



THE
Life of Faith.

PART. I.

HEBREWS II. 1.

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,
 the evidence of things not seen.*



Though the wicked are distinguished into *Hypocrites* and *Unbelievers*, yet *Hypocrites* themselves are *Unbelievers* too. They have no faith which they can justify, by its prevailing efficacy and works: and therefore have no faith by which they can be justified. Because their discovery is needful to their recovery, and all our salvation depends on the sincerity of our faith. I have chosen this text, which is a description of faith, that the opening of it may help us for the opening of our hearts, and resolving the great question, on which our endless life depends.

To be a *Christian*, and to be a *Believer* in Christ, are words in Scripture of the same signification. If you have not faith, you are not *Christians*. This faith hath various offices and

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objects.

obj:cts. By it we are *justified, sanctified and saved*. We are *justified*, not by believing that we are justified, but by believing that we may be justified. Not by receiving justification immediately, but by receiving Christ for our justification: not by meer accepting the pardon in it self, but by first receiving him that procureth and bestoweth it, on his terms: Not by meer accepting health, but by receiving the Physician and his remedies, for health.

Faith is the practical Believing in God as promising, and Christ as procuring justification and salvation. Or, the practical belief and acceptance of life, as procured by Christ, and promised by God in the Gospel.

The everlasting fruition of God in Heaven, is the ultimate object. No man believeth in Christ as Christ, that believeth not in him for eternal life. As faith looks at Christ as the necessary means, and at the divine benignity as the fountain, and at his veracity as the foundation or formal object, and at the promise, as the true signification of his will; so doth it ultimately look at our salvation, (began on earth, and perfected in Heaven) as the end, for which it looketh at the rest.

No wonder therefore if the holy Ghost here speaking of the Dignity and Power of faith, do principally insist on that part of its description, which is taken from this final object.

As Christ himself in his Humiliation was rejected by the Gentiles, and a stumbling stone to the Jews, despised and not esteemed, Isa. 53. 2, 3. baring made himself of no reputation, Phil. 2. 7. So faith in Christ as incarnate and crucified, is despised and counted foolishness by the world. But as Christ in his glory, and the glory of believers, shall force them to an awful admiration; so faith it self as exercised on that glory, is more glorious in the eyes of all. Believers are never so revered by the world, as when they converse in Heaven, and the Spirit of Glory resteth on them, 1 Pet. 4. 14.

How faith by beholding this glorious end, doth move all the faculties of the soul, and subdue the inclinations and interests of the flesh, and make the greatest sufferings tollerable, is the work of the holy Ghost in this Chapter to demonstrate, which beginning with the description, proceeds to the proof by a cloud of witnesses. There are two sorts of persons (and employments)

employments) in the world, for whom there are two contrary ends hereafter. One sort subject their reason to their sensual or carnal interest. The other subject their senses to their reason, cleared, conducted and elevated by faith. Things present or possessed, are the riches of the sensual, and the byas of their hearts and lives: Things absent but hoped for, are the riches of Believers, which auate their chief endeavours.

This is the sense of the text which I have read to you; which setting things hoped for, in opposition to things present, and things unseen, to those that sense doth apprehend, assureth us that faith (which fixeth on the first) doth give to its object a subsistence, presence and evidence, that is, it seeth that which supplieth the want of presence and visibility. The ὑπόστασις, is that which quoad effectum is equal to a present subsistence. And the ἔλεγχος, the evidence is somewhat which quoad effectum is equal to visibility. As if he had said, [Though the glory promised to Believers, and expected by them, be yet to come, and only hoped for, and be yet unseen and only believed, yet is the sound believer as truly affected with it, and acted by its attractive force, as if it were present and before his eyes] as a man is by an inheritance, or estate in reversion, or out of sight, if well secured, and not only by that which is present to his view. The Syriack Interpreter instead of a Translation, gives us a true exposition of the words, viz. [Faith is a certainty of those things that are in hope, as if they did already actually exist, and the revelation of those things that are not seen.

Or you may take the sense in this Proposition, which I am next to open further, and apply, viz. [That the nature and use of faith is to be as it were instead of presence, possession and sight: or to make the things that will be, as if they were already in existence; and the things unseen which God revealeth, as if our bodily eyes beheld them.]

1. Not that faith doth really change its object. 2. Nor doth it give the same degree of apprehensions and affections, as the sight of present things would do. But 1. Things invisible are the objects of our faith.

2. And Faith is effectual instead of sight to all these uses:

1. The apprehension is as infallible, because of the objective certainty,

certainty, (though not so satisfactory to our imperfect souls) as if the things themselves were *secu.* 2. The will is determined by it in its necessary consent and choice. 3. The affections are moved in the necessary degree. 4. It ruleth in our lives, and bringeth us through duty, and suffering, for the sake of the happiness which we believe.

3. This Faith is a grounded wise and justifiable act: an infallible knowledge; and often called so in Scripture, *John* 6. 69. *1 Cor.* 15. 58. *Rom.* 8. 28, &c. And the constitutive and efficient causes will justify the Name.

