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St. Paul's Orthodoxy.

O R

*The universal Advantage that Gospel-preaching
would be of to Civil Society.*

S H E W N I N A

S E R M O N,

D E L I V E R E D T O A

PROTESTANT-DISSENTING-CHURCH

A T

P I N N E R S - H A L L,

Sunday-Morning *June 24.* 1759.

By CALEB FLEMING,
Pastor of that Church.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. Noon, in the Poultry; and C. HENDERSON;
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St. Paul, Minnesota

Dear Sir,

M. O. M. F. S.

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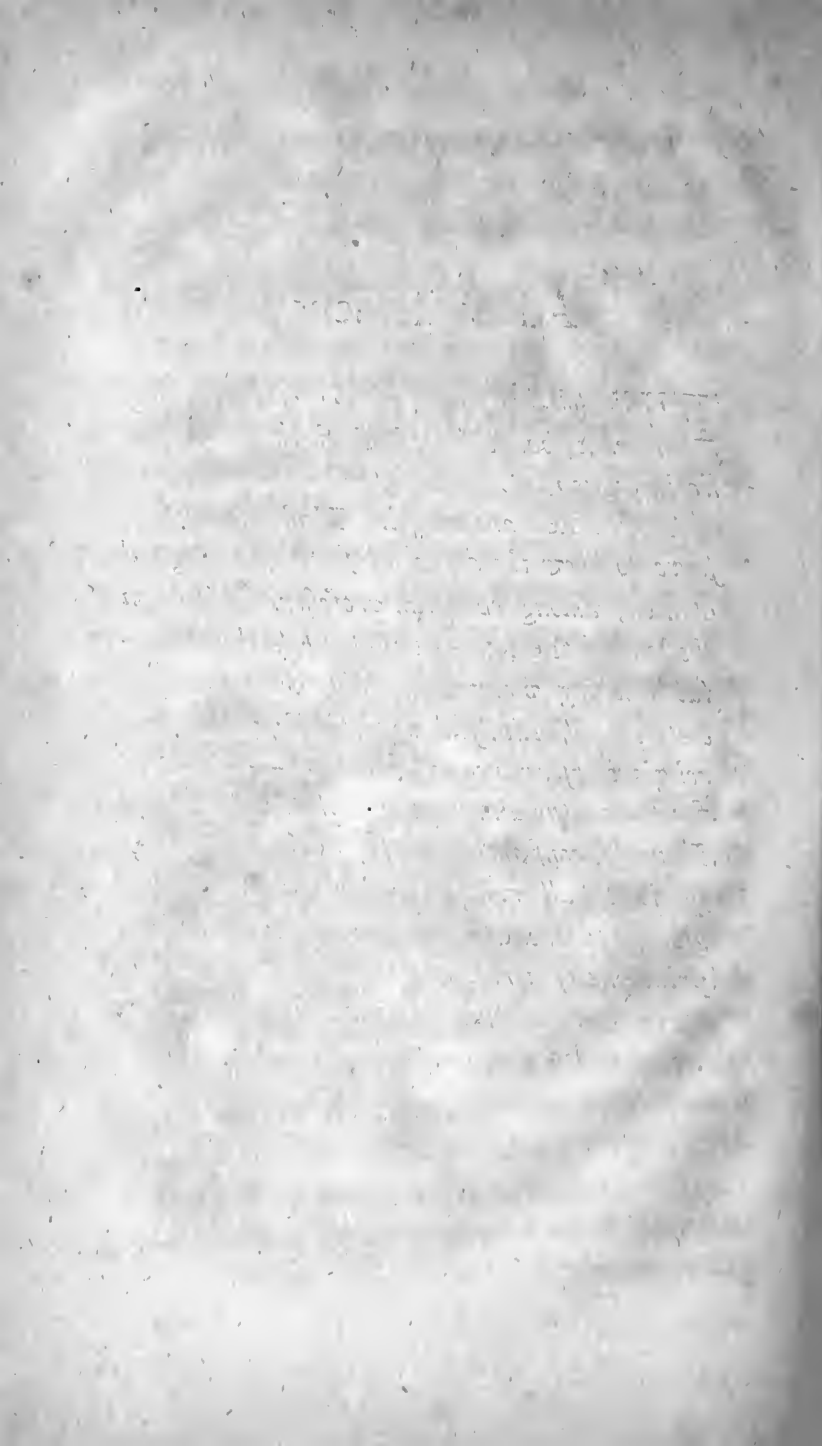
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Yours truly,

Advertisement.

