord will grant them unto us; yea it is a good sign, if we desire any saving grace, that the same grace is begun in us: but in matters temporal or spiritual, not necessary to salvation, we are to ask them conditionally, so far forth as they may stand with God's glory, and the good of ourselves and our brethren, and we are to believe that he will so far forth grant them:' thus our Saviour prayed in the like case, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Mat. xxvi. 39.

2. In the heart, three things are requisite, 1. Humility. 2. Reverence. 3. Ardency of spirit.

1. *Humility*, which is derived *ab humo*, 'from the ground,' intimating, that when we pray, we should humble ourselves, as it were to the ground: thus the Christians in the eastern churches were wont to cast themselves down to the ground when they called upon God: thus *Abraham acknowledged himself but dust and ashes*, Gen. xviii. 27. Thus *Jacob confessed himself less than the least of all God's mercies*, Gen. xxxii. 10. Thus *David professed that he would be vile before the Lord*, 2 Sam. vi. 22. Thus *Isaiah cried out, I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips*, Isai. vi. 5. Thus *Ezra prayed, O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens*, Ezra ix. 6. Thus the centurion, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof:*

thus the woman of Syrophenicia, confessed herself *a dog in comparison of the Israelites*; and thus the prodigal, received to favour, confessed himself *unworthy to be called a son*: here's a cloud of witnesses concluding that humility in the heart is requisite in prayer.

2. *Reverence of the majesty of God*: *Serve the Lord with reverence, and rejoice with trembling*. Psalm ii. 11. The blessed angels being in God's presence, and sounding forth his praise, are described, as having six wings, whereof two pair serve to *cover their faces and their feet*, hereby betokening their wonderful reverence of God, Isaiah vi. 2. How much more should we, who inhabit these houses of clay, subject to infirmities, and corrupted with sin, be stricken with an awful reverence of Almighty God? Did we consider ourselves to be in the midst of angels, before the God of angels, performing the like exercise as the angels, how would this strike us with a reverence of this great King of heaven?

3. *Ardency or fervency of spirit*; this gives wings to our prayers, and causeth them to ascend before God; this sets on work all the graces of God's Spirit, and the more fervent the prayer is, the more they are intended, actuated, increased: I mean not thus of every fervency; there is a fervency of faith, and a fervency of mere natural desires: in this latter, there is no holiness, no fire of the spirit, but in the former there is: when Christ lived upon earth, many came to him, and some were exceedingly importunate to be healed, or to have devils cast out, etc. now if he answered their requests, his usual phrase was, *Be it unto thee* (not according to thy importunity and fervency, but) *according to thy faith*; q. d. 'I heed not, I regard not this clamour and earnestness, if it be only out of mere natural desires, but if it be out of faith; if besides sense of need, you have in you a true hope of mercy, then be it unto thee according to that; this

fergency is fet out in the word by divers significant phrases; *Sometimes it is called a crying unto the Lord: thus Moses cried unto the Lord, Exod. viii. 12. and Samuel cried unto the Lord, 1 Sam. vii. 9. and Elijah cried unto the Lord, 1 Kings xvii. 20. and Isaiah cried unto the Lord; 2 Kings xx. 11. sometimes a crying mightily: let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: Jonah iii. 8 sometimes a lifting up of our prayers; wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left, said Hezekiah to Isaiah: If. xxxvii. 4. Sometimes a pouring forth of our souls before the Lord like water, O wall of the daughter of Zion, pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord: Lam. ii. 19. Thus the Israelites drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord, 1 Sam. vii. 6. Sometimes a groaning in spirit, or, groans of the spirit; The spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered: Rom. viii. 26. Sometimes a praying exceedingly; Col. iv. 12. Sometimes a praying fervently; 1 Thess. iii. 10. Sometimes striving with God, Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me: Rom. xv. 30. Sometimes a wrestling with God, Thus Jacob wrestled with a man, i. e. with God in the form of a man, until the breaking of the day: Gen. xxxii. 24. All these phrases do set forth the excellency, the necessity of this ardeny, fervency of prayer required in the text.*

§. 4. *The duties of the body in prayer.*

THUS far of the duties of the soul in prayer; as for bodily exercise of itself, it profiteth little; but if joined with the soul, it is of great importance; Therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit, for both are God's, 1 Tim. iv. 8. 1 Cor. vi. 20.

The duties of the body may be reduced to these two heads: 1. The gesture of the body. 2. The speech of the mouth.

Concerning the first; in publick prayer we are to follow the custom of the church wherein we live, if it be without scandal and superstition: in private prayer, we may take our liberty, so that our gesture be correspondent to the affections and dispositions of the soul. In scripture we read of these several gestures: (1.) Standing, which is a token of reverence and service, 2 Kings v. 25. 1 Sam. xvi. 21. 1 Kings x. 8. Job xxix. 7, 8. Gen. xviii. 22. 2 Chron. xx. 5. Psalm cxxxiv. 1. Luke xviii. 13. Mark xi. 25. (2.) Kneeling, which is a token of our humility and earnestness in prayer, Psalm xciv. 6. 2 Chr. vi. 13. Dan. vi. 10. Acts vii. 60. ix. 40. xx. 36. Luke xx. 41. (3.) Prostration, or falling on the ground, or falling on the face, a gesture of the greatest humiliation, tho' not used among us in these parts of the world, Numb. xvi. 22. Josh. v. 14. Ez. ix. 8. xi. 13. Matth. xxvi. 39. (4.) Sitting, Lying, Walking, Riding, Journeying, in some cases, 2 Sam. vii. 18. 1 Kings xix. 4. Isa. xxxviii. 2. Psalm vi. 6. Gen. xxiv. 26. 2 Chron. xviii. 31. (5.) Uncovering of the head in men, covering of the head in women, which is a token of subjection, 1 Cor. xi. 7, 10. Rev. iv. 10. (6.) Lifting up and casting down of the eyes, the former being a token of faith, the latter of dejection and humiliation, Psalm cxxiii. 1. Matth. xiv. 19. John xi. 41. xvii. 1. Luke xviii. 13. (7.) Lifting up or stretching forth of the hands; expressing humility and earnest affection; and knocking them on the breast, which betokens guilt, and earnest desire of pardon, Exod. ix. 33. Psal. cxliii. 6. 1 Kings viii. 22. Psalm cxliii. 2. Lam. iii. 41. Luke xviii. 13. Luke xxiii. 48.

Concerning the second; viz. The voice or speech of the mouth; it is necessary in church or family, and most convenient in private: now the voice used in prayer, is

either inarticulate, or articulate.

1. The inarticulate is that which is uttered in sighing, groaning, and weeping: *Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee*, saith David, Pl. xxxviii. 9. and Hezekiah professeth, *That he did chatter like a crane or a swallow; and did mourn like a dove*, Isaiah xxxviii. 14. *And the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*, Rom. viii. 26.

2. The articulate voice, is the external speech itself, whereby the prayer is expressed, wherein three things are considerable, 1. Quantity. 2. Quality. 3. Form.

1. For Quantity, we must not affect prolixity, as if for multitude of words we looked to be heard; *When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do*, Mat. vi. 7. The heathen thought that their gods did not always hear, as being otherwise employed (so Elias told Baal's priests) and therefore they used to repeat the same things often, that if they did not hear them at one time, they might hear them at another time; thus Christians must not pray, they must not lengthen their prayers, as conceiving that either God hears not, or that he will hear for the length's sake; but on the other side, where there is variety of good matter, uttered with the attention of mind, and vigour of affection, there the longer we continue in prayer, the better it is.

2. For Quality, we need not be curious in respect of the stile, God looking to the heart rather than the speech: as it is not the loudness of a preacher's voice, but the weight and holiness of the matter, and spirit of the preacher that moves a wise and intelligent hearer; so not gifts, but graces in prayers are they that move the Lord: the reason is, prayer moves not God as an orator, but as a child moves his father: two words of a child humbled and crying at his father's feet will prevail more than penned orations: it is the meaning of the Spirit that God looks unto, more than the

expressions, for the groans are said to be unutterable, Rom. viii. 26. yet must we not be more careless and negligent for the manner of speech, than we would be, if we were to speak to a mortal man, *If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts*, Mal. i. 8.

3. For the Form: we are not tied to any set form, nor are we so tied to conceived prayer, as that it must be without all study or meditation, either against the instant, or in former times: a man may conceive a prayer *ex tempore*, and yet without enthusiasms, or extraordinary revelations; viz. by the help of his former studies and meditations: and that I may afford some help that way, I shall, in conclusion of this chapter, lay down a directory for prayer, together with a form of prayer (tho' broken) in scripture-phrases.

§. 5. Duties after Prayer.

THE Duties Subsequent, which follow after prayer, are these:

1. Quietly to rest in the good-will and pleasure of God, not doubting, but the Lord hath heard our prayers, and in good time shall grant that which shall be most for his glory, and our good; and this is the meaning of the word *Amen*, wherewith we seal up our prayers.

2. Diligently to use all good means for the obtaining of our suits; as, if I pray for faith, or any other spiritual grace, I must, besides prayer, use all good means carefully, which the Lord hath ordained for the begetting and increasing of those graces in us, as hearing the word preached, receiving the sacrament, reading the word, and meditating on it, otherwise, our prayers are a tempting of God, as if he must grant, not by means, but by miracles.

3. Carefully to look after our prayers, and to cast up our comings in, and gainings by prayers, otherwise we are like fool-

ish venturers, who have a great flock going, but look not after their returns: *In the morning I will direct my prayers, and look up,* Psalm v. 3. There are two military words in the verse, David would not only pray, but marshal up his prayers, put them in array; and when he had done so, he would be as a spy upon a tower, to see whether he prevailed, whether he got the day: for the better unfolding this mystery of grace, I shall propound and give answer to some queries or cases of conscience, as;

1. *Suppose I have prayed, how shall I assuredly know that God hears, and will answer in his own time?*

2. *Suppose the thing I desired shall not be answered, how may I assuredly know that God notwithstanding doth hear my prayers?*

3. *Suppose after prayer, I observe all I can, and I can by no means discern, that either God will answer, or doth hear my prayers, what shall I do then?*

4. *Suppose the thing I desire is answered, how may I assuredly know it was at my prayers, or out of common providence?*

5. *Suppose that others joined with me in those prayers now answered, how shall I know that my prayers had an hand in obtaining those answers, as well as any others?*

6. *Suppose I am assured upon former observations, that God hath heard, and answered my prayers in their particulars, what must I do then?*

§. 6. *The first case: Suppose I have prayed, how may I assuredly know that God hears, and will answer in his own time?*

WE may resolve this case, by some observations, before Prayer, in Prayer, and after Prayer.

1. Before Prayer: when God prepares the heart to pray, when he pours upon a man a spirit of grace and supplication, a praying disposition; when he puts in motives, suggests arguments and pleas unto God, as materials for prayer; all which

you shall find to come in readily and of themselves; and that likewise with a quickening heat and enlargement of affection, with a lingering and longing and restlessness of spirit to pour out the soul unto God: this is a sign that God lends his ear, and will return answers: *Thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear,* Pf. x. 27. *q. d.* Thou fashionest the heart, and composest it into a praying frame, and that is a sign, Lord, that thou meanest to hear.

2. In prayer; as, (1.) When God draws nigh, and reveals himself to thy soul in and upon such and such a particular petition, when God smiles upon thee, welcomes thee, falls about thy neck and kisseth thee; when no sooner thou comest into his presence to inquire of him, but he says, *here I am,* as the promise is, Isa. lviii.

9. this thou art to observe as a sign that he hears thy prayer, and accepts both thee and it; *Hear me speedily,* saith David, *and that I may know thou hearest me, draw nigh unto my soul,* Psal. lxxix. 17, 18. (2.) When God doth put a restless importunity into the heart maugre all discouragements, for this or that mercy, and when this importunity is joined with a subjection to God's will, and runs along with it, then hath God stirred it up, and then look for something to come; you know the parable how the unjust judge heard the widow *for her importunities sake,* Luke xviii. 5. So when God puts this importunity into the heart, it is a sign God means then to hear and answer.

3. After prayer: this will appear in several particulars; as,

1. When God quiets and calms the heart after prayer, by speaking something to the heart, though what is spoken be not always discerned; as when you see an earnest or importunate suitor going in to a great man, exceeding anxious, but coming out very chearful, contented, and quiet in spirit, you would conceive that cer-

certainly something hath been said to him, which gave him encouragement : so when thou goest to God, and hast been importunate in a business, and thy desires were exceedingly up for it, and then thou risest up with thy mind, calmed and satisfied, and thou feelest the anxiousness, the sollicitude of thy heart about the thing taken off and dispelled ; this is a good sign that God hath heard, and will return answer to the full : when Hanna out of much bitterness, and with strong desires *had poured out her soul unto the Lord*, it is said, *That she looked no more sad*, 1 Sam. i. 18. And then God gave her a son, a son of her desire.

2. When God gives an obedient, dependent heart, in walking before him, when that consideration still comes in a curb unto sin ; *if I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not bear me*, Pl. lxxv. 18. When God doth still after praying, keep the soul in a more obedient frame of spirit ; when he keeps thee from using all means, &c. it is a sign that God hath heard thy prayers, and thou shalt have returns : David praying for his life, *Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplications ; in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness, Psalm cxliiii. 1.* Presently after, he prays for holiness, knowing that sin would enervate and spoil all his prayers, *Cause me to know thy way, wherein I should walk, teach me to do thy will*, ver. 8.

3. When God, after prayer, strengtheneth the heart to wait and expect for the mercy desired, when a man, after prayer, begins to wait, rather than pray (though he prays still) because he looks now God should perform ; in this case, and at this time he may look for some good answer from God : David having prayed, says to his soul, *Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he will strengthen thy heart : wait I say, on the Lord*, Plal. xxvii. 14.

§. 7. *The second case : Suppose the thing I desire shall not be answered, how may I assuredly know that God notwithstanding doth bear my prayer ?*

WE may resolve this case, if 1. we observe these particulars.

1. Whether thy prayer was framed in a right manner ? didst thou not pray absolutely for such blessings as were never absolutely promised ? if so, no wonder thy prayer is denied ; or didst thou pray conditionally (as Christ prayed, *If it be possible*, etc.) then thy prayer may be heard, and yet the things denied ? for otherwise Christ had not been heard, when yet the text says, *He was heard in that he feared*, Heb. v. 7.

2. Whether there be not a reservation in that denial, for some greater mercy, whereof that denial was the foundation ? If we had many of our desires, we should be undone : if the child had lived for which David so earnestly prayed, he would but have been a living monument of his own shame ; God therefore denied his prayer, but after he gave him a Solomon.

3. Whether God doth not answer thee still according to the ground of thy prayer ? Now the ground and intent of thy prayer, is, after God's glory, the churches good, thy own particular comfort ; it may be God denies the particular mercy thou desirest, and yet he answers the ground of thy prayer, his glory shall be advanced, his church preserved, thy comfort made up (even for that prayer of thine) some other way.

4. Whether God yields not far to give thee satisfaction, as if he were tender of denying thee ? So the Lord answered Abraham, when praying for Ishmael, *O let Ishmael live in thy sight !* God went as far in answering his request as might be, *I have heard thee*, said God, *and I have blessed him, and I will make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly, and he shall beget twelve princes ; but my covenant I will*

will establish with Isaac, Gen. xvii. 18, 20.

5. What effects that denial hath upon thy heart? as

(1.) Whether thy heart be enlarged to acknowledge God to be holy and righteous in his dealings with thee, and thine own unworthiness the cause of his denying thee? *I cry in the day time, said David, but thou hearest not: yet thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel,* Psalm xxii. 2, 3.

(2.) Whether God fills thy heart with holy contentment in the denial?

(3.) Whether thou canst be thankful to God out of faith, that God hath ordered all for the best, though he hath denied thee?

(4.) Whether thy heart be not discouraged, but thou canst pray still, at least for other things? it moves ingenuous natures to see men take repulses and denials well, and so it moves God: now if the case be thus, if upon observation thou canst say, that thy prayers, though denied, were conditional [if God will] that thou perceivest a reservation in God's denial, for some greater mercy; that God answered thee at least, according to the ground of thy prayers, that God yielded far to thee; as if he were loath to deny thy prayers; that thou feelest such effects of denial upon thy heart, as these: 1. An enlargement, to acknowledge God holy and righteous. 2. A holy contentment in the denial. 3. A thankful heart. 4. An heart not discouraged howsoever. Surely then God hears, or God hath heard thy prayers, although the particular suits are not accomplished.

§. 8. *The third case: Suppose after prayer, I observe all I can, and can by no means discover, that either God will answer or bear my prayers, What shall I do then?*

WE may resolve this case by laying open the duties appertaining to such a soul: canst thou not discern God's deal-

ings? spy no returns of thy prayers? it is then thy duty,

1. To examine what is the cause; and if the fault be in our prayer, because *we did ask amiss,* Jam. iv. 3. we must endeavour by God's grace to amend; or if the fault be in ourselves, because we are impenitent, we must repent, and then renew our prayers unto God.

2. To persist and persevere in our prayers, without fainting; *continue instant in prayer,* as Hanna, and David, and Daniel, and Bartimeus, and that importunate widow, Luke xviii. 1. Rom. xii. 12.

3. To expect the Lord's leisure; *I waited patiently for the Lord,* saith David, *and he inclined unto me and heard my cry,* Ps. xl. 1.

4. To rest in the good will and pleasure of God; *Let him do what seemeth him good;* Who can tell but God in time may give thee a sign of his good will towards thee, and that he hath heard thy prayers? howsoever it is the Lord that gives or denies, let him do what he please.

§. 9. *The fourth case; Suppose the thing I desire is answered; how may I assuredly know it was by my prayers, and not out of common providence?*

WE may resolve this case by giving these directions to the soul, whereby it may be enabled to discern when and how things prayed for, come in by prayer; as

1. From the manner of God's performance; when God gives any thing in answer to prayers, he often discovers a more than ordinary hand of providence in it; as

(1.) By bringing it to pass through many difficulties; Thus Peter was delivered out of prison at the prayers of the church, Acts xii. 6, 10. and we find 1. He was sleeping between two soldiers, if they had wakened, he had been discovered. 2. He was in chains, but they fell off. 3. The keepers stood before the doors, but they minded him

him not. 4. When one watch is past, he passeth quietly through another. 5. When both those were past, an iron gate flies open of its own accord; now such difficulties are there in many businellies, which yet in the end are accomplished by prayer; iron chains fall off, iron gates, enemies hearts, fly open of their own accord, and though not in that miraculous manner, by the means of an angel, yet no less wonderful.

(2.) By facilitating all means, and causing them to conspire to accomplish the thing prayed for; thou hast wind and tide, and a fair day, and all the way paved and plain before thee; there falls out a great conjunction and meeting of many circumstances together to effect it, which had influence into it, wherefore if any one had been wanting, haply the thing had not been done; thus when Israel went out of Egypt (which was the accomplishment of their prayers) *their cry came up unto God*, saith the text, Ex. ii. 23. how were all things facilitated? the Egyptians that detained them came and intreated them to go out, *Rise up, and get you forth amongst my people*, said Pharaoh; *yea, they were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land; yea, they hired them to go out with their jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment*, and Pharaoh parts himself lovingly and fairly with them, and desires their prayers, *Bless me also; yea to shew there was no resistance*, the text saith, *A dog did not move his tongue*, Exodus xii. 13, 33, &c. xi. 7. the brute creatures did not disturb them, though at midnight, when these creatures use to be most obstreperous through noises, especially at travellers.

(3.) By bringing it to pass suddenly and unexpectedly; as the return of the captivity of Babylon, which was the conclusion of many prayers, was done in a trice; *they were as men in a dream*, Psalm cxxvi. 1. they could scarce believe it was so, when

it was done.

(4.) By doing above what was desired with addition of other mercies; so Solomon asked Wisdom, and God gave him more than he asked, *Peace, riches, and honour*, 1 Kings iii. 12, 13. When prayers are answered, usually mercies come thick; the thing we prayed for, comes not alone.

(5.) By adding some special circumstances, as a token of God's special hand in it, such a token as a man himself often takes notice of; *yea, and others also often take notice of it; Shew me a token for good*, saith David, *that others that hate me may see it, and be ashamed*, Psalm lxxxvi. 17. So when Abraham and Isaac, and Abraham's servant had prayed for a wife for Isaac; see by what a token God shewed that he had heard their prayers; Rebekah was the first that came out, and if *she be the woman appointed for Isaac* (prays the servant) *let her offer me drink, and my camels also, and thereby shall I know thou hast shewed kindness to my master*, Gen. xxiv. 14. and God gave him the token, and therefore the servant *bowed at it, and worshipped the Lord*: if we take notice of the sign, it was such as argued in her a kind, courteous disposition, which therefore, it may be, he singled out as a token of a meet wife, especially to be looked at in the marriage choice.

2. From the time, wherein the thing prayed for is accomplished: God, who doth all things in weight and measure, shews his wisdom and love as much in the season, as in giving the thing itself; God considereth all times of thy life, and still chuseth the best and fittest to answer thy prayers in: *In an acceptable time have I heard thee*, saith God, Isa. xlix. 8. as,

(1.) It may be at the very time when thou art most instant and earnest in prayer: *While they are yet speaking*, saith God, *I will hear*, Isa. lxxv. 24. a time culled out on purpose. that they might rest assured it was an answer to their prayers.

2. At that time when thou hast most need, and when thy heart is most fitted for mercy, *i. e.* when thy heart is most subdued, and thy lusts mortified, for then thou art fittest to relish his goodness alone, and not to be drawn away with the carnal sweetness that is in the thing; *Thou wilt prepare thine heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear*, Psa. x. 17. thou wilt prepare thine heart in taking it off from the thing desired, in making it quieted and contented with God in the thing, *and thou wilt hear*] this is the fittest time.

3. From the effects upon thy heart that prayest; as

(1.) If the thing granted by thy prayers, draw thy heart more near unto God: things granted out of ordinary providence only, do increase our lusts, and are snares to us; but if thou findest God's dealings with thee, to be a kindly motive to cause thee to mourn for sin, and to be a restraint against sin, it is a sign it was a fruit of thy prayer: *Away from me ye workers of iniquity*, (saith David) *God hath heard the voice of my weeping*, Psalm vi. 8. or,

(2.) If thou findest God's dealings with thee, to be a kindly motive, to cause thee to rejoice in God, more than in the thing obtained, it is a sign it was a fruit of thy prayer. Hanna blessing God for her child, *My heart rejoiceth in the Lord*, saith she, 1 Sam. ii. 1. She rejoiceth not so much in the gift as in the giver, not so much in her child, as in his favour that answered her prayer.

(3.) If the mercy obtained by thy prayer, enlarge thy heart with thankfulness: self-love makes us more forward to pray, than to give thanks, for nature is all of the craving and taking hand, but where grace is, there will be no eminent mercy gotten with much struggling, but there will be continual, particular thankful remembrance of it a long while after, with much enlargement; 'Great blessings won with prayer, are worn with thankfulness;' such a man will not

ask new, but withal, he will give thanks for old: thankfulness of all duties proceeds from pure grace, therefore if thy spirit stirs thee to it, it is a sign he made the prayer: see Hanna's song when she had her desire, 1 Sam. ii. 1.

(4.) If the mercy gotten by thy prayer, doth encourage thee to go to God another time, to pray again more confidently and fervently, it is a sign thou hast gotten the former mercy that way; *The Lord hath heard me*, saith David, *and I will call upon him as long as I live*, Psalm xi. 6. 2.

5. If the thing obtained by thy prayer, doth make thee careful to perform thy vows made in prayer: *I will pay thee my vows*, saith David, *which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in my trouble*; and the reason follows, *because that verily God hath heard me, when I cried to him*, Psalm lxi. 13, 14. So Eliphaz in Job doth connect and hang these two together, *Thou shalt make thy prayer to him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows*, Job xxii. 27.

6. If the thing granted by thy prayer prove a real and stable mercy; if the curse be taken out, and it have few thorns and vexations in it; *When the blessing of God maketh rich, he addeth no sorrow with it*, Prov. x. 12. It may be the heart was put to some trouble in the desiring, but 'tis recompensed by the more settled, constant, unmixed sweetness in the enjoying.

7. If the mercy obtained brings with it assurance of God's love, and an evidence of his favour; I need not make that a sign, for when this comes with a mercy, it carries its own evidence; you will then know well enough that it is the fruit of prayer. §. 10. *The fifth case; Suppose that others join with me in those prayers now answered, how should I know that my prayers had an hand in obtaining those answers, as well as any others?*

WE may resolve this case by these observations; as

1. If thy heart did sympathize and accord in the same holy affection with those others in praying, then it is certain thy voice hath helped to carry it; *If two of you shall agree on earth, saith Christ, Mat. xviii. 19. as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven: if two of you shall agree* (the word is *sumphoneosin*) q. d. if you harmoniously agree to play the same tune (for prayers are musick in God's ears, and so called, *melody to God*, Eph. ii. 29.) if you agree not only in the thing prayed for, but in your affections, for it is the affections that make the consort and melody; if the same holy affections were touched and struck by God's Spirit in thy heart, that was in others, then didst thou help to make up the consort, and without thee it had been imperfect; yea without thee the thing might not have been done, for God sometimes stands upon such a number of voices (as when he named ten persons in Sodom) and so one voice may cast it.

2. If thy heart be filled with joy in the accomplishment of what was prayed for, it is an evident argument that thy prayers did move the Lord to effect it, as well as the prayers of others. When good old Simeon saw his prayers answered in sending the Messiah into the world, he was even willing to die thro' joy, and thought he could never die in a better time; *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, Luke ii. 29.*

3. If the thing concern others, and thy heart be thankful for a blessing on others, prayed for by thee with others, it is a sign thy prayers had some hand in it: thus Paul prayed for the Thessalonians, and when Timothy came, and brought him good tidings of their faith and charity, he was not only comforted, but in his ravishment he cries, *What thanks can we render again to God for you?* 1 Thess. iii. 6, 7, 9.

4. If the thing concern thyself which was prayed for by others, helping thee in their prayers, what cause hast thou but to think

it was granted for thy own prayers, and not for theirs only? It may be indeed that God heard thee the sooner through the help of their prayers: *I know this shall turn to my salvation, thro' your prayers,* said Paul, Phil. i. 19. But if God stirs up thy heart to pray for thyself, as well as others pray for thee, then God that gave thee an heart to pray, hath heard thy prayers also, and hath had a respect to thee as well (if not more than) to others, because it concerneth thyself especially, as being a more special mercy to thee than to others.

§. 11. *The sixth case: Suppose I am assured on former observation, that God hath heard and answered my prayers in their particulars, what must I do then?*

WE may resolve this case, by laying open the duties appertaining to such a soul; art thou now assured of the answer and return of thy prayers, it is thy duty then

1. To be thankful to God for his goodness: *Blessed be the Lord* (saith David) *because he hath heard the voice of my supplications,* Psalm xxviii. 6.

2. To love God the more, and resolve with confidence to call upon him so much the more; *I love the Lord because he hath heard the voice of my supplication; because he hath inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call upon him as long as I live,* Psalm cxvi. 1, 2.

3. To have such a deportment and demeanour ever after as is suitable to such who have commerce and intercourse with God; as, *To depart from sin, to apply our hearts to obedience, and to pay all our vows: away from me, ye workers of iniquity, God hath heard the voice of my weeping: and I will pay thee my vows which my lips have uttered, for God hath heard me,* Psal. vi. 8 lxliii 13, 14, 19.

§. 12. *A directory for prayer.*

I Promised in conclusion of this chapter, to lay down a directory, and a broken or interrupted scripture form of prayer; for the former, I shall draw this scheme.

In prayer observe we

I. The *Preface* to it, which consists of (1.) A Description of God, and that both by his *Attributes* and *Promises*.

(2.) A craving of *Audience* and *Acceptance*.

II. The *Parts* of it, which are three, namely, *Confession*, *Petition*, *Thanksgiving*.

(1.) *Confession* of sin, and that of three kinds, (1.) Of the sin of our first Parents; (2.) Original Pollution, (3.) Of actual Transgressions.

In confession of actual Transgressions,

(1.) Confess we our transgressions in thought, word, and deed, *before* and *sure* conversion.

(2.) Confess we our sins against light of knowledge, checks of conscience, long forbearance of God, tender mercies, terrifying judgments, strong purposes, frequent promises, multiplied vows.

(3.) Confess we the *ties* of our age, sex, constitution, relations, &c.

(4.) Confess we our secret, open, habitual sins, 1. Against the Law of God; 2. Against the gospel of Christ, as,

Our not thinking after Christ; our not relying on Christ; our grieving God's Spirit; our continued impenitency.

5.) Confess we our sins, in their several aggravations; by circumstances of—

1. The *Person* against whom they are committed;—2. The *Number* of them;—3. The *Time*, *Place*, *Manner*, &c.

(6.) Confess we the judgment and condemnation we deserve for sin;—To which is annexed humiliation, or mourning for sin.

(II.) *Petition*; and that 1. for ourselves; 2. for others.

(1.) For ourselves; and this sort of petition includes in it two things, namely, *precation*, and *deprecation*.

1. *Precation*, and that for the following things, viz.

(1.) Pardon of sin, and that,—for his names sake, his promise sake, his mercies sake, Christ's sake. (2.) Sealing of this pardon to our consciences. (3.) Peace of conscience and joy in the holy Ghost. (4.) Justifying and

lively faith. (5.) Repentance unto life. (6.) Saving knowledge. (7.) Love to God, saints, enemies. (8.) Lively hope, ardent zeal, filial fear, &c. (9.) Growth in grace. (10.) For means conducing, as, The word preached, The sacraments, The Sabbaths. (11.) Purifying, and power against sin. (12.) A blessing on our outward callings. (13.) Sanctifying of all afflictions to us or others.

2. *Deprecation*, and that,

(1.) Against all evil; of sin especially; against the devil, and all his assaults, against the world and all its temptations, against our own flesh, with all the lusts of it, against our darling corruptions, Devilish sins.

(2.) Against all judgments, either National, or Personal. National, as War, Famine, Pestilence, and the like. Personal, as bodily diseases, &c. and inward Torments of Conscience, and Spiritual Desertion.

(3.) Against the sting of death and horror of the grave.

2. *Petition* for others. (1.) All belonging to God's election, though as yet uncalled, as, Jews, Pagans, Infidels, Profane or ignorant Christians, Persecutors themselves. (2.) All in the bosom of the church, either in foreign countries; or in our own nation, as the magistracy, the ministry, the commonalty. (3.) All afflicted in soul or body.

(III.) *Thanksgiving*, and that for blessings spiritual, and temporal.

1. Spiritual blessings, such as are (1.) Election, with all the golden chains of graces hanging thereon; as redemption, vocation, justification, sanctification, hope of glory. (2.) The word, sacraments, Sabbaths, ordinances, labours of the learned. (3.) Power over sin, Satan, our own selves.

2. Temporal blessings, such as are (1.) Creation; (2.) Continual preservation; (3.) Life, health, peace, prosperity, plenty, &c. (4.) Deliverance from judgments national, and personal. (5.) Victory over the church's enemies.

S E C T. XIII.

§. 1. *A Form of Prayer in Scripture-phrase.*

IN this form observe, 1. *A Description of God.*

O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh. Who hast created the heavens, and stretch'd them out, who hast spread forth the earth and that which cometh out of it, who givest breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein. Who hast formed the mountains, and created the wind, and declarest unto man what is his thoughts, who makest the morning darkness, and treadest upon the highest

places of the earth. Who art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light, as with a garment, who layest the beams of thy chambers in the waters, who makest the clouds thy chariots, who walkest upon the wings of the wind. Who hast measured the waters in the hollow of thy hand, and metted out heaven with thy span, who comprehendest the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighest the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. Who givest the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who dividest the sea when the waves thereof roar. Who

Who madeſt the ſeven ſtars and orion, and turneſt the ſhadow of death into the morning, and makeſt the day dark with night. Who haſt built thy ſtories in the heaven, and haſt founded thy troop in the earth, who calleſt for the waters of the ſea, and poureſt them out upon the face of the earth, Numb. xvi. 22. Iſa. xlii. 5. Amos iv. 13. Pſalm civ. 1, 2, 3. Iſaiah xliii. 12. Jer. xxxi. 36. Amos v. 8. ix. 6.

2. A begging of audience.

Look down from heaven thy holy habitation: have thou reſpect unto the prayer of thy ſervants, to hearken to the cry, and to the prayer which thy ſervants pray before thee this day. Let our prayer be ſet forth before thee as incenſe, and the lifting up of our hands as a morning ſacrifice, Deut. xxvi. 15. 1 Kings viii. 28. Pſal. cxli. 2.

3. A confeſſion of the ſins of our firſt parents, and of our original pollution.

We confeſs, O Lord, thou createdſt our firſt parents in thine own image, and breathedſt into their noſtrils the breath of life, but the ſerpent beguiled them, and they did eat of the forbidden fruit; whereby all mankind (being then in their loins) alſo ſinned, and now come ſhort of the glory of God. And beſides that ſin which is imputed to us, we find in us inherent a proclive diſpoſition to all manner of evil; we are riſen up in our Father's ſtead an increaſe of ſinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord towards us. We know, Lord, that in us, that is in our fleſh, dwelleth no good thing, for though to will be preſent with us, yet how to perform that which is good we find not. We ſee another law in our members warring againſt the law of our minds, and bringing us in captivity to the law of ſin which is in our members. O wretched men that we are, who ſhall deliver us from the body of this death? Gen. i. 26. and iii. 6. Rom. iii. 23. Numb. xxxii. 14. Rom. vii. 18, 23, 24.

4. A Confeſſion of actual Tranſgreſſions in Thought, Word, and Deed.

And yet, O Lord, to fill up the meaſure of our condemnation, to this ſin original we have added ſin actual: *who can ſay I have made my heart clean? I am pure from my ſin?* ſinners we are by imputation, having the ſin of our firſt parents charged upon us; ſinners by real communication, being heirs to our forefathers corruption, and ſinners by actual commiſſion. We have ſinned in thought; our ſouls which ſhould have been ſeaſoned with ſweet meditations on thy goodneſs and mercy, and grace and heavenly things, they are and have been peſtered and aſſailed with the black and helliſh thoughts of atheiſm, deſpair, diſcontent, blaſphemy, and ſoul-vexing fears. O what a world of ignorance, vanity of mind, diſeſteem of thy mercy, timorousneſs, diſcontent, unbelief, miſinterpreting the Lord's doings, ſelf-confidence and ſolitary muſings on the temptations of Satan have neſtled in our hearts? thou, Lord, ſeeſt that the wickedneſs of man is great upon earth, and that *every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually.* We confeſs Lord, we have ſinned in word; our tongues which ſhould have been as trumpets to have ſounded thy praiſe, they have been deeply guilty of blaſphemy, murmuring, ſwearing, forſwearing, lying, flandering, railing, reviling, brawling, ſcoffing, boasting, diſcovering of ſecrets, defence of ſin, flattery, giving ill counſel, ſowing ſeeds of diſcord amongst neighbours, fooliſh jeſting, idle words, ſinful ſilence, raſh cenſurings; *behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth, the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; it hath deſiled our whole bodies, and hath ſet on fire the courſe of nature, and it is ſet on fire of hell;* O Lord, if of every ſinful word, and of every idle word we muſt one day give account, what a fearful account have we to make? *If we juſtify ourſelves, our own mouths will condemn us, the heaven ſhall reveal our iniquity, and the earth ſhall riſe*

up againſt us. We confeſs, Lord, we have ſinned in deed: witneſs our worldlineſs and covetouſneſs, and pride, and malice, and luſts, and lukewarmneſs, and impatience, and diſcontentedneſs, and vain-glory, and ſelf-love: O the wrongs we have done, O the goods we have ill gotten, and the time we have miſpent, and the ſabbaths we have profaned! O the pollutions, diſtempers, eſtrangedneſs from God in our ſouls! O the villainies, vanities, and rebellions of our whole life! O Lord, we may as well number the ſtars as our ſins, but thou knoweſt them all, *thou haſt ſet our iniquities before thee, our ſecret ſins in the light of thy countenance,* Prov. xx. 9. Gen. vi. 5. James iii. 5, 6. Matth. xii. 36. Job ix. 20. xx. 27. Pſalm xc. 8.

5. Confefſion of ſins before and ſince Conversion.

And however thou haſt been pleaſed of thy rich mercy in Chriſt, to tranſlate ſome of us from darkneſs to light, yet Lord, how infinitely did we ſin before our conversion? O our omiſſions of good duties in that graceleſs time, which were as large as the duties enjoyned in all thy commandments! O the actual ſins, and groſs iniquities, and hainous crying crimes we then committed with all manner of greedineſs! O we cannot but ſay out of our own experiences, abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water. For our iniquities are grown over our head, and as an heavy burden they are too heavy for us to bear. But that which infinitely adds to our ſins, how have we ſinned ſince conversion by our many relapſes, and frailties and falls? Alas, Lord, our profitable and pleaſing ſins in former times have broken in upon us again and again, and notwithstanding we have confeſſed, and prayed, and promiſed, yet ſtill we have relapſed and backſlidden; in our holy things we have been peſtered with wanderings and diſtractions of heart, with coldneſs and dulneſs, and unprofitableneſs,

to this day innumerable ſins paſs by us that we take no notice of, ſo that we cannot but with holy David complain, Who can underſtand his errors? Lord cleanſe us from our ſecret faults, Job xv. 16. Pſalm xxxviii. 4. and xix. 12.

6. A Confefſion of ſins againſt Light of Knowledge, Checks of Conſcience, Vows, Promiſes, Law, Goſpel, &c.

But O the aggravation, that we ſhould ſin againſt knowledge, that we ſhould abuſe the good gifts of God, and turn his grace into wantonneſs, that we ſhould ſin againſt our covenant many a time renewed; that we ſhould grieve that good Spirit of God whereby we are ſealed unto the day of redemption; that we ſhould wrong the bleſſed name of God, his word, religion, and profeſſion of godlineſs; that in the land of uprightneſs we ſhould deal unjuſtly, and not behold the majeſty of the Lord: this makes our ſins become exceeding ſinful. We confeſs Lord, we have ſinned againſt the law, we have broke all the commandments, from the firſt to the laſt; and now, O our God, what ſhall we ſay after this? We confeſs, Lord, we have ſinned againſt the goſpel; we are aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt, though it be the power of God unto ſalvation to every one that believeth. We have not thirſted after Chriſt, our ſouls have not panted after him, as the hart that pants after the water brooks. We have not loved the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity, we have not conſidered him as the ſweetneſs of our hearts, and the life of our ſouls. We have not counted all things loſs and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord. We take no pains to know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, or to be made conformable to his death. We hide as it were our faces from him, and will not have him to reign over us. We have not believed the promiſes of ſalvation, not relied upon Chriſt for juſtification, ſanctification,

cation, and salvation: O Christ, there is none of us that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee. And howsoever Lord, thou hast given space, to repent of all our abominations that we have committed, yet we have not repented. We confess not our transgressions unto the Lord, that thou mightest forgive the iniquity of our sin. Thou hast indeed stricken us, but we have not grieved, thou hast consumed us, but we have refused to receive correction, we have made our faces harder than a rock, and have refused to return. But above all, O the insolencies, and outrages, and excesses, and tyrannies of our bosom sins, of our darling delights: these are they that rage, and tyrannize it over us more than any of the rest. These are as our right hands, and right eyes, and we are loath to cut them off, or pluck them out, Jude iv. Eph. iv. 30. Isaiah xxvi. 10. Ezra ix. 10. Romans i. 16. Psalm xlii. 1. Eph. vi. 24. Phil. iii. 8, 10. Isa. liii. 3. xiv. 7. Rev. ii. 21. Ps. xxxii. 5. Jer. v. 3. Mat. v. 29, 30.

7. An accusing, judging, and condemning ourselves.

And for all these sins, thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, and because his compassions fail not. If thou shouldst lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, thou mightest make thy anger and jealousy to smook against us, and all the curses that are written in thy book thou mightest lay upon us, and blot out our name from under heaven. Thou mightest make thy arrows drunk with blood, and thy sword might devour flesh from the beginning of revenges. Thou mightest give us our portion with the wicked that are turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God, Ezra ix. 13. Lam. iii. 22. Isaiah xxviii. 17. Deut. xxix. 20. xxxii. 42. Ps. ix. 17.

8. Humiliation, or mourning for sin.

But, Lord, thou hast said, if we confess our sins, thou art faithful and just

to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Thou hast promised, he that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy. Thou hast proclaimed, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever; only acknowledge thy iniquity that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. Thou hast threatened, I will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offence, in their affliction they will seek me early. Thou hast sweetly encouraged, He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not, he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see light. And, O Lord, in reference to these sayings, and promises, and proclamations, and threats, and encouragements, we embolden ourselves to acknowledge our wickedness, and the iniquities of our fathers. Lord, we ly down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us, we cannot but say, We have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers from our youth, even unto this day, and we have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God. And O that now we would go and seek the Lord, as the children of Israel and Judah together, going and weeping, asking the way to Zion, with our faces thitherward. This is a time of mourning, and our sins have given us occasion of sorrow. O that we were on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of us mourning, every one for our iniquity. Why Lord, this is thy promise, A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. O make all our men like David's this day, let them eat asses like bread, and mingle their drink with very weeping. O make all our women like

Marys and Marah's this day, and let their maids meet them as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts. O let us take to us words, and turn to the Lord, and say to him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips: Ashur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods. It is true, Lord, we have many a time idolized the creature, and abused the Creator; we have many a time crucified Christ, and trod under feet the blood of the Lamb; but if Christ would but look on us as he did on Peter, then should we look upon Christ whom we have pierced, and mourn for him as one that mourneth for his only son, and be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born: then should we make a great mourning as the mourning of Hadadrimmon, in the valley of Megiddon. Why, Lord, help us to mourn for our sins, and when thou hast cast us down, and humbled us to purpose, then lift us up again. Surely thou art nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and savest such as be of a contrite spirit. When men are cast down, then shalt thou say, there is lifting up, and thou shalt save the humble person. To this purpose thou hast promised, they that sow in tears, shall reap in joy, he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. And to this purpose was Christ anointed to preach good-tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And is it not thine own saying, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the hum-

ble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones? O for a dram of this reviving to our poor drooping souls! 1 John i. ix. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jer. iii. 12. Hosea v. 15. Job xxxiii. 27, 28. Jer. xiv. 20. iii. 25. 1. 4, 5. Ezek. vii. 16. xxxvi. 26. Psalm cii. 9. Nah. ii. 7. Hof. xiv. 2, 3. Zach. xii. 10. Psalm xxxiv. 18. Job xxii. 29. Pf. cxxvi. 5, 6. Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. lvii. 15.

§. 2. *The second part of prayer is petition for ourselves, and others.*

We petition for pardon of sins, for his name's sake, Christ's sake, for his promise sake, and for his mercies sake.

O that we might have our request, and that God would grant us the thing that we long for. Even that it would please him to cover our iniquities, and cause our sins to be blotted out from before him. Dear Father, we are sure nothing can hinder mercy from us but sin, O pardon our sins for thy names sake, oh pardon our iniquity, for it is great. And to this end; O look on Christ that Lamb that takes away the sins of the world. It is he that bears our iniquities. It is he that once appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. It is he that by himself purged our sins. It is he that bare our sins on the tree in his own body. It is he that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. It is he that is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. It is he that was wounded for our transgressions, that was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes are we healed. O then for his sake, and in his blood wash us thoroughly from our iniquities, and cleanse us from our sin. And to this end, remember thy promises: Thou hast said, I will cleanse you from all your iniquity whereby you have sinned against me, I will pardon all your iniquities whereby you have sinned, and whereby you have transgressed against me. Thou hast said, I, even I am he that blotteth out thy

thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Thou hast said, I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. Thou hast said, I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more. Thou hast said, Come now and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. And thy prophets have said, who is a God like unto thee, that pardonest iniquity, and passest by the transgressions of the remnant of thy heritage, thou retainest not thy anger for ever, because thou delightest in mercy. We press thee, Lord, with thy own precious promises: have we nothing of our own to bring thee but sin? Why thou hast a Son, that thou lookest upon, whom thou hast set forth for thy propitiation: would we have a pledge of thy undeserved favour? Why thou hast given thy only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life: do we require further assurance of thy unspeakable kindness? why thou hast made large promises, and entered into covenant with us, that shall never fail on thy part. Dear Father, thou wast pleased to wait long for our conversion when we went astray, and wilt thou not much more have mercy upon us now we pray unto thee? Thou hast commanded us to forgive our brethren till seventy times seven times, if they sin and repent; and shall our God require so much of us (whose compassions are not as the drop of a bucket to the ocean, if compared with thy mercies) and wilt thou not much more deal tenderly with us, who have sinned indeed often, and many a time, but now desire to repent us? When we excused our disobedience, and charged our faults upon thee, thou settest thy love on us; but how much more now, Lord, when we accuse ourselves, and pray for thy mercy? Good Lord, misery is the object of mer-

cy; the greater our distress, the more glorious will be the grace of God in our deliverance; if thou wilt be merciful to our sins, then shall thy glory appear, and our hearts shall be enflamed with thy love, we shall walk in thy fear, and our tongues shall sing of thy goodness. Yea, our tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. Job vi. 8. Neh. iv. 5. Psalm xxv. 11. John i. 29. Isa. liii. 11. Heb. ix. 26. 1. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 24. Rev. i. 5. 1 John ii. 2. Isa. liii. 5. Psalm li. 2. Jer. xxxiii. 8. Isaiah xliii. 25. xlv. 22. Jer. xxxi. 34. Isa. i. 18. Micah vii. 18. Rom. iii. 25. John iii. 16. Luke xvii. 34. Neh. v. 9. Psalm li. 14.

2. For sealing of this pardon in our consciences.

And for assurance hereof to our souls, O shew us the salvation of God. Seal up the assurance of pardon in our hearts and consciences by the gracious testimony of thy holy Spirit; O let thy Spirit testify it to us, and persuade us hereof, and confirm it unto us by his seal and earnest. It is thy Spirit that bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. We desire thy Spirit to testify it to us, and with us; O give us the testimony of a renewed conscience enlightened by thy Spirit, and directed by thy word, whereby we may come to know what God hath wrought in us. Give unto us the spirit of adoption, whereby we may with confidence and comfort cry, Abba Father. Give us joy in the holy Ghost, and the answer of a good conscience towards God. Psal. i. 23. 2 Cor. i. 22. Rom. viii. 16. 1 Cor. ii. 12. Rom. viii. 15. xiv. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

3. For justifying and lively faith.

Give us even that gift of God, a soul-saving and justifying faith. O that we could roll ourselves upon the Lord, and stick fast unto his mercy! we have found a rich treasure of promises in thy word for the pardon of our sin, only create in us the hand of faith, that we may effectually receive what in mercy thou reach-

‘st forth: O we are of little faith. Increase it, Lord, though it be but as a grain of mustard-seed. Work in us not a dead faith, but that which may be rich in good works, following after peace with all men, and holiness, without which none shall see God. And because our righteousness is so impure, even as menstruous rags, O clothe us with the robes of Christ’s righteousness, that we may be found in him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Eph. ii. 8. Mat. vi. 39. vii. 20. James ii. 20. Heb. xii. 14. Phil. iii. 9.

4. For repentance unto life.

‘Give us repentance; it is thine own word, that unto us God hath raised up his Son Jesus, and sent him to bless us in turning every one of us from our iniquities. O that we could draw this virtue from Christ! Oh that our heads were waters, and our eyes fountains of tears, that we might weep day and night for our sins! Oh that all the night we might make our beds to swim, that we could water our couches with our tears. That we could repent in sackcloth and ashes. Oh that there were such hearts in us that we might repent, and recover ourselves out of the snare of the devil. Oh that we could lay our sins to our hearts, that we could repent us of our wickedness, saying, What have we done? Oh that we could, as Ephraim, bemoan ourselves thus, Thou hast chastised us, and we were chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, turn thou us, and we shall be turned, thou art the Lord our God. Surely, after we are turned, we shall repent, and after we are instructed, we shall smite upon our thigh, we shall be ashamed, yea, even confounded, because we bear the reproach of our youth. Oh that remembering our ways, and all our doings whereby we have been defiled, we could loath ourselves in our own

fight for our iniquities, and for our abominations, Acts iii. 26. Jer. ix. 1. Ps. vi. 6. Matth. xi. 21. 2 Tim. ii. 26. Jer. viii. 6. xxxi. 18. Ezck. xx. 43.

5. For saving knowledge.

Give us saving knowledge; give us thy Spirit of truth, who will guide us into all truth. Incline our ears to wisdom, and our hearts to understanding, that we may cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for understanding, that we may understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God, that we may be enabled to cry unto thee, our God, we know thee. Hast thou not promised, saying, After those days I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them? Oh that thou wouldst give us this knowledge, that thou wouldst fill us with this knowledge as the waters cover the sea. That thou wouldst give unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, that the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance is in the saints. Dear Father, is not thy secret with the righteous? is not the secret of the Lord revealed to them that fear him? O then give us this unction from the holy One, that we may know all things. John xvi. 13. Prov. ii. 2. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Heb. ii. 14. Eph. i. 17, 18. Prov. xxxiii. 2. Psalm xxv. 14. 1 John ii. 20.

6. For love to God, saints, enemies.

Give us a love of God, and of all things that belong to him: thou hast said, thou wilt circumcise our hearts, and the hearts of our seed, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, that we may live. Set us on fire, burn us, make us new, and

and transform us, that nothing besides thee may live in us: O wound very deeply our hearts with the dart of thy love, and that (because our sins, which are many, are forgiven us) we may love thee not a little, but much. Wilt thou, Lord, love the image, and shall not the image much more love the pattern? O that we were sick of love; that our understandings, wills, and affections were all overflowed, overcome and amazed, that our faintings were enflamed towards thee, and even melted into thee! O sweet Jesus, touch our souls with thy Spirit, that virtue may go out of thee into us, and draw us unto thee: let the favour of thy ointments, whose very breath is love, be ever in our nostrils; give us the flaggons of the new wine of the kingdom, which may lift up our souls above ourselves in our loves, that we may forget the low and base loves of this world, and by an heavenly excess may be transported into an heavenly love, that we may embrace Christ, who is the Lord from heaven, with a love like himself: nor do we desire only the pleasures of love, and joys of thy union; but that we may become generative and fruitful; far be it from us to love thee like an harlot, and not like a wife: O let us desire union with thee, and to bring forth fruit unto thee; we will not cease to cry unto thee, give us children, or else we die: give us even fruits of thy Spirit which may resemble thee, and be pledges to us of thy union with us. And that we may bring forth fruits wholly thine, and not anothers besides thee, O burn and consume whatsoever would grow one with our souls besides thee: O let the fire of thy Spirit so wholly turn our souls into a spiritual fire, that the dross of the flesh, and the world, being wholly consumed, we may be spiritual, and so bring forth fruits only to the Spirit. But alas, sometimes it is, that the ointments of love are not seen or felt, and then our love cools; and if so, O then, sweet Saviour, look upon us in mercy;

one look of thine will awaken our loves, and make us weep bitterly that we loved thee so little, whom to love sufficiently, our best and mightiest loves are most insufficient. Prevent our seeking with thy seeking, be thou present with us in thy providence and power, when thou seemest to be far off us in the taste of thy sweetness, and the fruition of thy loves: and then when we have regained thee, we will hold more hardly, and keep more fastly, and love the more vehemently, and provide a stock of loves in the summer against the winter if it return any more. And give us also to love one another, as Christ hath loved us. Make our love to abound yet more and more towards all men, especially them that are of the household of faith. Yea Lord, cause us to love our very enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good unto them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us, Deut. xxx. 6. Luke vii. 47. Cant. v. 8. Luke viii. 46. Cant. i. 3. Hof. iii. 1. John vi. 38. Gen. xxx. 1. Rom. vii. 4. Luke xxii. 61, 62. Isaiah lxx. 1. Cant. ii. 3. iii. 4. John xiii. 34. Phil. i. 9. Gal. vi. 10. Matth. v. 44.

7. For ardent zeal, patience, perseverance, and all other graces.

Give us a zeal after God, and his truth, good causes, and good men. Let us not rest contented with a lukewarm profession, being neither cold nor hot: but make our souls to break for the longing that they have to thy judgments at all times. O that we were fervent in Spirit, zealously affected always in every good thing. O that the zeal of thy house might even eat us up. And that our zeal might provoke very many. O that thy word were in our hearts as a burning fire, that we were weary with forbearing, and that we could not slay, Rev. iii. 16. Psa. cxix. 20. Rom. xii. 11. John ii. 17. 2 Cor. ix. 2. Jer. xx. 9.

Give us the grace of patience; thou hast foretold us, that in the world we shall have

tribulation. And through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God. Make us therefore run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. O help us to consider him, that hath endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. Let us not think it strange concerning the fiery trial. But rather rejoice in as much as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his joy shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy. O teach us to reckon with ourselves that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Hast thou not said, that if we be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are we? O therefore that it may be given to us in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Help us to deny ourselves, and to take up our cross daily, and follow our Saviour, John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22. Heb. xii. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. Rom. viii. 18. 1 Pet. iv. 14. Phil. i. 19. Luke ix. 23.

Give us perseverance; and to this end make us to build on thy promises; thou hast said, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. Thou hast said, to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you, I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and I will deliver you. For this God is our God for ever, he will be our guide unto death. O give us one heart, and one way, that we may fear thee for ever, and make thou an everlasting covenant with us, that thou wilt not turn away from us to do us good; and put thy fear in our hearts that we may not depart from thee. Help us, Lord,

to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. Confirm us unto the end, that we may be blameless in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ, Psalm xxxvii. 23, 24. Isa. xlvi. 4. Psalm xlvi. 14. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. Heb. x. 23. Rom. xi. 29.

Give us all other saving graces: a lively hope that he may save us: yea in these times let us with Abraham against hope believe in hope. A joy in the holy Ghost, thou hast said, light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. A filial fear, because thou takest pleasure in those that fear thee. In that day when thou makest up thy jewels, they shall be thine, and thou wilt spare them as a man spareth his son that serveth him. Humility, and lowliness in spirit; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. Meekness of mind, that the wolf may dwell with the lamb, and the leopard may ly down with the kid, the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, whilst a little child may lead them. Peace of conscience, and peace of God, that may keep our hearts and minds, that may guard or garrison our whole souls, Rom. viii. 24. iv. 18. Psalm xcvi. 11. cxlvii. 11. Mal. iii. 17. 2 Cor. x. 4. Isa. xi. 6, 7. Phil. iv. 7.

8. For growth in grace.

And for our further assurance, O give an increase and growth to all these graces; O do thou guide us continually, and satisfy our souls in drought. O make full our bones, that we may be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. O let the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings, that we may go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. O that thou wouldst make our path as the path of the just, even as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. O that thou wouldst be to us as dew unto Israel, that we might grow as the lily, and
cast

cast forth our roots as Lebanon, that our branches might spread, and our beauty be as the olive-tree, and our smell as Lebanon. Hast thou not said, I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses? O put into our hearts their ways, who go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appearing before God, Isa. lviii. 1. Mal. i. 2. Prov. iv. 18. Hof. xiv. 5, 6. Isa. xlv. 3, 4. Psal. lxxxiv. 5, 6, 7.

9. *For purifying, and power against sin.*
 Nor pray we only for remission, but cleansing: not only for pardon and sense of pardon, but for purifying, and power against sin, and deliverance from sin. Holy God, thou hast promised, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem, when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning. Holy God, thou hast promised, that thou wilt put thy law in our inward parts, and write it in our hearts. Holy God, it is thy promise, the first promise, and the foundation of all other promises, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; that Christ should break the power and dominion of Satan. O that having these promises we could live by faith, that we could rest upon God and believe, that God of his free grace in Christ will purge us from the filthy remainders of sin, and renew us more and more after his own image in righteousness and holiness; surely Lord thou hast said it, and therefore it is no presumption, but true obedience to assure ourselves of whatsoever thou hast promised, and entered into bond and covenant freely to give. He that believeth on

thee, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Christ is a fountain of grace, ever flowing, and ever full, and of his fulness we receive grace for grace; there is no grace but from Christ, and no communion with Christ but by faith; O therefore that we could embrace him by faith for our sanctification, that so we might be filled with the gift of his grace in our measure. It is Christ is our wisdom and sanctification, as well as righteousness and redemption; it is Christ who took upon him our nature, and sanctified it by his holy Spirit, that we being made one with him might receive the self-same spirit, tho' in measure, to sanctify us. O that our Jesus would justify our persons, and sanctify our natures, and enable us to those duties of holiness that he requires, that he would make us unto him a kingdom of priests, an holy nation, Isaiah iv. 3, 4. Jer. xxxi. 33. Gen. iii. 15. Heb. x. 38. Eph. iv. 24. John vii. 38. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 30. Exod. xix. 6.

10. *Against all evil of sin, the world, flesh and devil.*

O Lord, we have many potent enemies that daily war against us, the world, flesh and devil; and our strength is too weak to vanquish the allurements of this world, to repress the lusts of our rebellious hearts, to defeat the policies of Satan, much more to change and cleanse our own hearts; but Lord thou hast promised, O help us to believe, that God will aid, assist and bless us in our endeavours, yea and do the whole work for us. Grant, Lord, that we may not love the world, that our hearts may not be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life. Grant Lord, that we may not suffer sin to reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither suffer us to yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, that being now made free
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from sin, and become the servants of God, we may have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Grant, Lord, that we may be sober and vigilant, because our adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. O make us strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, that we may be able to stand against all the wiles of satan: why, Lord, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. O therefore strengthen us that we may stand, having the girdle of truth, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shield of faith, wherewith we may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, 1 John ii. 15. Luke xxi. 34. Rom. vi. 12, 13. 1 Pet. v. 8. Eph. vi. 10, 12, 14, 15, 16.

11. *Against all evil punishment, national or personal.*

Thou hast plagued our nation; the stout hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep, and none of the men of might have found their hands. O heal the land. Let no evil befall us, neither let any plague come nigh our dwellings. Our souls are among lions, our soul also is sore vexed, but thou, O Lord, how long? 2 Chron. vii. 14. Psalm lxxvi. 5. xci. 10. vi. 3.

12. *For the catholic militant church of Christ.*

‘ And as we pray for ourselves, so for the catholic church of Christ. Let thy delight be to mount Zion, grave her on the palms of thy hands, let her walls be continually before thee, let her builders make haste, and cause her destroyers, and such as would lay her waste, to depart from her. Thou hast said, I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. And we have a promise, that the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies a cloud, and smoke by day, and the shin-

ing of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. Now, Lord, make good thy word, and look upon Zion the city of our solemnities, let thine eyes see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, let not one of the stakes thereof be removed, or any of the boards be broken. Isa. xlix. 16, 17. xxvii. 3. iv. 5.

13. For all that belong to God’s election, though uncalled as yet.

Call home the Jews, thou hast revealed that they shall be grafted in again and thou art able to graft them in again, as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. O that thou wouldest raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. O that as a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so thou wouldest seek out thy sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day, and bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country: Bring in the Gentiles; thou hast promised, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring their sons in their arms, and their daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. It is prophesied that the days shall come (even the last days) when the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. Yea, Lord, the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and the kings to the brightness of thy rising; the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. Nay, is it not at hand? Who are these, Lord, that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their win-

windows ? O the matter of rejoicing, O the blessed day is at hand ! sing. O barren, thou that didst not bear, break forth into singing, and cry aloud thou that didst not travail with child ; for more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations, spare not, lengthen thy curtains, and strengthen thy stakes. Blessed God, hasten these times, accomplish the prophecies, bring on the days when violence shall be no more heard in our land, nor wasting, nor destruction in our borders ; when thou shalt call our walls salvation, and our gates praise, when the sun shall be no more our light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto us, but the Lord shall be unto us an everlasting light, and our God our glory. Rom. xi. 23, 26. Amos ix. 11. v. 15. Ezek. xxxiv. 12, 13. Isa. xlix. 23. ii. 2. lx. 3, 5, 8. liv. 1. lx. 18, 19.

14. Against the Churches incurable Enemies.

Consume antichrist with the Spirit of thy mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of thy coming, even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs, and lying wonders.

We bless thee, Lord, for that thou hast begun his downfall, we beseech thee at last bring in those ten horns of the beast that may hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, that they may eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. Hasten the ruin of all other the churches enemies, now it is that Gog and Magog are gathered to the battle, and the number of them is as the sand of the sea ; Lord, they are gone upon the breadth of the earth, and they have compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city ; O let fire come down from God out of heaven and devour them, 1 Thess. ii. 8. Rev. xvii. 16. xx. 8. 15. For the Reformed Churches abroad, and at home.

Look tenderly on these western churches, Germany, the Palatinate, Bohemia, &c. Thine heritage, O Lord, is unto thee as a speckled bird, the birds round about her are against her. Many pastors have devoured thy vineyard, they have trodden thy portion under foot, they have made thy pleasant portion a desolate wilderness ; they have made it desolate, and being desolate, it mourns unto thee. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old ; art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon ? Art not thou it that hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep, that hath made the depth of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over ? Take pity on Scotland, Ireland, &c. Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand, them which put their trust in thee, from those that rise up against them : keep them as the apple of thine eye, hide them under the shadow of thy wings. Preserve that little flock, to whom thou hast promised, and reserved the kingdom. Have mercy on miserable, sinful England ; dear Father, hast thou utterly rejected Judah ? Hath thy soul loathed Zion ? Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us ? We looked for peace, and there is no good, and for the time of healing, and behold trouble ; we acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against thee, do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory, remember, break not thy covenant with us. O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, O Lord, hearken and do, defer not for thine own sake, O our God : O that ever it should be said of England, God hath forsaken his house, he hath left his heritage, he hath given the dearly beloved of his soul into the hands of her enemies. Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness,

and of thy glory, where is thy zeal and thy strength, the founding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards us? Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, thou, Lord, art our Father, and our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting, Jer. xii. 9, &c. Isaiah li. 9, 10. Psalm xvii. 7, 8. Luke xii. 32. Jer. xiv. 19, 20, 21. Dan. ix. 19. Jer. xii. 7. Isa. lxiii. 15, 16.

16. For Magistracy, Ministry, People.

Bless the magistracy, and provide for us out of all the people able men such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness. And that judgment may not be turned into gall, nor the fruit of righteousness into hemlock; give courage to our rulers that they may execute justice truly in the gates. Bless the ministry, let their words be upright, words of truth; as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of the assemblies, which are given from one shepherd. Set watchmen upon our walls, that shall never hold their peace day nor night, those that make mention of the Lord let them not keep silence, nor give him rest till he establish, and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. And O let their doctrine drop as the rain, let their speech distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass, to open the blind eyes, and to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. Bless all from Dan to Beerseba, call them thy holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, Exod. xviii. 21. Amos vi. 12. Eccles. xii. 10, 11. Isa. lxii. 6, 7. Deut. xxxii. 2. Isa. xlii. 7. lxii. 12.

17. For all afflicted in Soul, or Body.

Behold the tears of such as are oppressed, and have no comforter. O Lord, thou hast at this time especially laid affliction on the loins of many of thy servants, and hast made them drink of the wine of astonishment, thou hast fed them

with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in great measure. And yet thou hast said, that howsoever two parts in the land shall be cut off and die, yet a third part shall be left therein, and thou wilt bring the third part through the fire, and wilt refine them, as silver is refined, and wilt try them as gold is tried; they shall call on thy name, and thou wilt hear them, thou shalt say, it is my people, and they shall say, the Lord is my God. Lord, so it is, that a third part of the land is now in the fire, and thou art refining them as silver is refined, and thou art trying them as gold is tried; ask now, and see whether a man doth travel with child? Wherefore then (may we say with Jeremy) do I see every man with his hands on his loins as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas for the day is great, so that none is like it, it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. Blessed be God for this promise; thou mayest indeed sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted with a sieve, but the least grain shall not fall upon the earth. Dear father, look to thy afflicted ones, and speak to them as once to Ephraim; is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. Come, Lord, and take away thy wrath, make good thy promise, that the Lord our God in the midst of us is mighty, he will save, he will rejoice over us with joy, he will rest in his love, he will joy over us with singing. O Lord, prepare us for the worst of evils, for death the king of terrors, that it may not come upon us as a snare: O make us to know our end, and the measure of our days, that we may know how frail we are: teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Come, Lord Jesus, and be as the roe on the tops of the mountains,

our life is hid with thee, O appear quickly, that we may quickly appear with thee in glory; thou hast given us some earnest of thy love, and the very voice of these earnest is come, come Lord Jesus, come quickly. And is it not thy promise, surely I come quickly? O honey, and sweetness itself to the soul that loves, and longs for the coming of Christ, for her perfect happiness, and consummate marriage. Amen, Even so, Come, Lord Jesus. Amen, and Amen, Eccl. iv. 1. Psal. lxxvi. 11, lx. 3, &c. lxxx. 5. Zach. xiii. 8. Jer. xxx. 6, 7. Amos ix. 9. Jer. xxxi. 20. Zeph. iii. 15, 17. Job xviii. 14. Psalm xxxix. 4. xc. 12. Rev. 22. 20.

§. *The third part of prayer, is Thanksgiving for Blessings Spiritual, and Temporal.*

WE bless God for our election, with all the golden chain of graces hanging on it.

We give thanks to God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby we are beloved for the Father's sake, and for that golden chain of graces hanging thereon, having predestinated us to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Having accepted us in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood; having given us the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace; having quickened us who were dead in trespasses and sins: Walking in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he

might shew the exceeding riches of his grace unto us,' Col. i. 3. Rom. xi. 28. Eph. i. 5, 6, 7. ii. 1, &c.

2. We bless God for his word, sacraments, sabbaths, labours of the learned, &c.

'Thou hast shewed thy word unto Jacob, thy statutes and thy judgments unto Israel; Thou hast not dealt so with all nations, and as for thy judgments they have not known them: Thou hast been pleased by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe,' by preaching at the first or second rebound, by lively voice, or printed sermons, Psalm cxlviii. 19, 20. 1 Cor. i. 21.

3. We bless God for any power over sin, Satan, or our own corruptions.

We acknowledge Lord to thy glory, that *all our strength is in thee, and in the power of thy might*, Eph. vi. 10.

4. We bless God for our creation, preservation, life, health, peace, deliverance, victories.

'We bless thee for our creation after thine own image, for our preservation, by thy loving kindness and truth, for our life once and again redeemed from destruction; for our health once and again restored; for our liberty, prosperity, peace in our walls and palaces; for our food and raiment convenient for us; for deliverance from judgments national and personal; for a little moment didst thou forsake us, but with great mercies hast thou gathered us: For all the victories over thine and thy churches enemies; well may we sing, The Lord is our strength and our song, and he is become our salvation; He is our God, and we will prepare him an habitation, our fathers God, and we will exalt him: Awake, awake, O my soul, awake, awake, utter a song: Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people; sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, and talk of

all his wondrous works ; glory in his name, let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord : Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth: O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever : Blessed be the

Lord God of Israel for ever and ever, and let all the people say Amen, praised be God: Gen. i. 27. Psal. xl. 11. ciii. 4. Jer. xxx. 17. Psalm cxxii. 7. Prov. xxx. 8. Isaiah lii. 7. Exod. xv. 2. Judges v. 12. 1 Chron. xvi. 8, 9, 10, 31, 34, 36.

C H A P. XV.

Of Reading the Scriptures.

S E C T. I.

Of the Nature of reading the Scriptures, what it is.

THE second duty in reference both to secret, private and publick ordinances, is reading the holy scriptures, which is nothing else but a kind of holy conference with God wherein we enquire after, and he reveals unto us himself and his will : when we take in hand therefore the book of scriptures, we cannot otherwise conceive of ourselves than as standing in God's presence, to hear what he will say unto us : So much the prophet seems to imply, when he expresseth his consulting with God's word, by that phrase of going into the sanctuary of God, Psalm lxxiii. 17. *i. e.* in going in unto God ; as going into the sanctuary is termed, 2 Sam. vii. 18. So by reading the word we come in unto God, we stand in the presence of God to enquire at his mouth.

§. 2. *Of fit times and seasons for reading the Scriptures.*

THERE is a season to every purpose under the sun, saith Solomon, Ec. iii. 1. The observation whereof not only adds grace to every good action, but many times facilitates the work itself we have in hand : Now the Times and Seasons most convenient to this duty of Reading

the Scriptures, are (besides the sabbath) left to christian wisdom ; only we have general commands to be frequent and diligent in meditation of the word, Josh. i. 8. Psalm cxix. 97. and the particular times may be either *uncertain and occasional*, or *constant and set*.

For the first, we may have occasions to read the scriptures, to resolve us in doubts, to comfort us in afflictions, to direct us in matter of advice, to guide us in our way, to assist us in temptations, Psa. lxxiii. 17. cxix. 50, 24, 105. Eph. vi. 17. Such or the like occasions may make us to have recourse to the word Extraordinarily.

For the second, respect must be had both to order and proportion ; for the former, *viz.* Order, godly men have accustomed to begin the day with religious exercises, as with prayer, Psal. v. 3. lv. 17. lxxxviii. 13. Now although prayer and the reading of the word be two distinct exercises, yet they mutually help one another, and consequently are fit to be joined together : And as we must thus begin the day, so it is very fit to close up the day with the same duties : The evening was David's time, Psal. lv. 17. and Isaac's time, Gen. xxiv. 63. For the latter, *viz.* Proportion of time to be allotted for this exercise, it must indifferently respect both the duty, that we read all scripture, and the person that undertakes it ; for more time is required of

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husbands, parents, magistrates, ministers, than of others; though all must set apart some time for this duty; but that I may in general commend the practice of this order and proportion to all, I shall compose a kalendar, to shew how we may read all the scriptures over in a year.

§. 3. *Of the Manner of preparation before the reading of the Scriptures.*

THere is a double preparation needful, as 1. To the undertaking. 2. To the performance of the duty, 1. For the undertaking of the work, we had need to be prepared with a firm and constant resolution before we go about it, partly because of the sluggishness of our carnal natures to holy duties, and of our uncon- stancy and unstedfastness in persisting and going through with them to the end; and partly because we know how dangerous it is to *put one's hand to the plough and look back*, Luke ix. 62. Now the grounds upon which our hearts must be settled in the firmness of such resolution, must be drawn,

1. From the sense of our own blindness and ignorance, who of our selves have not the knowledge nor understanding of a man, as Agur acknowledgeth, Prov. xxx. 3.

2. From assurance that this is the means ordained by God to help us out of ignorance: *We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts*, 2 Pet. i. 19.

3. From the delight which we may find in the use of it: This delight drew holy David to the *continual meditation of it*, Psalm cxix. 96, 97. the sweetness of the word arising out of its suitability to his sanctified nature, overcame David.

2. A man's heart (being thus confirmed, with a full purpose and settled resolution to undertake and continue constantly in

the study of the holy scriptures) must be more particularly prepared to the work itself.

1. By cleansing the heart of all *superfluity and naughtiness*, James i. 21. of all worldly thoughts and cares, of all unquiet passions of anger, fear, joy, sorrow, &c.

2. By awing the heart with due reverence of God before whom we stand, because he can find us out in all our failings, as *knowing our very thoughts afar off*, much more having *all our ways* before him, Psa. cxxxix. 2. cxix. 178. and being one who will not forgive our wilful transgressions: Such considerations will cause us to receive the word with that trembling of heart which God so much respects, Isa. lxvi. 2.

3. By stirring up in ourselves a spiritual appetite to the word, such as Job found in himself, *who esteemed the words of his mouth more than his necessary food*; and David in himself, *who opened his mouth, and panted, and longed for his commandments*, Psalm cxix. 131. which appetite ariseth both from the sense of our emptiness (for *the full soul loathes the honey-comb*, Prov. xxvi. 7.) and from the fitness of the word to supply unto us whatsoever we want and hunger after, as being the food of our souls.

4. By awaking our faith; and to this purpose we must consider, that it is the word of him that *speaketh righteousness, whose faithfulness is to all generations*; and that God hath made it his *power to salvation, mighty through him to cast down strong holds*, and hath promised that *it shall not return empty, but shall surely execute that for which it was sent*, Isaiah xlv. 19. Psalm cxix. 90. Rom. i. 16. 2 Cor. x. 5. Isaiah lv. 10, 11.

5. By softening the heart, and making it pliable; and to this purpose we must cast aside our wills and willows, which stiffens our hearts against God's counsel, and seek after the spirit of tenderness,

which is called, *The opening of the heart*, Acts xvi. 14.

6. By lifting up the heart unto God in prayer, *to open our eyes, to enlarge our hearts, to incline our hearts to his testimonies, to keep them to the end, and* (according to his promise) *to send his Spirit, and to lead us into all truth*, Pf. cxix. 18, 32, 36, 112. John xiv. 16, 30. Some short effectual prayer to this purpose, to close up our meditations in this preparation of ourselves to the reading of the word, representing unto God our dependance on him alone, to prosper us in the use of his own ordinance, seldom returns without a gracious answer.

§. 4. *Of the necessary duties in reading of the scriptures.*

THE duty now fallen upon it is good for profiting to observe these particulars:

1. That in the beginning of our reading in the Bible, or of each book in the Bible, we view and read over some analytical table, that so we may better mark the drift and scope of the holy Ghost, and that we may with singular ease and delight remember the same: to that purpose I have added such a table towards the end of this chapter which may well serve for the purposed ends.

2. *That we attend diligently to what we read*: now there is a good reason to this attention, 1. Because of the authority and wisdom of him that speaks; *A child must hear his father*, Prov. iv. 1. and a subject must attend reverently to the words of a ruler, Job xxix. 21. yet none of them is our Potter as God is, Isaiah lxiii. 4. nor made us, as he did, Psalm c. 3. nor consequently can challenge such respect from us as he may. 2. Because of the matter or subject which the scriptures handle, not only for the weight and importance of those high mysteries which are therein revealed, but for the great interest which we ourselves have in those things, as contain-

ing our evidences and directions, which *we and our children must observe, that we may do them*, John v. 39. Deut. xxix. 29.

3. That we keep still Jesus Christ in our eye, in the perusal of the scripture, as the end, scope and substance thereof: what are the whole scriptures, but as it were the spiritual swaddling-clothes of the holy child Jesus? 1. Christ is the truth and substance of all the types and shadows. 2. Christ is the substance and matter of the covenant of grace, under all administrations thereof; under the Old Testament, Christ is veiled: under the new covenant, revealed. 3. Christ is the centre and meeting-place of all the promises, *for in him all the promises of God are yea and amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. 4. Christ is the thing signified, sealed and exhibited in the sacraments of the old and new Testament. 5. Scripture-genealogies use to lead us on to the true line of Christ. 6. Scripture chronologies are to discover to us the times and seasons of Christ. 7. Scripture-laws are our school-master to bring us unto Christ, the moral by correcting, the ceremonial by directing. 8. Scripture-gospel is Christ's light whereby we know him, Christ's voice, whereby we hear and follow him; Christ's cords of love whereby we are drawn into sweet union and communion with him; yea, *it is the power of God unto salvation, unto all them that believe in Christ Jesus*, Rom. i. 16. and therefore think of Christ still as the very substance, marrow, soul and scope of the whole scriptures.

4. That we observe some special passages, where we find things represented unto us, either more weighty in themselves, or more proper to ourselves, for our particular use and occasions. I deny not but all God's testimonies are wonderful in themselves; all of them pure; all profitable to give understanding; and to cleanse our way; and to make the man of God perfect to every good work, Psalm cxix. 129, 140, 130, 9. 2 Tim. iii. 16. Yet there are

are some things in scripture more important than others, and more useful than others, for some persons, times and occasions: and to this purpose, I have in the end of this chapter composed some heads, or common places, for observation of such profitable things.

5. That we approve and assent to that we read, both because it is the truth of God, and because till our judgment approve it, we cannot believe it, nor possibly bring our hearts to yield to it true and sincere obedience: It is true, that every godly man at all times gives his assent to every truth of God revealed unto him, yet that assent is not alike firm at all times, because the evidence by which he acknowledgeth it, is not alike clear at all times; but when it shines to us clearly, when men clearly discern the glory and beauty of those heavenly mysteries, and taste of the goodness of them, they cannot but ravish readers with admiration, yea transport them with strong and heavenly affections of *love, joy, and desire*, Psa. cxix. 97, 111, 131, 162. Observe, that it happens sometimes such spiritual raptures may seize on a man, even while he is reading the scriptures; as the disciples *hearts burned within them, whilst our Saviour talked with them going to Emmaus*, Luke xxiv. 32. And if so, then the heart opens itself to close with and draw in that ravishing object, which will necessarily inforce the soul to make a pause; and these pauses rather further than hinder us in our work; for a godly spirit quickened by such sweet refreshings, receives increase of alacrity, and is thereby strengthened to go on with much greater life, to the end of this holy exercise.

§. 5. *Of duties after reading the scriptures.*

THE end of studying the scriptures is not only knowledge, but practice; wherefore after we have read any part of the scriptures, our special care must be,

1. To recount and revolve in our minds

those things we have read, and seriously to meditate on them.

2. To search out the true sense and meaning of the words, together with the scope unto which they are directed, and if our own understanding be too weak, we may do well to make use of other men's writings or conference.

3. To single out and apply what is of more special use to ourselves in such sort, as if we were specially named in any precept, reproof, promise, commination, consolation, or the like; which is the most effectual means to awaken and stir up affections, and to set on our endeavours, as manifestly appears in good Josiah his example, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 20, &c.

4. To work those things upon our hearts, till they warm our affections: this is best done;

1. By appropriating them unto our selves; for that which affects us, is that which most nearly concerns us.

2. By believing what we read as undoubtedly true; thus David believed, Psa. cxix. 138, 151, 160.

3. By loving those counsels of God which we embrace by faith, for their purity, perfection, righteousness, and especially for the usefulness and wonderful benefit of them to ourselves, in *quickenning the spirit, in giving wisdom, in converting the soul*, Psalm cxix. 63, 98, 99. xix. 7. These eminent excellencies of the word, cannot choose but make these heavenly counsels precious in our eyes, and bring the soul to delight in them exceedingly.

5. To advise about, and to resolve upon the means to bring all into practice, especially for those duties which are laid before us in reading the word, or some part of the word at such a particular time.

6. To examine our ways, how near they come up to the rule, or come short of it; that on the one side we may be encouraged in conforming our practice to the law, and withal rejoice in the grace of God,

working in us with thankfulness; and on the other side, that we may be humbled and grieved for our failings, and driven to seek unto Christ to make up our peace, and then look better to our ways for time to come, as David doth, Psalm cxix. 131, 132, 133, &c.

§. 6. *A kalendar purposed to shew how we may read over the scripture several ways once in a year.*

IN reading the scripture, we spake of a proportion of time to be allotted for this exercise; and that we may so proportion our reading with our time, that we read all the bible or scriptures over in a year, I had composed a kalendar, shewing how we might right read it over several ways.

1. By reading every day three chapters or more in the old Testament, and two or more in the New. 2. By reading three chapters a day, and some more of the Psalms. 3. By reading strictly three chapters a day, of those that edifie most. 4. By reading two chapters a-day, most of the old Testament, and all of the New. 5. By reading only one chapter a day out of such books as are principal, and a rule for the rest: but every private Christian may with a little industry find out this, or some other kalendar more beneficial to him; and therefore, (not to swell this book needlessly) I shall leave it to him; only with this note, that after all these forms, it were not unprofitable, if he read at least every morning a psalm, and every evening a chapter of those that edifie most in their order, which is now the constant use of a weak Christian in his family-duties.

§. 7. *Of heads or common places of observations for profitable things.*

I Declared before (Sect. 4.) that in reading of the scripture, it were good for our profiting to observe some special passages, where we find things represented unto

us, either more weighty in themselves, or more proper to ourselves, for our particular use and occasions; and to that purpose I shall now compose some heads or common places for observation of such profitable things: some I know herein advise these four points: 1. That every Christian following this direction, should make a little paper-book of a sheet or two, and write on the top of every leaf, the title that he would observe in his reading. 2. That he would observe such places as stare him in the face, that are so evident, that the heart cannot look off them. 3. That he set down under each title, only the book, chapter and verse, and not the words, for that would tire him in the end; only when he hath done his quarter-task, or years-talk, then he may write out the choicest things, as he thinks good. 4. That he look not at the profit of this course the first week or month, but let him consider how rich it will make him at the year's end; surely after he hath gathered them, he would not sell his collections for a great price, if it were but for the good they may do him in the evil day, when it shall come upon him: of these I shall give you the experience of a weak Christian, the unworthiest servant of Christ, in the following section and paragraphs.

§. 8. *Common places observed by one in his private reading of the scriptures.*

PLACES that in reading he found rebuke of corruption in his nature or practice.

Numb. xiv. 11. 2 Chron. xxxii. 26. Pf. cxix. 75. Isaiah lvi. 11. lvii. 17. lix. 11, etc. Jer. vi. 13. Ezek. xxxiv. 2, etc. Hosea vii. 10. Mark vii. 21, etc. Luke xii. 15. Romans vii. 23, etc. Ephes. v. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 1. Rev. ii. 5. iii. 15, 16, 17, 19.

2. Places that hold forth comforts against the burden of his daily infirmities, inward temptations and afflictions of spirit.— Gen. xv. i. Exod. xxxiv. 6 7. Psal. xviii. 6. xxiii. 4, etc. xxxiv. 18. xlii. 5, 11. Hosea

Hosea vi. 1, 2. Micah vii. 19. Luke xvii. 4. John xvii. 19. Rom. vi. 14. xvi. 20. 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Theff. iii. 3. 1 Tim. i. 15. Heb. iv. 15, 16. 1 Pet. v. 10. 1 John i. 9. ii. 1, 12. v. 18.

3. Places that establish his heart against the fear of falling away ——— 1 Kings vi. 13. Job viii. 20. Psalm xv. 5. xvi. 8. xxxiii. 24, 27, 28, 31. lxxxix. 33, etc. xciv. 14. Isa. liv. 10. Jer. xxxi. 3. xxxiii. 20, 21, 25, 26. xxxii. 39. etc. Hof. ii. 19, 20. Luke xxii. 32. John vi. 39. xiii. 1. xiv. 16. xvii. 22, 23, 26. Rom. viii. 35, 39. xi. 29. 1 Cor. xviii. 9. Eph. i. 13, 14. iv. 30. Phil. i. 6. 1 Theff. v. 23, 24. 2 Theff. iii. 3. Heb. xiii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 6. 1 John iii. 9. v. 4.

4. Places that directed him in his particular calling——Job xxxiii. 23, 24. Isa. xlix. 4, 5. l. 4. lii. 11. lviii. 1. lxii. 1, 6, 7. Jer. xv. 19. xxiii. 22. xlvi. 10. Ez. iii. 1, 18, 19, 20, 21. xxxiii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. xxxiv. 10. Mal. ii. 7. Matth. x. 16, 17, Acts xx. 20, 21, 23. 1 Cor. i. 5. xiv. 1, 12. 2 Cor. iv. 5, 6, 7. vi. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. xii. 15. Phil. ii. 3. 1 Theff. i. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17. 1 Tim. i. 4. iv. 12.

5. Promises that comfort him against outward crosses.——Exod. iv. 31. xxiii. 25. Judges xiii. 23. 2 Chron. xxv. 9. Psa. xxiii. 1, 2. xxxvii. 25. cxix. 165. Prov. i. 33. iii. 8, 10. Isaiah lviii. 8. Dan. vi. 16. Luke xxi. 18. John xvi. 33. Rom. i. 17. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. 2 Tim. ii. 12. Heb. xiii. 5, 6. 1 Peter iii. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. iv. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19. Rev. ii. 10.

6. Places that hold forth his privileges in Christ, above all the wicked in the world.——Gen. iii. 15. vii. 1, 23. xii. 3. xv. 6. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 14. xxxii. 28. Exo. ix. 4, 5, 6. Numb. xxiii. 21. xxiv. 5, 6. Deut. xxvi. 18, 19. xxxiii. 29. 1 Sam. xii. 22. 2 Chron. xv. 4. xvi. 9. Job v. 19. to 27. Psa. xxii. 7. xxxiii. 18, 19. xxxiv. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. etc. Isaiah ix. 6. xl. 31. xli. 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. liii. 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17. Jeremiah xxxiii. 8. Lam. iii. 32. Ezek. xi.

19. Daniel vi. 23. Zech. ii. 8. Mal. iv. 2. Mat. i. 21. x. 30. xi. 28. xxviii. 20. Luke xi. 13. xix. 10. xxi. 18. John i. 12, 16, 29. x. 28. iii. 16, 17. xiv. 16, 17. xvii. 17, 19, 24. Acts xiii. 39. xxvii. 34. Rom. iv. 5. viii. 30, 33. x. 4. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 19, 21. Gal. iii. 13. iv. 4, 5, 6. Eph. i. 3, 4, 6, 7. ii. 14, 16. Phil. iii. 21. Col. i. 21. iii. 4, 1 Theff. v. 23, 24. 1 Tim. i. 15. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. i. 3. ix. 12, 26. 1 John i. 7. ii. 2. iii. 1, 2, 5. Rev. i. 5, 13.

7. Places containing sweet passages which melted his heart.——Gen. xxii. 1, to 20. xxiv. 2, to 53. xxxiii. 1, to 12. xliii. 1, to 31. xlv. throughout. xlv. throughout. xlvi. 1. to 12. l. 1. to 12. Deut. v. 22. to 30. Judges vii. 9. to 23. Ruth ii. 1. to 14. iii. throughout. 1 Sam. xvii. 22, to the end. xviii. 1, to 8. xx. throughout. xxiv. 1, to 20. xxv. 14, to 36. 2 Sam. xv. 10. to the end. Isaiah lvii. 15. to 20. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19, 20. Jonah ii. 1, to 8. Mark ix. 14. to 25. John ii. 1, to 46.

8. Places that in reading the scriptures he found sensible comfort in.—Exod. xiv. 13. xix. 4, 5. xxiv. 10, 11, 17. xxxiv. 6, 7, 8. Numb. xiv. 18. Deut. v. 29. x. 15. 1 Sam. xxx. 6. 2 Sam. xii. 13. 2 Kings xx. 5. 2 Chron. ii. 12. xv. 4. xx. 21, 22, 27, 28. Job v. 11, 17, 18. 19. xxxiii. 25, 26. Prov. iii. 12. Psalm xxvii. 13, 14. xxxi. 7. xxxvii. 1, to 8, 32, 33, 34. lvii. throughout. cxix. 103. cxxxviii. 7, 8. cxxxix. 17. Isaiah xxix. 19. xxx. 18, 19. xl. i. 2, xlii. 3. xlvi. 18. xlix. 2, 13, 14, 15, 16. lii. 9. liv. 7, 8, 9, 10. lv. 7. xvii. 15, 16, 18. Jer. i. 9. xxxi. 3. 9. 20. Hosea vi. 1, 2. xi. 8. Micah vii. 18, 19. 20. Matth. v. 11, 12. x. 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. Mark ii. 17. Luke vi. 22, 23. Rom. viii. 18, 31, 32. 2 Cor. vii. 6. Eph. v. 8. Col. i. 13. iv. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 11. Heb. x. 35, 36, 37, 38. xii. 5, 6, 7, 8. James v. 20. 1 John iii. 12, 13.