We know and are infallibly sure, of the truth of God, which we believe: As it's said, *John* 6. 69. [*We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.*] *2 Cor.* 5. 1. [*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.*] *Rom.* 8. 28. [*We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*] *1 Cor.* 15. 58. [*You know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*] *Joh.* 9. 29. [*We know God spake to Moses, &c.*] 31. [*We know God heareth not sinners.*] *John* 3. 2. [*We know thou art a Teacher come from God.*] So *1 John* 3. 5, 15. & *1 Pet.* 3. 17. and many other Scriptures tell you, that Believing God, is a certain infallible sort of knowledge.

I shall in justification of the work of Faith, acquaint you briefly with 1. That in the Nature of it: 2. And that in the causing of it, which advanceth it, to be an infallible knowledge.

1. The Believer knows (as sure as he knows there is a God) that God is true, and his Word is true, it being impossible for God to lie, *H. b.* 6. 18. *God that cannot lie hath promised,* *Titus* 1. 2.

2. He knows that the holy Scripture is the Word of God; by his Image which it beareth, and the many evidences of Divinity which it containeth, and the many Miracles (certainly proved) which Christ, and his Spirit in his servants, wrought to confirm the truth. 3. And therefore he knoweth assuredly the conclusion, that all this Word of God is true.

And for the surer effecting of this knowledge, God doth not only set before us the ascertaining Evidence of his own veracity,

veracity, and the Scriptures Divinity; but moreover, 1. He giveth us to believe, Phil. 1. 29. 2 Pet. 1. 3. For it is not of our selves, but is the gift of God, Ephes. 2. 8. Faith is one of the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22. By the drawing of the Father, we come to the Son. And he that hath knowledge given from Heaven, will certainly know: and he that hath Faith given him from Heaven, will certainly believe. The heavenly Light will dissipate our darkness, and infallibly illuminate. Whilst God sets before us the glass of the Gospel in which the things invisible are revealed, and also gives us eye sight to behold them, Believers must needs be a heavenly people, as walking in that light which proceedeth from, and leadeth to the celestial everlasting Light.

2. And that Faith may be so powerful as to serve instead of sight and presence, Believers have the Spirit of Christ within them, to excite and actuate it, and help them against all temptations to unbelief, and to work in them all other graces that concur to promote the works of Faith; and to mortifie those sins that hinder our believing, and are contrary to a heavenly life: So that as the exercise of our sight, and taste, and hearing, and feeling, is caused by our natural life; so the exercise of Faith and Hope, and Love, upon things unseen, is caused by the holy Spirit, which is the principle of our new life, 1 Cor. 2. 12. *We have received the Spirit, that we might know the things that are given us of God.*] This Spirit of God acquainteth us with God, with his veracity and his Word, Heb. 10. 30. *We know him that hath said, I will never fail thee, nor forsake thee.*] This Spirit of Christ acquainteth us with Christ, and with his grace and will. 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, 12. This heavenly Spirit acquainteth us with Heaven, so that *[We know that when Christ appeareth, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,* 1 Joh. 3. 2. *And we know that he was manifested to take away sin,*] 1 Joh. 3. 5. And will perfect his work, and present us spotless to his Father, Eph. 5. 26, 27. This heavenly Spirit possesseth the Saints with such heavenly dispositions and desires, as much facilitate the work of Faith. It bringeth us to a heavenly conversation; and maketh us live as fellow-citizens of the Saints, and in the household of God, Phil. 3. 20. Eph. 2. 19. It is within us a Spirit of supplication, breathing heaven-ward, with sighs and

groans which cannot be expressed; and as God knoweth the meaning of the Spirit, so the Spirit knows the mind of God, Rom. 8. 37. 1 Cor. 2. 11.

3. And the work of Faith is much promoted by the *spiritual experiences*, of Believers. When they find a considerable part of the holy Scriptures verified on themselves, it much confirmeth their Faith as to the whole. They are *really possessed* of that heavenly disposition, called, *The Divine Nature*, and have felt the power of the Word upon their hearts, renewing them to the Image of God, mortifying their most dear and strong corruptions, shewing them a greater beauty and desirableness in the Objects of Faith, than is to be found in sensible things: They have found many of the Promises made good upon themselves, in the answers of prayers, and in great deliverances, which strongly perswadeth them to believe the rest that are yet to be accomplished. And *experience* is a very *powerful and satisfying way* of conviction. He that *feeleth*, as it were, the first fruits, the earnest, and the beginnings of Heaven already in his soul, will more easily and assuredly believe that there is a Heaven hereafter. [*We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ: This is the true God and eternal life,*] 1 Joh. 5. 20. [*He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself,* Vets. 10.] There is so great a *likeness* of the holy and heavenly nature in the Saints, to the heavenly life that God hath promised, that makes it the more easily believed.