THE solicitation of many of my young friends, has subjected this discourse to public inspection.

Some notes are added. Those on bigotry, serve to shew the depraved state of theological opinion, among christian professors. Those on the law of the sexes, would expose the shameful shocking violations, whilst the weal of society does essentially and necessarily depend on a religious observance of that law. — A concern for the virtue and happiness of the rising age, I would constantly cherish, as what may give spirit to all my public labours. and would gladly, to the utmost of my ability, inculcate principles of a rational piety and devotion, the only solid and unshaken foundation of the hope and confidence of man.





TITUS II. 15.

THESE THINGS SPEAK AND EXHORT, AND
REBUKE WITH ALL AUTHORITY: LET
NO MAN DESPISE THEE.

S T. *Paul* is supposed to have written this epistle about the year 56. — the person to whom he writes is *Titus*, an idolatrous Greek; converted by him to the christian faith. *Gal.* ii. 3. hence called, *his own son*, *Tit.* i. 4. appointed by him Elder or Bishop of the church in *Crete* or *Candie*. a fruitful Island in the mediterranean-sea, where this apostle had first propagated the christian doctrine. The instruction which it contains, describes the qualification, spirit, and behaviour of Bishops and Deacons.—the method in which *Titus* is to conduct his public ministrations.

Alike

Alike advice is given to *Timothy*, in the first epistle written to him about the same time with this to *Titus*. But as our ecclesiastical historian observes, “that is of greater length, because *Timothy* was a young man. *Titus* is older, and of more experience. and did not need a long exhortation.”^a

The occasion of this Epistle was partly owing to false teachers having endeavoured to mix Judaical observances, and to corrupt the Gospel system. and many, who pretended to know God, did, in works disgrace their profession. they recommended a licentiousness of manners, and *were void of judgment, concerning good works.* ch. i. 16.

Titus must religiously enjoyn good works, as well as remonstrate against all immorality. for he is constantly to speak those things which become sound doctrine. ch. ii. 1. which injunction is renewed in my text,—*these things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority.*

Several inquiries should be made by us. Such as

I. Into

^a See Dr. *Lardner's* Supplement, Vol. ii. p. 190, 191.

- I. Into the things which *Titus* is to dwell upon, as a christian instructor.
- II. Into the manner and spirit of his address.
- III. Into the weight or influence which his teachings ought to have on christian people.

As to the things which *Titus* must dwell upon, we may observe, that the general scheme of the gospel is summed up in the previous context ; where the salutary grace of God is said to teach, or persuade men “ to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts ; “ and to live soberly, righteously, and godly “ in this present world.” this being the capital end of Christ's mediation, *viz.* “ to redeem “ men from all iniquity, and purify unto “ himself a peculiar people, zealous of good “ works.” *Titus* must never propose any view of Christ's mediation but what manifests the grace of God as bringing salvation to men, by redeeming them from their vanity, worldliness, and lust ; and by animating their zeal for *good works*.

What these are, he has very distinctly shewn in this Epistle.—for example, “ *aged* “ *men* must be vigilant and temperate, found “ in

“ in the faith, in charity, in patience.” The *Cretians* were much addicted to intemperance, deceit, and lying. habits not easily thrown off in old age. they should purge their minds from avarice, and quit the sordid, earthly spirit. a vice in aged persons too often seen in *matching* their children; wherein they are wont to consult only external condition. “ but they must be temperate and “ sound in the faith.” And besides this, “ they should be sound in charity and pa-
“ tience.” not peevish, fretful, and complaining under their infirmities: not of a jealous, surmising, suspicious temper; fatiguing and disagreeable to all around them.