9. Places hard to be understood, of which he desired and endeavoured after resolution, as (amongst the rest) all the titles of the Psalms, especially of thine Psalms, iii,

iv, v, vi, vii, viii, x, xii, xiii, xiv, xv, xvi, xvii, xviii, xix, xx, xxi, xxii, xxx, xxxiv, xxxviii, xxxix, xl, xli, xlii, xliii, xliv, xlv, xlvi, xlvii, xlviii, xlix, l, lii, liii, liii, lvii, lviii, lxi, lxxii, lxxxviii, xc, xcii, cxix, cxx, etc.

10. Other several heads hath he noted in his private little book, which only I shall set down for others imitation: as (1.) Places that hold forth experiences (or the word written in our hearts) as the best commentary. (2.) Places that hold forth divers points of religion, that a Christian may infallibly rest on, and live and die in the assurance of them. (3.) Places that justify a precise respect of the least sin. (4.) Places that shew the godly have suffered all sorts of crosses, reproaches and slanders. (5.) Choice sentences, or memorable sayings. (6.) Promises of the churches flourishing in the last times.

But above all, those which concern our own particular, I esteem most precious, and of singular use.

§. 9. *Of the use of these collections.*

THE first head was, Places that in reading, he found rebuke of corruption in his nature or practice: the use hereof is to open his eyes, and to let him see the anatomy of his corruptions, and plainly to perceive what things are in his nature, that God hath a quarrel against; so that now it is time, that as such a one is guided by the finger of God to know his corruptions, so he should go to the Spirit of God for mortification.

The second head was, Places that hold forth comforts against the burden of his daily infirmities, inward temptations, and afflictions of spirit: The use hereof is, when such a particular temptation comes, to eye the promises, and to betake the soul unto the Lord for succour promised: this is the voice of faith, 'Be of good courage, here is a word of comfort, and there is help enough in heaven; the devil may thrust sore at thee, but he shall not get the victory, for God is with thee; no question but for these sins the Lord bestows on thee a pardon of course, only be vigilant

and watchful at all times, in all places, upon all occasions, against all sins, with all the degrees thereof, especially against sins of constitution, calling, company, corrupt education: indeed, this is the property of faith, both to rest on the promises, and to keep waking, for nothing is more wisely fearful than faith, nor more cautelous and circumspect than holy fear.

The third head was, Places that establish his heart against the fear of falling away: the use hereof is, in case of any such doubt, to learn and think upon these precious places, that we may be settled in believing our perseverance. This will encourage and quicken us in our Christian course, stablish us in well-doing, and hearten us against the greatest difficulties: their objection, who say, The doctrine of assurance of not falling away, doth set open a door to all licentiousness, is most false; for the more assurance of salvation in a man's soul, the more fear and trembling in a man's course; he who is best assured, hath most power of God's Spirit, and the stronger the Spirit of God is within, the more holiness and fruits of grace are without.

The fourth head was, Places that directed him in his particular calling: the use hereof, is to consider the several texts, as the crowing of cocks, which ring in his ears: When wilt thou arise? why tarriest thou so long? why stirrest thou so slowly? See how the sun rejoiceth as a giant to run his race, why then dost not thou sharpen thyself to the work which God hath laid on thee? it may be thou meetest with many troubles, disgraces, oppositions; but what then? is not this God's command? is not this a service to the Lord Jesus? doth not the Lord assist? and is not he pay-master sufficient? it may be thy labour is in vain, thy work is without fruit; and what then? is not thy labour thy duty? and good success God's work, what hast thou to do with thoughts about the blessing and success of thy labours? look thou to thy duty,

view the texts well, and obey them, and leave the blessing of thy endeavours to the good will and pleasure of God : lay aside all care of the event, and roll thy burthen upon the Lord, who will sustain thee : Thus these texts cry upon him to submit to God's direction, and to depend therein upon his help and assistance. This is the double duty we all owe, 1. To ask counsel at the word, and to follow the determination of it ; for a true heart is ever obediential, subjecting itself to the will of God, as the rule of holiness, acknowledging his sovereignty, subscribing to his wisdom as most absolute, and to his ways as most true, just, and merciful. 2. To put over all our business into God's hands, in a manner out of our own, trusting in him for ability to work, and for good success to come by them.

The fifth head, is, Promises that comforted him against outward crosses : the use hereof, is, to live by faith in afflictions ; for then is faith in these promises the only stay and support of the heart : *I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living : this is my comfort in mine affliction, for thy word hath quickened me,* Psalm xxvii. 13. cxix. 49, 50. In daily and lighter trials, a man of a mild and patient temper, may hold up the head ; but when one deep calleth unto another, and the waves flow over our head, when nature yieldeth, and the heart fainteth, then to stand fast, and be of good courage, is the only property of faith, which is grounded upon the rich mercy of God made over to us in these precious promises. I cannot deny, but distrust many times wrings from a christian such voices as these, Were it any thing but this, I could bear it ; but now if in conscience of his impotency, he will seek to Christ to make him able, and he will fasten himself upon him by a true and lively faith in these promises, he may find strength enough through his might, where-

by to bear that comfortably, which otherwise he may find most intolerable. Faith drives a man out of himself, as not able to bear the least cross as he ought, and thro' the power of God, it enableth him to bear that best with which God is pleased to try him.

The sixth head, is, Places that hold forth his privilege in Christ, above all the wicked in the world : the use hereof is, 1. To believe and to rejoice in them : All these privileges are mine, will a soul say, the Lord hath given them for my portion, how then should I glory in God, triumph over death, sin, and hell, through my Saviour ? 2. To live unto him who hath bestowed them on the soul : And now, O Israel, (after all his kindness) what doth the Lord require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, and to love him and serve him with all thy heart, and to keep his commandments ? Deut. x. 12, 13. Oh (saith the soul) how should I now think much of Christ ? and speak much of Christ ? and converse much with Christ ? and do much for Christ ? and suffer much for the Lord Jesus Christ ? and if I cannot do much, how should I desire and will to do much, which is accepted as if I did it ? how should I continually go to him, to enable me to do more, than of myself I can do ? nay, how should I mourn and lament for what I have not done, either through want of ability or will ? this is the use of such glorious privileges, to believe in Christ, and to live unto Christ, 2 Cor. viii. 12.

The seventh head, was, Places containing passages that even melted his heart : the use hereof, is to call such passages to remembrance in times of mourning, only be sure that our affections prove spiritual, and not merely natural : I make no question but David's longing after God, Psalm lxii. 1, 2. his panting after the word, Psalm cxix. 140. his delight in the sweetness of it, Psalm cxix. 103. his trembling at God's presence, Psalm cxix. 120. his grief for

the breach of his law, Psalm cxix. 136. were spiritual affections; for they were raised by spiritual objects, so it is good for us to see to our affections that they be raised by spiritual objects, and then they prove singularly useful; it may be indeed that when a christian persecuteth over again the same texts, he shall not have the like operation as before: all the goldly shall find by their own experience, that those instructions, reproofs and consolations, which at some times awaken, wound and revive their spirits, at another time move them nothing at all; sometimes the spiritual sense is numbed, and they *hear only by the hearing of the ear*, Job xlii. 5. but at other times, when those senses are awakened, they taste, and see, and feel the same, and consequently are affected, as Job was in that place, chap. xlii. 5. so if at any time we find these meltings stirred in us by a spiritual object, and that they are answerable to God's dealings with us, then we can rejoice or mourn seasonably, when God calls us to either, Eccles. vii. 14. I take this to be an holy and happy use made of those places.

Now the eighth head, was, Places, that in reading, he found sensible comfort and ravishing of heart in: The use hereof is not only for present, but while he lives in any distress, for then he may have recourse to these places, as to so many wells of joy; and if, in this grief, one, or two, or ten will not comfort him, yet it may please God that some of them will have spirit and life in them; besides, it cannot but marvellously establish his faith, when he remembers in how many distinct places of Scripture the Lord was pleased to comfort his soul.

The ninth head, is, Places hard to be understood, of which he desired and endeavoured after resolution: the use hereof is specified in the very title itself; and the resolution of the hard texts cited (viz. those titles of several Psalms) was by industry found out thus.

Psalm iii. The title is, *A Psalm of David,*

when he fled from Absalom his son.

In which three things are contained, 1. The author thereof, David king of Israel, who composed it. 2. The kind of the Psalm; which word [Psalm] is a word generally applicable to all those spiritual hymns, without particular application to the ceremonies of persons, time, or manner of singing, as many others are: It was usually delivered to the whole quire, on the sabbaths and festival days, to be sung by voice, and to be fitted to the instruments used to be played upon in the temple. 3. The expression of the time, and occasion of the composing thereof; *i. e.* when he fled from Absalom: the story is set down, 2 Sam. xv. Many were the troubles wherewith this good king was afflicted, especially after his sin in the matter of Uriah, but never any so grievous, as to be driven out of his own kingdom by his own son, and his subjects to fall away from him, and to follow his enemy, that fought his life and throne.

Hereupon he makes his sorrowful complaint to God in this Psalm, and appoints it to be sung in the church for his own comfort, and instruction to himself and the whole church, in such times of calamities.

And to this his pathological moan, he joins this word *Selah*, as a note of the attention of the mind, and stop or pause in the song.

For understanding the meaning and use of the word *Selah*, note, that *Selah* is an Hebrew word, and signifies as much as *Amen*, for ever, *semper, in sempiternum, in secula &c. eis ton aiona, in aeternum.*

Hierom observes, that the Jews used one of these three words at the conclusion of their writings or sentences, or, in the end of their prayers, *Amen*, *Selah*, or *Salem*, which signifies, peace: and 'tis noted to be a word to express an affirmation, or giving assent to that which is prayed, or said, as *Amen* is, or else it imports a wish, vow or desire that the thing spoken be certain or may be for ever, *i. e.* that it may

may be performed: and it is to be noted, that it is usually placed, when some special thing, worthy attention or observation, is spoken or delivered, or some desire to be performed, whether it be in the end, or in any sentence of the Psalm, prayer, &c. that by a little stop or pause of the breath, the matter, worth or excellency of the thing may better be considered: and you shall not find it in any part of the Scripture, saving in the Psalms, and the prayer of the prophet Habakkuk, ch. iii. 3. whereupon it is observed by Drusus and others, to be a word of note, used in those ditties and musick, to make a stop or stay, that the matter uttered may be better minded of the hearers. either to affirm it by their assent, or to desire the performance of what is sung by that intermission, which seems to be most probable, because the Greek translators of the Hebrew Bible express the word *Seich*, by the Greek word *Diastima*, which signifies a stop or intermission, and so comes to be used in the Psalmody, and is *rithmi commutatio*, a change of the note, or, *vicissitudo canendi*, or, as some say, *alterius sensus exordium*.

Psalm iv. *To the chief musician on Neginoth, a Psalm of David.*

The meaning is this, The kingly prophet David composed this Psalm, and delivered it to be sung and played in the congregation to him that was the chief overseer, master, and set over the rest of that musick or consort, upon the instrument called, *Neginoth*, which sounded by playing on with the hand: to understand this the better, we may observe, that some instruments used in the Jewish temple were *pneumatica*, windy, such as sounded by breath, and motion of the fingers, as, organs that are blown by bellows, and all hollow instruments, as, trumpets, rams-horns, cornets, &c. such as the priests and Levites used in the holy ordinances, from the Hebrew word *Nechiloth*, which signifies, *bored through or hollow*.

Others were *pulsatilia*, such as were played upon with the fingers only, either by a quill, or otherwise; as the harp, dulcimer, &c. and had strings and of this sort was the instrument in the title of this psalm, called *Neginoth*; now to every one of these several kinds of instruments, there was one who excelled therein, appointed overseer, or chief of the consort, and to direct those under him in the song, as there was of such as were the fingers also for the song: hence it is that the psalm being committed to be sung to the master of that order, 'tis said, *To the chief musician, or, to him that excelleth: a psalm of David.*

Psalm v. *To the chief musician upon Nechiloth, a psalm of David.*

The title of this psalm may be understood by that which is said in the title of the fourth psalm, differing in nothing but in the name of the instrument, which were one of those that were hollow, and sounded by breath, as the Hebrew word shews, as afore, &c. Some of the Hebrew writers say, it was a musical instrument, whose sound was like the buzzing of bees, or, in regard of the multitude of them which are like an army for number, and for that the master of that quire was appointed to pray for all Israel, as for all the armies of the Israelites against the armies of their enemies that came against them in multitude and noise, like a swarm of bees; thereupon he gives the title, *Super exercitus psalmus Davidis*, &c. but improperly, the title having no conformity with the substance of the psalm, nor is it approved by our interpreters, &c. but the first followed.

Psalm vi. *To the chief musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, a psalm of David.*

The meaning of this title may be understood by that which is said afore in the fourth psalm, saving that here is added, *upon Sheminith*; that is, it was played with the eighth tune, note, or strain, and sung with a very clear and high voice; we may bet-

ter understand it by what is said, 1 Chr. xv. 21. *Mattithia, Eliphaleb, and others were set over the base and tenor*, which is the *Sheminith*, or the eighth, or *Diapfan*, as musicians call it so, the meaning is; this psalm was to be ordered by the chief musician of that consort, to be sung and played upon the instrument *Neginoth*, with the highest and utmost strain of sound and voice, or instrument of ten strings.

Psalm vii. *Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.*

This was a psalm of David, sung according to an ordinary song, the beginning whereof was *Shiggaion*, for 'tis usual with us also to make songs to be sung according to the tune of some others that were made before.

Tremelius and some others, from the Hebrew word, which signifies *errare*, &c. titles it, *Ode erratica, a wandering sonnet*, because it is mixt, and consists of divers forms and distinctions of voice and sound, in playing artificially joined to complete the music, as we see resembled in prick song.

And where it is said, *Concerning the words of Cush*, it shews the occasion of the psalm, namely, That when David was most unjustly slandered by his enemies, and especially by Cush, etc. he makes his complaint to God in this psalm, desiring him to revenge his innocence, etc. and to be delivered from the persecution of Saul and his flatterers, such as this Cush was; [*Words*] i. e. *Accusations*, etc. Who this Cush was, is doubtful. Hierom affirms it to be Saul, and gives his reasons for it: others, which I think is more probable, think it to be some courtier of Ethiopia, whom Saul entertained in his court, and was his special favourite, as if he had been of his family or stock; for Cush is the name of, and taken for Ethiopia; this man, for hatred against David, and flattery towards Saul, falsely accused him to Saul, and practised all the mischief he could against him.

Psalm viii. *To the chief musician upon Gittith, a psalm of David.*

The title of this psalm is diversly given, some thus, *To the chief Musician, pro particularibus, for wine-presses*; as if it was a prayer for fruitfulness of that fruit. Others, that it was composed by David in the city of Gath, when he was banished: others, that that kind of instrument was invented and used there: that which is most probable and agreeable with the scripture, is, That Gittith was an instrument which Jeduthun and his posterity, being chief of the third class, or order of musicians, used to play upon, the custody whereof was committed to Obed-Edom the Gittite, and his family, that was of the posterity of Jeduthun; who for himself and his brethren, for his time, ministered and used them in the holy service, 1 Chron. xvi. 37, 38.

Psalm ix. *To the chief musician on Muth-Labben, a psalm of David.*

Muth-Labben was the beginning of a tune, after which this psalm was to be sung by the quire, which contains a thanksgiving for his victory, and for the death of Goliath, the champion of the Philistines against Israel; therefore some read the title thus, *Magistro Symphoniae de morte illius bellatoris, i. e. Goliath*, etc. which typically is applied to Christ, as a song of joy of the church and saints of God, for Christ's triumphant victory over the tyranny of Satan, and his kingdom of sin, and death: some divide the words, and make *Muth labben* two distinct words, and make the sense to be this, *Victori, super mortem filii, Psalmus David*, as if David had made it for the death of his son, as Selden; which sense Austin millikes, and yields his reasons for the former, arguing from the substance of the psalm, in that he mourned, and rejoiced not for his son's death, therefore the first sense is best.

Psalm xvi. The title is, *Michtam of David, i. e. A golden or excellent psalm.*

The meaning is, it is a psalm made by Da-

David, to be sung after a certain tune, named Michtam, well known among the Jews, which for the excellency, is compared to gold, the beginning of which tune was Michtam; or else it is taken for a musical instrument of special esteem amongst them.

Pſalm xxii. *To the chief muſician on Aijeleth Shabar; i. e. The hind of the morning.*

Some take *Aijeleth Shabar*, to be the name of ſome common ſong, or to be the beginning of ſome ordinary tune, according to which this pſalm was ſung; that's the Geneva note, which may be ſo: but Tremellius, Lyria, and divers, take it to be otherwiſe, and better as I think, who interpret thoſe words, in, or at the dawning of the day, as you would ſay, between break of the day and ſun-riſing; becauſe, at that time, the comfortable light or ſhine of the day begins to break forth.

The meaning of the title being this, David made this pſalm, and appointed it to be ſung in the church by the prieſts and Levites every morning, ſo ſoon as the day brake out; at which time it was by the law and cuſtom their duty to exerciſe their miniſtry in the quire, and to ſing pſalms, 1 Chron. ix. 33. which ſervice the Lord would have to be done by the church, that their faith and expectation of Chriſt might daily be renewed and had in memory; the prophecy of whoſe kingdom and ſufferings are repreſented in this pſalm, looking (as the day ſprings from on high) that Chriſt ſhould viſit them.

Pſalm xxx. Title, *A pſalm or ſong of David, at the dedication of the houſe of David, which he compoſed to be ſung at the dedication of his houſe.*

Which title ſheweth the occaſion of this ſong, and time when it was uſed, which was at ſuch a time as he had built and finiſhed his houſe of cedar upon mount Zion. which many good authors think probable, and follow.

Or elſe, when he was returned to his houſe again in ſafety, after Abſalom in his rebellion had profaned it, and deſiled it by his inceſtuous wickedneſs with his father's concubines; and ſo to purge it from all uncleanneſs, he dedicates it to the Lord, praying him to ſanctifie and make it holy again, that it might be bleſſed and acceptable to himſelf, 2 Sam. xvi. 22. which is the opinion of learned Tremellius, and the matter of the pſalm ſerves to imply as much; for it was a cuſtom preſcribed by the law, Deut. xx. 5. that whoſoever had built a new houſe, he ſhould dedicate it unto the Lord, ſever it from wickedneſs and ſinful abuſe, or (as you would ſay) make God the landlord thereof.

And this dedication imports three things. (1.) That the builder ſhould devote it unto God, to teſtify that he would uſe it to holineſs, and not to profane or ſinful uſes. (2.) To teſtify his thankfulneſs for the work finiſhed. (3.) To offer prayers and ſacrifices, that God might continue and confer his bleſſings upon them in it.

Pſalm xxxiv. *A pſalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, and he departed.*

The title ſhews the occaſion of the pſalm, rather than the ceremony thereof: the ſtory is ſet down, 1 Sam. xxi. 13. the ſum is, David flying from Saul to Achish, king of Gath, who here is called Abimelech, for his ſafety, but being diſcovered by thoſe about the king, and thereby in ſome danger, he changed his behaviour, *mutavit geſtum ſum*, ſome *vultum*, meaning that out of policy, to free himſelf, he feigned a diſtemper, as if he had been mad before Abimelech, who after ſent him away, and ſo he eſcaped the danger he feared, and thereupon makes this pſalm of thankſgiving for his deliverance: and it is to be noted, touching the name of the king, that here he is called Abimelech, which was a common name to all the kings of that country, as Pharaon was to the Egyptians, Ceſar

far to the Romans; and in Samuel he is called Achish king of Gath, which was his more proper name.

Psalm xxxviii. Title, *A psalm of David to bring to remembrance.*

A psalm which David made to be sung by the quire upon the Sabbath, after the Lord had afflicted him with sickness, and grievous chastisements, to put himself (and others of God's children in like case) in remembrance of his sin, which caused them; (which some think was the matter of Uriah) and to admonish him of God's goodness, who had delivered him from those punishments, and pardoned his sin.

Some apply this to the agonies of Christ; and his powerful victory over sin, death, &c.

Psalm xxxix. Title, *To the chief musician, even to Jeduthun, a psalm of David, [Magistro Symphoniae Jeduthun.]*

This psalm was composed by David, and appointed to be sung and played on instruments to *Jeduthun, even to Jeduthun*, i. e. To that excellent musician, who for the excellency of his skill, was the chief of his order, and father to those of his stock, which prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and praise to the Lord, as 1 Chron. xxv. 3.

Psalm xlii. Title, *To the chief musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah.*

A psalm committed to the sons, i. e. posterity of Korah, of whom it seems Heman was chief, for the third class, or order of these musicians, to whom the holy service belonged, 1 Chron. xxv. 5. All these were under the hand of the father, viz. Heman, who sung in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries and harps, &c. that it might not only be kept, but sung by them in the tune beginning with the word *Maschil*, that both the singers and hearers might be instructed in the matter thereof, according to the signification of the word.

Some think the psalm was made by the sons of Korah, after his rebellion against Moses; to whom, after their repentance,

&c. God gave the spirit of prophecy, whereby they made divers psalms, whereof this was one, and therein foretold things to come of Christ, &c. which conceit Augustine mislikes, neither doth it agree with the matter of the psalm; besides, the Hebrew letter *Lamech*, being prefixed to note the dative case, it seems it was made by David, for them to act by their musick, and not of them; and that David in his banishment, to shew his grief and zeal for the house and temple, and to quicken his faith and confidence in God for his comfort, made this psalm for his own and the churches instruction in the like calamity, and delivered it to Heman and his sons, to be used in the song.

Psalm xlv. Title, *To the chief musician, Sheshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, a song of loves.*

Sheshannim, was an instrument amongst the Jews, which had six strings, according to the lily that hath six leaves or stems, thereby called *Hexachorda*, upon which instrument this psalm was delivered by David to be sung to, and played to by Korah and his posterity; it begins with the word *Maschil* (as afore) i. e. *To give instruction to God's people touching the spiritual marriage and love between Christ and his church*, whereof Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter was a figure and type; and likewise to shew the perfect love that ought to be between the husband and wife; hence called, *A song of loves*, not unlike to Solomon's Canticles: and some put this difference between a song and a psalm, that, where no instrument, but the voice only is; this, the contrary: the song is, when the instrument begins, and the voice follows; a psalm, when the voice or ditty begins, and the instrument follows.

Psalm xlvi. Title, *To him that excelleth upon Alamoth, or the chief musician, for the sons of Korah, upon Alamoth.*

Some understand this *Alamoth*, to be the tune of a song; I take it otherwise, after the best expositions, to be meant of an instrument,

strument, not a tune, the meaning being thus much, a psalm committed by David to be sung, and to him that was chief of the sons of Korah, to be played upon the instrument called *Alamoth*; for, 1 Chron. xv. 10. it is expressly said, that Zachariah played with psalteries upon *Alamoth*, and then they played first upon that instrument, and so then sung the psalm or ditty.

Psalm l. Title, *A Psalm of Asaph*.

Some think it is so called, for that Asaph was the author of it, having the gift of prophecy, which is but a weak reason, because all the rest were indeed endued with a prophetic spirit as well as he. Augustine and other learned divines, take it to be so called, not for that Asaph made it, but because it was committed to him and his posterity to be the singers thereof, 1 Chron. xxv. 2.

Psalm liii. Title, *To the chief Musician upon Mahalath Maschil*.

Hierom thinks Mahalath to signify a tune of the whole quire or company of singers, and that David committed it to be sung by the whole company of Levites, &c. But others better take it to be an instrument, such as was made to sound by breath and blowing, by reason of the hollowness thereof; the rest is expounded before.

Psalm lvi. Title, *To the chief Musician upon Jonah, Elem Rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath*.

The words of this title in the original, have a double signification. and may be interpreted either metaphorically, a *dumb dove*, for so Jonah signifieth; *in a far or strange country*; so Jerom: or more properly, *for a soul-suffering violence in a far country*; for howsoever usually the first word is interpreted, *Columba*, a dove, yet it is taken also in the other sense properly, and in its natural signification for *soul-suffering violence*; in both which senses David applyeth this title to himself in his great distress: For David by a metaphor, com-

pare himself to dumb doves in a far country; because when he was driven out of Judea, his own country, by Saul that fought his life, and from the worship of God, and forced to flee to Gath amongst the Philistines, yet with patience, meekness and silence, escaping, he neither sought revenge, though it was in his power, nor shewed any impatience, but betook himself in silence unto God, as if he had been dumb, and mourning like a Dove; and we may apply this Psalm to Christ, of whom he was a type.

Or, which is better approved by Junius, he referreth it (which sense the words likewise bear) to the soul-suffering violence, enclosed by a band or multitude of Philistines, enemies both to him and his God. Some read the words, *To the master of the harmony*, which is all one in sense, as, *To him that excelleth, or chief musician, Michtam of David*; i. e. The excellency of this psalm is as precious as gold.

Psalm lvii. Title, *To the chief musician, Altschith Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave, or into the cave*.

The general notes on this title intimate, that the words are either the beginning of the song, *Destroy not*, or else words uttered by David in his extremity, staying and bridling his passion, &c. *Michtam of David*; as if he should say, This was the golden or excellent sonnet which David composed and delivered to the Levites to be sung, and after the tune of the psalm beginning with *Altschith*, when he was in some wonderful fear and danger of death in the cave of *Adullam* or *En-gedi*, whither he was driven by Saul, and so compassed about by his guard, that he saw nothing but death in the cave, or destruction if he came out, and thereupon prayeth, that he would not *Destroy*, i. e. *suffer him to be destroyed*, which was the occasion of this: See the story, 1 Sam. xxii. xxiv.

Psalm lx. Title, *To the chief Musician upon*

upon *Shushan-Eduth*, *Michtam* of *David*, to teach when he strove with *Aram Nabaraim*, and *Aram Zobah*, when *Joab* returned and smote of *Edom* in the valley of *Salt*, twelve thousand.

Shushan-Eduth is either the name of some instrument to be played upon in singing this psalm, or the beginning of some song so called according to the tune where-with *David* would have this psalm sung; or *Michtam*, i. e. an excellent song which may be sung either upon the instrument or tune *Shushan-Eduth*, or that of *Michtam*.

Some titles have it *magistro symphonie in hexachorda*, and then it signifies an instrument of strings, upon which *David* would have this Psalm played, to testify unto the whole church his faith, and the benefit of his victory given him by God, against the *Aramites* of *Mesopotamia*, and the other *Aramites* that inhabited *Zobah*, for which cause the word, *in testimonium*, is put in that title; for further explication of the words declaring the time and occasion of the making this, see the story, 2 Sam. viii. and 1 Chron. xviii.

Psalm lxxii. Title, *A Psalm for Solomon*, or of *Solomon*.

Not that *Solomon* made it, or was the writer thereof, but that it concerned him, or was composed on his behalf by his father *David*, when being ready to die he commends his son *Solomon*, created king, to God, &c.

Psalm lxxxviii. Title, *A Psalm or song for the sons of Korah*, to the chief musician upon *Mahalach-Leannoth*, *Maschil* of *Heman the Ezrahite*.

Heman and *Ethan* were brothers, endowed with an excellent spirit of prophecy and wisdom, wherein they were compared with *Solomon*, 1 Kings iv. 31. *Heman* was the Author that composed and made this Psalm, and *Ethan* the next Psalm, and committed them to be sung and played to the sons of *Korah*, to the chief of that company, upon *Mahalach Leannoth*, which

was the beginning of a song, after which he would have the Psalm sung, as some think, or else some instrument to which he would have the tune of it played and sung; and for the excellency of the matter contained therein, would have them preserved for a form of complaint unto the church, in any private or singular distress (as in this Psalm) or in the time of affliction, or in persecution of church or common-wealth, as in the next.

And it is to be noted, that some skilful in the holy tongue, affirm the Hebrew word *Mahalach* to be of divers significations; signifying both a musical instrument, or a quire and company of musicians, or infirmity; according to every of which acceptations it may be taken in this place, and applied to the instrument so called, to be sung by the whole company of the *Levites*, as well by voice as playing, in times of affliction of that people or others:

Psalm xc. Title, *A prayer of Moses the man of God*, i. e. *A Psalm of prayer made by Moses*.

It is thought this Psalm or prayer was made by *Moses* for himself and the people, at such time as the spies came back from viewing the land of *Canaan*, murmuring and bringing an ill report thereof, for which the Lord threatened that they should not enter into the land of promise.

Psalm xcii. Title, *A Psalm or song for the sabbath day*.

This Psalm was made to be sung and used in the service of God in the assembly, upon the sabbath day, when the people met for the publick exercises of the church.

Some Hebrew writers say, it was made by *Moses*, in celebration of the memory of the creation; there is no Author thereof expressed in the title.

This Psalm for the sabbath, and cxiii, cxiv, cxv, cxvi, cxvii, Psalms, which the Jews call their *Hallelujah*, or Praises of God, were sung at the passover, and are the psalms or hymns which are mentioned

in the gospel, which were sung during the celebration.

Psalm cxix.

In this cxix Psalm, we find no less than ten several names or appellations, whereby David expresseth God's revealed will; sometimes he calls it God's Law, sometimes his Way, sometimes his Word, sometimes his Precepts, sometimes his Commandments, sometimes his Judgments, sometimes his Statutes, sometimes his Promises, sometimes his Righteousness, sometimes his Testimonies; but above all, notable it is, that there is not one verse (excepting one, viz. 122.) in this long Psalm, containing according to the Hebrew alphabet, two and twenty consonaries, where we may not find one or more of these ten words or names; hence we may gather, if David were so exact throughout the Psalm, that in every division, according to the letters 22. and in every subdivision, every verse beginning with the self-same letter, he still makes mention of some one or more of these, so many appellations: O then, how were his affections inkindled, how was his love inflamed towards God's holy word!

Psalm cxx. The Title, *A song of degrees.*

The title of this Psalm hath more relation to the ceremony and manner of singing, than to the matter and contents of the Psalm, and I do not find so many different opinions touching the reason of the title in any other, as in this.

Some suppose this and the 14. others next following to be so called, for that they were sung in some high and eminent place: some refer it to the extension or lifting up of the voice in singing, or rising of the tune, that they might be better heard of the people; so Calvin: some, that they were sung by the priests and Levites, after the form and melody of some known and esteemed song, beginning with this title: some latter expositors conceive nothing to be meant hereby, but the excellency of the psalms above the rest, because

those places are accounted chiefest, whereunto we do ascend by Degrees; therefore the word is used in the plural number [Degrees] as being choice epigrams, as one would say, Most excellent sonnets; because the Hebrews use to express the superlative degree or excellency of a thing, by substantives of the plural number, as here. *A song of degrees*, i. e. *an excellent song*; so the Canticles of Solomon, called *A Song of songs*, i. e. *excellent*; so the *LORD* is called, *the God of gods*, Deut. x. 18. *Lord of lords*, Revel. xix. 16. i. e. without all comparison, above all other Gods or Lords: Daniel called him, *A man of desires*, chap. ix. 23. i. e. to be esteemed or desired above others; in this sense Junius takes it: others think they were composed for psalms of thanksgiving, at the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon; and in that Jerusalem was situated amongst hills, whencesoever they came, they must rise or ascend to come at it, as they do that climb up an hill; these songs therefore were appointed to be sung at every ascent and cleft, as the places they went up did arise; and for this cause called *Psalms of degrees.*

Carulus Siggonius de rep. Hebræorum (whose judgment is more to be approved, as more agreeable to the truth) understands them to be so called, for that they were sung by the priests and Levites, upon the several stairs that went out of the great court or porch where the people were, into the higher or inner part of the temple, whither none but the priests might come; and in Nehemiah ix. 4. mention is made *of the stairs whereon the Levites stood in the solemn feasts, crying unto God, etc.*

For Solomon in building the temple of Jerusalem, made certain terraces, stairs or steps rising one above another, 2 Chr. ix. 11. by which the priests and Levites went up from that outward and great open court or room adjoining to the temple, 2 Chr. iv. 9. where the people prayed, brought and attended the sacrifice, called, John x. 29. *S-*

Lemon's porch, or the court of the people, because it was open to all the people, into an higher room or place in the temple, called, *The inner court*, or *Lord's house*, 2 Chro. xxiv. 21. or *Atrium Sacerdotale*, because none but the priests must enter thither: now upon every feast-day, the Levites, or they of them appointed for the song, sung these 15 Psalms, upon each stair one, being in number 15, as they went up into that court of the temple, making a pause upon each stair, from whence they had the title of *Psalms of degrees*.

This ceremony was used then as an outward means of preparation to the worshipping of God, to admonish all people to do it with cheerful hearts renewed and lifted up to him by faith, from whence Cyprian observes, that in the church-liturgy of his time, the deacon called upon the people to lift up their hearts unto God, using this speech, *Sursum corda*.

Observation.

It may be observed, that in titles many things seem strange, and hard unto us, because we know not, nor do the latter Jews of these times themselves know, the particular instrument, form of singing, or the tunes used *in specie*, whether they be the same that we use in these days; or some resemblance of ours, in respect of the playing by the hand, or by breath; as *decemborda*, an instrument of ten strings, is a resemblance of the lute we use, &c. Cymbals, of our cornets, &c. otherwise we know no more of theirs, than our songs, tunes or instruments are known to

Genesis, Exod. Levit. Numb. and Deuteron.

Wherein is, 1. The object of the Law, to whom it was delivered, viz. To the church, in its original, in Genesis.

2. The promulgation of the Law, which was delivered either jointly, as the Law ecclesiastical and civil, in Exodus: or severally, as the Law ecclesiastical and civil, in Leviticus; and the Law political, in Numbers.

other strange nations and tongues, to whom we and our language is unknown and unheard of.

Again, where in some titles it is said *to be sung after such a tune*, is no more but as in our Psalms it is said, *This is to be sung after or according to such a Psalm*, because neither their nor our psalms have for every several psalm a several tune, but the tune of one is and may be referred to another.

Thus much of such hard places in the psalms, as the weak Christian spoken of, desired and endeavoured after resolution in: for other difficult places of scripture, because they would too much enlarge this book, I purposely omit them.

§. 10. *Of the analysis of the whole Bible, and especially (as in the first place) of the Old Testament.*

IN reading of the scripture (Section 4.) we spake of an analytical table, that so we might the better mark the drift and scope of the holy Ghost, and that we might with singular ease and delight remember the same: To this purpose I have annexed this analysis, 1. Of the whole Bible. 2. Of the several parts of it.

The whole is divided into two Testaments, the Old and the New.

1. The old Testament Christ divides into (1.) the Law, and (2.) the Prophets.

I. The law which is in the pentateuch or Five Books of Moses, comprehended in this verse,

3. The repetition of the Law, after once delivered, in Deuteronomy.

II. The prophets; which are

(1.) Historical, declaring time past, as Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.

(2.) Dogmatical, instructing for faith and life pre-

present, as Job, David, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles.

(3.) Prophetical, foretelling things to come, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezzeiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, Malachi.

As for Esdra, Tobit, Judith, and the rest of those books commonly called Apocryphal, tho' they be not of divine inspiration, yet they may and ought to be read by all Christians, as containing a variety of good directions, and giving great light into some places of the Bible, by letting us know the state of religion in those times.

S E C T. XI.

§. 1. *Of the Pentateuch or Books of the Law.*

GENESIS treats of the church, to whom the law was to be delivered.

Genesis contains I. The creation of the church; and therein

1. Of the great world in which it was to live, chapter 1.

2. Of the lesser world, man, of which it was to be his happiness, ch. 2. his misery, ch. 3.

II. The constitution of the church, which must be considered as it was in two worlds :

1. The old world before the flood; wherein consider the propagation of sin, and punishment, chap. 4. the conservation of the church, chap. 5. the condemnation of the wicked world foretold, ch. 6. executed, ch. 7.

2. The new world after the flood, in the ages of four men,

1. Noah; in whom consider his deliverance from the deluge, cha. 8. his blessing from God, ch. 9. his posterity, as united, ch. 10. as dispersed, out of which God chose his church, ch. 11.

2. Abraham; in whom consider his vocation in the former part of chapter 12. His peregrination (1.) Into Egypt, in the latter part of ch. 12. (2.) Into-Canaan, ch. 13. His dealings or actions 1. With Lot. ch. 14. 2. With God, who promised him issue, c. 15. Gave him a child, c. 16. and made his covenant with him: Of which covenant consider, 1. The form, ch. 17. 2. The fruit, 1. On God's part, in the communication of his counsels and secrets, ch. 18. his benefits, in de-

livering Lot, ch. 19. Succouring Abraham, c. 20. Giving him Isaac, chap. 21. 2. On Abraham's part, who is commended for his obedience and faith, in offering up Isaac, chap. 22. for his love and justice in burying Sarah, ch. 23. for his providence and piety in marrying Isaac, chap. 24.

3. Isaac; in whom consider his issue or kindred, ch. 25. His travels and troubles, chap. 26. His prophecies concerning the state of the church in his two sons, ch. 27.

4. Jacob; in whom consider his peregrination, 1. Into Mesopotamia, where note his journey thither, ch. 28. His arrival and marriage, chap. 29. His riches and children, ch. 30. 2. Into Canaan, where note his journey thither, and arrival there, c. 31. His congress with Esau, c. 32. 33. His progress with grief in Dinah's rape, ch. 34. Rachel's death, ch. 35, 36. Joseph's selling, ch. 37. Judah's incest, ch. 38. 3. Into Egypt, whither went (1.) His sons Joseph, in whom his Affliction, ch. 39, 40. Dignity and preferment, c. 41. The other brethren, ch. 42, 43, 44. (2.) Himself; wherein note his sending for by Joseph, chap. 45. Travelling thither, chap. 46. Abode there; where his conferring, ch. 47. Blessing, ch. 48. Prophecying, ch. 49. Dying, ch. 50.

§. 2. *EXO DUS treats of the lawgiving to the church generally Ecclesiastical and Political together.*

Exodus contains, I. The deliverance of the people to whom the law was to be given, ch. 1.

1. The occasion of it, The tyranny of the Egyptians.

2. Instrument by whom effected (Moses) of whose Birth, chap. 2. Calling, chap 3. Assistant, Aaron, ch. 4. Sayings to the King of Egypt, ch. 5, 6. Signs which he wrought in Egypt confirming his calling, ch. 7. Contending the King, ch. 8, 9, 10, 11.

3. Deliverance itself, wherein the people's departure out of Egypt, ch. 12. Ratification of it by signs and observations, ch. 13. their passage through the Red-sea, ch. 14. Thanksgiving after they went over, ch. 15.

4. Consequents of their deliverance, 1. Provision of viuals and necessaries, Quails and Manna, ch. 16. 2. Defence and protection from their enemies Amalekites, chap. 17. 3. Admini-

nistration of justice by Jethro's counsel, ch. 18.

II. The delivery of the law itself unto the people; wherein consider, 1. How it was given by God (1.) The preparation before it, ch. 19. (2.) Parts or kinds of it, 1. Moral, in 2 tables, ch. 20. 2. Judicial, ch. 21, 22, 23. 3. Ceremonial, feasts, ch. 24. Tabernacles and instruments, ch. 25, 26, 27. Priests and their garments, ch. 28, to 31. II. How it was taken and obeyed by the people, 1. Moral law, (1.) Their transgression in the golden calf, ch. 32. (2.) Reconciliation to God by Moses's prayer, c. 33. (3.) Retitution of the law by the finger of God, ch. 34. 2. Ceremonial; wherein is set down the building of the tabernacle, from 35, to the end.

§. 3. *LEVITICUS treats of holy observations and persons.*

I. Sacrifices, or offerings; 1. their Sorts or kinds, distinguished by their matter, of which *Animalia*, or living creatures, ch. 1. *Inanimalia*, or inanimate creatures, ch. 2. Occasion for which they were 1. Good things from God, ch. 3. 2. Evil things from men, ch. 4, 5. 2. Rites, ch. 6, 7.

II. Persons, and these 1. Publick, viz. the priests their Consecrating to their office, ch. 8. Execution of their office, ch. 9. transgression in their office, ch. 10.

2. Private, in respect of their sanctification.

(1.) Particular, of one man; where observe the ways whereby he is polluted—viz. (a) eating, ch. 11. (b) child-bearing, ch. 12. (c) leprosie, chapters 13, 14. (d) flux, ch. 15.

(2.) Common, of the whole church.

1st, In things necessary, about which consider (1.) The laws which concern either Purification for sins ordinary, ch. 16. extraordinary, ch. 17. or information of their lives; (a) Oeconomical, about marriage, ch. 18. (b) Political, about their earnings, chapters 19, 20. (c) Ecclesiastical; which laws consider either persons, ch. 21. or things, ch. 22. or times, as days, chap. 23, 24. years, ch. 25. (2.) Obligation of these laws, by promises and threatenings, ch. 25.

2^{dly}, In things voluntary, ch. 27.

§. 4. *NUMBERS, Of the laws, for most part, political, occasioned by the mustering of*

the people for their journey to Canaan.

Numbers. This story contains,

I. Their preparation to the journey, wherein note 1. their mustering, or numbering; which was either civil, of the people that were numbered, ch. 1. ordered. ch. 2. or sacred, of the priests that were numbered, ch. 3. ordered, ch. 4. 2. Laws given them, which are either common to all, about sanctity in things necessary, chapter 5. things voluntary, chap. 6. or particular, for the laity; viz. The tribes, chap. 7. and the clergy; viz. the priests and Levites, chap. 8. 3. Manner of their sanctification and order, ch. 9. their progress or journey.

II. Their journeys, which are distinguished by a story of eight murmurings of the people, 1. for the tediousness of their journey, ch. 11. 2. for loathsomeness of the manna, ch. 11. 3. for the emulation of Miriam, and Aaron against Moses, ch. 12. 4. for the sedition of the spies, who murmured, ch. 13. were plagued, ch. 14. reconciled, chap. 15. 5. for the conspiracy of the three Levites, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, ch. 16. 6. for the indignation of the people at the former judgments; wherein their murmuring, ch. 17. their reconciling persons, cha. 18. manners, ch. 19. 7. for want of water, chap. 20. 8. for wearisomeness of the way, ch. 21.

III. Their station or abode when they came to Canaan, which hath two stories that concern,

1. The people who were to inherit, considered in a sixfold manner, (1.) as conquerors of their enemies, ch. 22. (2.) as encouraged by magic arts, Balaam, chapters, 22, 23, 24. (3.) as disordered with idolatry and fornication, ch. 25. (4.) as reconciled, and again mustered, c. 26. (5.) furnished with a new prince, c. 27. (6.) instructed about sacred things, either necessary, chapters 28, 29. or voluntary, ch. 30.

2. The inheritance itself considered, 1. In a part of it, as conquered, chap. 31. as disposed, ch. 32. where, by digression, their journeys are reckoned all together, chapter 33. 2. In the whole, wherein are set down, 1st, The bounds or division of the land, chap. 34. 2^{dly}, the Law, concerning the inheritance of the priests, ch. 35. of the people, ch. 36.

§. DEUTERONOMY is a repetition of the Law.

I. Preparation of the people to receive the law by Moses, (1.) by a rehearsal of God's blessings to them in peace, ch. 1. (2.) Good success which they had in war, chap. 2, 3. (3.) Council, chap.

4, 5.

II. Promulgation of the Law given to the people, chap. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. (1.) By the propounding of it; (2.) By the expounding of it: namely,

1st, The Moral Law Generally, and Specially, chap. 12, 13.

2^{dly}, The Ceremonial Law, cha. 14, 15, 16.

3^{dly}, The Judicial Law, as it was either Common to all, cha. 16. or Singular, for priests, ch. 28. for people, cha. 19. for war, cha. 20. for civil justice, ch. 21. to ch. 27.

III. Confirmation of the Law after it was given (1.) By signs, chap. 26. (2.) By promises, and threatenings, cha. 28. (3.) By renovation of the covenant, chap. 29, 30. (4.) By the election of a new captain, cha. 31. (5.) By prophecies, chap. 32, 33.

IV. Conclusion of all, by the death of Moses, chap. 34.

Hitherto of the Law: Now of the prophets, which are either Historical, called the Anterior prophets; or Doctrinal, called Hagiographae; or Prophetical, called Posterior prophets.

S E C T. XII.

§. 1. Of prophets Historical. JOSHU'A.

Joshua contains

I. His calling to the Government, ch. 1.

II. His acts in his Government:

1. In time of war; where note (1.) The sending of the spies, ch. 2. (2.) Their miraculous passage over Jordan, with the consequents, ch. 3, 4, 5. (3.) The besieging and winning of Jericho, chap. 6, 7. (4.) Winning of Ai, cha. 8. (5.) Covenanting with the Gibeonites ignorantly, ch. 9. (6.) Victory over five kings, ch. 10. (7.) Battle with the remnant of the Canaanites, ch. 11. (8.) all repeated, ch. 13.

2. In time of peace; where note (1.) Division of the Land, cha. 13. to 21. (2.) Dismissal of the Trans-jordiani, cha. 22. (3.) Celebration

of the parliament, cha. 23. (4.) Death of Joshua, chap. 24.

§. 2. JUDGES: Story of the Jews under the Government of Judges.

Judges contains

I. The occasion of that government, ch. 1, 2.

II. Narration of the peoples state, (1.) Under Governors, Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, cha. 3. Deborah, cha. 4, 5. Gideon, ch. 6, 7, 8. Abimelech, ch. 9. Jephtha, ch. 10, 11, 12. Sampson, ch. 13. to 16. (2.) Without Governors; wherein of their monstrous sins and civil wars, ch. 17.

§. 3. RUTH a Moabitish woman; Of her Piety.

Ruth contains

I. Her conversion, ch. 1.

II. Her conversation, ch. 2.

III. Her marriage, (1.) procured, ch. 3. (2.) Celebrated, ch. 4.

§. 4. Hitherto of the State of the Jews under JUDGES.

Now under kings till the captivity.

I. As the kingdom was united, in books of Samuel, where kings are (1.) by Election, 1 Sam. (2.) Succession, 2 Sam.

II. As it was divided, in the books of Kings, under Solomon, 1 Kings. Other kings; 2 Kings.

III. As it was in both states, more fully considered in the books of Chronicles.

§. 5. First Book of SAMUEL.

Jews state under kings Elect.

1 Samuel contains

I. The time of change of Government in Samuel's days; whose birth is described, ch. 1. and part of ch. 2.

II. Occasion of the change; viz. wickedness, (1.) Of the sons of Eli, which is threatened, ch. 2, 3. punished, ch. 4, 5, 6, 7. and (2.) of Samuel's son, ch. 8.

III. Story of the kings; (1.) Saul; 1st, Of whose election, as he was called, ch. 9. confirmed by inauguration, ch. 10. By consent of the people, ch. 11. By resignation of Samuel, ch. 12. 2^{dly}, Of Saul's rejection; with the true cause of it, ch. 13, 14, 15. (2.) David; 1. his posterity, viz. his vocation to his kingdom, ch. 16. his victory,

victory, over Goliath, ch. 17. (2.) David's adversity; *viz.* 1st, His exile and banishment, (a) the cause of it, ch. 18. (b) the kinds of it, *viz.* in his own country, ch. 19, 20. out of his own country, amongst Philistines, ch. 21. amongst Moabites, ch. 22. 2^{dly}, David's persecutions; wherein (1.) the grievousness appears both by the diversity of places whither he fled, ch. 23, to 27. and by the slight to his enemies with whom he lived, ch. 27, to 30. (2.) The end of them, ch. 31.

§. 6. *Second Book of SAMUEL; under the Successive kings.*

2 Samuel contains

I. The tidings of Saul's death, ch. 1.

II. The unlawful Successor of Saul, Ishbosheth, whose promotion, ch. 2. Dejection, ch. 3, 4.

III. The true successor (David) whose inauguration, ch. 5. his good government, (1.) In religious things, ch. 6, 7. (2.) In war, ch. 8. (3.) In political things, ch. 9, 10. his bad government, where 1. His sins committed, ch. 11. 2. Confessed, ch. 12. 3. Punished with judgments internal and external, 1st, Internal, or domestick punishments, as Amnon's incest, ch. 13. and Absalom's Sedition; whereof the occasion, ch. 14. Beginning, ch. 15. progress, ch. 16. Issue, ch. 17, 18, 19. 2^{dly}, External and publick, 1. The kinds of it, as, Sedition of Zeba, ch. 20. and famine, ch. 21. 2. The events of it, Good, as, Thanksgiving, ch. 22. Prophecy, ch. 23. Evil, ch. 24.

§. 7. *KINGS. Two Books treat of the kingdom as divided.*

1 Kings contains

I. The increase of the kingdom under Solomon, wherein (1.) His institution to be king, ch. 1. (2.) Conservation in the kingdom, ch. 2, 3. (3.) Administration of it: wherein his glorying in his family, chap. 4. Buildings, chap. 5, to 9. Riches, ch. 10.

II. Decrease: 1. Occasion or cause, *viz.* Sins of Solomon, and justice of God, ch. 11. 2. Beginners of it, as authors of the division, Rehoboam and Jeroboam, ch. 12, 13, 14. Their successors, whose reigns are handled briefly, ch. 15. more largely, from ch. 15. to the end of the book.

§. 8. *Second Book of KING S; of the Decrease of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah.*

2 Kings contains

I. Their continuance or defection together, (1.) Of the Kings of Israel apart, as Ahaziah, ch. 1. Joram, chap. 2, to 9. Jehu, ch. 9, 10. Joash, ch. 11, 12. Jehoaz Joas, ch. 13. (2.) Of both kingdoms together, ch. 14, to 18.

II. A special story of the defection of the kingdom of Judah, (1.) Their decay, ch. 18. to 22. (2.) Their repair, chap. 22, 23. (3.) Their final destruction, ch. 24, to the end.

§. 9. *First CHRONICLES.*

1 Chronicles contains

I. The beginning of the kingdom of Israel, 1. Genealogy of the world from Adam to Jacob, ch. 1. 2. Particularly of the nation of Israelites in twelve tribes, ch. 2, to 9. II. The administration of the kingdom, 1. Under Saul, ch. 9, 10. 2. Under David, whose entrance and acts are described.

1. David's entrance into his kingdom, his inauguration, ch. 11. His followers, chap. 11, 12. Care of religion, chap. 13. Confirmation in his kingdom, chap. 14. 2. David's acts, (1.) In the progress of his reign, his good acts, for religion and God's service, ch. 15, 16, 17. War, ch. 18, 19, 20, 21. his evil acts, chap. 21. (2.) Towards the end of his reign, in his old age, such as 1st, His courses again for religion, ch. 22, to 26. 2^{dly}, His order for the common-weal, ch. 27. 3^{dly}, The parliament a little before his death, and events of it, ch. 28, 29.

§. 10. *Second CHRONICLES.*

2 Chronicles contains

I. The increase of the kingdom under Solomon, (1.) His virtues, ch. 1. (2.) His buildings both sacred, ch. 2, to 7. and civil, ch. 8. (3.) His condition and death, chap. 9. II. The decrease in the reign of Rehoboam, ch. 10, 11, 12. Abia, ch. 13. Afa, ch. 14, 15, 16. Jofaphat, ch. 17, 18, 19, 20. Joram, ch. 21. Ahaziah, ch. 22. Joash, ch. 23, 24. Amaziah, ch. 25. Uzziah, ch. 26. Jotham, ch. 27. Ahaz, ch. 28. Hezekiah, ch. 29, to 33. Manassh, Ammon, ch. 33. Josiah, ch. 34, 35. Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoniah, Zedechiah, ch. 36.

§. 11.

§. 11. *EZRA*, of the Return of the people from Babylon.

I. Of the manner of it, chap. 1, 2. II. Of the end of it; viz. Restoring of religion and government, ch. 3. III. Of the hindrance, 1. Raised by the Samaritans, ch. 4. By the governors of the land of Canaan, ch. 5. 2. Removed by Cyrus, ch. 6. and by Ezra, of whose journey, cha. 7, 8. Reformation which he wrought, ch. 9, 10.

§. 12. *NEHEMIAH* treats of

I. The repair of the buildings, 1. The causes of it, ch. 1, 2. 2. The work itself which was begun, ch. 3. hindred, cha. 4, 5, 6. finished, cha. 7. II. Reformation political and ecclesiastical, chap. 7. to 14.

§. 13. *ESTHER* contains a story of a miraculous deliverance of the Jews.

I. The means of it, viz. Esther cha. 1, 2. II. The manner of it. 1. The greatness of the danger, ch. 3, 4. 2. The Degrees of the deliverance, 1/3, The intercession of the queen, ch. 5. 2dly, Frustrating the advice of Haman, cha. 6, 7. 3dly, Confirmation of the deliverance. 1. Revoking the decree, cha. 8. 2. Punishing adversaries, chap. 9. 3. Peace of the Jews, ch. 10.

Hitherto of the Books Legal and Historical: Now of the books Dogmatical, or Sapiential, which concern either a singular subject, as Job; or a common subject, as David's psalms; Solomon's proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles.

S E C T. XIII.
Of Prophets Dogmatical.
Job contains

I. A dialogue; 1. The occasion, Job's prosperity, chap. 1. Job's adversity, ch. 2. Job's sin, ch. 3. 2. The forts, and so observe the speeches of 1/3, The disputants, Eliphaz, cha. 4, 5. Job, ch. 6, 7. Bildad, ch. 8. Job, ch. 9, 10. Zophar, ch. 11. Job, chap. 12, 13, 14. Eliphaz, chap. 15. Job, ch. 16, 17. Bildad, ch. 18. Job, ch. 19. Zophar, ch. 20. Job, ch. 21. Eliphaz, ch. 22. Job, chap. 23, 24. Bildad, ch. 25. Job, ch. 26, to 32. 2dly, The moderators, 1. Elihu, ch. 32, 33. 2. God, ch. 34, to 41.

II. An Epilogue, ch. 42.

§. 2. *The PSALMS* are, by the Hebrews divided into five books.

I. From Psalm 1. to the end of Psalm 41. concluded with Amen and Amen.

II. From Psalm 42. to the end of Psalm 72. shut up with Amen and Amen.

III. From Psalm 73. to the end of Psalm 87. closed with Amen and Amen.

IV. From Psalm 90. to the end of Psalm 106. ending with Amen, Hallelujah.

V. From Psalm 107. to the end of Psalm 150. concluding with Hallelujah.

This division seems to arise from the peculiar close of these five Psalms. Others divide them into two parts, viz. some directed from man to God, as the praying and thanksgiving psalms; some directed from God to man, as the exhortatory, consolatory, didactical, prophetic Psalms.

§. 3. *PROVERBS* contains rules of life.

I. General, about piety, wherein 1. What we must do, chapters 1, 2, 3, 4. 2. What we must avoid, ch. 5, to 10. II. Special, and so the life of man is informed by all sort of rules, political, oecconomical, moral, ch. 10. to the end.

§. 4. *ECCLESIASTES* treats

I. Of the vanity of all earthly things, proved by Solomon's observations in his own estate, ch. 1, 2. and conditions of all sorts of men, ch. 3, to 10. II. Rules to be observed in this vain life of ours, ch. 10, 11, 12.

§. 5. *CANTICLES*. Description of the love 'twixt Christ and his Church.

In speeches (1.) 'Twixt Christ and church, ch. 1. (2.) Church and Christ, ch. 2. (3.) Church, ch. 3. (4.) Christ, ch. 4. (5.) Church, ch. 5. (6.) Church and Christ, ch. 6. (7.) Church. chapters 7, 8.

These are the books dogmatical: Now follow prophets, four greater, and twelve lesser.

S E C T. XIV.

§. 1. *Of prophets propheticall.*

ISAIAH contains prophecies

I. Legal, 1. Reproving and correcting sins. of the Jews, chapters 1. to 11. With comfort to

the elect, ch. 11. to 12. 2. Threatening, *1st*, Enemies of God's people, the particular nations threatened, ch. 23, to 28. The general uses of these threatenings, ch. 24, to 27. *2dly*, Israelites, ch. 28. *3dly*, Jews themselves, whose captivity is denounced with mixed comforts in Christ, ch. 29, to 36. II. Historical, chapters 36, to 49. III. Evangelical, (1.) concerning their Deliverance from, and preservation in captivity, chapter 49, to 50. (2.) Kingdom of Christ, about which he makes eight sermons or speeches. 1. Of Christ, chapters 40, 50, 51. 2. Of God, ch. 52. 3. Of the prophets expounding 1. the story of Christ, 53. and 2. the fruit of his kingdom, ch. 54. 4. Of God, promising, ch. 45. Exhorting, chapters 56, 57. 5. Of the prophets reproving hypocrisy, chapters 58, 59. Exciting the church, ch. 60. 6. Of Christ, chapters 61, 62. 7. Of the church, chapters 63, 64, 65. 8. Lastly of God, ch. 66.

§. 2. JEREMIAH contains

I. A prologue concerning the prophet's calling, ch. 1. II. Sermons 1 concerning the Jews either in Judea, in the reign of Josiah, ch. 2, to 21. Zedechiah, ch. 21, to 25. Jechoiachim, chapters 25, 26, 27. Zedechiah again, ch. 28, to 35. Jechoiachim again, ch. 35, 36. Zedechiah again, ch. 37, to 43. Or in Egypt, ch. 43, to 46. 2. Concerning the enemies of the Jews, ch. 46, to 52. III. An epilogue historical, ch. 52.

§. 3. LAMENTATIONS contains

The mournings of the church, ch. 1. Prophet, ch. 2. Church, ch. 3. Prophet, ch. 4. Church, ch. 5.

§. 4. EZEKIEL contains

I. The preface, which concerns 1. God, and his majesty, ch. 1. 2. The prophet and his fearfulness, ch. 2. his confirmation, ch. 3. II. Prophecies themselves, which contain 1. Objection, or reproof of the impiety of the Jews, with their judgments, in 17 sermons from ch. 4, to 25. 2. Comminations against the enemies of the Jews, in 8 sermons from ch. 25, to 34. 3. Exhortations and encouragements to the Jews, to repentance and hope of delivery in six sermons from ch. 34, to 40. 4. Consolations in one continued prophecy of their spiritual deliverance

by Christ in visions, from ch. 40, to the end.

§. 5. DANIEL contains

I. An history of the things done in the kingdoms both of the Babylonians and Persians, ch. 1. to 7. II. A prophecy of things to be done; 1. Many calamities to be executed, ch. 7, to 12. 2. Final deliverance and glory of the elect, ch. 12.

§. 6. HOSEA is

I. Parabolical; and so the prophecy is pronounced, cha. 1. Applied, ch. 2. Repeated, cha. 3. II. Plain; and so is either, 1. A commination or invective, in three sermons 1. in chap. 4. 2. in chap. 5, 6, 7. 3. in chap. 8, 9, 10. 2. Consolation, ch. 11, to 14.

§. 7. JOEL contains

I. A commination of famine, ch. 1. II. An exhortation to repentance, ch. 2. III. A consolation to penitents, ch. 3.

§. 8. AMOS contains

I. A commination against 1. Enemies of God's people, ch. 1. 2. Against Jews and Israelites, and that 1. in plain words, against their idolatry, chap. 2. their violence, chap. 3. their indignity, pride, inhumanity, luxury, cha. 4, 5, 6. 2. In a threefold type, chap. 7, 8, 9. II. A consolation, from the 11 verse of the 9 ch. to the end.

§. 9. OBADIAH

1. Doth testify to ver. 12. 2. Dehors to ver. 17. 3. Comforts, to the end of the chapter.

§. 10. JONAH

First, Describes the two callings of Jonas, *1st*, in the manner of it, ch. 1. *2dly*, the effect of it, prayer, ch. 2. Second, His sermons to the Ninevites and their repentance, ch. 3. The effect of their repentance in Jonah, chap. 4.

§. 11. MICAH contains Five Sermons.

(1.) Threatening against the whole kingdom, ch. 1, 2. (2.) Threatening against the magistrates, ch. 3. (3.) Consolations in God and the Messiah, cha. 4, 5. (4.) Commination, ch. 6. (5.) Consolation again, ch. 7.

§. 12. *NAHUM*

He threatens destruction to the Assyrians, which is 1. Propounded, ch. 1. 2. The means shewed, ch. 2. 3. The cause of their sins, ch. 3.

§. 13. *HABAKKUK*

Contains, (1.) A dialogue betwixt God and the prophets, chapters 1, 2. 2. A prayer, ch. 2.

§. 14. *ZEPHANIAH*

Contains three sermons, *viz.* (1.) A commination, ch. 1. (2.) An exhortation, ch. 2. (3.) A mixture of both, ch. 3.

§. 15. *HAGGAI*

First, Exhorts to build the temple, ch. 1. Secondly, Comforts with prophecy of Christ's kingdom, ch. 2.

§. 16. *ZECHARIAH contains*

I. Types and visions, (1.) Hortatory, generally to all the people, chapters 1, 2. Specially unto the priests, chapters 3, 4. (2.) Monitory, ch. 5, 6. (3.) Consolatory, chap. 6. II. Speeches and sermons (1.) Doctrinal, of things present, about God's service, chapters 7, 8. (2.) Prophetical, of things that concern Christ's incarnation, chapters 9, 10. Christ's passion, chapters 11, 12, 13.

§. 17. *MALACHI*

(1.) Chides for perfidiousness in God's service, ch. 1. for pollution of marriage and blasphemy, ch. 2. (2.) Comforts in the promise of Christ, ch. 3. and of Christ his forerunner, ch. 4.

S E C T. XV.

§. 1. The New Testament contains books 1. Historical; *viz.* Four Evangelists, and Acts. 2. Doctrinal; in epistles of Paul, James, Peter, John, Jude. 3. Prophetical, in the Revelation.

The books, for memory's sake, are comprised in these four verses.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts; these are books historical:

Epistles, Rom. Cor. Gal. Ephes. Philip. Colof. teach doctrines all:

Joyn Thess. Timothy Tit. Phil. and Heb. Heb. Paul, for others, some deny.

To doctrines still, James, Pet. John, Jude; Except Revel. 'tis prophecy.

Of books historical. *MATTHEW speaks of Christ.*

I. In his person, as of his birth, ch. 1. his education, ch. 2.

II. His office. 1. In his preparation unto his office in his forerunner John Baptist, ch. 3. and in himself, who was baptized, ch. 3. Tempted, ch. 4. 2. Execution of his office, (1.) Prophetical in teaching, whose doctrine is briefly expounded, chapters 5, 6, 7. and largely expounded and confirmed; and to be 1st, Teacherth, and confirmeth by miracles of all sorts, ch. 8, to 19. 2^{dly}, Reproves, and confuteth the doctrine of the scribes and pharisees, ch. 19, to 24. 3^{dly}, Foretells and prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem and of the world, chapters 24, 25. (2.) Sacerdotal, in his passion, and sacrifice for the sins of the world, chapters 26, 27. (3.) Regal, in respect of the beginning and manifestation of it, ch. 28.

§. 2. *MARK treats*

I. Of Christ's life, and herein 1. of his forerunner, ch. 1. 2. Of his sayings and doings, (1.) Before his transfiguration, and so reports both his oracles, ch. 2. and miracles, ch. 2. to 9. (2.) In his transfiguration, ch. 9. (3.) After it, and that before he entred the city, ch. 10. In his entrance, his disputation, ch. 12. His prediction, ch. 13. II. Of Christ's death, where (1.) Antecedents before it, ch. 14. (2.) Manner of it, ch. 15. (3.) Consequents after it, ch. 16.

§. 3. *LUKE treats*

I. Of Christ's life: 1. Private, wherein (1.) Conception, ch. 1. (2.) His birth and education, ch. 2. 2. Publick, in preaching the gospel, where (1.) His preparation to it, ch. 3. (2.) Performance of it; and that either alone, by teaching, ch. 4. by doing, ch. 5. Or with others; *viz.* his apostles, whom he calls and instructs, chapters 6, 7, 8. sendeth, ch. 9. Seventy disciples, ch. 10.

II. Of Christ's death:

1. Antecedents of it; where consider the things he did, and spake, (1.) In his journey to Jerusalem, where he taught of inward worship of God, *viz.* prayer, ch. 11. Faith, ch. 12. Repentance, in causes moving to it, ch. 13. Hindering

ing of it, ch. 14. Effects of it, ch. 15. And of outward worship, where 1. What we must avoid, *viz.* Abuse of riches, ch. 16. Scandal, ch. 17. 2. What we must do, ch. 18. (2.) When he came to Jerusalem, how he was received, ch. 19. Disputed, ch. 20. Prophesied, ch. 21.
2. Tenor of his death, chapters 22, 23.
3. Consequents after it, ch. 24.

§. 4. JOHN treats

I. Of Christ's Person, ch. 1. II. Of his office; which he performed in his journey to three feasts: 1. Of the passover 1. In Cana from whence he went out, ch. 2. (2.) While he abode at the feast, ch. 3. (3.) In his return by Samaria, ch. 4. 2. Of pentecost, where he cured the palsy, ch. 5. and fed the people, ch. 6. 3. Of tabernacles, where note (1.) His coming to Jerusalem, ch. 7. (2.) His abode there, his disputation, ch. 8. Works, ch. 9. Sermon, ch. 10. (3.) His departure thence, ch. 11. 4. To the celebration of the true passover, about his death, where note,

1st, What went before it, *viz.* (1.) His deeds, as his entrance to the city, ch. 12. And washing his disciples feet, ch. 13. (2.) His speeches, At supper-time, ch. 14. As they went to the garden, some monitory, ch. 15. Some consolatory, ch. 16. Some supplicatory, ch. 17.

2^{dly}, The manner of it, ch. 18, 19.

3^{dly}, Consequents of it; *viz.* his appearance to his disciples, conversing in Judea, ch. 20. Fishing in Galilee, ch. 21.

§. 5. ACTS, A history of the apostles.

I. A general one of all, *viz.* (1.) Of their assembling, ch. 1. (2.) Of their gifts, chap. 2. (3.) Of their sayings, ch. 3. II. A special (1.) Peter with John and others, chapters 4, 5. (2.) Stephen, chapters 6, 7. 13. Philip, ch. 6. (4.) Peter alone, 1st, His miracles, ch. 9. 2^{dly}, Doctrine propounded, ch. 10. Defended, ch. 11. 3^{dly}, Imprisonment and deliverance, chap. 12. (5.) Paul, and his travels, 1st, With Barnabas, chapters 13, 14. 2^{dly}, With Silas, 1. of whose Departure, whereof the first council at Jerusalem, ch. 15. 2. His abode 1. In Asia, ch. 16. 2. In Grecia, ch. 17. 3. Return, ch. 18. 3^{dly}, For the Epicurians, where (1.) From whence he went, 18, to 23. (2.) By what place, ch. 19,

20. (3.) Whither he came, *viz.* (1.) To Jerusalem, and what befel him there, chapters 21, 22, 23. 2. To Cefarea, and what was done under Felix, ch. 24. Festus, ch. 25. Agrippa, ch. 26. (3.) At Rome, chapters 27, 28.

S E C T. XVI.

§. 1. *Of the books doctrinal. Epistle to the ROMANS treats of*

(1.) Justification, chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. (2.) Sanctification, ch. 6, 7, 8. (3.) Predestination, ch. 9, 10. 11. (4.) Good works, ch. 12, to 16.

§. 2. I. CORINTHIANS.

I. He reproves (1.) For schisms and factions, and hearkening to ambitious teachers, ch. 1, 2, 3, 4. (2.) incest and fornication, ch. 5. (3.) Going to law, ch. 6.

II. He disputeth about (1.) Marriage, ch. 7. (2.) Things indifferent, ch. 8, 9, 10. (3.) Sacrament of the supper, ch. 11. (4.) Right use of spiritual gifts, ch. 12, 13, 14. (5.) Resurrection, ch. 15.

III. He concludeth about collections, and matters of salvation, ch. 16.

§. 3. II. CORINTHIANS.

I. He apologizeth for himself against divers aspersions, chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

II. He exhorteth them, (1.) to a holy life, and patience, shunning needles society with the wicked, ch. 6. (2.) to avoid judging ill of him, ch. 7. (3.) to mercy and liberality, ch. 8, 9. (4.) to sincere respect of him and his apostleship, cha. 10, 11, 12.

III. Concludeth, ch. 13.

§. 4. GALATIANS.

(1.) He reproves their backsliding, ch. 1. (2.) Treats of justification, ch. 2, 3, 4. (3.) Exhorts to good works, ch. 5, 6.

§. 5. EPHESIANS treats

(1.) Of matters of faith, ch. 1, 2, 3. (2.) of works, ch. 4, 5, 6.

§. 6. PHILIPPIANS.

I. Narration, (1.) of his love to them, 2. His Afflictions, 3. His Desire of death, ch. 1.

II. He

II. He exhorts 1. to love and humility, cha. 2. (2.) To wariness and progress, assurance and sanctity, ch. 3.

III. He concludes with particular exhortations and with general commendations, ch. 4.

§. 7. *COLOSSIANS* treats

Of matters of faith, ch. 1, 2. and life, ch. 3, 4.

§. 8. I. *THESSALONIANS* treats

(1.) Of their conversion, ch. 1. (2.) Of the means of it, ch. 2. (3.) Of the fruits of this love to them, and care for them, ch. 3. (4.) Directions for their lives, ch. 4.

§. 9. II. *THESSALONIANS*.

(1.) He comforts, ch. 1. (2.) He prophesieth, ch. 2. (3.) He exhorteth, ch. 3.

§. 10. I. *TIMOTHY*.

(1.) He confuteth the erroneous doctors, ch. 1. (2.) He exhorteth about prayer and apparel, c. 2. (3.) Informeth concerning the duty of bishops and deacons, ch. 3. (4.) Prophesieth of the last and evil times, ch. 4. (5.) Ordereth church-governors, ch. 5. (6.) Taxeth several abuses, ch. 6.

§. 11. II. *TIMOTHY*.

(1.) He exhorteth him to perseverance, *1st*, In the duties of his calling, ch. 1. *2dly*, In Christian warfare, ch. 2. (2.) Prophesieth, ch. 3. (3.) Chargeth about preaching, and so concludeth, chap. 4.

§. 12. *TITUS*.

He treats of ministers, ch. 1. and hearers, ch. 2, 3.

§. 13. *HEBREWS* treats

I. Of Christ, and so (1.) of his person, in his divine nature, ch. 1. in his human nature, ch. 2.

(2.) his office, 1. of a prophet, ch. 3, 4. 2. of a priest, ch. 5. to 10. II. Of the duties of christians, and so of faith, ch. 11. and of a holy life, chap. 12, 13.

§. 14. *JAMES* treats

(1.) Of patience, right hearing the word, and true religion, ch. 1. (2.) of love, and justification by works, ch. 2. (3.) of the tongue, and wisdom, ch. 3. (4.) of contentions, and presumption, ch. 4. (5.) of oppression, and swearing, and prayer, and admonition, ch. 5.

§. 15. I. *PETER* hath in it a matter

(1.) Of consolation, chap. 1, to 13. verse. (2.) Exhortation, from verse 13. of the 1 chap. to 8 verse of 3. chap. (3.) Dehortations, from 8 verse of 3 chap. to the end of 3 chap.

And in these are again handled, (1.) Exhortation, 4 ch. to 12 verse. (2.) Consolation from 12 verse to the end of 4 ch. (3.) Dehortation implicitly, with the conclusion, ch. 5:

§. 16. II. *PETER*

(1.) Exhorts to holiness, ch. 1. (2.) Threatens wicked teachers and apostates, ch. 2. (3.) Prophesieth of the day of judgment, ch. 3.

§. 17. *First epistle of St. JOHN* treats

(1.) Of the benefits of Christ, ch. 1. (2.) of the office of Christians in love, ch. 2, 3, 4. and faith, ch. 5.

§. 18. *Of the Book prophetical. REVELATION* contains, (1.) History of the state of the church then, chap. 1, 2, 3. (2.) Mystery or prophecy 1. of the world, ch. 4. to 10. 2. Of the church 1. in her battles, ch. 10. to 17. (2.) in her victories, cha. 17. to 21. (3.) Triumphs and eternal glory, ch. 21. to 22.

C H A P. XVI. S E C T. I.

Of the Suffering of Saints.

Hitherto of Doing, one chapter I would add of Suffering; and the rather be-
cause of the times into which we are cast; or, howsoever, be the times what they will,

we cannot expect but that God will sometimes be honoured by the sufferings and afflictions of saints. There is a strict and near dependence and connection betwixt Christianity and the cross, and that from the pleasure and providence of God, and dispensation of things under the gospel: God hath so ordered it, that we should not serve the Lord our God of that which costs us nothing, but that true Christian piety should bring sufferings upon us. This course of divine oeconomy is so general and without exception, that the apostle is clear, Heb. xii. 6, 7, 8. *Whom God loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth; if you endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons, for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.* Words of a large unlimited latitude, which I cannot discern any way in the world to soften, so as they may be supportable to him that hath no changes, that hath enjoyed an age of an uninterrupted continued prosperity, without ever having the cross on his shoulders. When this text is set down as an aphorism of divine observation under the kingdom of Christ, as an axiom of gospel-providence, there will be no safety in disputing or labouring to avoid the literal importance of it. 'Tis true indeed under the old testament, we find not any such oeconomy, but promises of a long and happy life, in a temporal Canaan, to God's servants; but under the gospel it is quite contrary; *through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God.* Our way to Zion is through the valley of Baca, we cannot follow Christ, and be his disciples but upon these terms. *All that will live rightly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution,* Acts xiv. 22. Psalm lxxxiv. 6. Matth. xvi. 24. 2 Tim. iii. 12. And therefore, as we have learned what to do, let us learn how to suffer; it is not duty only that we

should seek God's honour, but that we should seek it in his own way; while God is pleased to offer us opportunities of doing, while we see his mind in improving us thus, let us follow it on with all our might, let no opportunity slip; do to the utmost that we can for God; but when we see his mind to lay us aside, and to use us in another way, although it be in a way of affliction and grievous sufferings, let us now be as willing to yield to God in this, as in the former way. And for our help therein I shall direct, 1. How to prepare for sufferings before they come. 2. How to carry in sufferings when they are come. 3. What to do, and how to carry when sufferings and afflictions are gone.

§. 2. *Of the manner of preparation for sufferings before they come.*

WHAT? are we now at ease? are these sun-shine days of peace? surely we should consider of the days of darkness which may be many. Oftimes we are thinking of, and seeking after great things when we should be preparing to suffer hard things. Be not deceived, the clouds seem to gather, and 'tis time for us to prepare. Now this preparation consists in these particulars.

1. Make we account of afflictions: do not say, I shall never be removed; altho' we know not what particular afflictions shall befall us, yet make an account that an affliction condition will be our portion. Thus did the apostle, Acts xx. 22, 23. *And now I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.* It is our wisdom thus to make account of afflictions, that when they come they may be no other than were expected before. As it is reported of Anaxagoras, that when news came to him of the death of his son, and it was thought he would have been much troubled

bled at it, he answered only thus, I knew that I begat one mortal: so when any troubles befall us, we should entertain them with these thoughts, I knew my condition to be an afflicted condition: I entered upon the ways of godliness upon these terms, to be willing to be in an afflicted condition, this is God's ordinary way towards his people, it is God's mercy that it is no worse, I expect yet greater trials than these.

2. Let us deny ourselves, and so take up the cross: where self is renounced, the cross is easily born; it is self that makes the cross pinch. Now there is a six-fold self that in this case must be denied.

1. Self-opinion, we must be willing to lie quietly under the truth, to be convinced and to be guided by it.

2. Self-counsels, and Self-reasonings, we must take heed of conferring with flesh and blood, as it was the care of Paul, *immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood*, Gal. i. 16. surely if he had, he would have been in danger.

3. Self-excellencies, our parts, our privileges, our credits, and all those things that are great in our own eyes, and that make us great in the eyes of the world.

4. Self-will, we must not think it so grievous a thing to have our wills crossed, we must not expect to have our conditions brought to our wills, and therefore it is our wisdom, whatsoever our conditions be, that we bring our wills unto them.

5. Self-comforts, those that give liberty to themselves to satisfy themselves to the utmost, altho' in lawful comforts, they will be unfit to suffer hardship, when God shall call them thereunto. I fear that neck (said Tertullian,) that is used to pearl-chains, that it will not give itself to the sword. 6. Self-ends, we must aim at God, and not at ourselves in all our ways; and then how easy will it be for us to bear crosses, considering that God's ends do go on, tho' our ends be crossed?

3. Be we sure to lay a good foundation

in a thorough-work of humiliation. The seed that fell upon the stony ground withered, and although for a while it was received with joy, yet, when tribulation and persecution arose, *by and by he was offended*, Matth. xiii. 21. Mark the expression, *by and by*, he was presently offended, and all because there was no depth of earth, there was not a thorough-work of humiliation. Some think the burthens of afflictions great, because they never felt what the weight and burthen of sin meant; but that soul which constantly exerciseth itself in the work of humiliation for sin, which burthens itself with the weight of its sins, and is willing to lie under sin for further breaking of spirit; that soul (I say) will be able to endure crosses, and to stand under sore afflictions.

4. Be we careful to preserve our inward peace with God and our own consciences. If vapours be not got into the earth, and stir there, all the storms and tempests abroad can never make an earth-quake; so where there is peace within, all troubles and oppositions without cannot shake the heart. *Having peace with God, we glory in tribulations*, Rom. v. 1, 3. We are not only patient under them, but we glory in them. O then let that time that God gives us yet any respite from afflictions be spent in making up our peace with God, let us now labour to get clearer evidences, and deeper sense of his love; then shall we suffer any thing for God, O then we shall go through fire and water, then shall we triumph with the apostle, Rom. viii. 38, 39. *I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come shall ever be able to separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus*.

5. Labour we to see more into the fulness of all good in God. The Lord told Abraham, that he was *God all-sufficient*, Gen. xvii. 1. as the only means to strengthen him against whatsoever evils he was like

like to meet withal. In God is all the excellency, beauty, comfort, and good of the creature in a most eminent and glorious manner, and God take infinites delight in communicating himself, in letting out his goodness to his creature; and if so, what is the loss of any thing to me, when I see where I can have it made up? What is any bitterness, when I see such infinite sweetness to sweeten all? When tempests come upon mariners, and they be in narrow seas where they want sea-room, there is danger, but if they have sea room enough, there is no fear; thus, if we are acquainted with the infinite fulness of good in God, we should see ourselves safe in the midst of all tempests, we should feel our spirits quiet under the forest afflictions.

6. Do we humbly and cheerfully submit to our present condition whatsoever it is. Many cast about in their thoughts what they shall do hereafter, if troubles should befall them, and yet, in the mean time, they neglect the duties of their present condition: surely, if we would go on humbly and patiently in the performance of the duties that God now calls for, they would prepare us for whatsoever duties should be required hereafter. Mr. Bilney the martyr used to put his finger in the candle to prepare him for the burning of his whole body; a patient bearing of less troubles, for the present, will prepare the heart for the bearing of greater afterwards.

7. Be we often renewing our resignations of all unto the Lord. Let us renew our covenant with him to be at his dispose, that so when any trouble comes at any time, this resignation of heart and renewal of covenant may be fresh upon our spirits. Experience tells us that sometimes immediately after a day of solemn humiliation, the soul thinks it could then do or suffer any thing; but in a little time after (except this to be renewed again) the heart grows drossy and cleaves to present things, and mingles itself with them again; the often

renewing of this keeps the heart very loose from the creature.

8. Lay we up provision against an evil day. There is a three-fold provision we should treasure up to prepare us for afflictions. 1. We should treasure up the consolations of God that he affords upon occasion, that at any time we feel in the performance of duties, in the exercise of graces, in the use of ordinances. 2. We should treasure up the experiences of God's ways towards us, and his gracious dealings with us in former straits. 3. We should treasure up soul-supporting, soul-quickening, soul-reviving, soul-comforting promises, and that of several kinds, suitable to several afflictions, for we know not what kind of afflictions we may meet withal.

9. Labour we much to strengthen every grace; it is strong grace that is suffering grace; a strong wing will fly against the wind, but so will not every wing. It is true a candle will hold light in the house, but if we go abroad in the air, there is need of a torch, there must be a stronger light there; weak grace may serve our turn to uphold us now, but in time of afflictions it had need to be strong; a little grace will be soon spent then, as a candle is soon spent when it stands in the wind.

10. Set much before us the example of Jesus Christ, and God's people, who have endured very hard things. In the example of Christ, consider 1. Who it was that suffered, he was the son of God, the glory of the father, God blessed for ever; when we suffer, nothing but base worms trodden under foot do suffer. 2. What he suffered; even the wrath of God, and curse of the law, he was made a curse in the abstract, as the scripture speaks, which was another manner of thing than any of our afflictions. 3. For whom he suffered; it was for us vile worms, wretched, sinful creatures, who are enemies to him; we suffer for God who is infinitely blessed, to whom we owe all we are or have. 4. How freely

freely he suffered; it was of his own accord, his own free grace moved him to it, he laid down his life, none could take it from him; but for us, it is not in our liberty whether we will suffer or no, we are under the power of another. 5. How meckly he suffered; he was as a sheep before the shearer, his sufferings no way disquieted his spirit, but still it kept in a sweet quiet frame in the midst of all. Thus set we Christ before us, let these meditations be meat and drink unto us. In the example of God's suffering saints, consider what precious choice-spirited men they were, how holy, how spiritual, how heavenly; what are we in comparison of them? consider what they did, what they endured for the Lord Jesus Christ. To this purpose there's a notable chapter, *Heb. xi.* Read and consider; is it not enough for us that we have such a *cloud of witnesses*, such a noble army of martyrs before us and with us?

Thus of preparations for affliction before they come.

§. 3. *Of the manner of bearing sufferings when they come.*

IF any will come after me, saith Christ, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me, *Mat. xvi. 24.* This cross is sufferings; in which condition one way or other we may be (if God so please) continually; the soul might say, If I must bear this cross, I hope it is but now and then; nay saith Christ, *Let him take up his cross daily*, *Luke ix. 23.* But if every day, may the soul say, I hope it is an easy cross. Nay saith Paul, it is a killing cross, *I die daily*, *1 Cor. xv. 31.* Yet may the soul say, if it be a killing cross, I hope there are refreshings some part of the day. Not so neither; *For thy sake*, saith David, *are we killed all the day long*, *Psal. xlv. 22. i. e.* In regard of the danger of death. 2. In regard of some beginnings that we find. 3. In regard of our willingness to undergo it. But though we tie not these

actual sufferings according to the letter, to every time and moment; yet certainly there is a time for that: and the duties that concern us when God now calls us to suffer afflictions are these. (1.) That we be willing to come under them. (2.) That we contentedly submit our selves and quietly behave ourselves in them. (3.) That we labour to improve them.

§. 1. *We must be willing to come under sufferings.*

IT was the honour of the three children in Daniel, *ch. iii. 28.* that they yielded their bodies to those fiery flames they were cast into. Let us not seek to put off sufferings by distinctions; certainly the best policy in dangerous times is the greatest purity. The Lacedemonians were wont to say, It was a shame for any man to fly in time of danger, but for a Lacedemonian it was a shame to deliberate. How much more truly may this be said of a Christian, when God calls him to suffer? he should before-hand be so resolved, that it should be a shame for him ever to deliberate. And yet by way of caution, before we come under afflictions, let us look 1. That our cause be good. 2. That our call be clear. 3. That our end be right.

1. Look that our cause be good. It is not for every cause that a christian should engage into sufferings. *Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or a busy-body in other mens matters*, *1 Pet. ix. 15.* to suffer in these or the like cases is not christian, neither will it be comfortable.

2. See that our call be clear. Christ calls not all to martyrdom; *To you it is given to suffer*, saith the apostle, *Phil. i. 29.* not only that you should believe in Christ, but also suffer for his sake. Affliction is a gift of love, even as saith is; 'tis grace as well to bleed for Christ, as to believe in Christ. Let us be wise therefore to clear our call: for example, if truth suffers by our silence, then are we called to speak; if the saving

of our life should be Christ's denial, then are we called to die; if we are before a magistrate for the name of Christ, Christ then calls us not to be ashamed of him; if sin and suffering surround us, as that we are necessitated to take the one, and to leave the other, then we may conclude that Christ calls us to suffering.

3. Let us eye our end in all our sufferings; if our end be Self, how should we expect comfort? some have died that their names might live; a Roman spirit can hold to suffering and death itself; an opposing spirit will put on some to die rather than yield: the apostle hath left it a clear thing, that 'tis possible to give one's body to be burnt, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. and yet to want true divine love. One may (I wish none did) suffer as much for selfish as sublime respects, *i. e.* for his own glory. O let us mind Christ's glory, truth's propagation, the maintenance of equity and righteousness in all our sufferings; and if so, go on, fear not, flinch not, *if we draw back, his soul will have no pleasure in us*; what? are we shy of the ways of religion because of affliction? if such thoughts work in us at any time, take these considerations.

(1.) At what low rate do we prize the ways of God, that such and such more low comforts must not be laid down for them, that such light afflictions must not be endured for the maintainance of them?

2. Consider if Christ had stood on such terms as to have said, *I could be content indeed that these poor creatures might be deliver'd from misery; but seeing such grievous sufferings must be endured for their deliverance, let them perish for me, I am not willing to save them on such hard terms as these*: O then what had become of us?

3. They who are so shy of suffering, may be forced to suffer in spite of their hearts, and what a sad thing will that be to them? What a sad thing was it to Cranmer after

he had recanted for fear of sufferings, that yet he was forced to suffer? What a darkening was it to his spirit, to his cause, and to his good name?

4. Whatsoever prosperity we enjoy, when God calls us to suffer for him, it is cursed unto us: If we bless ourselves in our name, in our estate, our liberty, our life, and avoid the way of suffering that God calls us unto, we deceive ourselves, for there is no blessing in them, they are all accursed unto us.

5. All the duties of religion that now we perform out of a suffering condition are not accepted of God. We must not think now, having avoided suffering for God's truth that because we are willing to perform duties, therefore God now accepts of us; no it was another work that God called us unto, a work of suffering, and seeing we have refused this, do what we can, God casts it as dung in our faces, and he regards it not; this is a sad condition; what joy can such a man have of his life, if he had but an enlightened conscience?

6. What intolerable pride and delicacy is this in us that we will not venture the loss of any thing, the enduring of any thing for God and his truth? the least truth of God is more worth than heaven and earth, and what is our ease, our name, our liberty, our life to it?

7. How vile is the unbelief of our hearts who dare not trust God with our name, our estate, or liberty, how can we trust God with our souls, our eternal estate? How lightly do we regard the faithfulness, mercy, goodness, wisdom, power of God, working for his people in their suffering conditions? Of what little account are all those gracious blessed promises of God to us in this condition? Our base shyness, and cowardice of spirit is such, as if there were no God, no faithfulness, no mercy, no wisdom, no power to help us, as if there were no promise to support and relieve us.