4. And it exceedingly helpeth our Belief of the life that's yet unseen, to find that *Nature* affordeth us undeniable Arguments to prove a future Happiness and Misery, Reward and Punishment, in the general; yea and in special, that the *Love and Fruition of God* is this Reward; and that the effects of his *displeasure* are this Punishment: Nothing more clear and certain than that *there is a God*, (He must be a *fool* indeed that dare deny it, *Psal.* 14. 1.) as also that this God is the Creatour of the rational nature, and hath the absolute right of Sovereign Government: and therefore that the rational Creature oweth him the most full and absolute obedience, and deserveth punishment if he disobey. And it's most clear that infinite good-
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ness should be loved above all finite imperfect created good : And it's clear that the rational nature is so formed, that without the *hopes and fears* of another life, the world neither *is*, nor ever *was*, nor (by ordinary visible means) can be well governed ; (supposing God to work on man according to his nature.) And it is most certain that it consisteth not with infinite wisdom; power and goodness, to be put to rule the world in all ages, by fraud and falshood. And it is certain that Heathens do for the most part through the world, by the light of nature, acknowledge a life of joy, or misery to come : And the most hardened Atheists, or Infidels must confess, that [*for ought they know there may be such a life:*] it being impossible they should know or prove the contrary. And it is most certain that the *meer probability* or *possibility* of a Heaven and Hell, (being matters of such unspeakable concernment) should in reason command our utmost diligence to the hazard or loss of the transitory vanities below : and consequently that a holy diligent preparation for another life, is *naturally the duty* of the *reasonable* creature. And it's as sure that God hath not made our nature in vain ; nor set us on a life of vain employments, nor made it our business in the world to seek after that which can never be attained.

These things, and much more, do shew that nature affordeth us so full a testimony of the life to come that's yet invisible, that it exceedingly helpeth us in believing the supernatural revelation of it, which is more full.

5. And though *we* have not *seen* the objects of our faith, yet those that have given us their infallible testimony by infallible means, have *seen* what they testified. Though [*no man hath seen God at any time, yet the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared him,* Joh. 1. 18. [*Verily, verily; (saith our Lord) we speak that we know, and testify that we have seen*] Joh. 3. 11. Vers. 31, 32. [*He that cometh from Heaven is above all, and what he hath seen and heard that he testifieth.*] Christ that hath told us saw the things that we have not seen : and you will believe honest men that speak to you of what they were eye-witnesses of. And the Disciples saw the person, the transfiguration, and the miracles of Christ. Inasmuch that *John* thus beginneth his Epistle, 1 Cor. 1. 1, 2, 3. [*That*

[That which was from the beginning which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life, (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew it to you, that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us :) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.] So Paul, 1 Cor. 9. 1. Am I not an Apostle? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord, 1 Cor. 15. 5, 6, 7. [He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present] Heb. 2. 3, 4. This [great salvation at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the holy Ghost, according to his own will.] 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17. [For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his Majesty: For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him, from the excellent glory: This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: And this voice which came from Heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy Mount.] And therefore when the Apostles were commanded by their persecutors, not to speak at all, or teach in the name of Jesus, they answered, [We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.] Acts 4. 18, 20. So that much of the objects of our faith to us invisible, have yet been seen by those that have instrumentally revealed them; and the glory of Heaven it self is seen by many millions of souls, that are now possessing it. And the tradition of the Testimony of the Apostles unto us, is more full and satisfactory, than the tradition of any Laws of the Land, or History of the most unquestionable affairs that have been done among the people of the earth: (as I have manifested elsewhere.) So that faith hath the infallible Testimony of God, and of them that have seen, and therefore is to us instead of sights.

6. Lastly, Even the enemy of faith himself doth against his will confirm our faith by the violence and rage of malice, that he stirreth up in the ungodly against the life of faith and holiness;

ness; and by the importunity of his oppositions and temptations, discovering that it is not for nothing that he is so maliciously solicitous, industrious, and violent.

And thus you see how much *faith* hath, that should fully falsifie a *rational man*, instead of *presence, possession and sight*

If any shall here say, [But *why would not God let us have a sight of Heaven or Hell, when he could not but know that it would more generally and certainly have prevailed for the conversion and salvation of the world: Doth he envy us the most precious means?*]

I answer; 1. Who art thou O man that disputest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Must God come down to the bar of man, to render an account of the reason of his works? Why do ye not also ask him a reason of the nature, situation, magnitude, order, influences, &c. of all the Stars, and Superiour Orbs, and call him to an account for *all* his works? when yet there are so many things in your own bodies, of which you little understand the reason. Is it not intollerable impudency, for such worms as we, so low, so dark, to question the eternal God, concerning the reason of his Laws and dispensations? Do we not shamefully forget our *ignorance*, and our distance?

