

in his love, to affect Christ; in his joy, to delight in Christ; in his desire, to long after Christ; in his endeavours, to exalt Christ; in all his duties, graces, gifts, abilities, to make them serviceable unto Christ: 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.

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*OF THE LIFE OF FAITH.*

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SECT. I.

*Of the Nature of the Life of Faith.*

To live by faith, is, by faith in Christ, to possess the whole word of God as our own in all states 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 ourselves, 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 advanced. O blessed duty!

That we may live by faith, we must endeavour two things,

1. To get matter for our faith to work upon.

2. 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.

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 poorly, but to have somewhat to spare.

3. That we so lay them up, that we may have them at hand. It is a 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 plenteously and richly in all wisdom.*

That we order our faith aright in the work, observe these directions:

1. Take possession of the promises, and value them as our own. There is no godly man or woman but is a great heir. Whensoever they look in God's book, and find there any promise, they make it their own; just as an heir that rides over divers fields and meadows, 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 rides over those fields. 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 scriptures, (remember this when you are reading the scriptures,) and there meets with a promise, 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. Some promises are absolute, which God hath simply determined to accomplish; as the promise of the Messiah, Isa. vii. 14. and of the 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; they are no farther promised, than God seeth 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. 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.*

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 promise, otherwise we live not by faith, but tempt God, and throw away his promises and all.

5. Set it down, 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 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. 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:* not until we will, or until we see fit, but until he will have mercy upon us.

7. Imagine the Lord not only delays, but seems to frown, and to say, He will not hear. In this case, with an holy humi-

lity contend with God, 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. So do we catch the Lord Jesus, and strive with him, and leave him not, till we have those comforts he hath promised. Surely this is the glory, and victory, and triumph of faith, when the Lord is, as it were, fain to lay down his weapons, and to yield himself as conquered: *Thy name shall be no more called Jacob, but Israel; because thou hast prevailed with God.*

SECT. II.

*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 exercise of faith concerning the promises.

We begin with temporal evils; and, concerning them, first give you the promises; and secondly, the exercise of faith in the respect of those promises.

1. The promises to prevent afflictions, you may read in the word, and they are these, and the like: Psal. xci. 10. Psal. 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 at hand; protect them, and destroy their enemies.

2. The promises to qualify evils, are these, and the like: Psal. ciii. 13, 14. Isa. xlix. 13, 14, 15. Hos. xi. 8, 9. In this last promise, God imitates parents, says Theodoret, when any misery is upon their child, their bowels yearn more; never sits the child so much on the mother's lap, never lies so much in her bosom, as when he is sick. Is there, or can there be, any richer or fuller expression of Tully, than there is in the apostle's Greek, where there is both an elegant antithesis, and double hyperbole, beyond Englishing:—for affliction, glory; for light affliction, heavy, massy, 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, exceeding, excessive, eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17.

3. The promises to bear them, or in due time to remove them, are these and the like: Ps. xxxvii. 24. Jer. xxix. 11. Mic. vii. 8, 9. Ps. xcvi. 11.—As sure as harvest follows seeding, so to the righteous, comfort follows mourning, Job xvi. 20. 1 Cor. x. 13.

1. For sickness: the promises to prevent it are these and the like, Exod. xv. 26. Deut. vii. 15. Ps. xci. 10.

2. Promises to qualify sickness, are these, and the like, Ps. xli. 3. Heb. xii. 6, 7, 8.

3. Promises to remove sickness, are these, and the like, Exod. xxiii. 25. Deut. vii. 15. Isa. xi. 31.

2. For poverty, we may store up these promises, Psal. xxiii. throughout. Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 25. Heb. xiii. 15.—The wicked indeed may have more abundance than the Christian, but here is 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. Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19. Prov. x. 2, 3. Ps. 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.”

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. Ps. cvi. 46. Ezek. xi. 16.