8. How little love is there in our hearts to God, when we are so shy of any thing to be suffered for God? Love rejoices in suffering for the beloved: 'The avoiding hell, and the getting heaven are no great things (saith Chrysostom) where the love of God is.'

9. What is the issue of soul apostacy? If we draw back from persecution, we draw on perdition. Christ is not so sweet in his dealings with martyrs, but he is as dreadful in his discovery to apostates. Ask Spira how doleful a condition denying is? He'll tell you that he could feel no comfort in his heart, that there was no place there but full of bitter torments and hideous vexings of spirit; he'll tell you of God's wrath burning in him like the torments of hell, and that his conscience was afflicted with pangs unutterable.

10. What honour should God have in the world? Where would there be any witness to truth against the rage and malice of the devil and wicked men, if all should do as we do? If there be any christian blood left in us, if any spirit worthy of our profession, O be we ashamed of our baseness this way, and be not so shy of sufferings.

§. 2. *We must contentedly submit ourselves, and quietly behave our selves in sufferings.*

Seeing we are now under an ordinance of God, take heed of the least murmuring or repining against God as if he were an hard master. If our spirits at any time begin to rise in such workings, let us charge our souls to be silent to God, it is a shame for a Christian not to be well skilled in that art, instructed in that mystery of Christian contentation; let us say with our Saviour; *Shall not I drink of that cup which my Father hath given me to drink?* It is the cup of my Father, and shall not I quietly and contentedly drink of that cup? Now we have an opportuni-

ty to manifest the power and excellency of our grace, to shew what our grace can enable us to do: Strength of reason will go far in quieting and calming of the heart under afflictions, but grace surely, where it is true, will go farther; it will teach us to submit ourselves, and to resign our spirits unto God, to be willing that God should deliver us when he will, and as he will, and how he will, so that our wills are melted into the very will of God. It is true we may be sensible of it, and make our moan to God concerning it, and desire to be delivered of it, and seek it by all good and honest and lawful means; yet we must not murmur nor repine, we must not fret or vex, there must not be any tumultuousness or unsettledness of spirit in us, there must not be any distracting fears in our hearts, nor any sinking discouragements, base shiftings, rebellious risings against our God. Now that we may attain this frame, this grace of contentment and quietness of spirit, observe these directions.

1. Be we humbled in our hearts for the want thereof, or that we have had so little of this grace in us; there is no way to set upon any duty with profit, till the heart be humbled for the want of the performance of the duty before. Many men when they hear of a duty that they should perform, they will labour to perform it, but first they should be humbled for the want of it. 'Oh that I had this grace of contentment (should every one say) What an happy life might I live? What abundance of honour might I bring to the name of God? But O Lord, thou knowest it is far otherwise with me, I feel a kind of murmuring, and vexing, and fretting within me, every little cross puts me out of temper and frame of spirit: Oh the boisterousness of my spirit! What a deal of evil doth God see in my heart? Oh the vexing, and fretting, and murmuring, and repining that is in me!'

2. Pore not too much upon our sufferings.

ings. Many men have all their thoughts taken up about their crosses and afflictions, they are ever thinking or speaking of them; when they awake in the night, their thoughts are on them, and when they converse with others, nay it may be when they are praying to God, they are thinking on them. Oh, no marvel though we live discontented lives, if our thoughts be always poring on such things, we should rather have our thoughts on those things that may comfort us. It is very observable of Jacob, that when his wife died in child-birth, *his wife called the child Benoni*, that is, *a son of sorrows*, Gen. xxxv. 18. Now Jacob he thought with himself, if I should call this child Benoni, every time that I name him, it will put me in mind of the death of my dear wife, which will be a continual affliction unto me, and therefore I will not have my child have that name; and so the text saith, that *Jacob called his name Benjamin*, and that was the son of my right hand. Now this is to shew us thus much, that when afflictions befall us, we should not give way to have our thoughts continually upon them, but rather upon these things that may stir up our thankfulness to God for his mercies. It is the similitude of Basil: 'It is in this case as it is with men and women that have sore eyes; now it is not fit for those to be always looking on the fire, or on the beams of the sun, but on some things that are suitable, upon such objects as are fit for one that hath sore eyes, as upon green colours, or the like: So men or women that have weak spirits must not ever be looking upon the fire of their afflictions, upon those things that deject them or cast them down, but they are to look upon those things rather that may be suitable for the healing and helping of them.' It will be of great use and benefit to us if we lay it to heart, not to be poring always upon afflictions, but upon mercies.

3. Let us make a good interpretation

of God's ways towards us, if possibly we can. Should our friends always make bad interpretations of our ways towards them, we would take it ill. It is ill taken of the Spirit of God when we make ill interpretation of his ways towards us, and therefore if we can make any good interpretation of God's ways towards us, let us make it. *For example*, If any affliction befall us, let us think thus, 'It may be God only intends to try me by this; it may be God saw my heart too much set upon the creature, and so intends to shew me what there is in my heart; it may be God saw that if my estate did continue I should fall into sin, and so the better my estate were, the worse would my soul be; it may be God intended only to exercise some grace in me; it may be God intends to prepare me for some great work which he hath for me to do;' thus we should reason. It is usual with many otherwise to interpret God's dealings, just as they did in the wilderness, *God hath brought us hither to slay us, or to fall by the sword*, Numb. xiv. 3. This is the worst interpretation that possibly we can make of God's ways: Oh why will we make their worst interpretations when there may be better? Love thinketh no evil. Love is of that nature that if there may be ten interpretations made of a thing, if nine of them be naught, and one good, love will take that which is good, and leave the other nine; and so though there might be ten interpretations presented to us concerning God's ways towards us, and if but one be good and nine naught, we should take that one that is good, and leave the other nine. Oh retain good thoughts of God. Take heed of judging God to be an hard-master, make good interpretation of his ways, and that will further our contentment in all our afflictions.

4. Let us look upon all our afflictions as sanctified in Christ, as sanctified in a mediator. This is to see all the sting, and venom,

venom, and poison of them to be taken out by the virtue of Jesus Christ the mediator between God and man. *For example,* Would a Christian have contentment? say then, What is my affliction? Is it poverty that God strikes me withal? Christ had not an house to lay his head in, *the foxes had holes, and the fowls of the air had nests, but the Son of man had not an hole to lay his head in,* Matth. viii. 20. O then how is my poverty sanctified? I see by faith the curse, and sting, and venom of my poverty taken out by the poverty of Jesus Christ. Christ was poor in this world to deliver me from the curse of my poverty. Again, am I disgraced, dishonoured? is my good name taken away? Why Christ had dishonour put upon him, he was called *Belzebub, a Samaritan, and they said he had a devil in him,* Mark iii. 22. John viii. 48. All the foul aspersions that could be, were cast upon Christ, and this was for me, that I might have the disgrace that is cast upon me to be sanctified unto me. Again, am I jeered and scoffed at? Why so was Jesus Christ when he was in his greatest extremity; they could put *thorns on his head, and a reed in his hand, and bow the knee before him, and mock him, and say, Hail king of the Jews,* Matth. xxvii. 27. How then may I attain contentment in the midst of scorns and jeers, by considering that Christ was scorned, and by acting faith upon that which Christ suffered for me? We see many Christians lie under grievous pains and extremities very cheerfully, and some wonder at it; why this is the way that they get it, *viz.* by acting their faith upon what pains Jesus Christ suffered: Are we afraid of death? Let us exercise our faith upon the death of Christ: Are we troubled in soul? Doth God withdraw himself from us? Let us exercise our faith upon the sufferings that Christ endured in his soul when he was in his agony, and when he swate drops of

blood. And this will bring contentment to our souls.

5. Let us fetch strength from Christ to bear all our burdens. Now this is done by going out of ourselves to Jesus Christ, and by acting our faith upon Christ, and by bringing the strength of Christ into our souls. A man may go very far with the use of reason alone to help him to contentment, but when reason is at a *non-plus*, then set faith on work: This is above reason. It would be a ridiculous thing in the schools of philosophy to say, *If there be a burden upon you, fetch strength from another; for another to come, and to stand under the burden they would easily grant, but that any one should be strengthened by another's strength, that is not near him in outward view, this they would think most ridiculous;* O but true believers find contentment in every condition by getting strength from another; there is strength in Christ, not only to sanctifie us and save us, but to support us under all our burdens and afflictions. And Christ expects that when we are under any burden, that we should act our faith upon him, to draw virtue and strength from him. O sweet consolation! If a man have a burden upon him, yet if he have strength added to him, if the burden be doubled, yet if his strength be trebled, the burden will not be heavier but lighter, than it was before to his natural strength; so if our afflictions be heavy and we cry out, 'Oh we cannot bear them!' Yet if we cannot bear them with our own strength, why may we not bear them with the strength of Jesus Christ? Do we think that Christ could not bear them? or if we dare not think but that Christ could bear them, Why may not we come to bear them? Some may question, Can we have the strength of Christ? Yes; that very strength is made over to us by faith, for so the scripture saith frequently, *The Lord is our strength, God is our*

strength, and Christ is our strength, Psa. xxviii. 7. and xlii. 2. and cxviii. 14. Isa. xii. 2. Heb. iii. 19. And therefore is Christ's strength ours, made over unto us, that we may be able to bear whatsoever lies upon us. This was Paul's prayer for the Colossians, *that they might be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness*, Col. i. 11. 1. Here's strengthening with all might. 2. Here's strengthening with all might according to the glorious power of God in Christ. 3. Here's strengthening with all might according to the glorious power of God in Christ. 4. Here's the end, unto what? It is *unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness*. Oh you that are now under sad and heavy afflictions more than ordinary, look upon this scripture, and consider how it is made good in you, that so you may with comfort say, Through God's mercy I find that strength coming into me, that is here spoken of in this scripture.

6. Let us fetch contentment from the covenant, and from the particular promises in the covenant for the supplying of every particular want. There is no condition that a godly man can be in, but there is some promise or other in the scripture to help him in that condition: and this is the way of his contentment: to go out to the promise, to plead the promise, to fetch from the promise that which may supply. But hath faith warrant to believe whatsoever we find in the promise literally? I dare not say so, but howsoever it may act upon it, and believe that God will make it good in his own way. But I am in affliction, and here is a promise that God will deliver me out of it, I act faith upon it, but I am not delivered, what good now is there in this promise to me? I answer, 1. Notwithstanding our non-deliverance, yet now are we under the protection of God more than others are. 2. Notwithstanding the affliction continues, yet the evil of the affliction is now taken away. 3. Notwithstanding

God makes use of this affliction for other ends, yet he will make it up to us some other way, which shall be as good. *q. d.* Let me have your health your liberty, your life, you shall not lose by it, I will make it up to you some other way.

7. Let us by faith realize the glorious things of heaven to us: *Faith* we know, *is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. Faith makes the kingdom of heaven, and the glory that is to come as now present: Hence the martyrs had such contentment in their sufferings: 'Tho' we have but an hard break-fast, say some, yet we shall have a good dinner, we shall presently be in heaven.' 'Let us but shut our eyes, said others, and we shall be in heaven presently.' 'It is but a little cloud,' said Athanasius, and it will be presently over.' We faint not, said the apostle, why? Because *these light afflictions that are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17. The saints in their afflictions see heaven by them, and that contents them. As the mariners though they were troubled before they could see land, yet when they come nigh the shore, and see such a land-mark, that contents them exceedingly: So the godly though they may be tossed in the midst of waves and storms, yet seeing the glory of heaven before them, they content themselves. One drop of the sweetness of heaven is enough to take away all the sour and bitter of all the afflictions in the world.

8. Pray for this grace of contentment. It is God's gift and it is a soul-business; it is an inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit; which comes not so much from any outward arguments, or any outward thing, as from the disposition of our own hearts; that contentment that comes merely from external arguments, will not hold long; if it be habitual and constant, it ever comes from the gracious temper

of a man's own spirit, and therefore we had need to pray that God would *create in us clean hearts, and that he would renew right spirits* (or constant spirits, as it is in the original) within us, Psalm li. 10. All the rules and helps in the world will do us little good, except we get a good temper within our hearts: you can never make a ship go steady with propping of it without; you know there must be ballast within the ship, that must make it go steady; and so there is nothing without us that can keep our hearts in a steady constant way but that that is within us; grace is within the soul, and that will do it. O pray we to God to create this christian contentation within us, open we our hearts unto God, and then with Hanna we shall come from prayer, *and look no more sad*, 1 Sam. i. 18.

§. 3. *How we must improve sufferings.*

WE must not only be contented under God's afflicting hand, but we must labour to thrive under it: certainly there is a blessing in every ordinance of God, if we have wisdom and care to draw it forth, and to make it our own. Austin (in his book *De civitate Dei*, l. 2. c. 33.) cries out against such who did not profit by afflictions. 'You,' saith he, 'have lost the profit of this calamity.' As it is a sign of great wickedness to turn blessings into curses, so it is a sign of great grace to turn curses into blessings; by this improvement we shall not only get water, but honey out of the rock. But how should we improve our afflictions?

1. Be jealous of ourselves, lest that our sufferings should pass away un sanctified. Be we more afraid of the affliction leaving of us, than of its continuing upon us; lay out our strength more for a sanctified use of it, than for deliverance from it, that we may say with David, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes*, Psalm cxix. 71.

2. 'Labour to know God's mind in our afflictions.' The man of wisdom sees God's name upon this rod, and he understands what God intends, *viz.* whether he sends them for sin, or for some other ends. Only observe, though God sends afflictions sometimes for trial, and other ends, rather than for sin, yet it is sin that makes us capable of such a way of trial; were we not sinful, God would not deal with us that way, therefore it is good in all to be humbled for sin. But here two questions are to be discussed.

1. *How we may discern God's ends in our afflictions?*

2. *If it be rather for sin, how we may find out the particular sin?*

For the first, 'God's ends in afflicting us, may be discerned thus.

1. If the affliction be extraordinary, and come in an extraordinary way: and upon examination we find ourselves not guilty of any special evil besides daily incurSIONS, then we may comfortably hope God's intentions are not specially for sin, but for some other end; so it was in Job and Joseph.

2. We may know from the work of the affliction, which way it tends, and how God follows it; whether in it God settles not sin upon our heart for humiliation more than ordinary; or, whether the work of God's Spirit, be not rather for the stirring up of the exercise of some other grace: for God in his dealings with his people will work for the attaining the ends he aims at.

3. Much may be learned from the issue of an affliction; when God comes chiefly for trial, in the issue his grace does much abound towards his servants, as it did in Joseph and Job: what honour was Joseph advanced unto? and how had Job (chap. xlii. 10.) given him *thrice as much as he had before?* But when the affliction is for sin, it doth not use to have such an issue; it is well if the sinner be restored into such a comfortable condition as he was in before

fore: when David was afflicted for his sin, some scars stuck by him after his deliverance, he scarce ever was brought into that comfortable condition he was in before.

For the second, *If the affliction be for sin, how may we find out the particular sin?* I answer,

1. Look what sins and afflictions the word hath coupled together; although every sin deserves all kinds of afflictions, yet the word joins some special correction to special transgressions; as God forts several promises to several graces, so he forts several afflictions to several sins.

2. Consider what sins and afflictions providence couples in respect of similitude: God often stamps the likeness of the sin upon the judgment, Judges i. 7, 8.

3. Enquire at the mouth of God by prayer and humiliation, as David did, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. and as Job did, Job x. 2. and as those in Jeremiah did, Jer. xvi. 10, 11.

4. Hearken to the voice of conscience, that is God's officer in our souls; especially after humiliation and seeking of God, then listen to the voice of conscience: for, as it is with an officer whom you would have search the records, if you would have him diligent indeed in the search, you must give him his fee, else he will do the work but slightly; so we must give conscience, God's register his fee, *i. e.* we must let conscience have much prayer and humiliation, which it calls for, and then it will tell us God's mind more fully.

5. When we have found out our sins, let us, 1. take notice of God's displeasure against us. 2. Let us be humbled for it. 3. Let us stir up our hearts against it with indignation. 'This is that which hath caused me all this wo, that hath brought upon me all this trouble and smart.' As the Jews took hold on Paul crying, Acts xxi. 28. *Men of Israel help, this is the man that teacheth every where against the people: so should we take hold on our sin that we have found out, and cry to the*

Lord; 'Help, O Lord, this is that sin, that hath made the breach, this is that sin that hath been the cause of so much evil unto me. As we read of Antony after Julius Cesar was murdered, he brought forth his coat all bloody and cut, and laid it before the people: 'Look here,' says he, 'you have your emperor's coat thus bloody and torn.' Whereupon the people were presently in an uprore, and cried out to slay those murderers: thus the looking upon our afflictions, and considering what mischief sin hath done us, our hearts should be raised to fly upon our sin with indignation, and not be satisfied without the destruction of that which would have destroyed us.

6. Let us promise and covenant reformation, and begin the work while the affliction is on us. Do something now presently, do not put off all till the suffering be over, till we be recovered or delivered, and think, *then I will do it*, Psalm lxxvi. 14. There is much deceit of the heart this way; many miscarry in their vows to God upon this ground, because they put off all till they be out of their affliction; for by that time, the impression that was upon their spirits is abated, their hearts are cooled, and so the duty is neglected, wherefore do something presently, and be always in doing, till that which was vowed be fully performed.

7. Let every affliction drive us much to God in prayer. James v. 13. *Is any man afflicted, let him pray.* It is a similitude of Chrylostom's, 'As clouds darken the heavens, and cause lowering weather, but being distilled into drops, then sweet sunshine, and fair weather follows: so sorrows and cares in the soul cloud the soul, till they be distilled in prayer into tears, and poured forth before the Lord, but then the sweet beams of God's grace come in, and much blessing follows.

8. Let us not cease to seek and sue till we have some assurance that we have made our peace with God: this is that the Lord

Lord looks for at our hands in all our crosses, and the chief end he aims at in afflicting his children, to cause them to seek him more diligently, and to get better assurance of his favour; Isaiah xxvii. 5. *Let him take hold of my strength* (saith God) *that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.* This is done these three ways. 1. By acknowledging

unto God freely our manifold sins, and so justifying him in his judgments, as David did, Psalm xxxii. 5. *I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.*

2. By praying for, and seeking assurance of his favour in the pardon of our sins, Isaiah xxvi. 16. *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.* 3. By forsaking our sin whereby we had provoked him, Isaiah xxvii. 9. *By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.* It is good that we practise all these three ways, and never cease practising, till God hath assured us that he is at peace with us.

9. Let us now (if ever) try, exercise, and improve our faith, wisdom, zeal, patience, and all other graces of the Spirit.

1. Let us try our graces: what graces? (1.) Our faith: it is an easy matter to trust God when our barns and coffers are full, and to say, *Give us our daily bread,* when we have it in our cupboards: but when we have nothing, when we know not how nor whence to get any thing in the world, then to depend upon an invincible bounty, this is a true and noble act of faith. (2.) Our wisdom: Plato, being demanded how he knew a wise man, answered: 'When being rebuked he would not be angry, and being praised he would not be proud.' Our disposition is never well known to ourselves, until we be crossed.

(3.) Our zeal: a little water cast upon the fire makes it burn hotter and brighter; so should our afflictions make us more zealous and fiery for God, and for good causes and for good men: the wicked, in afflictions, are many times furious, but never zealous, they are often like wild beasts that grow mad with beatings, if crosses or losses rush in upon them, they fall to the language of Job's wife, *Curse God and die;* or, to that of the king of Israel's messenger, 2 Kings vi. 33. *Why should I serve God any longer?* (4.) Our sincerity: thus was Job's sincerity discovered by Satan's malice; after all his losses he says no more but, *The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh* ——— *In all this Job did not sin with his lips.* (5.) Our patience: when it is calm weather, the sea is quiet, and still as any river, but let the winds arise once, and we shall see a difference: for then the sea foams and rages, and *casteth out mire and dirt.* We are that indeed which we are in temptation; if we cannot abide a drawing plaister to drain away corrupt blood and humours, how should we abide cutting of joints and members? how *pulling out eyes*, which repentance must do?

2. Let us exercise our graces: afflictions give opportunity for this, it calls forth whatsoever grace there is in the heart to the exercise of it. The apostle speaking of saints-sufferings, saith thus, Rev. xiii. 10. *Here is the patience and faith of saints, i. e.* Here is matter for their patience and faith to be exercised about; this calls for the working of their patience and faith; and so for other graces, as, Humility, Self-denial, Love to God, Meekness, waiting on Christ, loving our enemies, not resisting of evil, fervent prayer. O what mighty prayers, and lively stirrings of spirit are there many times in afflictions? Isa. xxvi. 16. *They poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them;* our prayers do but drop out before, now they are poured out. And this is it that many times makes God to afflict us, because God delights much to see the exercise of our graces: when spices are beaten, then they send

send forth their fragrant smell; so when God's servants are in afflictions, then their graces send forth their sweetness in the activeness of them: grace is ever better for wearing.

3. Let us improve our graces. John xv. 2. *Every branch in me* (saith Christ) *that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit.* This is the end of Christ's purging us, that we may be more fruitful; as vines are made more fruitful by pruning, so are God's people by the pruning-knife of afflictions: now they find more peace, more assurance, more strength than ever they did before: never such sweet joy, never such full assurance, never such use of faith, and patience, and love, as in the forest and longest afflictions: is it thus with us now? O this may be a sweet seal to our souls of their sincerity ever after afflictions. God's people never thrive so much in grace, as when they are watered in their own tears; Manasses his chain was more profitable to him than his crown. 'There is a great deal of difference (could Luther say) between a divine in outward pomp, and a divine under the cross: they that are afflicted do better understand scripture; but those that are secure in their prosperity, read them as verses in Ovid.' But what graces must we improve? I answer, every grace, only I shall instance in these. (1.) Our spiritual wisdom. To this purpose God is said to *open the ears of men even by their afflictions*, Job xxxiii. 16. We are best instructed when we are afflicted: *It is good for me that I have been afflicted*, saith David, *that I might learn thy statutes*, Psal. cxix. 72. Algerius, a martyr, could say, 'that he received more light in the dark dungeon, than ever he received before in all the world.' And Luther professed, 'that he never understood some of David's Psalms till he was in affliction: when all is done, said he, tribulation is the plainest and most sincere divinity.' Prayer, reading, medi-

tation, and temptations make a divine. (2.) Our patience. To this purpose, *We rejoice in tribulation*, said the apostle, Rom. v. 3. *knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience.* My brethren, saith James, ch. i. 23. *count it exceeding joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith bringeth forth patience.* The malice of our enemies both proves and improves our patience. See it exemplified in David, when Shimei cursed, and cast stones at David, and called him murdurer, and wicked man; poor afflicted David was so far from revenging it, or suffering others to revenge it, that he makes that very thing an argument of his patience which was the exercise of it. *Behold my son*, saith he, *who came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life, how much more may this Benjamite do it?* 2 Sam. xvi. 12. (3.) Our faith. To this end God afflicts us that our faith may increase: as it is said of the palm-tree, that it groweth higher and stronger, and more and more fruitful, by how much the more weight it hath hanging upon it; or, as it is said of the lion, that she seems to leave her young-ones till they have almost killed themselves with roaring and howling, but at last gasp she relieves them, whereby they become the more courageous; so it pleaseth the Lord sometimes to leave his children. *Out of the depths have I cried unto thee*, saith David, Ps. cxxx. 1. *and then*, and not till then, it follows, *the Lord heard me.* The Lord saw him sinking all the while, yet lets him alone till he was at the bottom, and then hearing him, David is stronger in faith. This is the height of faith, and the worth of faith; to have a strong confidence in God, even in the worst of affliction, this is thank-worthy: hope in a state hopeless, a love to God when there is nothing but signs of his heavy displeasure, heavenly-mindedness when all worldly affairs draw contrary-way, is the chief praise of faith. What made our Saviour say to that woman of Canaan, *O woman, great is thy faith*,

faith, Matth. xv. 28. but this, in that neither his silence, nor his flat denial could silence her? such a faith had Job, ch. xiii. 15. *Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him.* Here is faith to the purpose; to love that God who crosseth us, to kiss that hand which striketh us, to trust in that power which kills us, this is the honourable proof of a Christian, this argues faith indeed.

8. Be we thankful to God for our afflictions: thus Job was, notwithstanding he was bereaved of his estate, of his children, and in a great measure given up into the hands of Satan, yet he blesteth the Lord, *The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord*, Job i. 21. And this is the meaning of the prophet, Isaiah xxiv. 15. *Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea.* And thus adviseth the apostle, 1 Pet. iv. 16. *If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf.* And a little time before, *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory, and of God resteth on you.* As Noah's dove hovered over the water, and found no place to rest her foot on, until she returned to the ark; so doth the Spirit of God, as it were, hover over the souls of men, it wanteth rest, and when it sees a soul that suffers for the truth, there it lights, there it rests, *The Spirit of God and of glory there resteth upon you.* A Christian is more bound to be thankful for the opportunity of exercising one grace, than for all the prosperity in the world: now there are some graces that cannot be exercised but only in affliction; the saints in heaven never exercise patience, and without affliction the saints on earth have no opportunity to exercise patience: but what? have we the opportunity of exercising that grace that we had not before? be we thankful to God.

9. Let us *with joy draw out of the wells of salvation*, Isa. xii. 3. Let us comfort

ourselves in our suffering condition: we should not only be thankful, but joyful. Methinks I hear some suffering saint sigh and say, *What? Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? I weep sore in the night, and my tears are on my cheeks; among all my lovers there is none to comfort, all my friends have dealt treacherously with me, they have heard that I sigh, and there is none to refresh me. I stand for Christ, but there is none stands by me, I own him, but none owns me*, Lam. i. 2, 12. Bleeding Christian, bear up, though men forsake thee, yet Christ will own thee; tho' men, as swallow-shallow friends, do leave thee in the winter of afflictions, yet Christ as a constant friend, abides: it is thy glory that thou sufferest for Christ, rejoice as Paul did, in thy sufferings, sith in them thou fillest up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, Col. i. 24. Know this for thy comfort, that *if thou sufferest with him, thou shalt also reign with him*, 2 Tim. ii. 12. In the mean while, what sweetness dost thou feel from Christ? It is thy privilege, and surely thou mayest, I hope thou dost expect more than ordinary sweetness from thy Saviour, seest thou not heaven clear over thee? doth not Christ lead thee gently, the cup in thy hand, tho' it taste bitter to the flesh, doth not the spirit make it sweet? What's that in the bottom of thy bloody cup? Is it not love? are not thy draughts of sufferings sweeter and sweeter? What glory is that which rests upon thee? Is not Christ with thee in the fire, and doth not he pass with thee thro' water? in this thy storm of wind and rain, doth not the sun shine? 'Ah no, I suffer for Christ, and yet I am without Christ; could I but have his presence, I should slight persecutions; did he smile, I should laugh at my foes frowns; were I but in the light of him, I could sing in this darkness; did I but enjoy the least of his love, I could triumph in the flame of their wrath; but, alas, alas, wo, etc.' Stay, O soul, speak

not out thy sorrows too speedily, Christ cannot be long away, hark! he comes leaping over the mountains, see how the clouds fly away; surely the sun will shine presently, he cannot be long away; thy very sins shall not, therefore thy sufferings cannot separate between him and thee; *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord: hast thou not heard, hast thou not known the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth? He fainteth not, he giveth power to the faint,* Isa. xli. 27, 28. Sing, ye sufferers, rejoice, ye prisoners of hope; the Lord whom ye look for, and long after, he is with you, he cannot be absent from you; Christ is in your prison (though it may be you are not aware of it) however, *cast not away your confidence, for he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith, 'tis spoken to sufferers) But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him,* Heb. x. 35, 37, 38.

But that I may draw out many arguments for your comfort, consider of these particulars.

1. Christ is especially present with his suffering saints. Thus run the promises, *I will be with him in trouble, and will deliver him. Fear not, O Israel, when thou passest through the water, I will be with thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee,* Isa. xliii. 1, 2. Oh what sweet promises, what flaggons of wine are these to comfort the distressed soul. As Cesar said to the trembling mariners, 'Be not afraid, for you carry Cesar:' so may I say to poor, persecuted, afflicted Christians, 'Be not afraid, for he that is your king is in you, for you, with you.' Upon this ground David comforted his soul, *Tho' I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me,* Psalm xxiii. 4. When Paul was bereaved

of his sight, then, as some conceive, he was rapt into the third heaven, and heard those words *from Christ not fit to be uttered,* 2 Cor. xii. 4. When Stephen was at the bar, and the shower of stones was ready to fall upon his head, then *he saw heaven itself open, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God,* Acts vii. 57. When the three children were in the furnace, Christ was there to make the fourth, *I saw four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God,* Dan. iii. 25.

2. Christ is not only present, but supportingly present with his in their sufferings. *Thou art with me,* saith David, *thy rod and thy staff comfort me,* Psalm xxiii. 4. Though all men forsook Paul when he was to answer before Nero, *Notwithstanding,* saith Paul, *Christ the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me,* 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.

3. Christ gives his saints cordials suitable to their sufferings. *They shall put you out of the synagogue,* saith Christ, *and kill you,* John xvi. 2. 1. *They shall excommunicate you;* now as suitable to this Christ told them that he went to *prepare mansions for them in his Father's house,* Joh. xiv. 2. 2. *They shall kill you,* now as suitable to this Christ tells them that their lives should be as sure as his; *because I live, ye shall live also,* John xiv. 19. Thus Christ hath suitable cordials; if men frown, he hath smiles; if men disgrace, he hath honours; if you lose perishing riches, he hath durable unsearchable riches. Whatsoever you suffer loss in, he will make it up.

4. Christ sympathizeth with his suffering saints. *In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them,* Isa. lxiii. 9. Christians, suffer when and where you will, Christ suffers then, and there with you. Had persecutors eyes, they would see this, and they would be afraid of this. 'If we perish, Christ perisheth with us,' could Luther say. Suffering-saints! Christ so loves you, as that he suffers with you;

you; are you in dungeons? Christ is there too: are you with Job on the dung-hill? Christ there sits by you; every drop of blood that you bleed, goes to the heart of Jesus Christ: the baptism of affliction wherewith ye are baptized is Christ's. Count not, call not that yours, which is his; surely he rather suffers in you, than you for him; or if you will say, you suffer for him, yet know he sympathizeth with you in those sufferings.

5. Christ ordereth all the sufferings of his saints for quality, quantity, and duration. (1.) For quality, Christ orders to some mockings, bonds, imprisonments; to others stoning, sawing, killing with the sword; Christ tells Peter by what death he should glorifie him, John xxi. 19. (2.) For quantity, *Thou tellest my wanderings*, Pf. lvi. 8. he means the wanderings whilst he was persecuted, such wanderings as the apostle means, *They wandered about in sheep skins, and goats skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented*, Heb. xi. 37. David must not wander a step more than Christ would: nor shall saints weep a tear, nor bleed a drop, nor bear a stripe more than Christ will number out. (3.) For duration, he orders that too; *Ye shall have tribulation ten days. The Gentiles shall tread the holy city under foot forty two months. The witnesses shall lie in the streets three days, and an half*, Revel. ii. 10. xi. 2, 9. So many days, months, years, Christ orders all.

6. Christ often gives to his saints most glorious visions in their grievous sufferings: was it not thus with John, and Stephen? and how many martyrs have spoke of spiritual visions, visits, incomes which they have had in prisons, the like unto which they never found nor felt at other times? We give our rings, jewels, chains, net-works to our children if they be in pains, which we lock up in closets and cabinets at other times; Christ gives cabinet-comforts, lockt up, and unusual discoveries to his

members in prisons and dungeons, of which many have had sweet and gracious experiences. Rev. i. 12. Acts vii. 54, 55.

7. Christ rewards all the sufferings of his saints. *To you that have continued with me in my temptation, I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed me*, Luke xxii. 29, 30. *For our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17. *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us*, Rom. viii. 18. *And blessed is the man that endureth temptations, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life*, Jam. i. 12. 'Tortures are but tradings with God for glory,' said Grotius. And 'persecutors are but my father's goldsmiths who are working to add pearls to the crowns of saints,' said Bernard. Christians, comfort yourselves with these words.

§. 4. *Of the manner how to carry ourselves when sufferings and afflictions are gone.*

THE duties that concern us when afflictions are gone, are these,

(1.) That we treasure up all the experiences we have had of God, and of our own hearts in the time of our affliction: keep we them fresh in our hearts, and work them upon our own spirits, and make use of them as God offers occasion. (2.) Whatsoever we wished that we had done then, be sure now to set about, and never rest till it be done, that when affliction comes again, it may not find it undone, if it doth, it will make the affliction very bitter unto us; if this rule were well observed, we should have glorious reformations. (3.) Be we careful to perform the vows we have made in our afflictions. Most hypocrites have many good motions and purposes, and seem to be new men in their afflictions, but when God's hand is removed, they return to their old bias again, yea become worse than

before; only the elect are better for their afflictions afterwards; *Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy word*, Psalm cxix. 67. (4.) Take heed of trusting to our own promises that we have made to God for obedience, rather than his promises he hath made to us for assistance. (5.) Often call ourselves to account after the affliction is over, what is become

of it? how was it with me then? and how is it now? have I more peace now than I had then? and how comes it about? hath my peace grown upon good grounds, to as that it may hold? I had workings of spirit then, what are become of them? Have I been faithful to God and my own soul?

Thus much of the sufferings of saints.

CHAP. XVII. SECT. I.

Of Preparatives to Fasting.

HITHERTO of duties ordinary; now follow the extraordinary, Fasting and feasting; but because the book has swollen bigger than I had purposed it, and that much of the extraordinary is contained in the ordinary duties, I shall therefore deliver in a few words what I have to say of these duties.

The first of these is fasting, in which there is required something Antecedent, Concomitant, Subsequent.

1. The antecedent or preparation thereunto, consists in these particulars.

1. Take but a moderate supper the night before; for if a man glut himself over night, he will be more unfit for the duty of humiliation the next day.

2. Immediately after supper, all servile works of our calling laid aside, begin the preparation, and continue so long as we can conveniently sit up, even longer and latter than upon other days: *From even to even (shall ye celebrate your Sabbath, * faith God, Lev. xxiii. 23. and therefore † then set the time allotted apart for that holy work, propounding to ourselves the end of our intended fast, resolving to keep it*

to God according to his will, adding serious petitions to God in our prayers, in that behalf.

3. When we awake that night, let not our thoughts be upon worldly business, much less upon any wicked thing, but let them be holy, such as may tend to the furtherance of the holy actions to be done the next day.

4. Arise early the day of our fast; this agrees well with a fasting-day; it is probable, that for this cause some *lay on the ground*, 2 Sam. xii. 16. others in *sackcloth*, Joel i. 13. in the nights of their fasts, not only to express, but to further their humiliation, by keeping them from sleeping over much or over sweetly.

5. In the morning, after some renewing of our preparation, and prayer for God's spiritual grace to enable us to sanctify a fast that day, apply we our selves to the main work of the day, of which in the next section.

§. 2. *Of the duties required in fasting.*

IN the action of Fasting there are duties inward, and outward.

* I speak not this in reference to our Lord's day; indeed the seventh day (Sabbath among the Jews began at evening, and so ended the next day evening, according to the beginning and ending of natural days from the creation (as it is said, The evening and morning made the first day) but our Lord's day beginneth in the morning from the resurrection of Christ on the morning on that day; and that's not without a mystery, that the legal sabbath began with darkness, and the evangelical began with light.

† This *then* hath only reference to this occasional sabbath of fasting, or humiliation for sin.

I. The inward duties are general, and more special.

1. The duties that more generally concern the nature of the day, are such as these :

(1.) In the true spiritual fast, there must be fasting from sin, or the forsaking of all our sins; for while we abstain from lawful things, we are aimonished much more to abstain from all things that are utterly unlawful at all times. It is the Lord's complaint, *Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and smite with the fist of wickedness, ye shall not fast as ye do this day*, Isa. lviii.

4. It is plain the Lord will endure no fast of those that go on still in their wickedness.

(2.) The word and prayer must be added: *I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven*, said Nehemiah: *And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God, one fourth part of the day, and another fourth part they confessed and worshipped the Lord their God*, Neh.

i. 4. ix. 3. But whereas prayer is a daily and ordinary exercise of the saints, it is manifest, that by prayer coupled with fasting, is understood a special and peerless kind of prayer, wherein two things are required. 1. Fervency of desire; now we must not only pray, *but cry unto the Lord*, Joel i. 14. yea as the Ninevites speak, *We are to cry mightily unto him*, Jonah iii. 8. For the use of our outward abstinence, is but the wing of prayer, wherewith it might more easily fly up to heaven. 2. In such a prayer there should be an assurance of faith: the Lord hath made a gracious promise in many places to this ordinance, 2 Chron. vii. 14. Isa. lviii. 8, 13. Joel ii. 18, 19. and let all the falls of the church of Christ, both in the Old and New Testament, be looked at, as Judg. xx. 23. Ezra ix. 6. Esth. iv. 16. Acts xiii. 2, 3. and it will appear, that the end of their fasts (kept in any measure of truth and sincerity) was a feast, and the issue of their mourning, great rejoicing; all which may serve

wonderfully to strengthen our faith in this holy performance.

(3.) Works of mercy must be added; *Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to deal thy bread unto the hungry, to bring the poor that are cast out, into thine house, and when thou seeest the naked, to cover them?* Isa. lviii. 6, 7. In all our fasts this must be observed, that the poor may have the gain of our fasting; If their Joins and bowels bless us, the Lord also will bless us abundantly.

(4.) We must ever in these days of humiliation, renew our covenant with the Lord: and not only unfeignedly purpose, but faithfully promise amendment of life; this making, renewing and keeping our covenant, is the life and sum, and the one most necessary thing in this excellent and extraordinary exercise of fasting and prayer.

2. The particular duties, wherein we must seriously exercise our souls on such a day, are these: (1.) In a right survey and full comprehension of all our vileness, iniquities, transgressions, and sins. (2.) In a right apprehension of God's dreadful wrath and flaming vengeance against sin. (3.) In a feeling sense of our own unspeakable, and inconceivable misery by reason thereof. (4.) In a vile and base conceit and esteem of our selves, abhorring ourselves in dust and ashes. (5.) In an inward sorrow, renting of the heart, bleeding of the soul, accompanied with an outward bewailing, with a plentiful and heart piercing confession of all our sins before God's gracious throne. (6.) In a resolute hatred, dislike and aversion in the will; in an impregnable resolution and strong reasoning of mind; in a constant endeavour and watchful opposition against sin. (7.) In a heart-grieving, that we cannot perform all these more heartily, sincerely and soundly.

II. The outward duties consist especially in outward abstinence: as,

1. From sleep, whence that exhortation

in some sense, *Watch unto prayer*, Col. iv.

2. 1 Peter iv. 7.

2. From costly apparel, from ornaments and better attire, Exodus xxxiii. 4, 5, 6. Jonah iii. 6.

3. From matrimonial benevolence, from that society which God hath sanctified by his word to married persons, 1 Cor. vii. 5. Joel ii. 16.

4. From bodily labours and worldly business, Lev. xvi. 29, 31. xxiii. 32. Joel i. 14. ii. 15.

5. From food wholly; and yet this total abstinence from meat and drink is not so strictly required, but that they whose health cannot bear it, may, in case of true necessity, take some little refreshing, lest otherwise they hazard and hurt their health, and unfit themselves for the spiritual exercise and duty; indeed we have no example in this case propounded in scripture, yet we have sufficient ground for it, Hof. vi. 6. Matth. xii. 7.

6. From all carnal delights and pleasures of this life, Joel ii. 16. David and Daniel would not anoint themselves at such a time, 1 Sam. xii. 20. Dan. x. 3. And all these outward duties are to be observed, 1. Partly as helps to our humiliation, in renouncing the hindrances thereof, 2. Partly as signs of our humiliation, whereby we acknowledge ourselves unworthy of these delights. 3. Partly as evidences of our repentance, in that by way of godly revenge we deprive our senses, which have all sinned, of their several delights.

§. 3. *Of the duties after fasting.*

WHEN all is done and performed, observe these particulars;

1. Take heed of inward pride, and resting in the performance: spiritual pride is that worm that will breed in the best fruits of the spirit, that poison which the devil (the hellish spider) will suck out of the best flowers in God's garden; and if he can but prevail over us to be self-con-

ceited with our enlargements, or to trust to that service we have done, he hath what he looks for, and deprives us of all the comfort of our humiliation: labour therefore, as much as we can, to humble ourselves with a thorough view of our failings in the best of our performances; and for our enlargements, consider we the fountain of them, which is not any ability of our own, but the good Spirit of God, breathing when and where it listeth, and setting out our strait hearts, which otherwise would be utterly closed and shut up; let Christ have the glory of all our abilities, who hath given us his grace, but *will not give his glory to another.*

2. Hold the strength which we have got that day as much as we can; keep we still our interest and holy acquaintance, which we have gotten with God, and with the holy exercises of religion; unloose not the bent of our care and affections against sin, and for God; it is a corruption of our nature, and it is a policy of Satan to help it forward, that like some unwise warriors, when they have gotten the day of their enemies, we grow full of presumption and security, by which the enemy taketh advantage to recollect his forces, and coming upon us unlooked for, gives us the foil, if not the overthrow; we are too apt, after a day of humiliation, to fall into a kind of remissness, as if then we had gotten the mastery; whereas if Satan fly from us, if sin be weakened in us, it is but for a season, and but in part, and especially if we stand not upon our watch, Satan will take occasion to return, and sin will revive in us, Luke iv. 13. Matth. xii. 44.

3. Wait upon God for return; we must not presume that presently upon the work done, God must grant our asking; as hypocrites that could say, *We have fasted and thou hast not regarded it*, Isa. lviii. 3. we may and must expect a gracious hearing, upon our unfeigned humiliation, *All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing,* ye

ye shall receive, Mat. xxi. 22. but as for when and how, we must wait patiently; it is true, faith secureth us of good success, *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us,* 1 John v. 14. but faith neither prescribeth unto God how; *For who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord? or who being his counsellor hath taught him?*

Isaiah xl. 13. nor yet doth it make haste, *Behold, I laid in Zion a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste,* Isaiah xxviii. 16. Faith waits God's leisure, when he in his wisdom shall judge it most seasonable, that is the time.

And thus much of our duty before, in, and after religious fasting.

CHAPTER XVIII. SECTION I.

Of the Duties before Thanksgiving, or Feasting.

THE second duty extraordinary, is, Holy Feasting or Thanksgiving; and the preparation thereto consists in these particulars:

1. In stirring up ourselves to the performance of this duty: *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name: bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,* Psalm ciii. 1, 2.

2. In meditating on God's undeserved bounty towards us, and of our own unworthiness to God: *O God of my fathers, which saidst to me, I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant,* Gen. xxxii. 9, 10.

3. In craving the assistance of God's Spirit (because of ourselves we are unable) *to open our lips, that we may shew forth his praise,* Psalm li. 17.

§. 2. *Of the duties required in thanksgiving.*

IN the action of Thanksgiving there are duties inward, and outward.

I. The inward duties are *charis*, Thankfulness, *chara*, Cheerfulness.

1. Thankfulness of the soul, which implies Mindfulness, Acknowledgment, Affection.

(1.) We must mind, and therefore we are often stirred up to remember God's benefits, Deut. vi. 12. viii. 18. xxxii. 18.

Psalm ciii. 2.

(2.) We must acknowledge God's goodness, James i. 17. Deut. viii. 18. and our beheldedness, in respect of own nullity and unworthiness, 1 Cor. iv. 7. 1 Chron. xvii. 16.

3. We must prize and esteem God's benefits, endeavouring to amplify them, in respect of their greatness, excellency, profit, necessity, sufficiency, acknowledging therein God's wisdom, power, goodness, fatherly providence and bounty towards us, Pf. xvi. 5, 6. Mark vii. 37. Rom. viii. 28. and this acknowledgment, if it be effectual, will work affection in the heart, a sense of God's goodness and bounty towards us, causing us to love God, and to be obsequious towards God in all the duties of thankfulness.

2. Cheerfulness and alacrity of spirit; as the Lord loves a cheerful giver, so a cheerful thankgiver; *charis* thanks, comes from *chairo*, to rejoice; *charis* must be *meta charas*, with joy Phil. i. 5. James v. 13. The holy Ghost in many places hath joined them together, *I will be glad and rejoice in thee, I will sing praise unto thy name, O thou most high: rejoice in the Lord; O ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright: it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High; for thou hast made me glad through thy work, I will triumph*

in the works of thy hands, Ps. ix. 2. xxxiii.

I. xcii, 1. 4.

II. The outward duty, is to express our inward thankfulness and cheerfulness: our thankfulness, by celebrating and praising the name of God, by extolling his goodness, by recounting his mercies, and by exciting others to praise the Lord: our cheerfulness, by making a joyful noise and singing unto God: *Sing aloud unto God our strength, make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob: make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands, serve the Lord with gladness, come before his presence with singing*, Psa. lxxxii. 1. c. 1, 2. To this purpose we may sing the psalms in the end of this book, or some such other.

SECT. IV. *Of Psalms suitable to this duty, translated by Mr. W. B.*

PSALM c. To the tune, *Have mercy, &c.*

ALL men of mortal birth,
That dwell in all the earth,
2. O make a noise to God with joys,
and serve the Lord with mirth.
O come before his throne
with singing every one:
3. For certainly the Lord most High
even he is God alone.
He made us, and not we,
not we ourselves, but he.
His folk and flock, and pasture stock,
he made us for to be:
4. With praise come to his gate,
and to his courts relate
His laud and fame, and bless his name,
his honour celebrate.
5. For God is good for ever,
his mercy faileth never,
His truth doth last all ages past,
and constant doth persevere.

PSALM cviii. First part.

O God, I fix my heart,
my glory bears a part,
And as my tongue so shall my song
praise thee with musick's art.
2. Walk harp and psaltery,
right early walk will I;
3. Thy praises, Lord, will I record,
the people standing by.

§. 3. *Of the duties after thanksgiving.*
THE duty after, consists in these particulars:

1. In referring the benefits and gifts received, to the glory of God the giver, in the good of his church.

2. In seeking to glorify God who hath been so gracious unto us, in bringing forth the fruits of a godly life: *Hercin is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit*, John xv. 8.

3. In honouring the Lord with our substance, and acknowledging him to be the chief Lord of all we possess, *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruit of all thy increase*, Prov. iv. 9.

I'll praise thee with my song,
the nations all among:

4. To heavens high, to clouds of sky,
his truth and mercies throng.

5. Exalted be thy name,
above the heavens frame.

Let earth below the trumpet blow
of thy renowned fame.

PSALM cl.

PRaise, praise the Lord most high,
within his sanctuary,
In topmost tower of his great power,
with praise him magnific.

2. Praise him for acts renown'd,
with excellency crown'd;
According to his greatness, do
praise him with trumpet found.

3. O praise him cheerfully
with harp and psaltery:

4. And let the dance his praise advance,
and timbrels melody.

Praise him with joint consents
of stringed instruments.

5. The organs bring, loud cymbals ring,
each one his praise presents.

6. High sounding cymbals ring,
let every breathing thing

The praise record of this great Lord,
and Hallelujah sing.

Hallelujah, Hallelujah; Amen, Hallelujah.

U L T I M A;

T H E

L A S T T H I N G S,

In Reference to

The First and Middle Things;

O R, C E R T A I N

M E D I T A T I O N S

O N

Life, Death, Judgment, Hell, Christ's Sufferings, and Heaven.

Deut. xxxii. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.*

Eccl. vii. 38. *Whatsoever thou takest in hand, remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss.*



L I F E'S L E A S E.

Gen. xlvii. 9. *Few and evil have the days of my life been.*

WHEN Pharaoh was Egypt's king, Joseph, Pharaoh's steward, and Jacob, Joseph's father, there was a great famine which Pharaoh had dreamed, Joseph foretold, and Jacob suffered: God, that sent Joseph to Pharaoh, brings Jacob to Joseph, the same providence so disposing of all, that yet some food must be in Egypt, when nothing was found in all the land of Canaan: thither come and welcome, as you may see the story: Pharaoh salutes Jacob with this question, What is thy age? How many are thy days? how many? alas, but few: what are they? alas, but evil: thus we find Jacob at his arithmetic, the bill is short, and the number is but a cypher: will you hear him cast his accounts? 1. They are days, and without all rule of falshood, by subtraction few, by addition full of evil: contract all, and this is the sum of all, *Few and evil have the days of my life been.*

This text, briefly, is the lease of Jacob's life; God the chief Lord enriched his substance, yet limits the grant of his time: will you question the lease? for what time? no more, but my life, saith Jacob; but a life? what years? no years, but days, saith Jacob: but days? how many? not many, but few, saith Jacob; but few? how good? not good, but evil, saith Jacob: who can blaze the arms of life, that finds not in it cross and crosslet? the lease, but a life, the term, but days, the number, few, the nature, evil, nay when all is done, we see all is out of date; the days are not, but are

past, they have been, *Few and evil have the days of my life been.*

We must, you see, invert the text, and begin with that on which all hangs; it is but my life, saith Jacob.

Life.] WOULD you know what is that? take but a view of nature, and scripture, and these will sufficiently describe our life.

1. Nature, whose dim eyes see thus far: what is it? but a rose, saith Tifernas, which if you view in its growth, the cold nips it, heat withers it, the wind shakes it; be it never so fair, it withers; be we never so lively, immediately we die and perish.

A rose? that is too beautiful? 'life is but grass,' saith Plautus*, green now, withered anon; thus like the flower that is cut in summer, as soon as we are born, death is ready with his scyth; as soon as we are dead, angels gather in the harvest, on whose wings we are carried to that barn of heaven: Grass? no, saith Philemon, Life is no better than a counterfeit picture? what if the colours be fair, and the resemblance near? the shadow of death, and the curtains of our grave will darken all. A picture? that is too honourable; 'life is' (a worse resemblance) 'but a play,' saith † Lufcinus, we enter at our birth, and act all our life; presently there is an exit, or a back-return, and away we go, shutting all up with a sudden tragedy. A play? that is too large. Anonymus being asked what was life? 'he shews himself a little, and

* Ut herba fluitans.

† ecce in ludis quoque vita. *Lufcin.*

hides himself again *; his meaning was this, our life is but a little shew; and no sooner are we seen, but immediately are we hid and gone. A shew? that is too pleasant; life is nothing but a sleep, saith † Philonius, 'we live secure, and dervice-like we slumber away our time;' when all is done, as if all this were too little; we sleep again, and go from our (grave) the bed, to (that bed) our grave. A sleep? that is too quiet, it is nothing but a dream, saith Aristophanes; all our worldly pleasures are but waking dreams, at last death rouzeth our souls that have slept in sin, then lifting up our heads and seeing all is gone we awake sorrowing. A dream, or the dream of a shadow, saith Pindar; and the worst, the weakest dream that can be imagined; sure one step further, were to arrive at death's door; and yet thus far are we led by the hand of nature: nay, if you will lower, death succeeds life, and 'life is but the image of death,' saith ‡ Cato. Here is a true picture of our frailty, life is like death, indeed so like, so near together, that we cannot differ each from other.

See here the condition of our life, what is it but a rose, a grass, a picture, a play, a shew, a sleep, a dream, an image of death? such a thing is life, we so much talk of.

Use. And if nature give this light, how blind are they that cannot see life's frailty? you need no more but mark the destinies (as poets feign) to spin their threads; one holds, another draws, a third cuts it off: what is our life but a thread? some have a stronger twist, others a more slender: some live till near rot, others die when scarce born; there's none endures long, this thread of life is cut sooner or later, and then our work is done, our course is

finished. Are these the emblems of our life? and dare we trust to this broken staff? how do the heathen precede us christians in these studies? Their books were skulls, their desks were graves, their remembrancer an hour-glass. Awake your souls, and bethink you of mortality; have you any privilege for your lives? are not heathens and christians of one father Adam? of one mother earth? The gospel may free you from the second, not the first death; only provide you for the first, to escape the second death. O men, what be your thoughts? nothing but of goods and barns, and many years? you may boast of life, as Oromazes the conjurer of his egg, which, he said, included the felicity of the world, yet, being opened, there was nothing but wind: think what you please, your life is but a wind, which may be stopt soon, but cannot last long by the law of nature.

But, 2. as nature, so scripture will inform you in this point. The life of man is but of little esteem; what is it but a Shrub or a briar in the fire? *As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the life or laughter of the fool; momentary and vanity*, Eccl. vii. 6. Nay, a shrub were something, but our life is less, no better than a leaf, not a tree, nor shrub, nor fruit, nor blossom: *We all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have swept us away*, Isaiah lxiv. 6. Yet a leaf may glory of his birth, it is descended of a tree: life is a reed, sometimes broken, at least shaken, so vain, so infirm, so unconstant is the life of man: *What went ye out to see? a reed shaken with the wind?* Matth. xi. 7. Nay, a reed were something, our life is baser, indeed no better than a rush or flag. *Can a rush grow without*

* Cum parumper se ostendisset, mox se abscondit. *Red. Agric.* † Tu quiescis si curus; et in modum gliris sepulchri jaces? *Id.* ‡ Vita quid nisi mortis imago, *Cato*.

mire? tho' it were green and not cut down, yet shall it wither before any other herb, Job viii. 11, 12. What shall I say more? what shall I cry? a rush? All flesh is grass, and the grace thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; surely the people is grass, Isai. xl. 7. I am descended beneath just patience, but not so low as the life of man; as all these resemble life, so in some measure they have life: but life is like a smoke without any spark of life in it, thus cried David, My days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burnt like an hearth, Psalm cii.

3. Yet is here no stay, the smoke engenders clouds, and a cloud is the fittest resemblance of our life: *My welfare passeth away as a cloud, saith Job, and our life shall pass away as the trace of a cloud, and come to nought as the mist that is driven away with the beams of the sun, Job xxx.*

15. Neither is this all, clouds may hang calm, but life is like a tempest, it is a cloud and a wind too; *Remember that my life is but a wind, and that mine eye shall not return to see pleasure, Job vii. 7. Nay, we must lower, and find a weaker element, it is not wind, but water, said that woman of Tekoah, We are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again, 2 Sam. xiv. 14. Yet water is both a needful and necessary element; life is the least part of water, nothing but a foam, a bubble: The king of Samaria, that great king, is destroyed as a foam upon the water, Hos. x. 7. I can no more, and yet here is something less, 'a foam or bubble may burst into a vapour,' and what is your life, it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and afterwards vanisheth away, Ja. iv. 14. Less than this is nothing; yet life is something less, nothing in substance, all it is, it is but a shadow, We are strangers and sojourners as all our fathers were; our*

days are like a shadow upon the earth, and there is none abiding, 1 Chron. xxix. 15. See whither we have brought our life, and yet ere we part, we will down one step lower; upon a strict view we find neither substance nor shadow, only a mere nothing, a very vanity, behold, thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth, and my age is as nothing in respect of thee; surely every man living is altogether vanity, Psalm xxxix. 5.

Lo here the nature of our life; it is a shrub, a leaf, a reed, a rush, a grass, a smoke, a cloud, a wind, a water, a bubble, a vapour, a shadow, a nothing.

What mean we to make such ado about a matter of nothing? I cannot choose but wonder at the vanity of men, that run, ride, toil, travel, undergo any labour to maintain this life, and what is it when they have their desire which they so much toil for? we live, and yet whilst we speak this word, perhaps we die. Is this a land of the living, or a region of the dead? We that suck the air to kindle this little spark, where is our standing but at the gates of death? Psalm ix. 13. Where is our walk, but in the shadow of death? Luke i. 79. What is our mansion-house, but the body of death? Rom. vii. 24. What think ye? 'Is not this the region of death, where is nothing but the gate of death, and the shadow of death, and the body of death?' † Sure we dream that we live, but sure it is that we die; or if we live, the best hold we have is but a lease: God our chief Lord may bestow what he pleaseth, to the rich man wealth, to the wise man knowledge, to the good man peace, to all men somewhat: yet if you ask who is the lessor? God. Who is the lessee? Man. What is leased? This world. For what term? *My life.* Thus Jacob tells Pharaoh, as the text tells you; *Few and evil have the days of my life been.*

† An non & haec regio mortis, ubi porta mortis, umbra mortis, & corpus mortis?

This is the lease, and now you have it, let us see what use you will make of it.

Use 1. It is a bad life some live; *Come*, say they, *and let us enjoy the pleasures that are present, and let us cheerfully use the creatures as in youth, let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and let not the flower of life pass by us*, Wisd. ii. 6, 7. What a life is here? Can it be that pleasures, wine and ointments should have any duration in this vale of misery? suppose thy life a continued scene of pleasures: hadst thou Dives' fare, Solomon's robes, David's throne, Cresus' wealth; livedst thou many years without any cares, yet at last comes death, and takes away thy soul in the midst of her pleasures: alas, what is all thy glory, but a snuff that goes out in stench? Couldst thou not have made death more welcome; if he had found thee lying on a pad of straw, feeding on crusts and crumbs? Is not thy pain more grievous, because thou wast more happy? Do not thy joys more afflict thee, than if they had never been? O deceitful world, that grievest if thou croffest, and yet to whom thou art best, they are most unhappy!

Use 2. But to speak to you who have passed the pikes and pangs of the new birth, would you have life indeed, and enjoy that joy of life which is immortal? then hear, revive, watch and awake from sin: were you sometimes dead in sin? O but now live in Christ; *Christ is the life*, John xiv. 6. Were you sometimes dumb in your dying pangs? O but now abide in Christ; *Christ is the word of life*, John i. 1. are you as yet babes in Christ, feeble and but weak through life's infirmities? why, then use all good means, eat and be strong, *Christ is the bread of life*, John vi. 48. Here is a life indeed, would you not thus live for ever? Then *Believe in God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and this is life eternal*, John xvii. 3. O happy life, which many a man never dreams of? So must they strive to protract this brittle life

which but adds more grief, that they forget Christ; nay they forget their creed, which begins with true life, God, and ends with life never ending, *Life everlasting*. Others that hope for heaven, fix not their thoughts on earth; if you be God's servants, lift up your hearts above, for there is Life, and the God of Life, the tree of Life, and the well of Life, the Life of angels, and the life everlasting.

One sand is run, and the text is lessened; but as you have the lease, so you may now expect to know the date; the lease is but a life, the date lasts but days.

Days.] **N**OT weeks, nor months, nor years; or if a year, the best arithmetick is to reduce or break it into days; so we have it in the last translations, The days of the year.

Here then is the sum, a year, the fraction, days.

1. A year; in the spring is the youthful spring of our age; in the summer is the aged time of our youth, in the autumn is the high noon or middle of our age, when the sun (which is our soul) rules in the equinoctial line of our life; in the winter we grow old and cold, the nips of frost strip the tree of our life, we fall into the grave, and the earth that nourisheth us, will then consume us. See, what is man! 'a spring of tears, a summer's dust, an autumn's care, a winter's wo:' read but this map, and you need travel no further to enquire of life.

The first quarter is our Spring, and that is full of sin and misery; the infant no sooner breathes, but he sucks the poison of his parents: in Adam all sinned, and since his time all were defiled by his sin. Is it not nature's rule, that 'every man begets one like himself?' And is it not God's rule, that 'every sinner begets another no better than himself?' How may a foul vessel keep sweet water? or how may an earthly sinner beget an heavenly saint?

We are all in the same state of sin, and so we fall into the same plunge of sorrow: the child in his cradle sleeps not so secure, but now he wakes, and then he weeps, cold starves him, hunger pines him, sores trouble him, sickness gripes him; there is some punishment, which without sin had never been inflicted. It is wonderful to consider, how nature hath provided for all creatures; birds with feathers, beasts with hides, fishes with scales, all with some defence; only man is born stark naked, without either weapon in his hand, or the least thought of defence in his heart; birds can fly, beasts can go, fishes can swim; but infant-man as he knows nothing, so neither is he able to do any thing: indeed he can weep as soon as born, but not laugh (as some observe) till forty days old; so ready are we born to woe, but so far from the least spark of joy. O meer madness of men, that from so poor, naked and base beginnings, can persuade ourselves we are born to be proud!

And if this be our spring, what think ye is our summer? *Remember not the sins of this time*, prays David, Psal. xxv. 7. and why? *Their remembrance is bitter*, saith Job, ch. xiii. 26. If mirth and melody should never meet with end, this were an happy life; *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but remember, for all these things God will bring thee to judgment*, Eccl. xi. 9. This judgment is the damp that puts out all the lights of comfort: could not Solomon have given the reins, but he must pull again at curb? Must youth rejoice; *But for all this remember*, what a bar stands here in the very door of joy? alas, that we should trifle thus with toys, which no sooner we enjoy, but in grievous sadness we repent our follies. The wise man that gave liberty to his ways, what cries he but vanity, and after vanity of vanities; and at last

all is vanity? What was the wisdom of Achitophel? a vain thing: what the swiftness of Hazeel? a vain thing: what the strength of Goliath? a vain thing: what the pleasures of Nebuchadnezzar? a vain thing: what the honour of Haman? a vain thing; what the beauty of Absalom? a vain thing: thus if we see but the fruit that grows of sin, we may boldly say of laughter, *Thou art mad: and of joy, what is this thou dost?* Eccl. ii. 2.

And if this be our summer, what may be our autumn? an hour of joy? a world of sorrow: if you look about you, how many miseries lie in wait to ensnare you? there is no place secure, no state sufficient, no pleasure permanent; whither will you go? The chamber hath its care, the house hath its fear, the field hath its toil, the country hath its frauds, the city hath its factions, the church hath its sects, the court hath its envy, here is every place a field where is offered a battle: or, if this were better, consider but your states; the beggar hath his sores, the soldier hath his scars, the magistrate hath his troubles, the merchant his travels, the nobles their crosses, the great ones their vexations; here is every state a sea tossed with a world of tempests. Or yet if this were happier, bethink a little longer of your fleeting joys, the sweet hath its sower, the crown hath its care, the world hath its want, pleasure hath its pain, profit hath its grief, all these must have their end: here is a dram of sugar mixt with an ephah of bitter. Is this manhood that is subject to all these miseries? Nay, what are these in comparison of all it suffers? It is deformed with sin, defiled with lust, outraged with passions, overcarried with affectations, pining with envy, burthened with gluttony, boiling with revenge, transported with rage, all man's body, is full of iniquity, and his soul (the bright image of God) through sin, is transformed to the ugly shape of the devil.

‘And if this be our autumn, what I pray is the winter? then our sun grows low,
and

and we begin to die by degrees; shew me the light that will not darken, shew me the lover which will not fade, shew me the fruit which will not corrupt, shew me the garment which will not wear, shew me the beauty which will not wither, shew me the strength which will not weaken: Behold, now is the hour that thy lights shall darken, thy cheeks wrinkle, thy skin be furrowed, thy beauty fade, and thy strength decay. Here is the ambition of a long life; thy lease lies a bleeding, and death raps at the door of thy heart to take possession: O forcible entry! will not pleasures delay? cannot riches ransom? dares not strength desic! is neither wit nor wealth able to deceive nor bribe? What may rent this house that the soul may not lodge but one night longer? Poor soul! that dies or departs in unremedied pangs: our sins may run on score, and repentance forget her days of payment; yet our lease shall end, the date expire, this body suffer, and the soul be driven from her house and harbour. See the swift course of our mortal sun, at north and south, in our mother's womb and tomb both in one year.'

Use. 'Consider this you that forget God; you have but a year to live, and every season yields some occasion to tell you, you must die. In childhood, what is your chest of clouts, but a remembrance of your winding sheets? In youth, what is your mirth and musick, but a summons to the knell? In manhood, what is your house and enclosure, but a token of the coffin? In age, what is your chair or litter, but a shew of the beer, which at last shall convey you to your graves? Man, ere he is aware, hath drest his herse; every season adding something to his solemnity. Where is the adulterer, murderer, drunkard, blasphemer? Are you about your sins? look on these objects; 'There is a sun now setting, or a candle burning, or an hour-glass running, or a flower decaying, or a traveller passing, or a vapour vanishing, or a sick

man groaning, or a strong man dying; be sure there is something pulls you by the sleeve, and bids you beware to commit such enormities: who dares live in sin, that considers with himself he must die soon? And who will not consider, that sees before his eyes so many a remembrance? Alas, we must die, and howsoever we pass from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, from manhood to age; yet there is 'none can be more than old;' *Senectutem nemo excedit.* Here is the utmost of our life, 'a spring, a summer, an autumn, a winter;' and when that is done, you know the whole year is finished.

The sun is a year, the items are days. And what days can ye expect of such a year? My text, in relation to these days, gives us two attributes, the first, is, few; the second, is, evil: if you consider our days, in regard of the fewness (which this word seems rather to intimate) you may see them in scripture brought to fewer and fewer, till they are well near brought to nothing.

If we begin with the beginning, we find first, that the first man Adam had a lease of his life in fee, and as lawyers say, 'To have and to hold,' from the beginning to everlasting: but for eating the forbidden fruit, he made a forfeiture of that estate; of this he was forewarned, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death,* Gen. ii. 17. And this he found too true, *Because thou hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, thou shalt not eat,* what then? amongst other curses this was one, *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return,* Gen. iii. 19. After him the longest life came short of the number of a thousand years; *The days of Methusalem, saith Moses, were nine hundred, sixty, and nine years,* Gen. v. 27. And had he come to a thousand which never was attained by man; yet a thousand years are but one day with God, 2 Pet. iii. 8. Yea, but as yesterday, saith Moses; *A thousand years in*
God's

God's *fight* are but as yesterday, Psalm xc. 4. But what speak I of a thousand years? no sooner came the flood, but the age of man (of every man born after it) was shortened half in half. *These are the generations of Shem* (saith Moses) Gen. xi. 10. to wit, Arphaxad, and Selah, and Eber; none of which three could reach to the number of five hundred years; the longest liver was Eber, and yet all his days, before and after his first-born Peleg, were but *four hundred, sixty and four years*, Gen. xi. 16, 17. Nay, as if half a thousand were more than too much, you may see God halves their ages once again: Peleg lives as long as any man after him, and yet his days were neither a thousand, nor half a thousand, nor half of half a thousand; no, no more than *two hundred, thirty and nine years*, Gen. xi. 18, 19. But this was a long life too: if we come to arrive at the time of Jacob, we shall find this little time well near halved again; when he spoke this text, he tells you he was *one hundred and thirty years old*; and after this he lived no longer than seventeen years more; *so that the whole age of Jacob was but* (sevenscore and seven) *an hundred, forty and seven years*. Gen. xlvii. 28. Nay, to leave Jacob a while, and to come a little nearer ourselves, in Moses' time we find this little time halved again; he brings seven score to seventy; *The days*, saith he, *of our age are threescore years and ten, and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow, so soon passeth it away, and we are gone*, Psa. xc. 10. Here is halves of halves, and if we half it a while, sure we shall half away all our time: nay, we have a custom goes a little further, and tells us of a number a great deal shorter, we are fallen from seventy to seven, in life's leaves made by us. Nay, what speak I of years, when my text breaks them all into days? *Few and evil have the days been*; so our former translation, without any addition

of life at all; and if you mark it, our life in scripture is more often termed days than years: the book of Chronicles, which writes of mens lives, are called, according to the interpretation, *Words of days*: to this purpose we read, *David was old, and full of days*, 1 Chron xxiii. 1. And, *in the days of Jehoram, Edom rebelled*, 2 Chr. xxi. 8. So in the New Testament, *In the days of Herod the king*, Mat. ii. 1. and, *In the days of Herod the king of Judah*, Luke i. 5. In a word, thus Job speaks of us, our life is but days, our days but a shadow: *We know nothing*, (saith Job) and why so? *our days upon earth are but a shadow*, Job viii. 9.

Lo here is the length of our little life, it is not for ever; no, Adam lost that estate, and he that lived longest after Adam, came short of the number of a thousand years; nay, that was halved to somewhat less than five hundred, and that again halved to little more than two hundred; Jacob yet halves it again to a matter of seven score, and Moses halves that again to seventy, or a little more; nay, our time brings it from seventy to seven; nay, Jacob yet brings it from years to days, *Few and evil have the days of the year of my life been*.

Use 1. *Teach us, O Lord, to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*, Psalm xc. 12. Moses' arithmetic is worthy your meditation; learn of him to number, pray to God your teacher, think every evening there is one day of your number gone, and every morning there is another day of misery coming on; evening and morning meditate on God's mercy, and your own misery. Thus if you number your days, you shall have the less to account for at that day, when God shall call you to a final reckoning.

Use 2. But miserable men, who are not yet born again, their days run out without any meditation of this kind: what think they of but *of long days and many years*? And were all their days as long as the days

of Joshua, when the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, yet it will be night at last, and their sun shall set like others. True, God may give some a liberal time, but what enemies are they to themselves, that of all their days allow themselves not one? *If any man long after life, and to see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile,* 2 Pet. iii.

10. How live they that would needs live so long, and follow no rules of piety? Many can post off their conversion from day to day, sending religion before them to thirty, and then putting it off to forty, and not pleased yet to overtake it, promise it entertainment at threescore; at last, death comes, and allows not an hour*: in youth, these men resolve to reserve the time of age to serve God in; in age, they shuffle it off to sickness; when sickness comes, care to dispose their goods, loathness to die, hope to escape martyrs that good thought. O miserable men! if you have but the lease of a farm for twenty years, you make use of the time, and gather profit; but in this precious farm of time, you are so ill husbands, that your lease comes out before you are one pennyworth of grace the richer by it. *Why stand ye here all the day idle?* Mat. xx. 6. there are but a few hours or days that ye have to live; at last comes the night of death, that will shut up your eyes in sleep till the day of doom.

You see now the term of our lease, our life lasts but days. And although we live many days, yet in this thy day, saith Christ, Luke xix. 42. *and give us this day our daily bread,* Matth. vi. 12. say we, as if no day could be called thy day, but this day: If there be any more, we shall soon number them; my text tells you, they are not many,

but few; *Few and evil have the days of my life been.*

[FEW.] O Ur lease is a life, our life is but days, our days are but few, the Phoenix, the elephant, and the lion fulfill their hundreds; but a man dieth when he thinks his sun yet riseth, before his eye be satisfied with seeing, or his ear with hearing, or his heart with lusting; Death knocks at the door, and often will not give him leave to meditate an excuse before he comes to judgment: is not this a wonder, to see dumb beasts outstrip man's life? the phoenix lives thousands, say some; but a thousand years are a long life with man. Methusalem, (you saw) the longest liver, came short of this number; and yet, could we attain to so ripe an age, what are a thousand years to the days everlasting? If you took a little mote to compare with the whole earth, what great difference were in these two? and if you compare this life, which is so short, with the life to come, which shall never have end, how much less will it yet appear? *As drops of rain are unto the sea, and as a gravel stone is in comparison to the sand, so are a thousand years to the days everlasting,* Eccl. xviii. 9. But will you have an exact account, and learn the just number? It was the arithmetick of holy men to reckon their days but few; as if the shortest cut were the best account. The Hebrews could subduct the time of sleep; which is half our life; so that if the days of men were threescore years and ten, Pl. xc. 10. Here's five and thirty years struck off at one blow. The philosophers could subduct the time of weakness, which is most of life, so that if *vivere* be *valere*, that is, if that be only a true life which enjoys good health; here's the beginning and ending of

* At thirty man suspects himself a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;

In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves; and re-resolves: then dies the same.

Dr. Young's NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

our days struck off at a second blow. The Fathers could subduct all times not present, and what say you to this account? were the days of life at noon, man grown to manhood? Look ye back, and the time past is nothing; look ye forward, and the time to come is but uncertain; and if time past and time to come stand both for cyphers, what is our life but the present? and what is that but a moment? Nay, as if a moment were too much, look at scripture, and you will see it brought to a lesser pass: Job, for his part, goes about to subduct the time of his birth, which is the bud of life; *Let the day perish*, saith he, *wherein I was born; nay, let it not be joined unto the days of the year, nor let it come into the count of months*, Job iii. 6. Solomon could subduct not only childhood, but the time of youth too, which is the strength of life: *Take away grief out of thine heart, and cause evil to depart from thy flesh; for childhood and youth both are but vanity*, Eccl. xi. 10. Paul could subduct the time of sin, which is the joy of life, *She that lives in pleasure* (lives not, nay she) *is dead while she is alive*, 1 Tim. v. 6. Sum all, and suppose that the time of birth, and childhood, and youth, and sin were gone, to what an epitome were man's life come? Think of this all ye that travel towards heaven; had we not need to make haste, that must go so long a journey in so short a time? How can he chuse but run, that remembers his days are few? nay, that every day runs away with his life? The workman that sets a time for his task, he listens to the clock, and counts the hours, not a minute must pass, but his work goes onwards: How then do we neglect our time while we should serve God? *Work while it is to day*, saith Christ, John ix. 4. and, *this is the day of salvation*, saith the apostle, 2 Cor. vi. 2. Would you know your task? you must work: would you know your time? it is this day: a great task, a short time; had we not need with

Moses to number our days, lest we lose a minute? it is true, of all numbers we cannot kill to number our days: We can number our sheep, our oxen, our fields, our coin; but we think our days are infinite, and never go about to number them. The saints that went before us cast another account; Moses had his tables, Job had his measures; all agree both for measure and number, magnitude and multitude, our life is but short, our days are but few. *Few and evil they have been.*

Give me leave a little to amplify this point: Would we throughly know the shortness of our time, the fewness of our days? I shall then set before you the magnitude of the one, and the multitude of the other,

And, 1. For the magnitude of the time of our relief: A man, say the philosophers, is *Microcosmus*, a little world; little for goodness, but a world of wickedness. Of this world, if you'll have the dimensions according to the rules of Geometricians, the length, breadth, and depth, of our short life: Then first, for our length from east to west, from our birth to our burial. I need not to take so many paces, as will make *mille passus*, a mile; our little life bears no proportion to such a length: I dare not say, as Stobens relates, 'that our life hath the last of a cubit's length;' for that's more than the scripture will afford it; It is but a span, or hand-breadth, saith David, Psalm xxxix. 5. that's little; nay, *Alcaeus in Carmine Lyrico*, saith, it is but an inch long, that's less; nay, saith Plutarch, 'all our life is but a prick, a point;' yet less, saith Seneca, It is a point that we live, and less than a point; that's less than either I can say, or you conceive. What is it? not a mile, but a cubit, but a span, but an inch, but a point, nay, less than that: Here's little longitude of life. Well, but our latitude is perhaps greater: No, take a measure, if you please, from one pole to another, as we stand betwixt the terms of

life and death, and wherefoever we are, death is within an hand-breath of our life; if we be on the sea, there's but a thick board between us and drowning; if on the land, there's but a shoe-sole between us and our grave; if we sleep, our bed is our bodies grave, and there's but a sheet, perhaps a winding-sheet, betwixt us and it: when we are awake, our body is our grave, and there's but a few skins (as say physicians) betwixt death and us. What is it? but the breadth of hand, of a board, of a shoe-sole, of a thin sheet, of a small skin; there's little latitude, you see. Well, but our profoundity may help all this: Go to further, and see what it is. I shall not lead you down many steps, for, indeed there are not many steps to lead you down. In one word, come to the centre of the heart of man: The Grecians, to express the shallowness of this life, give the same name to the heart, that they do to death; *Heart* is the heart, the author of life; and *Heart* is destiny, the worker of death; to show, that as every man hath an heart, so death hath a dart for every man. Christians! Mortals! consider your magnitude in all these dimentions; alas, how is it that many of you make yourselves so great? What mean those titles which you take upon you? Your Greatness, Your Highness, Your——I know not what. O consider the mortality of your bodies, and that will tell you the just scantling of yourselves.

2. For the multitude of our days; He was branded with the name of a fool, that thought he had many years to live. Moses tells us, *The days of our years are threescore years and ten*, Psa. xc. 10. But now, as you heard, we value our life, but at seven years, as if six years we had to labour, and to do all we had to; but the seventh were a sabbath to rest with God, Rev. xiv. 13. Nay, yet the scripture comes somewhat lower, and because a plurality might cause a security, it bestows but an unity upon

our years: thus Jacob, in this text, reckons of a great number of one year, *The days of the year of my life are an hundred and thirty year*, Gen. xlvii. 9. nay, Austin comes shorter, and compares our life to a quarter of a year, like Jehoahash reign which lasted about three months time, 2 Kings xxiii. 31. nay, the scripture descends from months to days, *Few and evil are my days*, saith Jacob, implying that this life is but a few days, or but one day, as some would have it, which is the meaning of Christ's prayer, *Give us this day our daily bread*, Matth. vi. 11. And yet that we may not think our death a great way off; the scripture tells us, it is not a day to come; no, *Boast not of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*, Prov. xxvii. 1. Thy day is this present day, and therefore saith the apostle, *To day if ye will hear his voice*, Heb. iii. 7. nay, to speak farther, this day, saith Job, is past already, *We are but of yesterday*, Job viii. 9. nay, as if a day were too long for the life of man, Moses resembles it to the *grass that grows up in the morning, and is cut down in the evening*, Psa. xc. 6. and Gregory compares it to Jonah's gourd, that came up in a night, and perished ere the day was come, Jonah iv. 10. *The evening and the morning make but one day*, Gen. i. 5. but our day is oftentimes an evening without a morning, and oftentimes a morning without an evening. Nay, yet to go lower, as if half a day were more than our life could parallel, Moses compares it to a watch, which is but the fourth part of a night, Psalm xc. 4. Yea, and as if this were longer than our life doth last, the scripture calls it but an hour, John v. 25. *The hour is coming, and now is*, saith Christ; nay, our life is but a minute, or, if we can say less, a moment, *In a moment they go down to the grave*, saith Job; and, *in a moment shall they die*, saith Elihu, Job xxi. 13. and xxxiv. 20. And, *a lying tongue is but for a moment*, saith Solomon, Pro. xii. 10.

and, *our light affliction is but for a moment*, saith Paul. 2 Cor. iv. 17. Lo, here the length of our little life, this is the gradation that God makes of it: At first, a matter of seventy years, but these were tythed from seventy to seven, this number again was made no number, *one single year; a year? nay, a month, nay, a day, nay, an hour, nay, a minute, nay, a moment; as soon as we were born, we began to draw to our end*, Wild. v. 13. There's but one poor moment which we have to live, and when that is spent, our life is gone: How? but one, and a moment? One is the least number that is, and a moment the shortest time that ever was: O what mean men to plot and project for the time to come, as if this life would never be done? O consider of the littleness of the time that thou hast to live! O consider of the greatness of the matter that depends upon it! thy body, soul, heaven, and hell, all hangs on this thread; a short life, a few days. *Few and evil have the days of my life been.*

You have learned Moses' Arithmetic to number our days, practise a while, and you will find this use.

Use 1. God shortens your time, you that are unregenerate, lest you defer your repentance. It is said of the devil, that he is *busy, because his time is short*. Rev. xii. 12. and are you worse than devils? Is not your time shorter? and yet are you more negligent? How do you give way to that old serpent? He delays no time to bring you to hell, and you neglect all times to get you heaven: What is your life but a Jonan's gourd, suddenly sprung up, and by and by withered again, and gone? whatsoever ye do, your wheel whirls about apace: In a word, ye die daily, and you all know thus much, that you have every one of you a poor soul to save. I have wondered at men, that desire time after time, one time after another; why, if your souls perish, the day will come soon enough. It makes me weep, said one of a better stamp,

when my hour glass is beside me, and I see every drop of sand follow other so speedily. Your days are but few, and yet who knows whether this day his sun may set? Take heed, you unregenerate, if death comes unawares, it is the price of your souls, how you are provided! Who, alas! would defer to be good, that knows not how soon he may go to judgment? The enemy keeps a daily watch, a friend prepares for your welcome, and are you such enemies to yourselves, that never are prepared to welcome death?

Use 2. But to speak to thee, whosoever thou art that readest, regenerate, or unregenerate, the best counsel thou canst learn, is to be still in a readiness; think every day thou risest to be the day of thy death, and every night thou goest to bed, that thou art laid down in the grave: If thou shouldest forget, will not each object be a remembrancer? Thy sheets, of thy winding-sheet; thy coverings of thy clapping dust; thy sleep of thy death, with whom, I may say truly, thou shakest hands every night: who can forget his grave, that lies him down in his bed? And who then would not so provide himself, as if every night he went to his grave? Our days are but few, and the night will be ere long that we die indeed. What are we but tenants at will in this clay-farm? The foundation of all the building is but a small substance, always kept cold by an intercourse of air; the pillar is but a little breath, the strength, some few bones tied together with dry strings, howsoever we piece and patch this poor cottage, it will at last fall into the Lord's hands, and we give surrender only in this tenor, *Few and evil have the days of my life been.*

You now see the time of our lease to the full, our life lasts but days, our days are but few; who is so fond to settle his care on this lease, that so soon is expired; nay, with a blan is gone out? The man that is wedded to this world, enjoys nei-

ther

ther length of days, nor a day of joy ; as he is mortal, so is he miserable : You shall see my text join both the hands, nothing indeed but death can loose the bonds, the days of my life are few, the few days of my life are evil ; few in number, evil in nature ; neither many nor good, but few and evil.

EVIL] **O**Ur life is but days, our days are but few, our few days but evil : Into what a sea of misery have I now rushed sail ? Evil life, evil days ; but few, yet evil.

There waits on our } Sin,
Life } Punishment.

Both these are evil : Sin as the father plays the bankrupt ; and punishment, the son, must pay the debt : First, *Lust conceives and brings forth sin, then sin being finished, brings forth death*, James i. 15. Here is both the work and wages ; first, we commit, and then we suffer evil.

The evils we commit are sins, and see what a troop of enemies march about us ; if you expect the battle in array, what say you to those evils original ? these are the inheritance which we have from our first parents : It is the same infection that distilled from them, abides in us, and therefore the same punishment is due to us, that fell on them. O the flood-gate of evils that now are opened ! Adam's sin is ours by imputation, we are twigs of one root, streams of one fountain, and, by the same reason, partakers of one sin. And, as no evil is alone, so besides that imputed, we have another inherent, this is the proclive disposition that we have to evil, because of the loss of those powers that we had to good. ' First, (as Polanus expresses it) the sin of the person infected the nature, and now the sin of the nature infects the person : ' is not the mind doubtful of the ways of God ? Is not the will prone to all manner of evil ? Are not the afflictions disordered in their actions ? But as for Goodness, and Holiness, and Virtue, and Grace,

and Temperance, and Innocency, all these ornaments are lost ; Adam received them for himself and us, and therefore lost them from us, as from himself : What wonder, if we being spoiled, nature be left naked, a rotten root must needs bear rotten branches ; and if the first man be infected with sin, what follows, but a corruption of the whole nature of man ?

But these are but the seeds, what say you to the off-spring ? Evils original beget evils actual, and such are they, as Austin defines them, ' Whatsoever ye say or do, or think against the law eternal.' How many of these furies haunt us ! our saying, doing, thinking, all is evil that is against God's command : His will is the rule that should measure all our actions, our actions are the frame that should be measured by his will ; here then are sins material and formal, the actions of a man diverted from the will of God ; and if all these be evils, how many evils are they all ?

Look at our omillion of good duties, and come they not in like motes in the sun ? How many alms have we denied ? How many blessings have we refused ? How many sermons have we neglected ? How many sabbath-days have we mispent ? This was the sin of that rich man, of whom though Lazarus had no hurt, yet, because he could receive no good, therefore *he was tormented in that flame*, Luke xvi. You know a day will come, when a bill of negatives shall be framed against the wicked, not what ye have done, but what ye have not done : *I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink ; I was a stranger, and ye lodged me not ; I was naked, and ye clothed me not ; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not*, Mat. xxv. 42. It is the not doing your duties must incur that heavy sentence, *Depart from me ye cursed*. Mere harmless men are no fit members for God's kingdom ; if you mean to avoid evil, you must neglect no good : alas, who would slip

slip any occasion, that considers the just reward of this evil of omission.

But these are not half the count, there be evils of commission whereby we fight against God, and provoke his justice against us: Of all the commandments which we should perform, there is not one precept which we have not broken; God himself is dishonoured, his worship is neglected, his name is blasphemed, his days are profaned: If we go any farther, parents are disobeyed, injury is maintained, adultery is committed, robbery is practised, false witness is produced, covetousness is followed: Thus is the manner of our keeping the commandments from the first to the last, having transgressed against all. *Hide thy face from my sins, and put away all my iniquities*, Ps. li. 9. We had need to pray, Hide them, for if they be not hid, how many of these evils will rise up in judgment against us?

But here is no end; there be evils external that accompany the body, and what part of the body is not possessed with some evil? look at the senses, and wherein hast thou employed thine eyes, but in beholding vanity? Wherein thine ears, but in hearkning to lies? Wherein thy tasting, touching, smelling but in sensual pleasures? And as the senses, so are the members full of evil, *The head is sick, the heart deceitful, the tongue unruly, the teeth as swords, the jaws as knives, the hands are full of blood, and the feet swift to shed blood*, Isa. i. 5. Jer. xvii. 9. James iii. 8. Prov. xxx. 14. Isaiah i. 15. and lix. 7. Thus from the soles of the feet to the crown of the head, there is *nothing whole, but wounds, and swellings, and sores full of corruption*, Isaiah i. 6.

And if these be our outward, what be those inward evils? should I thrust my hand into your bosoms, O how leprous should I pluck it out again! that understanding created full of light, is now so blind that *it perceives not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can it know them,*

for they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14. No doubt there is in us a remaining spark of nature, and that is the light of reason which makes us men; but if you look at this reason, it perceives only natural and external things; it can perceive thy house adorned, thy land tilled, thy grounds stocked; but those spiritual blessings, celestial promises, eternal privileges, it cannot see, nor so much as think of: what are all our thoughts but vanity, and *imagination of man's heart, but only evil?* Gen. viii. 21. Neither is this all, God framing man's soul, planted in it two faculties, the understanding that informeth, and the will that followeth; and as the understanding, so is the will; it receives from reason (her counsellor) sensual advice, and sends forth to the affections (her courtiers) injunctions of vanity; here is a counsellor indeed, what is it but reason without reason? and here is a will indeed; what is it but a slave to sin, without any will to good? Man is so holden captive by the yoke of sin, that (as Calvin observes, Instit. book ii. chap. 4.) of his own nature he can neither 'aspire by desire, nor travel by endeavour to any goodness.' I say not, but (as Bernard) 'to will is in us all;' but to will evil is of nature, to will good is of grace: away then with our abilities, and confess we with the apostle, that *To will is present with me, but I find no means to perform that which is good*, Rom. vii. 18.

And yet this is not all; take a view of those affections which attend the will, and how are all evil? It is God should be the object both of our will and affections; and what say you? do you love him, and fear him, and trust in him, and serve him? your sins say, no: we can do nothing that good is, but we run upon evil; see thine anger like a serpent, thy desire like a wolf, thy fear like an hart, thine envy like a viper, all thy passions are become sensual, and *every man is a beast by his own knowledge*, Jer. x. 14.