2. But if you must have a reason, let this suffice you: It is fit that the Government of God be suited to the *nature* of the *reasonable* subject. And *Reason* is made to apprehend more than we see, and by reaching beyond *sense*, to carry us to seek things higher and better than *sense* can reach. If you would have a *man* understand no more than he sees, you would almost equalize a *wise* man and a *fool*, and make a *man* too like a *beast*. Even in worldly matters, you will venture upon the greatest cost and pains for the things that you see not, nor ever saw. He that hath a journey to go to a place that he never saw, will not think that a sufficient reason to stay at home. The Merchant will sail 1000 miles to a Land, and for a Commodity, that he never saw Must the Husbandman see the Harvest before he plow his Land, and sow his seed? Must the sick man feel, that he hath health before he use the means to get it? Must the Souldier see that he hath the victory before he fight? You would take such conceits in worldly matters to be the sym-

ptoms of distraction : And will you cherish them where they are most pernicious? Hath God made man for *any end*, or for *none*? If *none*, he is made in vain : If for *any*, no reason can expect that he should *see his end*, before he *use the means*, and *see his home* before he begin to travel towards it. When children first go to School, they do not *see* or *enjoy* the learning and wisdom which by time and labour they must attain. You will provide for the children which you are like to have before you see them. To look that *fight* which is *our fruit in it self*, should go before a holy life, is to expect the *end* before we will use the *necessary means*. You see here in the government of the world, that it is *things unseen* that are the instruments of rule, and motives of obedience. Shall no man be restrained from felony or murders, but he that *seeth* the *Assizes* or the *Gallows*? It is enough that he *foreseeth* them, as being made known by the *Laws*.

It would be no *discrimination* of the *good* and *bad*, the *wise* and *foolish*, if the reward and punishment must be *seen*? what thief so mad as to steal at the *Gallows*, or before the *Judge*? The basest habits would be restrained from acting, if the reward and punishment were in sight. The most beastly drunkard would not be drunk; the filthy fornicator would forbear his lust; the malicious enemy of godliness would forbear their calumnies and persecutions, if Heaven and Hell were open to their sight. No man will play the adulterer in the face of the *Assembly*: The chaste and unchaste seem there alike: And so they would do if they saw the face of the most dreadful God. No thanks to any of you all to be *godly* if *Heaven* were to be presently seen? or to *forbear your sin*, if you saw *Hell* fire, God will have a meeter way of tryal: You shall *believe his promises*, if ever you will have the *benefit*, and *believe his threatnings*, if ever you will *escape the threatned evil*.

CHAP. 2.

Some Uses.

Use 1. **T**His being the nature and use of Faith, to apprehend things *absent* as if they were *present*, and things *unseen*, as if they were *visible* before our eyes; you may hence understand the *nature of Christianity, and what it is to be a true Believer*. Verily, it is another matter than the dreaming, self-deceiving world imagineth. Hypocrites think that they are Christians indeed, because they have entertained a superficial opinion, that there is a Christ, an immortality of souls, a Resurrection, a Heaven and a Hell; though their lives bear witness, that this is not a *living, and effectual* faith; but it is their *sensitive faculties and interest* that are *predominant*, and are the *bias* of their hearts. Alas, a little observation may tell them, that notwithstanding their most confident pretensions to Christianity, they are utterly unacquainted with the Christian life. Would they *live* as they do, in worldly cares, and pampering of the flesh, and neglect of God and the life to come, if they *saw* the things which they say they do believe? Could they be sensual, ungodly and secure, if they had a faith that *serv'd instead of sight*?

Would you know who it is that is the Christian indeed?

1. *He is one that liveth (in some measure) as if he saw the Lord*: Believing in that God that *dwelleth in the inaccessible light*, that cannot be *seen* by mortal eyes, he liveth as before his face. He speaks, he prays, he thinks, he deals with men, as if he saw the Lord stand by. No wonder therefore if he do it with *reverence* and *holy fear*. No wonder if he make lighter of the smiles or frowns of mortal man, than others do that see none higher; and if he observe not the lustre of worldly dignity, or fleshly beauty, wisdom or vain-glory, before the transcendent incomprehensible light, to which the Sun it self is darkness. When he *awaketh he is still with God*, Psal. 134. 8. *He sets the Lord alwaies before him, because he is at his right hand, he is not moved*, Psal. 16. 8. And therefore the life of Believers is oft called, a *walking with God*, and a *walking*

before God, as Gen. 5. 22, 24. & 6. 9. & 17. 1. in the case of *Enoch, Noah, and Abraham*. *All the day doth he wait on God*, Psal. 25. 5. Imagine your selves what manner of person he must be that *sees the Lord*; and conclude that such (in his measure) is the true believer. For by *faith he seeth him that is invisible* (to the eye of sense) and therefore can forsake the glory and pleasures of the world, and feareth not the wrath of Princes, as it's said of *Mosis*, Heb. 11. 27.