6. For oppression, we have these promises, Ps. xii. 5. lxxviii. 5. cxlvi. 7, 8, 9.

2. For the exercise of faith, concerning these promises, that we may live by them, use meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider,

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 create evil: I the Lord do all these things.*

2. That as God sends it, so none can deliver us out of it, but God:—*O our God, wilt thou not judge them? We have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.* This meditation draws the heart from repose in means or friends; it expels vexation and distracting cares, and estrangeth from the use of unlawful means of deliverance: *The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord.*

3. The cause of all miseries and sorrow is sin, and therefore it is time to examine our ways, to humble ourselves, and to set upon reformation.

4. That now God trieth our faith, patience, and meekness, 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. 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 we should use all lawful means of help

which God in his providence 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.

2. For prayer, observe this method:

1. Lay open our sorrow before the Lord, pour out our complaints into his bosom.

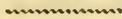
2. Confess our sins with hatred and godly sorrow; for want of this God threatened the Israelites: *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offences.*

3. 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.*

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.* 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 slay me, yet will I trust in thee.*

These are the acts of faith by which it puts forth, and exerciseth itself, in time of affliction.



### SECT. III.

#### *Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in Temporal Blessings.*

CONCERNING temporal blessings, the general promises are these, and the like, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Ps. xxxiv. 8, 9. lxxxiv. 11. Phil. iv. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 21.—All things are your's; we are heirs of all the world.

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. iv. 8. 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, Prov. iii. 8. Ps. ciii. 3, 4, 5.—or for safety, concerning which, Prov. i. 33. Job xi. 8. Hos. ii. 18. Job v. 23.—or for peace, concerning which, Lev. xxvi. 6. Ps. xxix. 11. xxxvii. 11. Prov. xvi. 16.—or for sleep, concerning which, Job xi. 19. Prov. iii. 24.—or for food, concerning which, Ps. xxxvii. 3. cxi. 5. Joel ii. 26.—or for rai-

ment, concerning which, Deut. x. 18. Matt. vi. 25, 30, 32.—or for posterity, the fruit of the body, concerning which, Deut. viii. 12, 13, 14.

3. Those promises that have relation to our estates, are these, Job xxii. 24, 25. Prov. viii. 18, 19. Ps. xxxvii. 5.

4. Those promises that have a relation to our calling, are either for plenty, concerning which, Prov. x. 4. xii. 11. xiii. 4. xxxviii. 19.—or for protection, concerning which, Ps. xci. 11. or for promotion, concerning which, Prov. xii. 24. 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 encouragements of their righteousness, as testimonies of God's love and care over them, and by virtue of a promise.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, observe that we may live by them, either in the want, or in the enjoyment of these temporal mercies. In the want of them go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation; consider, 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.* This advice faith digests, and labours the reformation of what is amiss, and whatsoever hinders the promises.

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.

3. That faith preserves from the use of all unlawful means. The believer consults ever what is truly just; not what is gainful, or what may be compassed by honest courses, not what may be gained by fraud, deceit, or the like carnal dealings: *Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.*

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 his providence, after the use of all lawful means; and this maintains a Christian in true contentment.

2. For prayer, observe this method:

1. Confess our sins, especially those sins which upon search we are persuaded hinders prosperity.

2. Importune the Lord for his temporal blessings, so far as he seeth them to be for our good, and for the glory of his great name.

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.* 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, consider,

1. Faith, in prosperity, keeps the heart in a holy temper, 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?* In this case faith will remind man of his duty, and persuade him to be so much more serviceable, as God's mercies are plentiful upon him.

2. That faith makes a man heavenly-minded in the possession of a prosperous estate ; as it receives all earthly blessings from God, so it pulls up the soul to God again : 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, lest the heart should be drawn away with the pleasing delights of things transitory ; for by grace it is that we are conscious of our own weakness, and of the snare that is in every creature to entangle us : prosperity is pleasing, but dangerous ; as man may quickly surfeit of sweetmeats. This makes the waking believer circumspect, 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 mountains seem strongest.

2. For prayer observe this method :

1. 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. I have nothing, Lord, but merely of free grace, and by virtue of a promise.

2. 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 lie open to many temptations, and if we pray not earnestly that God may sanctify 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.

## SECT. IV.

*Of the manner of this Life of Faith in Spiritual Evils.*

EVILS spiritual arise either from the devil, or the flesh, or the world, or from man, or God, or from our own selves.