Blessed God! what a world of evils are within us? 'We have sinned, O Lord, above the number of the sands of the seas, our transgressions, O Lord, are multiplied, our offences are exceeding many:' many fure, that contain these streams, and yet how many are the rivulets that issue from them? There be evils of weakness against God the Father, whose attribute is power; there be evils of ignorance against God the Son, whose attribute is wisdom; there be evils of malice against the holy Ghost, whose attribute is love. Can we add any more? Mark but our thoughts, our delights, our consents to evil; or, if these be not enough, see a swarm indeed that continually assault us, Anger, Hatred, Envy, Distrust, Impatience, Avarice, Sacrilege, Pride, Despair, Presumption, Indevotion, Suspicion, Contention, Derision, Exaction, (give me leave to breathe in the numbring of this bed-roll) Perjury, Blasphemy, Luxury, Simony, Perplexity, Inconstancy, Hypocrisy, Apostacy; here is a number numberless, 'gross sins, little sins, known sins, hid sins:' Psalm xix. 12. *Who can understand his errors? O Lord, cleanse me from my secret faults.* The days of life are few, but the evils God knows how many; he that would number them, may tell a thousand, and yet not tell one of a thousand: can the proudest Pharisee justify himself? Remember the swarms that lurk in thy venom'd conscience, number thy wanton words, thy carnal thoughts, thy unchristian gestures, thy outrageous sins, and come they not in by troops and herds, thicker than the frogs in Egypt? Well may we stand amazed at their number, and, as convicted prisoners, cry for that psalm of mercy, *Lord, have mercy on us* most evil wretched sinners.

Thus you see, beloved, how evil be our days, sith every day we do evil: then to wander no further, now we have found such a world of them, will you see them in a map? Here are evils original, evils actual,

evils of omission, evils of commission, evils of the body, evils of the soul; well may we pray, Deliver us from evil: what, so many evils of sin? now the Lord deliver us.

Use 1. Remember yourselves, and who will not sing David's burden, *Mine iniquities have gone over mine head, and as a weighty burden, they are too heavy for me to bear?* Psal. xxxiv. 4. There is in sin, saith Austin, both weight and number, and is any one so dull or dead, that he is sensible of neither? Go ye to the balance, and what a mass lies upon you? enough, and enough again to sink you down to hell: go ye to the count, and what a swarm comes upon you? a million, and a million of millions to keep you out of heaven; when all your sins must be called to account before that Judge of the world, what account shall be given of this account that is endless? See them like the stars, only these set and rise, but your sins rise, and never set; see them like your hairs, only these shed and loose, but your sins grow ever more and more; see them like the sands, only these are covered with the floods and waters, but your sins lie still open, and are ever before you: think on these stars, these hairs, these infinite innumerable sands of sins, and when all is done, let your tears be the flood to hide them over. It was David's saying, *Every night wash I my bed, and water my couch with my tears,* Ps. vi. 6. If your days be evil, let not your night slip without repentance; go not to bed, but beat your breast, with the publican; ly you not down, but withal lift up your voice, *Lord, be merciful to me a sinner:* how sweet a rest doth that night bring, whose sleep is prevented with the consideration of our sins? Though we are begirt with a thousand devils, this would be as the watch of our souls, and the safe-guard of our persons.

But I must speak with a difference: I stand over some of you, who are so fir
from

from * *washing away your sins with tears*, that I fear you never took much notice of the multitude of your sins: should I tell you that you brought sin enough with you to damn you, when you first came into this world; should I tell you, that you have every one committed thousands, and thousands of thousands of actual sins, and yet any one of those thousands is enough to send you packing to hell: you would think these strange points; but if God be true, there is no sin of man, either original or actual, either of omission or commission, either of the body, or of the soul, which without repentance will not produce eternal death; and therefore in God's fear take notice of your sins, set before you the commandments of God, and thereto comparing your life, you may find out such a catalogue of your sins that will thoroughly convince you of your damnable estate.

You may ask, To what end should we be so careful to find out our sins?

I answer to a very good end, both in respect of the Unregenerate, and Regenerate.

I. In respect of the unregenerate: this is the first step of repentance, this is one of those places that will lead you towards heaven. You may be sure without repentance, no heaven, without confession no repentance, and without finding out sin, there can be no confession. It were good therefore, and a singular means to bring you out of corruption into Christianity, and out of the state of nature into the kingdom of grace, that you would every one of you have a catalogue of your sins. If you will not, I can tell you who will; there is an adversary called Satan (the adversary of mankind) that stands at your

back, and, I may say figuratively, with a scroll in his hands, wherein he writes down your sins; not a day passeth on, but he can easily tell how many sins you have committed all day. 'Lord, that men would think on it! are you about any sin? at that very time Satan is registrating the act, and time, and place, and every circumstance; now wo, wo to man, that lets Satan do his work for him! would you do this yourself, would you but study for a catalogue of your own sins, that so you might confess them to God, and repent you thereof, this would be a dash in the devil's book, so that he could not have whereof to accuse you; but if still you go on securely in sin, and never go about to call your sins to remembrance, a day will come, wo worth the day, when that roaring lion shall set all your sins and transgressions in order before you; then shall you read, perforce your sins original and actual, of omission and commission, of your bodies and souls. And I must tell you, herein is a great policy of Satan, he lets you alone in your security a while, if you will not trouble him, he will not trouble you; if you will not tell your own sins, neither will he tell you of them; but he will change his note, at furthest, when your few evil days finish; it is the very case, as many creditors deal with their debtors, while they have any doings, as they say, and are in trading, they will let them alone, in policy they will say nothing; but if once down the wind, in sickness, poverty, disgrace, or the like, then comes serjeant after serjeant, arrest upon arrest, action upon action: just thus is Satan's dealing with the unregenerate man; if you will but sin, and never call yourselves to a reckoning, in policy he will say nothing, but when the score is full, and death comes

* When I speak thus of tears or repentance, I argue not a causality or merit; only I infer a necessary presence of repentance in those that obtain pardon of sin. All that I positively affirm, is this, that repentance is the means or way which God hath appointed antecedently to pardon, Acts iii. 19. Jer. iv. 14.

to arrest you, then will he bring out his black book of all your sins committed all your days. 'O I tremble to speak of it! then shall your sins fall as foul on your souls, as ravens on the fallen sheep, and keep you down for ever in the dungeon of despair.'

2. In respect of the regenerate; that you have ready by you, or by heart, a catalogue of your sins, is necessary in many respects.

1. To humble you: for no sooner shall the poor soul look on all the sins he hath committed, both before and after his regeneration, but confessing them in prayer, it will pull down his heart, and make the wound of his remorse to bleed afresh, as before; and therefore this catalogue is most necessary in days of humiliation.

2. It is necessary to prepare you for the receiving of the sacrament; for indeed I would have none to presume to taste on that supper, but first to view over all his sins, and to confess them in prayer to his heavenly father: there be many that in confession look on their sins, as they do on the stars in a dark cloudy night, they can see none but the great ones, of the first or second magnitude, it may be here one and there one; but if they were truly enlightened, and informed aright, they might rather behold their sins, as those innumerable stars that appear in a fair frosty winter's night; they are many and many; and therefore take a little pains in composing your catalogue, that so you may confess all (at least for the kinds) before you presume to come near the table of the Lord.

3. It is necessary in times of desertion, or visitation: yea, if the Lord shall please to exercise you with any cross, or disgrace, or discountenance, loss of goods, disease of body, terror of soul, or the like; you may be sure, as no misery comes but for sin, so then the enumeration of your sins from a bleeding broken heart, is the prime and first means to cause that sun of mercy

to break through the clouds, and to beget a clear day; alas! *our days are evil*, and sure we have as good reason as ever Jacob had to confess it: for my part, tho' I keep my catalogue to myself, yet in the general I cannot but confess to you all, My days have been evil, evil, evil: few and evil.

And now we have done with the work, it rests that you should know your ages; there be days of sin, and then days of sorrow; as you have spent your days, so must you have your rewards; first we trespass, and then we pay for it; first we sin, and then we suffer evil.

2. The evils that we suffer may be ranged in this order; first evils original fill up the scene, and what a multitude of evils do enter with them? No sooner had Adam sinned, but a world of miseries fell on man, so that as the infection, in like manner the punishment distils from him. *By one man* (saith the apostle) *entered sin into the world*, Rom. v. 12. What? sin alone? no but *death by sin, and so death went over all men*. Infants themselves bring their damnation with them from their wombs; or if that be omitted, how many are the miseries of this life, as the forerunners of that judgment? Look at the mind, and what think ye of our ignorance, not only that of wilful disposition, but as the schools distinguish, of pure negation; if it be not a sin, what is it but a punishment for sin? that our understanding should be obscured and darkened, our knowledge in things natural wounded, in supernatural utterly extinguished. 'O the miserable issue of that monster sin! but as evils come by heaps, so of the same parent here is another brood, ignorance and forgetfulness; and is not this a misery, after all our time and study to get a little knowledge, quickly to forget that we are so long a learning? Man in his whole state, before the fall, could not forget things taught him; but now, as the hour-glass, we receive in at the one ear

and

and it goes out at the other; or rather, like the sieve, we always keep the bran, but let the flower go, so apt are we to retain the bad, but we very easily forget the good. And is this all? nay yet more evils; see but our affections, and to what a number of infinite sorrows, griefs, anguishes, suspicions, fears, malices, jealousies, is the soul of man subject? So prone are we to these miserable passions, that upon any occasion we fall into them; or for want of cause from any other, we begin to be passionate with ourselves; why hast thou, O Lord, set me against thee? I am become irksome and burdensome even unto mine own self, Job vii. 20.

Alas, poor man, how art thou beset with a world of miseries? and yet, as if all these summed up together, could not make enough; look at the body, and how many are its sufferings? *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread*, said God, Gen. iii. 19. The spider spins and weaves, and wastes her very bowels to make her net; and when all is done, to what purpose serves it, but to catch a fly? If this be vain work, how vain is man in his fond imitation? The birds and beasts can feed themselves, without any pains, only man toils night and day, on sea and land, with body and mind; yet all is to no purpose, but to catch a fly, to protract a life, or to procure some vanity. And yet, as if misery had no mean, besides our industry, how is this body stuffed with many an infirmity? All the strength of man is but a reed, at best shaken, perhaps broken, howsoever weakened by every wind that blows upon it. The physicians distinction of *temperamentum ad pondus, et justitiam*, gives us thus much to learn, That no constitution is ever so happy, to have a just temper according to its weight: some are too hot, others too cold, all have some defects, and so are disposed to all kind of infirmities: man cannot carry himself, but he must needs carry about with him many

forms of his own destruction.

The books of the physicians tell us of many diseases, and yet many are the diseases which their books cannot tell of; we see in our own days, most labour of new sicknesses, unknown to our fathers; or if any of us be free from any of these, yet every ones body nourisheth the causes, and may be a receptacle of a thousand diseases. How evil is sin, that incurs so many evils of punishment.

But as if all were too little (because our sins are so many) if you will number any more, here is yet another reckoning, 'Evils original, and evils adventitious, evils of necessity, and evils of chance.' 'What shall we say of those innumerable accidents that befall a man?' (so innumerable, as Austin observes, that the books of physicians cannot contain them all:) as heat, and cold, and thunder, and rain, and storms, and earthquakes, and poisons, and treasons and robberies, and wars, and tumults, and what not? Go whither you will, and every place is full of some of these evils; if you go on sea, every wave threatens you, every wind fears you, every rock and sand is enough to drown you; if you go on land, every step dangers you, every wild beast fears you, every stone or tree is enough to kill you: if you go no whither, you cannot be without danger; Eli was sitting, and what more secure? Yet at the news of God's ark that *it was taken by the Philistines, he falls down backward, and his neck was broken*, 1 Sam. iv. 17. Korah was standing, what more sure? yet as soon as Moses had made an end of speaking, *The earth opened her mouth and swallowed him and his family, and all the men that were with him*, Num. xvi. 32. Indeed Abshalom was riding, and what way more ready to escape the enemy? yet, *As the mule carried him under a great oak, his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth, and the mule that was under him*

went away, 2 Sam. xviii. 9. Whatsoever we do, or whithersoever we go, so long as we do evil, those evils will meet us. Go into the ship, there is but a board betwixt thee and the waters; walk on the ground, there is but a shoe-sole betwixt thee and thy grave; take a turn in the streets, and so many perils hang over thee, as there are tiles on the houses; travel in the country, and so many enemies are about thee, as thou meetest beasts in the fields; if all these places be so dangerous, then retire to thy house, and yet that is subject to fire, or water, or if it escape both, it may fall on thy head: whithersoever we turn us, all things about us seem to threaten our death. Our days are evil indeed, and who is it that is exempted from every of these evils? Sinners are corrected, good men are chastened, there is none escapes free.

To see a little the state of God's own friends and children: was not Abel murdered by his brother? Noah mocked by his son? Job scoffed by his wife? Eli slain for his sons? will you all at once? take one for all, and see Jacob our patriarch, a notable example of extreme infelicity: he is threatened by his brother, banished from his father, abused by his uncle, defrauded of his wife; was not here misery enough to break one's heart? But after this, for another wife's sake, see him enter into a new service: *In the day he is consumed with heat, in the night with frost*, Genesis xxxi. 40. an hard service sure! nay after this that he got his Rachel, see then a division betwixt her and Leah, two sisters brawling for one husband, yet neither content, after both enjoyed him. Blessed saint! how wast thou haunted with afflictions? yet after this, he agrees his wives, and they all run from their father: and now see a fresh pursuit: behind him Laban follows with an hue and cry; before him Esau meets him with 400 men: to go forward intolerable, to go

backwards unavailable; which way then? It was an angel of God, nay the God of angels that now must comfort him.

And yet again after his first entry into his own country, his wife Rachel dies, his daughter Dinah is ravished, his son Reuben lies with his concubine; and if the defiling of a wife be so great a grief to the husband, what sorrow and shame, when the wickedness is committed by a man's own son? what can we more? If yet his heart be unbroken, here's another grief great enough to match all the rest; his son, his Joseph, they report, is lost; and what news hears he of him, but that he is torn with wild beasts? And now see a man of miseries indeed! *He rents his cloaths, he puts sackcloth about his loins, he will not be comforted; but surely, saith he, I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning*, Genesis xxxvii. 34, 35. Alas poor Jacob! what can they say to comfort him? To comfort, said I? Nay, yet hear the tidings of a new misery; a famine is begun, and another of his sons is kept in prison: what a grief is here? Another in prison, and nothing to redeem him but only Benjamin; here is the loss of son after son, *Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and now ye will take Benjamin, all these things are against me*, Gen. xlii. 36. We need no more, if Jacob thus number, how many are the miseries he did daily suffer? Would you have the sum? He himself, the best witness of himself, affirms it to Pharaoh, evil, evil. *Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been*.

So miserable is our life, that no man can take his breath before some evil or other do seize on his person: if you would that we knit up all in one bundle; there be evils original, evils adventitious, evils of the mind, evils of the body, evils that are common, evils of the chosen; we had need pray again, deliver us from evil. What so many evils of suffering? Now the Lord deliver us.

Use 1. What is sweet in this life, which so many miseries will not imbitter? if this be a vale of tears, where is the place to pleasure? If this life be a nest of cares, how canst thou settle so great a vanity as sin in a field of such misery as the world? *O ye sons of men, how long will ye blaspheme mine honour, and have such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing?* Psalm iv. 2. Were men not mad in their ways, or utterly befotted in their imaginations, well might these miseries of our life breed their neglect of the world. Can we chuse but wonder to see how busily thou heapest up riches, yet knowest not who shall eat the grapes of thy planted vineyard? God gave thee a countenance erected towards heaven, and must it ever be grovelling and poring on the earth? God gave thee a soul to live with his blessed angels, and wilt thou make it a companion fitter for no other than brute beasts? *There is an evil sickness, saith Solomon, that I have seen under the sun;* and what is that? but *riches reserved to the owners for their evil,* Eccl. v. 12. See here the just judgment of a righteous God, to this end is thy riches, thou wouldst live at ease, and outlast many years, therefore thy life is but miserable, and thy death must be sudden: *thy days are but few, and thy few days evil.*

Use 2. But to comfort all you that live in the fear of God, it may be your days are evil, and what then? this is to make trial of your love to God, and a trial it is of God's love to you.

1. It makes a trial of your love to God: certainly if you have but a spark of this love, your days cannot be so evil, but in the midst of those evils you shall find some inward consolations that will sweeten all. It is memorable, how Jacob for Rachel serves Laban seven years, but yet, saith the text, *they seemed to him but a few days, for the love he had to her.* Nay after Laban had deceived him in giving him blear-eyed Leah instead of beautiful Rachel, Ja-

cob then serves him another seven years prentilship: love makes the heart cheerful in the worst of sufferings: though Jacob was *consumed with drought in the day, and frost in the night,* Gen. xxxi. 40. which many and many a time made his rest and sleep to depart from his eyes; yet his love of fair Rachel sweetens all his labours. Why thus, thus will it be with you that wait on the Lord your God. What tho' miseries come upon you as thick as hail-storms in a sharp winter-day? you may remember you have a better master than Laban, a better service than Jacob's, a fairer prize than Rachel: who is your master, but such an one as will surely keep his covenant, even the Lord your God? What is your service, but such an one as is most glorious and honourable, even a light burden, a perfect freedom? What is your prize, but such a one as surpasseth all prizes whatsoever, even the beauty of heaven, the beautiful vision of our blessed God? If then you but love God as Jacob did Rachel, what matters it how evil your few days be? nay, be they never so evil, and were your days never so many, yet an hundred, a thousand years spent in God's service, they would seem but a few days for the love ye bear to him. 'O Lord, work in us this love, and then command what thou wilt, persecution, affliction, the cross, or death; no service so hard but we shall readily obey thee.'

2. As your evils of sufferings try your love to God, so they are a trial, or token of God's love to you. *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, causeth unto us a far more excellent and an eternal weight of glory,* 2 Cor. iv. 17. And if this be the end, who would not endure the means? O divine mercy! therefore the dugs of this life taste bitter, that thereby God may wean us from the love of this world to attain a better: certainly God is good unto us in tempering these so fitly; bitterness attends this life, that thou mayest

mayest sigh continually for the true life. Wouldst thou not run thro' dangers for a kingdom? wouldst thou not fetch a crown for fear of a thorn? Nay, who would not go to heaven, although it were with Elijah in a whirlwind? *I count*, saith Paul, *that the afflictions of this life are not worthy of the glory which shall be shewed unto us*, Rom. viii. 18. Come then ye that thirst for long life, believe in God, and you shall have life eternal. All is well that ends well: though a while we sink in miseries, yet at last the joys of heaven will refresh us; then shall we live in love, rejoice in hymns, sing forth in praises the wonderful works of our Creator and Redeemer: this is that life of heaven, and when our life ends here, Lord grant us life everlasting.

Thus far have you seen the state of our life: this lease breeds sorrow, but the reversal is our joy; no sooner shall this life expire, but God will give us the purchase of his Son, that inheritance of heaven; comfort then thy soul that wades through this sea of miseries, and the Lord so assist us in all our troubles, that he lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Have been.

OUR life is but days, our days are but few, our few days but evil, and now when all is done, we find all is out of date. *Few and evil have the days of my life been.*

This last word is the lease's expiration; and why *have been*?] If you will needs know the reason.

The time that is past is best known to Jacob.

And the life of Jacob is but as the time that is past.

1. The time that is past is best known to Jacob: old men can tell old stories, and something it delights them to remember the storms gone over them. We all know how many years we have lived. How great miseries we have suffered.

Jacob tells you, as you may tell each other, our years have been few, our few years have been evil. To make this good, *Have they not been few*? Let me ask some old man, whose hairs are dipt in snow, whose *golden ewer is broken, whose silver cord is lengthened*, Eccl. xii. 6. How many be thy years? It may be thou wilt answer, as Moses gives the number, a matter of *threescore years and ten*? or *fourscore years*, Psalm xc. 10. I cannot say but it is a long time to come; but alas, what are these fourscore years now they are gone? Tell me you that have seen the many changes both of moon and sun, are they not swiftly run away? You may remember your manhood, childhood; and I pray what think ye? was it not yesterday? is it not a while since? who will not wonder to see how quickly it is gone, and yet how long it was a coming? The time to come seems tedious, especially to a man in hope of bliss, the time now past is a very nothing, especially to a man in fear of danger: go down to those cast-away souls that now suffer in hell flames; and what say they of their life, but *Alas as we were born, we began to draw to our end*, Wis. v. 13. Go down to those putrified bodies, and find amongst them the dusts of Adam, Seth, Enoch, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methusalem, every one of whom lived near to the number of a thousand years, are they not dead? and what is their epitaph, but, *They lived and died*? Gen. v. To sum up all in one, and to make this one serve for all, *Jacob is an hundred and thirty years old*, for so you see it registred in God's book, Gen. xlvii. 9. Yet now being demanded to tell his age, he answers but days, and his days are but few; how should they be many that now are gone already? these few days, they have been.

2. And as time past tells our days, so it counts all our miseries; who cannot remember the miseries he doth suffer? The poor, the sick, the banished, the imprison-

ed, the traveller, the soldier, every one can write a chronicle of his life, and make up large volumes of their several changes. What is the history of the Bible but an holy brief chronicle of the saints grievous sufferings? see the miseries of the patriarchs described in the books of Moses: see the wars of the Israelites set down in the books of Joshua: see the afflictions of David in the books of Samuel: Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, every one hath a book of their several calamities: and if all our miseries were but thus abbreviated, *I suppose that the world would not contain the books that should be written.* There is no man so cunning to know his future condition; but for those things which have been, every one can read them. Look then, beloved, at the time now past, and will you not say with Jacob, *Your days have been evil?* Evil for your sins, and evil for your sufferings: if you live more days, what do you but increase more evils? The just man sins seven times a day, and every one of us perhaps seventy times seven times: do we thus multiply sins? and think we to subtract our sorrows? Think but of those storms that already have gone over our heads, famines, sores, sickneſſes, plagues; have we not seen many seasons unseasonable, because we could find no season to repentance? Our springs have been graves rather than cradles, our summers have not shot up, but withered our grass; our autumns have took away the flocks of our sheep, and for our latest harvest, the heavens themselves have not ceased weeping for us, that never yet found time to weep for ourselves. And as this procured the famine, so famine ushered the pestilence. O the miseries miserable that at this time fell upon us! Were not our houses infected? our towns depopulated? our gardens made our graves? and many a grave a bed to lodge in it a whole family? Alas, what an hideous noise was heard about us? in every church bells tolling, in

every hamlet some dying, in every street men watching, in every place, every where, wailing and weeping, or groaning and dying. These are the evils that *have been*, and how should we forget them that have once seen them with our eyes! Call to mind time past, was the rule of Bernard; and what better rule have we to square our lives, than the remembrance of those evils which our lives have suffered? Look back then with Jacob, and we have good reason to redeem the time past, because our days have been evil.

2. But there is yet another reason why these few evil days have been. As the time past is best known to Jacob, so the life of Jacob is but as the time past. *Go to now*, saith James, ch. iv. 13. *ye that say to day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain, and yet ye cannot tell what shall be to morrow.* It is a meer presumption to boast of the time to come: can any man say he will live till to morrow? Look back ye that trust to this staff of Egypt, there is no man can assure you of this day; *Man knoweth not his time*, saith the preacher, Ec. ix. 12. As near as it is to night, it may be before evening some one of us may be dead, and cold, and siter to lodge in our graves under earth, than in our beds above it; nay assure yourselves, our life is of no long continuance: what speak we of to morrow, or this day? we are not sure of (that least of time's division) a very hour: *Watch therefore*, saith our Saviour; and will you know the reason: *for ye know neither the day, nor the hour when the Son of man will come*, Mat. xxv. 13. The man with ten or twenty dishes set before him on his table, when he hath all intelligence that in one of them is poison, will he not refuse all, lest in eating of any he run upon the hazard of his life? What is our life but a few hours? and in one of them death must needs come; watch then, for the hour is at hand, and we know not

how soon it will seize upon us. This hour the breath thou drawest may be thy infection, this hour the bread thou eatest may be thy poison, this hour the cup thou tastest may be *that cup that must not pass from thee*. But what speak we of this hour, seeing it is come, and gone? The sweetest ditty that Moses sung, were his briefs and semibricks of life, and what is it but a watch? Pf. xc. 4. What is it but a sleep? Psalm xc. 5. We watch when it is dark, we sleep when it is night: if then our life be no more but a night-work, what is truer than this wonder, our life is done, our days they have been?

You may think we go far to prove so strange a paradox, yet Job goes further; what are we *but of yesterday, for our days upon earth are but a shadow*? Job viii. 9. See here the chronology of man's frailty, we have a time to live, and when is it think you? Not to morrow, nor to day, nor this hour, nor last night, it is as long since as yesterday itself. Are not we strangely deceived? What mean our plots and projects for the time to come? why, our life is done, and we are now but dead men. To speak properly, in the midst of life we be in death, our whole life being truly (if not past, yet) as the time past that is gone and vanished. The similitude or resemblance will run in these respects.

The time past, cannot be recalled, but suddenly is vanished. And so is our life: can we recall that which is fled away? the life that we led yesterday, you see it is gone; the life that we led last night, it is past and done; the life that we led this morning, it is now a going, nay, it is gone as soon as we have spoken. Nicodemus' saying, according to the flesh, was true, *How can a man be born who is old? can he enter into his mother's womb again, and be born?* John iii. 4. How should a man recall what is past? can he receive again the soul once given, and begin to live? Man never so great in power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree;

a tree most durable, a bay-tree most flourishing; a green bay-tree that is most in prime, if any thing will stand at a stay, what is more likely? yet *he passed away*, (saith the Psalmist) *and lo he was gone; I sought him, but he could not be found*, Pf. xxxvii. 35, 36. We cannot stay time present; how should we recall time past? See here the man on whom the eyes of the world are fixt with admiration, yet for all this he passeth without stay, he is gone without recall, *I sought him; but to find him is without all recovery*. Time was that Adam lived in paradise, Noah built an ark, David slew Goliath, Alexander overcame the world; where be these men that are the wonder of us living? we all know they are long since dead, and the times they saw shall never come again. How fond was that fiction of Plato, that after the revolution of his tedious year, then he must live again, and teach his scholars in the same chair he sate in? Our faith is above reason, for, *The heavens shall pass away, the elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with the works therein shall be burnt up*, 2 Pet. iii. 10. Where then is the life of Plato, when all these things shall turn to nothing? We may now for his learning praise him where he is not, and he may then for his error be convinced and judged where he is. Is there any man with skill or power can call back but yesterday? once, only, we read of such a miracle, but it was only by the hand of God Almighty. *Hezekiah was sick, 2 Kings xx.* and to confirm the news that he must recover, he requires a sign, *What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day?* This was no temptation, for you see how the prophet gives him satisfaction, *This sign shalt thou have of the Lord; wilt thou that the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?* Hezekiah thinks of death, and the prophet restores his life; not only a

time of fifteen years to come, but of ten degrees now gone, and thus it was observed in the dial of Ahaz. This was a miracle that but once happened since the beginning of the world. He then that sleeps away his time in expectation of Hezekiah's sun, may sleep till his death, and then not recall one minute of his life; as the time, so our life; if once past, it is irrevocable, irrecoverable.

2. And as it cannot be recalled again, so suddenly it is vanished. 'Nothing makes life long, but our hope to live long: take away those thoughts of the time to come, and there is nothing swifter than the life that is gone.' Suppose then thou hadst lived so long, as from Adam to this time; as Austin saith, 'Certainly thou wouldst think thy life but short:' and if that were short, which we think so long; how long is our life, which, in comparison of that, is so extremely short? The time once past, we think it suddenly past, and so is life gone in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, so soon indeed, before it can be said, *This it is*. In every one of us death hath ten thousand times as much as life, the life that is gone is death's, and the life yet to come is death's, our *now* is but an instant; yet this is all that belongs to life, and all the life which any of us all is at once possessed of: here is a life indeed, that so soon is vanished, before it can be numbered or measured; it is no time but *now*, yet stays not till the syllable *now* may be

written or spoken: what can I say? the life that I had when I began to speak this word, it is now gone since I began to speak this word. May we call this life that is ever passing towards death? Do we what we can, and could we do yet more, all we do, and all we could do, were to no purpose to prolong our life: see how we store this ruinous house of our body with food, with raiment, with exercise, with sleep, yet nothing can preserve it from returning to its earth: we go, and we go suddenly, witness these two Cæsars, who put off themselves whilst they put on their shoes; Fabius till'd Maximus for his exploits, and Cunctator for his delaying, yet could not delay death, till notice might be taken he was sick; but how many examples in this kind have we daily amongst us? You know how some lately have gone safe to bed, and yet in the morning were found dead and cold: others, in health and mirth laid down by their wives, and yet, ere midnight found breathless by their sides. What need we further instances? You see how we go, before we know where we are; the life that we had, what is it but a nothing? the life that we have, what is it but a moment? and all we can have, what is it but a fleeting wind, begun and done in a trice of time, before we can imagine it. In a word, our sun now sets, our day is done; ask Jacob, the clock-keeper of our time, the text tells the hour, and now struck, you hear the sound? our days are gone, *Few and evil they have been*.

T H E
C O N C L U S I O N .

Occasioned by the Death of Charles Bridgeman, who deceased about the age of Twelve, in the Year of our Lord, 1632.

He was a most pious son of a most pious mother, both now with God.

HERE I thought to have finished my text and sermon; but here is a sad accident to confirm my saying, and whilst

I speak of him, what can I say of his state, his person, his birth, his life, of all he had, and of all he was, but that they have been?

Sweet rose, cropt in its blossom; no sooner budded, but blasted; how shall we remember his days, to forget our sorrows? No sooner hath he learnt to speak, but (contrary to our custom) he betook him to his prayers; so soon had grace quelled the corruption of his nature, that being yet an infant, you might see his proneness to learn; nay, sometimes to teach them this duty, who waited on to teach him his devotion: not long after, he was set to school, where he learned by book what before he had learned by heart: the sweet care, good disposition, sincere religion, which were in this child, all may remember which cast but their eyes upon him. 'O God, how hast thou bereaved us of this gem? Sure it is (as it was said of another) for this cause only, that it might shine in heaven. But this was but the beginning of his days, now they are past, they have been.'

Go a little further, we left him at school, but how learned he *Christ, and him crucified*? 1 Cor. ii. 2. this was the knowledge taught him by the Spirit of God in a wonderful manner; *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou, O God, ordained strength*, Psalm viii. 2. To consider again his religious words, his upright actions, his hearty devotions, his fear of God, all then concluded, as they did of John, *What manner of child shall this be?* Luke i. 66. No question the grace of God was with him. If I should instance in any of these, his frequency in prayer, his reading of scriptures, his reasoning with others to get knowledge to himself, we may wonder at God's power in this child's poor weakness: excuse me whiles I tell nothing but truths, and I hope they will tend to our own instruction. 'In the morning he would not stir out of doors, before he had poured out his prayers; at noon he would not eat any meat, before he had given the Lord thanks; at night he would not ly down on his bed, before he had kneled down on his knees; we may remember those times, when some-

times that he had forgotten this duty, no sooner had he been in bed, but up he would get again, and so kneeling down on his bare knees, covered with no garment but his lincens, he would ask God forgiveness for that sin of forgetfulness; neither have his brothers escaped without his reprehension; for had they eaten any meal or meat without a grace, his check was usual: 'Dare you do thus? unless God be merciful unto us, this bit of bread might choak us.' The wise sentences, the religious words, which often dropt from his mouth like honey, can we remember them, and not grieve at the death of him that spake them? What comfort had we in those days? What sorrow have we to think those days are done? they are gone, they have been.

Thus he lived: will you know how he died? 1. A lingering sickness seized upon him; against which to comfort him, one tells him of possessions that must fall to his portion: 'and what are they? (said he) I had rather have the kingdom of heaven, than a thousand such inheritances.' Thus he minds heaven; and God, to minding him, presently sent him his sickness that should summon him thither. And now how should I repeat his words, with the life that he spake them dying? No sooner had God struck his body with that fatal sickness, but he asks and needs would know his soul's estate. 'I have heard of the soul (said he) but what is the soul? the mind?' He questions, and questioning answers, better, I fear, than many, too many gray-headed amongst us; but the answer given, how the soul consisted of the will and understanding, he says, 'he is satisfied, and now understands better than he did before.' Another comes to him, and then he begins another question; now he knows the soul, he desires yet to know further, 'How his soul may be saved?' O blessed soul, how wisely couldst thou question for thine own soul's good! the answer given, 'By faith applying Christ's merits:' he heard
it,

it, and had it, anon telling them, who before had taught it him. Resolved in these questions, he questions no further, but will now answer them that go about to question him: one asks him, whether he had rather live or die? He gives the answer, and not without Paul's reason, I desire to die, said he, that I might go to my Saviour. O blessed Spirit, how didst thou inspire into this child thy wisdom and goodness! this done, his pains begin again to afflict him, and this occasions another thus to question him, whether he would rather still endure those pains, or forsake his Christ? 'Atlas! (said he) I know not what to say as a child, for these pains might stagger a strong man; but I will strive to endure the best I can.' Upon this he presently calls to mind that martyr, Thomas Bilney, who being in prison, the night before his burning, put his finger in the candle, to know how he would endure the fire; 'O, (said he) had I lived then, I would have run through the fire to have gone to Christ.' Sweet resolution of a silly child! who can hear, and not wonder? wonder, and not desire to hear that he may wonder still? Blessed child, hadst thou lived, that we might have wondered at thy wisdom! but his days were determined, and now is the number turned to this poor cypher, they are not, they have been.

I cannot leave him yet, his sickness lasts long, and at least three days before his death, he prophesies his departure, and how strange a prophecy? not only that he must die, but foretelling the very day; 'On the Lord's day (said he) look to me.' Neither was this a word of course, which you may guess by his often repetition; every day asking, till the day came indeed, 'What, is Sunday come?' At last, the look'd for day came on, and no sooner had the sun beautified that morning with his light, but he falls into a trance: 'What, think ye, meant this blessed soul, whilest the body itself used such an action? His eyes were

fixed, his face chearful, his lips smiling, his hands and arms clasping in a bow, as if he would have received some blessed angel that there was at hand to receive his soul; but he comes to himself, and tells them how he saw the sweetest boy that ever eyes beheld, and bids them, be of good cheer, for he must presently go with him.' One standing near, as now suspecting his time of dissolution, bids him say, 'Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit: yes, (said he) into thy hands, Lord, I commit my spirit, which is thy due; for why? thou hast redeemed it, O Lord my God most true, Psalm xxxi. 5.' Who will not believe this child now sings in heaven, that so soon had learned this David's psalm on earth? I cannot hold myself, nor will I hold you long; but how may I omit his heavenly ejaculations? Beloved, I beseech you pardon me whilest I speak his words, and I will promise you to speak no word, but the very same formally which were his own: 'Pray, pray, pray, nay, yet pray, and the more prayers the better all profers: God is the best physician; into his hands I commend my spirit: O Lord Jesus, receive my soul. Now close mine eyes, forgive me, father, mother, brothers, sister, all the world. Now I am well, my pain is almost gone, my joy is at hand; O Lord, have mercy upon me, receive my soul unto thee.' Where am I whilest I speak these words? Blessed saint, now thou singest in heaven, God hath bid thee welcome, the angels are hugging thee, the saints rejoice with thee, this day is the crown set on thy head, this day is the palm of victory in thy hand, now art thou arrayed in the shining robes of heaven, and all the host do triumph at thy coronation. Sweet soul, how am I ravished to think upon thee! what joy is this? the patriarchs salute thee, the prophets welcome thee, the apostles hug thee, all hands clap for joy, all harps wabble, all hearts are merry and glad. O thou Creator of men and angels, help us all to heaven,

that when our days have been, we may all meet together in thy blessed kingdom.

'I have done: turn back by the same thread that led you through this labyrinth, and you shall have in two words the sum of this whole text.

The time of our lease, what is it but our life? What is this life, but a number of few days? What are these days, but a world full of evil? But a life, but days, but few, but evil; can we add any more? Yes, life is life howsoever we live, and better you think to have a bad lease in being, than

our life to be quite extinguished; nay, be not deceived, this life is but death, the days that we spend, they are past and done, few and evil they have been.' Thus ends the text with the expiration of our lease; yet is not all done: when we lose this life, we have another freehold prepared in heaven, and this is not leased, but purchased; not for life, but inheritance; not for days, but for ever: cross but the words of my text, and 'many and happy shall the ages of thy life be in heaven, for ever and ever.' Amen.

DEATH'S ARREST.

Luke xii. 20. *This night thy soul shall be required of thee.*

MAN's body, we say, is closed up with- in the elements, his blood in his body, his spirits in his blood, his soul in his spirits, and God or Satan in his soul. Who holds the possession we may guess in life, but then it is most apparent when we come to death: the tree may bend east, or west, or north, or south; but *as it falleth so it lieth*: our affections may look up or down, towards heaven or hell; but as we die we receive our doom, and then whose we are shall be fully made manifest to all the world. There is a parable of poor Lazarus, Luke xvi. whose life was nothing but a catalogue of miseries, his body full of sores, his mind full of sorrows; what spectacle could we think more pitiful, whose best dainties were but broken crumbs, and his warmest lodging but the rich man's gates? here is a parable of a certain rich man, who enjoys, or at least purporeth, a delicious fare, he hath lands, v. 16. fruits, v. 17. buildings, v. 18. and if this be the inventory, what is the sum? See it collected in the verse succeeding, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years;*

now live at ease, eat, drink, and take thy pastime. These two estates, thus different, how should they be but of divers tenures? *No man can serve God and Mammon*, Mat. vi. 24. See Lazarus dying, and the angels carry him into Abraham's bosom. See this rich man dying, and they (that is, devils) require his soul. God receives one, and his soul is in heaven; Satan takes the other, and drags down his soul to hell; he is comforted that received pains, and thou art tormented that was full of ease: this is the doom, and that he may undergo this death now gives the summons, *This night thy soul shall be required of thee.*

The text we may christen Death's Arrest; it is we that offend his majesty of heaven, and his precepts are given unto death, to attach our souls. See here a precedent, a rich man taken on a sudden, who must instantly appear before the judge of heaven: when? This night. What? Thy soul. Why? It is required. Of whom? Of thee.

Or if this will not find the offender, see yet a more narrow search; every word is like some dark closet, therefore we will open

pen the windows that you may have full light. This text is death's arrest, which as it must be executed, so it admits of no other time but this. This, what, this day, whilst the sun gives light to the world, and the light gives pleasure to the eye? this were some comfort: no, but then suddenly whilst all asleep securely, not this Day, but This Night. And what, this night? Is it to attach the body of some great personage, whose looks might affrighten officers had they come by day? no, let his body rot in dust, whilst the soul must answer his defaults; it is not thy body, 'tis thy Soul. And what of his soul? Is this a subject liable to arrests? neither can they beg it at his hands, or will he yield it at their fair intreaties? No, it is neither begged nor intreated; but by virtue of God's writ it is required. And how required? Of his sureties bound for his appearing? He hath many friends, and all have, or would have entred bonds: no, he must go without bail or main-prize, it is not required of his sureties, but himself; not of others, but *of thee is thy soul this night required.*

You hear the text's harmony, of each string we will give a touch, and first note the time. *This night.*

NO other but This? Were it a fourthnight, a seven-night, any but this night, and his griefs were lessened; the news is more heartless in that it comes more sudden. You may observe, 'Then are the greatest losses when they come on us by heaps, and without fear or suspicion of any such matter.' Here was a man swimming in his fulness, and a sudden death robs him of all his treasures. To give you a full view, see his possessions, and how great was the loss, because of the suddenness, This night.

1. Those goods whereof he boasted, are now confiscate; not a penny, not a dram, not a mite shall be left him, save only a token of remembrance, (I mean his winding-

sheet) which he carries along with him to his grave.

2. 'His goods and grounds both were took from him at his death:' he that commanded so much of earth, must now have no more earth to pleasure him but a grave: what a change was this? his grounds were fertile, and they brought forth plenteously, but a blast of death hath struck both the fruit and the ground; and nothing is now left him but a barren tomb.

3. His lands and houses both went together. You may guess that great demaiesness must have stately halls: we read of his building, and especially of his barns; when these were too little for his store, he tells us, 'He will pull them down, and he will build greater.' He never thinks of any little room in the bowels of the poor. Was his harvest so great that his barns would not hold it? Whence came the blessing but from God? How is it then he forgets God that bestowed this blessing? It is written, Lev. xix. 9, 10. *When ye reap the harvest of the land, ye shall not reap every corn of your field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of the harvest.* How? not reap it? not gather it? what then? why, *Thou shalt leave them for the poor, and for the stranger: I am the Lord your God.* When Ruth came to glean in the fields of Boaz, that good master commands his servants, *Let her gather among the sheaves, and do not rebuke her,* Ruth ii. 15. Had this worldling been so pitiful to the poor, his barns might have stood, himself might have lived, his soul have been saved. But now what a strange lot happens on him? his halls, houses, barns, buildings, all run round in a dance of death before his eyes.

4. 'His house and friends both left him when death came.' The parable is common: A man hath three friends, two whereof he loved most entirely, the third he made no account of: this man being sent for to come before the king, he de-

fires his first friend to go with him ; but he could not, only he would give him something for his journey : he desired his second friend to go with him, but he would not, only he would bring him a little piece of his way : when both these forsook him, he goes to the last, which before he esteemed least, and this friend was the party that went with him to the king, and answered for him in all his causes. This is the case of every dying man ; the king our judge sends death his serjeant to summon you to your judgment. Come to your first friends, I mean your riches, alas they cannot go with you, but give you a sheet as necessary for your journey : come to your second friends, I mean your acquaintance, alas ! they will not go with you, but bring you to your graves, and there leave you to yourselves : Come to your last friends, which you now least think of, I mean your consciences, and you shall find that is the truest friend that will go with you to the judge, and answer for you to the king, and either acquit you, or condemn you ; bring you to the gates of heaven, or deliver you to the goal of hell. Have a care of your consciences, if you mean to speed well at this day : how blessed a man had this worldling been, if only a good conscience had accompanied him to the judge of heaven ? but now when death summons him, there is no friend to sollicit, no advocate to plead, no man to speak one word in his soul's behalf ; it is his bad conscience keeps him company, and though all others leave him, he can devise no means to shake this from him.

5. There is a jewel irrecoverable, of which this sudden death robs him, I mean his time, and what a loss was this ? All his goods, grounds, barns, buildings, were they more worth than the world itself, yet were they not able to restore one minute of his time : if this could be purchased, what a rate would he give for a little respite ? nothing is now so precious as a

piece of time, which before by months and years he lavishly mispent : they that pass away time with mirth and pastime, shall one day see to their grief what a loss they have ; now we revell it out, dally it away, use all means and occasions to make it short enough ; but when this golden shower is gone, and those opportunities of salvation lost by negligence, then we may wish, and wish again, ' Oh had we a little time, a little space to repent ! ' imagine that this worldling (whom now you must suppose to ly frying in hell-flames) were dispensed with for a little time, to live here again on earth amongst us ; would but the Lord vouchsafe him one hour of new trial, a minute-season of a gracious visitation, Oh how highly would he prize, how eagerly would he apprehend, with what infinite watching, praying, fasting, would he improve that short time, that he might repent him ! I know not how effectually this may work on your hearts, but I am fully persuaded, if any damned creature had but the happiness to hear this sermon, you should see his very heart would bleed within him : bleed, said I ? nay, break and fall asunder in his breast like drops of water. Oh with what inflamed attention would he hear and listen ? with what insatiable grasping would he lay hold on Christ ? with what streaming tears would he water his cheeks, as if he would melt himself, like Niobe, into a fountain ? ' Blessed God, how fond are foolish men that never think of this till their time be lost ! ' We that are alive have only this benefit and opportunity, and if we neglect it, a day will come (we know not how soon) that we shall be past it, and cannot recover it, no not one hour, if we would give a thousand, ten thousand worlds for it. What can I say ? reflect on yourselves, you that have souls to save ; you have yet a little time, and the time present is that time : what then, but so use it now, as when you

are gone, you need not with grief to with you here again.

6. Yet more loss, and that is the loss of losses, the loss of his soul; his riches, lands, houses, friends, time, and all were nothing to his soul. This is that paragon, peer, rose and spouse of our well-beloved Christ. 'How many a tear shed he to save it? what groans, cries, prayers, tears and blood poured he before God, that he might redeem it from the jaws of Satan! and is this lost notwithstanding all this labour! O sweet Jesus, what a loss is this! thou wast born, lived, died, and that a shameful death, the death of the cross, and all this suffering was to save poor souls: yet see a soul here lost, and the blood of God, though able, not effectual to redeem it.' Whose heart would not melt into blood, that but knew this misery? Suppose you could see but the soul of this wretched worldling, no sooner had it left the body, but immediately it was seized on by infernal fiends, now lies it on a bed of fire, tortured, tormented, scourged, and scorched in those furious flames; there his conscience stings him, his sorrow grips him, his pain so handles him, that he cries and roars, 'Wo, wo, and alas for evermore.' Who now for shadows of short pleasures, would incur these sorrows of eternal pains? In this world we can weep and wail for a loss of trifles; an house, a field, an ox took from us, enough to cruciate us: but how shall we bewail the loss of a soul, which no sooner plunged into that pit of horror, but it shall feel a punishment without pity, misery without mercy, sorrow without succour, crying without comfort, torment without ease, a world of mischief without all measure of redress? Such is the loss of this man's silly soul; whilst he was cheering it with a home-bred solace, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years*; God whispers in his ears, and tells him other news: what? of his soul: how? it is required: when? this night: a fearful

sound, unlookt for message, speedy dispatch, no more delays nor days, only this night, for then his soul must be taken from him.

You see all his losses; and now to contract them, there is one grief more than all, that all is lost on a sudden. Losses that come by succession are better born with, but all on a sudden is the worst of all; yet such is the misery of man when he goes, all goes with him, and he and all pass away on a sudden: *As in the days of Noah, they ate, and drank, married, and gave in marriage, and knew nothing till the flood came, and took them all away: so is the coming of the Son of man*, Matth. xxiv. 38. How many have been thus took tripping in their wickedness! Belshazzar in his mirth, Herod in his pride, the Philistines in their banqueting, the men of Ziklag in their feasting, Job's children in their drunkenness, the Sodomites in their filthiness, the steward in his security, this churl in his plenty: miserable end, when men end in their sin. 'Call to mind this, O my soul, and tremble; sleep not in sin, lest the sleep of death surprize thee: the hour is certain, in nothing but uncertainties; *Certa mors, incerta hora*; for sure thou must die, yet thou knowest not on what day, nor in what place, nor how thou shalt be disposed when death must be entertained. Do you not see most die, while they are most busie how to live? he that once thought but to begin to take his ease, was fain that very night, whether he would or no, to make his end: would you have thought this? he but now flourished like a green bay-tree, his thoughts full of mirth, his soul of ease,' but I passed by, and lo he was gone. I psalm xxxvii. 35, 39. Gone, whither? his body to the grave, his soul to hell; in the midst of his jollity, God threatens destruction; devils, execution; death, expedition, and thus like a swan he sings his funerals. There is that faith, *I have found rest, and now will I eat continually of my goods, and yet he*

knoweth not what time shall come upon him, and that he must leave these things to others, and die, Eccl. xi. 19. The higher our Babel-tower of joy is raised, the nearer it is to ruin and confusion; Sodom, in the heat of their sins, had that shower of fire poured on their heads: Nebuchadnezzar, in the height of his pride, became suddenly a beast, that ruled before as a king: Once for all, here was a man solacing, singing, warbling out pleasant songs of ease and pastime: but, O the misery, in the midst of his note here is a sudden stop; he dreams of longs and larges, he hears of briefs, and semi-briefs, no longer a day, but this very night, and then shall thy soul be taken from thee.

See here the many losses of one man, 'his goods, his ground, his houses, his friends, his time, his soul, and all on a sudden, whilst the word is spoken, this night.'

Use 1. Our neighbours fire cannot but give warning of approaching flames. *Remember his judgment, thine also may be likewise: unto me yesterday, and unto thee to day,* Eccl. xxxviii. 22. Whose turn is next, God only knows who knows all. *Is not madness in the hearts of men whiles they live?* Eccl. ix. 3. In the least suspicion of losing worldly riches, all watch and break their sleep; you shall see men work, and toil, and fear and care, and all too little to prevent a loss; but for all these losses which are linked together, our riches, lands, houses, friends, time and soul, and all we have, there is few or none regards them: O that men are so careful in trifles, and so negligent in matters of a great importance! It is storied of Archimedes, that when Syracuse was taken, he only was sitting secure at home, and drawing circles with his compass in the dust. Thus some we have, that when the eternal salvation of their souls is in question, they are handling their dust, nothing but suits or money-matters are their daily objects: but, alas! what will your goods, or grounds

or houses, or friends avail you, when death comes? Where did ever that man dwell, that was comforted by any of these in that last and forest conflict? give me a man amongst you, that spends the span of his transitory life in grasping gold, gathering wealth, growing great, enriching his posterity, without any endeavour or care to treasure up grace against that fatal hour; and I dare certainly tell him, whensoever he comes to his death's-bed, he shall find nothing but an horrible confusion, extremest horror and heaviness of heart; nay, his soul shall presently down into the kingdom of darkness, and there ly and fry in everlasting fires. Nor speak I only to the covetous, though my text seems more directly to point at them, but whosoever thou art that goest on in a daily course of sin, in the fear of God bethink you of mortality: some of you may think I speak not to you, and others I speak not to you; the truth is, I speak to you all, but to you more especially that to this day have sinned with delight, but never as yet felt the smart for sin upon your souls or consciences: O beloved! this is it I call for, and must call for till you feel a change, a thorough change in you: would but some of you at this present examine your consciences, and say, 'Whether have I not been inordinate in drunkenness, or wantonness, or covetousness? whether have I not sworn an oath, or told a lie, or dissembled in my heart, when I have spoken? O who can say amongst you, I am clean, I am clean? and assure yourselves, if you are guilty, you must either feel heart's grief, or you can never be provided for death's dismal arrest. If you were but sensible of sin, if you felt but the weight and horror of God's wrath for sin, I am verily persuaded you would not take a quiet sleep in your beds for fear, and horror, and heaviness of heart: what is it but madness of a man to ly down in ease upon a feather-bed, and to lodge in his bosom that deadly enemy, sin?'

But,

But, horror of horrors, what if this night, whilst you sleep in your sin, death should arrest you on your beds? This I tell you is no wonder, are not sudden deaths common and ordinary among the sons of men? how many have we heard that went to bed well over night, for ought any man could tell, and yet were found dead in the morning, I will not say carried away out of their beds, and cast into hell-fire? Whether it be so or no, the Lord our God knows: but howsoever it is with them, if we, for our parts, commit sin, and repent not thereof by crying and sobbing, and sorrowing for sin, it may be this night, and that is not long to, you may sleep your last in this world, and then shall your souls be hurried by devils to that infernal lake, whence there is no redemption. 'O beloved! O wretch, who-soever thou art! Canst thou possibly sleep in such a case as this? Canst thou go to bed with a conscience laden with sin? Canst thou take any sleep which is the brother of death, when thou liest now in danger of eternal death? Consider, I pray what space, what distance, how far off is thy soul from death, from hell, from eternity? No more but a breath, one breath and no more; no more but a step, one step, and no more; O beloved! were not this lamentable, that some one of us that now are standing or sitting, should this night sleep his last, and to morrow have his body brought to be buried; yea, and before to morrow morning have his soul (which the Lord forbid) cast from his bed of feathers, to a bed of fire? And yet, alas! alas! if any of us this night die in his sins, or in a state unregenerate, thus will it be with him whosoever he be; to morrow may his body ly cold under earth, and his soul lodge in hell with this miserable rich man.'

Use 2. But let me speak to you, of whom I hope better things; it is good counsel for you all to expect death every day, and by

this means, death foreseen cannot possibly be sudden; no, it is he only dies suddenly, that dies unpreparedly: *watch therefore*, saith our Saviour, be ever in a readiness: and finally, that this rich man may be your warning, you that tender your souls, learn that lesson of our Saviour; *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal*, Matth. vi. 19, 20. You will say,

What treasures are those? I answer; those treasures are those stocks of grace that will last for ever; it is that *circumspect walking*, Eph. v. 15. *that fervency of spirit*, Rom. xii. 11. *that zeal of good works*, Tit. ii. 14. *that purity* which John makes a property of every true-hearted professor, 1 John iii. 3. In a word, it is the work, the life, the power of that prayer, that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy: these are heavenly hoards indeed. 'O that we would treasure up such provision against the day of calamity! if while it is called to-day, we would make our peace with this heavenly Highness, by an humble continued exercise of repentance; if in this time of grace we would purchase God's favour, and those rarest jewels of faith and a good conscience; if now before we appear at the dreadful tribunal, we would make God and his angels our friends in the court of heaven; O then how blessed would our death be to us? Came it never so suddenly, still should death find us ready, and if ready, no matter how suddenly, yea though it were *this, this night.*'

I have ope the writ, and you see when it must be served, this night; but in this *quando*, there is both suddenness and sadness: it is not this day, but this night. Let this end this day's discourse, and the next day we will lay open the night's dark sad-

ness: it is a dismal time, God give us grace so to provide, that we may be ready with oil in our lamps, and enter with our Saviour into his blessed kingdom.

Night.

HE sins all day, and dies at night, and why at *night*? This you know is frequent, and there is reason, 'Most are begot and born, and therefore die at night:' but we must further than the lists of nature; this night was more than ordinary, as being the fittest time to aggravate his grief: weigh but the circumstances.

1. It was a night of darkness, and this may increase the horror of his judgment: think but what a fear seized on the Egyptians, when *no power of the fire must give them light, nor might the clear flames of the stars lighten the horrible night that fell upon them*, Wisd. xvii. 5. The husband-men, the shepherd, the workmen, all were bound with one chain of darkness, *No man saw another, neither rose up from the place where he was for three days*, Exod. x. 23. Was not this fearful darkness? You may guess it by the effects, they were troubled, and terrified, and swooned, as tho' their own souls should betray them. *Whether it were an hissing wind, or a sweet noise of birds among the spreading branches, or a pleasing fall of waters running violently, or a terrible sound of stones, or the running of skipping beasts, or the noise of cruel beasts, or the eccho that answereth again in the hollow mountains, these fearful things made them to swoon for fear*, Wisd. xvii. 18. And if thus the Egyptians, how was it with this worldling? a darkness seized on him that engendred a thousand times more intolerable torments. This was the *image of that darkness which should afterward receive him, and yet was he unto himself more grievous than the darkness*, Wisd. xvii. 21. It was not an outward, but an utter darkness, not only to be not seen, but to be felt and feared. Imagine then what visions, what sounds, what sights,

what sudden fires appeared unto him? Unhappy worldling, look round about thee; although it be dark, here is something to be seen: above is the angry judge, beneath is the burning lake, before is gloomy darkness, behind is infallible death, on thy right and left hand a legion of evil angels expecting every moment to receive the prey. Here is a sight indeed, able to break the very heart-strings of each sinner. If some have lost their wits, by means of some dreadful sight; yea if the very suspicion of devils have caused many men to tremble, and the hairs of their heads to stand staring upright; what then was the fear and terror of this man, when so many dreadful, horrible, hellish monsters stood round about him, now ready to receive him? *O ye sons of men, stand in awe and sin not, commune with your own hearts, and in your chamber, and be still*, Psalm iv. 4. Will not this fear you from your sins? Suppose then you lay on your beds of death, were the judge in his throne, your souls at the bar, the accuser at your elbows, and hell ready open to shut her mouth upon you: O then, how would you curse yourselves, and bewail your sins? What horrible visions would appear to you in the dark? horrible indeed? 'In-somuch (saith Cyril) that were there no other punishment than the appearing of devils, you would rather burn to ashes, than endure their sight.' Good God! that any Christian should live in this danger, and yet never heed it till he sees its terror. How many have gone thus fearfully out of this miserable world? I know not what you have seen, but there are very few who have not heard of many, too many, in this case. What were Judas's thoughts, when he strangled himself that his bowels gushed out again? what were Cain's visions, when he ran like a vagabond roaring and crying, *Whoever findeth me shall slay me*? Gen. iv. 14. What are all their affrights that cry when they are dying, They see spirits and

and devils flying about them, coming for them, roaring against them, as if an hell entered into them, before themselves could enter it? I dare instance in no other but this wretched miser: what a night was that to him, when on a sudden a darkness seized on him, that never after left him? Thus many go to bed, that never rise again, till they be wakened by the fearful sound of the last trumpet: and was not this a terror? Whose heart doth not quake? Whose flesh doth not tremble? Whose senses are not astonished whilst we do but think on it? And then what were the sufferings of himself in his person? He might cry, and roar, and wail, and weep, yet there is none to help him; his heart-strings break, the blessed angels leave him, devils still expect him, and now the judge hath pronounced his sentence, This night, in the dark, they must seize upon him.

2. Yet this was not all the horror, it was a night both of darkness and drowsiness, or security in sin. He that reads the life of this man, may well wonder at the fearful end of so fair beginnings: walk into his fields, and there his cattle prosper; come nearer to his house, and there his barns swell with corn; enter into his gates, and there every table stands richly furnished; step yet into his chambers, and you may imagine down-beds curtained with gold hangings; nay, yet come nearer, we will draw the curtains, and you shall view the person; he had toiled all day, and now see how securely he takes his rest: *This night*, he dreams golden dreams of ease, of mirth, of pastime, (as all our worldly pleasures are but waking dreams) but stay a while and see the issue: just like a man, who starting out of sleep, sees his house on fire, his goods ransacked, his family murdered, himself near lost, and not one to pity him, when the very thrusting in of an arm might deliver him: this, and no other, was the case of this dying miser; as that night, while his senses were most drowsie,

most secure, death comes in the dark and arrests him on his bed; 'Awake, rich dormitant! what charms have lulled thee thus asleep? Canst thou slumber whilst death breaks down this house, thy body, to rob thee of that jewel thy soul? What a deep, dull, drowsie, dead sleep is this? O fool! this night is thy soul assaulted, see death approaching, devils hovering, God's justice threatening; canst thou yet sleep? and are thine eyes yet heavy? behold, the hour is at hand, and thy soul must be delivered into the hands of thine enemies; Heavy eyes! he sleeps still, his care all day had cast him into so dead a sleep *this night*, that nothing can warn him until death awake him. That thief is most dangerous that comes at night, such a thief is death, a thief that steals man; which then is most busie, whilst we are most drowsie, most secure in sin: hark the sluggard that lulls himself in his sins, *Yet a little more sleep, a little more slumber, is not his destruction sudden, and poverty coming on him like an armed man?* Prov. vi. 11. *Watch, saith our Saviour, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, at the cock-crow, or in the morning, lest coming suddenly he should find you sleeping,* Mark xiii. 35. Was not this the wretchedness of the foolish virgins? How sweetly could they slumber? how soundly could they sleep until midnight? They never awake, nor so much as dream to buy oil for their lamps; imagine then how fearful are those summons to these souls: *behold the bridegroom, go ye out to meet him,* Mat. xxv. 16. Sudden fears of all others are most dangerous: was it not a fearful waking to this rich man, when no sooner he opened his eyes, but he saw death's ugliness afore his face? What a sight was this? at his door enters the king of fear, accompanied with all his horrid horrors, and stinging dread: on his curtains he may read his sins, arrayed and armed in their grisliest forms, and with

their fiercest stings; about his bed are the powers of darkness, now presenting to his view his damnable state, his deplorable misery: what can he do that is thus beset with such a world of woful work, and hellish rage? His tongue falters, his breath shortens. his throat rattles, he would not watch, and now cannot resist; the cry is made, the mid-night come, God sounds destruction, and thus runs the proclamation, This night thou drowst, thy soul must be taken from thee.

3. And yet more horror; it was a night of drowsiness and sadness. How is he but sad, when he sees the night coming, and his last day decaying? Read but the copy of this rich man's will, and see how he deals all he hath about him; he bequeaths his garments to the moth, his gold to rust, his body to the grave, his soul to hell, his goods and lands he knows not to whom; *Whose shall these things be?* Here is the man that made such mirth all day, and now is he forced to leave all he hath *this night*. It is the fruit of merry lives to give sad farewells. You that sport yourselves, and spoil others, that rob God in his members, and treasure up your own damnations; will not death make sorry hearts for your merry nights? A night will come as sad as sadness in her sternest looks, and then what a lot will befall you? O that men are such cruel caritiffs to their own souls? Is this a life, think ye, fit for the servants of our God, revelling, swearing, drinking, railing? what other did this miser? He would eat, and drink, and revel, and sing, and then came fear as desolation, and his destruction on a sudden as a whirlwind. If this be our life, how should we escape his death? Alas for the silly mirth that now we pleasure in! you may be sure a night will come that must pay for all, and then shall your pleasures vanish, your griefs begin, and your numberless sins (like so many envenomed stings) run into your damned souls, and pierce

them through with everlasting sorrow; away with this fond, foolish, sottish vanity; *The end of mirth is heaviness*; saith Solomon, Prov. xiv. 13. What will the sons and daughters of pleasure do then? all those sweet delights shall be as scourges and scorpions for your naked souls. Then, though too late, will you lamentably cry out, *What hath pride profited us? or what profit hath the pomp of riches brought us? all these things are passed away as a shadow, or as a post that passeth by*, Wisd. v.

8. 9. Look on this man as he lies on his bed of death, here is neither smile nor dimple; *All the daughters of musick are brought low*, Eccles. xii. 4. His voice is hoarse, his lips pale, his cheeks wan, his nostrils run out, his eyes sink into his head, and all the parts and members of his body now lose their office to admit him: is this the merry man that made such pastime? Sweet God! what a change is this; *instead of sweet smell, there is a stench; instead of a girdle, a rent; instead of well-set hair, baldness; instead of beauty, burning*, Isa. iii. 24. Instead of mirth, mourning and lamentation, *weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth*. Must not sadness seize on that soul which incurs this doom? Here is a malefactor stands at bar, indicted by the name of fool, charged with the guilt of treason, condemned by the judge of heaven, and this night, the saddest that ever he saw, is that fearful execution, that his soul is taken.

4. And yet more horror: it was a night of sin, and this doth increase the sorrow. *How dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*, Psa. cxvi. 13. and we may say on the contrary, how abominable in the sight of the Lord, is the death of the wicked? Was not this a grief to betook thus tripping in his wickedness? even now whilst he was butly plotting his ease and pastime, death stands at his door, and over-hears all his plots and projects. It was a death to his soul to be took in his sin: hear

hear how he roars and cries, ' O that I had lived so virtuously as I should ; had I embraced the often inspirations of God's blessed Spirit ; had I followed his laws, obeyed his commands, attended to his will, how sweet and pleasant would they now be unto me ? Wo and alas that I had not foreseen this day, what have I done, but for a little pleasure, a fleeting vanity, lost a kingdom, purchased damnation ? ' O beloved ! what think ye of yourselves whilst you hear this voice ? You sit here as senseless of this judgment, as the seats, the pillars, the walls, the dust ; nay, as the dead bodies themselves on which you tread : but suppose, and it were a blessed meditation, you that are so fresh and frolick at this day, that spend it merrily, use it profanely, swearing, revelling, singing, dancing ; what if this night, while you are in your sin, the hand of death should arrest you ? Could I speak with you on your death-beds, I am sure I should find you in another case : how ? but sorrowing, grieving, roaring, that your time were lost ; and these words not heeded, while the time well served ? how would you tear your hair, gnash your teeth, bite your nails, seek all means possibly to annihilate yourselves ? and can nothing warn you before death seize on you ? take heed, if you go on in sin, the next step is damnation. It was the apostle's advice : *Now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed,* Ro. xiii. 11. If this wretched man had observed the present time, how happy had he been this hour of his departure ? But as officers take malefactors, drinking or drabbing, so is he nearest danger, when deepest in the mire of pleasure. Look at those that are gone before us, and which of them thought their end so near, while they lived so merry ? I must needs tell you, there is a fire, a worm, a sting, a darkness, an hell provided for all wicked wretches, and there most certainly must you be this night, if you die this day in

your natural state of sin. ' Lord ! that men should be so strangely bewitched by the prince of the air, as for the momentary enjoyment of some glorious miseries, bitter-sweet pleasures, heart-vexing riches, desperately and wilfully to abandon God, and to cast themselves head-long into the jaws of Satan.' Such a prodigious madness seized on this worldling, he sings, he revells, he dallies, then dies. Thus greatest evils arise out of greatest joys, as the ears with vehement sounds, and the eyes with brighter objects ; so many by felicity have lost both their sense and being. Gallus (as Pliny, book vii. ch. 23. relates) dies in the act of pleasure ; Ithobotheth dies in the midst of sleep, 2 Sam. iv. 7. the Israelites die in their day of lust, Numbers xi. 33. This worldling dies in that night of sin, even then on a sudden his soul is taken.

5. And yet more horreur, it was a night of death, and this was the worst of all ; the darkness, drowsiness, sadness, sin, all were nothing to this, all nothing in themselves, if death had not followed : this is that *most terrible of all terribles*, as Aristotle calls it ; all fears, griefs, suspicions, pains, as so many small brooks, are swallowed up, and drowned in this ocean of misery. Now rich man ! what sayest thou to thy barns, buildings, riches, lands ? Do these pleasure thee in this thy extream and dying agony ? Thou liest this night on thy departing bed, burdened with the heavy load of thy former trespases ; pangs come fore and sharp upon thee, thy breast pants, thy pulse beats short, thy breath itself smells of earth and rottenness ; whither wilt thou go for a little ease or succour ? What help canst thou have in thy heaps of gold, or hoord of wealth ? should we bring them to thy bed, as we read of one dying, ' Commanded that his golden vessels and silver plate should be set before him, which looking on, he promised to his soul, it should have them all, on condition of his stay with him ; but the remedy being silly,

at last most desperately he commends it to the devil, seeing it would not stay in his body, and so gave up the ghost.' Alas, these trifling treasures can no more deliver thee from the arrest of that inexorable serjeant, than can an handful of dust. Wretched men! what shall be your thoughts when you come to this miserable case? Full sad and heavy thoughts, Lord, thou knowest; you may lie upon your beds, like wild bulls in a net, full of the fury of the Lord; *In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were evening; and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning: for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see,* Deut. xxviii. 67. Here is the terror of that night of death, when you may wish with all your hearts, that you had never been born, if the Lord once let loose the cords of your conscience, what account will you make of crowns, of possessions? all these will be so far from healing the wound, that they will turn rather into fiery scorpions, for your further torments. Now, now, now is the dismal time of death, what will you do? whither will you go? to whom will you pray? The angels are offended, and they will not guard you; God is dishonoured, and he will not hear you; only the devil had your service, and only hell must be your wages. *Consider this ye that forget God, lest ye be torn in pieces, and there be none to deliver you,* Psalm l. 22. It is cruel for your souls thus to suffer, to be torn, and torn in pieces, and so torn in pieces that none may deliver you. Better this worldling had been a worm, a toad, an adder, any venomous creature, than so to live, and thus to have died; yet hither it is come, his sickness is remediless, his riches comfortless, his torments caseless, still he must suffer, and there is none to deliver, he is *torn, torn in pieces, and none may deliver him.* What need you more, now we are come to this period? His glass is run, his

fun is set, his day is finished, and now this night, the very night of death, his soul is required, and is received of him.

Lo here, the dismal, dreadful, terrible time of this man's departure, it was in the night, a night of darkness, drowsiness, sadness, sin, death, and destruction.

Use 1. Who will not provide each day against this fearful night? Howsoever we pass away our time in sin, we must of necessity, ere it be long, ly gasping for breath upon our dying-beds, there shall we grapple hand to hand with the utmost powers of death and darkness: what should we do then, but sow our seed while the seed-time lasteth? we have yet a day, and how short this day is, God only knows: be sure *the night cometh wherein none can work,* John ix. 4. and then what a fearful time will come upon us? I know there be some that dream of doing good in another world, or at least will defer it longer, till some time hereafter; such vain hopes of future performances have undone many a soul: *I must work the work of him that sent me, while it is day,* saith our Saviour; John ix. 4. The way-faring man travels not in darkness, but while the day shines on him, then he knows he is under the protection of the laws, the light of the sun, the blessing of heaven; *Are there not twelve hours in the day? if any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of the world; but if a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no light in him,* John xi. 9. Do good then, and lay hold of every season which may get you to heaven. Let the whole course of your life be a conscientious preparative against death. Suppose every day your last, as if at night you should be called to account before that high and great tribunal: in a word whatsoever you think, speak or do, say thus with yourself, 'Would I do thus, and thus, if I knew this night to be my last?' Who

is it would sin, if he thought at that instant to go to judgment?

Use 2. But if we neglect the day, be sure the night will come to our condemnation: where be those wonders that so dazzled our eyes, while the day shone on them? Where is Absalom's beauty, Jezebel's paint, Saul's personage; nay, where is this wretched worldling? he had a day to work out his own salvation, and that being lost, at last came night, before he had gone two steps towards heaven. *O beloved! walk while ye have light, that ye may be the children of the light,* John xii. 35. You may be sure the meanest soul that hath the work of grace upon it, death is to him no night, but the day-break of eternal brightness. This may make us in love with the sincerity of religion, this may make us to labour, and never cease labouring till we have gotten out of the state of nature into the state of grace. O that I could say of every one of you, as Paul of the Ephesians, *Ye were once darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord,* Eph. v. 8. *Ye were once carnal, but now are ye spiritual; ye were once unregenerate, but now are ye first-fruits dedicated to God.* 'If it were thus with you, then, to your comfort, upon your dying beds you should meet with a glorious troop of blessed angels, you should feel the glorious presence of the sweetest comforter, you should see the glorious light of God's shining countenance, you should have a night, if it were night, turned all into a mid-day.' Now the Lord give you such a day, whensoever you die; through Christ our Lord.

You have heard the time of death's arrest, *this night*. Now for the party we'll make a privy search, and if we stir one word, we shall find him at next door, it is thy soul.]

Thy Soul.

THE party under arrest, is the rich man's soul. No warranty could prevail, no riches satisfy, no strength rescue,

death now demands it, and there is none can redeem it, therefore this night they will have his soul.

Observ. Every man hath a jewel better worth than a world, and the loss of this is so much more dear, by how much it is more precious. *What profits it a man to gain a world, and to lose his soul?* (said our Lord and Saviour) Matth. xvi. 26. Nay, what are a thousand worlds when the soul is valued? Give me leave to open the cabinet, and you shall see the jewel that is arrested; it is the soul.

The soul; what's that? It is, saith Austin, 'a substance that is created, invisible, incorporeal, immortal, most like to God, as bearing the image of its Creator.' Please you that we illustrate this description, and you shall see how every word shews forth some excellencies, as the glorious lustres of this glorious pearl the soul.

1. If you ask, what is the soul? *'Tis a substance.* How fond were the opinion of some philosophers? Dicaearchus would have it to be nothing [*vox et præterea nihil*] and how many of us are of this opinion? Do not we live as if we had no souls at all? The Epicure is for his belly, the ambitious for his body, but who is he that provides for his soul? Sure we imagine it to be nothing valuable, or, how should our estimation of it be so gross and vile, to prefer the body, to neglect the soul? There were other philosophers went a pace yet further, and they gave it a being, but what? No better than an accident, that might live or die without death of the subject; thus Galen calls it, *krasis humorum*, 'a certain temper composed of the elements, or nothing but the harmony of those humours in the body.' Is this the soul? then of all creatures are men (say we) *Of all men are we* (saith the apostle) *most miserable,* 1 Cor. xv. 19. most unhappy. Look at beasts, and in this respect we and they are even as one condition, Eccl. iii. 19. xi. 3. Look at trees, and in
their

their corruption you may see the like constitution both of us and them. Look at stones, and by their dissolution we may argue the temper of composition in them also; Matth. xxvii. 51. If then our soul were nothing but this *krasis*; not only men, but beasts, and plants, and stones, and metals have a soul; far be it from your thoughts, whose souls are prized to be of more worth than a world, there being nothing in the world that may give a recompense for our souls, Mat. xvi. 26. Others have gone a little further, and they suppose it to be a Substance; but how? only bodily and not spiritual; such gross conceits have many idolaters of the Deity, as if this our image were of God's own substance, and this substance nothing else but a bodily being. *A spirit* (saith our Saviour) *hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have*, Luke xxiv. 39. It is the body is the flesh, but the soul is the spirit; the body you may see and handle, but the soul is not seen, not handled: as the disciples then did err in supposing a spirit when they saw his body, no less is their error, in supposing a body where is only a spirit. 'The worst soul (says Austin) is better than the best of bodies.' 'O precious soul, (saith Bernard) espoused to thy God, endued with his Spirit, redeemed by his Son, what art thou, whose being is from heaven, to the flesh?' Others again have passed this opinion, and they call it a form; but what? only material, not substantial, and such as are the souls of beasts that die with their bodies, as being deduced from the matter of some bodies pre-existent. It is not so with the souls of men, which though for a while they are knit and united to this house of clay, yet may they be separated from it, and subsist without it; this is that goodness of God, that as our souls are intellectual, so their being is perpetual, not but that our souls might die (seeing every thing that is of nothing may return into the same no-

thing whence it sprung) but that God so sustains them by his glorious goodness, that as he gave the first being, so he would continue that he gave, *What have we, that we have not received?* 1 Cor. iv. 7. Or to speak of the soul, what are we that God, and God only hath not bestowed upon us? our parents begot our bodies, God only gave our souls; our bodies are buried again in the womb of our common mother, but our souls return to God, as to their chiefest good. So immaterial is the soul, that neither will nor understanding depends on the dying organ. What then is the soul? 'a nothing, an accident, a body, a form only material?' no, but on the contrary, 'an ens, a substance, a spirit, a form, a substantial being of itself subsisting.'

But we'll ascend a little higher, it is a Substance created, not traduced, as some would have it; I must confess the opinion was not a little strong, that as our bodies, so our souls were both propagated from our parents. Tertullian, and the fathers of the west, as Jerom witnesseth, were most on that side: the reason of this opinion was because of original sin, which defiling the soul, as well as the body of each man sprung from Adam, they could see no means how both were corrupted, except withal the soul were propagated. But are not our souls as the angels? and therefore if our souls, then may the angels beget one another; nay, if this were true, what soul were generated, but another were corrupted: for the rule is infallible, 'There can be no generation without a transmutation, and so would every soul be subject to corruption. Concerning that objection of original sin (if the soul were not traduced from the loins of Adam, how then should that sin be imputed to our souls?) 'I must confess the question is intricate, (to use the words of the learned Whittaker, in his book concerning original sin) we should rather believe it, than enquire of it, and we may better enquire

of it than understand it, and yet more easily understand it than express it. But so well as we can, we shall untie the knot. First, then, ' We say it is a fallacy to divide soul and body, for not the soul without the body, nor the body without the soul, but the whole man sinned in Adam, as the whole man is begot of Adam; so soon therefore as the soul is conjoined to the body, and of the soul and body is constituted whole man, that man being made now a member of Adam, is said to sin with him, and to derive that sin from him. But for a further satisfaction, although the soul depend on God according to its substance, yet it is created in that body which is produced of the parents: thus, in some sort we may say that the soul is begotten, *non quoad essentiam, sed quoad eïnai*, as Aristotle says, God only gives the essence, but to exist comes from the parents. What is the soul, but a form of the body? and of what body but that which is organical, as being apt for the soul? This aptness then whereby it is prepared for the form, being received from the parents, we may say of the soul, that thus it is generated, as not beginning to subsist before the body is prepared.' This is true in some sort, though not properly. Consider then the excellency of man's soul, which is not born, but created, and howsoever now it is besotted with sin, yet was it then pure and undefiled, as the untouched virgin: how is it but pure, which the hands of God have made? it was the devil that caused sin, but all that God made was good, and very good, Gen. i. 31. and such a soul hath every man. ' It is created by God, infused by his spirit, of nothing made something, and what something, but an excellent work, besitting such an excellent workman?'

3. And yet there be more stairs to ascend, it is, Thirdly, Invisible. ' Hath any man seen God? or, hath any man seen God's image, which is the soul, and lived?'

Substances that are more pure, are less visible. We see but darkly through a glass, nay, the best eye upon earth looks but through a lattice, a window, an obscuring impediment, mortal eyes cannot behold immortal things; how then should this corruptible sight, see a spiritual soul? The object is too clear for our weak eyes, our eyes are but earthly, the soul of an heavenly nature. O divine Being! not only heavenly, but heaven itself: as God and man met both in Christ, so heaven and earth met both in man: would you see this earth? that is the body, *Out of it wast thou taken, and into it must thou return*, Gen. iv.

19. Would you see this heaven? that is the soul, *The God of heaven gave it, and to the God of heaven returns it*, Eccl. xii.

7. The body is but a lump, but the soul is that breath of life: of earth came the body, of God was the soul; thus earth and heaven met in the creation, and *the man was made a living soul*, Gen. ii. 7. ' the sanctified soul is (as Bernard expresses it) an heaven upon earth, where the sun is understanding, the moon is faith, and the stars gracious affections: ' What heaven is in that body, which lives and moves by such a soul? Yet so wonderful is God's mercy to mankind, that as reason doth possess the soul, so the soul must possess this body. Here is that union of things visible, and invisible; as the light is spiritual, incorruptible, indivisible, and so united to the air, that of these two is made one, without confusion of either; in like manner is the soul united to this body, one together, distinguished asunder; only here's the difference, the light is most visible, the soul is invisible, she is the breath of God, the beauty of man, the wonder of angels, the envy of devils, that immortal splendor which never eye hath seen, never eye must see.

4. And yet we must up another step, it is, Fourthly, Incorporeal; as not seen with a mortal eye, so neither clogged with a

bodily shape : I say not but the soul hath a body for its organ, to which it is fo knit and tied, that they cannot be severed without much sorrow or struggling ; yet is it not a body, but a spirit dwelling in it ; the body is an house, and the soul is an inhabitant ; every one knows the house is not the inhabitant, and yet (O wonder !) there is no room in the house where the inhabitant lives not : would you please to see the rooms ? ‘ The eye is her window, the head is her tower, the heart is her closet, the mouth is her hall, the lungs her presence-chamber, the senses her cinqueports, the common-sense the custom-house, the phantastic her mint, the memory her treasury, the lips are her two-leaved doors that shut and open, and all these, and all the rest, as the motions in a watch, are acted and moved by this spring, the soul.’ See here a composition without confusion, the soul is in the body, yet it is not bodily : as in the greatest world the earth is more solid, the water less, the air yet lesser, the fire least of all ; so in this little world of man, the meaner parts are of grosser substance, and the soul by how much more excellent, by so much the more spiritual, and wholly withdrawn from all bodily being.

5. And yet a little higher, it is, Fifthly, Immortal. It was the error of many fathers, (according to Scaliger) ‘ That bodies and souls must both die till doomsday, and then the bodies being raised, the souls must be revived.’ Were this true, why then crys Stephen, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*, Acts vii. 19. Or why should Paul be dissolved, that he might be with Christ ? Phil. i. 23. Blessed men are but men, and therefore no wonder if subject to some error. Others more absolutely deny the soul’s immortality ; *We are born*, say they, *at all adventures, and we shall be hereafter, as though we had never been ; why so ? for the breath is a smoke in our nostrils, and the words as a spark raised out of our*

hearts, which being extinguished, the body is turned into ashes, and the spirit vanisheth as fast air, Wild. i. 2, 3. What is the soul a smoke ? and the spirit no better than the soft vanishing air ? Wretched men ! *have you not read what is spoken of God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ? Now God, saith Christ, is not the God of the dead, but of the living*, Mat. xxii. 32. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, they are not dead then in the better part, their souls, but passed indeed from the valley of death, unto the land of the living. *Whosoever liveth and believeth in me, saith our Saviour, shall never die*, John xi. 26. Not die, against some ; never die, against others : what can we more ? only live and believe in him that redeemed us, and be sure his promises shall never fail us ; our souls must live, live for ever. Sweet soul, blessed with the felicity of eternal life ! here’s a joy unspeakable, that this soul now clogged with cares, vexations, griefs, passions, shall one day enjoy those joys immortal, not for a day or two (tho’ this were more than we can imagine) but through all eternity ; ‘ There shall be no defect, nor end.’ after millions of ages the soul must still live in her happiness ; it is not of a perishing, but an everlasting substance.

6. And yet the perfection of the soul goes higher ; it is most like to God. So far it transcends all earthly happiness : ‘ I cannot say, but in some sort all creatures have this likeness ; every effect hath at least some similitude with its cause, but with a difference ; some only have a being, as stones ; others being and life, as plants ; but man above all hath a being, life, and reason, and therefore of all other most like unto his Creator.’

7. Can we any more ? Yes, one step higher, and we are at the top of Jacob’s ladder : *The soul is not only like God, but the image of God*. I cannot deny, but there is some appearance of it in the outward

ward man, and therefore the body, in some measure, partakes of this image of the Deity : it was man, and whole man that was corrupted by sin, and, by the law of contraries, it was man, and whole man that was beautified with this image. Please you to look at the body, ' Is it not a little world, wherein every thing that God made was good ? as therefore all goodness comes from him, so was he the pattern of all goodness, that being in him perfectly, which only is in us partly.' This is that idea, whereby God is said to be the exemplar of the world : man then in his body being as the world's map, what is he but that image, in which the builder of the world is manifest ? But if you look at the parts of his body, how often are they attributed, (tho' in a metaphor, yet in resemblance) to his Maker ? ' Our eyes are the image of his wisdom, our hands are the image of his power, our heart is the image of his knowledge, and our tongue the lively image of his revealed will : ' God therefore, before he made the body, said, *Let us make man in our image*, Gen. i. 26. and what was the meaning, but that soul and body should both bear the image of his majesty ? ' Be astonished then, ye men of the earth, if this dust, this clay, this body of ours be so glorious, what think ye of the soul, whole substance, faculties, qualities, dignities, every way represent God's omnipotent essence ? Look on this glass, and first, for Substance, Is the soul invisible ? why, so is God ; *No man hath seen God at any time*, John i. 18. Is the soul incorporeal ? why so is God ; *we ought not to think him like unto silver, gold, or stone graven with art*, Acts xvii. 29. Is the soul immortal ? why, so is God ; *He is King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality*, 1 Tim. vi. 16. Is the soul spiritual ? why, so is God ; *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit*, Joh. iv. 24. Is the soul one essence ? why, so is God ; *There is one God and Father of all,*

who is above all, and thro' all, and in you all. Eph. iv. 6. See here the lively image of God in every soul of man. But there is another character imprinted in every faculty, so that not only the substance, but the powers of the soul bear this image in them : as there is one God, and three persons, so there is one soul and three faculties : the Father, Son, and holy Ghost are but one God ; the Understanding, Will, and Memory are but one soul ; the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the holy Ghost ; so the understanding is not the will, nor the will the memory ; and yet the Father is God, the Son is God, and the holy Ghost is God ; so the understanding is the soul, the will is the soul, and the memory is the soul. I dare not say but there is some difference, ' This trinity in us, we rather see it than believe it, but that trinity of persons we more believe it than see it.' (Austin of the trinity :) howsoever then our soul is no proof of the Godhead, yet is it a true sign of that image of God in the soul. Nay, yet, (as if this stamp were of a deeper impression) see the dowry of God's spouse, and who wonders not at the qualities, and conditions with which the soul is arrayed ? *The king's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of brodered gold*, Psal. xlv. 13. What say you to that heavenly knowledge inspired into us ? God, that created man, *filled him with knowledge of understanding, and shewed them good and evil*, Ec. xvii. 6. What say you to those heavenly impressions that are stamp'd upon us ? such are the new man's marks, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. iv. 24. These make the soul like God, and God loving to the soul ; is it not clothed with righteousness as with a garment ? witness the integrity of Adam, in that sweet subjection, his soul to the Lord, his affections to the soul, his body to the affections, the whole man to God as to the chiefest good ; and as truth and mercy meet together, so righteousness and

holiness kiss each other : O blessed image ! how nearly dost thou resemble thy Creator ? He is the pattern of perfection, and we bear the image of that pattern, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*, 1 Pet. i. 15. And yet again, as if this picture were of deeper dye, how like is the soul to its Creator in her full dominion over all the creatures ? *Thou art beautiful, O my soul, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners*, Cant. vi. 3. What is it will not stoop to this God's vice-gerent ? *Beasts, and birds, and serpents, and things of the sea are tamed, and have been tamed of the nature of man*, James iii. 7. What a thing is this soul ? she can tame the wild, command the proud, pull down the lofty, do what she will by compounding, comparing, contemplating, commanding. O excellent nature ! that sitteth on earth, canst reach to heaven, mayst dive to hell, nothing being able to resist thy power, so long as thou art subject to that power of God. Is this the soul ? *Lo, what is man that thou art mindful of him ? thou hast made him to have dominion in the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet*, Psalm viii. 6.

O my soul, my soul ! what can we say of such a creature ? To sum up all ; she is in nature a substance, created by God, invisible of men, incorporeal with angels, immortal through grace, most like to God in a way of nearness, and bearing his image in the glorious stamp of her created likeness.