2. The Believer is one *that liveth on a Christ whom he never saw*, and trusteth in him, adhereth to him, acknowledgeth his benefits, loveth him, and rejoiceth in him, as if he had seen him with his eyes. This is the faith which Peter calls *more precious than perishing gold*; that maketh us *love him whom we have not seen, and in whom though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoyce, with unspeakable and glorious joy*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. *Christ dwelleth in his heart by faith*; not only by his Spirit; but *objectively*; as our dearest absent friend, doth dwell in our estimation and affection, Ephes. 3. 17. O that the miserable Infidels of the world, had the eyes, the hearts, the experiences of the true believer! Then they that with *Thomas* tell those that have seen him, [*Except I may see and feel, I will not believe*] will be forced to cry out, [*My Lord and my God,*] Joh. 20. 25, &c.

3. A Believer is one that judgeth of the man by his invisible inside, and not by outward appearances with a fleshly worldly judgement. He seeth by faith a greater ugliness in sin, than in any the most deformed monster. When the unbeliever saith; what harm is it to please my flesh, in ease, or pride, or meat and drink, or lustful wantonness? the believer takes it as the question of a fool, that should ask [*what harm is it to take a dram of Mercury or Arsenick?*] He seeth the vicious evil, and foreseeth the consequent penal evil, by the eye of faith. And therefore it is that he pittieeth the ungodly, when they pittie not themselves, and speaks to them oft with a tender heart in compassion of their misery, and perhaps weeps over them (as *Paul*, Phil. 3. 18, 19.) when he cannot prevail; when they weep not for themselves, but hate his love, and scorn his pittie, and bid him keep his lamentations for himself; because they see not what he sees.

He seeth also the inward beauty of the Saints, (as it shineth forth in the holiness of their lives) and through all their sordid poverty and contempt, beholdeth the image of God upon them. For he judgeth not of *sin* or *holiness* as they now appear to the distracted world; but as they will be judged of at the day which he foreseeth; when sin will be the *shame*, and holiness the honoured and desired state.

He can see Christ in his poor despised members, and love God in those that are made as the scorn and off-scouring of all things, by the malignant unbelieving world. He admireth the excellency and happiness of those, that are made the laughing-stock of the ungodly: and accounteth the Saints the *most excellent on earth*, Psal. 16. 2. and had rather be one of their communion in rags, than sit with Princes that are naked within, and void of the true and durable glory. He judgeth of men as he perceiveth them to have more or less of Christ. The worth of a man is not obvious to the sense. You see his *stature*, *complexion* and his *cloths*; but as you see not his *learning* or *skill* in any Art whatsoever; so you see not his *grace* and heavenly mind. As the *soul* it self, so the sinful *deformity*, and the holy *beauty* of it, are to us invisible, and perceived only by their fruits, and by the eye of faith, which seeth things as God reveals them. And therefore in the eyes of a true Believer, *a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth those that fear the Lord*, Psal. 15. 4.

4. A true Believer doth seek a happiness which he never saw, and that with greater estimation and resolution, than he seeks the most excellent things that he hath seen. In all his prayers, his labours, and his sufferings, it is an *unseen Glory* that he seeks: he seeth not the Glory of God, nor the glorified Redeemer, nor the world of Angels, and perfected spirits of the just: but he knoweth by faith, that such a God, such a Glory, such a world as this *there is*, as certain as if his eyes had seen it. And therefore he provides, he lives, he hopes, he waits, for this *unseen* state of spiritual bliss, contemning all the wealth and glory, that sight can reach in comparison thereof. He believeth what he *shall see*; and therefore strives that he *may see* it. It's something above the Sun, and all that mortal eyes can see, which is the *end*, the *hope*, the

portion of a believer, without which all is nothing to him; and for which he trades and travels here, as worldlings do for worldly things, *Matth. 6. 20, 21. Col. 3. 1. Phil. 3. 20.*

5. A true Believer doth all his life prepare for a day that is yet to come, and for an account of all the passages of his life, though he hath nothing but the Word of God, to assure him of it. And therefore he lives as one that is halting to the presence of his Judge; and he contriveth his affairs, and disposeth of his worldly riches, as one that looks to hear of it again, and as one that remembreth the *Judge is at the door*, James 5. 9. He rather asketh, [what life, what words, what actions, what way of using my estate and interest, will be sweetest to me in the review, and will be best at last when I must accordingly receive my doom?] than [what is most pleasant to my flesh? and what will ingratiate me most with men? and what will accommodate me best at present? and set me highest in the world?] And therefore it is, that he pittieeth the ungodly even in the height of their prosperity; and is so earnest (though it offend them) to procure their recovery, as knowing that how secure soever they are now, they must give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead, 1 Pet. 4. 5. and that then the case will be altered with the presumptuous world.