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, Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. x. 13. 1 John 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. Eccl. vii. 26. 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

3. Those evils that arise from the world, are covetousness, cares, evil company; and for strength against such, consider these promises, 2 Cor. vi. 14, 17, 18. Gal. i. 4. 1 John v. 4. Heb. xiii. 5. There are five negatives together in the original, that strongly affirm; as if he had said, 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, Matt. x. 19. Acts xviii. 9, 10.—or oppositions against goodness, Matt. v. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 14.—or oppositions against both, and so they fall either on our good name, concerning which, Ps. xxxvii. 6. where, howsoever thy innocency be at some times covered 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, Ps. lxxviii. 13. Matt. v. 11, 12. 1 Pet. iv. 14, &c.—or they may fall on us in respect of our liberty, concerning which, Ps. lxxix. 32, 33. cii. 19, 20. Rev. ii. 10.—or they may deprive us of our goods, concerning which, 2 Chron. xxv. 9. Matt. xix. 29. Hab. iii. 17, 18.—or they may take away life, concerning which, Matt. 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. 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. xxx. 15, 16, 17.—or weakness of memory, concerning which, John xiv. 26.—

or fears of losing God's love, concerning which, Isa. lxix. 15.—and liv. 10. Jer. xxxiii. 20. Psalm lxxxix. 33, 34, 35. John xiii. 1. Rom. xi. 29.—or indisposition, distraction, 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. Ps. xxxvii. 24. 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, consider,

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 farther than God will give them leave ; not the devil himself can tempt who he will, nor how long he will, but in all these he is confined by the providence of God.

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 the world, or flesh, or man, or God, or our own corruptions, runs to Christ, and in his name resists all these evils, and in his name gets the victory.

2. For prayer, observe this method.

1. Confess our sins of former ignorance, vanity of mind, self-confidence, misinterpreting of the Lord's doings, &c. which set open the soul to all other spiritual evils.

2. Importune the Lord for pardon of sin, and for help against all oppositions.

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 whoso pleaseth God, shall escape the strange woman ; that whosoever is born of God overcometh the world ; that if we suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are we ; that, *in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee.* These are precious promises ! Now, Lord, make them good to my soul ; let me draw the virtue from every of these promises ; let not a word of these promises fall to the ground ; let me have a share, and part, and portion, in these comfortable promises, through the Lord Jesus.

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## SECT. V.

*Of the manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Blessings, as derived to us from God and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ.*

1. FROM God proceeds his Love of us—Presence with us—Providence over us.

1. Concerning his love of us, we have these promises, Deut. vii. 7, 8, 13. Isa. liv. 8. Jer. xxxi. 3. Hosea ii. 19. 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. xxviii. 15. Exod. iii. 12. Josh. i. 5. Jer. i. 8. 1 Chron. xxviii. 20. Isa. xli. 10. Matt. xxviii. 20. Rev. ii. 1.

3. Concerning his providence over us, we have these promises, Ps. xxxiv. 7. xci. 11, 12. Job. xxxvi. 7. Zech. ii. 8.

2d. 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 Genesis iii. 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:

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. 30.

3. Concerning justification, we have these promises, Isaiah liii. 11. Acts xiii. 39. Rom. viii. 33.

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.

3d. 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.

2. Concerning sanctification, we have these promises, Micah vii. 19. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Heb. viii. 10. and x. 16. 1 Thess. v. 23. 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5.

Concerning graces and duties, we shall handle them anon.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning the promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider these things:

1. That faith (considering the privileges of God's children,) admires and adores: *Oh, 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.*

2. That faith, on this account, rests upon God, and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, to receive whatsoever may be good and profitable to the soul: *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.* What can they want, who have God for their Father, Christ for their Saviour, the Spirit for their sanctifier?

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. Pleasures, profits, honours, all are vain and empty, and nothing is to be rested on, but Jesus Christ; yea, there is a full content in Jesus Christ.

4. Faith in these promises doth greatly enlarge the heart towards God, and stirreth up to 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.