Is this the darling of our Lord ? where shen is the rich man that hath lost this pearl ? He that could tell his soul, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, live at ease, eat, drink and take thy pastime*. Now on a sudden his soul is taken, and *whose shall those things be which he hath provided ?* The loss of all losses is the loss of a soul, without which, had we never so much, we could truly enjoy nothing : what, trust then in your earthly

treasures ? What stay in such broken slaves of reed ? One day you shall find them most deceitful, leaving your naked souls to the open rage of wind and weather, to the scourges and scorpions of guiltiness and fear : could you purchase a monopoly of all the world, had you the gold of the west, the treasures of the east, the spices of the south, the pearls of the north, all is nothing to this incarnate angel, this invaluable soul. O wretched worldling ! what hast thou done to undo thy soul ? Was it a wedge of gold, an heap of silver, an hoard of pearl to which thou trustest ? see they are gone, and thy soul is required. Alas, poor soul ! whither must it go ? To heaven ? to its Creator ? to God that gave it ? No ; there is another way for wandering sinners ; *Go ye into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*, Mat. xxv. 41. Thither must it go with heaviness of heart into a kingdom of darkness, a lake of burning, a prison of horrible confusion of terrible tortures : O poor soul ! what a misery is this ? Darkness, burning, confusion, torments, are these the welcomes of his soul to hell ? What meant the rich man in his unhappy fore-cast ? He propounded to his soul a world of ease, of pleasure, of pastime ; it proves far otherwise. This other world is a world of torments, which, like infinite rivers of brimstone, feed upon his soul without ease or end. What avails now his pompous pride at his doleful funerals ? The news is sounded, he is dead ; friends must lament him, passing peals ring for him, an hearse-cloth wraps him, a tomb-stone lyes over him, all must have mourning suits, and, may be, rejoicing hearts ; but all this while his soul is going to judgment, without one friend, or the least acquaintance to speak in his cause : O that his soul were mortal, and body and soul to be buried both together in one grave ! must his body die, and his soul live ? in what world or nation ? in what place or region ? it is another world,

another nation, where devils are companions, brimstone the fire, horror the language, and eternal death the soul's eternal life, never to be cured, and never must be ended. 'O my soul, saith Bernard, what a terrible day shall that be, when thou shalt leave this mansion, and enter into an unknown region? who will deliver thee from these rampant lions? who can defend thee from those hellish monsters?' God is incensed, hell prepared, justice threatened, only mercy must prevent, or the soul is damned. View this rich man on his death-bed, the pain shoots through his head, and at last comes to his heart, anon death appears in his face, and suddenly falls on to arrest his soul: is it death? what is it he demands? can his goods satisfy? no, the world claims them: must his body go? no, the worms claim that: what debt is this, which neither goods, nor body can discharge? *Habeas animam ejus coram nobis*: God's warrant bids fetch the soul: O miserable news! the soul committed sin, sin morgaged it to death, death now demands it; and what if he gain the world, he must lose his soul: *This night thy soul shall be required of thee.*

Use 1. *Animula vagula, blandula*, said dying Adrian; 'Pretty, little, wandering soul, whither goest thou from me? wilt thou leave me alone, that cannot live without thee?' O what conflicts suffers the poor soul? when this time is come, must the soul be gone? help friends, physick, pleasure, riches; nay, take a world to revive a soul; so different are the thoughts of men dying from them living; *now* are they for their pleasure, or profit, the body or the world, but *then* nothing is esteemed but the soul: what can we say? but if you mean your souls must be saved, O then let these precious, dear, everlasting things breathed into your bodies for a short abode, scorn to feed on earth, or any earthly things: it is matter of a more heavenly metal, treasures of an higher tem-

per, riches of a nobler nature, that must help your souls. Do you think that ever any glorified soul, that now looks God almighty in the face, and tramples under foot the sun and moon, is so bewitched as was Achan with a wedge of gold? No, it is only the communion of saints, the society of angels, the fruition of the Deity, the depth of eternity which can only feed and fill the soul. So live then, as that when you die, your souls may receive this bliss, and the Lord Jesus our Saviour receive all our souls.

Use 2. I must end, but gladly would I win a soul: 'If the reward be so great, as you know it, to recover a sick body, which for all that must die, of what reward is that cure to save a soul, which must ever, ever live?' O sweet Jesus! why sheddest thou the most precious and warmest blood of thine heart, but only to save souls? Thou wast scourged, buffeted, judged, condemned, hanged; was all this for us? and shall we do nothing for ourselves? 'What is it thou wouldst have had, if thou couldst wish it good? Not thy house, nor thy wife, nor thy children, nor thy goods, nor thy clothes, but no matter for thy soul: I beseech you, value not your souls at a less price than your shoes: you can please the flesh with delicacies, which is naught but worms meat; but the soul pines for want, which is a creature invisible, incorporeal, immortal, most like to God?' (Auit.) Are we thus careful of pelf, and so careless of this pearl? Certainly, 'I cannot chuse but wonder, seeing the streets peopled with men that follow suits, run to courts, attend and wait on their counsellors for this case, and that case, this house, or that land; that not one of these, nor one of us all will ride, or run, or creep, or go to have counsel for his soul! I must confess, I have sometimes dwelt on this meditation; and, beloved, let me speak homely to you; be our counsellors in this town every week solicited by their clients? and have we no clients

clients in foul-cases? not one that will come to us with their cases of conscience? Sure you are either careless of your souls, or belike you have no need of particular instructions: O let us not be so forward for the world, and so backward for the soul! yet, I pray mistake not; I invite you not for fees, as noble Terence, when he had petitioned for the Christians, and saw it torn in pieces before his face, gathered up the pieces, and said, 'I have my reward; I have not sued for gold, silver, honour or pleasure, but a church.' So say I, 'In the midst of your neglect, I have not sued for your gold, or silver, for your houses or lands, but for your precious souls; and if I cannot, or shall not wooe them to come to Christ, God raise up some child of the bride-chamber which may do it better; if neither I, nor any other can prevail, O then fear that speech of Eli's sons, *They hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them*, 1 Sam. ii. 25. In such a case, *Oh that my head were full of water, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for your sins!* O that I could wash your souls with my tears from that filth of sin, wherewith they are besmeared and defiled! O that for the salvation of your souls, I might be made a sacrifice unto death! but the Lord be praised, for your souls and my soul Christ Jesus hath died; and if now we but repent us of our sins, and believe in our Saviour, if now we will but deny ourselves and take up his cross and follow him; if now we will but turn unto him, that he may turn his loving-countenance unto us, if now we will but become new creatures, and ever hereafter walk in the holy path, the narrow way which leads unto heaven; why, then may our souls be saved.' This is what we had need to care for, not so much for the body as for the soul's good. To this purpose, saith Hugo, 'Why clothe we the body in silks, which must rot in the grave,

and adorn not the soul with faith and good works, which one day must appear before God and his angels.' O think of this day, this night, this hour of death, for then must *your souls be taken from you*.

Thus far you see the rich man's arrest: God enjoins it, death serves it, the time was *this night*, and the party is, *his soul*: God give us grace to provide our souls, that when death arrests, we may be ready, and then, O God, have thou mercy on our souls.

Shall be required.]

THE original is *apaitusi*, *They shall require it*: wherein you have, the serjeants, and the arrest.

The serjeants, *They*; and the arrest itself, *They require his soul*.

We'll first take a view of the Serjeants.

They: who? not God, he knows not sinners, what should he do with a drunken, profane, covetous, sensual soul? He that never so much as thought on God in this life, will God accept of the commending of his soul to him at his death? no, the Lord of heaven will none of it: he that forsook God, is justly forsaken of God: see the true weight of this balance, he would not receive God's grace into his soul, and God will not receive his graceless soul into heaven. But who then? will the angels take it? No, they have nothing to do with the soul of a dying sinner; the angels are only porters for the souls of the just: poor Lazarus that could neither go, nor sit, nor stand for sores; it is he must be carried on the wings of angels; but for this rich man, not the lowest angel will do him poorest service. Who then? will the saints receive it? no, they have no such commission to receive a soul: that blind opinion, which every one may blush at, that 'Saint Peter should be heaven's porter, and that none may go in, but to whom he will open.' if it be true, why may not a saint help a departing soul? Away with this dreaming folly! not Peter, nor Paul, nor all the saints

faints of heaven have any such privilege ; if God will not hear us, what will our prayers do to faints ? Heaven is too far off, they cannot hear, or were it nearer they will not, cannot help. It is God must save us, or we perish ever. Who then are the serjeants ? not God, nor faints, nor angels : no, there is another crew, death and devils stand in a readiness, and they are the parties that arrest this prisoner.

Stay, what would death have ? the soul cannot die, and for the body, no matter who receives it. O yes ! there is a death of the soul, as well as of the body : I mean not such a death whereby it may be annihilated, but a second death that shall ever accompany it : this is a death of the soul, that will always keep it in death's pangs. But not to speak of this death, there is another death temporal, that shall sever the soul and body each from other : these two twins that have lived together since their first espousal, these two lovely ones that were made, and met, and married by the hands of God, these two made one, till death them depart, and make them two again, now is their rueful time of divorce : when death comes, he gives over the body to the grave, and arrests the soul, to appear in presence before God's high tribunal. Such a bailiff hath now laid hands on this rich man's soul, when he least thought on't, death comes on a sudden, and arrests his person. ' O wretched worldling ! who is this behind thee ? call we this God's serjeants ? What grim, ugly, monstrous visage is this we see ? have ever any of you seen the grisly picture of death before you ? How was it but with hollow eyes, open skull, grinning teeth, naked ribs, a few bones knit together with dry strings, as presenting to your eyes the most deformed image of a man in moulds ? But what's that in his hands ? an hour-glass and a dart : the one expressing the decaying of our life, and the other death's stroke, that he gives us in our death. Such emblems are

most fit to express mortality : and imagine such a thing to arrest this rich man, would it not terrifie him ; whilst looking back, death suddenly claps him on his shoulder, away he must with this messenger, all the gold and pearl of east and west cannot stay him one hour : now rich man, what avails all thy worldly pleasure ? *Hudst thou in thy hands the reins of all earthly kingdoms ; wert thou exalted as the eagle, and thy nest set among the stars,* Obad. i. 4. yet all this, and whatsoever else thou canst imagine, is not worth a button : where did that man dwell, or of what cloth was his garment, that was ever comforted by his goods, or greatness, in this last and forest conflict ? See, worldling, death requires thy soul, no bribe will be taken, no intreaty will prevail, no riches rescue, nothing at all redeem death ; death is impartial.'

But, O horror ! death is not all, see yet more serjeants ; devils and dragons are about thy bed, and these are they that will hurry away thy soul to hell. How ? Devils ; O worldling, stay thy soul, and never yield it ! better to die a thousand deaths, than to leave it in their hands ; but alas, thou canst not choose, thy last hour is come, and here is neither hope nor help, nor place of any longer tarrying. See but the misery of a miserable soul ! what shall it do ? whither shall it flie from these damned furries ? would they take it and tear it into nothing, it were somewhat tolerable : but to tear it in pieces, and never to make end of tearing, to give it torments without all patience or resistance ; this is that load which it cannot bear, and yet, O extremity ! it ever, ever must be born : think on this, O my soul ! and whilst thou hast a minute's stay in this body, call upon God to prevent this arrest of devils ; was it not think ye a terror to this rich man, when so many hell-hounds waited for his soul ? We read in the lives of the popes, of ' one man, who being took away with a devil through the air, was said so to roar and yell, that man-

ny miles distant his noise was heard, to many a man's trembling.' And if the soul had but the organs of a sound, what a shriek would it make, being seized on by a devil? witness the cries of many desperate souls, when as yet they are safe in their beds, how do they roar and rage? how do they call and cry, 'Help, help us, save us, deliver us from these fiends about us?' These are those evening wolves enraged with hellish hunger, these are those ramping lions ever ready to devour our souls; these are those walkers up and down the earth, which are now come and entred into this rich man's lodging. *Wherefoever the dead carcass is, thither, saith our Saviour, will the eagles resort,* Mat. xxiv. 28. and wherefoever a damned soul is, thither with alacrity will these spirits come. O how they flie and flutter round about him? what fires do they breathe, to enkindle them on his soul? what claws do they open, to receive her at the parting? and what astonishment is that poor soul in, that perceives these serjeants even ready to clasp her in their burning arms? See, O cosmopolite, what thy sin hath caused! lust hath transported thine eyes, blasphemy thy tongue, pride thy foot, oppression thy hand, covetousness thy heart, and now death and devils, they are the serjeants that require thy soul.

Uſe. Reflect these thoughts on your own souls, and consider with yourselves what may be your cases; it may be as yet thou standest upright without any changes, hitherto thou hast seen no days of sorrow, but even *washed thy steps with butter, and the rock hath poured thee out rivers of oil,* Deut. xxxii. 13, 14. Alas! was not this the case of this poor wretched worldling? yet for all this, you see a night came that paid for all; and so it may be with thee; 'a day, an hour, a moment, says Casaubon, is enough to overturn the things that seem to have been founded, and rooted in adamant;' who can tell whether this night, this

storm may fall upon thee? Art thou not strangely nailed and glued unto sense? Art thou not stupidly senseless in spiritual things, that for self, vanity, dung, nothing, wilt run headlong and wilfully into easeless, endless and remediless torments? Yet such is thy doing, if thou beest a worldling, to get riches to thy body, and let death and devils have thy soul. O beloved, consider in time, and seeing you have such a terrible example set before you, let this worldling be your warning.

We have done with the serjeants, but what's their office? to beg? to sue? no, but to force, to require, thy soul is required.

How? required? is any so bold to approach his gates, and make a forcible entry? Yes, God hath his special bailiffs that will fear no colours, riches cannot ransom, castles cannot keep, hollows cannot hide, hills nor their forts protect: sits Herod on his throne? there's a writ of remove, and the worms are his bailiffs; is Dives at his table? Death brings the *Mittimus*, and devils are his jailors; sits Lazarus at his gates? the king greets him well, we may say, and angels are his keepers: poor, rich, good, bad, all must be served at the king's suit; no place can privilege, no power secure, no valour rescue, no liberty exempt; with a *non omittas propter aliquam libertatem*, runs this warrant: O rich man! what wilt thou now do? 'The sorrows of death compass thee, and the floods of Belial make thee afraid.' What? no friends to help? no power to rescue, is there no other way but yield and die for it? O misery! enough to break an heart of brass again: imagine that a prince a while possessed some royal city, where, if you walk the streets, you may see peace flourishing, wealth abounding, pleasure waiting, all his neighbours offering their service, and promising to assist him in all his needs and affairs: if on a sudden this city were besieged by some deadly enemy, who coming, like a violent stream, takes one hold after another, one wall

wall after another, one castle after another, and at last drives this prince only to a little tower, and there sets on him; what fear, anguish and misery would this prince be in? If he looks about, his holds are taken, his men are slain, his friends and neighbours now stand aloof off, and they begin to abandon him, were not this a woful plight trow you? even so it fares with a poor soul at the hour of her departure: the body, wherein she reigned like a jolly princess, then droops and languishes: *The keepers tremble, the strong men bow, the grinders cease, and they wax dark that look out at the windows,* Eccl. xii. 3. no wonder, *if fear be in the way,* when the arms, the legs, the teeth, the eyes, as so many walls wherein the soul was invironed, are now surprized and beaten to the ground: her last refuge is the heart, and this is the little tower whither at last she is driven: but what is she there secure? No, but most fiercely assailed with a thousand enemies, her dearest friends, youth, and physick, and other helps, which soothed her in prosperity, do now abandon her: what will she do? the enemy will grant no truce, will make no league, but night and day assails the heart, which now like a turret struck with thunder begins all to shiver? Here is the woful state of a wicked soul, God is her enemy, the devil her foe, angels hate her, the earth groans under her, hell gapes for her; the reason of all, sin struck the alarm, and death gives the battle; it is but this night, a minute longer, and then will the raging enemy enter on her: Death is no beggar to intreat, no suitor to woove, no petitioner to ask, no solicitor to crouch and crave a favour: 'She runs raging, ruling, charging, requiring.' Hark this man's arrest, *Thy soul shall be required:* it shall? Yes, the word is peremptory: what? *be required?* Yes, it comes with authority. Here's a fatal requiring, when the soul shall be forced by unwilling necessity, and devils by force hurry her to her

endless fury. Adieu, poor soul! the writ is served, the goal prepared, the judgment past, and death, the executioner, will delay no longer; *This night thy soul shall be required of thee.*

Use 1. But to whom speak I? Think of it, you miserable covetous, 'that join house to house, and call the lands after your own names:' *You may trust in your wealth, and boast yourselves in the multitude of your riches, but none of you can by any means redeem his brother,* no, nor himself, Psal. xlix. 6, 7. When death comes, I pray, what composition with the Lord of heaven? could ever any buy out his damnation with his own coin: howsoever you live merrily, deliciously, go richly; yet death will at last knock at your doors, and, notwithstanding all your wealth, honours, tears and groans of your dearest friends, will take you away as his prisoners, to his darkest dungeon. Your case is, as with a man, who lying fast asleep upon the edge of some steep, high rock, dreams merrily of crowns, kingdoms, possessions; but upon the sudden, starting for joy, he breaks his neck, and tumbles into the bottom of some violent sea: thus is your danger every hour, Satan makes you a bed, lulls you asleep, charms you into golden dreams, and you conceive you are wallowing in the sea of all worldly happiness; at last death comes, against which there is no resistance, and then you are suddenly swallowed up of despair, and drowned in that pit of eternal death and perdition.

I have read of some, whom in some sort we might parallel with this rich man concerning their fearful horrid departure out of this miserable world: yea I suppose the books are so working, that any man who-soever he is, that would but read them, and ponder them in a serious way, they would certainly work in him much matter of humiliation, and make him to shun sin, as the very stinging of a scorpion.

One of them I mean to speak of, was

an Englishman. Abbot that relates the story, tells indeed of two in one year that died thus uncomfortably ; the one so many ways looking homewards, that he died miserably rich ; the other so lashing outward, that he died miserably poor, both of different ways of life, yet both of uncomfortable passages out of the world. The one coming to his death's-bed, the Author reports of him, that ' first the devil presented himself unto him to be his physician, and after Christ appeared to him sitting on the throne, condemning his unprofitable life, and bidding him shift for himself, for he would have nothing to do with him.' The other, of whom I mean to speak, as if he would prevent Christ, condemned himself to hell for ever and ever : ' O said he, that I might burn a long time in that fire, so I might not burn in hell, I have had, said he, a little pleasure, and now I must go to the torments or hell for ever.' Then praying to God (as he was pressed by others) to forgive him his sins, and to have mercy upon him, he would add, but I know God will not do it, I must go to hell for evermore.' Whatsoever came between whiles, this was the close, ' I must be burned in hell, I must to the furnace of hell, millions, and millions of ages.' The author of this story who was minister of the place where he lived, went to him, offered him the comforts of the gospel, opened to him the promises of the largest size, shewed him that God was delighted to save souls, and not to destroy them, and that his sweet promises were without exception of time, place, person, or sin, except that against the holy Ghost, which he assured him too, was not committed by him : and what was the issue ? All this could not fasten on him, but still he would answer, ' Alas, it is too late, I must be burned in hell.' That man of

God, the shepherd of his soul, seeing his soul in this danger, came to him again and again, and at last secluded the company, he presses him with tears in his eyes, not to cast away that soul for which Christ died ; he told him, that Christ rejected none that did not reject him : but for all this he could have no other answer, but ' that he had cast off Christ, and therefore must go to hell.' The minister replies, yet pray with me, saith he, that Christ would come again ; there is yet an hour in the day, and if Christ come, he can and will assist you to do a great deal of work on a sudden : no, he would not hear of that ; ' Former counsels and prayers might have done me good,' said he, but now it is too late.'

O horror, that ever any soul should suffer these conflicts for sin ! but what sins were they ? ' He was, saith the author, no swearer, no whoremonger, no thief, no scoffer at religion, no perjured wretch, no willful liar at all, only drunkenness, and neglect of mens bodies, (for he was an apothecary) neglect of prayer, God's word, and his sacraments, so awaked his trembling conscience, that he was forced to pass this fearful doom upon his soul, ' I must be burned in the furnace of hell, millions of millions of ages : ' and at last, the Lord knows, in idleness of thought, and talk, he ended his miserable, miserable life.

The other I mean to speak of was an Italian, under the jurisdiction of Venice, called Francis Spira, who being excessively covetous of money, and for fear of the world, having renounced the truth, which before he professed, he thought at last he heard a dreadful voice speaking to him, ' Thou wicked wretch, thou hast denied me, thou hast broken thy vow : hence, apostate, and bear with thee the sentence of thy eternal damnation : ' * At this voice, he trembling and quaking, fell down in a

* A relation of the fearful estate of Francis Spira,

swoon; and after recovering himself, he professed that he was captivated under the revenging hand of the great God of heaven, and that he heard continually that fearful sentence of Christ now past on his soul. His friends, to comfort him, propounded many of God's promises recorded in scripture: 'Oh but my sin, said he, is greater than the mercy of God.' Nay, answered they, The mercy of God is above all sin; God would have all men to be saved: 'It is true, said he, he would have all men that he hath elected, to be saved: but he would not have reprobates to be saved, and I am one of that number.' After this, roaring out in bitterness of spirit, he said, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* These troubles of mind brought him to a distemper of body, which the physicians perceiving, they withed him to seek some spiritual comfort: those comforters come, and observing the distemper to arise from the sense and horreur of hell-pains; they ask him, whether he thought there were any worse pains than what he endured? he said, 'He knew there were far worse pains; yet do I desire nothing more, said he, than that I may come to that place, where I may be sure to feel the worst, and to be freed from fear of worse to come.'

As on this manner he was speaking, he observed (saith my author) divers flies that came about him, and some lighted on him; whereat presently remembering how Beelzebub signifies the Gen of flies; 'Behold, said he, now also Beelzebub comes to his banquet, you shall shortly see my end, and in me an example to many of the justice and judgment of God.' Then he began to reckon up what fearful dreams and visions he was continually troubled withal, that he saw the devils come flocking into his chamber, and about his bed terrifying him with strange noises; and that these were not fancies, but that he saw them as really as the standers-by; and that besides

these outward terrors, he felt continually a racking torture of his mind, and a continual butchery of his conscience, being the very proper pangs of the damned wights in hell.

But of all the rest, most desperate was that last speech of his, when snatching a knife (as intending to mischief himself, but stopped by his friend) he roared with indignation, 'I would I were above God, for I know he will have no mercy on me;' and thus living a long while, he appeared at length a very perfect anatomy, expressing to the view nothing but sinews, and bones, vehemently raging for drink; ever pining, yet fearful to live long; dreadful of hell, yet coveting death; in a continual torment, yet his own tormentor; consuming himself with grief and horror, impatience and despair, till at last he ended his miserable miserable life.

And now, beloved, if such be the departure of a sinful soul, O who would live in sin, to come to such a departure! for my part, I dare not say these parties, thus miserable in their own apprehensions, are now among devils in hell: I find the authors themselves incline to the right hand; besides, what am I, that I should sit in God's chair? only this I say, that their miserable deaths may very well give warning to us all; nor need you think much at me for uttering these (*terribilia*) terrible stories: for if sometimes you did not hear of God's judgments against sin; a day might come, that you would most of all cry out on the preacher: to this purpose, we have a story of a certain rich man, who lying on his death-bed, 'My soul (said he) I bequeath to the devil who owns it, my wife to the devil, who drew me to my ungodly life, and my chaplain to the devil, who flattered me in it.' I pray God I never hear of such a legacy from any of you: sure I had better to tell you asorhand to prevent it, than not telling you to feel it. And let this be for my apology in relating these stories.

Use 2. But for a second use, give me leave, I pray you, to separate the precious from the vile: now then to sweeten the thoughts of all true penitents, the souls of faints are not required, but received. Rejoice then, ye righteous, that mourn in Sion; what though a while ye suffer? death is a goal-delivery to your souls, not bringing in, but freeing out of thralldom. Here the good man finds sharpest misery, the evil man sweetest felicity; therefore it is just, that there should be a time of changing turns: the rich man's table stood full of delicacies, Lazarus lacks crumbs, but

now he is comforted and thou art torment-

ed. We unto you that laugh, for you shall

mourn, Luke vi. 25. Blessed are you that

mourn, for you shall rejoice, Matth. v. 4.

Happy Lazarus! who from thy beggary and loathsome sores wert carried by angels into Abraham's bosom: happy thief, who upon thy true repentance, and unfeigned prayer, wert received from the cross into the paradise of thy Saviour: happy are all they that suffer tribulation, death shall loose their soul from bonds and fetters, and instead of a bailiff to arrest them, shall be a porter to conduct them to the gates of heaven: there shalt thou tread on serpents, trample on thine enemies, sing sweet trophies: were not this enough? thy conquest shall be crowned by the hands of the Seraphims, triumphed with the sound of angels, warbled by the quire of spirits, confirmed by the King of kings, and Lord of hosts. Happy soul! thou art not required by devils, but received by angels; and when we die, Lord Jesus, send thine angels to receive our souls.

You see now death's arrest, and what remains further, save to accept of some bail? but what bail, where you have the King's commandment from his own mouth? 'This requiring is not of any other, but himself; of no surety, but of thee (saith God) must thy soul be required.

Of thee]

Once more, you see, I have brought this rich man on the stage, his doom is now at hand, and death, God's messenger, summons him to appear by requiring of his soul; but of whom is it required? had he any sureties to put in? or was any bail sufficient to be taken for him? no, he must go himself, without all help or remedy, it was he that sinned, and it is he must pay for it; *Of thee it is required.*

How? *Of thee?* Sure death mistakes; we can find thousands more fit, none more fearful; there stands a Saul, near him his armour-bearer, behold a Judas; such will outface death's fury; nay, rather than it fail in its office, they will not much question to be their own death's-men: but this *Of thee*, who art at league with hell, in love with earth, at peace with all, is most terribly fearful.

Stay death! there stands a poor Lazarus at the gates, like Job on his dung-hill, his eyes blind, his ears deaf, his feet lame, his body struck with boils, and his *soul chafing rather to be strangled and die, than to be in his bones*, Job vii. 15. Were not this a fit object for death's cruelty? would he spare the rich, he should be welcome to the poor: but death is inexorable, he must not live, nor shall the beggar beg his own death for another: *Of thee it is required.*

But death, yet stay thy hand, here's a better surety; what needs death a press, when he may have volunteers? There stands an old man as ready for the grave, as the grave for him; his face is furrowed, his hairs hoary, his back bowing, his hamms bending, and therefore no long is fitter than old Simon's, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace*, Luke ii. 29. Youth is loath, but age is merry to depart from misery: let death then take him that stands nearest death's door: no, the old must die, but the young may; he must die soon, yet be sure thou shalt not

live

live long, *Of thee it is required.*

Cannot this serve? let death yet stay his hand, there stands a servant waiting at this rich man's beck, as if he would spend his own life to save his master's, he can make a pageant of cringes, act a whole speech of flatteries, every part owes him service, feet to run, hands to work, head to crouch, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so the eyes of his servants look unto the hands of their master: but where be these attendants when death comes? was ever any master better than Christ? Were ever any servants truer than his apostles? yet see their fidelity: must their Saviour die? One betrays him, another forswears him, all run from him, and leave him alone in the midst of all his enemies. What then is the trust of servants? the rich man may command, and go without, if death should require them, they would not; or if they should desire death, he will not; his arrest concerns not the servants, it is for the master himself, he that commands others, now death commands him: *Of thee it is required.*

Will not all do? Let death but stay this once: there stands a friend, that will lose his own, to save his life: *Greater love than this hath no man,* (saith our Saviour, John xv. 13.) *when any man bestoweth his life for his friends.* Riches may perhaps procure such love, and get some friend to answer death's quarrel which he owes this man: Jonathan loves David, David Absalom; and sure it was a love indeed, when Jonathan preserves the life of David, and David wished a death to himself in the stead of Absalom, 2 Sam. xviii. 33. *O my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee; O Absalom, my son, my son:* But where be any friends so respective of this worldling? He wants a Jonathan, a David; upon a strict enquiry we find no friend, no father, no son, neither heirs nor assigns to whom he may bestow his lands. But what if he had friends as near to himself as himself;

no man can die for another; or as the Psalmist, *No man may deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him: for it cost more to redeem their souls, so that he must let that alone for ever,* Psalm xlix. 7, 8. Should the poor man beg, the old man pray, his servants kneel, his friends ly at death's feet, and all these offer up all their lives for this rich man's recovery, all were but vain; it is thy soul is arrested, and it is thy self that must yield it: *Of thee it is required.*

You see there is no way but one with him: to conclude then, we'll bid him his farewell, this is the last office we can do this rich man, and so we'll leave him.

The hour is come, and the dawning of that dreadful day appeareth; now he begins to wish that he had some space, some piece of time to repent him; and if he might obtain it, O what would he do? or, what would he not do? 'Relieve the weak, visit the sick, feed the hungry, lodge the stranger, clothe the naked, give half his goods to the poor, and if he had done any wrong, restore it him again seven-fold?' But alas! all is too late, the candle that but follows him, cannot light him to heaven; a sudden death denies his suit, and the increasing of his sickness will give him no leisure to fulfill those duties: what cold sweats are those that seize upon him? his senses fail, his speech falters, his eyes sink, his breast swells, his feet die, his heart faints, such are the outward pangs: what then are the inward griefs? if the body thus suffers; what cares and conflicts afflict the soul? Had he the riches of Croesus, the empires of Alexander, the robes of Solomon, the fare of that rich man that lived deliciously every day: what could they do in the extremity of these pangs. 'O rich man, thou couldst tell us of pulling down barns, and building greater; but now imagine the vast cope of heaven thy barn, and that were large enough, and all the riches of the world thy grain, and that were

crop enough; yet all these cannot buy a minute of ease, now that death will have thy body, hell thy soul. O dark dungeon of imprisoned men! whose help wilt thou crave? whose aid wilt thou ask? what release canst thou expect from such a prison? The disease is past cure, the sickness wants remedy; alas! what may recover; now the heart-strings break asunder? Thy date expires, thy last breath goes, and now is thy soul and body required of thee.

I have hitherto with Nathan, beat sinful David on a stranger's coat. You must give me leave to take off the mask, and shew you your own faces in this glass.

Use 1. Believe thou, O man, who readest this, that shortly there will be two holes where thine eyes now stand, and then others may take up thy skull, and speak of thee dead, as I have done to thee living: how soon I know not, this I am sure of, *Thy time is appointed, thy months are determined, thy days are numbered, thy very last hour is limited*, Job xiv. 5. 14. Pf. xc. 12. John xi. 9. And what follows, but that thy body ly cold at the root of the rocks, at the foot of the mountains? Go then to the graves of those that are gone before us, and there see; [See what? See the lowly end of beauty, strength, greatness, power! Where now are the haughty sons and daughters of pride? are not their eyes wasted, their mouths corrupted, their bones scattered? where be those ruddy lips, lovely cheeks, sparkling eyes, comely nose, hairy locks? are not all gone as a dream in the night, or as a shadow in the morning? Where are the once valiant achievers of feats of strength? Their power is gone; their nerves unbrac-

ed; their bones dismembered, and scattered in the grave? Are these the *viri immortales*, the immortal men, that braved it to the skies, that thought themselves invulnerable †, that carried desolation, terror, death, where'er they came; are these the mighty sons of fame, now reduced to bones and ashes? Where now lies greatness? There in that lowly grave: all are now blended in one common mass: there's no distinction now: the fair, and ugly; the weak, and strong; the poor, and rich; the mean, and great; kings, and their subjects; conquerors, and the conquered; all lie together, all are mingled into common dust. *] Alas! that we neglect these thoughts, and set our minds wholly upon the world and its vanities! we are careful, fearful and immoderately painful to get transitory riches, like children following butter-flies; we run and toil, and perhaps miss our purpose: but if we catch them, what is it but a flie to besmear our hands? Riches are but empty, and yet be they what they will be, all at last will be nothing. Saladine, that great Turk, after all his conquests, gets his shirt fastened to his spear in manner of an ensign; this done, a priest makes a proclamation; 'This is all that Saladine carries away with him, of all the riches he hath gotten.' Shall a Turk say thus, and do Christians forget their duties? 'Remember, yourselves, ye sons of earth, of Adam, what is this earth you dote on? Be sure you shall have enough of it, when your mouths must be filled and crammed with it, and (as your souls desire, so) at that day shall your bodies turn to it.' O that men are thus given to grasping greediness! there is a gene-

* When I look upon the tombs of the great, (says one) every motion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow: when I see kings lying by those who despoiled them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contentions and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together.

† That is, *incapable of being wounded*.

ration, and they are too common amongst us, that we may preach and preach (as they say) our hearts out, yet will not they stir a foot further from the world, or an inch nearer unto God, but could we speak with them on their death-bed, when their consciences are awaked, then should we hear them yell out those complaints, *What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us?* Wild. v. 8. Assure yourselves, *this day or this night* will come, and imagine (I pray) that the ten, twenty, thirty, forty years or months, or days, or hours which you have yet to live, were at an end; were you at this present stretched on your beds; wearied with struggling against your wearied pangs; were your friends weeping, your physicians parting, your children crying, your wives howling, and yourselves lying mute and dumb in a most pitiful agony.

Beloved Christian! whosoever thou art, stay a while, I pray thee, and practise this meditation! ' Suppose thou now feltest the cramp of death wresting thy heart-strings, and ready to make that ruful divorce betwixt thy body and thy soul; suppose thou liest now panting for breath, swimming in a cold fatal sweat; suppose thy words were fled, thy tongue struck dumb, thy soul amazed, thy senses frighted; suppose thy feet beginning even to die, thy knees to wax cold and stiff, thy nostrils to run out, thine eyes to sink into thy head, and all the parts of the body to lose their office to assist thee; upon this supposal, lift up thy soul, and look about thee, (O, I can tell thee, if thou livest and die in sin) there would be no where any comfort, but a world of terror and perplexity: look upwards, there shouldst thou see the terrible sword of God's justice threatening, look downwards, there shouldst thou see the grave in expectation ready gaping; look within thee, there shouldst thou feel the worm of conscience bitter gnawing; look without thee, there shouldst thou see good and evil an-

gels on both sides, waiting whether of them should have the prey: now alas! then wouldst thou say, the soul to depart from the body were a thing intolerable, to continue still therein were a thing impossible, and to defer this departure any longer, supposing this hour were thy last hour, no physick could prevail, it were a thing unavoidable: what then would thy poor soul do, thus invironed with so many straits?' O fond fools of Adam's seed, that neglect the time till this terrible passage! how much wouldst thou give, if thus it were, for an hour's repentance? At what rate wouldst thou value a day's contrition? Worlds are worthles in respect of a little respite, a short truce will seem more precious than the treasures of empires, nothing would then be so much esteemed as a trice of time, which before by months and years thou lavishly mispent. Think on thy sins, nay, thou couldst not chuse but think, Satan would write them on the curtains of thy bed, and thy agashed eyes would be forced to look upon them, there wouldst thou see thousands committed, not one confessed, or thoroughly repented, then too late thou wouldst begin to wish, ' O had I led a better life, and were it to begin again, O then would I fast and pray, how repent, how live! certainly, certainly, if thou goest on in sin, thus would be thy departure, thy carcase lying cold among the stones of the pit, and thy soul, by the weight of sin, irrecoverably sinking into the bottom of that bottomless, burning lake.'

Use 2. But to prevent this evil, take this use of advice for thy farewell: whilst yet thy life lasteth, whilst yet the Lord gives thee a gracious day of visitation, ply, ply all those blessed means of salvation, as prayer, and conference, and meditation, and sermons, and sacraments, and fastings, and watchings, and patience, and faith, and a good conscience; in a word, so live, that when this day or night of death comes, thou mayest then stand firm and sure: as yet thou

thou art in the way of a transitory life, as yet thou art not entred into the confines of eternity: if now therefore thou wilt walk in the holy path, if now thou wilt stand out against any sin whatsoever, if now thou wilt take on thee the yoke of our Saviour Christ, if now thou wilt associate thyself to that sect and brotherhood that is every where spoken against; if now thou wilt direct thy words to the glorifying of God, and to give grace unto the hearers; if now thou wilt delight in the word, the ways, the saints, the services of God; if now thou wilt never turn again unto folly, or to thy trade of sin, though Satan set upon thee with his baits and allurements to detain thee in his bondage, but by one darling delight, one minion-sin: then I dare assure thee, *dear, right dear will be thy death in the sight of the Lord*, Psalm cxxvi. 15. With joy and triumph wouldest thou pass through all the terrors of death,

with singing and rejoicing would thy soul be received into those sacred mansions above. O happy soul, if this be thy case! O happy night or day, whensoever the news comes, that then must thy soul be taken from thee!

You may think it now high time, that we bid this farewell-funeral text adieu. Then for conclusion, let every word be thy warning. Lest *this* be thy time, provide for this and every time; lest the *night* be dreadful, *Do not sleep, as do others, but watch and be sober*, 1 Thess. v. 6. lest *thy soul* should suffer, desire the sufferings of thy God to satiate; lest death *require* it of thee by force, offer it up to God with a cheerful devotion; and lest *this of thee* be fearful, who hast lived in sin, correct these courses, amend thy ways, and the blessing of God be with thee all thy life, at the hour of death, now, henceforth, and for ever. *Amen.*

D O O M S - D A Y.

Matth. xvi. 27. *Then shall he reward every man according to his works.*

THE dependence of this text is limited in few lines, and that your eyes wander no further than this verse, therein is kept a general assize; the Judge, officers, prisoners stand in array; the Judge is God, and *the Son of man*; the officers, angels, and they are his angels; the prisoners, men, and because of the goal-delivery, *every man*. If you will have all together, you have a Judge, his circuit, his habit, his attendants, his judgments: A Judge, *the Son of man*; his circuit, *he shall come*; his habit, *in the glory of his Father*;

his attendants, *with his angels*: what now remains, but the execution of justice? Then without more ado, see the text, and you see all; the scales in his hand, our works in the scales, the reward for our works, * of just weight each to other; *Then shall he reward every man according to his works.*

The text gives us the proceeding of dooms-day, which is the last day, the last sessions, the last assize, that must be kept on earth, or is decreed in heaven; if you expect sheriffs or judges, plaintiffs or prisoners, all are in this verse, some in each

* I mean not an arithmetical, but a geometrical weight; rewards, especially of heaven, are not equal according to justice, but proportionable according to promise.

word. *Then* is time's trumpet that proclaims their coming. *He* is the judge that examines all our lives. *Reward* is the doom, that proceeds from him in his throne. *Man* is the malefactor, *every man* stands before him as a prisoner. *Works* are the indictments, and *according to our works* must go the trial howsoever we have done, good or evil.

Give me yet leave, this judge sits on trials as well as prisoners; it is an high court of appeal, where plaintiffs, counsellors, judges, all must appear and answer. Would you learn the proceedings? There is the term, *then*; the judge, *he*; the sentence, *shall reward*; the parties, *every man*; the trial itself, which you may find in all to be just and legal, *every man his reward according to his works*.

We have opened the text, and now you shall have the hearing.

Then.]

THEN? When? the answer is Negative, and Positive.

First, Negative, *Then*; not on a sudden, or, at least, not at this present. This life is no time to receive rewards, the rain and sun pleasure both the good and bad; nay, oftentimes the bad fares best, and God's own children are most fiercely fined in the furnace of affliction; *The earth is given into the hands of the wicked*, saith Job, chap. ix. 24. but, *If any man will follow me, he must take up his cross*, saith our Saviour, Mat. xvi. 24. Joy and pleasure, and happiness attend the ungodly, while God's poor servants run thro' the thicket of briars and brambles to the kingdom of heaven: but, *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Gen. xviii. 25. A time shall come when both these must have their change: *Mark the upright, and behold the just, for the end of that man is peace; but the transgressors shall be destroyed together, and the end of the wicked shall be cut off*, Psal. xxxvii. 37, 38. The effect of things is best known to us in

some issue of time, and then shall we have our rewards, when *the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father*. Let this admonish us to have patience in all our expectations: what is it to suffer a while, an inch of time, considering the reward is great indeed, everlasting in durance? *Rest in the Lord*, saith David, and *wait patiently for him: fret not thyself for him who prospereth in his way*, Psalm xxxvii. 10, 11. And will you know the reason? *For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; but the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace*, Psalm xxxvii. 10, 11. So they shall indeed, if only they will expect a little time; not now, but *then*; stay yet a little while, and be sure anon the reward shall be given.

2. But to answer positively, this *then* is no other than dooms-day, and when that shall be, will be known best by, Conjectures, and Signs. We will begin with the former.

1. Some would have it in the year 6000, from the beginning of the world; this was the sentence of Elias, say the Jews, whose prophecy thus runs, 'Two thousand years before the law, two thousand years under the law, and two thousand years under the gospel: how untrue this sounds, any one may guess that considers; in the first number he fails, because it was too little; in the second number he errs, because it was too much; and if Elias say amiss for the time now past, how should we believe him for that yet to come? Others, besides testimony, produce reason, That as God was creating the world six days, so he must be a governing it six thousand years; here's a seeming proportion, but upon what reason? Every day, say they, must be a thousand years with man, because *a thousand years are but as one day with God*, Psalm xc. 4. It were too frivolous a pains to repeat any more, or to answer these: 'Is not this sacrifice, to

break into God's place, and pry into his sanctuary?' (says Salvian.) Why should we presume to know more than God would have us? Look at the apostles, were they not God's secretaries? Look at the angels, are they not God's heralds? Look at Christ himself, is he not the Son of God? and yet, as he is the Son of man, he speaks of all, *Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no angel, neither the Son, but the Father only*, Mark xiii. 32. 'It is not for us to seek, where the Lord hath not a tongue to speak.' Why should we know more than other men, than all men, than angels, than Christ himself, who (as man) was either ignorant of it, or, at least, had no commission to reveal it. *It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power*, Acts i. 7. It is a better use which our Saviour makes, *Take heed, watch, and pray; for ye know not when the time is*, Mark xiii. 33. *As a thief in the night*, 1 Thess. v. 2. Is dooms-day, it comes suddenly, it will come shortly: would you needs know when? Why then when you least imagine such a matter, then when worldly honours profit nothing, then when kindred and acquaintance fail, then when the world shall be set on fire, then, then he shall reward every man according to his works.

But, 2. If conjectures fail, the signs are certain; Thomas Aquinas tells us that Jerom reports of fifteen miracles for fifteen days, which he writes to have found in the Hebrews annals, and immediately must precede the Judge's coming. 'The first day, (saith he) the sea shall swell, and lift up her waves, at least, fifteen cubits above the height of the highest hills. The second day, unlike to the former, the sea shall ebb again, and the waves be fallen till they scarce be seen. The third day, the sea must return to its ancient course, and so abide that day as it was before. The fourth day sea-monsters shall appear above the sea, whose bellowing roars shall fill the air with cries, which

God alone understands, and men shall tremble at. The fifth day, all the fowls of the air shall flock together, and meeting in the fields, shall there chatter, and starve for fear of the approaching times. The sixth day, floods of fire shall rise up against the firmament, which kindling at the falling sun, shall run like a lightning to the rising morn. The seventh day all stars and planets shall shoot out fiery comets. The eighth day, there shall be a general earthquake, and the motion so violent, that the ground shall hop, and the living-creatures not stand on their feet that walk on the tottering floors. The ninth day, trees shall sweat blood. The tenth day, all the stones of the earth shall war together, and with a thundering noise break one upon another. The eleventh day, all buildings shall be ruined, and all the hills and mountains melt into dust and powder. The twelfth day, all beasts of the field shall come from their woods and dens, and so abstaining from their food, shall roar and bellow up and down the plains. The thirteenth day, all graves shall be open, from the rising up of the sun, unto the going down of the same. The fourteenth day, all men shall come abroad, and such a distraction seize on their heavy hearts, that they shall lose the speech and volubility of their tongues. And the fifteenth (which is the last day) the living men shall die, and the dead shall live again, all above earth be changed, and those in their graves be raised and recovered.'

I will not say these things are certain (I leave you to the Author that recites them) but, if any whit true, why, blessed Lord! what a day of appearance shall this be? I know not, saith one, what others may think of it, but 'for myself it makes me tremble to consider it:' *it is a day of anger and wrath a day of trouble and heaviness, a day of obscurity and darkness, a day of clouds and blacknets, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the strong cities,*

ties, and against the high towers, Zeph. i. 15. (Chrylostom, Homil. 77. on Matt.) I will but run through the signs, as we find them in God's writ, and then see if your hearts will fail for fear.

Then shall the sun be darkened, Mat. xxiv. 29. Can nature stand and suffer a general eclipse? When Christ died the sun could discolour its beauty, and suit itself in black to its Maker's condition; and now man dies, the sun is clad again in mourning-ropes. Alas! what can it do but mourn? God lives, but mankind dies: tho' he was the Creator, yet we are the creatures for whom it was created: 'When the housholder dies, (says Chrystost. on Matt. xxiv.) the family grieves:' were all eyes dry, here is the eye of the world weeps itself blind to see this dissolution: is man bereft of compassion, for whom the sun itself undergoes this passion? Think on those times, when darkness that may be felt shall spread over all the earth; how should plants but wither? or, beasts of the field but waste? how should men but die, when they stumble at noon-day? Their eyes shall fail them, the light forsake them; miserable men! the sun shall not shine on them, because God will judge them. But this is not all.

Then shall the moon not give her light, Matth. xxiv. 29. As the day and night are both alike with God, so the day and night shall be alike with man; the sun will not lend it lustre, nor can the moon borrow any more light: but what strange war makes this confusion of nature? The sun shall look black; and *the moon be turned into blood,* Joel ii. 31. Here is a new moon, and such a change as before was never seen: there is no increase, no full, no wane, but all the light is at once extinguished: unhappy creatures that depend upon her influence! how should they live, when she herself wades in blood? God made these 'lights for signs, and for seasons, for days, and for years:' but now signs are out, seasons past, days are done, years abolished;

The angel hath sworn by him that lives for ever and ever, that time shall be no longer, Rev. x. 6. Who will not believe that hears this sacred oath? was it a man? No, an angel: did he say it? No, he swore it: How? by himself? No, it was by him that lives for ever and ever: and what? that time must be little? Nay, it must be no longer, *Time shall be no more.* How shall it be no more? The sun is disfigured, the moon disrobed, both eclipsed. But this is not all.

Then shall the stars be shaken: the powers of heaven shall move, and the lamps of heaven shall tremble; these were God's threats against the Babylonians, Isaiah xlii. 10. *For the stars of heaven, and the planets thereof shall not give their light.* Against the Egyptians, Ezek. xxxii. 7. *I will cover the heaven, and make the stars dark over thee:* Against all his enemies, Joel iii. 15. *The sun and moon shall be darkened,* (but not they alone, for) *and the stars themselves shall withdraw their shining:* but what speak we of darkness, or the stars not shining? they shall not only dim, but down. *In those days, saith our Saviour, Mark xlii. 15. after that tribulation the sun and moon shall darken, and the stars of heaven shall fall:* How fall? 'So thick (say expositors) that the firmament shall seem to be without all manner of light. I cannot say these signs shall be real; whether it is by subtraction of their light, or the conceit of brain-troubled sinners, or the fall of some inflamed vapours, or the apostasie of some enlightened persons: for certain, to speak literally, there shall be some change in the whole order of nature: *Sun and moon, stars and planets,* all must lose their lights, and by all likelihood, it is the glory of the judge that will dazzle those candles: neither is this all.

Then shall the elements melt: The fire shall fall down from heaven, the air turn itself into vapours, the sea swell above all clouds, the earth be full of yawning clefts,

and violent tremblings, 2 Peter iii. 18. A fire shall first usher the judge, and such a fire as shall have the property of all fires: that fire in its sphere, this fire on earth, the fearful fire which torments in hell, all shall meet in one, and according to their several qualities, produce their several effects: 'The just shall be refined by one; the wicked shall be tormented by another; the earth be consumed by a third:' There is no creature but it must be fuel for this fire; as the first world was destroyed with water, to quench the heat of their lust; so must this be destroyed with fire, to warm the cold of our charity. But not the fire alone.

Then shall the air breed wonders: what shall be seen but lightnings, whirl-winds, conflagrations, blazing-stars, flashing thunders? Here a comet runs round in a circuit, there a crown compasseth that comet; near them a fiery dragon fumes in flames, every where appears a shooting fire, as if all above us were nothing but inflamed air. Yct not the air alone.

Then shall the waters roar, Luke xxi. 25. Rivers shall wax dry; the sea froth and foam, and fume: those that dwell near shall wonder at the swelling tides; others afar off shall tremble at the roaring noise: what threats are those which the surges murmur? War is proclaimed by noise, set on by blasts, continued by storms, the floods and tides shall run over all the plains, the sea and waves shall mount up to the very skies; now would they war with heaven, then overwhelm the earth, anon will they sink to hell; and thus shall they rove and rage, as if they would threaten all the world with a second inundation. Nay yct again.

Then shall the earth be shaken in divers places (saith Matthew, ch. xxiv. 7.) *in all places* (saith Joel, chap. i. 10.) *for all the earth shall tremble before him.* Here is an earth-quake indeed; not some part of the land, by reason of some cloistered wind,

but the rocks, mountains, castles, cities; some countries shall remove, others be ruined: thus all the earth shall be as a swallowing gulf, that all things here situated, may be then devoured. What can I more?

Then shall plants cease their growth, beasts want their sense, men lose their reason: were this but little, you may wonder more.

The Sybils could affirm, That *nature should both cease and change her being;* the trees instead of growth shall sweat out blood, the beasts shall bellow up and down the fields, then want their sense. Men should have disfigured faces, astonished hearts, affrighted looks; then lose their reason: nay, what marvel then, if at the world's end, they be at their wits end? O fearful signs, enough to move flinty stones! if this be the term, what is the fruit, the bill, the doom, the execution? A trumpet shall summon, death will arrest, God must have appearance, and *then is the day: then shall be reward every man according to his works.*

What a chaos is here, when the world must be thus turned topsie turvie? The sun, the moon, the stars; come yet a little lower, the fire, the air, the sea, the earth; nay, trees, and beasts, and men, all must be out of order in the whole course of nature.

Uſe 1. Who can read or hear this prognostication of dooms-day, and not wonder at the signs which shall hang over our heads? We see by experiences when any outrageous storm happens on sea, or land, how wonderfully men are dismayed, how strangely astonished: now then, when the heavens, the earth, the sea, the air shall be wholly distempered and disordered; when the sun shall threaten with mourning, the moon with blood, the stars with their falling; yea, when all the heavens shall shrink and pass away as a paper scroll, who then dares eat, or drink, or sleep,

sleep, or take a minute's rest? Be sure these days shall come, and the signs shall pass: *Awake ye drunkards, and weep, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it shall be pulled from your mouths. Gird yourselves, and lament ye priests, howl ye ministers of the altar: alas! for the day, for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as destruction from the Almighty, shall it come,* Joel i. 5. xiii. 15. What are ye insensible of these signs? The imprisoned thief fears at the news of the assize: and is the sinner so impudent that he fears nothing? The day shall come when the men of earth shall fear, and be full of fear; every sign shall breed a wonder, and every sight shall breed a wondrous terror; men shall hide themselves in the caves of beasts, and the beasts seek to save themselves in the houses of men: where then shall the wicked stand when all the world shall be thus in uprore?

Use 2. Yet a word for us all, we have all warning, and we had best to provide; yet the weather is fair; we may frame an ark to save us from the flood; yet are the angels at the gates of Sodom; yet is Jonas in the streets of Nineveh, yet the prophet woos, *O Judah, how shall I intreat thee?* Hosea vi. 4. yet the apostle prays, nay, *We pray you in Christ's stead, that ye will be reconciled unto God,* 2 Cor. v. 20. To conclude, yet the bridegroom stays the virgin's leisure; Lord that they would make speed, seeing the joys of heaven tarry for them. This term is at hand, and is it not time to petition the judge of heaven? What a dangerous course is it never to call to mind that time of times, until we see the earth flaming, the heavens melting, the judgment hastening, the judge with all his angels coming in the clouds, to denounce the last doom upon all flesh, which shall be unto some wo, wo, when they shall call to the mountains to cover them, and for shame of their sins hide themselves (if it were possible) in hell-fire:

if we have any fear, this should move fear; if we have any care, this should move us all to be careful indeed. We have not two souls that we may hazard one, neither have we two lives that we may trust to another, but as thy last day leaves thee, so will this dooms-day find thee. Who would not but accept of the fatherly fore-warning of Christ our Saviour? See you not now many signs, as the heralds and fore-runners of his glorious coming? *The abounding of iniquity, the waxing cold of charity, the rising of nation against nation,* Mat. xxiv. 7. 12. Was there ever less love? was there ever more hatred? where is that Jonathan that loves David as his own soul? nay, where is not that Joab, that can embrace freely, but carries a malicious heart toward Abner? sure we are near the end indeed, when charity is grown thus cold. You then that would have the comfort of the day, take these signs for warnings, provide for him who hath thus long waited for you; and *seeing you look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless,* 2 Pet. iii. 24. Who would endanger their souls for a little sin? Busy clients heed nothing but their cause, and if you would recover heaven, be sure that ye mark this term. The time draws on, now the writes are out, anon comes the judge, and then is the day. *Then he shall reward every man according to his works.*

You see the term, and now you may expect to view the Judge: the term is *then*, the Judge is *he*. Stay a while, and the next time you shall see him in his judgment-seat. *He.]*

H E? Who? If you look at the foregoing words, you may see who he is. *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, and it is he that shall reward us according to our works* This title of the *Son of man*, denotes unto us the humility of the Son of God; what is the son of man, but man? and this tells us how

how humble he was for us, that being God was made man, or the Son of man, which is all one, according to that, Pfalm viii. 4. *What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?*

It is true, *God is the judge of all*, Heb. xii. 23. and yet it is as true, this God is man, Acts xvi. 31. *God (saith Paul) will judge the world, but it is by that man whom he hath ordained.* God hath the power, but God as man hath only the commission. He (who is God) hath given him authority to execute judgment, and would you know the reason? it is only because *he is the Son of man*, John v. 27. In a word, God shall judge, the whole trinity by prescription, Christ only in execution: the Father judgeth, but by the Son; or, as the evangelist John, *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*, John v. 22.

But because, as man, there appears in him a double form, as humbled, as glorified; we'll discuss these questions which resolve all doubts.

I. Whether Christ, *as man*, or, 2. Whether man *as glorified*, shall appear unto us, when he will reward us?

To the first, we say, *That only as man he will appear our judge, who as man appeared when himself was judged*; what better reason to express the benefit of our redemption, than fo to judge us as he did redeem us? Was he not man that suffered, died, and was buried? and is he not man that one day shall come to judge both the quick and the dead? 'He that came obscurely to be judged by the unjust, shall then appear openly to judge all the just.' says Austin, in his book of the city of God. The same man, who is God and man, shall be our judge in his human nature, by his divine power. Thus we say, God, who is the Ancient of days, hath the power original; but man, who is the Son of God, hath the power traduced; and therefore, saith Daniel, *One like the Son of man came with*

the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, Dan. vii. 13, 14.

Use. Consider this ye that are going to the bar: what a fight will this be to the faithless Jews, stubborn Gentiles, wicked Christians, when every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him, Rev. i. 7. 'This is the man (shall they say) that was crucified for us, and again crucified by us?' Why, alas! every sin is a cross, every oath is a spear, and when that day is come, you must behold the man whom thus you do crucify by your daily sins. Sure this will be a fearful sight! where is the bloody swearer that can tear his wounds, and heart, and blood, and all? at this day of doom 'those wounds shall appear, that heart be visible, that body and blood be seen both of good and bad,' and then shall that fearful voice proceed from his throne, 'This was the heart thou piercedst, these are the wounds thou razedst, and this is the blood thou spilledst.' here is the fearful judgment, when thou that art the murderer shall see the slain man sit thy judge: what favour canst thou expect at his hands whom thou hast so vilely abused by thy daily sins? Be sure, *the Son of man will come, as it is written of him, but wo unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed; it had been good for that man if he had not been born*, Matth. xxvi. 24.

To the second question we answer, That as Christ shall appear in the form of man, so this man shall appear in a glorious form: he that is a Mediator between God and man, must both interceed for man to God, and communicate those things which are of God to man: to this purpose, both these offices are agreeable to him, in that he participates of both extremes; he is man to abide the judgments due from God, he is God to convey all his benefits unto man: as then, in his first coming,

coming, he pleased God by taking the infirmities of man upon him; so in his second coming will he judge us men, by appearing in that glory which he derives from God. But look about you, who is this judge arrayed in such a majesty? *A fire devours before him, and behind him a flame burns up, on every side the people tremble, and all faces shall gather blackness*, Eccl. ii. 3, 6. Here is a change indeed, he that was in a cratch, now sits on a throne; then Christ stood like a Lamb before Pilate, now Pilate stands like a malefactor before Christ; he that was once made the footstool of his enemies, must now judge *till he hath made all his enemies his footstool*, Psalm cx. 1. Where shall they run? and how shall they seek the clefts of the rocks, and hollow places? The glory of his majesty kindles a flame, while *the heaven and earth shall fly from the presence of this judge*. *O ye heavens, why do ye flee away? what have ye done? why are ye afraid?* Rev. xxi. 17. It is the majesty of the judge that will amaze the innocent, the greatness of whose indignation, will be able to strike all the heavens with terror and admiration: when the sea is outrageous and tempestuous, he that stands on the shore will be struck into a kind of fear; or, when the father goes like a lion about his house, in punishing his bond-slave, the innocent son stands in great fear and trouble; and how then shall the wicked tremble, when the very heavens shall be afraid? *“ If the goodly cedars of Lebanon be shaken, what shall become of the tender twigs of the desert? if the sturdy rams stoop and tremble, how will the bleating lambs cry, and run away?”* and, *if the just and righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* 1 Pet. iv. 18. The mountains and heavens shall melt before the Lord; and what stony hearts have we, that for all this are nothing at all yet moved?

But, may be, I prevent your expectati-

on, if here be a judge, where is the guard? Behold him coming from above with great power and glory: would you know his habit? He is clothed with majesty: seek you the colour? 'Tis the brightness of his Father: would you view his attendants? They are an host of angels: look you for the guard? They are a troop of shining cherubims; nay, yet see a longer train, a further company, the souls of saints descend from their imperial seats, and attend the Lamb with great glory, and glorious majesty: never was any judge lord of such a circuit; his footstool are the clouds, his seat the rain-bow, his justices saints, his officers angels, and the archangel's trumpet proclaims a silence, whilst a just sentence comes from his mouth on all the world. Thus are the assizes begun to be solemnized; *The thrones, as Daniel saw in his vision, were set up, and the Ancient of days sat down, his garments white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool, his throne like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire*, Dan. vii. 9. This is the judge, whose coming is so fearful, ushered by a fiery flood, apparelled in snowy white, carried in his circuit on burning wheels, and attended with the number of thousand thousands. O ye Jews, behold the man whom before ye crucified like a malefactor, behold him in his throne, whom you said, his disciples had stolen by night out of his grave: behold him in his majesty, whom you would not deign to look upon in his humility; the biter you esteemed his weaknets, the heavier must you find and feel his mightiness. The Son of man appears, and the kindreds of the earth must mourn; such a shout of fury follows the sight of his majesty, that the vaults shall echo, the hills resound, the earth shake, the heavens change their situation, and all be turned to a confusion; then shall the wicked weep and wail, and yet their tears not serve their turn, their sins past betray them, their shame present con-

dems them, and their torment to come confounds them; thus shall they bewail their miserable hap, their unfortunate birth, and their cursed end: *O fearful Judge, terrible as an army with banners*, Cant. vi. 4. 5. *turn away thine eyes from us*, which overcome the proudest potentates: the kings of the earth shall be astonished, and the nations of the isles shall fear from far: every eye shall see Him whom they have pierced, and tremble at the presence of his sight. Conceive the guilty prisoner coming to his trial, will not the red robes of his Judge make his heart bleed for his bloodshed? doth not that scarlet cloth present a monstrous hue before his eyes? O then! what sight is this, when the man slain, sits in the judgment-seat, the rosè wounds of our Saviour still bleeding, as it were, in the prisoners presence? These are the wounds, 'not as tokens of infirmity, but victory, and these now shall appear (as Aquinas thinks) not as if he must suffer, but to shew us he hath suffered.' See here an object full of glory, splendor, majesty, excellency, and this is He, the Man, the Judge, the *Rewarder of every man according to his works*.

The Judge we have set in his throne, and before we appear, let us practise our repentance, that we answer the better.

Use 1. Think but, O sinner, what shall be thy reward, when thou shalt meet this judge; the adulterer for a while may flatter beauty, the swearer grace his words with oaths, the drunkard kiss his cups, and drink his bodies health, till he bring his soul to ruin: *but remember for all these things God will bring thee to judgment*, Eccl. xi. 9. Cold comfort in the end: the adulterer shall satisfy his lust, when he lies on a bed of fire, all hugged and embraced with those flames; the swearer shall have enough of wounds and blood, when devils torture his body, and rack his soul in hell; the drunkard shall have plenty of his cups when scalding lead shall be poured down his throat, and his breath draw

flames of fires instead of air; as is thy sin, so is the nature of thy punishment; the just judge shall give just measure, and the balance of his wrath poize in a just proportion.

Use 2. Yet I will not discomfort you who are the judge's dearest favourites: now is the day if you are God's servants, that Satan shall be trod under your feet, and you with your Lord and master Christ, shall be carried into the holiest of holies. You may remember how all the men of God in their greatest anguishes here below, have fetcht comfort by the eye of faith at this mountain: Job rejoiced being cast on the dung-hill, that his *Redeemer lived, and that he should see him at the last day stand on the earth*: John longed and cried, *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly*; and had we the same precious faith, we have the same precious promises: why then are we not ravished at the remembrance of these things? certainly there is an happy faith, wheresoever it shall be found, that shall not be ashamed at that day: *Now therefore, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence*, 1 John ii. 18. Confidence? what else? *I will see you again* (saith our Saviour judge) *and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you*, John xvi. 22. O blessed mercy, that so triumphs against judgment; our hearts must joy, our joys endure, and all this occasioned by the sight of our Saviour; for *He shall reward every man according to his works*.

We have prepared the judge for sentence: he hath rid his circuit in the clouds, and made the rain-bow his chair of state, for his judgment-seat; his sheriffs are the saints, that now rise from the dust to meet their judge, whom long they have expected: the summons is sent out by a shout from heaven; the cry no sooner made, but the graves flie open, and the dead arise: stay a while till ready them; you have seen the judge, and now we prepare the judged. He, is the judge; every man, the judged:

judged : and he shall reward every man according to his works.

Every man.]

THE persons to be judged, are a world of men, all men of the world, good and bad, elect and reprobates, but in a different manner : To give you a full view of them, I must lead your attentions orderly thro' these passages ; there must be a citation, resurrection, collection, separation : follow me in these paths, and you may see both the men and their difference, before they come to their judgments.

1. There is a summons, and every man must hear it : it is performed by a shout from heaven, and the voice of the last trump : the clangor of this trump could ever sound in Jerom's ears, *Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.* The clangor of this trump will sound in all mens ears, it will wake the dead out of their drowse sleep, and change the living from their mortal state, make devils tremble, and the whole world shake with terror : * A terrible voice, ' a trumpet shall sound that shall shake the world, rend the rocks, break the mountains, dissolve the bonds of death, burst down the gates of hell, and unite all spirits to their own bodies.' Chrysof. on Cor. What say you to this trump, that can make the whole universe to tremble ? no sooner shall it sound, but ' the earth shall shake, the mountains skip like rams, and the little hills like young sheep : ' It shall pierce the waters, and fetch from the bottom of the sea the dust of Adam's seed ; it shall tear the rocky tombs of earthly princes, and make their haughty minds to stoop before

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the King of heaven ; it shall remove the center, and tear the bowels of the earth, open the graves of all the dead, and fetch their souls from heaven or hell, to re-unite them to their bodies. A dreadful summons to the wicked, whom this sudden noise will no less astonish than confound ; the dark pitchy walls of that infernal pit of hell, shall be shaken with the shout, when the dreadful soul shall leave its place of terror, and once more re-enter into her sinking carrion, to receive a greater condemnation : what terror will this be to the wicked wretch : what woful salutations will there be between that body and soul, which living together in the height of iniquity, must now be re-united to enjoy the fulness of their misery ? The voice of Christ is powerful, *The dead shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation.*

You hear the summons, and the next is your appearance ; death the goaler brings all his prisoners from the grave, and they must stand and appear before the Judge of heaven.

The summons is given, and every man must appear : death must now give back all their spoils, and restore again all that she hath took from the world †. What a ghastly sight will this be, to see all the sepulchres open, to see dead men rise out of their graves, and the scattered dust to flie on the wings of the wind, till it meet together in one compacted body ‡ ? Ezekiel's dry bones shall live : thus saith the

Lord,

* Lo! a mighty trump, one half conceal'd
In clouds, one half to mortal eye reveal'd,
Shall pour a dreadful note: the piercing call,
Shall rattle in the center of the ball;
Th' extended circuit of creation shake,
The living die with fear, the dead awake.

† It is echoing voice now rends the yielding air,
' For judgment, judgment, sons of men, prepare!'

Earth shakes anew, I hear her groans profound,
And hell through all her trembling realms resound.

‡ Now man awakes, and from his silent bed,
Where he has slept for ages, lifts his head;
Shakes off the slumber of ten thousand years,
And on the borders of new worlds appears.

‡ Now monuments prove faithful to their trust,
And render back their long committed dust.

Lord, *I will lay sinews upon you, and make flesh grow upon you; and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall know that I am the Lord, Ezek. xxxvii. 7.* This dust of ours shall be devoured of worms, consumed by serpents, which crawl and spring from the marrow of our bones: look in a dead man's grave, and see what you find; but dust, and worms, and bones, and skulls, putrified flesh, an house full of stench and vermin: behold then the power of God Almighty, out of this grave and dust of the earth; from these chambers of death and darkness, shall arise the bodies of the buried, the graves will flie open, and the dead go out; not an hair, not a dust, not a bone shall be denied, but whatsoever holds their dust shall yield their bodies: *I saw the dead, saith John, small and great stand before God; and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works, Rev. xx. 12, 13.* What a wonderful sight will this be, to see the sea and earth bring forth in all parts such variety of bodies; to see so many sorts of people and nations to come together? Huge armies, innumerable, as the caterpillars of Egypt, all shall arise, and every one appear before the Lord's tribunal: worms and corruption cannot hinder the resurrection: he that said to *Corruption, thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my sister and mother, said also, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and mine eyes shall behold him.* O good God, how wonderful is thy power! this flesh of ours shall turn to dust, be eaten of worms, consume to nothing; if

there be any reliques of our ashes, the wind may scatter them, the blasts divide them, our feet trample them, the beasts digest them, the vermin devour them; if nothing, yet time will consume them. But for all this, God is as able to raise us from the dust, as to create us of the dust; not one dust of this clay shall perish, though scattered, divided, trampled, devoured, consumed, it shall be gathered, recovered, revived, refined, and raised; and as one dust shall not be lost of one man, so neither shall one man be lost of all the world: this is that general day that shall congregate all, they shall come from the four winds and corners of the world, to make an universal appearance; all the children of Adam shall then meet together, *yea all the kindreds of the earth shall meet together, and mourn; Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the beaten,* Joel iii. 11, 12.

The summons are founded, the dead raised, and yet to give you a fuller view of the parties, see how God the Judge now sends his messengers, to fetch the living bodies to his court.

3. *He shall send his angels, saith our Saviour, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to another, Mat. xxiv. 31.* True it is, all shall be gathered, yet with a difference; some with a swift pace flie to the throne, where is the hope of their deliverance; others draw and pull back, while the angels hale them to the judgment seat; * the righteous have nimble swift bodies, that flie to the Judge, as a bird to her nest and young

Now charnels rattle: scatter'd limbs, and all
The various bones obsequious to the call,
Self mov'd advance; the neck perhaps to meet
The distant head, the distant legs the feet.
Dreadful to view; see through the dusky sky
Inguents of bodies in confusion fly,

To distant regions journeying there to claim
Deserted members, and compleat the frame.

* Not all at once, nor in like manner rise:
Some list with pain their slow unwilling eyes,
Shrink backward from the terror of the sight,
And bless the grave, and call for lasting night.

Others,

young ones; but the wicked have their bodies black and heavy, they cannot flie, but flag in the air, and the angels do not bear, but drag them to the judgment-seat; how can this chuse but fear the wicked, when like malefactors they are brought before the wrathful Judge? as they were born or buried, so must they rise again naked and miserable; what a shame is this? and yet the more horrible, in that their nakedness shall be covered with a filthy blackness; needs must desperate fears seize on the soul, when it is again united to her body, transformed to such an ugly form: is this the body fed with delights and delicacies? Is this the flesh pampered with ease and lust? is this the face masked from the wind and sun? are these the hands decked with rings and diamonds? how become these so swarthy horrible, which before were so fair and amiable? this is the change of the wicked, when through sorrow and confusion they shall cry to the rocks, *Cover our nakedness*, and to the hills, *hide our ugliness*; nay rather than appear, *Let the infernal furies tear and tatter us into a thousand pieces*. Look your beauties, beloved, in this glass: such is the end of this world's glory, so vain the pleasure of this body. Now is the end of all things come, and what remains, but a sea of fears and miseries rushing on them? before shall the angels drag them, behind shall the black crew follow them, within shall their consciences torture them, and without shall hot flames of fire fume, and fry, and furiously torment them; fear within, and fire without: but worse than all, a Judge above all, thither must they go, angels usher them, devils attend them, the

crier hath called them, the angel's trumpet hath summoned them, and now they must appear.

We have brought all together, now we must part them asunder, the sheep shall be put on the right hand, and the goats on the left, as every man hath been qualified.

Two travellers go together, feed together, lie together, sleep together, but in the morning their ways part asunder: thus the sheep and goats eat together, drink together, sleep together, rot together, but at this day there shall be a separation; *Let them grow together, corn and tares, until the harvest*, Matth. xiii. 30. This world is the floor; fan while you will, there will be some chaff; love peace like lambs, there will be some goats to trouble; the sheep and goats live both together in one fold, the world; lie both together in one cote, the grave: the world is a common inn, which entertains all manner of passengers: the road-way to death, is the king's high-way free for all travellers: after the passage of this weary day, death hath provided a large bed to lay all in, the grave: all live together, and all lie together; all rest together, and all rot together: but when this night is past, and the last day is sprung, then is the woful separation; some turn on the right, and those are the blessed; others on the left hand, and those are the cursed. Here is the beginning of woes, when the wicked shall curse, and howl like the fiends of hell; 'O Lord, punish me here, (saith Austin devoutly) rack me in pieces, cut me in shreds, burn me in fire, so that I may be there placed at thy right hand: Blessed are they that have a place amongst those elect sheep; what now remains but

Others, whose long attempted virtue stood
Fix'd as a rock, and broke the rushing flood,
Whose firm resolve, nor beauty could melt down,
Nor raging tyrants from their posture frown;
Such in this day of horrors shall be seen
To face the thunders with a god-like mien;

The planets drop, their thoughts are fix'd above:
The centre snakes, their hearts disdain to move:
An earth dissolving, and a heav'n thrown wide,
A yawning gulph, and fiends on every side,
Serene they view, impatient of delay,
And bless the dawn of everlasting day.

their doom, which is a lot that must befall every man? For he shall reward (not one, or some, but every one) every man according to his works.

The summons are given, the dead are raised, the prisoners conducted to the bar, and the sheep and goats severed afunder each from other.

Use 1. And now see the parties thus summoned, raised, gathered, severed: is not here a world of men to be judged all in one day? *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision,* Joel iii. 14. blessed God! what a multitude shall stand before thee? all tongues, all nations, all people of the earth shall appear at once; all we shall then behold each son of Adam, and Adam our grand-father shall then see all his posterity. Consider this, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, God is no acceptor of persons. Hark, O beggar, petitions are out of date, and yet thou needst not fear, thou shalt have justice; this day all causes shall be heard, and thou, though a poor one, must appear with others to receive thy sentence. Hark, O farmer, now are thy lives and leaves together finished; this day is the new harvest of thy judge, who *gathers his wheat into his garner, and burns up the chaff in fire unquenchable,* Matth. iii. 12. No boon, no bribe, no prayers, no tears can avail thy soul; but as thou hast done, so art thou sentenced at the first appearing. Hark, O land-lord, where is thy purchase to thee and thy heirs for ever? This day makes an end of all, and happy were thy soul, if thou hadst no better land than a barren rock, to cover and shelter thee from the judge's presence. Hark, O captain, vain now is the hope of man to be saved by the multitude of an host; hadst thou command of all the armies on earth and hell, yet couldst thou not resist the armies of heaven: see the trump sounds, and the alarm summons thee, thou must appear.

Hark, O prince, what is the crown and scepter against thunder? the greatness of man, when it comes to encounter with God, is weakness and vanity. Hark, all the world, *From him that sitteth upon the glorious throne, unto him that is beneath in earth and ashes: from him that is clothed in blue silk, and weareth a crown, even to him that is clothed in simple linen,* Ecclus. xl. 3, 4. all must appear before him, the beggar, farmer, landlord, captain, king, and prince, and every man (when that day is come) shall receive his reward according to his works.

Use 2. But, O here is the misery, every man must appear, but every man will not think on it? would you know the sign of that man which this day shall be blessed? It is he, and only he that again and again thinks on this day, that Jerom-like, meditates on this summons, and resurrection, and collection, and separation. Examine then yourselves by this rule: 'Is your mind often carried to these objects? soar you on high with the wings of faith, and a sound eye to this hill? Why then, you are right birds, truly bred, and not of the bastard brood?' I pray you mark it, every cross, and disgrace, and slander, and discourteance, loss of goods, disease of body, or whatsoever calamity, if you are the children of God, and destined to sit at the right hand of our Saviour, they will ever and anon be carrying your minds to those objects of dooms-day. And if you can but say, that experimentally you find this true in yourselves; if ordinarily in your miseries, or other times, you think on this time of refreshing, then be of good comfort, for you are of the bride's company, and shall enter into the marriage chamber to abide there for ever. But if you are destitute of these kind of motions, O then strive for these properties that are the inseparable breathings and movings of an holy heart, sound mind and blessed person; every day meditate that every man shall

shall appear one day, and receive his reward according to his works.

You see how we have followed the cause, and well near brought it to a final sentence; the term is discovered, the judge revealed, the prisoners prepared, and the next time we shall bring them to the bar, to receive their rewards. This time depart in peace, and the God of peace keep your souls spotless without sin, that you may be well prepared for the day of judgment.

According to his works.]

WE have brought the prisoners to their trial, and now to go on, how should this trial be? I answer: not by faith, but works; by faith we are justified, by works we are judged: faith only causeth, but works only manifest that we are just indeed. Here then is the trial, that every soul of man must undergo that day. Works are the matter that must be first enquired of; and is there any wicked man to receive his sentence? let him never hope to be saved by another's supererogating; the matter of enquiring is not *aliena*, but *sua*; 'not another's, but his own works.' Or is there any good man on whom the smiling judge is ready to pronounce a blessed doom? Let him never boast of meriting heaven by his just deservings; see the reward given, not *propter*, but *secundum*, (as Gregory tells us) 'not for his works, as if they were the cause, but according to his works, as being the best witnesses of his inward righteousness.'

But the better to acquaint you with this trial, there be two points, of which especially we are to make enquiry. (1.) How all men's works shall be manifest to us? (2.) How all men's works shall be examined by God?

1. Of the manifestation of every man's work. John speaketh, *And I saw the dead small and great stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which*

were written in the books, according to their works, Rev. xx. 12. God is said to have books, not properly, but figuratively; all things are as certain and manifest to him, as if he had registers in heaven to keep records of them. Remember this, O forgetful; you may commit, add, multiply your sins, and yet run on score till they are grown so many, that they are out of memory; but God keeps them in a register, and not one shall be forgotten; there is a book and books, and when all the dead shall stand before God to receive their sentence, then must these books be opened, *viz.* (1.) the book of God's memory, (2.) the book of man's conscience, (3.) the book of eternal life.

There is a book of God's memory, and herein are all the acts and monuments of all men whatsoever enrolled and registered; *A book of remembrance was written before God, for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name,* Mal. iii. 16. This is that which manifests all secrets, whether mental or actual; this is that which reveals all doings, whether good or evil. In these records are found at large Abel's sacrifice, Cain's murder, Absalom's rebellion, David's devotion, the Jews' cruelty, the prophets' innocency, good men's intentions, and the sinner's actions; nothing shall be hid when this book is opened, for all may run and read it, stand and hear it. How fond are we that imagine heaven's eye (such is this book) to be shut upon us? Do we not see many run to corners to commit their sins? there can they say, *Let us take our fill of love until the morning, for darkness hath covered us, and who seeth us? who knoweth us,* Prov. vii. 18. Isaiah xxix. 15. But are not the angels of God about you? *We are a spectacle to the angels,* saith the apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 9. I assure we must be so to both, *to angels, and to men, and to all the world:* O do not that before the angels of God, yea before the God of angels, which you would shame to do

in the sight and presence of an earthly man! alas! must our thoughts be known, and shall not dark corner sins be revealed? must every word and syllable we speak be writ and recorded in God's memorable book, and must not ill deeds, ill demeanours, ill works of darkness be disclosed at that day? Yes, *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, be it good or evil*, Eccl. xii. 14. Wail, ye wicked, and tremble in astonishment. Now your closet sins must be disclosed, your private faults laid open, God keeps the account-book of every sin, every transgression: *Imprimis*, for adultery; *Item*, for envy, blasphemy, oaths, drunkenness, violence, murder, and every sin, from the beginning to this time, from our birth to our burial, the total sum, eternal death and damnation: this is the note of accounts, wherein are all thy offences written, the debt is death, the pay perdition, which fury pays over to destruction.

But there is another book, that shall give a more full, I cannot say, but a more fearful evidence than the former, which is, *the book of every man's conscience*: some call it the book of testimony, which every man still bears about him. There is within us a book and secretary, the book is conscience, and the secretary is our soul; whatsoever we do is known to the soul, and writ in our book of conscience: there is no man can so much as commit one sin, but his soul, that is privy to the fact, will write it in this book. In what a woful case will thy heart then be? in what strange terror and trembling must it stand possess'd, when this must be opened, and thy sins revealed? 'It is now perhaps a book shut up and sealed, but in the day of judgment it shall be opened;' and if once opened, what shall be the evidence that it will bring forth? There is a private sessions to be held in the breast of every condemned sinner; the *memory* is recorder, grief an accuser, truth is the law, damnation the

judgment, hell the prison, devils the jailors, and conscience both witness and judge to pass sentence on thee. What hopes be at the general assize, whose conscience hath condemned him before he appear? Look well to thy life, thou bearest about thee a book of testimony, which though for a time it be shut till it be full fraught with accusations, yet then, at the day of doom, it must be opened, when thou shalt read, and weep and read every period, stop with a sigh, every word be enough to break thy heart, and every syllable reveal some secret, thy own conscience upon the matter, being both witness, judge, accuser, and condemner.

But yet there is another book we read of, and that is the *book of life*. Herein are written all the names of God's elect, from the beginning of the world till the end thereof: these are the golden leaves; this is that precious book of heaven, wherein if we are registred, not all the powers of hell, or death, or devils shall blot us out again. Here is the glory of each devout soldier of our Saviour; how many have spent their lives, spilt their blood, run upon sudden deaths to gain a perpetual name? and yet for all their doings, many of these are dead and gone, and their memories perished with them; only Christ's soldier hath immortal fame; he, and only he is writ in that book that must never perish. Come hither ye ambitious! your names may be writ in chronicles, yet lost; writ in durable marble, yet perish; writ in a monument equal to a Colossus, yet be ignominious. O were you but writ in this *book of life*, your names should never die, never suffer any ignominy! it is an axiom most true, 'They that are written in the eternal leaves of heaven, shall never be wrapped in the cloudy sheets of darkness.' Here then is the joy of saints, at that day of doom this book shall be opened, and all the elect whom God hath ordained to salvation, shall see it, read it, hear it, and greatly

greatly rejoice at it. The disciples casting out devils, return with miracles in their mouths; *O Lord, say they, even devils are subject to us through thy name. True, saith Christ, I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven: notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven,* Luke x. 20. And well may the saints rejoice, that have their names written in God's book, they shall see them, to their comfort, writ in letters of gold, penned with the Almighty's finger, ingraven with a pen of a diamond: thus will this book give in the evidence, and accordingly will the judge proceed to sentence.

Use 1. Consider (thou that readest) what books one day must be set before thee; a time will come when every thought of thy heart, every word of thy mouth, every glance of thy eye, every moment of thy time, every office thou hast born, every company thou hast used, every sermon thou hast heard, every action thou hast done, and every omission of any duty or good deed thou hast left undone, shall be seen in these books at the first opening of them; thy conscience shall then be suddenly, clearly, and universally enlarged with extraordinary light to look upon all thy life at once; God's memory shall then shine forth, and shew itself, when all men looking on it as a reflecting-glass, they shall behold all the passages of their mispent lives from their births to their burials. Where is the wicked and deceitful man? wilt thou yet commit thy villainies, treacheries, robberies, murders, de-

bates, and impieties? Let me tell thee (if so) to thy heart's grief, all thy secret sins, and closet-villanies, that no eye ever lookt upon, but that which is a thousand times brighter than the sun, shall be disclosed and laid open before angels, men, and devils, and thou shalt then and there be horribly, universally, and everlastingly ashamed: never therefore go about to commit any sin, because it is midnight, or that the doors are lockt upon thee; suppose it be concealed, and ly hid in as great darkness as it was committed, till dooms-day again, yet then shall it out with a witness, and be as legible in thy fore-head as if it were writ with the brightest stars, or the most glistering sun-beam upon a wall of chrystal.

Use 2. As you mean the good of your souls, amend your lives, call yourselves to account while it is called to day, search and examine all your thoughts, words and deeds, and prostrating yourselves before God, with broken and bleeding affections, pray, and sue that your names may be written in heaven, in that book of life. This will be the joy of your hearts, the peace of your souls, the rest of your minds; yea, how glad will you then be to have † all these books laid open? By this means, I speak it to the comfort of all true-hearted Christians, shall your obedience and repentance, and faith, and love, and zeal, and patience, &c. come to light, and be known. God is not unrighteous to forget your works of labour and love. No, all must out, especially at that day when the books shall be open, our works manifested, and as we have done, so must we be rewarded,

† It is a question, whether the sins of God's people shall be manifested at that day? Some say they shall be manifested, not for their ignominy or confusion, but only that the goodness and grace of God may be made the more illustrious; and for this they urge, Matth. xii. 36. 2 Cor. v. 10. Rev. xx. 12. Others say, they shall not be manifested; (1.) Because Christ in his sentence only enumerates the good works they had done, but takes no notice of their sins. (2.) Because this agrees best with those expressions, That God bloteth out our sins, and that they are thrown into the bottom of the sea. (3.) Because Christ is their bridegroom, friend, advocate, and how ill would it become one of such relations to accuse or lay open their sins? Which of these opinions is true is hard to say, Heb. vi. 16.

for then he shall reward every man according to his works.

The books are opened, and now are the matters to be examined: there is first, a view; and then a trial.

2. The law book whereby we are tried, contains three leaves, *Nature, the law, and the gospel*: the Gentiles must be tried by the first, the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles by the second, and the faithful Jews and Gentiles by the last. Those that confess no God by nature, must be judged by the law of nature: those that confess a God, no Christ, must be judged by the law of God without the merits of Christ; those that confess God the Father, and believe in God the Son, shall be judged by the gospel, which reconcileth us to God the Father by the merits of Christ. Atheists, by the law of nature; infidels, by the law of God, Christians by the gospel of our Saviour Christ. To the statutes of the former, who can answer? Our hope is in the latter, we appeal to the gospel, and by the gospel we shall have our trial; *They that have sinned without the law, shall perish without the law: and they that have sinned under the law, shall be judged by the law. But God shall judge the secrets of all hearts (of all our hearts) by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel, Rom. ii. 12, 16.*

Use. Let this then forewarn us what we have to do: 'It is the gospel will either thoroughly justify thee, or extremely condemn thee.' *The Spirit shall convince the world of sin, saith Christ; and why so? but because they believe not on me, John xvi. 9.* There is no sin, but infidelity; no righteousness, but faith: not that a dulcety, intemperance, malice are no sins; but if unfaithfulness remain not, all these sins are pardoned, and so they are as if they were no sins indeed. How quick a riddance true repenting faith makes with our sins? They are too heavy for our shoulders, and we cannot bear them; faith only turns them over unto Christ, and we

are disburthened of them; whereas there would go with us to judgment an huge kennel of lusts, an army of vain words, a legion of evil deeds; faith instantly discharge them all, and kneeling down to Jesus Christ, beseecheth him to answer for them all, howsoever committed. O then make we much of faith! but not of such a faith neither as goes alone without works: it is nothing at this judgment to say, *I have believed, and not well lived*; the gospel requires both faith to believe, and obedience to work; not only to *repent and believe the gospel*, Mark i. 15. but to *obey from the heart that form of doctrine*, Rom. vi. 17. True indeed, thou mayest be saved for thy faith, not for thy works; but for such a faith as is without works thou shalt never be saved; we say therefore works are disjoined from the act of justifying, not from the person justified; heaven is given to us for Christ's merits, but we must shew him the fair copy of our lives. O then, let this move us to abound in knowledge, and faith, and repentance, and love, and zeal, and clothing, and feeding, and lodging the poor members of Christ Jesus, and howsoever all these can merit nothing at God's hands, yet will he crown his own gifts, and reward them in his mercy. Say then, *Doest thou relieve a poor member of Christ Jesus? Doest thou give a cup of cold water to a prophet in the name of a prophet?* Matth. x. 42. Christ doth promise thee of his truth, he will not let thee lose thy reward: certainly he will not, so thy works be done in faith: why, this is the covenant, the glad tidings, the gospel, to live, and believe well. O let not that which is a word of comfort to us be a bill of indictment against us! albeit in our justification we may say, *Be it unto us according to our faith*; yet, in our retribution, it is said, as you have it before you in this text read unto you, *Then he shall reward every man (for manifestation of his faith) according to his works.*

A little to recall ourselves; the prisoners are tried, the verdict is brought in, the indictment is found, and the judge now sits on life and death, even ready with sparkling eyes to pronounce his sentence. This we must defer a while, and the next time you shall hear what you have long expected. The Lord grant us an happy issue, that when this day is come, the sentence may be for us, and we may be saved to our endless comfort.

Shall reward.]

WHAT affize is this that affords each circumstance of each prisoner's trial? The time is *then*, the Judge is *he*, the prisoners *men*, the evidence *works*, which no sooner given in, but the sentence follows, which is, *To reward every man according to his works.*

This reward is nothing in effect but a retaliation; if we live well here, God will *then crown his own gifts*; (Austin in his book, of grace) but if we sin, without repentance we may not escape without punishment. There is a God that sits and sees, and anon will reward us.

But to unfold this reward, there lies in it, a doom, and execution. God speaks it in the first, effects it in the second: he gives it in our doom, and we receive it in the execution.

The doom is of two sorts, according to the parties that receive it. One is an absolution, which is the doom of saints; the other is a condemnation, which is the doom of reprobates: there is a reward on the right hand bestowed on the blessed, and an heavy judgment which falls on the left hand upon the heads of the wicked.

To begin with that in our meditation, which our Saviour begins with in action: Imagine what a blessed day this will be to the godly, when standing on the right hand of the judge, they shall hear the heavenly musick of their happy sentence, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the*

world, Matth. xxv. 34.

In which gracious speech, we may observe four gradations. 1. A gentle invitation, *Come.* 2. A sweet benediction, *ye blessed of my Father.* 3. Heaven's possession, *inherit the kingdom.* 4. A glorious ordination to felicity, *prepared for you from the beginning of the world.*

1. You have, *Come.* It is the sweet voice of Christ inviting the saints before, and now giving their welcome to his heavenly Canaan: he hath called often, *Come, all that labour; come, all that travel*, Matth. xi. 28. *The Spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come*, Rev. xxii. 17. Thus he calls all men to his grace, but only the elect to his glory. Now he desires every man to come, but the righteous alone shall have this welcome. O how leaps that soul with joy, that hears this voice of her sweet Saviour! All the musick of angels cannot so ravish the mind, as this voice of our Saviour glads the soul: now are the gates of heaven open, and the Judge, who is master of the feast, bids the guests *come and welcome.*

But who are they? *Ye blessed of my Father.* A word able to make them blessed, when pronounced. Down on your knees rebellious sons; and so long as you live on earth, beg, pray, sue for the blessing of your Father in heaven. They that are God's servants, are no less his sons; therefore every morn, night and noon, ask blessing boldly, and God will bestow it liberally. The first sermon that ever Christ preached was full of blessing, Matthew v. *Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are they that mourn. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are the merciful.* And as he began, so he concludes, *Come, ye blessed, ye blessed of my Father.*

Must they come? For what? *To inherit the kingdom.* Of all tenures inheritance is best, of all inheritances a kingdom is most excellent: but that all shall inherit, and that

that there is no scantling, this is heaven's wonder, and the angels bliss. An heavenly inheritance sure, that is 'continued without succession, divided without diminution, common without envy, for ever happy, and without all misery.' This is the inheritance of the just, the possession whereof makes every faint no less glorious than a king. Kings are they indeed, whose dominions are not limited nor their borders bounded, nor their people numbered, nor the time of their reign prescribed. *Such glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God.*

Is this your inheritance? But upon what right? It is *prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* Had the Lord such care to provide for his children before they were? How may his sons triumph born to such dignity? God will so ascertain their salvation, that he hath prepared it for them from before the foundation of the world. O blessed souls, if you be God's servants! though a while you suffer sorrow and tribulation, yet here is the hope of saints, *It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom,* Luke xii. 32. Heaven is prepared of old, there is the place of God's majesty, and there the saints of God shall receive the crown, the reward of victory.