6. Lastly, A true believer is careful to prevent a threatened misery which he never felt; and is awakened by holy fear to flye from the wrath to come, and is indoltrious to escape that place of torment which he never saw, as if he had seen it with his eyes. When he heareth but the sound of the trumpet, he takes warning that he may save his soul, Ezek. 33. 4. The evils that are here felt and seen, are not so dreadful to him, as those that he never saw or felt. He is not so careful and resolute, to avoid the ruine of his estate or name, or to avoid the plague, or sword, or famine, or the scorching flames, or death, or torments, as he is to avoid the endless torments, which are threatened by the righteous God. It is a greater misery in his esteem, to be really undone for ever, than seemingly only for a time, and to be cast off by God, than by all the world; and to lie in Hell, than to suffer any temporal calamity. And therefore he fears it more, and doth more to avoid it; and is
more

more cast down by the fears of Gods displeasure, than by the feelings of these present sufferings. As *Noah* did for his preservation from the threatned deluge, so doth the true Believer for his preservation from everlasting wrath, *Heb. 11. 7.* [*By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark, to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness, which is by faith.*] God first giveth warning of the flood: *Noah* believeth it: not with a lifeless, but a working faith: that first moved in him a self-preserving fear: This fear moveth *Noah* to obey the Lord in the use of means, and to prepare the Ark; and all this was, to save himself and his house from a flood, that was as yet unseen, and of which in nature there was no appearance. Thus doth God warn the sinful world, of the day of judgement, and the fire that is unquenchable; and true believers take his warning; and believing that which they cannot see, by fear they are moved to flye to Christ, and use his means to scape the threatned calamity. By this they become the heirs of that Righteousness which is by faith, and condemn the unbelieving careless world, that take not the warning, and use not the remedy.

By this time you may see that the Life of Faith is quite another thing, than the lifeless opinion of multitudes that call themselves believers. To say [*I believe there is a God, a Christ, a Heaven, a Hell,*] is as easie as it is common. But the faith of the ungodly is but an uneffectual dream. To dream that you are fighting, wins no victories: To dream that you are eating, gets no strength. To dream that you are running, rides no ground: To dream that you are plowing, or sowing, or reaping, procureth but a fruitless harvest. And to dream that you are Princes, may consist with beggery. If you do any more than dream of Heaven and Hell, how is it that you stir not, and make it not appear by the diligence of your lives, and the fervour of your duties, and the seriousness of your endeavours, that such wonderful unexpressible overpowering things, are indeed the matters of your belief? As you love your souls, take heed lest you take an image of faith to be the thing it self. Faith sets on work the powers of the soul, for the obtaining of that joy, and the escaping of that misery

mifery which you believe. But the *image* of faith in self-deceivers, neither *warms* nor *works*: it conquereth no difficulties; it ftirs not up to faithful duty. It's *blind*, and therefore *feeth* not *God*; and how then should he be feared and loved? I *feeth* not *Hell*, and therefore the senselefs foal goes on as fearlefsly and merrily to the unquenchable fire, as if he were in the safeft way. This image of faith annihilerh the moft potent objeets, as to any due impreffion on the foal. God is as no God, and Heaven as no Haven, to thefe *imaginary* *Chriftians*. If a Prince be in the room, an image reverenceth him not: If muſick and feafting be there, an image finds no pleasure in them. If fire and ſword be there, an image fears them not. You may perceive by the ſenfelefs neglectful carriage of ungodly men, that they *fee* not by faith the God that they ſhould love and fear; the Heaven that they ſhould ſeek and wait for; or the Hell that they ſhould with all poſſible care avoid. He is indeed the true Believer that (allowing the difference of degrees) doth pray as if he ſaw the Lord; and ſpeak and live as alwaies in his preſence; and redeem his time as if he were to die to morrow, or as one that ſeeth death approach, and ready to lay hands upon him; that begs and cries to God in prayer, as one that *forefeeth* the day of judgement; and the endlefs joy or miſery that followeth: that beſtirreth him for everlaſting life, as one that *feeth* Heaven and Hell, by the eye of faith. Faith is a ſerious apprehenſion, and cauſeth a ſerious converſation: for it is inſtead of *ſight* and *preſence*.

From all this you may eaſily and certainly infer, 1. That *true faith* is a Jewel, rare and precious: and not ſo common as nominal carelefs Chriftians think. What ſay they, *Are we not all believers? will you make Infidels of all that are not Saints? are none Chriftians, but thoſe that live ſo ſtrictly?* Answer, I know they are not *Infidels* by *profefſion*: but what they are indeed, and what God will take them for, you may ſoon perceive, by comparing the deſcription of faith, with the inſcription legible on their *lives*. It's comon to ſay, *I do believe*: but is it comon to find men, *pray* and *live* as thoſe that do believe indeed? It is both in works of *charity* and of *piety*, that a *living faith* will ſhew it ſelf. I will not therefore contend about the name: If you are *ungodly*, *unjuſt*, or *uncharitable*,

uncharitable, and yet will call your selves *Believers*, you may keep the name, and see whether it will save you. Have you forgotten how this case is determined by the holy Ghost himself, *James 2. 14, &c.* *What doth it profit my Brethren, if a man say, he hath faith, and hath not works? Can faith save him? Faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone. Thou believest that there is one God: thou doest well: the Devils also believe and tremble. It such a belief be it, that thou gloryest in, it's not denyed thee! But wilt thou know, oh vain man, that faith without works is dead? &c.* Is there life where there is no motion? Had you that *Faith* that is instead of *fight*, it would make you more *solicitous* for the things *unseen*, than you are for the *visible trifles* of this world.