5. Faith ever runs to these promises in all straits, and here it finds comfort. 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.* 'Come,' saith faith, 'let us go 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.*

2. For prayer, observe this method:

1. Confess and acknowledge God's mercies both in his promises and performances.

2. Pray for this increase of faith, and for a farther and farther 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? 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 the 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, increase my faith, that I may hold him fast and be safe, and so at last may sing hallelujahs to thee in heaven for ever and ever.

## SECT. VI.

*Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Graces.*

THE operation of the Spirit appears in spiritual graces, and spiritual duties.

1. The kinds of graces are these ; faith, hope, joy, love, fear, obedience, repentance, humility, meekness, patience, zeal, and perseverance : concerning which the Lord hath made gracious promises, to give them, and to reward them.

The first grace is faith ; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Eph. ii. 8. Job. vi. 37. Observe here these promises of assurance, the highest measure of faith, Psal. l. 23. Ezek. xxxiv. 30. Isa. lx. 16. Psal. xcvi. 11.—2. To it, 2 Chron. xi. 20. Prov. xxix. 25. Isa. xxvi. 3. Acts x. 43. Rom. xviii. 4. Acts xiii. 39. John i. 12. vii. 38. iii. 16, 36, v. 24. and vi. 47.

The second is hope ; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Psal. lxxv. 4. Prov. xiv. 32. Job. xiii. 15.—2. To it, Psal. xl. 4. Rom. iv. 18, 22. and viii. 24.

The third is joy ; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9. lxxiv. 10. lxxviii. 3. xcvi. 11. cxviii. 15. Isa. xii. 2, 3. xxxv. throughout, lvi. 7. lxxvi. 13, 14. John xvi. 22. Rom. xiv. 17.—2. To it, Psal. lxxxix. 15, 16.

The fourth is love ; especially of God, and we may find promises, 1. Of it, Cant. i. 4. Deut. xxx. 6.—2. To it, Psal. xci. 14. cxlv. 20. Prov. viii. 21. Deut. vii. 9. 1 Cor. viii. 3. ii. 9, 10. James i. 12. ii. 5.

The fifth is fear ; and we find promises, 1. of it, Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. Hos. iii. v.—2. To it, Psal. ciii. 11. xxxi. 19. cxlvii. 11. Mal. iii. 16, 17.

The sixth is obedience ; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Ezek. xi. 19, 20. xxxvi. 26, 27.—2. To it, Deut. xxviii. 1, 2, to 14.

The seventh is repentance ; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Acts v. 30, 31. Ezek. xi. 19. xx. 43. xxxvi. 31.—2. To it, Mal. iii. 7. Isa. lv. 7. 2 Chron. vii. 14. Isa. i. 16, 17, 18. Job iii. 27, 28. Jer. iv. 14.

The eighth is humility ; and we find some promises, 1. Of it, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Gal. v. 22.—2. To it, Prov. xv. 33. xxii. 4. James iv. 6. 1 Peter v. 5. Isa. lvii. 15. Matt. v. 3.

The ninth is meekness ; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8. Gal. v. 22, 23.—2. To it, Psal. xxxvii. 11. cxlvii. 6. Isa. xxix. 9. Psal. xxv. 9. Zeph. ii. 3. Matt. v. 5. and xi. 29. Psal. cxlix. 4.

The tenth is patience ; and we find promises, 1. Of it, James i. 5.—2. To it, Heb. x. 36. James v. 11.

The eleventh is zeal ; and we find some promises, 1. Of it, Jer. xx. 9. 2 Cor. vii. 11.—2. To it, Numb. xxv. 12, 13. Rev. iii. 19, 20.

The twelfth is perseverance; and we find some promises, 1. Of it, Psal. lxxxix. 28. Prov. xii. 3. Isa. xlvi. 4.—2. To it, Matt. x. 22. Rev. ii. 26.

The degrees of graces follow; and we find some promises, 1. Thereof, Isa. xlv. 3, 4. Mal. iv. 2. Psal. lxxxiv. 7. Prov. iv. 18.—2. Thereto, Rom. xiii. 11. 2 Pet. 1, 8.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider.