The *aged women* ought to support a gracefulness and dignity of air and deportment, which becomes their years and profession. not countenance gossiping, tale-bearing, back-biting, and calumny.—“ not false ac-
“ cusers.”—They must be temperate and moderate in all their refreshments.—“ not
“ given to much wine.”—and they are to employ themselves continually, “ in teach-
“ ing their families good things.” hereby becoming venerable in all their sphere of influence.

And

And especially should they teach, both by precept and example, the *young women* who are their immediate ward, “to be wise, sober, chaste, modest, keepers at home; and to conduct all their family affairs with prudential care and a diligent oversight.” They may not become vain, giddy, roving, wanton; neither confine their attention to dress, figure, and amusement. A taste for the relaxing, sporting gaieties of life, scenes of diversion, however they may prescribe the steps and allure the feet of the other sex, to mingle in such associations and parties of pleasure; will never persuade the sober and thoughtful youth, that these assemblies thus frequented, can furnish among the fair, many, who have dispositions that promise much for the happiness of the conjugal state. Pride, humour, indulged passions can never train for this felicity. the humble, the meek, the prudent, the pious, all humane dispositions are to be inculcated, in order to form the *fair* for faithfulness to their husbands; and for taking every possible method to secure their love and esteem; “that so the word of God may not be blasphemed.”

Thus clearly did St. Paul discern, that with the *younger women* are entrusted

the most important interests of families, and the weal of society. and therefore it is, that he chusetli to be so very particular and express in these directions.

Titus must also “ exhort *young men* to be “ sober-minded.” that is to say, they are to attain an established decency, chastness, and discreetness of air and behaviour. “ They “ should flee youthful lusts,” as a man would the plague. and they must as eagerly pursue righteousness and purity, or an established virtue. compare 2 *Tim.* ii. 22. The imminent danger there is from intemperance, inebriety, indecorums, indecencies, debaucheries and gallantries, is every where visible in their fell-fruits. ^b

Salomon

^b The *British* sons of pleasure do not discover any understanding. they deviate from the plain dictates of nature, in all their libertine, impure embraces. they do their utmost to confound the divine order established in the intercourse of the sexes. they violate the very first law of society. and I will presume to prophesy of that people whom they so exactly copy after, I mean, the *French nation*, that if I am rightly informed, they must inevitably, by their gallantries, bring on a total ruin of that monarchy.—Dr. *Leland* in his history, of the life of *Philip of Macedon*, has observed, such consequences did take place in ancient *greece*, even among the most brave and celebrated of those people; for saith he, “ when every
“ part

Solomon has deserved the name of a wise man, rather from the rules he has laid down, and the observation he had made of mankind, than from his own example. he has however, from costly experience, labored to impress the minds of youth, by exposing the lure and enchantment of pleasure. youth should stately consult some of the first chapters of his book of proverbs.

Again, “*Servants* must be obedient to their own masters; and to please them well in all things; not gainfaying.” not saucily or pertly answering again:—“not purloining.” no way embezzling or wasting his goods, or injuring his property.—The religious servant will always study the interest of his master; and shew all good fidelity, “that he may adorn the doctrine of God his favor in all things.”

B 2

Subjects

“part of the government of *Athens* betrayed a total corruption and depravity, at the eve of its downfall. a love for public spectacles was the first thing which the youth were taught. There every object which could inflame their passions was presented to their view: they hung with effeminate pleasure on the musical airs—they wasted their time in wanton dalliance.—they lavished their fortune and vigour in an infamous commerce.—their love of money, or their incapacity for more rational entertainments engaged them in gaming.”*

* Vol. I. p. 86.

Subjects must also shew a reverence of the civil magistrate, whether supreme or subordinate. be dutiful in their several stations, and religiously observe the laws and ordinances that are needful to the support of government. They may not ever be concerned in conspiracies, seditions, insurrections and rebellions against a just and legal authority ; “ but be ready to every good work : ” as heartily concerned for the public safety and happiness.

The universal, perpetual duty of christians, is, “ that they speak evil of no man : “ but are gentle, and shew meekness to every one.”

The

• The spirit of *bigotry*, the inflamed animosity found among professors, occasioned wholly by some absurd speculation, or inexplicable mystery ; on account of which they defame, censure, and condemn the rational objector ; is not, in any wise consistent with this universal obligation. verily the affectation of orthodoxy, from an attachment to some human system, has ever been the excitement of an unholy zeal, hateful and hurtful to mankind.