Use. I cannot express what this joy affords to the one half of it. Come blessed souls bathed in repenting tears: here is a sentence able to revive the dead, much more the afflicted. Are you now sorrowing for your sins? Leave it a while, and meditate with me on this ensuing melody. 'Hear, yonder a quire of angels, a song of Zion, an heavenly consort sounding to the Judge whilest he is pronouncing of thy sentence.' Blessed souls! how pant you dances at the uttering of each syllable? *Come,* saith our Saviour, and if he but say *come,* joy, happiness, glory, felicity, all come on heaps into the indured soul. *Ye blessed,* saith our Saviour, and if he but say *blessed,* the angels, archangels, che-

rubims, seraphims, all joy at the enjoying of this blessed company. *Inherit the kingdom,* saith our Saviour, and if he but say *inherit,* crowns, scepters, garlands, diadems, all these are the inheritance of God's adopted children. *Prepared for you,* saith our Saviour, and if he but say, *prepared,* the love, mercy, election, compassion of our Lord will shine forth to the soul to her everlasting comfort. O ravishing voice! *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my well-beloved, that you tell him I am sick of love.* Cant. v. 8. What else? You that are God's servants are no less his spouse, your soul is the bride, and when the day is come (this day of doom) God give you joy, the joy of heaven for ever and ever.

But I must turn to the left hand, and shew you another crew prepared for another sentence.

And what terrible sentence will that be, which at first hearing will make all ears glow and tingle? *His lips,* saith the prophet, *are full of indignation, and his tongue like a consuming fire,* Isa. xxx. 27. What a fire so hot as that fiery sentence, *Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?* Mat. xxv. 41. Here is every particular full of horror, gradually enhancing their judgment. 1. A grievous refusal, *depart.* 2. The loss of salvation, *from me.* 3. That deserved malediction, *ye cursed.* 4. The horror of pains, *into everlasting fire.* 5. The preordination of their torments, *prepared for the devil and his angels.*

First, They must *depart*: this seems nothing to the wicked now; *depart?* Why, they are contented to be gone, much more delight have they in sin, than in God's service. But as when a gracious prince opening his long locked up treasury, bids in some to receive, but others to depart, this must needs be a disgraceful vexation: so when the glory of heaven, and those invaluable treasures shall be opened, and dealt

dealt about to the faithful, what horror will it be to the reprobates to be cast off with a *depart*? No share accrues to them, no not so much as one glimpse of glory must clear their dejected countenances, but as ill-meriting followers they are thrust from the gates with this watch-word to be gone, *depart*.

But whence? There is the loss, *from me*, and if from me, then from all that is mine, my mercy, my glory, my salvation. Here is an universal spoil of all things, of God in whom is all goodness, of the saints in whom is all solace, of the angels in whom is all happiness, of heaven, wherein all pleasures live ever and ever. 'Whither, O Lord, shall the cursed go that depart from thee? Into what heaven shall they arrive? What master shall they serve?' Is it thought so great a punishment to be banished from our native soil? What then is this to be banished from Almighty God? And whither but into a place of horror? to whom? but to a cursed crew of howling reprobates. *Depart from me*.

Who are they? *Ye cursed*. Christ hath before invited you with blessings, but these refused, now take you the curse to your despite: *The wicked man*, saith the prophet, *as he hath loved cursing, so let it come unto him*, Psalm cix. 17. Hath he loved it? let him take his love: *As he hath clothed himself with cursing, as with a garment, so let it come into his bowels, like water, and like oil into his bones*, Psa. cix. 18. No sooner our Saviour cursed the fig-tree, but leaves and boughs, body and root, all wither away, and never any more fruit grows thereon: and thus shall the wicked have a curse, like the *ax which put to the root of the tree, shall hew it down, and be cast into the fire*. *Go, ye cursed*, Mat. iii. 10.

But whither must they go? *into everlasting fire*: O what a bed is this for delicate and dainty persons? no feathers, but fire, no friends, but furies, no ease, but fet-

ters, no light, but smoak, no chimnes nor clock to pass away the night, but timeless eternity. A fire? intolerable: a fire burning, never dying? O immortal pains! *Which of you, saith the prophet, is able to dwell in the burning fire? who can endure the everlasting flames?* Isaiah xxxiii. 14. It shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoak thereof shall go up evermore: *The pile is fire, and much wood, and the breath of the Lord like a river of brimstone kindles it*, Isa. xxx. 33. What torment, what calamity can be compared with the shadow of this? the wicked must be crowded together like brick in a fiery furnace: there is no servant to fan cold air on their tormented parts, not so much as a crew, where the least puff of wind might enter in to cool them; *it is a fire, an everlasting fire*.

For whom? *prepared for the devil and his angels*; heavy company for distressed souls: the serpent's policy could not escape hell, nor can the craft of our age so deal with this serpent, as thereby to prevent this fire: it was sure prepared for some, as some have prepared themselves for it; burning in lust, in malice, in revenge, until themselves, their lust, malice, revenge, and all burn together in hell. *Tophet is prepared of old*, Isa. xxx. 33. whither that day-star is fallen from heaven, and a black crew of angels guard him round in that lake of hell: there must these howling reprobates keep their residence; the last sentence that never is recalled, is now pronounced: what? *Go*; who? *Ye cursed*; whither? *into everlasting fire*; To what company? *to a crew of devils and their angels*. O take heed that ye live in God's fear! lest that leaving his service he give you this reward, *depart ye cursed*.

Use. And is not this worthy your meditation? Consider, I pray you, what fearful tremblings seize on their souls that have their sentence for eternal flames? 'If a Lord have mercy on thee, Take him away
jay.

jaylor,' will cause such shedding of tears, folding of arms, and wringing of hands, what will this sentence do, *Go ye cursed, &c.* O which way will they turn? or how will they escape the Almighty's wrath? to go backward is impossible, to go forwards intolerable; whose help will they crave? God is their judge, heaven their foe, the saints deride them, angels hate them, all creatures cry for vengeance on them. Good Lord! what a world of misery hath seized on these miserable souls? their executioners are devils, the dungeon hell, the earth stand open, and the cruel furnace ready boiling to receive them: into what a shaking fit of distractions will these terrors drive them? every part shall bear a part in this doleful ditty, 'eyes weep, hands wring, breasts beat, hearts ache, voices cry, horror, dread, terror, confusion are lively equipages of this tragic scene.' Now, O man of earth! what will all thy wealth avail thee? what can all thy pleasures profit thee? one drop of water to cool thy fiery tongue in hell, is more worth than a world of treasures; all the gold and precious stones the world affords, will not buy one bottle of water; all thy golden gods, and silver plates cannot prevail one dram of comfort; but rather as they were thy bane on earth, so they will aggravate thy pain in hell. Who pities not the vilest creature, to see it suffer torments, and no way to release it? Who then will not pity this end of the wicked, when they must suffer, and suffer, yet never feel ease of pain, nor end of torments? A sentence not to be revoked, yet unsufferably to be endured; torment on torment, anguish on anguish, fire upon fire, and though a river, nay a sea of tears drop from their eyes, yet cannot one spark be quenched: *The worm never dies, the fire never goes out*, Mark ix. 44. *Go ye into everlasting fire*, not piled of consuming wood, or the black moulds turning to white ashes, but kindled by the Judge's breath, of pitch

and sulphur: rivers of boiling brimstone run from everlasting springs: in these hot baths was that Dives dived, when those fiery words came flaming from his mouth as spitting fire: *Let Lazarus dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue*, Luke xvi. 24. Alas! what should a drop of water do on a finger, when rivers cannot quench the tip of his tongue? He lies on a bed of never-dying flames, where brimstone is the fuel, devils the kindlers, the breath of an offended God the bellows, and hell the furnace, where body and soul must ever lie and fry in scorching torments. O let the heat of these flames quench the heat of our sin: if once the sentence pass, there is no reprieve to be hoped for; this is the last day of doom, when our sins must be revealed, our reward proportioned, and as we have done, so we must be sentenced: for then *he shall reward every man according to his works*.

Thus you have heard the sentence of the just and wicked: and now is the Judge rising from his glorious seat: the saints that were invited guard him along, and the sentenced prisoners are delivered to the jailors to be bound in burning steel and iron, the reward of execution.

The sentence being past in all prescribed order, the execution must needs follow: but as there is a double sentence, so a double retribution: 1. For the wicked, who immediately after the sentence shall be chased into hell, the execution being speedily and fearfully done upon them, with all horror and haste by the angels. O what a shriek of horror will be heard? what woes and lamentations will be uttered, when devils and reprobates, and all the damned crew of hell shall be driven into hell, whereinto they shall be thrust with violence, never to return again? How desperate is their case, when none will comfort them? The saints deride them, angels mock them, their own friends scoff them, devils hate them, the earth groans under them,

them, and hell will swallow them. Down they go howling, and shrieking, and gnashing their teeth, the effect of a most impatient fury. The world leaves them, the earth forsakes them, hell entertains them, there must they live and die, and yet not live nor die, but dying live, and living die; death in life, life in death, miserable ever. If the drowning of the old world, following up of Korah and his accomplices, burning up of Sodom with brimstone, were attended with such terrors and hideous out-cries, how infinitely transcendent to all possibility of conceit, expression or belief, will the confusions and tremblings of that red-dread-fiery day be? It is not a few, but many; not many only, but all the wicked of the earth, being many millions of men, shall be dragged down, with all the devils of hell to torments without end, or eadè, and past imagination; then to speak it again, that I may the deeper imprint it on your minds and memories: sure there was horrible shrieking, when those five filthy cities first felt fire and brimstone drop down upon their heads: when those rebels saw the ground cleave asunder, and themselves and all theirs go down quick into the pit, Numb. xvi. 33. when all the sons and daughters of Adam found the flood rising, and ready to overflow them all at once. But the most horrid cry that ever was heard, or ever shall be heard in heaven or in earth, in this world, or in the world to come, will be then when all the forlorn, condemned reprobates, upon sentence given, shall be violently, and unresistably haled down to hell; neither shall any tears, or prayers, or promises, or suits, or cries, or yellings, or calling upon rocks and mountains; or wishes never to have been, or now to be made nothing, be then heard, or prevail in their behalf; nay, yet more to increase their torments, there is not one in earth or heaven that will speak one word in their behalf: but, without mercy, without stay,

without any farewell at all they shall be immediately and irrevocably cast down into the bottomless pit of caselcs, endless, and remediless torments. 'Oh! what then will be the gnawings of the never-dying worm? what rage of guilty consciences? what furious despair? what horror of mind? what distractions and fears? what tearing their hair, and gnashing of teeth? In a word, what wailing, weeping, roaring, yelling, filling heaven, and earth, and hell? O miserable caritiffs, caught and wrapt in the snares of Satan! What need we more? This is the Judge's charge, the sheriff's commission, the sinners execution, *Take them away, cast them into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* A darkness indeed, that must ever be debarred from the sight of heaven: no sun-shine ever peeps within those walls, no light, no fire, no candle; alas! nothing is there but clouds and darkness, thick smoak and fiery sulphur; and such is the portion of sinners, the reward of the wicked.

Use. What faith or fear have the wicked, that go dancing and leaping to this fire, as it were to a banquet? or, like Solomon's fool, that runneth, and swiftly runneth to the stocks? Prov. vii. 22. Is this our pleasure, to sin a while, and burn for ever? For one small spark of silly joy, to suffer universal and perpetual pains: Who buys at so dear a rate? *Fear, and the pit, and the snare are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth; and he that fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake; the earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly, the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunken man, and shall be removed like a tent, and the iniquity thereof shall be heavy upon it, so that it shall fall, and rise no more,* 11c.

xxiv. 17, &c. O miserable fear to the wicked ! if the earth fall, how shall the sinner stand ? Nay, ' They shall be gathered together as prisoners in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, never more to be visited, released, or comforted.' Be forewarned then, O beloved, *lest you also come into this place of torment*, Luke xvi. 28. It is a fearful prison, and God give us grace, so to arraign, judge, cast, and condemn ourselves here, that we may escape this execution of the damned hereafter.

I have no will to end with terror : then to sweeten your thoughts with the joy of saints, look upwards, and you may see a blessed company.

After the wicked are cast down into hell, Christ, and the blessed saints ascend into heaven. From the tribunal-seat of judgment Christ shall arise, and with all the glorious company of heaven, march towards the heaven of heavens. O what comely march is this ? what songs of triumph are here sung and warbled ? *The voice of thy watch-men shall be heard, they shall lift up their voice, and shout together, for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion*, Isaiah lii. 8. Here is a victory indeed, the soldiers in arrayed order both marching and triumphing : Christ leads the way, the cherubims attend, the seraphims burn in love, angels, arch-angels, principalities, powers, patriarchs, prophets, priests, evangelists, martyrs, professors, and confessors of God's law and gospel, following attend the Judge and King of glory, singing with melody, as never ear hath heard, shining with majesty, as never eye hath seen, rejoicing without measure, as never heart conceived. O blessed train of soldiers, goodly troop of captains ! each one doth bear a palm of victory in his hand, each one must wear a crown of glory on his head ; the church militant is now triumphant, with a final overthrow have they conquered devils, and now must they enjoy God, life, and heaven ; and thus as

they march along, heaven opens unto them : O infinite joy ! Tell me, O my soul, what an happy hour will that be, when thou shalt enter into the gates of heaven, when the blessed Trinity shall gladly entertain thee, and with a *well done good and faithful servant*, bid thee, *Come and enter into thy Master's joy* ; Matth. xxv. 21. When all the angels and arch-angels shall salute thee, when cherubims and seraphims shall come to meet thee, when all the powers of heaven shall congratulate thy coming, and joy for thy arrival at the port of peace ? Here is the end of the godly, the fruits of his end, the reward itself. What can I say ? But live in God's fear, and the Lord reward you ; nay, he will so, if you live so ; for *Then he shall reward every man according to his works*.

And now this sermon done, you see the court is dissolved : stay but to receive a writ of review, and you shall hear in a word all the news of this assize, from the beginning to the ending.

What a strange assize was this, where every circumstance was to the wicked so terribly fearful ? The term full of horror, the judge full of majesty, the prisoners full of anguish, the trial full of fear, the doom full of grief to the wicked, as of comfort to the elect. *Seeing therefore that all these things are thus, what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy conversation and godliness* ? 2 Pet. iii. 11. A word of judgment could make Jeremiah weep, just Job be afraid, Felix to tremble ; and cannot this usual sound of the hammers a little mollifie our stony hearts ? *How is the gold become dross, and the silver iron* ? If. i. 22. We have run over reason, and tread upon conscience, and sting by counsel, and go by the word, and post to death ; but will you remember, that *for all these things you must come to judgment*, Eccl. xi. 19. Be sure there is a term for your appearance, *Then* ; there is a Judge that will sit

upon us, *He*; there is a band of prisoners, *Every man*; there is a bill of indictment framed, *according to our works*. And last of all, there is a sentence, after which follows the execution, *the reward due to us*,

which then he will give us: only, now bestow on us these graces of thy Spirit, and then, O Lord, *reward us according to our works*. Amen.

' O thou! whose balance does the mountains weigh,
' Whose will the wild tumultuous seas obey,
' Whose breath can turn those watry worlds to flame,
' That flame to tempest, and that tempest tame;
' Earth's meanest son, with trembling prostrate falls,
' And on the plenty of thy goodness calls.
' Ah! give the winds all past offence to sweep,
' To scatter wide, or bury in the deep:
' Thy pow'r, my weakness may I ever see,
' And wholly dedicate my soul to thee.
' Reign o'er my will; my passions ebb and flow
' At thy command, nor human motive know!
' If anger boil, let anger be my praise,
' And sin the graceful indignation raise.
' My love be warm to succour the distressed,
' And lift the burden from the soul oppress'd.
' Oh may my understanding ever read
' This glorious volume, which thy wisdom made!
' Who decks the maiden spring with flowry pride?
' Who calls forth summer, like a sparkling bride?
' Who joys the mother autumn's bed to crown?
' And bids old winter lay her honours down?
' Not the great Ottoman, or greater Czar,
' Not Europe's arbiter of peace and war.
' May sea and land, and earth and heav'n be join'd,
' To bring th' eternal Author to my mind!
' When oceans roar, or awful thunders roll,
' May thoughts of thy dread vengeance shake my soul;
' When earth's in bloom, or planets proudly shine,
' Adore, my heart, the Majesty Divine.
' Thro' every scene of life, or peace, or war,
' Plenty, or want, thy glory be my care!
' Shine we in arms? or sing beneath our vine?
' Thine is the vintage, and the conquest thine:
' Thy pleasure points the shaft, and bends the bow;
' The cluster blatts, or bids it richly flow:
' 'Tis thou that lead'st our powerful armies forth,
' And giv'st Great George thy sceptre o'er the north.

' Grant I may ever at the morning-ray
' Open with pray'r the consecrated day;
' Tune thy great praise, and bid my soul arise,
' And with the mounting sun ascend the skies:
' As that advances, let my zeal improve,
' And glow with ardour of consummate love;
' Nor cease at eve, but with the setting sun
' My endless worship shall be still begun.
' And oh! permit the gloom of solemn night
' To sacred thought may forcibly invite.
' When this world's shut, and awful planets rise,
' Call on our minds, and raise them to the skies;
' Compose our souls with a less dazzling light,
' And shew all nature in a milder light;
' How every boisterous thought in calms subsides!
' How the smooth'd spirit into goodness glides!
' O how divine! to tread the milky way,
' To the bright palace of the Lord of day;
' His court admire, or for his favour sue,
' Or leagues of friendship with his saints renew;
' Pleas'd to look down, and see the world asleep,
' While I long vigils to its Founder keep!
' Canst thou not shake the centre? oh controul,
' Subdue by force the rebel in my soul:
' Thou, who canst still the raging of the flood,
' Refrain the various tumults of my blood;
' Teach me with equal firmness to sustain
' Alluring pleasure, and assualting pain.
' O may I pant for thee in each desire!
' And with strong faith foment the holy fire!
' Stretch out my soul in hope, and grasp the prize,
' Which in eternity's deep bosom lies!
' At the great day of recompence behold,
' Devoid of fear, the fatal book unfold!
' Then wasted upward to the blissful seat,
' From age to age my grateful song repeat;
' My light, my life, my God, my Saviour see,
' And rival angels in the praise of thee.'

H E L L'S H O R R O R,

Matth. xiii. 30 *Bind them in bundles to burn them.*

THIS text is the harvest of tares, and here is 1. The *sowing*, ver. 25. 2. The *coming up*, v. 26. 3. The *overseers of it*,

v. 27. 4. Their intent to *weed it*, v. 28. 5. The sufferance of its growth *till the harvest*, v. 29. 6. The *harvest itself*, v. 30. Or, yet to give you the parable in a more ample wise, here is a *man sows good seed in his field, and the enemy whilst his servants sleep, sows tares amongst the wheat*: the seeding done, and the fertile soil made fruitful by heaven's showers, the blade of the corn springs up, and the tares appear in their kind amongst them. Those heavenly angels, who are God's stewards of this field, pitching their watchful eyes about, first see, then run to their master with this message, *Master, sowedst thou not good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?* God, whose all-knowing wisdom can resolve all doubts, tells them expressly, *An enemy hath done this*: an enemy sure; yea, as Peter calls him, *a devouring enemy*, 1 Pet. v. 8. Such is the fruit issuing from so bad an author. Yet see the sedulous care of God's holy servants, they will not spare to root up what envy sows, and with a willing obedience expect only his commands, *Wilt thou that we go and gather them up?* Nay, see the Almighty disparkling a while his beams of mercy; all must stay till the harvest, and then goes forth his royal command to the reapers: *Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.*

But methinks, I hear you say to me as the disciples to our Saviour, *Declare unto us this parable*, v. 36. for the doing of which I shall place before you a field, *the world*; the reapers, *angels*; the household-cr, *God*; good men, *as corn*; the wicked, *as tares*; the harvest that must gather all, *is the end of the world*, and then are the reapers enjoyned this heavy task, *Separate the bad from the good, and cast them into hell-fire to burn them.*

See here the miserable condition of impenitent souls, each circumstance aggravates their torment; and that ye may in this text view a series of the causes, here

is first the efficient, *Bind*; the material, *them*; the formal, *in bundles*; the final, *to burn them*. Every word like so many links, makes up this fiery chain of torment. *Bind*; heavy doom to be fettered in hell-fire! *them*; miserable souls to be captivated in those bands! *in bundles*; cruel anguish to be crowded in throng heaps! *to burn them*; intolerable heats to be scorched, blistered, burned! and yet see here at once, this heavy, miserable, cruel, intolerable doom fall on the wicked: the command is out, what? *Bind*; whom? *them*; how? *in bundles*; for what? *to burn them*. Not a word, but it speaks horror to the damned, either binding or bundling, or burning; *Bind them in bundles to burn them.*

The work you see, is ordered; now we put in our sickle: only God prosper our labour, till we have done the harvest. *Them.*]

WE will begin first with the subject, that you may know of whom it is spoken, *Bind them*: Them? Whom? If you will view the precedent words, the text tells you they are *tares*; *gather ye first the tares, and bind them*. In God's field there is corn and cockle, and as for the one there is provided a barn, so for the other there is nothing better than binding and burning.

The Greek word calls them *Nixania*, *tares*; the Hebrews call them *Hadul*, *thistles or thorns*; and both are apt expressions of the matter in hand: what are tares for? but to be gathered, bound, and burned, saith our Saviour: and what are thorns for? but to be *rejected, cursed, and burned*, saith the apostle, Heb. vi. 8. Such is the penalty of this weed of the earth (for they are neither better) that as men deal with thorns, who first cut them up with bills, then lay them up to wither; and, lastly, burn them in the furnace; so God deals with tares, he weeds them, binds them, burns them; not a tare escapes the fire, but all come to combustion.

But,

But, only to follow the original, they are called, *Ta xizania, tares*; and that of a double derivation; the first is, *Xizanon quasi sitanion, para to ton siton sinein*, because they hurt the corn wherewith they are joined; the second is, *Xizanon quasi to sito izainon*, because they initiate, associate, and so unite themselves with the corn, as if they were the very same. To begin with the last.

We all come together to the church, and amongst us are tares and wheat, good and bad; in all companies there will be evil intruders, Satan among the angels, Saul among the prophets, Judas among the apostles, Demas among the professors, yet who can discern the tares, but God alone who knows our hearts? Hypocrites can work dissimulation in a web, and this so cunningly is platted, that no difference is discerned: such are hot meteors in the air, which shoot and shew like stars, but are indeed nothing less: your eyes may be fixed on heaven, your ears all listening to this sermon, yet, as I condemn none, so I never knew but darnel hath been in God's field. *The church* Christ calls *a net, an house, a floor, a field*; a *net* that takes fish good and bad; an *house* that harbours vessels of wrath and honour; a *floor* whereon is poured wheat and chaff; a *field*, wherein is sowed corn and cockle: thus good and bad seed are a while as that *treasure hid in the field*, Matth. xiii. 44. Which cannot be discovered: But is there not a God that *searcheth both the heart and the reins*? *Be not deceived*, Gal. vi. 7. Ye deceivers of the world, *God is not mocked*; it is not a false heart with a fair look, it is not a mere shew of religion God will accept: silly tares, hide close your sins in the darkest furrows, or mount up your heads amongst the most flourishing wheat, yet know there is a *fan that will purge the floor*, Matth. xiii. 12. You would grow, and you shall grow till the harvest, God suffers that seed till the fruit grows ripe,

but then, *Gather the tares and bind them* (wicked dissemblers) *bind them in bundles to burn them*.

2dly, As the tares are hypocritical, so are they *hurtful*; they seem at unity, but are at enmity with the wheat about them: and these tares are either *hereticks*, as most Fathers understood them, or any *sinner* whatsoever, that is a *child of the wicked one*, as our Saviour did expound them.

1. They are *hereticks*; wicked tares indeed: and that you may know who are these: *airesis* is a choice or election, at first a good word in philosophy, taken for a right form of learning; but now in divinity it is a word of disgrace, and intends a stubborn deviation from the received truth. This infection (like the tares) first begins *whiles men sleep*, the pastors negligence gives way unto it, and because of its little seed, or small beginning, it is never heeded, or regarded, till the whole house be infected: thus popery crept up in the dark, like a thief putting out the lights, that he might rob the house more securely; and as it began with a little, so it went on by degrees, till an universal apostacy was (as it were) over the face of the world. Austin saith of Arius his heresie, 'It was at first but a little spark,' but it spread so at last, that 'the flame of it singed the whole world:' so the pope rose by degrees, first above bishops, then above patriarchs, then above councils, then above kings, then above scriptures, even so the apostle speaks of antichrist, *He hath exalted himself above all that is called God*, 2 Thes. ii. 4. Heresie creeps in at a little hole, like a plague that comes in at the windows; and then propagates itself beyond all measure: O that these tares were weeded, that Ishmael were cast out of doors, so that Sarah and her son Isaac might live in quiet and peace; or if they must grow until the harvest, what remains; but, *I beseech you, brethren, mark them who cause divisions and offences contra-*

ry. to the doctrine that ye have learned; and avoid them, Rom. xvi. 17.

But as *hereticks*, so all *reprobates* whatsoever are the *tares* here spoken of, they are offenders on all hands, both in doctrine and conversation: and thus our Saviour interprets, *The good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one,* Ver 38.

And most fitly are the *reprobates* called *tares*, in respect of their intrusion here; And separation hereafter.

1. As the *tares* grow amongst corn, so the wicked all their life associate themselves with the godly; the church (saith Austin) is full both of wheat and chaff: 'I avoid the chaff lest I become chaff, but I keep the floor, lest I become nothing.' What else? In this life the best company is not free from the intrusion of *tares*, therefore cries David, *Wo is me that I am constrained to dwell with Melech, and to have my habitation among the tents of Kedar,* Pl. cxx.

4. No greater discomfort, than to cohabit with the wicked: are they not *pricks in our eyes, and thorns in our sides?* Num. xxxiii. 55. Yea, they are thorns indeed, saith the Lord to Ezekiel, *Lo, the thorns and briars are with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions,* Ezek. ii. 6. Sure we had no need of security, that are thus compact with enemies, the briars may scratch us, the thorns prick us, the scorpions sting us, we can hardly so escape, but some of these will hurt us, a good man with ill company, is like a living man bound to a dead corpse, and (may I appeal to yourselves) is the living likely to revive the dead? or the dead more likely to suffocate the living? O ye children of the kingdom, bless you while you live; lo, the *tares* are among you like wolves amongst lambs; be wise then in your carriage, and save yourselves, your own souls.

2. As the *tares*, so *reprobates* shall one day be separated from the wheat, the good: *In the time of harvest* (saith our Saviour)

I will say to the reapers, gather ye first the tares: here is that woful separation between true Christians, and the profane wretches of this world. It is begun at death, and then must they part till the day of doom; but when that comes, there must be a final separation. He shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. Mat. xxv. 32. Here is a separation indeed, not for a day, or a year, but for timeless eternity. Lo a vast and immeasurable gulf betwixt heaven and hell, so as that Abraham tells the rich man, *They that would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us. that would come from thence,* Luke xvi. 26. 'This is that endless divorce of the *wheat and tares*, this is that unpasable distance 'twixt heaven and hell, thro' all eternity. O miserable *tares*! what a loss hath befallen you? Now you live with the wheat, and you overtop them, trouble them, vex them with your society; but hereafter you must shake hands for ever; for *the wheat must be gathered into God's barn*, his kingdom, whilst the miserable *tares* are gathered by angels, and bound up in bundles for the burning.

Lo here a world of *tares*, and that I may give you them in a map, what are they but hypocrites, hereticks, *reprobates*; all children whatsoever, that have Satan to their father, for of them is this spoken.

The proverb is, *ill weeds grow apace*, nay they are so common, that it is hard to set the foot besides them. Look into your hearts, you sons and daughters of Adam, are not your furrows full of cockle and darnel? The earth (saith the philosopher) is now an own mother to weeds, but a stepmother to good herbs; man of his own inclination is apt to produce weeds and *tares*, but ere he can bring forth herbs and graces, God must take pains with him indeed. No husbandman so labours his grounds,

grounds, as God doth our hearts; happy earth that yields him an expected harvest; and that our parts may be herein, what shall we say unto thee, O thou Preserver of men? *Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out, yea let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits,* Cant. iv. 16.

And yet again, that I may weed the tares amongst us, consider with yourselves, you that go on in your sins, will you run upon ruin, and can we say nothing to keep you out of the fire? O sweet Saviour! what didst thou endure for us, that we might escape this durance? and yet we are secure, and care not, vilifying that blood that was of more value than a world. Think of it, you that are in the blade, ere the harvest come: no man desires to purchase land, that will bring forth nothing but weeds; and shall God buy so base a ground, that will be no better, at so inestimable a price, as the incorruptible blood of his only Son? O ye weeds of the earth, turn yourselves, or be ye turned into wheat; call, and sue, and cry for the mercy of God in Christ our Saviour: yea again and again, beg of your Jesus, that he may root up your weeds, and plant in you his graces, that like good corn you may fructify here, and when the harvest comes, you may be gathered into his barn, and remain in his kingdom.

Thus far you see the prisoners, the next point is the chains wherewith these prisoners are bound; but of that hereafter. Remember in the mean time the tares, and as good seed bring ye forth good fruit, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred fold, that when the reaping comes, we may be ready for the barn, and then, Lord Jesus, come when thou wilt, even, Lord Jesus, come quickly. *Amen.*

Bind.]

THE malefactor, whose hands are pinnioned, legs chained, feet corded, may lie restless in his thoughts, caseless in

all parts; the wicked are cast into a prison under lock and bolts, where the devil is jaylor, hell the prison, and the bolts such other as burning steel and iron. See here a jaylor, goal, and manacles, all which are provided for the damned: and because of their relation each to other, give me leave to produce them in their order.

The tares must be bound, and for the executing of this doom, the Judge here delivers them over to the jaylor: jaylor? whom? Good and bad angels; for both these are the executioners of God's direful sentence.

1. The good angels, so saith our Saviour, *The reapers are the angels,* v. 39. *And he will say unto the reapers,* ver. 30. *Gather ye first the tares, and bind them up in bundles.* They which are all mercy to the good, are here the executioners of God's judgments on the wicked. Thus was Sodom destroyed by an angel, Gen. xix. The army of Sennacherib was overthrown by an angel, 2 Kings xix. Seventy thousand men of Israel were struck with pestilence by an angel, 2 Sam. xxiv. Blasphemous Herod was smitten by an angel, Acts xii. 23. Yea the tares themselves must be gathered by angels, who will bind them in heaps like faggots, and cast them into hell-fire to burn them.

How fearful is it to fall into the hands of God's host? No power can resist, no policy prevail, all the stratagems of war are but folly to God's wisdom; then into what motes and atoms shall the proudest dust of sinful man be torn? What, dares he struggle against heaven? See God and angels are become his enemies, and whose help should he have, when heaven itself makes war? Mountains and rocks are no defence against God: shields and spears cannot keep the tares: no, God hath his warriors that will pluck, and tear, and torture reprobates: the angels are his reapers, that must *gather the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.*

But *2dly*, good and bad angels both join in this office to *bind the tares*: if there be any difference, it is in this, the good angels begin, and the bad continue to make the bintling everlasting. Here is a jaylor indeed, and if you would see him in his form, you may take the description from that great Leviathan, *By his neefings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eye-lids of the morning, out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out; out of his nostrils goeth smoak as out of a seething pot or cauldron; his breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth,* Job xli. 18, 19, 20, 21. What an ugly devil is this, whom God only mystically describes with such terrible shapes? His neefing flames, his eyes stare, his mouth shoots fire, his nostrils smoak, his very breath sets all a burning round about him. Such a Jaylor hath God prepared for hell-prisoners. As God hath fettered him, so he lays fetters on them, revenging his own malice on his fellow-sufferers. The devil first tempts and then he fetters *tares*: while men live on earth, he lays snares for souls: thus he prepared flatterers for Rehoboam, liars for Aliab, concubines for Solomon, forcerers for Pharaoh, witches for Saul, wine for Benhadad, gold for Achan, a ship for Jonas, and a rope for Haman: but he that makes gins, and nets, and snares on earth, makes bolts, and hammers, and whips in hell: thus he hath prepared darkness for Herod, a fire for Dives, plagues for Pilate, brimstone for Judas, snares for Demas, and fiery fetters for all reprobate *tares*: what need poor souls any farther fetters, whom the devil once shuts within his den, dare you live in such a nest among speckled poisons. There? serpents girdle the loins, and cockatrices kill with their eyes, and dragons spit fire from their mouths, and wolves all devour mens souls, and lions roar for the prey, and vipers sting and strike with their tails: O fearful

jaylors! what strange kind of furies live in hell!

You see the jaylor, now turn your eyes from so bad a spectacle, and let us view the den where this monster lies.

The Hebrews call it Sheol, a great ditch or dungeon: the Greeks Zophos, even darkness itself; the Latins Infernus, a place under ground: all agree it is a dungeon under earth, containing these two properties; Deepness, and Darkness.

1. It is deep: as heaven is high, so (most probable it is) that hell is deep. John calls it, *a bottomless pit*, Rev. ix. 1. As if reprobates were always falling, yet never could find bottom where to rest; or howsoever this be a metaphor, yet without question, heaven and hell are as opposite as may be: and whether the center be the 'place of torment, or (as Kecker thinks) all the gulfs of the sea, and hollows of the earth, as being more capable to contain the damned,' I leave it to the schools; as for the pulpit, I think this prayer more fit, 'Lord, shew us what it is, but never where.'

2. The deepness is yoaked with darkness; such a dungeon fits the tares, they committed works of darkness, and *are cast into utter darkness*; a darkness that may be felt, thick clouds that may be handled, damps and mists that strike at their hearts with sensible griefs. This is that bottomless pit in the heart of the earth; there shines no sun, no moon, no stars; there is no light of candle, torch or taper; shine the sun never so fair, it is still night there; the dungeon is dark, and this makes the place more sad, more uncomfortable. Let Poets feign of Tantalus' tortures, Prometheus' vultures, Ixion's wheel, and Charon's rowing, these come far short to express the pains of those that rage in hell; there plagues have no ease, cries have no help, time has no end, place no redemption; it is the dark prison where the tares are chained, and the wicked bound in fetters of fire and darkness. Could men have a

light

fight of hell while they live on earth, I doubt not their hearts would tremble in their bosoms; yet view it in a way of meditation, and see what you find? 'Are there not wonderful engines, sharp and sore instruments of revenge; fiery brimstone, pitchy sulphur, red hot chains, flaming whips, scorching darknes?' Will you any more? 'The worm is immortal, cold intolerable, stench endurable, fire unquenchable, darknes palpable: this is that prison of the damned, then whose eyes dare behold such amazing objects? But if not see, yet listen with your ears; is there any charm in hell to conjure away devils, or to ravish souls? What music affords the place, but roaring, and crying, and howling? Cursing, their hymns; wailing, their tunes; blasphemies, their ditties; lachrymæ, their notes; lamentations, their songs; shrieking, their strains; these are their evening and morning songs; Moab shall cry against Moab, one against another, all against God. O fearful prison! what torments have the tares that ly here fettered? Their feet are chained in the stocks, and the iron pierceth their souls; it is a dungeon where the light never shined, but the walls are as black as pitch, the vaults are smoked as chimneys, the roof as dark as hell, nay, the dungeon is hell, where the tares ly bound and fettered.' Think of this goal, ye offenders of God's law and majesty; the angels see our doings, the Judge now expects our returning, the tares grow till the harvest, and, if they still offend, death apprehends them, God will judge them, the jaylor take them, hell imprison them, there are they bound. You hear the evidence brought in, and the sentence gone out, *Take them, bind them, bind them in bundles, and burn them.*

And if this be the jaylor's goal, what then be the bonds or chains?

The angels who kept not their first estate (saith Jude) *God hath reserved in everlasting chains,* Jude 6. And, *God spar-*

ed not the angels that sinned, saith Peter, *but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darknes,* 2 Pet. ii. 4. Thus Christ doomed him that had not on his wedding-garment, *Bind him hand and foot,* Matth. xiii. 22. and what may these chains and bonds insinuate, but that the tares are tied to their torments? Might they but remove from place to place, this would afford some ease; might they but stir a foot, or turn about, or have any little motion to refresh their tormented parts, this would yield some comfort: but here is an universal binding, *hand and foot,* body and soul, all must be bound with everlasting chains. The reprobates are packt and crowded together, like bricks in a fiery furnace, having not so much as a chink where any wind may enter in to cool them. 'O ye that live in the sinful wealth of this world, consider but this one punishment of hell, and be afraid! if a man, enjoying quiet of mind, and health of body, shall ly chained on a soft down-bed for a month, or a year, how would he abide it? But this is nothing: if a man should ly sick of a fever, swoln in a dropsie, pained with the gout, and though it were for the recovery of his health, without any turning, tossing, stirring, this were a great torture sure, and a question it were, whether the disease or the physick were more intolerable? Witness, poor patients, who change their sides, wish other beds, seek other rooms, and all these shifts but to mitigate their pains: how wretched then are the tares bound in chains? They are not in health, nor bound for a month, nor sick of a fever, nor ly for a year, their pain is grievous, their bonds heavy, their torments durable, their restless rest eternal. The worm shall gnaw their spirit, the fire torture their flesh; were there nothing, yet small torrows grow great with continuance; the fire shall torture, yet never cease; worms gnaw the heart, yet never gnaw in funder the strings; wretched souls

are bound indeed, whose bonds are never out of date: a seven years apprenticeship would ere long expire, but what are seven years to a world of ages? The reprobates must serve years, ages, even to a million of millions, and yet are never free: O bondage not to be uttered, yet must be endured! is it not a bedlam-fury, that must have such bonds? a little to express their torments by our sufferings, which yet are nothing, nothing in comparison: what means these chains, and whips, and links, and scourges? Iron chains, whips of steel, fiery links, knotty scourges? Furies shake their bolts to affrighten souls, the irons strike through their ears, and the hooked engines tear their bowels, as if the torment of tares were the delight of devils.' Here is a prison indeed, where is nothing heard but yells, and groans, and sudden cries; the fire flakes not, the worm dies not, the chains loose not, the links wear not, revenge tires not, but for ever are the torments fresh, and the fetters on fire, as they came first from the forge.

What a strange kind of torture falls upon the wicked? they are bound to fiery pillars, and devils lash at them with their fiery whips: is there any part of man escapes free in such a fray? 'The flesh shall fry, the blood boil, the veins be scorched, the sinews racked, serpents shall eat the body, furies tear the soul;' this is that woful plight of tares, which lie bound in hell. The sick man at sea may go from his ship to his boat, and from his boat to his ship again; the sick man in his bed may tumble from his right side to his left, and from his left to his right again; only the tares are tied hand and foot, bound limb and joint; their feet walk not, their fingers move not, their eyes must no more wander as before; lo, all is bound. O these manacles that rot the flesh, and pierce the inward parts! O unwatchable torments, yet most fit for tares! sin made them furious, hell must tame their phrensie; the

Judge thus commands, and the executioners must dispatch; fetter them, fire them, *Bind them in bundles to burn them.*

I have led you through the dungeon, let this sight serve for a terror that you never come nearer: to that purpose, for exhortation, consider.

Alas! all hangs on life, there's but a twine-thread betwixt the soul of a sinner, and the scorching flames; who then would so live, as to run his soul into hazard? The Judge threatens us, devils hate us, the bonds expect us, it is only our consciences must clear us, or condemn us. Search then thy ways, and stir up thy remembrance to her *items*: hast thou dishonoured God, blasphemed his name, decayed his image, subduing thy soul to sin, that was created for heaven? Repent these courses, ask God forgiveness, and he will turn away thy punishments. I know your sins are grievous, and my soul grieves at the knowledge; many evils have possessed too many, drunkenness, and oaths, and malice, and revenge, are not these guests entertained into all houses? Banish them your hearts, that the king of glory may come in: *As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, Ezek. xxxiii. 11.* Would God bestow mercy? and should we refuse his bounty? as you love heaven, your souls, yourselves, leave your sins.

Use 2. And then, here is a word of consolation, the penitent needs not fear hell, God's servant is freed from bonds: yea, *if we love him who hath first loved us, Eph. v. 2.* all the chains and pains of hell can neither hold, nor hurt us.

Use 3. O then ye sons of Adam (suffer a reproof) what do ye, that ye do not repent you of your sins? is it not a madness above admiration, that men, who are reasonable creatures, having eyes in their heads, hearts in their bodies, understanding like the angels, and consciences capable of un-

unpardonable horrow, never will be warn'd until the fire of that infernal lake shall kindle and flame about their ears? Let the angels blush, heaven and earth be amazed, and let the creatures stand astonish'd at it. I am sure a time will come, when the tares shall feel, what now they may justly fear; you hear enough, such weeds must be bound, thus strait is the Lord's command; *Bind them in bundles to burn them.*

But all is not done, chains have their links, and we must bring all together. Sinners are coupled in hell as tares in bundles; but of these when we next meet; in the mean while let this we have heard, bind us all to our duties, that we hear attentively, remember carefully, practise conscientiously, that so God may reward accordingly, and at last crown us with his glory. The tares must be bound up in bundles; but, Lord, make us free in heaven, to sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in thy blessed kingdom.

In bundles.]

THE command is out: what? *bind*; whom? *them*; how? *in bundles*. The tares must on heaps, which gives us a double observation; General, and Special.

In the general it intimates these two points; *the gathering of the weed*, and *its severing from the wheat*; both are bound *in bundles*, but the wheat by itself, and the tares by themselves; as at that doom, when all the world must be gathered, and severed, some stand at the right hand, others at the left: so at this execution, some are for the fire, and others for the barn; they are bundled together, yet according to the difference of the several parties, each from the other.

1. Observe The tares must together: *Who is me*, (saith David) *that I am constrain'd to dwell with Mesch*, Psalm cxx. 4. And if David think it woful to converse with his living enemies, then what punishment have the wicked, whom the devil and damned, the black angels and everlasting

horror must accompany for ever? The tares must be gathered, and bundled, and the more bundles, the more and more miseries: company yields no comfort in hell-fire; nay, what greater discomfort than to see thy friends in flames, thy fellows in torments, the fiends with flaming whips, revenging each others malice on thyself and enemy? It was the rich man's last petition, when he had so many repulses for his own ease, to make one suit for his living brethren; he knew their company would increase his torment; to prevent which he cries out, *I pray thee, father Abraham, that thou wouldst send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment*, Luke xvi. 27, 28. Why, it may be God will hear him for them, especially making such a reasonable request as this was, that Lazarus might only warn his brethren of future judgment; no, but to teach you, if you sell your souls to sin, to leave a rich posterity on earth, you shall not only yourselves, without all remorse and pity, be damned in hell; but your posterity shall be a torment to you whilst they live, and a greater torment, if they come to you when they are dead. To converse with devils is fearful, but altogether to accompany each other, is a plague fit for tares: in this life they flourish'd amongst the wheat, *Let them grow both together, corn and tares until the harvest*. But the harvest come. God will now separate them both asunder, and as in heaven there are none but saints, so in hell there are none but reprobates: to increase this torment, as they grow together, so all their conference is to curse each other: Moab shall cry against Moab, father against son, son against father; what comfort in this company? The devil that was author of such mischiefs, appears in most guilty forms, his angels, the black guard of hell, torment poor souls in flames: there live swearers
with

with their flaming tongues, usurers with talent hands, drunkards with scorched throats, all these tares like fiery faggots burning together in hell-flames; this is the first punishment, all the tares must meet, they are bundled together.

Observ. 2. As the tares must together, so they must together by themselves; thus are they bundled, and severed; bundled all together, but from the wheat all asunder.

Hell is called damnation, because it brings heaven's loss; and this by consent of most divines, is the most horrible part of hell: so Basil, 'To be alienated or separated from the presence of God, his saints and angels, is far more grievous than the pain of hell.' So Chrylostom, 'The pain of hell is intolerable indeed; yet a thousand hells are nothing to the loss of that most glorious kingdom.' So Bernard, 'It is a pain far surpassing all the tortures in hell, not to see God, and those joys immortal, which are prepared for his children.' O then what hells are in hell, when besides the pains of sense, there is a pain of loss, the loss of God, loss of saints, loss of angels, loss of heaven, loss of that beatifical vision of the most sovereign good, our ever-blessed Maker? Consider with yourselves, if at the parting of the soul and body there be such pangs and gripes, and stings, and sorrows: what grief then will it be, to be severed for ever from the highest and supremest good? Suppose your bodies, as some martyrs have been used, should be torn in sunder, and that wild horses, driven contrary ways, should rack and pull your arms and legs, and heart and bowels, one piece from another, what an horrible kind of death would this be, think you? and yet a thousand rentings of this member from that, or of the soul from the body, are infinitely less than this one separation of the soul from God. When Jacob got the blessing from his brother Esau, it is said in the text, that *he roared with a great cry and*

bitter, saying to his father, *Hast thou not reserved one blessing for me also?* Genesis xxvii. 31. Imagine then, when the wheat must have the blessing, how will the tares (figured in Esau) roar and cry, and yell and howl again? and yet notwithstanding this unspeakable rage, all the tears of hell shall never be sufficient to bewail the loss of heaven. Hence breeds that worm that is always gnawing at the conscience; *A worm*, saith our Saviour, *that dies not*, Mark ix. 44. It shall lie day and night, biting and gnawing, and feeding upon the bowels of the damned persons. O the stings of this worm! no sooner shall the damned consider the cause of their misery, to wit, the mispending of their time, the greatness of their sin, the many opportunities lost, when they might have gotten heaven for a tear, or a sigh, or groan from a penitent heart; but this worm, or remorse, shall at every consideration give them a deadly bite, and then shall they roar it out; 'Miserable wretch, what have I done? I had a time to have wrought out the salvation of my soul, many a powerful searching sermon have I heard, any one passage whereof (had I not wickedly and wilfully forsook mine own mercy) might have been unto me the beginning of the new birth; but those golden days are gone, and for want of a little sorrow, a little repentance, a little faith, now am I burning in hell-fire: O precious time! O days, months, years, how are ye vanished, that you will never come again? And have I thus miserably undone myself? Come furies, tear me into as many pieces as there are moles in the sun, rip up my breast, dig into my bowels, pull out my heart, leave me not an hair on my head, but let all burn in these flames, till I moulder into nothing.' O madness of men, that never think on this all the days of your visitation! and then when the bottomless pit hath shut herself upon you, thus will this worm gnaw your heart with unconceivable grief.

Be amazed, O ye heavens! tremble thou earth! let all creatures stand astonished, whilst the tares are thus sentenced, *Bundle them, and burn them.*

Thus far of the word in general: but if we look on it with a more narrow eye, it gives to our hands this special observation.

Obsev. The tares must have chains proportionable to their sins: *Bind them in bundles*, saith my text, not in one, but in many faggots, an adulterer with an adulteress, a drunkard with a drunkard, a traitor with a traitor. As there be several sins, so several bundles, all are punished in the same fire, but all are not punished in the same degree; some have heavier chains, and some have lighter, but all in just weight and measure. The proud shall be trod under foot, the glutton suffer inestimable hunger, the drunkard feel a burning thirst, the covetous pine in wants, the adulterer ly with serpents, dragons, scorpions. Give me leave to bind these in bundles, and so leave them for the fire; they are first bundled, then burned.

1. Where is lady Pride and her followers? see them piled for the furnace: you that jet with your cauls and bracelets, tyres and tablets, rings and jewels, and changeable suits, Isa. iii. Think but what a change will come, when all you (like birds of a feather) must together, to be bound in bundles. What then will your pride avail, or your riches profit, or your gold do good, or your treasures help, when you must be constrained to *vomit up again your riches, the increase of your house departing away, and a fire not blown utterly consuming you and them*, Job xxvi. 26. The rich man in the gospel could for a time go richly, fare sumptuously, and that not only on sabbaths or holy-days, but, as the text, every day; yet, no sooner had death seized on his body, but he was fain to alter both his suit and diet; hear him how he begs for water, that had plenty of wines; and see him,

that was clothed in purple, now apparelled in another suit, yet of the same colour too, even in purple flames: O that his delicate morsels must want a drop of water, and that his fine apparel must cost him so dear, as the high price of his soul! why, rich man, is it come to this? The time was, that purple and fine linen was thy usual apparel, that banquets of sumptuous dishes were thy ordinary fare; but now, not the poorest beggar, even Lazarus himself, that would change estate with thee: change, said I? No; *Remember*, saith old Abraham, *that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented*, Luke xvi. 25.

2. But there are other bundles; where is gluttony and her surfeiters? Do we not see how the earth is plowed, the sea furrowed, and all to furnish one epicure's table? Seville sends fruit, Canary figars, Moluques spices, Egypt balsamum, Candy oils, Spain sweet meats, France wine; our own land cannot satisfy, but foreign kingdoms and countries must needs be sacrificed to our belly-gods: but what dainties have such Nabals when they come to hell? There is a black banquet prepared for devils and reprobates: the first dish is weeping, the second, gnashing of teeth, and what mirth is there where these two courses must last all the feast? The lazy friar sweating at his long meats and meals, *Heu quantum patimur*, cries he, 'Alas, how much do we suffer which are friars!' but alas, how much must you suffer at this supper, where the meat is poison, the attendants, furies; the musick, groans; and time without end, the fauce of every dith? See here the provision for the damned, their chains loose not, their fire cools not, their worm dies not, their woe ends not, such gall and vinegar imbitters every morsel. God hath proportioned this punishment for these sheaves, they are sent from surfeits to an empty dungeon, that sent away

beggars empty from their doors.

3. But more bundles yet, where is Drunkenness with her rioters? *Lo, they are trodden under foot*, saith the prophet, *they whose tables are full of vomit and filthiness*, Isa. xxviii. 3. are now driven to that scarcity and want, that not a cup of wine, nor a drop of water can be got in all hell for them. Sin must have its punishment in a just proportion; the tongue of that rich man that had turned down so many tuns of wine, cannot procure one drop of water in hell to cool it: in his tongue he sinned, in his tongue he is tormented; fiery heats breed a scorching thirst, yet, because he denied Lazarus a crumb of bread, Lazarus must not bring him a drop of water: How? a drop of water? alas! what are ten thousand rivers, or the whole sea of water unto that infinite world of fire? Here is a poor suit indeed, what begs he but a cup of water, an handful of water, a drop of water; nay, were it but a wet finger to cool the tip of his scorched tongue? Hearken, ye drunkards, and fear these flames that one day must parch your tongues. Here you may recreate yourselves by sleep, when you have too much, or by idle company when you would have more, but hereafter you shall find no means to qualify these pains; sleep there is none, though it be nothing but an everlasting night; friends there be none, tho' all could profess their everlasting loves; you may indeed commerce with some company, but who are they, save devils and reprobates, (miserable comforters!) in the same condemnation? Who is not sober, that knows what portion must befall these reprobates? Their mouths dry as dust, their tongues red as fire, their throats parcht as coals, all their bowels clung together as the burning parchment. *He that sows iniquity shall reap vanity*; the drunkard, that abuseth so much wine, must there want a little water, his tongue shall cleave to the roof of his mouth, and gob-

lets of boiling lead run down his throat; as the pleasure, so the pain; *he was comforted, and is tormented*.

4. And yet more bundles, where is Covetousness and her grippers! O the iron age we live in! was there ever less love? ever more dissembling? The covetous hoardeth, holdeth, oppresseth, or, it may be, puts out to usury, but never without sureties, pledges, mortgages, bills or bonds; think of those bonds, ye covetous, that must bind you in bundles; had you then ten thousand worlds, and were they all composed of purest gold, and brim-ful of richest jewels, yet would you cast them all at the foot of some Lazarus, for one drop of water, or one puff of wind to cool any part or piece of your tormented members. See the cruel effect of sin; he that hath no pity shall not be pitied; no, *He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy*, Jam. ii. 13. Thus to pay the covetous in his own coin, coffers and chests shall be brought before him, there shall devils ring him a peal of his damned coin, of pounds, of shillings, of pence, these accounts shall sound through his ears: and to satisfy his heart, melted gold shall be poured down his throat; yea, he shall be served too with his meat in plate, and plate and meat all boil together to his loathed supper; thus hath God satisfied him that could never satisfy himself, his gold now wants no weight, his silver is not scarce, mountains and loads are prepared for him to his greater torments.

5. Yet again more bundles, where is adultery with her minions? Lo, ugly fiends do embrace them, and the furies of hell be as their bosom concubines. I have read somewhere (but I will not deliver it as a truth) that a voluptuous man dying and going to this place of torment, he was there saluted in this fearful manner: 'First, Lucifer commands to fetch him a chair, and forthwith an iron chair and red-hot

with

with sparkling fire was brought, and he fet thereon; this done, Lucifer commands again to fetch him drink, and a drink of melted lead was brought in a cup, which they straightway pouring into his open mouth, anon it came running out of all his members: this done, Lucifer commands again, that according to his use they should fetch him musicians to make him merry, and a sort of musicians came with hot glowing trumpets, and sounding them at his ears (whereto they laid them) anon there came sparks of fire leaping out of his mouth, his eyes, and nostrils, all about him; this done, Lucifer commands again, that according to his wonted manner he should have his concubines, and upon this they bring him to a bed of fire, where furies give him kisses, fiery serpents hug about his neck, and the gnawing worm sucks blood from his heart and breasts, for ever and ever.

Howsoever in this story, it may be altogether truth was not brought a bed, yet imagine what a welcome shall be to the damned souls? Their eyes shall startle, their ears glow, their nostrils suck up flames, their mouths taste bitterness, and for the sense of feeling, (according to the measure of their sin) they are wrapped in the grisly embracements of stinging and stinking flames; where now are those dainty delights, sweet musick, merry company? are all left behind? And is there no recreation in those smoaky vaults? Unhappy dungeon, where there is no order but horror, no singing but howling, no ditties but their woes, no consorts but shrieks, no beauty but blackness, and no perfumes or odour, but pitch and sulphur. Let the heat of this fire cool the heat of your lust, pleasure ends with pain. *In as much (saith God) as the harlot glorified herself, and lived in pleasure, so much give ye to her torment and sorrow,* Rev. xviii. 7.

You see now (beloved) what tares are in bundles, the proud, gluttons, drunkards,

covetous, adulterers; these and such others are bundled by the reapers at the general harvest.

Use. O then, having yet a little time, how should we labour to escape hell's horror? Let the Proud be humbled, the Epicure fast, the Drunkard pray, the Adulterer chastise himself to pull down his body; and for the covetous wretch, let him with all holy greediness lay out his bags for the eternal good of his soul: alas, one foot in heaven is better than all your lands on earth. *I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents (in the houses, in the palaces) of the wicked.* Psal. lxxxiv. 10. Now then in the fear of God reform your lives, and your harvest, without question, shall be the joy of heaven; or if tares will be tares, what remains but binding, and bundling? *Bind them, bundle them, burn them.*

The harvest is done, and the angels sing and shout for their ended task: the tares are reaped, the furrows cleaned, the sickles laid aside, the sheaves bundled: and to shut up all, they must be burned: but stay we them a while, and at our next meeting we will set them on fire. God make us better seed, that we may receive a better crop, even that crown of glory in the highest heavens.

To burn them.]

WE have followed the prisoners from the bar, and brought them to the stake, what remains further but to kindle the faggots, and so to shut up all with the burning?

Hell-fire (at the first naming) makes my soul to tremble; and would the boldest courage but enter into a serious meditation, what it were to lye everlastingly in a red-hot scorching fire, how could he chuse but stand astonished at the consideration? It is a furious fire: rouze up (beloved) for either this, or nothing will awake you from the sleep of sin whereto you sleep too securely.

Some differences there are about this Fire: many think it a metaphorical, others a material fire; be it whether it will, it is every way fearful, and far above the reach either of human, or angelical thoughts to conceive.

If it be metaphorical (as Gregory and Calvin are of mind) then is it either more, or nothing less terrible: when the holy Ghost shadows unto us the joys of heaven by *gold, and pearls, and precious stones*, Rev. xxi. there is no one thinks but those joys do far surpass these shadows: and if the pains of hell are set out by fire, and flames, and brimstone, and burning, what pains are those, to which these are nothing but dumb shows or types?

Or if hell-fire be material (as Austin and Bullenger do conjecture) yet is it far beyond any fire on earth: mark but the differences, our fire is made for comfort; hell-fire is created for nothing else but torment: our fire is blown with some airy breath of man, but hell-fire is blown with the angry breath of God: our fire is fed with the fuel of wood or coal, but hell-fire is tempered with all the terrible torturing ingredients of sulphur, and brimstone; or (to cut the way nearer) I will reduce all the differences to some of these four, and so proceed in their order: they differ; first in Heat; secondly, in Light; thirdly, in their object; fourthly, in Duration.

First, in heat: *The pile thereof is fire and much wood, and the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it*, Isa. xxx. 33. This fire is not made by the hand of man, nor blown from the bellows of some forge, nor fed with any fuel of combustible matter: no, it is the arm of God, and the breath of God, and the anger of God that kindles it sharply, and continues it everlastingly; and, I pray, *if the breath that kindles it be like a stream of brimstone*, what is the fire itself? You know there is a great difference betwixt the heat of our breath, and the fire in our

chimneys: now then, if the breath of God that kindles hell-fire, be dissolved into brimstone, what a fearful fire is that, which a great torrent of burning brimstone doth ever mightily blow? A torrent of brimstone said I? No, it is not brimstone, but like brimstone, like to our capacity, altho', for the nature, this like is not like; nay, could we know exactly what this breath were, you would say (I warrant you) it were far more hotter than ten thousand rivers of brimstone, were they all put together: *Our God* (saith the apostle) *is a consuming fire*, Heb. xii. 29. And if God be a fire, what then is hell fire, kindled by the breath of God? 'O my soul, how canst thou but tremble at the thought of this fire, at which the very devils themselves do quake and shiver?' Pause a while and consider; wert thou arraigned at some earthly bar, thy doom past, the execution at hand, and thy body now ready to be cast, (as many a martyr's was) into some burning fire, or boiling cauldron: O how wouldst thou shout and roar, and cry through the extremity of torment? But what is a boiling cauldron to that boiling sea of fire and brimstone? Pitch and sulphur, boil altogether, were not this enough? See there the perplexing properties of such heats; they burn as brimstone darkly to grieve the sight, sharply to afflict the sense, loathsomely to perplex the smell: it is a fire that needs no bellows to kindle it, nor admits of the least air to cool it; the fuel wastes not, the smoke vents not; the chimnies are but reprobrates cradles, where they lie scorching, burning, howling their lullabies, and their nurses furies. The flames of Nebuchadnezzar's fire, could ascend forty nine cubits, but if hell be a bottomless pit, sure these flames have an endless height: how hot then is that glowing oven, where 'the fire burns lively, the blasts go strongly, the wheels turn roundly, and the darkened fuel are those damned souls that burn

in an heat surpassing ours, unspeakable of us; here is one difference.

2dly, As hell-fire differs from ours in heat, so in light; *Cast that unprofitable servant* (saith our Saviour) *into utter darkness*. Matth. xxv. 30. *Utter*, to perplex the mind; *Darkness*, to confound the eye. Consider but the terror of this circumstance; if a man alone in darkness should suddenly hear a noise of ghosts and spirits coming towards him, how would his hair bristle, his tongue falter, his blood run to the heart? Yea, (I dare say) although he felt never a lash from them on his body, yet the only howling of devils would make his very inmost heart to shake and shudder? O then, what horror is that, when darkness must surround thee, and devils hollow to thee, and reprobates shriek at the lashing of their bodies, and all hell be filled with the cries and echos of wo, wo, wo for their torments, and the darkness? May be you will object, if there be fire, there is assuredly light; nay, (without question) this fire hath heat, no light: it is a dark smoaky flame, that burns dim to the eye, yet sharp to the sense; or it may be, (as some do imagine) this fire affords a little sulphurous or obscure light, but how? Not for comfort, but confusion. Conceive it thus, he that in the twilight sees deformed images, or in the night beholds shapes of ghosts, and spirits, by a dim dark light, why better he saw nothing, than such terrible visions; such fears, nay a thousand times worse, are presented to the eyes of reprobates; they may discern through darkness, the ugly faces of fiends, the foul visages of reprobates, the furious torments of their friends, or parents, while all lie together in the same condemnation. What comfort affords this light, where nothing is seen but the Judge's wrath, and the prisoners punishment? O (will they cry) that our eyes were out, or the flames were quenched, or that some period were put to this endless night of darkness! but

all in vain; lo, pillars of smoke arise out of the infernal pit, which darken the light, as the fire lightens the darkness: and this is the second difference.

3dly, There is yet another difference in the fuel or object of this fire; ours burns not without materials, this works also on spirituals. It is I confess, a question whether devils suffer by fire? and how may that be? Some are of opinion, that they are not only spirits, but have bodies; not organical as ours, but aerial, or somewhat more subtle than the air itself: this opinion howsoever most deny, yet Austin argues for it; 'For if men and devils, saith he, are punished in the same fire, and that fire be corporeal, how are devils capable of the suffering, unless they have bodies, like men, fit for the impression? and yet if we deny them to have bodies, I see no impossibility, but that spirits themselves may suffer in hell-fire: is it not as easie with God to join spirits and fire, as souls and bodies? as therefore the soul may suffer through the body, so likewise may those spirits be tormented by fire.' I will not argue the case either with, or against Austin; yet safely may we put this conclusion, 'Not only men in their bodies, but devils and souls must together be tormented in hell-fire.' Thus our Saviour couples them in that last heavy doom. *Go, ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*. Matth. xxv. 41. What a fire is this? it tries the reins, it searcheth the bowels, it pierceth the very soul and inmost thoughts. O fire above measure! where spirits are the tormentors, damnation the punishment, men and devils the fuel, and the breath of an offended God the bellows. Think not on your fires, that give you heat for warmth, or light for comfort; neither *fear you him that kills your bodies*, but hath no further commission to hurt your souls: here is another fire, another judge; a fire that kindles souls, a Judge that sends bodies and souls

to everlasting fire : such hearts, such darknesses, such objects accompany this fire ; the heat is intolerable, darkness palpable, body and soul both combustible, all burn together that have sinned together. This is the third difference.

Lastly, There is a difference in durance ; our fire dies quickly, but hell-fire lasts for ever. This is done (saith Austin) ‘ admirably, yet actually,’ the burning bodies never consume, the kindled fire never wastes with any length of time. We read of a certain salt in Sicilia, that if put into the fire, it swims as in water, and being put into water crackles as in fire : we read of a fountain in Libya, that in a cold night is so hot, that none can touch it, and in a hot day so cold that none could drink it : if God thus work miracles on earth, do’st thou seek a reason of God’s high and heavy judgment in hell ? I see the pit, I cannot find the depth ; there is a fire that now stands as it were created ; it must be endured, yet never, never must be ended. The custom of some countries, that burn malefactors, use the least fires for greatest offenders, that so the heat being lessened, the pains might be prolonged ; but if this be so terrible to them, whose fire is but little, and whose time cannot be long ; what an exceeding horrible torment is this in hell, where the fire is extream great, and the time for ever and everlasting ? Suppose you, or any one of you should lie one night grievously afflicted with a raging fit of the stone, cholick, strangury, tooth-ach, pangs of travel, and a thousand such miseries incident to man, how would you toss and tumble ? How would you turn your sides, tell the clock, count the hours, expect every moment for the gay-bright morn, and till then esteem every hour a year, and every pang a misery matchless, and intolerable ? O then what will it be (think you) to lie *in fire and brimstone*, kept in highest flame by the unquenchable wrath of God, world without end ? How

tedious will be that endless night, where the clock never strikes, the time never passes, the morn never dawns, the sun never rises ; where thou canst not turn, nor toss nor tumble, nor yet take any rest, where thou shalt have nothing about thee but darkness, and horror, and wailing, and yelling, wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth for evermore ? Good Lord, that for a smile of present pleasure, men should run upon the rock of eternal vengeance ! come, ye that pursue vanity, and see here the fruit of sin at this harvest of tares, ‘ Pleasures are but momentary, but the pangs are eternal.’ eternal ? How long is that ? Nay, here we are silenced, no limner can set it forth, no orator can express it ; if all times that ever were, and ever shall be, should be put together, they would infinitely come short of this fiery eternity ; the latitude thereof is not to be measured, neither ‘ by hours, nor days, nor weeks, nor months, nor years, nor lustras, nor olympiads, nor indictions ; nor jubiles, nor ages, nor Plato’s years, nor by the most slow motions of the eighth sphere, though all these were multiplied by thousands, or millions, or the greatest multiplier, or number numbering that can be imagined.’ Plainly in a word, count if you please, ten hundred thousand millions of years, and add a thousand myriads of ages to them, and when all is done, multiply all again by a thousand, thousand, thousand of thousands, and being yet too short, count all the thoughts, motions, mutations of men and angels ; add to them all the sands of the sea, piles on the earth, stars in the heavens ; and when all this is done, multiply all again by all the numbers, squares, cubicks of arithmetic ; and yet all these are so far short of eternity, that they neither touch end, nor middle, nor the least part or parcel of it : what then is this which the damned suffer ? eternal fire ? we had need to cry out, Fire, fire, fire ; alas, to what end ? There is no help to extinguish fire that must burn
for

for ever : your buckets may quench other fires, not this ; no milk nor vinegar can extinguish that wild fire : it is a fire which no means can moderate, no patience can endure, no time can for ever change, but in it whosoever wofully lies, their flesh shall fry, their blood shall boil, their hearts consume ; yet they shall never die, but dying live, and living die ; death in life, life in death, miserable ever. This is that consideration, which shall bring all the damned reprobates to shriek and howl everlastingly : were they persuaded that after millions of years they should have one year of pleasure, or after thousands of millions they should have some end of torment, here would be a little hope ; but this word *ever*, breaks their hearts asunder : this *ever*, *ever*, gives new life again to those insufferable sorrows ; and hence it is, that when all those millions of years are done and gone, then (God knows) must the wheels of their torment whirl about and about : alas, the fire is durable, the heat continual, the fuel immortal, and such is the end of tares, they will burn without end : *Bind them in bundles to burn them.*

Lo here the fire of hell, which compared to ours on earth, it differs in heat, in light, in fuel, in durance : let your souls work on these objects, that they never come nearer to those flames.

Ute 1. *Who amongst us would dwell with devouring fire, who amongst us would dwell with everlasting burnings ?* Isaiah xxxiii. 14. Beloved, as you tender your souls, and would escape the flames, reform your lives while you have yet a little time. You hear it sounded in synagogues, and preached in pulpits ; what sound but heaven or hell, joys or torments ; the one befalling the good, and the other the just end of the wicked. Do we believe this truth ? And dare we commit sin, whose reward is this fiery death ? Upon due consideration, how is it that we sleep or rest, or take a minute's ease ? Lesser dangers have bestraght some

out of their wits ; nay bereaved many of their lives ; how is it then that we run headlong into this fire, yet never weigh whither we are going, till we are dropping into the pit, whence there is do redemption. Look about you while it is called to day, or otherwise wo and alas that ever you were born ; be sure a time will come, when miseries shall march, angels bear alarms, God sound destruction, and the tents of his enemies be all set on fire : *Bind them in bundles to burn them.*

Ute 2. Or yet, if comparisons can prevail ; suppose one of you should be taken, and brought along to the mouth of an hot fiery furnace, then (comparing sin with its punishment) might I question you, how much pleasure would you ask, to continue there burning but one year ? ‘ How much (would you say ?) surely not for all the pleasures and treasures that all this world can afford you. How is it then, that for a little sin, that endures but a moment, so many of you so little regard eternal punishment in hell-fire ? If we should but see a little child fall into the fire, and his very bowels burnt out, how would it grieve us, and make our very hearts bleed within us ? how much more then should it grieve you to see, not a child, but your own bodies and souls cast away for a momentary sin into the lake of fire, that never shall be quenched ? If a man should come amongst us, and cry, fire, fire, thy house is all on fire, thy corn, thy cattle, thy wife, thy children, and all thou hast are burning altogether, how would this astonish us, making both the hair to stand upright on our heads, and the tears to gush out of our eyes ? Behold then, and see the Spirit of God cries out, fire, fire ; even the dreadful fire of hell gapeth ready to devour, not thy house, thy corn, or thy cattle, but thy poor soul, and that for evermore : O then how should this break your dirty hearts asunder, and make your souls bleed again and again ; if you have any spark of grace,

this methinks should move you to a strict course of life; if you have any care of your souls, this methinks should make you to walk humbly, and purely, carefully and conscientiously towards God, and towards man; if not, what remains but fire, fire; *Bind them in bundles to burn them.*

3. Or yet if example can persuade us more, meditate on the miserable condition of that nameless rich man: suppose you saw him in hell-torments, compassed about with furies, fires, and all that black guard below, his tongue flaming, his eyes staring, his conscience biting, his soul suffering, his body all over burning in that fire of hell. O lamentable sight! but to make it more lamentable, hearken how he roars and cries through the extremity of pains, 'O torment, torment! how am I tormented in this fire? my head, my heart, my eyes, my ears, my tongue; my tongue is all on fire, what shall I do? whither shall I fly for succour? Within me is the worm, without me is fire, about me are devils, above me is Abraham, and what glorious star is yonder I see, but Lazarus, poor Lazarus in his bosom? what, is a beggar exalted? and am I in torments? Why, Abraham, father Abraham, have mercy on me: see here a man burning, scorching, frying in hell-flames, one dram of mercy, one drop of water to a tormented soul; oh I burn, I burn, I burn without ease or end, and is there none to pity me? Come, Lazarus, if Abraham will not hear, let me beg of thee, a beggar, and howsoever I denied thee a crumb of bread, yet be so good, so charitable, as to dip the tip of thy finger in water, and cool my tongue. It is a poor suit I ask; not to dive, but dip; not thy hand, but finger; not all, but the tip of it; not in snow, but water; not to quench, but to cool; not my body, but my least member, be it my tongue only: no ease so little, no grant so poor, no remedy so small, but happy were I if I could obtain it, though I begged it with tears and prayers of a thou-

sand thousand years continuance: but see Abraham and Lazarus deny my suits; I burn, and neither God, nor saint, nor angel takes pity on me; and shall I cry for help on devils? alas! they are my tormentors that lash me, and cut me with their whips of burning steel and iron.' O beloved! what shall we say to the roaring rage of this tormented wretch? Alas, alas! how little do men think on this? they can pass away time sporting and playing, as if they went to prison but for a few weeks or days; just like men, who having the sentence of death past upon them, run fooling and laughing to the execution; but when once hell mouth hath shut herself, then shall they find nothing but eternity of torments: in the fear of God take heed of this eternity, eternity, lest you also come into this place of eternity, eternity of torment: it is the doom of tares, wo to them whosoever that are of the number, for they, they must be gathered, and bound, and bundled, and burned.

We have now done our task, and ended the harvest: if you please to cast back your eye upon the particulars delivered, they amount to this sum.

Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap, Gal. vi. 7. If the enemy sow tares, and we nourish the seed, what think you is the harvest? *Gather ye together first the tares,* saith our Saviour to the angels; they are branded in their name, *tares*; sowed in the time, *first*; cursed in their doom, *gathered*; but worst in the hands of their executioners, it is by angels; and yet what is all this to the latter work in hand? If the tares weeded up might rot in the furrows, the punishment were less, but as they are gathered, so they must be bound. Is that all? nay, as they are bound, so they must be bundled. Is that all? nay, as they are bound and bundled, so they must be burned. *Bind them in bundles to burn them.* I must end this text, yet I am loath to leave you where it ends: as there is an harvest of tares,

tares, so there is a better harvest of wheat, *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy*, Psalm cxxvi. 5. If we repent us of our sins, we shall have a blessed harvest indeed; how? forty grains for one? Nay, by the promise of our Saviour, *an hundred fold. A measure heaped, and shaken, and thrust together, and yet running over*, Luke vi. 3. 8. Every faint shall have joy and glo-

ry, fountains of pleasure, and rivers of delight, where they may swim, and bathe their souls for ever and ever: what though tares must to the fire? the wheat is gathered into heaven. Pray you then with me, 'That we may be wheat, not tares; and God so bless the seed, that every soul of us may have a joyful harvest in the kingdom of heaven.' *Amen.*

Christ's Sufferings, the Purging of Sin.

Heb. i. 3. *When he had by himself purged our sins.*

THE point is not full, but to make it up, the text stands compact with words of wonder, concerning the Word, our Saviour, he that is *the Son of God, Heir of all things, Creator of the world, the brightness of his glory, the image of his person, and Upholder of all things by the word of his power*, stands here as the subject of humility and glory. *He purged our sins, and sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He purged our sins, by his suffering on the cross; He sits at God's right hand, by obtaining the crown; He purged our sins, by dying for them; He sits on God's right hand, by ruling with him: what need we more? here is his passion and session in the same order he performed them; for then He sat down on the right hand of his Father, when he had by himself purged our sins.*

But to come nearer the words, they are as the drugs of an apothecary, and we will examine the ingredients. *O I am sick of love*, faith the church, Cant. v. 8. Sick indeed, not of love only, but of sin also; a disease that infatuates the mind, gripes the conscience, distempers the humours, disturbs the passions, corrupts the body, indangers the soul: is not he blessed that can help this malady? Come then, ye that

labour of sin, and to your endless comfort see here the manner of the cure; there is a physician, *He*; the patient, *himself*; the physick administred, *when he had purged*; the ill humours evacuated, *when he had purged our sins*.

Or to gather up the crumbs, left in this costly receipt or physick any thing be lost; see here the remedy girt and compact with each necessary circumstance; the time, *When*; the person, *he*; the matter, *purged*; the manner, *by himself*; the disease, *sin*; the extent of it, *our*. Observe all, and you find no time more dismal than this *When*; no person more humbled than this *he*; no physick more operative than this *purge*; no disease more dangerous, no plague more spreading than *sin, our sin*, for which he suffered, *When he by himself had purged our sins*.

We have opened the body of the text, now look on the parts, and you may see the anatomy of our Saviour in every member of it.

When.]

THE text begins with the time, *When, he had purged*; and this time, faith Erasmus, according to the original denotes the time past, lest that we had thought *He had purged our sins by his setting him down*

at the right hand of God. First therefore, saith the apostle, *he purged*, and then *sate*: he first purged by his death, and when that was done, *He sat at the right hand of the Majesty, in the highest places*. Whence observe;

Doct. *The time that Christ purged, was in the days of his humiliation*. Then he was born, Mat. i. 18. then was he tempted, Mat. iv. 1. then was he circumcised, Luke ii. 21. then was he traduced, Mat. xi. 19. then was he persecuted, John viii. 59. then was he betrayed, Mat. xxvi. 16. then was he apprehended, Mat. xxvi. 50. then was he mocked, Mat. xxvii. 29. then was he crucified, Mat. xxvii. 35. But as all his life was full of infirmity, so according to the nature of all infirmities, he had those four times mentioned by physicians in his life; 'The beginning, the increase, the *akmen* or state, and declination.' Give me leave but to prosecute these times, and by that time we have done, the hour I know, will summon us to a conclusion.

1. Then he had his *archen*, his beginning, and that was the first time of his purging, even at his birth; then took he our infirmities upon him, and in some measure evacuated the brightness of his glory, to become for us a poor, a weak, a silly babe on earth: mark, I pray, how this purge works with him at his first entrance into the world, it brings him into so poor and low estate, that heaven and earth stand amazed at so great a change: where was he born but at Bethlehem, a little city? where did the shepherds find him, but in a poor sorry cottage? and there if we look after majesty, we find no guard but Joseph, no attendants but Mary, no heraulds but shepherds, none of the bed-chamber but beasts and oxen; and howsoever he is stiled *King of the Jews*, yet the Jews cry out, *They have no king but Cæsar*. His mother indeed descended of kings, and he himself gives crowns to others, of victory, of life, of glory; but for his own head no crown

is prepared but *a crown of thorns*; anon you may see him cloathed in purple, anointed with spittle; but for the crown we speak of, they can afford him no richer than of hedge, no easier than of thorns.

Thus for the beginning: what then is the increase of this?

This increase (say physicians) is, 'when the symptoms more manifestly appear either of life or death:' and no sooner was our Saviour born, but he had manifest tokens evidently shewing that for us he must die. If you run through his life, what was it but *a sickness and a purge*? consider his parcimony and abstinence, his constancy in watching, his frequency in prayer, his assiduity in labour. But how soon, and Herod makes him flee into Egypt, and live an exile in a strange land? At his return he dwells at Nazareth, and there is accounted *Jesus the carpenter*, Mark vi. 5. When he enters into his ministry, he hath no house to repose him, no money to relieve him, no friends to comfort him. See him first set on by Satan, then by men; he is led into the wilderness by the Spirit, and there he fasts *forty days and forty nights*, without bit of bread, or drop of water. The devil (seeing this opportunity) begins his temptation, who presently overcome, the Jews follow after him with hue and cry: mark but their words and works: in word they call him *a glutton, a drunkard, a deceiver, a sinner, a mad-man, a Samaritan, and one possessed with a devil*, Mat. xi. 19. and xxvii. 63. John ix. 24. and x. 20. and viii. 48. Good words I pray! is not he the anointed of God? The Saviour of men? yes; but *They rendered me evil for good, and hatred for my good will*, said the Psalmist in his person, Psalm xxxv. 12. When therefore he did miracles, he was a forcerer; when he reproved sinners, he was a seducer; when he received sinners, he was their favourer; when he healed the sick, he was a breaker of the Sabbath; when he cast out devils, it was by the power of devils; what and how

how many unjust contumelies endured he of the Pharisees, who sometimes cast him out of the city, accused him of blasphemy, cried out upon him, *he was a man not worthy to live*. And as they say, they do; observe but their works: first, They send officers to apprehend him, but they being overcome with the grace of his speeches, return only with this answer, *Never man spake like this man*, Joh. vii. 46. Then took they up stones to stone him, but by his miraculous passage (while they are a conspiring his death) *he escaped out of their hands*. John x. 36. Then led they him to an hill, thinking to throw him down headlong, and yet all would not do, for ere they were aware of it, *he fairly passeth through the midst of them all*. Luke iv. 10. At last his last passion draws near, and then men and devils combine in one to make him at once wretched and miserable: *He is despised, and rejected of men; yea, he is a man full of sorrows, (saith the prophet) and hath experience of infirmities*, Isa. liii. 3.

Or for a further inquiry, let us do what our Saviour bids, *Search the scriptures, for they are they which testify of him*. John v. 39. We have but two testaments in the whole Bible, and both these give full evidence of Christ's miserable life. In the old testament it was figured by Adam's penalties, Abel's death, Abraham's exile, Isaac's offering, Jacob's wrestling, Joseph's bonds, Job's suffering, David's mourning; yea, the prophets themselves were both figures; and delivered prophecies of our Saviour's afflictions. Thus Isaiah of him: *Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*, Isa. liii. 4. Thus Jeremiah of him: *He gives his cheeks to him that smites him, he is filled full with reproach*, Lam. iii. 30. Thus Daniel of him, *After three score and two weeks shall Messiah be slain: and shall have nothing*. Dan. ix. 26. Thus Zechary of him, *What are*

these wounds in the midst of thy hands? And he shall say, With these wounds was I wounded in the house of my friends, Zech. xiii. 6. But come we to the New testament; and in every gospel, we may not only read, but see him suffer: Matthew, who relates the history of his life; what writes he but a tragedy, wherein every chapter is a scene? Look thro' the whole book, and you read in the first chapter, Joseph will not father him: in the second, Herod seeks to kill him; in the third, John the Baptist would needs out of his humility deny him baptism; in the fourth, he fasts forty days, and forty nights, and is tempted in the wilderness; in the fifth, he foretells persecutions, and all manner of evil against his apostles; in the sixth, he teacheth his church that strict course of life, in fasting, praying, giving of alms, and forgiving of enemies; in the seventh, he concludes his sermon made on the top of a mountain; in the eighth, he comes down, and towards night hath no house to harbour in, nor pillow to rest his head on; in the ninth, he is rebuked of the pharisees for not fasting: in the tenth, all men hate his disciples for his sake; in the eleventh, they call him that knew no excess, a glutton and a drunkard; in the twelfth, they tell him how he casts out devils thro' Beelzebub prince of devils; in the thirteenth, they are offended at him, and derive his pedigree from a carpenter; in the fourteenth, Herod thinks him to be John Baptist's ghost; in the fifteenth, the scribes reprehend him for the breach of their traditions; in the sixteenth, the Sadducees tempt him for a token; in the seventeenth, he pays tribute to Cesar; in all the rest he foretels and executes his passion: now count not chapters, but hours, from that hour wherein he was sought for, until the sixth hour of his crucifying; one betrays him, another apprehends him, one binds him, another leads him bound from Pilate to Herod, from Herod back again to Pilate;

thus they never leave him, till his soul leave the world, and he be a dead man amongst them.

You have seen the beginning and increase, and we'll now draw the curtains, that you may behold the bridegroom where he lieth at noon-day, to wit, in the state or vigour of his grievous sufferings.

This state, or *Akmen* (say physicians) is 'when nature and the disease are in greatest contention, when all the symptoms are become most vehement: so that either nature or the infirmity must needs have the victory;' and 'although (say divines) all Christ's life was full of miseries, yet principally and chiefly is that called his passion, in scripture, which he endured two days before death:' and 'to this extreme passion (saith Kerker) is the purging of sins chiefly attributed.' Come then, *ye that pass by, behold, and see, if there was ever any sorrow like unto this sorrow, which is done unto him in the day of God's anger*, Lam. i. 12. His infirmities are now at full, and the symptoms which made it evident unto us, are some inward, some outward; inward in his soul, outward in his body: we will take a view of them both.

1. His soul, *It began to be sorrowful*, saith Matthew, Matth. xxvi. 37. *To be amazed, and very heavy*, saith Mark, Mark xiv. 33. *To be in an agony*, saith Luke, Luke xxii. 44. *To be troubled*, saith John, John xii. 27. Here is sorrow, and heaviness, and agony, and trouble, the estimate whereof we may take from his own words in the garden; *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*: Matth. xxvi. 38. Now was the time *he purged*, not only in his body, but his soul too; *Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour*, John xii. 27. A fatal hour sure, of which it was said before often. *His hour was not yet come*; but being come, he could then tell

his disciples, *The hour is at hand*; Matthew xxvi. 45. and after tell the Jews, *This is your hour, and the power of darkness*; Luk. xxii. 53. Now was it that Christ yielded his soul for our souls, to the susception of sorrow, enduring of pain, and dissolution of nature: and therefore even sick with sorrow, he never left *Sweating, weeping and crying, till he was heard in that which he feared*, Heb. v. 7.

2dly, As his soul, so his body had her symptoms of approaching death: our very eye will soon tell us, no place was left in his body where he might be smitten, and was not: his skin was torn, his flesh was rent; his bones unjointed, his sinews strained; should we sum up all? See that face of his, *Fairer than the sons of men*, Psalm xlv. 1. How it is defiled with spittle, swollen with buffets, masked with a cover of gore-blood: see that head, *white as white wool, and snow*; Rev. i. 14. how it is crowned with thorns, beaten with a reed, and both head and hair dyed in sanguine red that issued from it: see those eyes, that *were as a flame of fire*, Revel. i. 14. How they swim with tears, are dim with blood, and darken at the sad approach of dreadful death: see that *mouth, which spake as never man spake*; John vii. 46. how it is wan with strokes, grim with death, and embittered with that tarest potion of gall and vinegar: should we any lower? See those arms that could embrace all the power of the world, how they are strained and stretched on the cross; those shoulders that could bear the frame of heaven, how they are lashed with knotty cords, and whips; those hands that made the world, and all therein; how they are nailed and clenched to a piece of wood; that heart where never dwelt deceit nor sin, how it is pierced and wounded with a soldier's spear: those bowels that yearned with compassion of others infirmities, how they are dry and pent with straining pulls: those feet that walked in the ways of God,

how they are boarded, and fastened to a cross with nails: from hand to foot, there is no part free, but all over he is covered in a mantle of cold blood, whose garments were doft before, and took of them that were his hangmen: poor Saviour, what a woeful sight is this? 'A bloody face, thorny head, watry eyes, wan mouth, strained arms, lashed shoulders, nailed hands, wounded heart, griping bowels, boarded feet:' Here is sorry pains, when no part is free; and these are the outward symptoms of his state that appear in his body.

We have thus far seen our sun (*the Sun of righteousness*, Mal. iv. 2.) in the day-break, and rising, and height of his suffering: what remains further, but that we come to the declination, and so end our journey for this time?

This declination (say physicians) is, * 'When nature overcomes sickness, so that all diseases attain not this time; but those, and those only that admit of a recovery; yet howsoever (saith my † Author) there is no true declination before death. There is at least a seeming declination, when sometimes the symptoms may become more remis, because of weak nature yielding to the fury and tyranny of death overcoming it.' I will not say directly, that our Saviour declined thus, either in deed or in shew: for neither was *the cup removed from him*, nor died he by degrees; but in perfect sense, and perfect patience both of body and soul, he did voluntarily, and miraculously *resign his Spirit* (as he was praying) *into the hands of his Father*. Here then was the true declination of this patient; not before death, but in death, and rightly too: for then was it that this sun went down in a ruddy cloud: then was it that this patient received the last dregs of his purge; then was it that God's justice was satisfied, the con-

summaturum est was effected, all was finished; as for his burial, resurrection, and ascension, which follow after this time, they serve not to make any satisfaction for sin, but only to confirm it, or apply it, after it was made and accomplished.