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 of himself, and then no marvel if he falls. If we will have any of these graces, then deny we ourselves: *I will keep thy statutes*, said David: but immediately 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 hope and joy, but they exercise not their faith to believe God and his promises: I knew a man in Christ, off and on, unstayed, dismayed at his manifold slips, strong corruptions, little prevailing against them, and, when all came to all, he could find no help till he went to a promise, and believed that God would do the whole work for him. It is good to believe that, according to his promise, God will sanctify our natures, enable us to holiness, and bestow all his graces upon us.

3. That for the degrees of these graces, it is necessary to improve them. 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.* 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, observe this method:

1. Acknowledge your inability: '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*, but I find no means to perfect what I desire: Oh! when shall I be set at liberty, that I might do the work of God, and run the race of his commandments; Oh! that I had 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 callest the things that are not, as if they were ; thou canst, if thou wilt, work in me these graces, as thou didst gloriously create them in Adam : Lord, I have heard also of thy grace and truth ; thou art as faithful to keep, as free to make, these precious promises. Thy grace is unsearchable, thy word purer than silver seven times refined. O make good thy promises ! I press thee with thy power, grace, and truth ; O replenish me with thy graces !'

3. Look we on the promises, and pray by them, or turn them into prayer. Faith hearkeneth what the Lord speaketh, and speaketh back again in fervent groans and desires to whatsoever it heareth : 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, 28, 29.) prayed by a promise, and thus should we pray by a promise, and then we may be sure we pray according to his will.

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SECT. VII.

*Of the Manner of his Life of Faith in spiritual Duties.*

THE first duty is prayer ; to which are affixed these promises, Psal. v. 3. x. 17. lxxv. 2. Prov. xv. 29. Psal. l. 15. xii. 17, 18, 19, 20. Zech. xiii. 8, 9. Rom. viii. 13. James v. 15.

The second is praise ; to which are affixed these promises, 1 Sam. ii. 30. Psal. l. 23. and lxxviii. 5, 6.

The third is preaching ; to which Matt. xxviii. 20. John v. 25.

The fourth is reading the word ; to which Psal. xix. 8. Prov. i. 4.

The fifth is fasting ; to which James iv. 9, 10. Matt. vi. 18.

The sixth is meditation ; to which Psal. i. 2. Prov. xiv. 22. Phil. iv. 8, 9.

The seventh is examination ; to which 1 Cor. xi. 31. Gal. vi. 4.

The eighth is sanctification of the Lord's day ; to which Isa. lviii. 13, 14. lvi. 2. Jer. xvii. 26.

The ninth is reproof ; to which Prov. xxiv. 25. xxviii. 23.

The tenth is almsgiving ; to which Psal. xli. 1, 2, 3. Luke xiv. 13, 14.

The eleventh is waiting on God ; to which Isa. xl. 31. lxiv. 4. xlix. 23.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

For meditation, consider :—

1. That God deals graciously with his people. He might, out of his absolute sovereignty, 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 best fruit of faith; by faith *Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof, an offering to the Lord.* By faith David *went with the multitude unto the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise.* It is the voice of faith,—I will sing and give praise with the best member I have.

2. For prayer, 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 infinitely bind me to duty; and wilt thou yet add this and that promise, to this and that duty? O the miracle of mercies! O the goodness of God!’

2. Bewail your own dulness and sloth to the duty: ‘And yet, O Lord, how dull, and remiss, and slight, 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:* Oh! then what is my portion? No marvel if I feel no power, no sweet, in the ordinances, whilst I deal partially, hear perfunctorily, pray coldly, labour not to feed on the promise. O Lord, thou lovest a cheerful giver; but my services are maimed, corrupt, dead, superficial, and very uncheerful.’

3. Importune the Lord to quicken your dead hearts to the duty; so prays David, *Teach me to do thy will; thy Spirit is good, lead me in the land of uprightness:* so prays the church, “Draw me, and we will run after thee;” and so let us pray, ‘Give me a cheerful heart in thy service, enliven my heart by thy blessed Spirit, give me to do what thou requirest, incline my heart to thy statutes.’