Dr. S. Chandler in his sermon *on the signs of the times*, thus expresses himself — “ how zealous for their own “ forms and speculations, to what unscriptural height “ they carry the distinguishing opinions they have embraced, what absurdities they advance in the explanation and defence of them, how rigidly they confine “ their very charity to those of their own party, how “ dogma-

The social virtues and duties are nevertheless, *the things* which Titus must recommend and enjoy, as what do constitute the very essence of orthodoxy. They, verily, give the true complexion, of what the *canting-teacher* is wont to call, *the strain of evangelical preaching*. They are of infinite moment and consequence to the benefit and emolument of the world, and so to the honour of the christian profession.

This shall suffice for the first head of inquiry.

II. We are to examine into the spirit and manner of the address. — *these things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority.*

To *speak*, will import, the use made of the reasoning powers in addressing the vulgar. it signifies the endeavour to convince, by removing ignorance and prejudice; giving information to the judgment, by representing the nature and force of evidence in its di-

vinely

“dogmatically and presumptuously they annex damnation and salvation to their own tenets, how rigidly they impose them on all who are to expect their friendship.”—p. 36. Here is nothing of the gentleness and meekness of Christ, or of the christian towards all men. the persecuting pagan or papist has as good a claim to christianity: and yet, these men will have it, *they preach Christ; and are found in the faith.*

vinely moral direction. — so I should understand the term, *speak*, as denoting the labours of argumentation, or persuasion levelled at the common people.^d

And *exhort.* the Greek word ^e has an affectionate vehemence in it, which discovers warmth of passion. the speaker's heart is engaged, and he is extremely desirous to influence his hearer. the friendly, benevolent spirit breathes in the address. a solicitude is shewn for the welfare of the persons exhorted. The same word is rendered, *beseech*, Rom. xii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 20. ch. vi. 1. The exhortation is suited to excite the desires, and to enliven and actuate the hopes of men. their duty and interest are so described as to engage the heart, and obtain its approbation.

Rebuke with all authority. this can have nothing at all to do with those speculative opinions which have no hurtful or bad influence on the morals of men. but the reproof is to alarm and arguze from stupidity, to stimulate shame, to animate remorse and penitence; because of folly, vice and impiety. Now this, from the reason and nature of the thing, is done *with all authority*; because sin and folly deform and destroy humanity.

It

^d Leigh's Crit. Sacr. in Verb. λεγω.

^e παρακαλεω

It is confessedly right and reasonable ; for as much as no man scruples to arraign and condemn *lying, theft, and murder* : they are capital violations of truth, property and life. *Slander, fornication, adultery* are not less so : these have equally malign tendencies. — a christian instructor is then authorized to rebuke vice, by the consent of society, by the constitution of nature, and by the express voice of revelation. every divine reason conspire to give him authority, in censuring and condemning immorality. the most generous principles fill the reprover with an abhorrence of sin, and raise in him the most dreadful apprehensions of its final consequences ! so that *Titus* is, with the utmost reason, enjoined to rebuke with all authority.^f

The

^f It deserves to be noticed, that there is not any thing more expressly condemned in the teachings of our Lord and of his apostles, than every degree of domination and tyranny over faith and conscience. no man in all the world has authority either to place another in the divine favour, or to exclude him the mercy of his maker. All priestly usurpations fell at the feet of Jesus. and the power to save and to destroy, is determined only by personal character. Matt. xx. 23. The apostolic *binding and loosing* ; their *power of the keys*, could only respect the terms of acceptance by the Gospel publication. for when this Gospel was once published, the keys of the kingdom were equally and as truly put into the hands of every christian laic, as they could be into the hands of any christian cleric.

The word rendered, *authority*, is sometimes translated, *commandment*. Rom. xvi. 26. 1 Cor. vii. 6, 25. 2 ep. vi. 8. 1 Tim. i. 1. Tit. i. 3. And as this does frequently denote the Gospel, *Titus* has countenance therefrom in rebuking; or he may and should, in conformity to this divine scheme, censure and condemn whatever is vicious and immoral.