2. And hence you may observe, that *most true Believers are weak in Faith*. Alas, how far do we all fall short of the love, and zeal, and care, and diligence, which we should have if we had but *once beheld* the things which we do *believe*? Alas, how dead are our affections? how flat are our duties? how cold, and how slow are our endeavours? how unprofitable are our lives, in comparison of what *one hours fight of Heaven and Hell* would make them be? O what a comfortable converse would it be, if I might but joyn in prayer, praise, and holy conference one day or hour, with a person that had *seen the Lord*, and *been in Heaven*; and born a part in the *Angelicall Praises*! Were our Congregations composed of such persons, what manner of worship would they perform to God? How unlike would their heavenly ravishing expressions be to these our sleepy heartless duties? Were Heaven open to the view of all this Congregation while I am speaking to you, or when we are speaking in prayer and praise to God, imagine your selves what a change it would make upon the best of us in our services! What apprehensions, what affections, what resolutions it would raise! and what a posture it would cast us all into! And do we not all profess to *believe* these things, as revealed from Heaven by the infallible God? Do we not say, that such a Divine Revelation is as sure as if the things were in themselves laid open to our sight? Why then are we no more affected with them? Why are we no more transported by them? Why do they no more command

our souls, and stir up our faculties to the most vigorous and lively exercise? and call them off from things that are not to us considerable, nor fit to have one glance of the eye of our observation, nor a regardful thought, nor the least affection, unless as they subserve these greater things? When you observe how much, in your selves and others, the frame of your souls in holy duty, and the tenour of your lives towards God and man, do differ from what they would be, if you had *seen* the things that you believe, let it mind you of the great imperfection of faith, and humble us all in the sense of our imbecility. For though I know that the most perfect Faith, is not apt to raise such high affections in degree, as shall be raised by the *beatifical vision* in the glorified, and as present intuition now would raise, if we could attain it; yet seeing Faith hath as sure an Object and Revelation as sight it self, though the manner of apprehension be less affecting, it should do much more with us than it doth, and bring us nearer to such affections and resolutions, as sight would cause.

Use 2. If Faith be given us to make things to come as if they were at hand, and things unseen as if we saw them, you may see from hence, 1. The reason of that holy seriousness of Believers, which the ungodly want. 2. And the reason why the ungodly want it. 3. And why they wonder at, and distaste and deride this serious diligence of the Saints.

1. Would you make it any matter of wonder, for men to be more careful of their souls, more fervent in their requests to God, more fearful of offending him, and more laborious in all holy preparation for eternal life, than the holiest and precisest person that you know in all the world, if so be that Heaven and Hell were seen to them? Would you not rather wonder at the dulness and coldness, and negligence of the best, and that they are not far more holy and diligent than they are, if you and they did see these things? Why then do you not cease your wondering at their diligence? Do you not know that they are men, that have seen the Lord, whom they daily serve? and seen the glory which they daily seek? and seen the place of torments which they fly from? By Faith in the glass of Divine Revelations they have seen them.

2. And

2. And the reason why the *careless world* are not as diligent, and holy as *Believers*, is because they have not this eye of Faith, and never saw those powerful objects, that *Believers* see. Had you *their eyes*, you would have their *hearts* and *lives*. O that the Lord would but illuminate you, and give you such a *sight* of the things *unseen*, as every true *Believer* hath! What a happy change would it make upon you? Then instead of your deriding or opposing it, we should have your company in the holy path: You would then be such your selves, as you now deride. If you *saw* what they see, you would *do* as they *do*. When the heavenly light had appeared unto *Saul*, he ceaseth persecuting, and enquires what Christ would have him to do, that he might be such a one as he had persecuted: And when the scales fell from his eyes, he falls to prayer, and gets among the *Believers* whom he had persecuted, and laboureth and suffereth more than they.

3. But till this light appear to your darkned souls, you cannot see the reasons of a holy heavenly life: and therefore you will think it hypocrisie, or pride, or fancy, and imagination, or the foolishness of crackt-brain'd self-conceited men. If you see a man do reverence to a Prince, and the Prince himself were invisible to you, would you not take him for a mad man; and say that he cringed to the stools or chairs, or bowed to a post, or complemented with his shadow? If you saw a mans action in eating and drinking, and see not the meat and drink it self, would you not think him mad? If you heard men laugh, and hear not so much as the voice of him that gives the jest, would you not imagine them to be brain-sick? If you see men dance, and hear not the musick; if you see a Labourer threshing, or reaping, or mowing, and see no corn or grass before him; if you see a Souldier fighting for his life, and see no enemy that he spends his stroaks upon, will you not take all these for men distracted? Why this is the case between you and the true *Believers*. You see them reverently worship God, but you see not the Majesty which they worship, as they do: You see them as busie for the saving of their souls, as if an hundred lives lay on it; but you see not the Hell from which they fly, nor the Heaven they seek: and therefore you marvel why they make so

much ado about the matters of their salvation; and why they cannot do as others, and make as light of Christ and Heaven, as they that desire to be excused, and think they have more needful things to mind. But did you see with the eyes of a true Believer, and were the amazing things that God hath revealed to us, but open to your sight, how quickly would you be satisfied, and sooner mock at the diligence of a drowning man, that is striving for his life, or at the labour of the City, when they are busily quenching the flames in their habitations, than mock at them that are striving for the everlasting life, and praying and labouring against the ever-burning flames?