4. Implore the assistance of God’s Spirit to every good duty; beg acceptance of your persons and performances in the Lord Jesus Christ; press him with his promises, to set on duties, and to reward duties; and whatever duty you 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.

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SECT. VIII.

*Of the Manner of the Life of Faith in Things eternal.*

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 Thess. iv. 17. God hath promised us a kingdom, Matt. xxv. 34. *an heavenly kingdom,* Matt. vii. 21. *an eternal king-*

*dom*, 2 Pet. i. 11. *a crown of life*, James i. 12. *a crown of righteousness*, 2 Tim. iv. 8. *an immarcessible crown of glory*. 1 Pet. v. 4.

4. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider,

1. That faith in the precious promises of eternal life, quiets and cheers the heart in the midst of discouragements.

2. That fulness of glory is reserved for the life to come; but the beginnings of glory, as peace, joy, sanctification, are vouchsafed here. Grace is the beginning of glory; and now as grace grows, so we enter upon the possession of our inheritance.

3. Faith earnestly desires and longs after full glory. Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, *even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body.*

2. For prayer, 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! By reason of my sloth, the powers of grace are so enfeebled, that I can scarce breathe or sigh in the way to heaven.’

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.

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 a 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: Oh! where shall my heart be, but where my treasure is!—Oh! 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.*

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## SECT. IX.

*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, either to our own family, to godly society farther enlarged, or to the church of Christ.

1st. The members of our family are, husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant.

1. For the husband and wife; they have promises from the Lord, Ps. cxxxviii. 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. Prov. 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, Psal. xxxvii. 25, 26. Prov. xi. 21. Psal. cxii. 2. and xxv. 13. and xxxvii. 29. Prov. xiii. 22. Isa. xlv. 3, 4. and liv. 13.—And children obeying their parents have these promises, Exod. 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. Job viii. 16. Prov. xiv. 11.—especially the servant that is truly obedient, Col. iii. 23, 24. 1 Pet. ii. 19.

Here consider magistrates, Deut. xvii. 19, 20. Ps. cxxxii. 18.—and ministers, Psal. cv. 15. Rev. ii. 1. Isa. xlix. 4.

2d. Godly society, out of our own families, hath precious promises, as Prov. xiii. 20. Mal. iii. 16, 17. Matt. xviii. 20.

3d. The church of Christ, whether particular, (as public assemblies,) hath blessed promises, Isa. xxxiii. 20, 21. lix. 21. Matt. xviii. 20. 1 Cor. v. 4. Rev. ii. 1. Psal. xxvi. 8. and cxxxiii. 3. Mic. iv. 4, 11, 12.—or whether general and universal, it hath glorious promises, as Matt. xvi. 8. Isa. xxvii. 3. Psal. cxxv. 2. Zech. ix. 16. Here come in all the promises: first, of calling the Jews, as Isa. lix. 20. Rom. xi. 23, 26. Hos. xiii. 14. and xiv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.; secondly, of bringing in the Gentiles, as Isa. xlix. 22, 23. Rev. xxi. 24. John x. 16. Isa. lx. 3, 5, 8. Acts x. 14. Eph. ii. 12, 19.; thirdly, of the destruction of Antichrist, as 2 Thess. 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, 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.

For meditation, consider,

1. That we have had the performance of many of these promises; 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; experience should strengthen faith, and breed an assured hope in God's people, of the Lord's most glorious appearing.

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 the shakings in all the kingdoms of the world? 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 mountain.

For prayer, observe this method:

1. Confess our former neglect in our several relations: 'O Lord, I have not done my duty in my own family, among Christians, 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 it to thy glory, and my own shame?'

2. Pray for a blessing on others, as on our ownelves; 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; 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 the churches of Christ. We have a promise, that *the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon the assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defence:* 'Now, Lord, make good thy word.'

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.* It may be for the present things seem contrary, yet God hath said it, and that is 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.*

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## OF FAMILY DUTIES.

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### 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, which ought to be jointly or respectively observed by the families and houses of the people of God. This is implied by that threat, *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families*