Should we suppose that he must *speak* and *exhort* as well as *rebuke* with all authority, it will implunge us in no sort of difficulty; because whatever is reasonable and regular, social and moral is of divine obligation. Do but only attend to the sermon on the mount, you will there find the great duties of piety and humanity recommended and enforced by their everlasting tendencies. The very reason assigned why men had *Jesus* in such high veneration, as a teacher, was, "that he taught as one having authority; and not as the scribes."—There was a perfect knowledge of the moral system, and its infinite importance plainly seen in his teachings; but not at all discoverable in the instructions of the scribes.

He moreover shews, that those moral virtues and social duties were not generated

by

by the Gospel-Institution, but had been obligatory in every age of the world ; and could never be altered or changed by any dispensation whatsoever. He even denominates them, *the law and the prophets*. Math. v. 17. and declares, *till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass*. In like manner his apostle has spoken of the Gospel, so as to shew its moral and immutable obligation : *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*. Heb. xiii. 8. The several branches of truth have their re-establishment, and are recovered from the corrupt glosses that had been put upon them. they are rescued from those violations which custom had countenanced in the world. What had been said of them by corrupt men in corrupt times, was very daring and impious. But the great restoring prophet of God, revives the native dignity and glory of the divine precept, and points out its spirit, purity, and power.

We might here pertinently observe, that did but men fix their attention to the practical and moral, which is the saving design of the Gospel, they would have neither leisure nor inclination to employ themselves in the futile labours of doubtful disputations. but verily, such have been, such yet are the in-

fatuations and extravagant fondnesses for an established *credenda* and a current orthodoxy, that to rub off the rust of popular system, which as a canker has eaten deep into the minds of men, does greatly increase the difficulty of public instruction. the prejudices are stubborn and obstinate, and leave little hopes of success to those teachers, who would form their discourses upon St. Paul's rational plan of preaching Christ.

III. Some notice should be taken of the influence and weight which such teachings ought to have on a christian people.— *let no man despise thee.*

Titus however must be religiously careful of his own conduct. “ he should be blameless
 “ as the steward of God ; not self-willed,
 “ not soon angry, not given to wine, not
 “ quarrelsome ; not covetous ; but a lover of
 “ hospitality, a lover of good men : sober,
 “ just, holy, temperate ; holding fast the
 “ faithful word : ” which if he did, it would be at the peril of any should they despise him. In a world where *example* has such mighty influence, it is not likely that any should venerate, and feel just impressions from the most elegant as well as rational instructions,

fructions, when recommended by men of bad spirits, immoral lives, and ill examples. we cannot easily suppose the *orator* in earnest or sincere, in exhorting us to duties which he himself does not perform; or that he meaneth any thing by his reproofs and rebukes, who does not scruple any of those indulgences which he openly censures and condemns. see Rom. ii. 17—24. As little reason have we to imagine, that those *teachers* who subscribe to opinions which they do not believe, and who pay their homage upon a plan, that they in judgment disapprove, can ever propagate the divine importance of *sincerity*; or convince their hearers, that *hypocrisy* is hateful in the eye of God.

Public teachers of any denomination, are errant-triflers, who can play with truth for the sake of sordid gain, or can do homage to that idol, *popularity*. And *they are blind leaders of the blind* who study to countenance and cherish, rather than correct and cure, the ignorance, superstition and prejudice of the people. their maxims of policy and prudence will one day be tremendous, at least, to themselves. see Ezek. xiii. 18. 19. Gal. i. 10.^s

C 2

But

^s Dr. Chandler, in the forecited sermon, has this equally

But when the social virtues, and the duties of piety and humanity are recommended by a sincere, consistent and exemplary *Titus*, it would be at the peril of the people should they neglect or despise his instructions ; because in the sound doctrine which he delivered, there would be all the energy of divine authority that can possibly arise from nature, reason, and God, in his address.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

I. Would any man carefully read this Epistle, he must own, that the writer had an undoubted

qually shocking suggestion, p. 38. — “ if the services of
 “ devotion should be any of them *exceptionable* in their
 “ nature, and frequently performed by those who dis-
 “ relish them, or do not believe the principles they are
 “ founded on ; if objections are hereby raised against
 “ the INTEGRITY of the ministers of religion, and
 “ their influence to do good, and the success of their
 “ public ministrations is hereby greatly prevented.”—