Use 1. But what use of all this? Give me leave (I pray) to shake the tree, and then do you gather the fruit. From the first part, his birth, we may learn Humility, a grace most prevailing with God for the obtaining of all graces; this was it that made David a king, Moses a governor; nay, what say we to Christ himself, who from his first entrance, until his departure to his father, was the very mirror of true humility itself? *Learn of me* (saith he) *to be humble and lowly in spirit, and you shall find rest unto your souls*. Matth. xi. 29. Hereunto accorded his doctrine, when he pronounced them *blessed* who were *poor in spirit*, Mat. iii. 3. Hereunto accorded his reprehension, when he disliked their manner who were wont *to choose out the chief rooms at feasts*: Luke xiv. 7. Hereunto accorded his practice, when he vouchsafed *to wash his disciples feet; and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded*, John xiii. 5. O humility, how great are thy riches, that are thus commended to us? thou pleasest men, delightest angels, confoundest devils, and bringest thy Creator to a manger, where he is laped in rags, and clothed in flesh! had we Christian hearts to consider the humility of our Redeemer, and how far he was from our haughty disposition, it would pull down our pharisaical humours, and make us far better to remember ourselves.

Use 2. As we learn humility from his birth, so we may learn patience from his life. *If any man will come after me* (saith our Saviour) *let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me*. Mat. xvi.

* Galen. iv. lib. de Cris. cap. 5. † Sencr. institution. medicinae l. 2. par. 1. c. 12. de n. orb. temp.

14. Dear Christian, if thou wilt be saved, mind thy Christ: art thou abused by lies, reproaches, evil sayings, or doings? We cannot more shew how we have profited in Christ's school, than by enduring them all: if patience be in our calamities, they are no calamities, but comforts: this is that comfort that keeps the heart from envy, the hand from revenge, the tongue from contumely, and often overcomes our very enemies themselves, without any weapons at all. Come then, and do you learn this lesson of our blessed Redeemer! are you stricken? So was Christ of the Jews: are you mocked? So was Christ of the soldiers: are you betrayed of your friends? So was Christ of his apostles: are you accused of your enemies? So was Christ of the Pharisees: why complain you of being injured, and maligned, when you see the the master of the house himself called Beelzebub? *Hereunto are ye called, (saith Peter) for Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps,* 1 Pet. ii. 21.

Use 3. As patience from his life, so we may learn remorse from his passion; *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?* Lam. i. 12. O look on him, and let this look breed in you a remorse and sorrow for your sins: our Saviour labours in the extremities of pangs, his soul is sick, his body faints, and would you know the reason? Why, thus is the head wounded, that he might renew health to all the body; we sin, and Christ Jesus is heavy, and sore and sick, and dies for it; his soul was in our souls stead, his body endured a purgatory for us, that we both in body and soul might escape hell-fire, which our sins had deserved; who but considers what evils our sins have done, that will not grieve and mourn at the sin he hath committed? *Oh that my head were a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the sins of the daughters of my people!* we have sinned, we have sinned, and what

shall we say to thee, O Saviour of men! alas! our sins have whipped thee, scourged thee, crowned thee, crucified thee, and if I have no compassion to weep for thee, yet, O Lord, give me grace to weep for my self, who have done thus to thee: O my Saviour! O my sins! It is I that offend, it is thou must smart for it.

Use 4. We may yet learn another lesson, *Christ, saith Paul, humbled himself, and became obedient to the death, even the death of the cross,* Phil. ii. 8. and is it not our parts to be obedient to him who became thus obedient for us? We may gather humility from his birth, and patience from his life, and remorse from his passion; and to make up the posse, here is one flower more, Obedience, which that tree also yielded whereon he suffered. *If you love me, saith our Saviour, keep my commandments.* How, blessed Saviour? If you love me? Who will not love thee, who hast thou dearly loved us, as to give up thy dearest life for the ransom of our souls? But to tell us that there is no better testimony of our love, than to obey his commands, he woos us with these sugared words, *(whose lips like lilies, are dropping down pure myrrhe,* Cant. v. 13.) *If you love me: if you love me, learn obedience of me, keep my commandments:* and to move us the more, if all this cannot, what love and obedience was there in him, think you? Consider and wonder! that the Son of God would banish himself thirty three years from his glorious majesty; and what more? would be born man; and what more? would be the meanest among men; and what more? would endure the miseries of life; and what more? would come to the bitter pangs of death; and what more? would be *made obedient to the death, even the death of the cross:* a degree beyond death. 'O Son of God, whither doth thy humility descend?' But thus it must be, the prophets had foretold it, and according to their prophecies the days were

were accomplished, *when he himself must be purged*: he was born, he lived, he suffered, he died, and thus ran round the wheels of those miserable times; *when he had by himself purged our sins*.

You see the time's past, and a new time must give you the remainder of the text; the time is *when*; the person *he*; and he it is that in order will next come after; only have you the patience, till we have the leisure to draw out his picture, and then you shall see him in some mean proportion, who had by himself purged our sins.

He.]

WE have observed the time *when he had purged*, and now time it is that you know the physician who administers it: the apostle tells you it is he, that is, Christ our Saviour, who seeing us labour in the pains and pangs of sin, *he bows the heavens and comes down*; he takes upon him our frailty, that we thro' him might have the remedy to escape hell-fire. Come then, and behold the man, who undertakes this cure of souls; *He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills*, saith Solomon in his song, Cant. ii. 8. And, 'Would you know his leaps, (saith Gregory? Homil. xxxix.) See then how he leaps from his throne to his cratch, from his cratch to his cross, from his cross to his crown; downwards and upwards, like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of spices.'

1. His first leap downwards was from heaven, and this tells us how he was God from everlasting! so said the centurion, *Surely this man was the Son of God*, Mark xv. 39. How else? the sin of man could no otherwise be expiated, but by the Son of God; man had sinned, and God was offended, therefore God became man, to reconcile man to God: had he been man alone, not God, he might have suffered, but he could not have satisfied; therefore this man was God, that in his manhood

he might suffer, and by his Godhead he might satisfy: O wonderful redemption! that God must take upon him our frailty: had we thus far run upon the score of vengeance, that none could satisfy but God himself? could he not have made his angels ambassadors, but he himself must come in person? No; angels, or saints could neither supererogate; but if God will save us, God himself must come and die for us: it were sure no little benefit, if the king would pardon a thief; but that the king himself should die for this malefactor, this were most wonderful, and indeed beyond all expectation; and yet thus will the king of heaven deal with us; he will not only pardon our faults, but satisfy the law: we sin against God, and God against whom we sin, must die for it: this is a depth beyond sounding, an height above all human reach: what is he? God.

2. But we must fall a note, the Creator is become a creature; if you ask what creature? I must tell you though it were an angel, yet this were a great leap, which no created understanding could measure; what are the angels in respect of God? He is their Lord, they but his servants, ministers, messengers, and howsoever it would dazzle us to behold their faces; yet cannot the brightest angels stand before God, but they are fain *to cover their own faces with a pair of wings*, Isa. vi. 2. The difference may appear in Rev. v. 13, 14. where *the Lamb* is said to *sit upon the throne*, but *the four beasts and four and twenty elders fall down and worship him*. Is not here a great distance betwixt the Lamb in his throne, and the beasts at his feet? and yet thus far will the Lamb descend, that for our sakes he will dethrone himself, reject his state, take the office of an angel, to bring us the glad tidings of salvation in *purging our sins*.

3. And was he an angel? nay, that was too much; *He was made*, saith the apostle, *a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death*, Heb. ii. 9. What? the

Son of God to be made lower than the angels? Here was a leap beyond the reach or compass of all human thoughts; he that made the angels, is made lower by a little than the angels; the Creator is not only become a creature, but inferior to some creatures that he did create: O ye angels, how stand ye amazed at this humility? that God your master should become meaner than his servants; that the Lord of heaven should deny the dignity of powers, principalities, cherubims, seraphims, archangel, or angel: O Jesus, how contrary art thou to thy aspiring creatures? Some angels thro' pride would needs be as God, but God through humility is made *lower than the angels*, not equal with them, but a degree below them, as David that sweet singer of Israel sung, *Thou madest him a little lower than the angels*, Psalm viii. 9. which is cited also in the person of Christ.

4. But how much lower? *By a little*, saith Paul; and if you would know what that little was, he tells you again, that *He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham*, Heb. ii. 7, 16. Here is that great abyss, which all the powers of heaven could no less but wonder at: Abraham's Lord is become Abraham's son; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath took upon him the seed of Abraham, the seed of Isaac, and the seed of Jacob; wonder above wonders! that God should take the shape of angels is more than we can think; but to take on him the nature of man, is more than the tongue of angels can express; that the King of heaven should leave his glorious mansion, and from the bosom of his Father come into the womb of his mother, from that company of angels, and archangels, to a rude rout of sinful men: *Tell ye the daughters of Zion, Behold, thy king cometh unto thee*, saith the prophet Isaiah in the lxii. chap. verse 11. What could he less? and what canst thou

more? wonderful love, that he would come, but more wonderful in the manner of his coming; he that before made man a soul after the image of God, now makes himself a body after the image of men; and he that was more excellent than all angels, becomes lesser, lower than the angels, even a mortal, miserable, wretched man.

5. But what man? as he is king of heaven, let him be king of all the world; if he be man, let him be the ruler of mankind: no, thou art deceived, O Jew, that expectest in thy Saviour the glory of the world; fear not, Herod, the loss of thy diadem; for this child is born, not to be thy successor, but, if thou wilt believe, to be thy Saviour: Was he a king on earth? alas! look through the chronicles of his life, and you find him so far from a king, that he is the meanest subject of all men: where was he born, but at Bethlehem a little city? where did the shepherds find him, but in a sorry cottage? who were his disciples, but poor fishermen? who his companions, but publicans and sinners? Is he hungry? where stands his table, but on plain ground? what are his dainties, but bread and a few fishes? who are his guests, but a rout of hungry starved creatures? and where is his lodging, but at the stern of a ship? here is a poor king, without either presence or bed-chamber; *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not whereon to lay his head*, Mat. viii. 20.

6. Descend we a little lower, and place him in our own rank; what was he but a carpenter? Say the Jews in scorn, *Is not this the carpenter, Mary's son?* Mark iii. 6. A poor trade sure; but to shew us that he was man, and how much he hated idleness, some time he will bestow in the labours of man's life; but O wonder! if he will reject majesty, let him use at least some of those liberal arts; or if he will be mechanical, let him choose to some noble trade;

trade; *Thy merchants were the great men of the earth*, said the angel to Babylon, Rev. xviii. 23. Ay, but our Saviour is no adventurer, neither is he so stockt to follow any such profession; once indeed he travelled into Egypt with Joseph and Mary; but to shew us that it was no prize, you may see Mary his mother steal him away by night, without further preparation: what, gone on a sudden? it seems there was no treasure to hide, no hangings to take down, no lands to secure; his mother needs do no more but lock the doors and away; what portion then is for the Lord of heaven? O sweet Jesus! thou must be content for us to hew sticks and stocks; besides which (after his coming out of Egypt, about the seventh year of his age, until his baptism by John, which was the thirtieth) we find little else recorded in any writers, profane or ecclesiastical.

7. And are we now at our just *quantum*? Alas, what quantity, what bounds hath the humility of our Saviour? is he a Carpenter? That were to be master of a trade; but he *took on him* (saith the apostle) *the form of a servant*, not a master, Phil. ii. 7. It is true, he could say to his apostles, *Ye call me master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am*, Joh. xiii. 13. And yet at that very instant mark but his gestures, and you may see their Lord and master become a servant to his servants: his many offices express his services; when *He rose from supper, and laid aside his upper garments, and took a towel and girded himself, and after that he had poured water into a basin, began to wash his disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded*, John xiii. 4, 5. O ye blessed spirits, look down from heaven, and you may see even the Almighty kneeling at the feet of men! O ye blessed apostles, why tremble ye not at this so wonderful sight of your lovely, lowly Creator? Peter, what doest thou? Is not he the beauty of the heavens, the paradise of angels,

the brightness of God, the Redeemer of men? And wilt thou (notwithstanding all this) let him wash thy feet! No, leave, O Lord, leave this base office for thy servants, lay down the towel, put on thy apparel: see Peter is resolute, *Lord doest thou wash my feet? No Lord, thou shalt never do it*. Yes Peter, thus it must be, to leave thee and us a memorial of his humility; *I have given you an example*, (saith Christ) *that ye should do as I have done unto you*, verbe 25. And what hath he done? But for our sakes is become a servant, yea his servants servant, washing and wiping, not their hands or heads, but the very meanest, lowest parts, their feet.

8. And yet there is a lower fall, *How many hired servants* (said the prodigal) *at my father's house have bread enough, and I die for hunger?* Luke xv. 17. And as if our Saviour's case were like the prodigal's, you may see him a little lower than a servant, yea a little better than a beggar: *Ye know* (saith the apostle) *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor*, 2 Cor. viii. 9. Poor indeed, and so poor, that he was not worth a penny to pay tribute, till he had borrowed it *of a fish*, Matth. xvii. 27. See him in his birth, in his life, in his death, and what was he but a pilgrim, that never had house to harbour in? A while he lodges in an oxen-stall, thence he flies into Egypt, back he comes into Galilee, anon he travels to Jerusalem, within a while (as if all his life were but a wandering) you may see him on mount Calvary hanging on the cross; was ever any beggar's life more miserable? he hath no house, no money, no friends, no lands, and howsoever he was God the disposer of all; yet for us he became man, a poor man, a mean man, yea the meanest of all men: and this another step downwards.

9. But this not low enough, men are the image of God: ay but the Son of God is not used as a man, but rather as a poor

dumb beast appointed to the slaughter: what was he but a sheep, said Isaiah of him? ch. liii. 7. A sheep indeed, and that more especially in these two qualities. 1. *As a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth*: and to this purpose was that silence of our Saviour; when all those evidences came against him, he would not so much as drop one syllable to defend his cause; if the high priests question him, *What is the matter that these men witness against thee?* Matthew tells us, that *Jesus held his peace*, Matth. xxvi. 63. If Pilate say unto him, *Behold, how many things they witness against thee*; Mark tells us, that *Jesus answered him nothing*, Mark xv. 6. If Herod *question with him in many words, because he had heard many things of him*, Luke tells us, that *he answered him nothing* Luke xxiii. 9. As a poor sheep in the hands of the shearer, he is dumb before his judges and accusers; whence briefly we may observe, Christ came not to defend, but to suffer condemnation. 2. As a sheep he is dumb, and as a sheep he is slain: *He was led*, saith the prophet, *as a sheep to the slaughter*, Isa. liiii. 7. 'O Jesus! art thou come to this? to be a man, who art God; a sheep, who art man, and so for our sakes far inferior to ourselves; nay worse, a sheep; how? not free, as one that is leaping on the mountains, or skipping on the hills: no, but a sheep that is led: led whither? not thither as David was, who could say of his shepherd, that *He fed him in green pastures, and led him forth besides the waters of comfort*, Psal. xxiii. 2. No, but led to the slaughter. He is a sheep, a sheep led, a sheep led to the slaughter; and such a slaughter, that were he a dumb creature, yet great ruth it were to see him so handled as he was by the Jews.'

10. And yet will his humility descend a little lower; as he was the poorest of men, so the least of sheep; *Like a lamb*, saith the apostle, Acts viii. 32. and, *Behold the*

Lamb, saith John the Baptist, *even the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world*, John. i. 29. This was that Lamb which the Paschal lamb prefigured, *Your lamb*, saith God to the Israelites, *shall be a lamb without blemish, and the blood shall be a token for you*, Exod. xii. 5, 13. But was ever Lamb like the Lamb of God? He is without blemish; saith Pilate, *I find no fault in him*, Luke xxiii. 4. and the *sprinkling of his blood*, saith Peter, *is the right token of election*, 1 Peter i. 2. Such a lamb was this Lamb, without blemish in his life, and whose blood was sprinkled at his death, in life and death ever suffering for us, who, had he not done so, should for ever and ever have suffered ourselves. *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest?* saith the church in Canticles: *Tell me?* Yes: *If thou knowest not*, saith our Saviour, *go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock*, Cant. i. 8. Our Saviour is become a man, a sheep, a Lamb, or if this be not humility enough, he will yet take a leap lower.

What is he but a worm, and no man, yea the very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people? Pf. xxii. 6. Did you ever think we could have brought our Saviour to thus low a degree? What, beneath a lamb, and no better than a worm? Heaven and earth may well ring of this, as being the greatest wonder that ever was: there is not any bitter potion due to man, which the Son of God will not partake of to the utmost dregs; and therefore if Job say to the worm, *Thou art my sister and mother*, Job xvii. 14. nay, if Bildad say, *man is a worm, and the son of man is but a worm*, Job xxv. 6. which is more than kindred: behold our Saviour stooping thus low himself, what is he but a man? nay, as if that were too much, *a worm, and not a man*, as sung the Psalmist of him.

I am so low, that unless we think him no-body, we can down no lower; and yet here is one leap more, that if we take a view

view of it, we may suppose him to be nothing in esteem, a no-body indeed. Look we at every man in respect of God, and the prophet tells us, *All nations before him are as nothing*, Isa. xl. 17. And if man be thus, why sure the son of man will be no less; see then, to the wondrous astonishment of men and angels, how greatness itself, to bring man from nothing, *exinanivit se, hath made himself nothing*, or, *of no reputation*, Philipp. ii. 7. How? Nothing? Yes, saith Beza; *He that was all in all, hath reduced himself to that which is nothing at all*: And Tertullian little less, *exhaustit se, He hath emptied himself*, or, as our translation gives it, *He hath made himself*, not of little, but *of no reputation*.

Lo here those steps, the scripture lightning us all the way, by which our Saviour descended; he that is God, for us became an angel, a man, a serving-man, a poor man, a sheep, a lamb, a nothing in esteem, a worm, a man of no reputation.

Use 1. Let every soul learn his duty from hence; what should we do for him who hath done all this for us? There is a crew of unbelievers that hear and heed not; all the sufferings of our Saviour cannot move them a jot, either towards God, or from sin; and is not this a woful lamentable case? I remember a passage in Cyprian, how he brings in the devil triumphing over Christ, in this manner; 'As for my followers, I never died for them, as Christ did for his; I never promised them so great a reward as Christ hath done to his; and yet I have more followers than he, and they do more for me than his do for him: hear, O heaven, and hearken, O earth!' was ever the like phrensie? The devil, like a roaring lion seeks ever and anon to devour our souls; and how many thousands and millions of souls yield themselves to his service, tho' he never died for them, nor will ever do for them the poorest favour whatsoever, but pay them everlastingly with pains and pangs, death and damnation? On

the other side, see our Saviour, God almighty, take on him the nature of a man, a poor man, a sheep, a lamb, a worm, a nothing in esteem; and why all this? but only to save our souls, and to give them heaven and salvation; yet such is the condition of a stubborn heart, that to ch'oose, it will spurn at heaven's crown, and run upon hell, and be a slave to Satan, and scoff at Christ's sufferings, yea, and let out his blood, and pull out his heart, and bring him a degree lower than very Beelzebub himself, rather than it will submit to his will, and march under his banner to the kingdom of heaven. Hence it is, that the devil so triumphs over Christ. As for my followers, (saith he) I never died for them, as Christ did for his: No, devil, thou never diedst for them, but thou wilt put them to a death without all ease or end. Think of this, ye unbelievers: methinks, like a thunder-bolt, it might shake all your hearts, and dash them into pieces.

Use 2. But a word more to you, of whom I hope better things; let me exhort the saints, that you for your parts will ever love, and serve, and honour, and obey, and praise the Lord of glory for this so wonderful a mercy; I pray, have you not cause? Had your Saviour only sent his creatures to serve you, or some prophets to advise you in the way of salvation; had he only sent his angels to attend you, and to minister unto you; or had he come down in his glory, like a king that would not only send to the prison, but come himself to the dungeon, and ask, saying, Is such a man here? Or, had he only come and wept over you, saying, Oh that you had never sinned! all these had been great mercies: but, that Christ himself should come, and strive with you in mercy and patience; that he should be so fond of a company of rebels and hell-hounds, and yet we are not at the lowest, that he would for us become a man, a mean man, a lamb, a worm, a nothing in esteem.

cilem. O all ye stubborn hearts, too much stubborn are we all, if judgment and the hammer cannot break your hearts, yet let this mercy break you, and let every one say, 'O Jesus hast thou done all this for me? certainly I will love thee, and praise thee, and serve thee, and obey thee as long as I live.' Say so, and the Lord say amen to the good desires of your hearts. To what this on the more; remember still, it is you that should have suffered, but to prevent this, it was he that was humbled, it is he that was crucified, it is he that was purged: what needs more? *I am he*, (John xviii. 5.) said Christ to the Jews when they apprehended him: he? what he? I know not what; but be he what he will, he it is our Saviour, Redeemer, Physician, Patient, *Who had by himself purged our sin.*

Thus far we have measured his steps downwards, and should we go up again the same stairs, we might bring him as high as we have placed him low; but his ascent rather belongs to the words following my text; for, *after he had purged*, then *he sat down on God's right hand on high*. Come we then to the next words, and as you have seen the person, so let us look for a companion: This may in misery yield some comfort, if but any society bears a share in his misery: but methinks I hear you say to me, as the Athenians said to Paul, *We will hear thee again of this matter another time*, Acts xvii. 32.

By himself.]

THE time and physician have prepared a purge; but who is the patient to receive it? It is man is sick, and it is man must purge, or otherwise he dies without all remedy or recovery: but alas! what kind of purge, I pray you, must that be which can evacuate sin? Should man take all the virtue of herbs and minerals, and distil them into one sublime and purest quintessence, yet impossible were it to wash away sin, or the least dregs of its corruption: not Galen nor Hippocrates,

nor all the artists, or naturalists that ever lived on earth could find out, or invent any remedy for sin; this must be a work of grace, and not of nature; yea, and such a grace as neither man nor angel could afford: behold then, who is it that both administers and takes the receipt prepared? It is man that sinned, and God is become man, that so being both, he might administer it as God, and receive it as man, the same person being physician and patient, compounder and purger.

But, what a wonder is this? Are we a dying, and must he purge for it? can physick, given to the sound heal the party that is sick? It was the saying of our Saviour, *The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick*, Matth. ix. 12. And Christ Jesus, for his part, is whole indeed, *No fault in this man*, saith Pilate, Luke xxiii. 14. and he is a *just man*, said Pilate's wife of him, Mat. xxvii. 19. To what end then should he purge that is whole, and we escape it that are sick? O this is to manifest the dearest love of our soul-physician our endeared Saviour: *The whole indeed need not a physician, but they that are sick*; he needs no physick, no purge, no physician at all, but for us he is become a physician himself, for us he became physician and patient; for us he was sick, for us he purged, that we through him might escape that danger of eternal fire.

But how purged he? *By himself?* Was there none to associate him in this misery? No, *he purged by himself* only, and that without a partner, or comforter.

1. *Without a partner*: there was none that laid a finger in the burthen of his cross to ease him: why blessed Saviour! thou hast myriads of angels waiting on thee, and can they not a little lighten thy heavy yoke? No, the angels are blessed, but they are finite and limited, and therefore unable to this expiation of sin.

But what say we of the saints? If you will believe the Rhemists, they can tell you that

that ' the sufferings of saints (sanctified in Christ's blood) have not only a forcible satisfaction for the church, and its members; but withal they are the accomplishments of the wants of Christ's passion: ' (Rhem. Coll. 1. Sect. 4.) An horrible blasphemy; as if Christ's death were not sufficient in itself, but his wants must be supplied by the satisfaction of others; my text tells me, *Christ purged by himself*; therefore not by another, but sufficiently in his own person; and as for that text they urge against us, Coloss. i. 24. *Now rejoice I in my sufferings for you, and fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake which is the church*: whence they argue these two points; 1. The want of Christ's sufferings; and, 2. The abounding of saints sufferings for the satisfaction of others. To the first, we answer, that *the afflictions of Christ*, which the apostle saith, *I fulfill*, are not meant of the afflictions which Christ suffered in his person, but in his members; thus Augustine, ' The apostle saith not, my afflictions, but Christ's, because he was a member of Christ,' who is usually said to suffer both with, and in his members. To the second, we answer, that Paul's sufferings *for his body which is the church*, served not for satisfaction, but for confirmation of their faith; thus Ambrose, Serm. 66. ' Christ's passion sufficeth to salvation, Peter and Paul's passion serve only for example; ' so then if you will have the true sense of the words, they run thus; *Now rejoice I in my sufferings for you, where by I fulfill the measure of those tribulations which remain yet to be endured of Christ in his mystical body, which I do for the body's sake, not to satisfy for it, but to confirm it, or strengthen it in the gospel of Christ*: and good reason have we to admit of this comment, otherwise, how is Christ a perfect Saviour. if any act of our redemption be left to the performance of any saint or angel? No, it is Christ, and only Christ

Jesus, and only Jesus, *Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men where-by we must be saved*, Acts iv. 12.

3. But if not angels, or saints, what say we of good works? Cannot they expiate sin? Yea, say our adversaries, they are meritorious, and applicatory, and expiatory; so here is a threefold use of them: what? hath Christ purged by himself? and is there any other means whatsoever to expiate sin? No, saith the apostle; so incompatible are these two, his grace, and our works, that *if it be of grace, it is no more of works, or else grace were no more grace; and if it be of works, it is no more grace, or else works were no more works*, Rom xi. 6. *By grace then ye are saved, not of works, lest any man should boast himself*, Eph. ii. 8, 9.

But if no purging by angels, saints, nor good works, what say we to purgatory itself? We say it is a fable; or were it an article of faith (as the pontificians affirm) let us have scripture for it; yes, saith Rufinus in his book against Luther, art. 37. *We went through fire and water*, Ps. lxxvi. 12. And Sir Thomas Moor will have more scripture yet, *I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water*, Zech. ix. 11. Here are two places for purgatory, and one saith, there is *water*, the other saith, there is *no water*; but to lay truth of both, ' I he catholick faith, resting upon divine authority believes heaven and hell, but a third place (saith Austin) we know none, neither find we in holy scripture, that there is any such place: ' neither speaks he only of places eternal that are to continue for ever, for he purposely disputes against Limbus Puciorum; and rejects all places temporary; yea, he acknowledgeth, ' There is no middle place at all; but he must needs be with the devil, that is not with Christ.' Away then with those paper walls, and painted fires, ' a bug (could standing once lay) meet only to fray

fray children: God will have no rival in sin's purge, no angel in heaven, no faints, no works on earth, no purgatory under earth, it is he himself will purge it by himself; my text affirms it (and who dares gainsay it?) that *he by himself* (by no other) *hath purged our sins*.

Thus far you have seen Christ purging without a partner; *He trod the wine-press alone, and there was none to help him*, If. lxiii. 3. But O the bitterness of this purge that admits of no help, no ease! as he had no partner to help him, so no comforter to cheer him in his so lamentable sufferings.

Some ease it is to have one or other touched with the sense of our miseries, and if they cannot help us, yet to do what they can (be it only to condole us) it were a comfortable refreshing; ay, but our Saviour finds no refreshing at all, he purged by himself without a partner, without a comforter, not any one on earth or in heaven, that afforded his poor heart any cure or cordial. *First*, Look on earth, for to them doth he address that speech, in Lam. i. 12. *Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by?* The most grievous torments find some mitigation in the supply of friends, and what friends hath our Saviour to comfort him in his torments?

1. If you say the Gentiles; I must confess he found faith in some, and a seeming favour from others; the centurion is witness of the one, of whom our Saviour himself confessed, *I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel*, Mat. viii. 10. And Pilate gives a token of the other, when *he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man*, Mat. xxvii. 24. But alas! did Pilate so favour him, as to free him? No, he fears to condemn him being innocent, and yet dares not absolve him, being so envied as he was by the Jews; what then can a little water? what can Jordan's floods? what can rivers of wine and oil

do, towards the washing of those hands, that *had power to release him*, and would not? He knew *they had delivered him of envy*, Mat. xxvii. 18. He confesses, *I find no fault in this man*, Luke xxiii. 14. He tells him that *he had power to crucify him, and he had power to loose him*, John xix. 10. and yet fondly would he wash away the guilt of his unjust sentence, with a little water on his hands; no, Pilate, that ceremony cannot wash away thy sin, that sin I mean, which thou and the Gentiles in thee committed, in delivering of Jesus *to the will of the Jews*.

2. But if delivered to the Jews, sure it is well enough; he is their countryman, kinsman, of the stock of Abraham, of the tribe of Juda, of the family of Joseph; but this rather aggravates than allays his misery, that his own people should degenerate into traitors: not a Gentile, but a Jew to be his executioner: what torment had not been a lenitive, and a recreation in comparison of this? Daniel's den, the three children's furnace, Isaiah's wooden saw, Israel's fiery serpents, the Spanish inquisition, the Romish purgatory, are all as far short in torture, as the last of them in truth, to the malice of a Jew; witness our Saviour's death, when they all conspired not only to scourge him, mock him, buffet him, slay him; but to slay him in such a manner, as to hang him on nails, and to make the cross his gibbet.

But what? no comforter amongst them all; do the Gentiles condemn him? will the Jews crucify him? and is there none to pity him? Yes; what say we of his disciples, that heard him, followed him, and were sent of him, *by two and two into every city and place, whither he himself should come*, Luke x. 1. Would you think that these *Seventy* (for they were so many in number) which for a time did his embassy *with joy*, Luke x. 17. would now have forsaken him? Yes, if you mark it, *Many of them went back, and would walk no more with him*,

him, John vi. 66. Some stumble at his doctrine, others at his passion, but all were offended, as it is written, *I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered*, Mat. xxvi. 31.

Yet if the Gentiles reject him, they do but like Gentiles who were ignorant of God; if the Jews hate and malign him, it is but their old wont of *killing the prophets*, Mat. xxiii. 31. If the disciples that are weaker, faint and waver in faith, it was no more than was said of them, *O ye of little faith!* but what say we to the twelve apostles, those secretaries of his mysteries, stewards of his mercies, almsmen, of his bounties, *will they also go away*, and leave him comfortless alone? no, can Peter say, *Master, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life*, John vi. 68. Or if he will have deeper protestations, *I am ready to go with thee*, saith Peter, *into prison and to death*, Luke xxii. 23. To death? Yes, *Though I die with thee, I will not deny thee, and thus said all his disciples*, Mat. xxvi. 35. and yet like Jonas' gourd when the sun beats hottest, how soon are they all gone, and vanished away? lo, one betrays him, another forswears him, all run from him, and leave him alone in the midst of all his enemies.

5. And yet if his apostles leave him, what say we to Mary his mother, and other his friends? These indeed wait on him, seeing, sighing, wailing, weeping; but alas! what do those tears but increase his sorrows? might he not justly say with Paul, *What mean ye to weep and to break my heart?* Acts xxi. 13. Pity, and of all other feminine pity, it is the poorest, helpless salve of misery; but howsoever it was to others, it was so far from any salve to him, as 'tis one of his greatest, tenderest sores about him: *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and your children*, Luke xxiii. 28. O see the wonder of compassion which he bears to others in his passion; he hath more

care of the women that follow him weeping, than on his own mangled self, that reels along fainting and bleeding even unto death: the tears that drop from their eyes is more to him, than all the blood in his veins; and therefore careless as it were of his own sacred person, he turns about his blessed bleeding face to the weeping women, affording them looks and words too of compassion, of consolation, *Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and your children*, Luke xxiii. 28. But O blessed Saviour! didst thou flow unto us showers of blood, and may not we drop a tear for all those purple streams of thine? Yes Lord, thou dost not here forbid us weeping, only thou turnest the stream of our tears the right way; that is to say, homewards into our own bosoms, pointing us to our sins, the truest cause of thy sufferings.

6. But as for comfort to our Saviour, whence, trow ye, may it come? If we compass the earth, the Gentiles, Jews, his disciples, apostles, Mary his own mother, and all other his friends, they are but as *Job's miserable comforters all*: but let us *go up into heaven*, John xvi. 2. and there, if any where, be his comforters indeed; alas! what comforters? If you imagine the angels, it is true they could attend him in the desert, and comfort him in the garden; but when he came to the main act of our redemption, not an angel must be seen; how, not seen? No, they must not so much as look through the windows of heaven to give him any ease at all; nor indeed were it to any purpose if they should: for who can lift up, where the Lord will cast down? O ye blessed angels! how is it that your hallelujahs cease? that your songs which you warbled at his birth, are finished at his death? that your glorious company, which are the delight of happy souls, is denied to him who is the Lord and Maker both of you and them? Why, thus it must be for our sakes: *I am full of heaviness*, said our Saviour in his type,

and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none, Psalm lxi. 20.

7. And yet if the angels be no comforters, he hath a Father in heaven that is nearer to him: *I and my Father are one*, saith our Saviour, John x. 30. and, *It is my Father that honoureth me*, John viii. 34. *It is my Father that loveth me*, John x. 17. *It is my Father that dwelleth in me*, John xiv. 10. and howsoever others forsake me, and leave me alone, as himself proclaims it, yet *I am not alone, because the Father is with me*, John xvi. 32. Is it so, sweet Saviour, whence then was that sorrowful complaint of thine, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Leo it is that first that reconciled it, and all antiquity allow of it: 'The union was not dissolved, but the beams, the influence was restrained: *affectione justitiæ*, saith Scotus, he was ever united to his Father, because he ever loved, trusted, and glorified him; but *affectione commodi*, that delight ever emergent from that divine vision, was for a time suspended, and therefore was it that his body drooped, his soul fainted, he being even as a scorched heath-ground, without any drop of dew of the divine comfort on it.

8. Yet be it that his Father now forsakes him, will he so forsake himself? O yes! he burns in the fiery furnace of affliction without all manner of refreshing; and this was it that was figured in the law by those two goats offered for the sins of the people, whereof the one was the *Scape-goat*, and the other was the *offering*: The scape-goat departed away, and was sent into the wilderness, but her companion was left alone in the torments, and made a sin-offering for the people; even so was this sacrifice of God-man, Man-God, blessed for ever, the humanity was offered, but the Divinity escaped; the humanity suffered for the sins of the world, but the Divinity departed away in the midst of sufferings, and left her sister and com-

panion all alone in the torments: thus he purged, himself only in his humanity, no other with him, all other left him; the 'Gentiles, Jews, disciples, apostles, Mary his mother, and God his Father, may he himself is bereaved of himself, the humanity of his Divinity,' if not in respect of the union, yet in respect of the consolation, when he had by himself (in his human nature without any comforter) *purged our sins*. Lev. xxvi. 10.

Thus far you have seen Christ drink the cup of his bitter pains, pure, and without mixture of any manner of ease; what now remains, but that we make some use of it?

Use. *I will take the cup of salvation*, saith David, and call upon the name of th. Lord, Psalm cxvi. 13. And what can we less? If our Saviour hath begun to us in pains, shall not we afford him our thanks? The cup of death could not pass from him, and must the cup of salvation be removed from us? *O praise him, praise him, all his hosts*, Psalm cxlviii. 2. Howsoever he was alone in his sufferings, let us all bear the burden in a song of thanksgiving, and in this song, let us singing weep, and weeping sing; our sins may draw the tears which were the cause of his sufferings, and our salvation may make us sing, which those his sufferings did effect: what needs more? he suffered by himself; the cause, our sins; the effect, our salvation; let us mourn for the one, and praise him for the other; praise him, and him alone, for he had no partner in his sufferings, nor will he have any in our thanks; he had no comforter in his miseries, nor must any share with him in the duty we owe him of praising his name: alas, have we not reason (think you) to give all the glory unto him? it was he that suffered that which we deserved, *he purged by himself* when we ourselves lay sick of sin, in peril of death and damnation; thus gracious is he to us, that when there was no other remedy for our

our recovery, then *he by himself* in our stead came and *purged our sins*.

Thus far you have seen the patient, and order now requires that we prepare the receipt; the patient was himself, the receipt is a purge, but, to confess this purge, we must crave a further time; and in the mean while, and ever remember him in your thoughts, who hath done all this for you, and the Lord make you thankful.

Had purged.]

YOU see who it is that hath freed us from sin, to wit, Christ our Saviour without any assistant; he purged by himself; but what did he by himself? do we say he purged? what need he to purge, who never committed any sin in thought, word, or deed? it is without doubt he needs not, and yet do it he will, not to clear himself, but us.

But this purge doth imply a medicine, and so we must apply it; a medicine it was, and many medicines he used for the curing of man's soul; the first by diet, when *he fasted forty days and forty nights*, Matth. iv. 2. The second by electuary, when he gave his most precious *body and blood in his last supper*, Mat. xxvi. 26. The third by sweat, when *great drops of blood issued from him falling down to the ground*, Luke xxii. 44. The fourth by plaister, when he was *spit upon by the Jews*, Mark xv. 19. The fifth by potion, when he tasted *vinegar mingled with gall*, Matth. xxvii. 34. The sixth by letting of blood, when his hands and feet were pierced, yea, when his heart-vein was stricken, and his *side gored with a spear*, John xix. 34. The last, which contains all the rest, was by purge, when by all his sufferings, and especially by his blood-shed, he *washed us from our sins*, Rev. i. 5. Here was the cure of all cures, which all the Galenists in the world may admire with reverence, that our Lord and Saviour should become our surgery, that our soul-physician should become our purger: how? not by giving us

physick, but by receiving it for us; we miserable wretches, lay sick of sin, and he our Physician hath by himself purged and delivered us of it.

Observe. But that we may the better see how this purge wrought with him, we must know, 'That purging in general is taken for any evacuation whatsoever;' and to say truth in a word, 'The evacuation of Christ's blood was the right purging of our sins.' Hence is it, that, as scriptures affirm, the blood of Christ doth redeem us, cleanse us, wash us, justify us, sanctify us: *Ye were redeemed by his blood*, 1 Pet. i. 19. and, *His blood cleanseth us from all sin*, 1 John i. 7. and, *He washed us from our sins in his blood*, Rev. i. 5. and, *Being now justified by his blood*, Rom. v. 9. and, *Therefore Jesus suffered, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood*, Hebr. xiii.

12. This blood was it that was believed by the patriarchs, witnessed by the sacrifices, shadowed in the figures of the law, expected of all the faithful from the beginning of the world; and therefore the apostle concludeth, *Altogether all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission*, Heb. ix. 22. It is true, Christ purged by his death and other his sufferings, and yet are all these contained in the shedding of his blood: this blood is the foundation of true religion, for *other foundation can no man lay. Wherefore neither was the first testament ordained without blood*, Heb. ix. 18. Nor is the New Testament otherwise sealed, *than with blood*, Mat. xxvi. 28. What needs more? *If the blood of bulls and of goats* (in the Old Testament) *sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ* (in the New Testament) *purge your consciences from dead works, to serve the living God*, Heb. ix. 13, 14. O sweet blood of our Saviour that purgeth our consciences, evacuates our dead works, restores us to our God, will bring us unto heaven!

But, O my Saviour, *Wherefore art thou red in thy apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat?* Isaiah lxiii. 2. Is it thy precious blood that hath given this hue? Yes, an hue often dipped in the wine-fat; and that we may the better see the colour, let us distinguish the times when his blood was shed for us.

Six times, saith a modern: (Adam's Crucifix.) seven times, saith Bernard, did Christ shed his blood for us; and to reduce them into order, the first was at his circumcision, when his name Jesus was given him, *Which was so named of the angel, before he was conceived in the womb,* Luke ii. 21. And was this without mystery? No, saith Bernard, for 'by the effusion of his blood he was to be our Jesus, our Saviour.' Blessed Jesus! how ready art thou for the sacrifice? What? but eight days old, and then to shed thy blood for the salvation of our souls? *Maturum hoc martyrium,* here is 'a mature martyrdom indeed.' It is a superstition took up with the Egyptians and Arabians, that 'circumcision should fright away devils.' And the Jews have a conceit not much unlike; for when the child is circumcised, one stands by with a vessel full of dust, into which they cast the præpuce: the meaning of it is, that whereas it was the curse of the serpent, *Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:* They suppose therefore the præpuce or fore-skin, being cast into the dust, the devil by that covenant eats his own meat, and so departs from the child. But howsoever they err, of this we are sure, that 'Christ delivered his flesh as a bait to Satan, held him fast with the hook of his divinity through the shedding of his blood.' This blood was at first shed at his circumcision; and we cannot imagine it a little pain, seeing the flesh was cut with a sharp stone, which made Zipporah to cry out against Moses, *Surely a bloody husband art thou to me,* Exod. iv. 25. What a love is this, that Christ newly born should so car-

ly shed his blood? but all was for our sakes, for the salvation of our souls.

2. You see one vein opened; but in his second effusion not one, but all the veins in his body fell a bleeding at once, and this was at his passion in the garden, when, as the Evangelist testifies, *He fell into an agony, and his sweat was like drops of blood, trickling down to the ground,* Luke xxii. 44. Here is a physick purgative indeed, when all his body evacuates *sweat like drops of blood:* But what? be the pleurisie never so great, how strange is the phlebotomy? it seems not to consult where the sign lies; you see all his body falls at once to sweating and bleeding; nor is the cure less strange than the physick; for we had surfeited, and it is he that purgeth; we had the fever, and it is he that sweats and bleeds for the recovery of our health. Did you ever hear of such a remedy as this? Oft-times a bleeding in the head, say physicians, is best stopt by striking a vein in the foot; but here the malady is in the foot, and the remedy in the head; we silly wretches, lay sick of sin, and Christ our Saviour purgeth it out by a *sweat like drops of blood trickling down to the ground:* here is a wonder, no violence is offered, no labour is sustained, he is abroad too in the raw air, and laid down grovelling on the cooler earth; or if all this be not enough to keep him from sweating, the night is cold (so cold that hardier soldiers were fain to have a fire within doors) and yet notwithstanding all this, *He sweats,* saith the text. How sweats? It is not *sudor diaphoreticus*, a thin faint sweat, but *grumofus*, of great drops, and those so many, so violent, as they pierce not only his skin, but clothes too, *trickling down to the ground* in great abundance; and yet may all this fall within the compass of a natural possibility. But a sweat of blood puts all reason to silence; yea, saith Hilary, 'It is against nature to sweat blood; and yet, howsoever nature stands agast, the God of nature goes thus

far, that in a cold night, which naturally draws blood inwards, he sweats without heat, and bleeds without a wound. See all his body is besprinkled with a crimson dew, the very veins and pores, not waiting the tormentors fury, pour out a shower of blood upon the sudden: foul sin that could not be cleansed save only by such a bath! what, must our surfeits be thus sweat out by our Saviour? Yes, saith Bernard, we sin, and our Saviour weeps for it, not only with his eyes, but with all the parts of his body; and why so? but to this end, 'That the whole body of his church might be purged with the tears of his whole body.' Come then, ye sons of Adam, and see your Redeemer in this heavy case; if such as be kind and loving are wont, when they come to visit their friends in death or danger, to observe their countenance, to consider their colour, and other accidents of their bodies: tell me, ye that in your contemplations behold the face of our Saviour, 'What think you when you see in him such wonderful, strange and deadly signs? our sweat, howsoever caused, is most usual in the face or forehead; but our Saviour sweats in all his body; and how then was that face of his disfigured when it stood all on drops, and the drops not of a watery sweat, but of a scarlet blood? O my heart! how canst thou but rend into a thousand pieces? O my beloved! well may our eyes shed tears at this, when his veins thus shed their blood for us.'

3. But here is yet a third effusion of blood, and that, as Bernard tells us, was 'in the nippings and tearings of his sacred cheeks: to this bears the prophet witness, Isa. 1. 6. *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to the nippers*; or as our later translation, *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair*: Whether his cheeks were torn, or his beard plucked off, some vary in opinion: Bernard thinks both might be true; or how-

soever we believe, most probable it is that neither of them could be effected without effusion of blood. And now methinks I see that face fairer than the sons of men spit on by the Jews; nor is their scorn without some cruelty; for in the next scene they exercise their fits, which that they may do with more sport to them, and spite to him, they first *blindfold him, and then smiting him on the face, they bid him read who it is that strikes him*, Luke xxii. 64. And yet, as if whiteness of their spittle, and blewness of their strokes had not caused enough colours, they once more dye his rose countenance in a bloody red; to this end do they nip his cheeks with their nails, and (as others) pluck off his hair with their fingers, whereby streams and stroaks of blood run down his cheeks, and drop down at his chin to his lower garments: O sweet face of our Saviour! what mean these sufferings, but to tell us, if ever confusion cover our face for him, that we consider then how blood and sweat thus covered his face for us?

4. But yet here's a fourth effusion at his coronation; the blows drew not blood enough from his face, and therefore the thorns must fetch more from his head; *If mine adversary, says Job, should write a book against me, surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown unto me*, Job xxxi. 36. The Jews instead of writing a book, they wreath a crown, and see how our Saviour binds it to him; not only on his shoulder as a cross to bear it, but on his head too, as a crown to triumph in it: but neither is it for triumph only, but for torture; it is a crown woven of boughs, decked with thorns, and drops of blood in lieu of precious stones. 'O Jesus! was that spittle thy ointment, that reed thy scepter, those thorns thy crown, that purple dyed with blood, thy royal robes?' Unthankful people, thus watered with his blood, that bring forth nothing but briars and thorns to crown him!

but wherefore thorns, save only to crush into his tender head? and to this purpose they do not only flick his head full of them, but after the putting it on, to fasten the crown the better, they *strike him on the head with their reeds, or canes*. Matthew xxvii. 30. See here *thorns*, not like ours, but (as the country afforded) stronger and greater, to pierce his skull with more ease; and see here *canes*, not as ours, but heavier and solidier (as Jewry had plenty of them) to beat and hammer that crown of thorns deeper and deeper into his head. O then imagine, what streams of blood gushed out, when all those sharp prickles were shuffin? no less than a *shower of blood* now rained on his neck, his face, his shoulders; and all this for us, 'to make us members of that head, his head thus bleeds down upon all his members.' (Bernard on the passion of Christ.)

And his head-vein being opened, there is a fifth effusion of blood issuing out of his body; this was caused by the whips wherewith the merciless tormentors fetched blood from his sacred sides: is not here matter for our meditation to work on? Consider (I pray you) how rude are the hangmen that strip our Saviour of his garments, and then go about to bind his holy body to a pillar? he (poor man!) stands at the post alone, without any friends to comfort, or eye to compassionate him, whilst they strike on their lathes, redouble their strokes, again and again fall upon him afresh, as if they would not leave a drop of blood in all his body: but stay, what justice in all this? the law of Moses commanded, that malefactors should be beaten with whips, Deut. xxv. 2, 3. and *it shall be if the wicked be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault by a certain number: what number? forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed, lest if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many*

stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee. Thus indeed were Jews tied, but the Gentiles neither bound by law, nor moved with compassion, far exceed this number; I have read, that he received no less than 5400 stripes; which if we consider these things, is not altogether improbable. First, the law of beating, that every guilty should be stricken by every one of the soldiers, a free-man with staves, and a bond-man with whips. Secondly, the cause of this law, that the body of him that was to be crucified, should be disfigured, that the nakedness should not move the beholders to any dishonest thoughts, when they should see nothing pleasing or beautiful, but all things torn, and full of commiseration. Thirdly, the purpose of Pilate, who hoped to spare his life by this so great cruelty used against him. Fourthly, The great care and haste the priests used in carrying off the cross, lest Christ should have died before he was crucified: every one of these reasons argue an unreasonable whipping, which our poor Saviour endured. 'But (O joy of the angels, and glory of saints!) who hath thus disfigured thee? who hath thus defiled thee with so many bloody blows? certainly they were not thy sins, but mine, that have thus evil intreated thee: it was love and mercy that compass thee about, for I should have suffered, but to prevent this, thy mercy moves thee, and so thou takest upon thee all miseries.'

But all this would not satisfy the Jews, *Behold the man*, John xix. 5, 6. said Pilate to them; when he thought to have pacified their wrath by that doleful sight, but this nothing moved them, though (presently after) it moved rocks and stones to thiver in pieces: behold then a sixth effusion of blood, when *his hands and feet were pierced through with nails*: he bears indeed upon his shoulders an heavy and weighty cross of fifteen foot long; which must needs (say some) cause a great and grie-

grievous wound: but (to omit that which is questionable here) here be those woful sufferings; now come the barbarous inhuman hang-men, and begin to loose his hands that were tied to the post, to tie them to a (worse pillory) the cross; then strip they off his gore-glued cloths, which did so cleave to his mangled battered back, that they pull off cloths and skin together; nay, yet more (and how can I say it without tears for sin?) the cross is ready, and nothing wanting but a measure for the holes; down therefore they lay him on it, and though the print of his blood gives them a true length, yet spitefully they take it longer, that so they may stretch and rack him on the cross, till you may tell his bones, Psa. xxii. 17. And now all fitted, his hands and feet are bored, the greatness of whose wounds David forethrew by those words, *They digged my hands and my feet*, Psalm xxii. 16. And well may we think so, for (as ecclesiastical history reports) so big were the very nails, that Constantine made of them an helmet and a bridle. O then what pain is this, when all the weight of his body must hang on four nails: and they to be driven (not into the least sensible parts, but) thro' his hands and his feet, the most sinewy, and therefore more sensible parts of all others whatsoever; yet to hang thus for a time were (it may be) somewhat tolerable, but thus he hangs till he dies, and so the longer he continues, the wider go his wounds, and the frether is his torture. And now (my brethren) *behold and see, if there were ever any sorrow like unto this sorrow*: La. i. 12. Alas! what else appears in him, but 'bleeding veins, bruised shoulders, scourged sides, furrowed back, harrowed temples, digged hands and feet?' digged, I say not with small pins, but with rough boistrous nails, and how then that the blood from

those hands and feet thus digged, and digged through? *O, I am the rose of Sharon*, Canticles ii. 1. It is truly said of Christ; 'Look on one hand, and on the other, and you may find roses on both; look on one foot, and on the other, and you may find roses in either (Bern. on Chr. pass. c. 41.):' in a word, look all over his body, and it is all over rosy, and ruddy in blood.

Can we any more? yes, after all these showers of blood, here is one effusion; for after his death, *One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water*, John xix. 34. The soldier that gave this wound (say they) was a blind man; but our Saviour's blood springing out on his eyes, restored him to his sight; and so he became a convert, a bishop, and a martyr*: a strange cure, where the physician must bleed; but so full of vertue was this blood, that by it we are all saved. And yet (O Saviour!) why didst thou flow to us in so many streams of blood? one drop had been enough for the world, but thy love is without measure. Physicians are usually liberal of other mens blood, but sparing of their own; here it is not so: for instead of the patient's arm, it is the physician's own side that bleeds; instead of a lancet here is a spear, and that in the hand of a blind chirurgeon; yet as blind as he was, how right doth he hit the very vein of his heart? that heart where never dwelt deceit; see how it runs *blood and water* for our sins; here is the fountain of his sacraments, the beginning of our happiness: O gate of heaven! O window of paradise! O place of refuge! O tower of strength! O sanctuary of the just! O flourishing bed of the spouse of Solomon! who is not ravished at the running of this stream! methinks I still see the blood gushing out of his sides, more freely and fully than these sweet golden

* Lorginus bishop of Cappadocia, according to Herk. See Contemplations on Christ's passion.

streams which run out of Eden to water the whole world. But is it his heart's blood? what? keeps he nothing whole without him, nor within him? his apostles are scattered in the garden, his garments at the cross, his blood how many wheres? his skin they rent with their whips, his ears with their blasphemies, his back with their furrows, his hands and feet, with their nails, and will they yet have his heart too cloven with a spear? what a wonderful thing is this, that after all these sufferings he must have one wound more? 'Why (Lord) what means this open cleft and wound within thee? what means this stream and river of thy heart's blood? O it is I that sinned, and to wash it away, his heart runs blood and water in abundance.

Lo here those seven effusions of our Saviour's blood, the first at his circumcision, the second in the garden, the rest when his cheeks were nipped, his head crowned, his back scourged, his hands and feet nailed, his side opened with a spear, whence came out an issue of blood and water.

Uz. And be our sins thus purged? Lord, in what miserable case lay we, that Christ our Saviour must endure all this for us! were our sins infinite, for which none could satisfy but our infinite God? were not our iniquities as the sands, for which no less than an ocean of blood could serve to cover them? sure here is a motive (if nothing else) to draw from us the confession of our manifold sins. 'Lord, we have sinned, we have sinned grievously, heavily, and with a mighty hand; and what now remains, but that we never cease weeping, crying, praying, beseeching, till we get our pardon sealed in the blood of Christ.' O beloved! let me intreat you for Christ's sake, for his blood's sake, for his death's sake, that you will repent you of your sins which have put him to these torments: and to this end I shall intreat you thus to order your repentance: First, (after confession of your manifold sins) look upon him

whom you have pierced; and by your meditation supposing him to ly afore you, weep and weep over him, whom you see by your sins thus clothed in his blood. Why thus shall it be with the house of David, Zech. xii. 10, 11. *I will pour upon the house of David (saith God) and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace, and of supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one that mourneth for his only son; and be sorry for him, as one that is sorry for his first-born: in that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.* What is the house of David? and what are the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but the elect people of God? And if you be of that number, then do you look on him whom you have pierced, and mourn for him, or mourn over him, as one that mourneth for his only son, yea, be sorry for him, or be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. Is it not time, think you? Do you not see how every part of our Saviour bleeds afore you, his Head bleeds, his face bleeds, his arms bleed, his hands bleed, his heart bleeds, his back bleeds, his belly bleeds, his thighs bleed, his legs bleed, his feet bleed; and what makes all this blood-shed but our sins, our sins? O that this day, for this cause we would make a *great mourning as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon!* O weep, or if you will not weep for him, yet weep for yourselves, and your own sins: alas, have you not cause? your sins were his murderers, your hands by your sins were imbrued in his blood.

2. Stay not here, but when you have mourned and wept over your Saviour, then hate those sins that wrought this evil on your Saviour: which that you may do effectually, send your thoughts afar off, and see your Saviour in his circumcision, in the garden; and when you have done
so,

So, then follow him a little further; behold the tears in his eyes, and the clodded blood that came from him, when his cheeks were nipped, his head crowned, his back scourged, his hands and feet nailed, his side opened; and then, O then see if you can love those sins that have done all this villainy! Love them, said I? no if you have any share in Christ, I hope you will rather be revenged on your sins; rather you will every one say, 'O my pride, and my stubbornness, and my looseness, and my uncleanness, and my drunkenness; these were the nails, and the whips, and the spear that drew blood from my Saviour; therefore let me be for ever revenged of this proud, stubborn, rebellious heart of mine own; let me be for ever loath my sin, because it brought all this sorrow on my Saviour.' Is not this ordinary with men? Should any one murder your father or friend, whom you highly regarded and honoured, would you brook his sight, or endure his company? Nay, would not your hearts rise against him? would not you prosecute the law to the uttermost? and if you might be the executioner, would you not wound him and mangle him, and at every stroke cry out, 'Thou wast the death of my father, thou wast the death of my father.' And is the heart of a man thus enraged against him, that hath but murdered his friend, or his father? O then how should our hearts be transported with infinite indignation (not against the man, but) against sin that hath shed the precious blood of your father, your master, your God, your king, your Saviour? O follow, follow after these sins with an hue and cry. bring them to the bar, set them before the tribunal of that great judge of heaven, and cry 'Justice, Lord; justice a-

gainst these sins of mine: these slew my Saviour, Lord, slay them; these crucified my Saviour, Lord crucify them.' Why thus pursue and never leave them, until if it possibly may be, you see these sins bleed their last; never think you have done enough, but still give your corruptions one home-thrust more, and confess your sins once more and say, 'Lord, this pride, and this stubbornness, and this looseness of heart, these are they that killed my Saviour, and I will be revenged of them.'

3. Stay not here neither, but when you have mourned for your sins, and fought revenge on them, then by faith cast them all on the Lord Jesus Christ; ease your own souls of them, and cast your care on him that careth for you all. Certainly, there is no way to wash you clean from your sin, but only by Christ's blood, and how must you apply this but by faith? Now then, in the last place have faith, rene * your soul, as it were, in the blood of this immaculate Lamb, and though you are polluted and defiled, yet questionless the blood of Jesus Christ will purge you from all sin. *If the blood of bulls and goats, saith the apostle, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works, to serve the living God,* Heb. ix. 13, 14. Papists may talk of a purgatory; but here is the only purging of sin, in *that fountain that is laid open for the house of Judah to wash in;* and I pray you mark it, it is not only for justification, but being applied by faith, as effectual for sanctification; not only for the expiation of sin, that it be not laid to your charge,

* This is a very bold figure; and is perhaps the boldest that is to be met with any where in this Book: I do not oblige this to censure the worthy Author, whose works are equally above my praise or censure, but only to caution the reader (if indeed he needs to be cautioned) against the misapplication of this, or any the like, figure of speech. When gaily writers use such uncommon expressions, it is only when they are transported with their subject; but the plain meaning must never be forgotten.

but withal to purge your consciences from dead works to *serve the living God*. O then (as you tender your souls) believe, and cast yourselves upon Christ, for salvation and for pardon of sins: do you not see him bleeding on the cross? Do you not hear him graciously offering to receive your sin-wearied souls into his bleeding wounds? What should you do then but cast yourselves with all the spiritual strength that you can (at least with infinite longings, and most hearty desires) into the bosom of our Saviour? say with yourselves, 'The fountain is opened, and here will we bath for ever: Come life or come death, come heaven or come hell, come what come can, here will we stick for ever;' Nay, if you must perish, tell God and man, angels and devils, they shall pluck you out of the hands, and rent you from between the arms of your blessed bleeding Redeemer, your soul-purging Saviour. Thus if you believe, you need not to droop for your sins, but to go on with comfort to everlasting happiness: the blood of Christ (no question) will make way for you into heaven: yea, (saith the apostle) *By the blood of Jesus we may boldly enter into the holy places, by the new and living way which he hath prepared for us, through the veil which is his flesh*. Heb. x. 19, 20. Such is the blessed fruit of this blood, and the Lord make it effectual unto us, to bring us unto heaven, even for his sake, who by himself thus purged our sins.

You see the purge given and taken, only a time it must have, and then follows the evacuation: he purged: what? the ill humour is sin; the extent of it, our sin, of both these together at our next meeting. Now the Lord so prepare us, that this purge may work in us the everlasting welfare, and health of our souls.

Our sins.]

SIN is our sickness, and to cure us of it, the law yields corrosives, the gos-

pel lenitives, but especially Christ yields that physick purgative, which evacuates sin. To consider Christ as a man of sorrow, and not a Saviour of sinners, were but a melancholick contemplation; to behold his wounds, and not so to think on them as they were our salves, adds but more sorrows to our other miseries; but when we call to mind that his blood was our ransom, that his stripes were our cures, then with all our hearts we pray, *His blood be upon us, and our children*. And why not? *His blood*, saith the apostle, *speaks better things than the blood of Abel*, Heb. xii. 24. For Abel's blood cried revenge, but Christ's blood speaks mercy; and so to our comfort be it spoken, if God heard the servant, he will much rather hear the son: yea, if he heard his servant for spilling, how much more will he hear his Son for saving and regaining our souls? In the words are two parts.

1. The ill humour evacuated, Sin.

2. The extent of this sin, it is mine, yours, ours, every ones.

What is it but sin which our Saviour purged? this is that ill humour derived from our parents, inherent in ourselves, imputed to our Saviour, and therefore, saith the prophet, *he bare the sins of many*. Isaiah liii. 12. to whom agrees the apostle, *that his own self bare our sins in his own body*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. What a load then lay on his shoulders, when all our sins, the sins of all the world were fastened upon him. One man's sin is enough to sink him into hell; and had not our Saviour intervened, every one of us had known by a woful experience, how heavy sin would have been upon the soul of each man; but, O happy we! the snare is broken, and we are delivered. To prevent sin's effect, Christ Jesus hath purged and washed it away.

And is this all the matter therefore our Saviour suffered? was sin all the disease of which he laboured, when he had by himself purged? Yes, it was all, and if we

consider it rightly, we may think it enough to cause sufferings in him, when merely for its sake God was so wroth against us. O loathsome sin, more ugly in the sight of God, than is the foulest creature in the sight of man! he cannot away with it, nor (so righteous are his ways) could he save his own elect because of it, but by killing his own Son: imagine then what a sickness is sin, when nothing but the blood of the Son of God could cure it; imagine what a poison is sin, when nothing but a spiritual mithridate compounded and confected of the best blood that ever the world had, could heal it: we need not any further to consider its nature, but only to think of it how hateful it was to God, how hurtful to his Son, how damnable to men.

Use 1. And was it sin he purged? 1. This may teach us how hateful sin is, that put him thus to his purge: every sin is a nail, a thorn, a spear, and every sinner a Jew, a Judas, a Pilate: howsoever then we may seek to shift it in others, yet are we found the principal in this act ourselves; you know it is not the executioner that properly kills the man, sin only is the murderer, yea, our sins only are the crucifiers of the Lord of glory; yea, if you will please to hear me, I will yet say more, our sins did not only crucify him, but do *crucify him afresh*, Heb. vi. 6. and herein how far do we exceed the cruelty of the Jews? then his body was passible and mortal, but now it is glorified and immortal; they knew not what they did, *For had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8. but we know well enough what we do and say too; they buried Christ in the earth, and *the third day he rose again from the dead*; but we, through sin, so bury him in oblivion, that not once in three days, three weeks he ariseth or shineth in our hearts; O shame of Christians to forget so great a mercy! O sin past shame to crucifie afresh the Son of God! think of it, be-

loved, sin is the death of Christ, and would you not hate him that kills your brother, your father, your master, your king, your God? Beware then of sin, that does it all at a blow! and if you are tempted to it, suppose with yourselves that you saw Christ Jesus coming towards you, wrapt in lincens, bound with a kercher, and crying after you in this ghastly manner: 'Beware, take heed what you do; once have your sins most vilely murdered me, but now seeing my wounds are whole again, do not, I beseech you, rub and revive them with your multiplied sins; pity, pity me your Jesus, save me your Saviour, once have I died, and had not that one death been sufficient, I would have died a thousand deaths more to have saved your souls, why then do you sin again to renew my sufferings?' O my Saviour, who will not cease to sin that but *hears thy voice in the gardens? Lo, the companions hearken unto thy voice, cause me to hear it*, Cant. viii.

13. It is I that have sinned, and if this be the fruit of it, let me rather be torn of beasts, be devoured of worms, be violently pulled or haled with racks, than wittingly, or wilfully commit a sin.

Use 2. This may teach us what was the end, and meaning, and intent of Christ in his sufferings. It was to purge away sin, and therefore our faith must chiefly eye that; without this, the contemplation of Christ's death, or the meditation of the story of his sufferings, and of the greatness of them, will be altogether unprofitable. Christians, learn this for ever; that faith which is true, saving, justifying faith, it chiefly minds, and is most taken up with the main scope and drift of all Christ's sufferings, which is to obtain forgiveness of sins in Christ crucified. This was the true end of Christ's death, *To be a propitiation for sin, to bear our sins on the tree; he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*. This was the plot which God by an ancient de-

ignment aimed at in the sufferings of Christ; and thus our faith must take it up: O let our faith look mainly to this design, and plot of God and Christ in his sufferings, to satisfy for our sins, and to justify us sinners. Surely this intent of Christ in all that he did or suffered, is that welcome news, and the very spirit of the gospel, which true faith preys and seizeth on.

Secondly. He purged sin; whose? but our sin: and this tells us of the universality of this gracious benefit, together with its limitation.

1. Of the universality: *He tasted of death for every man*, Heb. ii. 9. and, *He gave himself a ransom for all men*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. and, *He purged our sins*, saith my text; what, ours only? No, saith the apostle, *He is the propitiation not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world*, 1 John ii. 2. You will say, all do not actually receive the fruit of his death: you say indeed truly; but I wonder thro' whose default: our blessed Saviour, what is he but like a royal prince, who having many of his subjects in captivity of thralldom under a foreign enemy, pays a full ransom for every one of them, and then sending forth his ambassadors, he woos them to return to their home, and to enjoy their liberty; some there are that reject the offer, they will rather serve the enemy than return to the freedom of their Lord; and are these all that thanks they give their Redeemer? O sweet Saviour! he made upon the cross a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the world; but not all receive the benefit, because many by their own demerit have made themselves unworthy; and yet howsoever some despite liberty; *Is the arm of the Lord shortened?* Numb. xi. 23. No, see his arms spread on the cross to embrace all; and here is the universality of this gracious benefit.

Use. The use hereof is full of comfort: * If any man, any sinner, will now come

in with a truly penitent soul thirsting heartily for Christ Jesus, and resolve unfeignedly to take his yoke upon him, there is no number or notoriousness of sin that can possibly hinder his gracious entertainment at God's mercy-seat. O then how heinously do they offend, who refuse to take Christ Jesus offered thus universally? If you ask, who are they? I answer, They are offenders on both hands; 1. Those that too much despair. 2. Those that too much presume: To begin with the latter.

1. Some there are, that howsoever Christ, and heaven, and salvation be offered unto them, yet so close do they stick and adhere to their sins, that they are loath to leave them, and they hope God is so merciful, that they can have Christ and their sins too. Alas! deceive not yourselves, though the dearness, and sweetness, and freeness, and generality of Christ's offers be a doctrine most true, and we propound it unto you as a motive and encouragement to bring you in; yet not so much as one drop of all that bottomless depth of Christ's mercy and bounty doth as yet belong unto any that ly in the state of unregenerateness, or in any kind of hypocrisy whatsoever. Away then with this presumption, and bethink you what a grievous and fearful sin you commit time after time, and day after day in neglecting so great a salvation, by chusing, upon a free offer of his soul-saving blood, to cleave rather to a lust (O horrible indignity!) than to Christ Jesus blessed for ever: what height and perfection of madness is this, that whereas a man, but renouncing his base, rotten, transitory pleasures might have Christ Jesus, and with him a full and free discharge of hell-pains, a sure and known right to heaven's joys; yet should in cold blood most wickedly and willingly, after so many intreaties, invitations and offers, refuse this mighty change? Heaven and earth may be astonished, angels and all creatures may justly be amazed at this

prodigious sottishness and monstrous madness of such miserable men! they are the words of a late divine; 'The world, (saith he) is wont to call God's people precise fools, because they are willing to sell all they have for that one pearl of great price; to part with profits, pleasures, preferments, their righthand, their right eye, every thing, any thing, rather than to leave Jesus Christ: but who, do you think, now are the true and great fools of the world? and who are likeliest one day to *groan for anguish of spirit, and say within themselves, This is he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach; we fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour, now is he numbered amongst the children of God, and his lot is amongst the saints,* Wild. v. 3, 4. Nay, if once come to this, with what infinite horror, and restless anguish will this conceit rent a man in pieces, and gnaw upon his conscience, when he considers in hell that he hath lost heaven for a lust; and whereas he might at every sermon had the Son of God his husband for the very taking, and have lived with him for ever in unspeakable bliss; yet, neglecting so great salvation, must now lie in unquenchable flames without all ease or end. Sure it is the highest honour that can be imagined, that the Son of God should make suit unto sinful souls to be their husband, and yet so it is; *He stands at the door and knocks,* Rev. iii. 20. if you will give him entrance, he will bring himself and heaven into your hearts: *We are Christ's ambassadors,* saith the apostle, *as tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God,* 2 Cor. v. 20. We are Christ's spokes-men, that I may so speak, to woo you and win you unto him; now what can you say for yourselves, that you stand out? Why come you not in? If the devil would give you leave to speak out, and in plain terms, one would say, I had rather be damned than leave my drunken-

ness; another, I love the world better than Jesus Christ; a third, I will not part with my ease and gainful trade of usury for the treasure hid in the field; and so on; so that upon the matter, you must needs all confess that you hereby judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, that you are wilful bloody murderers of your own souls: nay, and if you go on without repentance, you may expect that the hellish gnawing of conscience for this one sin of refusing Christ, may perhaps hold scale with the united horrors of all the rest whatsoever. O then make haste out of sin, and come, come to Christ, so freely offered unto you! hark how he calls, 'Come unto me, all sinners; see my arms spread, my heart open. O how gladly would I entertain you, if you would come unto me: here is a general invitation indeed, all men, all sinners, of all estates, of all kinds, of all conditions, whosoever you are, he keeps open house for you, Come and welcome.

Secondly, They offend on the other side, who after invitation come not through a kind of unmannerly modesty, or bashful despair: some there are, that may perhaps go so far as to acknowledge their sins, and to confess that without Christ they are utterly undone, and everlastingly damned; that may be ravished with the thoughts and apprehensions of this invitation of Christ, and would ever think themselves happy if they had their hungry souls filled with Christ Jesus; but yet so it is, that (considering their manifold grievous sins, sins of a scarlet die, of an horrid stain, against knowledge, against conscience, and that which troubles them most, for all these sins, their sorrow being so little, and poor, and scant, and in no proportion answerable to them) they cannot, dare not, will not meddle with any mercy, or believe that Christ Jesus in any ways belongs unto them. To these I speak, or rather let them hear our Saviour himself speak to them; *Whosoever*

*will, (saith he) let him come, and drink of this water of life freely: Rev. xxi. Yea, those that think themselves farthest off, he bids them come. Matth. xi. 28. Come, all that are weary and heavy-laden: If they find sin a burthen, then Christ invites them, they (whosoever they are) that stand at the staff's end, he desires them to lay aside their weapons and come in; or if they will not do it, he lays his charge on them, for this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ: 1 John iii. 23. Nay, he counts it a sin worse than the sin of Sodom, a crying sin, not to come in when the gospel is proclaimed; and therefore let them never pretend their sins are great and many, but rather (because of his offer, invitation, and command, it being without any restraint of person, or sin, except that against the holy Ghost) if they will not come in, and cast themselves upon Christ, let them say, it is not the greatness of their sins, but a willingness to be still in their sins, which hinders them; or otherwise let them know, that sins, when men are only sensible of them, should be the greatest encouragement, (rather than discouragement) to bring them in to our Saviour: *These that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick: Matth. ix. 12.* Is it not for the honour of a physician to cure great diseases? A mighty God and Saviour loves to do mighty things; therefore in any case let them come in, and the greater sinners they are, no question the greater glory shall Christ have by their coming. and indeed to take away all scruple, it is a maxim most true, That he which is truly weary of his sins, hath a sound, seasonable, and comfortable calling to lay hold upon Christ. Matth. xi. 28. Do they feel the heavy load of their sins? Just then is Christ ready to take off *the burthen*; do they thirst after righteousness? Just then is the *fountain of the water of life* set wide open unto them: Rev. xxi. 6. are they contrite*

and humble in spirit? Just then are they become *thrones for the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity to dwell in for ever.* Isa. lvii. 15. O then come and welcome! Christ excepts none that will not except themselves, *He died for all, and he would have all men to be saved.*

But yet let us be courteous: secondly, he purged *our sins, and ours*] with a limitation; the use of physick (we say) consists in application; and howsoever our Saviour hath purged our sins; yet this purge of his is nothing beneficial to us, unless there be some means to apply it. As then it is in all other physick, so in this; we must first take it; secondly, keep it.

1. Take it; for as the best plaister if not laid to, can cure no wound: so Christ himself, and all his precious merits are of no vertue to him that will not apply them by faith: when you hear the gospel preached, believe it on your parts; believe Christ is yours; believe that he lived and died, and sorrowed, and suffered, and all this for you, to purge your souls from your sins.

2. But having taken it, you must secondly keep it; as men take physick, not only in belief that it will do them good, but in hope to keep it by the vertue and strength of the retentive parts: so we take Christ by faith, but we retain him by holiness: these two, Faith and Holiness, are those two bonds wherewith Christ is united unto us, and we unto Christ: so that if we be of this number, then truly may we say that *he purged our sins*: for he both died for us, and by vertue of our faith and holiness through him, his death is applied to us, to us I say not in any general acceptation. but as we are of the number of his saints; for we had sinned, and they were *our sins*] only that he effectually purged, and washed away.

Use. And this lesson may afford us this use, that howsoever the free-grace, and mercy and goodness of Christ Jesus is revealed and offered to all men, universally, yet our

Saviour takes none but such as are willing to take upon them his yoke; he gives himself to none but such as are ready to sell all and follow him: he saves none but such as deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world: in a word, he purgeth none, or cleanseth none by his blood from all sin, but such as walk in the light, as God is in the light; who make conscience of detesting and declining all sins, and sincerely set their hearts and hands with love and careful endeavour to every duty enjoined them; why, these are the men only to whom his death is effectual; and therefore, as we mean to partake of his merits, or to have good by his death, let us become new creatures. It is true indeed and we cannot but maintain it, that to justification nothing but faith is required; but this caution must be added, it must be a faith that purifies the heart, that works an universal change, that shews itself in the fruits: if therefore any of us would come in, let us have ready our answer, as a late divine speaks, the dialogue betwixt Christ and a true Christian on this manner: First, (saith he) when God hath enlightened the eyes of a man, that he can see where this treasure is, what then? Why, (saith the Christian) I am so inflamed with the love of it, that I will have it whatsoever it cost me: Yea, (saith Christ) but there is a price upon it, it must cost thee dear, a great deal of sorrow, and trouble, and crosses, and afflictions: Tush, tell me not of price, (saith the Christian) whatsoever I have shall go for it, I will do any thing for it, that God will enable me: why, (saith Christ) wilt thou curb thine affections? wilt thou give up thy life? wilt thou be content to sell all thou hast? I will do it (saith the Christian) with all my heart, I am content to sell all that I have, nothing is so dear unto me but I will part with it, my right-hand, my right-eye: nay, if hell itself should stand between me and Christ, yet would I pass

through it unto him. This (beloved) this is that violent affection which God puts into the hearts of his children, that they will have Christ whatsoever it cost them: yet understand me, I pray you: it is not to sell our houses, or lands, or children, but our sins that I mean: the Lord Jesus and one lust cannot lodge together in one soul: no, if we are but once truly incorporated into Christ, we must take him as our husband and Lord; we must love, honour, and serve him, we must endeavour after sanctification, purity, new obedience, ability to do, or suffer any thing for Christ; we must consecrate all the powers and possibilities of our bodies and souls to do him the best service we can; we must grieve and walk more humbly, because we can do no better; and thus if we do, tho' I cannot say but still we shall sin so long as we live on this earth, yet here is our comfort, 1 John ii. 1, 2. [*We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. I say, for our sins*] effectually, if we believe in his name, for it was for us he died, and they were our sins he purged, and this is that great benefit we receive from our Saviour, in that *he by himself hath purged our sins.*]

And now our sins being purged, our souls recovered, I may well end this text, only I shall give it one visit more and do farewell.

You see the malady, *sin,*] the remedy, *a purge,*] the physician, *he,* the patient, *himself,*] *ourselves,*] for our infirmities were laid on him, and his sores became our sores, by whose vertue we are healed. Bless we then God for the recovery of our souls; and be we careful for the future of any relapse whatsoever: these relapses are they we had need to fear indeed, for in them the diseases are more dangerous, sins are more pernicious, and men become *seven times more the children of Satan than ever they were before,* Mat. xii. 44. Now then

then we are healed, be we studious to preserve it all the days of our life, and we shall find at our death, that he that *purged our sins* will save our souls; we need not any other purgatory after death; no, when our souls shall take their flights from our

bodies, then are the angels ready to conduct them to his kingdom: and thither may we come for his sake, and his only, who *by himself* (in his own person) *kath purged our sins*. Amen.

H E A V E N ' s H A P P I N E S S .

Luke xxiii. 43. *To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

HE that purged our sins is here disposing of paradise, at the same time when he hung on the cross, even giving up the ghost, he is dealing crowns and kingdoms to a poor penitent soul: thus like a glorious sun that breaks through the watry clouds ere it appear unto us, our Saviour, the Sun of righteousness, shoots forth his rays of majesty through all his sufferings on a dejected sinner. Two malefactors suffer with him; the one *rails on him, saying, If thou be Christ save thyself and us*: but the other prays to him, *Lord, remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom*. In the midst of his thraldom he proclaims his kingdom, and whom he sees a captive, he believes a Lord: *Lord, remember me*; is it not strange, that thro' so many, such thick clouds of misery, this dying thief should behold his glory? but where grace aboundeth, what marvel is it? *The natural man knoweth not the things of God, but he that is spiritual discerneth all things*, 1 Cor. ii. 15. No sooner was this penitent thief converted a Christian, but on a sudden, even on the very rack of torture he confesseth himself a sinner, and Christ his Saviour, and therefore desires to be remembered of him when he comes to heaven. Thus pouring out his soul in prayer the 'Bridegroom that became an harp, saith Bernard, (his cross being the wood; himself stretcht on it, the strings; and his

words, the sound) hark how he warbles the most heavenly musick that was ever chanted to a departing soul, *To day shalt thou be with me in paradise*.

The words are a gospel, such as the angels brought to the shepherds, Luke ii. 10. *Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy*. Here is tidings, good tidings; joy, and great joy, the greatest happiness that could ever befall a mortal, now waits on a malefactor, at that time when the execution was a doing, death approaching, and the horrors of hell laying hold upon him; when a word of comfort would have been most seasonable, *like apples of gold in pictures of silver*, Prov. xxvi. 11. then comes our Saviour (as a messenger with a pardon) and he bids him be of good cheer, there was happiness towards him; when? *to day*; what? *thou shalt be with me*; where? *in paradise*. Not a word but speaks comfort to the afflicted soul; be ye howsoever afflicted for the present, yet there shall be a change, and the more so sweeten it, Here is the celerity, *to day*. Certainty, *thou shalt be*. Society, *with me*. *Ubi*, or place, where all joy is enjoyed, *in paradise*. These are those four heads that issue out of Eden; may God give a blessing to the watering, that you may bear good fruit till you are planted in that garden whercof it is spoken, *To day shalt thou be with me in paradise*. We begin with the

certainty of this promise, *Thou shalt be, &c. Thou shalt be.*]

TO this purpose was that asseveration, *Verily, verily I say unto thee.* Nor is it enough that he affirms it, but he assures it, *ese, thou shalt be.* Will and shall is for the king, and what is he less that bestows kingdoms on his servants? Here was a poor man desires only to be remembered of him, and instead of remembering him, he tells him he shall be with him; how? but as a co-heir of his kingdom. Blessed thief, that had such a gift, and that made unto him with such assurance as this was! it is the promise of our Saviour, who to put him out of all doubt, he tells him it shall be so, *Thou shalt be, with me in paradise.* Whence observe,

Observ. 'That salvation may be made sure to a man.' If you would needs know the means, howsoever it was true in this thief, it is not by any immediate suggestion or revelation; Christ is now in heaven, and the holy Ghost works not by enthusiasms or dreams: 'The assurance of our salvation depends not upon revelation, but on the promises of the gospel;' there then must we search and see, and if our hearts be rightly qualified, thence may we draw that fulness of persuasion with Abraham, who *staggered not at God's promises, being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able to perform,* Rom. iv. 21. This doctrine we have confirmed by David, Ps. xxxv. 3. *Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.* By Peter in the 2 Pet. i. 10. *Make your election sure.* By Paul in the 1 Cor. ix. 26. *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly.* From all which we may argue, David would never pray for that which could not be; nor would Peter charge us with a duty which stood not in possibility to be performed; nor would Paul serve God at random, uncertain whether he should obtain any good, or prevent any mischief; no, but as one that was sure, that by so doing he should attain

everlasting life, and without so doing he could not avoid eternal death. We may then be sure, if conditions rightly concur; and seeing this is a point we would all be glad to know, that we are *sure to be saved,* I shall beg others help, God's assistance, and your patience, till we have opened the windows, and given you a light of the lodging, where securely our souls may rest at noon, Cant. i. 7.

Some lay the order thus, 'That to assure us of heaven, we must be assured of Christ; and, to assure us of Christ, we must be assured of faith; and, to assure us of faith, we must be assured of repentance, and to assure us of repentance, we must be assured of amendment of life.'

Others tell us of more evidences, and we shall reduce them to these heads; 'The testimony of our spirits, and the testimony of God's Spirit:' it is not our spirit alone, nor God's Spirit alone makes this certificate, but both concurring; and thus Paul tells us, Rom. viii. 16. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*

1. Our first assurance then, is, the testimony of our spirit; and this witnesseth two ways: by inward tokens, and outward fruits.

Inward tokens are certain special graces of God imprinted in the spirit of a man, as, *godly sorrow, desire of pardon, love of righteousness, faith in Christ, for he that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself,* saith the apostle, Jo. v. 10.

Outward fruits, are, all good deeds, holy duties; new obedience, and hereby we are sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments, 1 John ii. 3. To say then we are sure of heaven, and to live a life fitter for devils, what a fond saying is this? No, if we have a true testimony we must be of good lives; it is our holiness, and justice, and mercy, and truth that will be our best assurance; and so the apostle assures us; *If you do these things ye shall never*

never fall, 2 Pet. i. 10. See more of this in Media, Self-trial, Sect. 8. page 138.

2. Our second and best assurance, is, the testimony of God's Spirit, which sometimes may suggest and testify to the sanctified conscience, thus, or, in the like manner, *Thou shalt be saved, thou shalt be with me in paradise.*

But here I must satisfy two doubts: 1. 'By what means the Spirit of God gives this particular assurance? 2. How a man may discern betwixt the assurance of this Spirit, and the illusion of Satan who is the spirit of lies.'

To the first, we say, the means is either by an immediate revelation, or by a particular application of the promises in the gospel in form of an experimental syllogism; as, *Whoever believes on the Son shall be saved*, John iii. 36. But I believe on the Son; therefore I shall be saved. The *major* is scripture, the *minor* is confirmed by our faith, which if I have, I may say I believe: true, *Flesh and blood cannot say this*, it is the operation of the holy Ghost; but if the work be wrought, and I feel this faith within my soul, what need I doubt but this assumption is true, *I believe on the Son*? Yet I hear some complain, they have neither sight nor sense of faith; and thus it is often with God's dearest children: the sun, that in a clear sky discovers and manifests itself, may sometimes with clouds be overcast and darkened; and faith, that in the calmness of a Christian course shines, and shews itself clearly to the sanctified heart, may sometimes in the damp of spiritual desertion or darkness of temptation, lie hid and obscured: there is therefore in the faints, 'the assurance of evidence, and the assurance of adherence:' the assurance of evidence, is that which is without scruple, and brings an admirable joy with it, and this more especially appears, either in our fervent prayers, or in our heavenly meditations, or, in time of martyrdom, or in some quickening exercises of extraor-

inary humiliation, or in beginning of our spiritual, or end of our natural life, as most needful times: then doth God's Spirit speak comfortably to us, whispering to our souls the assurance of our happiness, that we should be inheritors of his kingdom. The assurance of *adherence* is that which I doubt not the faints have in their greatest extremity; for instance, many a faithful soul that makes conscience of sin, lies and languishes upon the rock of fears and terrors, he feels nothing but a dead heart, and a spiritual desertion, yet in the mean time his soul cleaves unto Christ, as the surest rock, he cries and longs after him, and for all his sorrows he will still rest upon him, Job-like, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, Job xiii. 15. Now this *adherence* unto Christ may assure him of salvation, for (if we speak punctually and properly) faith justifying is not to be assured of pardon, but to trust wholly upon Christ for pardon; and thus if he do, then may he with freedom of spirit, say, *I believe on the Son*; whence ariseth this conclusion, which is the testimony of God's Spirit, *therefore I shall be saved.*

To our second doubt, How we may discern betwixt the testimony of God's Spirit, and the illusion of Satan? I answer.

First, the testimony of God's Spirit is ever agreeable to the word, and thus to try us, the scripture tells us, that *whoever is born of God, doth not commit sin*, 1 Jo. iii. 9. which is not to be understood simply of the act of sinning, for *who can say, my heart is clean?* but in this sense, *he hath not committed sin*, that is, he makes not a trade of sin, it doth not reign in him; if then thou allowest any lust in thine heart, or goest on in the willing practice of any one known sin, and yet hast a conceit that thou art sure of salvation, alas, thou art deceived; *Thou hast made a lie thy refuge and hid thyself under falsehood.*

Secondly, God's Spirit breeds in the soul a reverend love, and insatiable longing af-

ter all good means appointed and sanctified for our spiritual good: and therefore that heart which sweetly is affected and inflamed with the word and prayer, and meditation and conference, and vows and singing of psalms, and use of good books, we doubt not but it is breathed on by the Spirit of God; which others that use all these ordinances out of custom or formality, or some other sinister end, alas, their conceit of being right, is built on the sands, and therefore down it falls at death's flood, and is overwhelmed in destruction.

Thirdly, God's Spirit is ever attended with the Spirit of prayer; and therefore saith the apostle, *We know not how to pray, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*, Rom. viii. 26. O the blessed operation of this Spirit! it even warms the spirit of a man with quickening life, to pour out itself in the presence of the Lord his God, sometimes in more hearty prayers, and sometimes in more faint and cold, yet always edged with infinite desires that they might be far more fervent than they are: but on the other side, every deluded pharisee is a meer stranger to the power of prayer, if he prays often (as I make it a question) yet never prays he from a broken heart, and this argues that all his confidence is no better than a weed which grows of its own accord, and therefore, like Jonah's gourd, when affliction comes, it withers in a sudden.

Fourthly, The testimony of God's Spirit is often exercised and accompanied with fears, and jealousies, and doubts, and distrusts, and varieties of temptations, which many times will drive the soul thus distressed to cry mightily to God, to re-examine her grounds, to confirm her watch, to resort for counsel where it may be had; whilst on the contrary, the pharisee's groundless conceit lies in his bosom without fears, or jealousies, or doubts, or distrusts, or any such ado; why so? alas, Satan is too subtle to trouble him in that case; he knows

his foundation is falshood, his hope of heaven no better than a golden dream, and therefore in policy he holds his peace, that he may hold him the faster.

Fifthly, The testimony of God's Spirit is ever most refreshing at those times, when we retire ourselves to converse with God, in a more solemn manner; when we feel that we have conquered, or well curbed some corruption of nature; when we are well exercised in the ordinances of God, or in our sufferings by man for a good cause and conscience sake; then (or at such time) shall we feel that sweetness of the Spirit cherishing our hearts with a lightsome comfort that cannot be uttered; which on the contrary the deluded man is always alike peremptory in his confidence; you shall not take him at any time without a bold persuasion, that he hopes to be saved as well as the best, thus like a man who lying fast asleep on the edge of a rock, he dreams merrily of crowns and kingdoms, and will not off it, but on a sudden starting for joy, he tumbles into the bottom of the sea, and there lies drowned in the deep; that assurance which is ever secure is but a dream, whereas the testimony of God's Spirit is sometimes mixed with doubts, and sometimes (to our unspeakable comfort) with a secret, still, heart-ravishing voice thus speaks to our consciences, *Thou shalt be] with me in paradise*.

You see the testimony of God's Spirit how it works in us, and how it is discerned by us; it works in us by a particular application of the promises in the gospel, and is discerned by us by the word, by our love, our prayers, our fears, our joys at sometimes while we are doing our duties. But for this see our best evidences in Media. Self-trial, ch. 4. Sect. 8. third edition.