Lord *Clarendon's* aversion to Protestant-dissenters, who would not conform to this *Liturgy*, led him to think all men should conclude, “ that nothing but a
 “ severe execution of the law can ever prevail upon
 “ that *classis* of men to conform to government.” * —
 what wonder, when he was so devoted to a King who did detest the presbyterians. † but had excessive grace for *Jesuits*. ‡

* See continuation of his life, Vol. ii. p. 143. octavo edition.

† P. 500.

‡ P. 272.

undoubted claim to *divine inspiration*. The thorough knowledge of mankind; the vast, the comprehensive views taken of the duties of humanity; the matchless skill in exposing the prejudices, follies, and vices of men; the motive and argument so happily thrown in to enforce the duty; the connexion and certain consequence of the prevalence of christianity, to wit, the welfare of the world under all its genuine impresson; has nothing to compare with it in the writings of antiquity. And one may venture to affirm, that the whole spirit and design of the Gospel-system, is fully and clearly expressed in this short epistle. But surely no man whatsoever could have communicated so much heavenly instruction in so narrow a compass, and with such energy, perspicuity and precision too, had he not been under a divine illumination.

2. The genuine intention of a Gospel-ministry, is, to consult and promote the rectitude and reformation of the world. among other things, the very particular and emphatical instruction which *Titus* is to give, about the education and behaviour of *younger women*, is in evidence of the great advantage which the Gospel-doctrine would be of to civil society. There is a delicacy and
strength

strength in the address, much too masterly to be matched by any of the celebrated orators of *Greece* or *Rome*. there is a purity and perfection in the advice, founded on reason, truth, nature, and extensive observation.^h

This

^h The care St. *Paul* has taken, in his Epistle, to inculcate upon females, that *subordinacy* and *subjection* of the sex, on which the happiness of the conjugal state absolutely depends, is an irrefragable argument of his inflexible regard to TRUTH; and the full persuasion he had of its divine energy. see his injunctions Eph. v. 22. 24. Col. iii. 18. 1 Cor. vii. 31. ch. xi. 8. 9. which are in full proof how well he understood, and how perfectly he has represented nature. for verily, the good influence of the *wife*, her real importance will ever be found in the sphere of her subordinacy: because whenever she quits rank and appointment, in the conjugal state, she disturbs the order of the system of nature, and no more attends to the law of her creator. On the other hand, the more observant she is of the pleasure and taste of her husband, the more she consults his peace, reputation and honour, the more she secures her own.

This is not only the doctrine of St. *Paul*, but of St. *Peter* who has expressly shewn the divine demand of this subjection. and observes, that the *meek* and *quiet spirit* of the wife, is a far more illustrious and captivating charm, than all her bodily figure, or the richest ornament of her dress. nay, that this is *even in the sight of God, of great price*. 1 Pet. iii. 1—6.

We might add, that the marriage contract admitting of no divorce, except in the case of adultery; a doctrine taught

This epistle, in some of its strictures, does point out the great hand which *younger women* must

taught by Jesus, in direct contradiction to the established custom of *Jews, Greeks and Romans*; is another convincing argument of the divinity of the Gospel-system; since it did not connive at, but condemn all those corruptions.

The *ladies* have a cogent reason to venerate the blessed Jesus, for restoring the sacred rites of marriage to their pristine spirit and obligation; which no longer leave the wife exposed to the capricious and cruel treatment of the husband, who was wont to discard, or repudiate at his pleasure.

But though the husband may not divorce his wife, save for the cause of her defiling his bed; yet is she obliged to subject herself to him in all things, or in every lawful thing. Eph. v. 24. she must reverence and obey him. Tit. ii. 5. for he is her head, as Christ is head of the church; to direct, govern, protect and defend her. Eph. v. 23. 1 Cor. xi. 3.

Yet the sovereignty of the husband is such, which obliges him "to live with his wife according to prudence, as with the weaker vessel; and to pay her the honours which are due to a fellow-heir of the grace of life." 1 Pet. iii. 7. — he must follow his secular affairs with diligence, and use his substance with frugality, that he may make a decent and fit provision for his wife and family. 1 Cor. vii. 33. — he must love her with a pure and chaste affection; allowing no rival in his esteem. Eph. v. 25. — He must not shew any bitterness, ill-nature, or severity towards her. Col. iii. 19. — he must love her *as his own flesh*. Eph. v. 29.

Thus

must always have, either in the reformation, or in the ruin of the world. Persuaded I am that to the married and unmarried of the *younger fair*, we must look for the taste, complexion and condition of the age. Nor am I singular in this opinion. a most celebrated and polite writer of our own country, thus speaks of the sex—"they compose, says he, half the world; and are, by the complaisance of our nation, the most powerful part of the people." Again, "as vivacity is the gift of women; gravity is that of men." and *once more*,—"the utmost of a woman's character, is contained in domestic life: she is blameable or
 "praise-

Thus amply is the happiness of the conjugal state provided for by the Gospel-injunction. And wherever by humour or passion that state is made unhappy, the delinquent deserves not the name of christian.*

This is the New Testament doctrine of marriage, and one of the intrinsic evidences of its divine authority, which will admit of no confutation. so far therefore as men are genuine christians, they observe this first law of society: they make conscience not to violate the obligation. and on the contrary, so far as men indulge themselves in a violation, they exclude themselves the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. vi. 9. *be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor adulterers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

* Consult Dr. James Foster's discourses, on the duties of the married state. Vol. ii. ch. 3.

“ praise-worthy according as her carriage af-
 “ fects the house of her father, or that of
 “ her husband. all she has to do in this
 “ world, is contained within the duties of a
 “ daughter, a sister, a wife and a mother.
 “ all these may be well performed, though
 “ she should not be the finest woman at an
 “ *opera*, nor figure most in an assembly.—
 “ but when they place their ambition on cir-
 “ cumstances, wherein to excell is no addi-
 “ tion to what is truly commendable, where
 “ can this end, but in making the gratifica-
 “ tions of life, last no longer than youth and
 “ good fortune.”ⁱ

How well has the *Spectator* copied St.
Paul? and I hope both the elder and young-
 er *fair* of this Audience will receive the in-
 struction.—Consult your own virtue, repu-
 tation and importance; do it for the good
 of mankind, by excelling in the province
 heaven has ordained you. shine more and
 more in the distinct circles of your influence
 and usefulness. desire no figure, demand no
 gratification, but what circumstance, condi-
 tion, and station will honestly and honoura-
 bly allow.

D

Your

ⁱ *Spectator*. No. 4. 128, and 342.

Your most raised attainments in true piety and religious virtue, will be discovered in the attention you give to domestic and social duties.—you are not intended by heaven for the cloistered confinement of the romish recluse, gone mad with superstition; but to be employed in the useful scenes of humanity, and to contribute your share to the pleasure and delight of mankind.

By this view given of your duty, St. Paul has condemned the whole system of popish devotion: since the more useful you are in your families and in society, the more *holy* will you be, as well as the more happy.

3. We are hence instructed in what is meant by *sound doctrine*. It is far remote from mysteries, unintelligible opinion about the person, office, or appointment of Jesus. for whatever representations are made concerning him that are doubtful, obscure, or perplexing, they have nothing in them that can belong to sound doctrine. the very account of his mediation, as it lies in the new testament, is simple, plain and moral. It has nothing at all to do with his appeasing or placating God: but is employed in purifying men from iniquity, and rendering them

them a peculiar people, in their zeal for good works. To what purpose then should any man please himself with ascribing honours to Jesus, only due to God? or shew a zeal about the iniquities of men being imputed to Christ, at the time he is conscious of allowed crime, and of indulged lust. the redeemed of the Lord are none but such, *who adorn the doctrine of God their savior in all things.*

It is asked, why have christians so generally swallowed the absurd opinion, of a transfer of merit and righteousness?—I should answer, many, I hope, have done it only from the prejudice of education. yet some, it is to be feared, like it much better than the laborious scheme of mortifying every lust, and subduing every passion, that is irregular and excessive. they affect greater humility, than to work out their own salvation. and they had much rather rejoice in the work of another, than in proving their own. These hold the opinion, because they would hold their lusts.—*Others*, whom I will call, the polite and fashionable world, think it quite enough, that they are like one another. they conceive it vain and assuming,

to aim at a greater decorum and regularity than that of those around them. this truly, they think, is *to be righteous over much*. and if you will needs have them provide better, than they seem to do, against a final reckoning; they are perfectly well satisfied with a SUBSTITUTE. and they fancy that a confidence in him, is *the faith once delivered to the saints*.