Use. O blessed man that feels in his soul this blessed testimony! what is here comparable to it? Riches are deceitful, pleasure is a toy, the world is but a bubble, only our assurance of heaven is the only

real comfort that we have on earth; who then would not study to make this certain? If we purchase an inheritance on earth, we make it as sure and our tenure as strong as the brawn of the law, or the brain of lawyers can devise, we have conveyance, and bonds, and fines, no strength too much; and shall we not be more curious in the settling our eternal inheritance in *paradise*? A man can never be too *sure* of going to heaven, and therefore in God's fear let us examine the testimony of our spirits by the inward tokens, and by the outward fruits: let us examine the testimony of God's Spirit by the means and the difference; and if we find both these testimonies to accord within us; how blessed are we in this vale of tears! it is an heaven upon earth, a *paradise* in a wilderness; in a word, a comfort in all miseries, be they never so embittered. See a thief hanging on the cross, an engine of most grievous torture; but who can tell the joy that entered into him before he entered into heaven? You may guess it by his desire to be *remembered of Christ when he came into his kingdom*; he begs not for life, nor pleasure, nor riches, nor honour, no, *There is one thing necessary*; give him heaven and he cares for nothing; to this purpose doth he address himself to our blessed Saviour, and he asks,—What? *If thou be Christ, save thyself*, Luke xxiii. 37, 39. said the Jews in derision; and *If thou be Christ, save thyself and us*, said the other thief to him; but this was only for the body's safety: and here is a man quite of another mind, let the Jews rack him, tear him, break all his bones, and pull him into atoms, if our Saviour will but do so much as *remember him in his kingdom*, he desires nothing more: O blessed Christ, speak comfortably to his soul that begs it thus vehemently at thy hands: but why do I prevent? the bowels of our Saviour yearn to hear him; *remember him*? Yes, he will *remember him*, and he *shall be with him*; comforta-

ble news! how leaps his heart at these so blessed words? his desire is granted, and heaven is assured, and the Spirit of God, yea, the God of spirits thus testifies it unto him, *To day [shalt thou be] with me in paradise.*

Thus far of the certainty of salvation, *thou shalt be*] but as the grant is sweet that is *certain*, so is it yet more acceptable if done with *expedition*: and here is both the *certainty and expedition, thou shalt be, When? to day] with me, in paradise.*

To day.]

O UR Saviour defers not that he promises, but as he quickly hears, and quickly grants: so he quickly gives him *paradise*, and a kingdom. This sudden unexpected joy makes all more grateful; to tell us of crowns and kingdoms that we must inherit, and then to put us off with delays, abates the sweetness of the promise: men that go to suits for lands and livings, tho' lawyers feed them with hopes, yet one order after another, spinning our time to a multitude of terms, makes them weary of the business: it is the happiness of this suitor that he comes to an hearing, but the highest degree of his happiness was the expedition of his suit; no sooner he motions, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom*, but the Lord gives him what he asks upon his first motion, *To day, ere the sun be down, the kingdom shall be thine, thou shalt be with me in paradise.*

But you may object, 'Was there no *limbus patrum*, no purgatory to run thro'? but the very same day he died, he must then go to *paradise*?' No; unless *limbus* or purgatory be *paradise* itself, there is no such thing at all. Some there are, that rather than say nothing, speak thus; 'Christ giving up the ghost, his soul descended into hell, and the very same day was this malefactor partaker of Christ's beatifical vision, with the other patriarchs in *Limbus*.' But of how great difference is *paradise* and *limbus*, we shall hear another time: sure

it is, Christ promised not a dungeon instead of a kingdom, nor is paradise a place of pleasure, of any such imaginary melancholy nature: we conclude then, *To day thou shalt be with me in paradise*, it is all one to say, *To day, thy day of death, shalt thou be with me in heaven, and there enjoy me in my kingdom.*

But again, you may object, 'That Christ rather that day descended into hell, than ascended into heaven:' The Creed teacheth, 'that after he was crucified, dead, and buried, he descended into hell.'

To answer the objection, some go about thus: By hell, say they, is meant paradise, where the soul of Christ was all the time that his body lay in the grave: if this be not a misconstruction, I am sure it is no literal exposition, and methinks a very strange kind of figure it is, to express Christ's ascent into paradise by his descent into hell. Others, more probably, understand Christ's abode in the grave for the space of three days: Austin, after some turns and wrenches, concludeth thus: * *Est autem sensus multo expeditior, &c.* 'It is a far easier sense, and freer from all ambiguity, if we take Christ to speak these words, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise*, not of his manhood, but of his Godhead; for the man Christ was that day in the grave according to the flesh, and in hell as touching the soul, but the same Christ, as God, is always every where.' Thus he: but this will not satisfy all, and therefore they argue thus against it; † 'These words, (say they) must be understood of his manhood, not of his Godhead: *And why so?* For they are an answer unto a demand, and unto it they must be suitable: Now the thief (seeing that Christ was first of all crucified, and therefore, in all likelihood should first of all die) makes his request to this effect;

Lord, thou shalt shortly enter into thy kingdom, remember me then: To which, Christ's answer, as the very words import, is thus much; "I shall enter into paradise this day, and there shalt thou be with me:" But the Godhead, which is at all times in all places, cannot be said properly to enter into a place, and therefore not into paradise. *Again*, when Christ saith, Thou shalt be with me in paradise; he doth intimate a resemblance between the first and second Adam; the first Adam sinned against God, and was presently cast out of paradise; the second Adam having made satisfaction for sin, must presently enter into paradise. Now there is no entrance but in regard of the soul, or manhood, and therefore to apply it to the Godhead, were to abolish this analogy betwixt the first and second Adam.'

These reasons are weighty, but should we say with Austin, That Christ in his soul went down into hell, one of our † Worthies can tell us, that 'Christ's soul, united to his Godhead, might do all that, and yet be that day in paradise: God works not lazily like man: Satan could shew Christ all the kingdoms of the world in the twinkling of an eye, and God's expedition exceeds his.' To this agrees †† another; that 'we have no warrant in God's word, so to fasten Christ's soul unto hell for all the time of his death, but that it might be in paradise before it descended into hell.' That he was in paradise must be received, because himself doth affirm it: and that he descended into the deep must be received also, for the Apostle doth avouch it; Ro. x. 7. but how he descended, or what time he descended, as also what manner of triumph he brought thence, cannot be limited by any mortal man. To conclude, I will not deny, but that according to the

* Aug. Epist 57.

† Perkins on the creed.

‡ Clark.

†† B. Estlin Of the power of hell destroyed, fol 119

creed, he descended into hell, yet howsoever we expound it, metaphorically, or literally, it hinders not this truth, but that immediately after death his soul went into paradise.

The objections thus solved, now come we to the thief thus comforted by Christ, *To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.* What? *To day?* without all doubts or delays? Here is a blessed dispatch, if we either consider the misery endured, or, the joy to be received.

1. In regard of his miseries, he was a thief condemned and crucified: We read of four kinds of death in use among the Jews; strangling, stoning, fire and sword; the cross was a death, whether for the pain, the shame, the curse, far above all other: We may see it in that gradation of the apostle, *He became obedient to death, even to the death of the cross*, Phil. ii. 8. What engine of torture was that? it spins out pain, it slows his death, yet a little and a little, till it be more than any man can think: See his hands bored, his feet nailed, *his legs broken*, every part full of pain from top to toe; and thus hangs this thief, the poise of his body every moment increasing his pain, and his own weight becoming his own affliction; in this case were not a quick riddance his best remedy? were not the news of death better than a lingering life? Lo then, to his eternal comfort, Christ our Saviour (*in the same condemnation*) grants him his desire. What would he have? a dispatch of pain? he shall have it *this day*] as Samuel's appearance said to Saul, *To morrow, (yea, To day) thou shalt be with me*, 1 Sam. xxviii. 19.

But secondly, here is a greater comfort, his miseries have an end, and his joys are at hand; while he is even gasping in death's pangs, he is carried on a sudden from earth to heaven, from his cross to paradise, from a world of wo to a kingdom of happiness and eternal bliss. O how blessed is the change, when in the very moment of mi-

fery joy enters! suppose you a poor man in the night-time out of his way, wandering alone upon the mountains, far from company, destitute of money, beaten with rain, terrified with thunder, stiff with cold, wearied with labour, famished with hunger, and near brought to despair of the multitude of miseries; if this man upon a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, should be placed in a goodly, large, and rich place furnished with all kind of clear lights, warm fire, sweet smells, dainty meats, soft beds, pleasant musick, fine apparel, honourable company, and all these prepared for him to serve him, honour him, and to anoint and crown him a king for ever; what would this poor man do? what could he say? surely nothing, but rather in silence weep for joy: such, nay, far happier was the case of this poor malefactor; he was like the man wandering on the mountains, full of as much pain as the cross could make him; but on a sudden he and our Saviour crucified with him, both meet in his kingdom; and now, Lord, what a joy enters into him, when he entered into heaven! on Calvary he had nothing about him, but the Jews at his feet, and the nails in his hands, and the cross at his back; instead whereof, no sooner comes he to paradise, but the angels, archangels, cherubims, seraphims, all hug him and embrace him; imagine with yourselves, how was he astonished, and, as it were, besides himself at this sudden mutation, and excessive honour done unto him! imagine with yourselves, what joy was that, when he met our Saviour in his glory, whom that very day he had seen buffeted, scourged, crowned, crucified; 'blessed day that ever could bring forth such a change!' Beloved, I know not how to express it, but let your souls in some meditation flee up from Calvary to heaven; in the morning you might have seen Christ and this thief hanging on two crosses, their bodies stretched, their veins opened, their hands

and feet bleeding in abundance; the one desiring to be remembered of the other, and the other complaining that he was forgotten of his Father, Matth. xxvii. 46. In this doleful case both leaving the world, ere night they meet again, and now what hugs, what kisses are betwixt them? when Joseph met with Jacob, *he fell on his neck, faith Moses, and wept on his neck a good while*, Gen. xlvi. 26. but never was any meeting on earth like this in heaven: here we have a Joseph lift out of the dungeon to the throne, where no sooner set, but our Saviour performs his promise of meeting him in paradise, at which meeting the angels sing, the saints rejoice, all harps warble, all hands clap for joy, and the poor soul of this penitent thief, ravished with delight, what does it, or what can it do, but even weep for joy (if any weeping were in heaven) to see on a sudden so great a change as this?

Use. And if this be his case, who will not say with Balaam, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his?* Numb. xxiii. 10. O let us (I beseech you) present unto our souls the blessed condition to come, and this will be effectual to stir us up to every good duty, and to comfort us in all conditions whatsoever: * What will a man care for crosses, and losses, and disgraces in the world, that thinks of an heavenly kingdom? What will a man care for ill usage in his pilgrimage, when he knows he is a king at home? We are all (in this time of our absence from God) but even strangers upon earth, here then must we suffer indignities, yet here is the comfort, we have a better estate

to come, and all this in the mean time is nothing but a fitting us to that heavenly kingdom: as David's time between his anointing and investing was a very preparing of him, that he might know himself, and that he might learn fitness for to govern aright; so we are anointed kings; as soon as we believe, we have the same blessed anointing that is poured on our head, and runs down about us; but we must be humbled and fitted, before we are invested: a little time, and but a little, we have here to spend; and let this be our comfort, howsoever we fare here, it is not long ere we inherit. *The afflictions of this life are not worthy of the glory that shall be shewed us*, Ro. viii. 18. and therefore Ignatius, in a burning zeal, durst say it; 'Fire, gallows, beasts, breaking of my bones, quartering of my members, crushing of my body, all the torments of the devils, let them come upon me, so I may enjoy this treasure of heaven;' and well might he say it that knew what a change would be one day; for never was cold shadow so pleasant in hot summer, never was easie bed so delightful after labour, as shall be this rest of heaven to an afflicted soul, coming thither out of this valley of tears. O then, what service should we do? what pain should we suffer to attain this rest? were it to run thro' fire and water, were it (as St. Augustine said) 'to suffer every day torments, yea, the very torments of hell, yet should we be content to abide it;' and how much more when we may buy it without money, or money-worth; we need not to part with any thing for it, but sin: this thief (now a blessed saint in glory) † for a day's suffering, an half-day's re-

* When we consider that we have but a little while to be here, that we are upon journey travelling towards our heavenly country, where we shall meet with all the delights we can desire, it ought not to trouble us much to endure storms and foul ways, and to want many of those accommodations we might expect at home. This is the common fate of travellers, and we must take things as we find them, and not look to have every thing just to our mind. These difficulties and inconveniences will shortly be over, and after a few days will be quite forgotten, and be to us as if they had never been. And when we are safely landed in our own country, with what pleasure shall we look back upon those rough, and boisterous seas which we have escaped?

† I speak of sufferings and repenting as means, not as the cause.

penting, was thus welcomed to heaven; imitate we him in his repentance, not in his delay; he indeed had mercy at the last cast, but this privilege of one infers not a common law for all: one finds mercy at the last, that none should despair; and but one, that none should presume. Be then your *sins as red as scarlet*, you need not despair, if you will but repent; and lest your repentance be too late, let *this* be the *day* of your conversion, now abhor sins past, sue out a pardon, call upon Christ with this thief on the cross, *Lord remember me, remember me, now thou art in thy kingdom*; thus would we do, how blessedly should we die, our consciences comforting us in death's-pangs, and Christ Jesus saying to us at our last day here, our day of death, our day of dissolution, *To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

Use 2. Let us admire at this free gift of Christ; it is true, I may press upon you doing, suffering, faith, repentance, yet understand aright, gospel-conditions make not the gift less free; if life be offered to a condemned man, upon condition that he should beg, and wait, before he have his pardon, and take him for his Lord who hath thus redeemed him; all this is no satisfying of the justice of the law, especially when the condition is also given, as it is by Christ to all his chosen; Christians! admire at this, surely we shall admire at this when we come to enjoyment; methinks I hear this blessed thief thus speak in heaven; 'O Jesus what didst thou see in me, that thou shouldest judge me meet for such a state as this? that I who was a robber, a thief, should be clad in the brightness of this glory? that I who was but lately groaning, weeping, dying, should now be as full of joy as heart can hold? Alas! what was my prayer, my tears, my repentance, to such a reward as this?' O when a self-denying, self-accusing, humble soul, who thought himself unworthy the ground he trod on, and the air he breathed in, unworthy to

eat, drink, or live, shall be taken up into this glory; he who durst scarce come amongst, or speak to the imperfect saints on earth, because he was unworthy; for this soul to find itself rapt up into heaven, and clofed in the arms of Christ, even in a moment, do but think with yourselves, what the transporting, astonishing admiration of such a soul will be? Now if such admirings be in heaven, admire now, begin we now to admire at this free grace, free gift of Christ, who will one day freely say to us, *To day shalt you be with me in paradise.*

We have dispatched with expedition this dispatch, this expedition, *to day*] the next day you shall hear the happiness of this grant, which is the society of our Saviour, *thou shalt be: with whom? with me] in paradise.*

With me.]

AND is he of the society of Jesus? yes, (though no Jesuite neither, for they were not then hatched) but what noble order is this, where the saints sing, angels minister, archangels rule, principalities triumph, powers rejoice, dominations govern, virtues shine, thrones glitter, cherubims give light, seraphims burn in love, and all that heavenly company ascribe and ever give all laud and praises unto God their Maker? Here is a society indeed, (I mean not of Babylon, but Jerusalem) whither Jesus our Saviour admits all his servants, and whereto this thief on the cross was invited, and welcomed, *Thou shalt be with me in paradise.*

For if *with me*] then *with all that is with me*, and thus comes in that blessed company of heaven; we will only take a view of them, and in some scantling or other you may guess at *heaven's happiness.*

With me] and therefore with my saints; blessed man! that, from a crew of thieves (by one hour's repentance) became a companion of saints: and now he is a saint amongst them. What joy is that he enjoys

with

with them? O my soul, couldest thou fo gain heaven by remorse for sin, and sincere repentance, [tho' indeed it were madness to expect it if thou dost not this moment forsake thy sins] then mightest thou see— What? all those millions of saints that ever lived on earth, and are in heaven: there are those holy patriarchs, Adam, Noah, Abraham, and the rest, not now in their pilgrimage tossed to and fro on earth, but abiding for ever on *mount Zion the city of the living God*: Heb. xii. 22. There are those goodly prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the rest, not now subject to the torments of their cruel adversaries, but wearing palms, and crowns, and all other glorious ensigns of their victorious triumphs; there live those glorious apostles, Peter, Andrew, James, John, and the rest, not now in danger of persecution or death, but arrayed in *long robes, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb*, Rev. vii. 14. There live those women-saints, Mary, Martha, and that virgin-mother, not now weeping at our Saviour's death, but singing unto him those heavenly songs of praise and glory, world without end: there are those tender infants (*an hundred forty four thousand*, Rev. xiv. 1, 3, 4.) not now under Herod's knife bleeding unto death, but *harping on their harps and following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*: There lives that noble army of martyrs, (*they that were slain upon the earth*, Rev. xviii. 24.) not now under the merciless hands of cruel tyrants, but singing and saying their *Hallelujahs, salvation, glory and honour, and power be unto the Lord our God*, Rev. xix. 1. There dwell all the saints and servants of God (*both small and great*, Revel. xix. 5.) not now sighing in this vale of tears, but singing sweet songs that eccho through the heavens; *As the voice of many waters, as the voice of mighty thunderings*, Revel. xix. 6. so is their voice, saying, *Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth*. And is

not here a goodly troop, a sweet company, a blessed society and fellowship of saints? O my soul, how happy wert thou to be with them! yea, how happy will that day be to thee, when thou shalt meet all the Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, disciples, innocents, martyrs, the saints, and servants of the king of heaven? why thus happy and blessed is this penitent thief: no sooner entered he into the gates of heaven, but there meets him *with musick and dancing*, (Luke xv. 23.) all the quire of heaven, and Lord, what a joy entered into his soul when his soul entered into his master's joy? Tell me (could I speak with thee that dwellest in the heavens) what a day was that, when stepping from the cross, and conducted to paradise, thou wast there received with all honourable companies and troops above? there did the patriarchs meet thee, and the prophets hug thee, and the martyrs struck up their harps to bid thee welcome to the tabernacle of heaven. Such honour have all his saints that attain the fellowship of the saints in glory.

But more than so, *thou shalt be with me*, and therefore with my angels: lo, here a blessed company indeed, these are the heavenly choristers eternally singing Jehovah's praise: the seraphims cry cloud, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts*, Isa. vi. 3. an army answers to the anthem, *Glory to God on high*: the whole quire of heaven add the burthen, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour, and glory, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy sake they are and were created*, Rev. iv. 11. O heavenly harmony consisting of ten thousand times ten thousand various sorts of musick! I heard (saith John the divine) *the voice of many angels round about the throne and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, thousand of thousands*, Re. v. 11. These are the shining and singing stars of which God told his servant Job, xxxviii. 7. *the morning stars sing together, and the sons of God shout for joy*, These

are the winged choristers of heaven, whom John the divine heard singing their songs of hallelujah and hosanna; *I heard* (saith he) *the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters*, the voice of many angels singing, and saying, Hallelujah, and again hallelujah: these are the nimble angels of heaven, whom Jacob saw flying up and down the ladder, Gen. xxviii. 12. These are the protectors of the godly, whose aid God promised the Israelites; *Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way and to bring thee to the place which I have prepared*, Exod. xxiii. 20. These are the guardians of God's children, of whom our Saviour told his disciples, that in *heaven their angels always behold the face of his Father*, Matth. xviii. 10. These are the armies of God, who meeting Jacob in his journey, he said, *This is God's host*, Gen. xxxii. 2. These are the spirits and ministers of God, whom David describing by the purity of their substance, and readiness of their obedience, he calls the *angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire*, Psal. civ. 4. They are shining and singing stars, winged choristers, nimble posts of heaven, protectors of the godly, guardians of God's children, the armies of the Almighty, the spirits and ministers of the great Jehovah.

What blessed company is this we shall enjoy in heaven? there is nothing in them but is amiable, nothing in them but is admirable: O that this clay of ours should come to dwell with those incorporeal spirits! and yet see here a man, a thief, the worst of men; by his confession and contrition, and faith in Christ, is now become a companion with angels.

Nor is that all, *Thou shalt be with me*, not only with my saints and angels, but with me (with my soul) in paradise. His soul indeed was there, tho' his body at that time was in the grave; and if the soul be it that makes us men, what a passing great joy is that, when men standing among the

angels, shall see their Lord, the Lord of heaven, not to be an angel, but a man? Here is the solace of saints, when they shall see and say, 'Who is yonder that rules on the throne of heaven? who is yonder that sits on the right hand of God the Father?' And they shall answer themselves again, It is he that for us became man; it is he that for the salvation of our souls hath took upon him a body and soul; and think now with thyself, whosoever thou art that readest (if thou wilt but spend thy few evil days in his fear, and so die in his favour) what a comfort it will be unto thee to see the Lamb sitting on his seat of state? If the wise men of the east came so far, and so rejoiced to see him in the manger, what will it be to thee to see him sitting and glittering in his glory? If John Baptist did leap at his presence in his mother's belly, what shall his presence do in his royal and eternal kingdom? 'It passeth all other glories (saith Austin) to be admitted into the inestimable sight of Christ his face, and to receive the beams of glory from the brightness of his majesty.' Nay, should we suffer torments every day, nay, further, should we endure the sharpest pains imaginable for the longest time that can be conceived, thereby to gain the sight of Christ, and of his saints, it were nothing in comparison. No wonder then, if Paul *desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 23. Alas, who would not be so? 'O most sweet Saviour (saith one devoutly) when shall this joyful day come? when shall I appear before thy face? when shall I be filled with thy excellent beauty? when shall I see that countenance of thine, which the very angels themselves are so desirous to behold?' An happy time sure it will be to each faithful soul; and thus happy was this man, he parted sorrowfully with our Saviour on the cross, but he met him joyfully in his kingdom; those sweet souls that both left the world at one time, no sooner had heaven-gates opened unto them,

them, but with mutual kisses they embraced each other in an unspeakable manner.

Nor was this all; *thou shalt be with me*, not only with my soul, but with my Godhead: this indeed was the height of bliss, the very soul of heaven's joy itself; set aside this, and crown a man with the empire of all the earth, the splendor of heaven, the royal endowments of a glorified soul, the sweetest company of saints and angels, yet still would his soul be full of emptiness, and utterly to seek for the surest sanctuary whereon to rest: only once admit him to the face of God, and then presently, and never before his infinite desire expires in the bosom of his Maker: I deny not, but the other joys in heaven are transcendent and ravishing, but they are all no better than accessories to this principal, drops to this ocean, glimpses to this sun. If you ask, How can our souls enjoy this Godhead? I answer, Two ways; first, by the understanding, secondly, by the will. The understanding is filled by a clear, glorious sight of God, called, *Beatific vision*; *We shall see him face to face*, saith Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *We shall see him as he is*, saith John, 1 John iii. 2. For, as the sun by his beams and brightness enlightens the eye and the air, that we may see not only all other things, but also his own glorious face; so God, blessed for ever (in whose presence ten thousand of our suns would vanish away as a darksome mote) doth by the light of his majesty, so irradiate the minds of all the blessed, that they behold in him, not only the beauty of all his creatures, but of himself; and thus shall we see and know that glorious mystery of the trinity, the goodness of the Father, the wisdom of the Son, the love and comfortable fellowship of the holy Spirit; nothing that can be known, but in him we shall know it, in most ample manner.

But seeing vision is taken from sense, it may be demanded, what our bodily eyes

shall see in heaven? I answer, 1. The glorious manifestations of the presence of God in some such sort as was on the mount, where we find mentioned *a bright cloud, and his clothes were white as the light, and his face did shine*, Matth. xvii. 2, 5. Or, as when God appeared in Solomon's temple, where *the glory of the Lord filled the house, that the priests could not enter*, 1 Kin. viii. 11. Now this was a visible glory, and surely some such, but a far more excellent manifestation is in heaven obvious to the very eyes of saints. 2. The glorified bodies of the blessed saints full of beauty and brightness; it is said at the day of judgment at the right hand of Christ, shall stand a company of glorious creatures, but on the left hand shall be an ugly company, and many of them deformed; for if we credit Durandus, their sins not being taken away, the fruit of sin will still remain upon them, as lameness, blindness, maimedness, &c. but in heaven all comeliness, and excellency will appear in the saints, for they shall be as jewels made up; now a jewel must be cut and polished, it must have a lustre set upon it, and be set in gold before it be made up, and thus must the saints be, and so they shall appear one to another. 3. The glorified body of our blessed Saviour; we shall see him that is dearer than all our friends, that died for our sins, not in his humility, but in the brightness of his glory.

2. The will is for ever satisfied with a perfect, inward and eternal communion with God himself; Christ that is God and man, by his manhood assumed, uniteth us unto God, and by his Godhead assuming, uniteth God unto us; so that by this secret and sacred communion, we are made partakers (and as it were possessors) of God himself: O bottomless depth, and dearest confluence of joys and pleasures everlasting! here is the perfection of all good things, the crown of glory, the very life of life everlasting! and well may it be so, for

what can the soul desire God will not be unto her? It is he that is eminently in himself beauty to our eyes, musick to our ears, honey to our mouths, perfume to our nostrils, light to our understanding, delight to our will, continuation of eternity to our memory; in him shall we enjoy all the varieties of times, all the beauty of creatures, all the pleasures of paradise. Blessed thief, what a glory was this to be admitted to the society of Christ in his Deity! *Thou shalt be with me?* how then should he be but happy? 'Where could he be ill with him? where could he be well without him?' said Austin. *In thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore,* Pl. xvi. 11. Joy, and fulness of joy; pleasures, and everlasting pleasures: *Blessed are all they that live in thy house, O Lord, for they shall praise thee eternally, world without end,* Psalm lxxxiv.

But a little to enlarge on this. To be with the Godhead, implies these seven things; 1. The presence of God. 2. The blessed vision of God. 3. The happy union with God. 4. The glorious communion with God. 5. The fruition of God. 6. The rest that the saints shall have in God. 7. The enjoyment of themselves in God.

1. To be with God, implies the presence of God; heaven itself were not heaven without the presence of God: it is the presence of God that makes heaven whatsoever it is; David *would not be afraid though he walked in the valley of the shadow of death, so that God were with him,* Psalm xxiii. 4. 'Luther would rather be in hell with God's presence, than in heaven God being absent.' Luther on Genes. And if the presence of God takes away dread of the shadow of the valley of death, and makes hell to be more desired than heaven, what will the presence of God make heaven to be? If the three children in the fiery furnace with God's presence

were happy, how happy then are the saints with God's presence in heaven? God made rich promises to Moses, yet he could not be satisfied without the presence of God; *If thy presence be not with us, bring us not hence,* Exod. xxxiii. 15. And the apostle when he would set out the miseries of those that are damned, he saith, *They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord,* 2 Thess. i. 9. Now the presence of God must needs be the happiness of the saints.

1. Because this must needs draw out all their graces in all the sweet favour of them, *While the king sitteth at his table, my spike-nard sendeth forth the smell thereof,* Cant. i. 12.

2. The presence of God quickens all the comforts of the saints, and keeps them always in vigour and activity; as the sun quickens things that lay dead, so God's presence hath a quickening power, it keeps the comforts of God's people green and lively: when they shall be *presented faultless before the presence of his glory, it shall cause exceeding joy,* Jude 24.

3. The presence of God fills the souls and bodies of the saints with glory, for it fills the heavens with glory, how much more must it fill an immortal soul with glory, because that is more capable of glory than heaven: if the sun can put a glory upon these dark creatures here below, much more can the presence of God put glory upon the glorified bodies and souls of the saints.

2. To be with God, implies the beatifical vision of God: the saints shall be where he is, and they *shall see his face,* Rev. xxii. 4. *Behold, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when we shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,* 1 John iii. 2. The glory of this may appear in these particulars.

1. To see God as the first Being of all, or, the principle of all good; this is a most

most blessed thing: to see Adam the first father, or, Eve the first mother of mankind, or for a child to see his father and mother, out of whose loins and bowels he came, whom he hath not seen in many years, this is a joy and comfort; but to see the Creator, the first principle of all things, that must be a great, an infinite contentment, and to see him that hath done all the good in the world, hath much satisfaction in it. *Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth*, John xiv. 8.

2. To see God in his unity; whereas now we understand God only according to his several attributes, as the manifestation of the infinite simple; his being in one way we call power, in another way we call mercy and bounty, in another way justice, and so we apprehend God according unto the several attributes that God hath manifested himself in: whereas there are not many things in God, but all these several attributes that we apprehend diversely, are but one excellency in God; as one beam of the sun shining thro' a red glass causes a red reflection, and the same sun shining through a blue glass causes a blue reflection; and so the same excellency of God shining one way, we call by one name, and the same excellency of God working another way we call by another name, and yet it is all one in God; and though we cannot apprehend it now, yet we shall see God in his unity afterward.

3. To see God in the trinity; though there be but one God, yet there are divers persons; to see how the Father begot God the Son, and how the Spirit did proceed from the Father and the Son, and the difference between the procession of the Spirit, and the generation of the Son; the sight of God in the mystery of the trinity is a most glorious thing.

4. To see God in his glory; there is a promise that *they shall see the king in his beauty, or, in his glory*. Isa. xxxiii. 17. There is a great deal of difference between

seeing the king at an ordinary time, and seeing him when he is in his robes, with his crown upon his head, and his scepter in his hand, and set upon his throne, with all his nobles about him in all his glory. So God doth manifest himself a little now, but this is not all that he doth intend, he will manifest himself in his glory; and oh, what a happiness is that!

5. To see God in his eminency; the saints shall see how all excellencies that are in the creatures, are eminently contained in the absolute perfection of the divine nature: all the good that is in the effect, is in the causes; and the good of those causes in their causes, and so at length they come to the first principle: so all the good that we can see in all objects that give content, we may see all eminently in God, and see God in all.

6. To see God as he is: Now there is a great deal in that *to see God as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. and for explication of that, there are these three branches.

1. Not to see him only negatively, for that is not to see him as he is: The most that we see of God now, is, by way of negation, rather than any positive sight: When we say of God, He is incomprehensible, that is, he is such a God as cannot be comprehended, that is but a negation: when we say of God, He is infinite, that is, he is such a God as hath no bounds of his being; this is still a negation, to say what God is not: but now in heaven, we shall not see God only by way of negation, but we shall see that positive excellency of God, *We shall see him as he is*.

2. Not to see him only in his effects in the creature: The greatest part that we see of God now, is in his effects, and not as he is in himself; we do not see the face of God, [*that is*, we do not see the sensible brightness of God's glorious presence,] but [as it was said *figuratively* to Moses, Ex. xxxiii. 23] we see only his back parts; [*that is*, we only see some faint glimpses

of his glory;] we look upon the sun, and there we see somewhat of the power of God, but it is but the effect of God's power, and not God's power itself: but then *We shall see him as he is.*

3. Not to see him undistinguished from the creatures. Here now we see almost nothing of God distinguished from created things: Say what you will of God, *that he is a spirit*, that *he is wise*, or *holy*, or *just*, or *merciful*, there is somewhat of all these in the creature, [for we know that Man also, with respect to his soul, is a *spirit*, and is, in some measure, *merciful*, and *just*, *holy* and *wise*,] only God he is infinitely above all, and this by way of negation: but we do not see him in that positive excellency which does difference him from all created things; only in heaven we shall thus see him, *we shall see him as he is.*

7. To see God by a transforming sight. The light that shall come from God upon the mind, it shall perfect the mind, and transform the mind into the same likeness with God. It shall not be a meer notional sight, as men may speak much of God, and have a notional vision of God; but there is a great deal of difference between the notional vision of God, and Deifical vision of God: It is not only beatifical, [that is, *which makes perfectly happy*,] but Deifical, [that is, *transforms a man into the likeness of God.*] A deformed man may see a beautiful object, and that sight shall not make him like that beautiful object; but the sight of God shall make the soul glorious as God is glorious; *We shall be like him*, 1 John iii. 2.

8. To see God so as never to lose him: this adds much to the happiness of the saints. To have but one glimpse of the face of God, though it were gone presently, it were a great happiness beyond all that the world affords; but God shall not only pass by, but stand still, so as the soul shall never lose the sight of God, but it shall have it to all eternity, and the eyes of

the soul shall be eternally opened to see God. If a man looks upon a delightful object, he is loath to have the eye drawn from it: you shall never have your eye drawn from God.

9. To see God in ourselves. It is an happiness to see God in the creature, but much more to see God in ourselves. The chiefest of the glory of God, next to that which appears in Jesus Christ as God-man, shall appear in the saints; and the chief excellency of God that the saints shall see, shall be within themselves; they shall see more of the glory of God within themselves than in all the heavens besides.

3. To be with God, implies the happy union with God. Sight is higher than presence, and union is higher than sight. And thus Christ prays to his Father, *That they may be one in us, as thou art in me, and I in thee*, John xvii. 21. Now that there shall be such a wonderful glorious union between God and the soul in heaven, appears upon these grounds.

1. There is not such distance between God and the soul, but that it is capable of union with God: one would think, how is it possible that God should be so united to the soul, being there is such an infinite distance betwixt God and the soul? But there is no such distance, as that there should not be a glorious union betwixt them. There is a great deal of likeness betwixt God and the soul. 1. In the spirituality; God is a Spirit, and the soul is a spirit. 2. In the immortality; God is immortal, and the soul is immortal. 3. In the high excellency of God, the understanding and will; the soul is endued with understanding and will.

2. God shall see nothing but himself in the souls of his saints. Now things that are of a like nature, do unite: bring an hot fire-brand to the fire, and it doth unite presently, because the fire doth find something of itself there; if there were some moisture in the brand, it would not so fully

ly unite. So here we cannot have full union with God, because though God see somewhat of his own in us, yet there is a great deal in us that is not God's. But when we shall be wholly free from sin, and God shall see nothing but his own in us, that must needs be a ground of a most glorious union.

3. There shall be an infinite inflamed love betwixt God and his saints: indeed here is an union of love; but in heaven there will be a further degree of love; and love being inflamed, there must needs be a glorious union.

4. The bond of connexion of God and the soul together, requires it; namely, the mediation of Christ. O this union with God is enough to cause the souls of God's people so to be satisfied, as to say, 'Though all things be taken from me, it is enough, I have somewhat of God's presence here, but I shall have the glorious presence, and vision of God, and union with God hereafter; and though mine eyes should never see good day after, or never see comfortable object in this world, this is enough, I shall see God, and have full union with God: though God should rend this creature, or that creature, the dearest husband, or the dearest wife, or the dearest comfort in the world from me; yet it is enough that God and my soul are somewhat united, and that God and my soul shall have a glorious union hereafter!

4. *To be with God*, implies the glorious communion with God. Union is the ground of communion: in this life there is a communion that the scripture speaks of; *Our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ*, 1 John i. 3. And, *The communion of the holy Ghost be with you*, saith the apostle, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. But certainly it shall be another manner of communion that the saints shall have with God in the world to come. Now this communion, it stands either in regard of the work of God upon and towards his saints,

or the work of the saints upon and towards God: for communion is on both sides; and that in these four things:

1. Communion consists in the delight they have in one another: there is full, actual, mutual, everlasting delight between God and the saints in heaven.

2. In communion there is a mutual wishing and willing of good to one another. Now God shall wish all good to the saints, and they wish all good to God: but what good can they wish or will to God? It is true there can be no addition to the essential goodness of God, but they can will that this his goodness may be honoured and praised.

3. In communion there is the communication of what one hath unto another. And thus God communicates himself to his saints immediately, fully, freely, everlastingly. And so the saints communicate to God in the same way that God communicates to them: they are always worshipping God immediately, not through ordinances; they are always communicating themselves, and all that they are or have, to God fully and freely.

4. In communion with God there is a familiar converse between God and the saints. And herein are these particulars:

1. God manifests himself in a suitable way to the conditions of his people, so condescending to their condition, that though his majesty be infinite, yet it shall no way be a terror unto them. The scripture speaks of the familiar converse that God hath with his people here, that they are called friends: Abraham was called the *friend of God*, and the disciples were called *friends*; but hereafter the friendship shall be much more full and sweet.

2. God opens himself to his saints. Much is said of God's opening of himself to his people here, Psalm xxv. 14. Prov. iii. 32. 1 Cor. ii. 16. Cant. i. 4. *They are brought into his chamber*, that is, he discovers his secrets to them. The mysteries of the

king.

kingdom are revealed to the saints here, much more in heaven : God will there reveal all his secrets ; they shall not only see his face, but they shall see God's heart.

5. *To be with God*, implies the fruition of God. Now this fruition of God consists in these things.

(1.) There is in fruition a reflex act of the soul, whereby it comes to know what it hath. It hath a God, and it knows it by a reflex act ; and upon this it is, that there is no creature can be said to enjoy a thing properly, but the rational creature. And this will add much to the happiness of God's people, in that as they shall be filled with happiness and glory, filled with God, so they shall know all their happiness.

(2.) There is in fruition the having use of all. If a man be never so rich, and have never so great possessions, if he have not the actual use of what he hath, he cannot be said to enjoy them. A man may have right to a thing, and yet for the present not enjoy the use of it : but now the people of God, as they shall have God to be their portion, so they shall enjoy God fully, to have what use they will of all the attributes of God, and all that is in God : and this is an infinite good and happiness to the people of God, that they shall have as much use of God's infinite wisdom, infinite power, infinite mercy, as they will ; and they cannot will it so soon, but they shall have it, nor so easily, as they may enjoy it. Then we enjoy the benefit of friendship, when one friend says to another, ' Make use of all I have, as your own, as you will : ' so shall God come to his people, and bid them make use of all his riches, and glory, and excellency as they will.

(3.) There is in fruition the sweet and comfort of all that we do use, or else we do not enjoy that we have. If a man should have the use of his estate, and meat and drink, if he have not the sweet and comfort of it, he cannot be said to enjoy it ; but when comfort is let out, that the

soul is sensible of it, then he may be said to enjoy it ; and hence it is that God is said to *give all things to us richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. vi. 17. He gives the thing, and he gives the comfort with it, and so a man is said to enjoy it.

6. *To be with God*, implies the rest that the soul hath in God. The term of all motion is rest ; every thing that moves, moves that it may have rest ; *Return, O my soul, unto thy rest*, Psalm cxvi. 7. God is the rest of the souls of the saints : therefore it is an expression of an ancient (Austrian), O Lord, thou hast made us for thee, and our hearts are unquiet till they come to enjoy thee.

7. *To be with God*, implies the enjoyment of the saints in God. As they shall enjoy God, and God in themselves, so they shall enjoy themselves in God, living in God continually. *Your life is hid with Christ in God*, Col. iii. 3. The life of saints here is an hidden life, and it is hidden in God, but then it shall be a revealed life, and revealed in God, and enjoyed in God. Hence is that phrase, *Enter into your master's joy* ; that enters not into you, but you must enter into it : it is your master's joy, not only that joy that your Master gives, but the same joy your Master hath, that you shall enter into and live in. And it was said of John, that *he was on the Lord's day in the spirit*, Rev. i. 10. It is not said, that the *spirit was in him*, but it is said, *he was in the spirit* ; that was as a beginning of the glorious condition of the saints of God, that they shall be in the Spirit of God ; not only God in them, but they in God ; as a drop of water in the sea swallowed up in it. There are three degrees of love to God ; loving of God for ourselves, and loving God for himself, and loving ourselves for God ; the one is but a natural love, the second is a gracious love, the third is a love of the glorified saints ; and in this kind of love of God, and enjoyment of ourselves in him, the
soul

soul shall be ravished with God, and be in a kind of extasy eternally.

Here you may see that most people in the world mistake heaven; they look at heaven and God in a sensual manner; where are they that look at heaven in these spiritual excellencies, about enjoying God, or being with God in this manner? As the Jews looked for a carnal Messiah, whose kingdom should be in earth, and whose glory should be external, not considering the spiritual kingdom of Christ; so most in the world look but for a carnal heaven. It is a good evidence of the truth of grace, if you can look to heaven with a right eye, in a right manner, to look at the spiritual part, and spiritual excellency in heaven. I conclude,

You see now heaven's society, they are saints, and angels, and Christ, and God blessed for ever and ever.

Use 1. Who then would not forsake father and mother, the dearest fellowship of this world to be with Christ in his kingdom? You that love one another in the deepest bonds, who cannot part out of this life but with the survivors grief, and heart-break: tell me what a merry day will that be, when you shall not only meet again, never more to part asunder, but when Christ our Saviour shall gladly welcome you, every one of you, into his society, *Thou shalt be with me*; and let me speak to the joy of us all, I mean all broken-hearted Christians, (as for you that are pious ones, you have your portion here, therefore stand you by, and let the children come to their share) a day will come, I trust in the Lord, when I shall meet you, and you me, in the kingdom of heaven; a day will come, I trust in the Lord, when you and I shall be all admitted into the society of God, and of Christ, and of his saints, and of the angels; a day will come, I trust in the Lord, when with *these eyes we shall behold our Redeemer*, together with that thief that was crucified with him; a

day will come, I trust in the Lord, when we shall meet again with all the saints that are gone afore us; and is not this a comfort? What shall we say, when we see our Saviour in his throne, waited on with Mary his mother, and Magdalen, and Martha, and Lazarus, and Paul and Peter, and all the apostles and disciples of our Lord and Saviour? Yea, when this thief shall be presented to our view, the wounds in his hands, and his feet shining like stars, and pearls and rubies, all his body glittering in glory, and his soul magnifying the Lord for his conversion and salvation world without end.

Use 2. But stay, lest we be led too forward, there is no such thing for us, if now we are not in the covenant of grace. Heaven is both happy and holy, and if we would enjoy heaven, then we must fit ourselves to that estate to which God hath preserved us: to this purpose saith the apostle, *Our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour*, Phil. iii. 20. He was assured of heaven, and therefore he conversed as a citizen of heaven before he came there, every way he carried himself, as much as earth would suffer him, like them that live in heaven; and thus must we, if ever we go to heaven, become like to those that are in that place. *Deceive not yourselves, neither whoremongers, nor adulterers, nor extortioners, nor the like, shall enter into the kingdom of God.* 1 Cor. vi. 9. Do men who live in these sins without all remorse or repentance ever think to go to heaven? is it possible that ever any flesh should go out of the puddle into the paradise? No, no, *Away ye workers of iniquity, I know you not*, saith our Saviour, Mat. xxv. 41. Let no man cherish presumptions of an heavenly kingdom, except he abstain from all sins against conscience. What then? but so live we here as becomes his servants, and thus when we part, it is but for better company: we lose a few friends, but we shall find him that

welcomes all his with this heavenly harmony, *Thou shalt be; with whom? with me, in paradise.*

Hitherto of the society. The last thing considerable is the place, or ubi, where his soul arrived; but of that hereafter, as the Lord shall enable me. God give us all grace so to live here, that howsoever we go hence one after another, yet at last we may all meet together with our Lord and Saviour in his heavenly paradise.

In paradise.]

AND where was that? our adversaries say in *limbus*, and yet to give them their due, Bellarmine so means not as that *limbus* was paradise, but that in *limbus* this thief had his paradise, to wit, the vision of God: 'The vision of God (saith Bellarmine) is a true paradise indeed, not local but spiritual.' But, with Bellarmine's leave, we have no such sense of paradise in any part of holy writ. In the old Testament we read of an earthly paradise, wherein Adam lived; in the new Testament we read of an heavenly paradise, whither Paul was caught; yet both these were local; for the one, saith Moses, *was a garden eastward in Eden*, Gen. ii. viii. and the other, saith Paul, was in heaven, which he calls the *third heaven*, 2 Cor. xii. 2. And that paradise in my text must be understood of heaven, this resemblance confirms; the first Adam sinned against God, and was presently cast out of that paradise on earth; the second Adam made satisfaction for sin, and so must presently enter into this paradise of heaven: because of the sin of the first Adam, both he and all his posterity were thrust out of Eden; because of the sufferings of the second Adam, both he and we, this thief, and all believers are to go into heaven: so then this paradise whither Christ is gone, and this thief went with him, what is it? but as Paul calls it, *the third heaven?* or as the thief himself stiled it in his prayer to our Saviour, *Remember me; where? in thy kingdom.*

And if this be it we call paradise, what can we say of it? 'It is not for us (saith Bernard) in these earthly bodies to mount into the clouds, to pierce this fulness of light, to break into this bottomless depth of glory; this is reserved to the last day, when Christ Jesus shall present us glorious and pure to his Father, without spot or wrinkle.' And yet because God in his word doth here give us a taste of heaven, by comparing it with the most precious things that are on earth, let us follow him so far as he hath revealed it, and no further.

In the midst of paradise is a tree of life, Rev. ii. 7. *and this tree bears twelve manner of fruits, yielding her fruit every month*, Revel. xxii. 2. What more pleasant than *life?* and what *life* better than where is variety of pleasure? Here is a *tree of life*, and the *life of the tree*; a *tree of life* that renews life to the eaters, and the *life of the tree bearing fruit every month*: and as many months, so many fruits; such are the varieties of heaven's joys, where youth flourisheth that never waxeth old, change of delights, and choice too entrencheth that never knoweth end. But look we a little further; John, that calls this place *paradise*, Rev. ii. calls this paradise a *city*, Rev. xxi. and hereof he gives us the quantity and quality, the bigness and beauty: [but understand all this metaphorically.] 1. For the greatness of it; *An angel with a golden reed measures it*, and he finds the *length and the breadth, and the height are equal*. 2. For the beauty of it, *The walls (saith he) are of jasper, and the foundation of the walls garnished with all manner of precious stones, the twelve gates are of pearls, and the streets paved with pure gold: there is no need of sun or moon, for the glory of the Lord lightens it, and the Lamb (not the Church, [as some infer from ver. 24.] but, Christ Jesus) is the light thereof*, Rev. ch. xxi. from v. 10. to v. 25. See here the excellency of this city:—On which words to give you a short comment.

We'll begin first with the *Greatness* of it: The angel sets it down, twelve thousand furlongs, verse 16. Yet, that we may not know this certain number, it is but figuratively taken, you may guess at the immeasurable magnitude of this city by those many mansions spoken of by Christ, John xiv. 2. *In my Father's house are many mansions*: How many? so many (saith *Kellock*) as would suffice *in finitis mundis*, a thousand worlds of men; and tho' all the men of the world attain not to it, it is not for want of room, but of will, *they believe not him who hath prepared these seats for them*. And guess it you may by that incredible distance between heaven and earth. Some Astronomers compute, (and in particular, *Casman*.) that betwixt us only and the starry firmament, there is no less than seventy four millions, seven hundred three thousand, one hundred, eighty miles; and if the empyreal heaven (as many say) be two or three orbs above the starry firmament, how many more miles is it then beyond? and the further it is distant (we all know well enough) the heavens being orb-wise, and one comprehending another, that which is furthest or highest, must needs be the greatest; hence it is that the scriptures compare the height of heaven, and consequently the magnitude, to the perfection of God past finding out, *Canst thou by searching find out God? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do?* Job xi. 8.

If such be the immensity, what think you is the beauty? 'It is a most glorious city, whose walls are of jasper, whose building is of gold, whose gates are of pearls, whose foundation of precious stones: — [This indeed is but a metaphorical description of it, and we know not certainly the glory of that place, nor can we know it fully, unless God were pleased to reveal it to us, until we come to heaven: only we may reasonably suppose, that the place must be very magnificent, where the King of heaven is pleased to manifest himself in

a more immediate and sensible manner to its blessed inhabitants: Must not that place be glorious, where almighty power managed by infinite wisdom, have been employed to make it a fit habitation for saints to dwell in for ever?] O how unspeakable is the glory of this city! Kings shall throw down their crowns before it, and count all their pomp and glory but as dust in comparison; and well they may: For what is an earthly kingdom to this heavenly paradise? where is mirth without sadness, health without sorrow, life without labour, light without darkness, where every saint is a king, adorned with light as with a garment, and clad in the richest robes that God bestows upon a creature.'

But that which more especially commends the beauty of this city, is, the lustre of it, *There is* (saith John) *no need of sun or moon, it is verus Olympus*, 'wholly light itself,' not like the starry firmament, bespangled here and there with glittering spots, *It is all as it were one great, one glorious Sun*; from every point it pours out abundantly whole rivers of purest light, and then what a light is this?

Nor is this all: For *the Glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*; besides the native lustre, there is the glory of God, the glory of all glories; this is it for which Moses prayed, *O Lord, I beseech thee shew me thy glory*; to whom God answered, *Thou canst not see my face and live, but I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while my glory passeth by; then will I take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back-parts: but my face shall not be seen,* [by back-parts, which is a figurative expression, and cannot be applied in a literal sense to God Almighty, no more than legs or arms, which are also figurative expressions in scripture, can be properly ascribed to Him who is a pure Spirit.] is to be understood a fainter discovery of God's glorious presence, than that which is signified by, *face*]

Exod. xxxiii. 18, 20, 21, 22, 23. Now, if Moses' face shone so bright with seeing those fainter discoveries of God's glory, that the *Israelites were afraid to come nigh him*, and that he was fain to cover his face with a vail while he spake unto them. Ex. xxxiv. 30, 33. how bright then is Paradise, not only enlightened with such glimpses of God's lustre, but with the fulness of his own glory? 'From the majesty of God, (saith Zanchy) there goes out a created light, that makes the whole city glitter, and this being communicated to the saints, God thereby causeth that they see him face to face.'

Again, 'The glory of God, and the Lamb of God both give their lights; that Lamb that was slain from the beginning of the world, that body of his once crucified, now brighter than ten thousand suns. O how infinitely glorious doth it make this paradise, this city of God?' *His countenance is as the sun that shineth in his strength*, saith John, Rev. i. 16. But what stars are those in his hands and feet? Where the nails pierced, now it sparkleth; where the spear entered, now it glittereth gloriously: If we look all over him, *his head and his hairs are as white as snow, his eyes are as a flame of fire, his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace*, Rev. i. 14, 15. No wonder then if such beams come from this sun, the Sun of Righteousness, that all heaven shine with it from the one end to the other.

And yet again, The Lamb and the saints all give their lights; for, *We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him*, 1 John iii. 2. How like? why? *He shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*, Phil. iii. 21. In what like? even in this very quality, for, *They that be wise shall shine*, Dan. xii. 3. How shine? *As the brightness of the firmament*: nay, more, as the stars, saith Daniel: nay more, as the sun, saith our Saviour: nay, yet more, saith

Chrysoſtom; howsoever the righteous in heaven are compared to the sun, Mat. xiii. 43. It is not 'because they shall not surpass the brightness of it, but the sun being the most glittering thing in this world, he takes a resemblance thence only towards the expressing of their glory.' Now then what a mass of light will arise in paradise, where so many millions of suns appear all at once? If one sun make the morning-sky so glorious, what a bright shining and glorious day is there, where's not a body but 'tis a sun? Sure it is, *There shall be no night there, no need of candle, no need of sun, or moon, or star*, Revel. xxi. 23. O that this clay of ours should be partakers of such glory! what am I, O Lord, that being a worm on earth, thou wilt make me a saint in heaven? This body of earth and dust shall shine in heaven like those glorious spangles in the firmament; this body that shall rot in the dust, and fall more vile than a carrion, shall arise in glory, and shine like the glorious body of our Saviour in the mount of Tabor.

To come near my text: 'See here a faint-thief shining gloriously; he that was crucified with our Saviour, at whose death the sun hid his face with a vail, now he reigns in glory without need of sun; for he is a sun himself, shining more clearly than the sun at noon: he that one day was fastened to a cross, now walks at liberty through the streets of paradise, and all the joys, all the riches, all the glory that can be is poured upon him. What else? He is in paradise, and what is paradise but a place of pleasure? where sorrow is never felt, complaint is never heard, matter of sadness is never seen, success is never feared, but instead thereof, there is all good without any evil, life that never endeth, beauty that never fadeth, love that never cooleth, health that never impareth, joy that never cealeth; what more could this penitent wish, than to hear him speak that promised paradise, and performed his pro-

promise, *To day thou shalt be? Thou art with me in paradise.*

And thus in a map have I given you paradise; for quantity great, for quality glorious; hereafter you may know it better, when you shall walk through the streets, observe the towers, fully contemplate the glory; which that you may, one word of application before I end.

Use 1. Meditate then with what sweet delight every true servant of God may solace himself before hand, even in this valley of tears! did we but think on this glorious place, wherein are those heavenly mansions prepared for us, did we spend many thoughts upon it, and ever and anon sigh and seek after it, until we came to the possession of it; O how would these heavenly meditations ravish our souls, as if heaven entered into us before we entered into heaven! consider of this, in what case soever we are, whether we are vexed or injured, or oppressed, or persecuted *for the name of Christ*; there is nothing so imbibbered, that a thought of heaven will not sweeten; yet I say not that we are only to think of it, withal, let us strive and strain to get into this golden city, where the streets, walls, gates, and all is gold and pearl; [nay, where the happiness is such, as doth infinitely surpass all those metaphorical descriptions of it. For, eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what the happiness of heaven is. Undoubtedly it will be a happiness pure and rational; altogether worthy of God to bestow, and suited to the capacities of those, who shall be admitted into it.]

Use 2. On the other side, consider with yourselves what fools are they who deprive themselves willingly of this endless glory, who bereave themselves of a place in this city of pearl for a few carnal pleasures? What bedlams and human beasts are they, who shut themselves out of paradise for

a little transitory self? What sots, and senseless wretches are they, who wittingly and wilfully put themselves out of this palace, for the short fruition of worldly trash and trifles? [Things of no value in comparison, not worthy the toiling for, not sure to be attained by all our endeavours, things which *perish in the using*, and which when we have them, we are liable to be deprived of by a thousand accidents? What madness hath seized men, that they will be at no pains to secure the happiness of their immortal souls? What? Is heaven not worth the seeking? Is it a matter of indifference, whether your souls be happy or miserable for ever? Will you be so mad, as prefer trash to jewels, earth to heaven, time to eternity?] As for you *of whom I hope better things*, let me advise you for the love of God, for the love of Christ, for the love that you bear to your own souls, that you will *settle your affections on things above, and not on things beneath*; and then you shall find one day the comfort of it, when leaving the world, the *Spirit of Christ* shall whisper to your soul this happy tidings, *To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

Here is an end; shall I now cast up the account of what I have delivered you? The total is this:

Every sinner that repents and believes, shall be saved: you need no other instance than this thief on the cross, at one hearty tear, one penitent prayer, *Lord, remember me in thy kingdom*, the Lord gives him his desire; see here the fiat, *Thou shalt be*; the expedition, *to day*; his admission, *with me*; the place where he is led into, it is *into paradise*; and there now he *officiates*, doing service to God without ceasing, world without end.

O Lord, give me grace so to repent and believe, that whensoever I go hence, *that day I may be with thee in paradise.* Amen.

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COLLECTION

OF THE

Best thoughts on several Important SUBJECTS.

The knowledge of God and Christ, our all in all.

WHATSOEVER other knowledge a man is endowed withal, he is but an ignorant person, who doth not know God, the author of his being, the preserver and protector of his life, his sovereign, and his judge, the giver of every good and perfect gift, his surest refuge in trouble, his best friend, or worst enemy, the present support of his life, his hopes in death, his future happiness, and his portion for ever; who does not know his relation to God, the duty that he owes him, and the way to please *Him* who can make him happy or miserable for ever; who doth not know the Lord Jesus Christ, who is *the way, the truth, and the life*:—Nay, if a man by a vast and imperious mind, and a heart large as the sand upon the seashore, (as it is said of Solomon) could command all the knowledge of nature and art, of words and things; could attain to a mastery in all languages, and found the depth of all arts and sciences, measure the earth and the heaven, and tell the stars, and declare their orders and motions; could discourse of the interests of all states, the intrigues of all courts, the reason of all civil laws and constitutions, and give an account of the history of all ages; could speak of trees, *from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springs out of the wall; and of beasts also and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes*: and yet should, in the mean time, be destitute of the knowledge of God and Christ, and his duty; all this would be but an impertinent vanity, and a more glittering kind of ignorance; and such a man (like the philosopher,

who, whilst he was gazing upon the stars, fell into the ditch, would but *sapienter descendere in infernum*, be undone with all this knowledge, and with a great deal of wisdom go down to hell.

On the Being of a God.

TO attain this knowledge and belief of a Deity nothing more is requisite than an unprejudiced mind, a good heart, a well ordered life, and a careful survey of the works of God. When we have cast our eyes abroad on this earth, and turned them up to the heavens, and considered the beauty and order of the one, the magnificence, extent, and kind influences of the other, we will naturally put such questions as these to ourselves:—WHOSE power was it, that framed this beautiful and stately fabrick, this immense and spacious world? (Ps. civ. 2.) *that stretched out the North over the empty place, and hanged the earth upon nothing?* Job ii. 6, 7. *that formed those vast and numberless orbs of heaven, and disposed them into such regular and uniform motions?* (Psa. xix. 1. cxlvii. 4. civ. 19.) *that appointed the sun to rule the day, and the moon and the stars to govern the night?* that so adjusted their several distances, as that they should neither be scorched by heat, nor destroyed by cold? that encompassed the earth with air so wonderfully contrived, as at one and the same time to support clouds for rain, to afford winds for health, and traffick, to be proper for the breath of animals by its spring; for causing sounds by its motion, for transmitting light by its transparency? that fitted the water to afford vapours for rain, speed for traffick, and fish for nourishment and delicacy? that weighed the

mountains in scales, and the hills in a ballance, and adjusted them in their most proper places for fruitfulness and health? that diversified the climates of the earth into such an agreeable variety, that in all that great difference, yet each one has its proper seasons, day and night, winter and summer? that clothed the face of the earth with plants and flowers, so exquisitely adorned with various and inimitable beauties, that even *Solomon* in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them? that replenished the world with animals, so *different* from each other in *particular*, yet All in the *whole* so much *alike*? that framed with exquisite workmanship the eye for seeing, and other parts of the body, necessarily in proportion; without which, no creature could have long subsisted? that beyond all these things, indued *the soul* of *Man* with far superior faculties; with Understanding, Judgment, Reason and Will; with Faculties whereby in a most exalted manner God teaches us more than the beasts of the field, and make thus wiser than the fowls of heaven.—None sure but GOD.

The madness and danger of Atheism.

THE Atheist contends against the religious man that there is no God; but upon strange inequality and odds, for he ventures his eternal interest; whereas the religious man ventures only the loss of his lusts (which it is much better for him to be without) or, at the utmost, the loss of some temporal convenience; and all this while is inwardly more contented and happy, and usually more healthful, and perhaps meets with more respect and faithfuller friends, and lives in a more secure and flourishing station, and more free from the evils and punishments of this world, than the atheistical person does; however it is not much that he ventures: and after this life, if there be no God, is as well as he; but if there be a God, is infinitely better, even as much as unspeakable and eternal happiness is better than extreme and endless misery.

If we consult our reason we cannot but believe that *there is*, if our interest, we cannot but heartily wish *there were*, such a Being as God in the world. Every thing within us and without us gives us notice of him. His name is written upon our hearts; and in every creature there are some prints and footsteps of him. Every moment we

feel our dependance upon him, and do by daily experience find that we can neither be happy without Him, nor think ourselves so.

There are certain seasons wherein nature shews itself superior to all the cheats, which bad men put upon themselves, and wherein they are forced to acknowledge that there is a God. There are none of us but may happen to fall into those circumstances of danger, or want, or pain, or some other sort of calamity, that we can have no hopes of relief or comfort but from *God* alone: none in all the world to flee to, but *Him*. And what would men do in such a case if it were not for *God*?

Greatness of God.

THIS globe of earth is many million of times greater than the largest hill; the sun is many times greater than this earth; the fixed stars are still greater than the sun, the heaven of heavens is as much greater than the fixed stars as the fixed stars are greater than the earth: How great then is God, who is greater than all these, and who filleth all in all!

Omnipresence of God.

Should the soul with one glance of thought start beyond the bounds of the creation, should it continue its progress through infinite space for millions of ages with the same rapidity, it would still find itself within the embraces of its Creator, and compassed about with the immensity of the Godhead.

Encomium on the Goodness of God.

THO' every one of the divine perfections in *particular*, affords most just ground of adoration and honour; yet That which to *Us* compleats the idea of God, and represents him under the notion of the *Father* as well as *Lord* of the Universe, and makes the supreme Being and Governour of all things, to be no less the object of our *Hope* and *Love* than of our *Admiration* and *Fear*; is this glorious attribute, of *goodness*. Eternity and Imminity, *amaze* our thoughts: infinite knowledge and wisdom, fill us with *Admiration*: Omnipotence or irresistible power is *great and admirable*; but at the same time, if considered singly by itself, 'tis also *dreadful and terrible*: dominion and

and majesty clothed with perfect and impartial justice, is worthy of the highest praises; but still to sinners it appears rather awful and venerable, than the object of desire and love: holiness and purity, are inexpressibly beautiful and amiable perfections; but of too bright a glory, for sinners to contemplate with delight. 'Tis goodness, that finishes the idea of God; and represents him to us under that lovely character, of being the best, as well as the greatest, Being in the universe. This is that attribute, which both in itself is infinitely amiable, and, as a ground-work interwoven with all the other perfections of the Divine Nature, makes every one of them also to become objects of our love, as well as of our Adoration. Immenſe and eternal goodness, goodness all-powerful and all-wise, goodness invested with supreme dominion, and tempering the rigour of unrelenting justice; This is indeed a description, of a perfect being; a character, truly worthy of God. This is that inexhaustible fountain of beneficence, from which the whole frame of nature derives its being; by which all creatures in the universe, are continually supported and preserved; from which Man derives his present enjoyments, and his future hopes; which angels and archangels and the spirits of just men made perfect, adore with never-ceasing praises in the regions of eternal happiness.

Instances of the divine goodness.

THE exuberant and overflowing goodness of the supreme Being, whose mercy extends to all his works, is plainly seen, from his having made so very little matter, at least what falls within our knowledge, that does not swarm with life: every part of matter is peopled: every green leaf swarms with inhabitants. There is scarce a single humour in the body of a man, or of any other animal, in which our glasses do not discover myriads of living creatures. The surface of animals is also covered with other animals, which are in the same manner the basis of other animals that live upon it; nay, we find in the most solid bodies, as in marble itself, innumerable cells and cavities that are crowded with such imperceptible inhabitants, as are too little for the naked eye to discover. On the other hand, if we look into the more bulky parts of nature, we see the seas, lakes

and rivers teeming with numberless kinds of living creatures: we find every mountain and marsh, wilderness and wood, plentifully stocked with birds and beasts, and every part of matter affording proper necessaries and conveniencies for the livelihood of multitudes which inhabit it. Nor is his goodness less seen in the diversity, than in the multitude of living creatures. Had he only made one species of animals, none of the rest would have enjoyed the happiness of existence; he has, therefore, specified in his creation every degree of life, every capacity of being. The whole chasm in nature, from a plant to a man, is filled up with divers kinds of creatures, rising one over another, by such a gentle and easy ascent, that the little transitions and deviations from one species to another, are almost insensible. This intermediate space is so well husbanded and managed, that there is scarce a degree of perception which does not appear in some one part of the world of life. Is the goodness or wisdom of the divine Being more manifested in this his proceeding?

Providence of God, our only comfort and support.

IN order to represent our deplorable state without a firm reliance on the all-sustaining and all-conducting providence of our great Creator, let us suppose, that, in a morning when we awake, we should find ourselves sailing along, with all our nearest relations and dearest friends, in a wide, unconstant, and seemingly boundless ocean; where we see storms and tempests gathering around us, hovering over, and very soon to break upon us; being utterly incapable ourselves to steer our vessel to any safe harbour, and without any hope of assistance, either from men or invisible powers; so that we could expect no relief, but must be in a perpetual dread of being tossed up and down at the pleasure of the winds and waves, till we should be starved to death, or, until our vessel split upon some unseen rock, and we should sink to the bottom. Would not our case be extremely lamentable? Yet this is but a faint image of our state here in this world, without an assured trust in the wisdom and goodness of an invisible and Almighty friend, who will lead us safely through this dangerous voyage of human life, and land us at last on some peaceful shore.

Christ's excellency, and worth.

CHRIST is the scope of all the scripture ; all things and persons in the old world were types of him ; all the prophets foretold him ; all God's love runs through him ; all the gifts and graces of the Spirit flow from him, the whole eye of God is upon him, and all his designs both in heaven and earth meet in him.—Oh the worth of Christ ! cast into the balance with him, the excellency of all men and angels, cast into the scale kings, and all kings, and all their glory, and add to the weight millions of heavens of heavens, and the balance cannot down, the scales are unequal, Christ outweighs all.—Admire then his worth, O ye sons of men ; be smitten with his love ; let your hearts cleave to him, and be fixed on him. Why are you taken with the toys of this world, when such a Christ is offered to you in the gospel ? Can the world die for you ? Can the world reconcile you to the Father ? Can the world advance you to the kingdom of heaven ?

Christ a believer's all in all.

EVERY true believer sees so much excellency in Christ, considered as the brightness of the Father's glory and express image of his person, and considered as God-man, Mediator, that all things else are in his esteem nothing worth ; yea, with Paul he counts all things but dung and loss, when compared with the saving knowledge he has got of Christ and him crucified. Lay down crowns and scepters at his feet ; offer him power, riches, honours, pleasures, yea, every thing that this world can afford, he would with a noble disdain reject them all as trash, and, having made a better choice, would cry out ;—*None but Christ, now but Christ !*

Q. What are the reasons why the saints prefer the Lord Jesus Christ before all things else ?

A. The reasons why the saints love the Lord Jesus Christ infinitely above all other things, are, First, Because of the excellencies of his divine nature : for whatever God is by nature, the same is Christ. Is God eternal ? So is Christ : is God all-powerful, all-wise, all-gracious ? So is Christ : is God the standard of all moral perfection, and the object of all religious worship ? So is Christ : Is God the life, the light, the sun, the only portion and eternal happiness of every true be-

liever ? So is the Lord Christ.

Secondly, Because of the amiable virtues he exemplified in his life, such as, *sincere and unaffected piety* towards God : boundless love and charity to all mankind : unparalleled humility, temperance, and purity, with reference to himself.

Thirdly, Because of his mediatory excellencies : as their prophet, their priest, their king : *They love him, because he first loved them, and gave himself unto the death for them.*

A short description of the bitter sufferings of Christ for mankind.

WHEN a man, with a steady faith, looks back on the sufferings of Christ, with what bleeding emotions of heart must he contemplate the life and sufferings of his Deliverer ? When his agonies occur to him, how will he weep to reflect that he has often forgot them for the glance of a wanton, for the applause of a vain world, for an heap of fleeting past pleasures, which are at present aking sorrows ?

After a life spent in doing good to the souls and bodies of men, in suffering many hardships and difficulties, from his friends and countrymen, whom his miracles, his doctrine, and his life ought to have obliged to the utmost gratitude and veneration, Jesus at last comes to the dreadful hour of his sufferings, — “ But what heart can conceive, what tongue can utter them ? Who is that yonder buffeted, mocked and spurned ? Whom do they drag like a felon ? Whither do they carry my Lord, my King, my Saviour, and my God ? And will he die to expiate those very injuries ? See where they have nailed the Lord and Giver of life ! how his wounds blacken, his body writhes, and heart heaves with pity and with agony ! Oh Almighty sufferer ! look down, look down from thy triumphant infamy : lo, he inclines his head to his sacred bosom ! hark, he groans ! see he expires ! The earth trembles, the temple rends, the rocks burst, the dead arise : which are the quick ? which are the dead ? Sure nature, all nature is departing with her Creator.

Christ's Love to Mankind.

HOW much doth it concern us to have a just sense of the unmerited, unsolicited, and

wonderful friendship of the eternal Son of God; who, tho' he was rich, yet, for the sake of apostate sons of men, became poor, and was made flesh, and suffered, and died, that he might enlighten their darkened understandings, purify their corrupted hearts, exalt their debased natures, deliver them from the punishments due unto their sins, set open the gates of immortality before them, and conduct them into the presence of their God.

The Excellency of the Christian Religion.

I Think, [says a most famous divine] I may with some confidence challenge any religion in the world to shew such a complete body and collection of holy and reasonable laws established upon such promises and threatenings as the gospel contains. And if any man can produce a religion that can reasonably pretend to an equal or a greater confirmation than the gospel hath, a religion the precepts and promises and threatenings whereof are calculated to make men wiser and better, more temperate and more chaste, more meek and more patient, more kind and more just, than the laws and motives of Christianity are apt to make men; if any man can produce such a religion, I am ready to be of it. Let but any man shew me any book in the world, the doctrines whereof have the seal of such miracles as the doctrine of the scriptures hath; a book which contains the heads of our duty so perfectly, and without the mixture of any thing that is unreasonnable, or vicious, or any ways unworthy of God; that commands us every thing in reason necessary to be done, and abridgeth us of no lawful pleasure without offering us abundant recompense for our present self-denial; a book the rules whereof, if they were practised, would make men more pious and devout, more holy and sober, more just and fair in their dealings, better friends and better neighbours, better magistrates and better subjects, and better in all relations, and which does offer to the understanding of men more powerful arguments to persuade them to be all this; let any man, I say, shew me such a book, and I will lay aside the scripture, and preach out of *that*.

Importance of Christianity.

IS it not of importance, of great importance, to creatures in a state of ignorance, corruption

and guilt; to have it made known to them, by an undoubted revelation, that, in the original plan of the divine government, there is a remedy provided for their misfortunes? how comfortable and rejoicing is the discovery, that there is a particular dispensation of providence carrying on by the Son and Spirit of God, for the recovery and salvation of mankind, who are in a state of apostacy and ruin? does it not nightly concern us to know these duties, and inward acts of religion which are due to Jesus Christ the Mediator, and the holy Ghost the guide and sanctifier of mankind? is it not beyond all contradiction, a matter of unspeakable importance, to have it confirmed to us by an infallible revelation, that this whole universe is one vast and immortal empire, of which God is the king and head; and that virtue and devotion are the great, the standing, and everlasting laws of this great kingdom, to which all rational beings ought to pay a voluntary subjection? can it be denied to be of the highest consequence to us, to have the particular branches of these immutable laws, delivered to us by a messenger from heaven, vested with the highest authority; and not to be left to gather them from ancient traditions of an uncertain source, from long deductions of human reasonings, from the admonitions of philosophers, or even from the dictates of our own hearts, where there are such great mixture of impurity? is it not a mighty advantage to have all these rules of life exemplified in a perfect pattern, by one clothed with mortality, and *who was in all points tempted like as we are, and yet without sin*? is it not a thing of universally acknowledged importance to have it ascertained to us by one who came from the spiritual and unseen world, that the righteous shall live there, in immortal happiness and glory, and that the wicked and disobedient shall be thrust down to a place of everlasting punishment?

The damnable condition of those that sin under the Gospel.

MANY are apt to pity the poor heathens who never heard the name of Christ, and sadly to condole their case; but as our Saviour said upon another occasion, *Weep not for them, weep for yourselves.* There is no such miserable person in the world as a degenerate Christian, because

cause he falls into the greatest misery from the greatest advantages, and opportunities of being happy. Dost thou lament the condition of Socrates, and Cato, and Aristides, and doubt what shall become of them at the day of judgment? and canst thou who art an impious and profane Christian, think that thou shalt escape the damnation of hell?

The faith and practice of ungodly Christians, the worst contradiction, and most aggravated crime.

DOst thou believe that *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and dost thou still allow thyself in ungodliness and worldly lusts? Art thou convinced that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, and dost thou still persist in a wicked course? Art thou fully persuaded that no whoremonger, nor adulterer, nor covetous, nor unrighteous person shall have any inheritance in the kingdom of God and Christ, and dost thou for all that continue to practise these vices? What canst thou say (man) why it should not be to thee according to thy faith? If it so fall out that thou art miserable and undone for ever, thou hast no reason to be surpris'd as if some unexpected thing had happened to thee. It is but with thee just as thou believ'dst it would be when thou didst these things; for how couldst thou expect that God should accept of thy good belief when thou didst so notoriously contradict it by a bad life? How couldst thou look for other but that God should condemn thee for the doing of those things for which thine own conscience did condemn thee all the while thou wast doing of them.—When we come into the other world, there is no consideration that will sting our consciences more cruelly than this, that we did wickedly, when we knew to have done better, and chose to make ourselves miserable, when we understood the way to have been happy. To conclude; we Christians have the best and the holiest, the wisest and most reasonable religion in the world; but then we are in the worst condition of all mankind, if the best religion in the world does not make us good.*

Character of a good man.

A Good man is modest and humble, peaceable and submissive to his superiors, in all

reasonable instances. To his equals, he is just and faithful, using all plainness and sincerity in his dealings: In his conversation injuring and abusing no man; but with gentleness and forgiveness, melting the hearts even of his enemies, and making them to be at peace with him. To his inferiors, he is gentle and condescending; not oppressing the weak, nor dealing hardly with those that are under his power, but encouraging them by his example in the ways of virtue, and in all kind of exigencies assisting and relieving them to the utmost of his ability.

Uncharitableness.

WE are generally apt to busy ourselves in observing the errors and miscarriages of our neighbours, and are forward to mark and censure the faults and follies of other men; but how few descend into themselves, and turn their eyes inward, and say, *What have I done?* It is an excellent saying of one; *No man was ever unhappy for not prying into the actions and conditions of other men, but that man is necessarily unhappy, who doth not observe himself, and consider the state of his own soul.*

Doing Good.

TO do good is to be like God, *who is good, and doth good*, and to be like him in that which he esteems his greatest glory, and that is, his goodness. It is to be like the Son of God, who when he took our nature upon him, and lived in the world, *went about doing good.* It is to be like the blessed angels, whose great employment is to be *ministering spirits for the good of others.* To be charitable and helpful and beneficial to others, is to be a good angel, and a Saviour, and a God to men.

Direction how to employ life.

LET all thy joy and peace consist in this alone, in passing from one good action to another, in remembering and thinking of God present every where.—Call upon God in all thy actions, and do not be uneasy for the time thou employest in his service. Three hours of life spent thus, are sweeter than an eternity in sin.

The

The advantages of Piety.

WHAT a seasonable refreshment is it to the mind of man, when the pangs of death are ready to take hold of him, and he is just stepping into the other world, to be able to look back with satisfaction upon a religious and well spent life? Then, if ever, the comforts of a good man do overflow, and a kind of heaven springs up in his mind, and he rejoiceth in the hope of the glory of God.

But with the ungodly it is not so: at the hour of death, the guilt of his wicked life doth then stare him in the face: when eternity, that fearful and amazing sight, presents itself to his mind, and he feels himself sinking into the regions of darkness, and is every moment in a fearful expectation of meeting with the just reward of his deeds, with what regret does he then remember the sins of his life? and how full of rage and indignation is he against himself for having neglected to know, when he had so many opportunities of knowing them, the things that belonged to his peace; and which, because he hath neglected them, are now and likely to be for ever hid from his eyes?

Preciousness of Time.

TIME is the season and opportunity of carrying on of any work, and for that reason is one of the most valuable things; and yet nothing is more wastefully spent, and more prodigally squandered away by a great part of mankind than this, which next to our immortal souls is of all other things most precious; because upon the right use or abuse of our time, our eternal happiness or misery does depend. Men have generally some guard upon themselves, as to their money and estates, and will not with eyes open, suffer others to rob and deprive them of it: but we will let any body almost rob us of our time, and are contented to expose this precious treasure to every body's rapine and extortion; and can quietly look on, whilst men thrust in their hands, and take it out by whole handfuls, as if it were of no greater value than silver was in Solomon's days, no more than *stones in the street*. And yet when it is gone, all the silver and gold in the world cannot purchase and fetch back the least moment of it, when perhaps we would give all the world for a very small part of that time, which we parted with upon such cheap and easy terms.

The present life a state of trial and probation, in order to eternity.

HERE is (my brethren) most certainly there is another life after this; we are not *hoists*, if we do not make ourselves so; and if we die we shall not die like them, neither shall our last end be like theirs. For, whatever we may think or wish, it shall not be in our power to extinguish our own beings, when we have a mind to be rid of them, and to chuse whether or no we shall live for ever. No; We are plainly designed for another state; and will be immortal, in spite of ourselves. And our condition hereafter, will be decided according to our behaviour here. Now this being the case, it is evident that the best thing we can do for ourselves is to provide for our future state, and to secure the everlasting happiness of another life. And the best way to do that, is to live in obedience to those laws, which our Maker, and our Sovereign hath prescribed to us; and according to which, he will one day sentence us to eternal rewards or punishments.

The benefit of Consideration.

IT is the great fault and infelicity of a great many, that they generally live without thinking, and are acted by their present inclinations and appetites, without any consideration of the future consequences of things, and without fear of any thing but of a present and sensible danger; what do we think God has given us our reason and understanding for, but to foresee evils at a distance, and to prevent them; to provide for our future security and happiness; to consider what we do, and what we ought to do, and what makes most for our future and lasting interest, and what against it?

The unsatisfactoriness of all earthly enjoyment.

I know not how it is, but either we, or the things of this world, or both, are so phantastical that we can neither be well with these things; nor well without them. If we be hungry, we are in pain; and if we eat to the full, we are uneasy. If we be poor, we think ourselves miserable, and when we come to be rich, we commonly really are so. If we are in a low condition, we fret and murmur, and if we chance to get up and to be raised to greatness, we are

many times farther from contentment, than we were before. So that we pursue the happiness of this world, just as little children chase birds, when we think, we are come very near it, and have it almost in our hands, it flies farther from us than it was at first.

The pleasantness of a religious course.

IT is pleasant to be virtuous and good, because that is to excell many others; and it is pleasant to grow better, because that is to excel ourselves. Nay it is pleasant even to mortify and subdue our lusts; because that is victory: it is pleasant to command our appetites and passions, and to keep them in due order, within the bounds of reason and religion; because this is a kind of empire.

The miserable state of those that are slaves to sin.

SIN is the saddest slavery in the world; it breaks and sinks mens spirits and makes them so base and servile, that they have not the courage to rescue themselves. No sort of slaves are so poor spirited, as they that are in bondage to their lusts. Their power is gone, or if they have any left, they have not the heart to make use of it. And though they see and feel their misery, yet they chuse rather to sit down in it, and tamely to submit to it, than to make any resolute attempt for their liberty.

Blind and miserable men! that in despite of all the merciful warnings of God's word and providence, will run themselves into this desperate state, and never think of returning to a better mind, till their retreat is difficult almost to an impossibility.

The deceitfulness of sin.

DIID sin appear to men in its proper colours; and in the days of temptation represent itself truly and in the same dress, wherein all men behold it in the days of affliction, in the time of sickness, and at the approach of death; did sin always appear to men, what it does sometimes; (what it does, whenever they consider it with sober thoughts and with impartial reason;) to be a thing absolutely hateful to God; base and vile, in the nature of the thing itself; contrary to all the reason, and all the wisdom in the world; contrary to the judgment of our own consciences, and the agreeing opinion of all the wise and all the good men, nay and almost of all the wicked men

also, that ever lived: 'twould be in a manner as impossible for men deliberately to chuse it, as to chuse destruction and death itself. But sin, by that deceitfulness which the apostle speaks of, hides its deformed appearances from the eyes of foolish men; and sets before them nothing but pleasures and profits, joy and vanity, present security, and very distant, very uncertain, very remote fears. The only way to prevent this deceit effectually, is to consider frequently, and examine ourselves diligently, and *to exhort one another daily while it is called to day.* Let the sinner consider seriously with himself; if he were sure God would immediately punish him in this world, for his profaneness and irreligion and disregard to the Almighty; would not this put him upon more sober thoughts? Undoubtedly it would. Yet if he pretends to be a Christian, and to believe the gospel; (and with such persons only I am now arguing;) he cannot but be sensible, that a severe punishment will certainly overtake him. If his shame were immediately to be published in the face of the world, would he be guilty of the vileness he now secretly commits? Without question he would not. And yet he cannot but know, that the time will come, when it shall be openly published before men and angels, before all the inhabitants of heaven and earth. If his fraud and injustice were by human authority to be punished immediately, without any possible hope of escape, or of evading the power of the laws; would not this prevail with him to forbear the commission of it? Unquestionably it would: yet, at the same time he cannot but acknowledge, that the consequence of the folly he now greedily commits, will be misery and death eternal.

The day of Judgment.

WE must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done whether it be good or evil. The judgment to come is a very amazing consideration, it is a fearful thing to hear of it, but it will be much more terrible to see it, especially to those whose guilt must needs make them so heartily concerned in the dismal consequences of it; and yet as sure as I stand, and you sit here, *this great and terrible day of the Lord will come!* and *who may abide his coming!*

What

What will we do, when that day shall surprize us careless and unprepared! what unspeakable horror and amazement will then take hold of us! when *lifting up our eyes to heaven, we shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of it, with power, and great glory*; when that powerful voice which shall pierce the ears of the dead shall ring through the world, *Arise ye dead, and come to judgment*; when the mighty trump shall sound, and awake the sleepers of a thousand years, and summon the dispersed parts of the bodies of all men that ever lived, to rally together and take their place; and the souls and bodies of men which have been so long strangers to one another, shall meet and be united again, to receive the doom due to their deeds; what fear shall then surprize sinners, and how will they tremble at the presence of the great Judge, and for the glory of his Majesty! how will their conscience fly in their faces, and their own hearts condemn them, for their wicked and ungodly lives, and even prevent that sentence which yet shall certainly be past and executed upon them.

God a consuming fire to the workers of iniquity.

WHAT can be more dreadful than the displeasure of an Almighty and Eternal Being, who can punish to the utmost, and *who lives for ever*, to execute his wrath and vengeance upon sinners? So that well might the apostle say, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Consider this, all ye that forget God, will ye provoke the Lord to jealousy? are ye stronger than he?* think of it seriously, and forget him if you can, despise him if you dare; consider this, lest he take you into consideration, and rouse like a lion out of sleep, and *tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*

Description of our Duty.

WHERE are the effects of true religion, in the full compass and extent of it, to be found? Such real effects as do in any measure bear a proportion to the power and perfection of their cause? For nothing certainly is more excellent and amiable in its definition than true religion is; but alas! how imperfect is it in the subject? I mean in us, who ought to shew forth the power and perfection of it, in the practice and actions of our lives, the best demonstration of the excellent frame and temper of our minds.

What a conflict and struggling do the best men find between their inclination and their duty? How hard to reconcile our practice and our knowledge, and to make our lives to agree with the reason of our minds, and the clear conviction of our consciences? How difficult for a man in this dangerous and imperfect state, to be in any measure either so wise or so good as he ought? How rare is it for a man to be good-natured, gentle, and easy to be intreated, without being often betrayed into some weakness and sinful compliances, especially in the bad company of our betters? How next to impossible is it to be strict and severe in our lives, without being sour? to govern our lives with that perpetual caution, and to maintain that evenness of temper, as not to be sometimes peevish and passionate? and when we are so, not to be apt to say with Jonah, *we do well to be angry.*

How hard is it to hit upon the just temper of wisdom and innocency? to be wise and hurt nobody; to be innocent, without being silly?

How hard a matter is it, to be much in company, and free in conversation, and not to be infected by it? To live in the midst of a wicked world, and yet to keep ourselves free from the vices of it? To be temperate in the use of things pleasing, so as neither to injure our health, nor to lose the use of our reason, nor to offend against conscience?

How hard is it to be chearful without being vain? and grave and serious without being morose? to be useful and instructive to others in our conversation and discourse, without assuming too much authority to ourselves?

How difficult is it to have a mind equal to every condition, and to be content with mean and moderate things; to be patient in adversity, and humble in prosperity, and meek upon sudden and violent provocations? to keep our passions free from getting head of our reason, and our zeal from out-running our knowledge? to have a will perfectly submitted and resigned to the will of God, even when it lies cross and thwart to ours, so that whatever pleases God, should please us?

To be *wise and innocent, men in understanding*, and yet *in malice children*? To have many great virtues, and not to want that which gives the great lustre to them all, I mean real and unaffected *modesty*, and *humility*? How difficult is it,

to have a regard to all God's commandments, and to hate every evil and false way? To have our duty continually in our eye, and ready to be put into practice upon every proper occasion? To have God, and the consideration of another world, always before us, present to our minds, and operative upon our practice? To live as those that know they must die, and to have our thoughts perpetually awake, and intent upon the great and everlasting concerns of our immortal souls?

These are great things indeed, easie to be talked of, but hard to be done; nay not to be done at all, without frequent and fervent prayer to God, and the continual aids and supplies of his grace; not without an earnest endeavour on our parts, a vigorous resistance of temptations, and many a sore conflict with our own perverse wills and sensual inclinations; not without a perpetual guard and watchfulness over our lives, and our unruly appetites and passions?

The danger of delaying repentance.

O That I knew what to say that might prevail with men, and effectually persuade them to break off their sins by repentance.—Consider, my dear reader, the Necessity of Repentance: “Repent thou must or perish.” Consider also that the longer thou delayest to reform thy life, thy repentance will become the more difficult: And how wretched is thy case (O sinner,) to be under a necessity of repenting of thy sins, or being damned for ever, and yet to put it out of thy power to repent at all? For how art thou certain whether hereafter thou shalt have time to repent; and if thou shalt have time, whether thou shalt have a heart to it, and the assistance of God's grace to go thorough with it. Therefore do not, I beseech you do not, put off this necessary work any longer. Do not even say, “To-morrow I will repent;” for to-morrow thou mayest never see; or, if thou dost, wilt be still more unfit, more indisposed for the work than thou art Now. Therefore repent, sinner, repent *To-Day*. Nay, To-day is with the latest to begin this work; had you been wise, you would have begun it sooner.

CONCLUSION.

And now Reader, that thou art come to an end of this Book, give me leave to ask thee what impression hath it made on thy mind? Art thou in any degree become, by thy perusal of it, a wiser and a better man than thou wast before? If so, then mayest thou bless God that thou hast spent thy time so well. But I wish thou mayest not deal with this Book, as I am afraid, thou hast dealt with many others;—pass thy judgment on the Author, criticise his stile, approve or condemn it, and the matter contained in it, just as it hath suited thy particular taste: ah! my dear Reader, what a poor use wilt thou thereby make of such a Book? Believe it was meant to do thee greater service: It was no doubt designed, sincerely designed to teach thee a variety of instructive lessons, and to stamp the most worthy impressions on thy heart. And wilt thou frustrate so good a design, in turning off the eye of thy understanding from these good instructions that have been offered thee, and hardening thy heart against the worthy impressions they would make upon it? No, my dear Reader, I hope better things of you, I trust you *will not*.

O! that I could now rivet one devout impression in thy mind, before I bid thee farewell! Think deeply with thyself what thou art, and what thou oughtest to be: Ask thy self Whether thou art born again? Whether thou hast done the duty of a regenerate man? Whether thou hast performed the part of a Christian parent, a child, a master, a servant, a husband, a wife, a minister, or people, a magistrate, or subject? Whether thou livest by faith on the Son of God? Whether thou art prepared for Death, for Judgment, for Eternity?—And now Reader, I bid thee farewell! Only methinks I cannot yet leave thee without a parting advice: Let me then beseech thee not to shut this Book, till thou hast taken a solemn review of what thou hast been reading, till thou hast fixed it in thy memory, till thou hast resolved, by the grace of God, *to be*, and *to do* what thou hast been so earnestly exhorted to. Then, and not till then, mayest thou *safely* shut this Book.