4. If St. Paul could teach Titus, we know what it is *to preach Christ*. It is to represent the whole of the Gospel scheme as practical and moral; what has a principal concern with our tempers and lives. To *preach Christ*, is to exhort men not to receive the grace of God in vain—to keep themselves from all pollutions—to be free from all worldliness; and to be *zealous of good works*.^k

Christians

^k The *αδουσιποι* of whom St. Paul speaks, ch. i. 16. are such, whom our *Antinomians* follow, in their opinions. all wicked professors do resemble them in practice. Advocates for imputed righteousness, though they may not designedly encourage vice; yet they weaken and sap the foundations of morality: they render *good works* of no effect. for they look upon them with disgust, as upon filthy rags. and whilst they
rave

Christians alas! in spite of all remonstrance, will, many of them conform to the evil customs, maxims, and manners of the age. Some of these will not let the *church* exercise dominion over their consciences; and yet will let the *world* tyrannize over their hearts. this is a strange absurdity. yet so it is: though the Lord of christians would have taught them much better. YE CANNOT SERVE TWO MASTERS.

An heathen could say, " would you have
 " these great things for nothing? I suppose
 " you would. but how can you? one busi-
 " nefs does not suit with another. you can-
 " not bestow your cares both upon externals,
 " and upon your own ruling faculty too:
 " but if you would have the former, e'en
 " let the latter alone, or you will succeed
 " in

rave against human reason, and depreciate the abilities of man's agency, they are most noisy in telling the people, that none but they are found preaching Christ.—The apostle will have *Titus* " affirm constantly that
 " they who have believed in God might be careful to
 " maintain good works; these things are good and pro-
 " fitable unto men." ch. iii. 8. So that all *antinomians* hold the reverse opinion with St. Paul, and teach a system only fit for unbelievers.

“ in neither, while you are drawn different
“ ways towards both.”¹

We hence learn, both from reason and revelation, that the teachings of divine truth are clear, distinct and intelligible. and whatever any may say of preaching Christ, he only does it who shews, “ that the salvation of God consists, in a man's deliverance from the dominion of lust, and in his devotedness to truth and righteousness.” —unless the relishes and tastes become heavenly, and we are actuated by the spirit of purity and love; the most admiring sentiments of the Gospel scheme, however full we are of devotion, will furnish no ground of felicity better than that of the *fool's paradise*; and will finally turn out the most fatal of all delusions.

Thus are we led to pity the ignorant, the proud, conceited, assuming *Enthusiast*, who scornfully calls the moral, a *legal preacher*. and affects to speak of morality itself in terms of contempt. though he is not able to shew any thing in all the Gospel worthy of God to give, or of man to receive, when you separate from it the moral influence or intention.

5. What-

¹ Carter's *Epicætetus*, p. 415, 416.

5. Whatever may be the vanity and levity of men, who affect inattentions and indifferences to Gospel-teachings, its truth is immutable, and its authority divine. The unprejudiced, impartial eye will confess, if the whole scheme both exhibits and enforces moral obligation — if the universal design and tendency be to conciliate to truth, righteousness, and goodness—if it be to remove all prejudice from the human breast; and if it would correct every passion that disturbs the order and peace of families and larger Societies; it must then be of God. And if this be not the design, there is none obvious to the discernment of man.

But if it evidently has this direct, uniform tendency, every one who neglects its instruction, or despises its authority, neglects and despises TRUTH itself: and cannot but be exposed to the displeasure of the God of truth.^m

^m Heb. ii. beginning. John xii. 48, 49.

T H E E N D.