How soon would you turn your admiration, against the stupidity of the careless world, and wonder more that ever men that hear the Scriptures, and see with their eyes the works of God, can make so light of matters of such unspeakable eternal consequence? Did you but see *Heaven and Hell*; it would amaze you to think that ever many, yea so many, and so seeming wise, should wilfully run into everlasting fire, and sell their souls at so low a rate, as if it were as easie to be in Hell as in an Ale-house, and Heaven were no better than a beastly lust? O then with what astonishment would you think! [Is this the fire that sinners do so little fear? Is this the glory that is so neglected?] You would then see that the *madness* of the *ungodly* is the *wonder*.

Use 3. By this time I should think that some of your own Consciences have prevented me, in the *Use of Examination*, which I am next to call you to. I hope while I have been holding you the glass, you have not turned away your faces, nor shut your eyes: - But that you have been judging your selves by the light which hath been set up before you. Have not some of your consciences said by this time [If this be the nature and use of Faith, to make things unseen, as if we saw them, what a desolate case then is my soul in? how void of Faith? how full of Infidelity? how far from the truth and power of Christianity? How dangerously have I long deceived my self in calling my self a true Christian, and pretending to be a true Believer? When I never knew the life of Faith but took a dead opinion, bred only by education, and the

the custom of the Countrey instead of it; little did I think that I had been an Infidel at the heart, while I so confidently laid claim to the name of a Believer! Alas, how far have I been from living, as one that *seeth* the things that he *professeth to Believe*?] If some of your consciences be not thus convinced, and perceive not yet your want of faith, I fear it is because they are *scared*, or *asleep*.

But if yet *conscience* have not begun to plead this cause against you, let me begin to plead it with your *consciences*: Are you *Believers*? Do you *live the life of Faith*, or not? Do you *live upon things that are unseen*, or upon the present visible baits of sensuality? That you may not turn away your ears, or hear me with a sluggish senseless mind, let me tell you first, how nearly it concerneth you, to get this Question soundly answered; and then, that you may not be deceived, let me help you toward the true resolution.

1. And for the first, you may perceive by what is said, that saving Faith is not so common, as those that know not the nature of it, do imagine. [*All men have not faith*,] 2 Thes. 3. 2. O what abundance do deceive themselves with *Names*, and *shews*, and a *dead Opinion*, and *customary Religion*, and take these for the *life of faith*!

2. Till you have this *faith*, you have no *special interest* in Christ. It is only *Believers* that are *united to him*, and are his living *Members*: and it is by *faith* that he *dwelleth in our hearts*, and that we live in him, Ephes. 3. 17. Gal. 2. 20. In vain do you boast of Christ, if you are not true *Believers*. You have no part or portion in him: None of his *special Benefits* are yours, till you have this living working *Faith*.

3. You are still in the state of *enmity to God*, and *unreconciled to him*, while you are *unbelievers*. For you can have no *peace with God*, nor *access unto his favour*, but by Christ, Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. Ephes. 2. 14, 15, 17. And therefore you must *come by faith to Christ*, before you can *come by Christ unto the Father*, as those that have a *special interest* in his love.

4. Till you have this *Faith*, you are *under the guilt and load of all your sins*, and under the *curse and condemnation of the Law*; For there is no *Justification or forgiveness*, but by *Faith*, Act. 26. 18. Rom. 4, & 5, &c.

5. Till you have this *sound Belief of things unseen*, you will be *carnal minded*, and have a *carnal end* to all your actions, which will make those to be *evil*, that *materially* are *good*, and those to be *fleshy*, that *materially* are *holy*: *Without Faith it is impossible to please God*, Rom. 8. 5, 8, 9. Prov. 28. 9. Heb. 11. 6.

6. Lastly, Till you have this *living Faith*, you have *no right to Heaven*, nor could be *saved* if you die this hour. [*Whoever believeth shall not perish, but have everlasting life: He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already: He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him*, Joh. 3. 16, 18, 36.

You see, if you love your selves, it concerneth you, to try whether you are true Believers: Unless you take it for an *indifferent thing*, whether you live for ever in *Heaven* or *Hell*; it's best for you to put the question close to your consciences betimes. Have you that *Faith* that serves instead of *sight*? Do you carry *within you the evidence of things unseen*, and the *substance of the things* which you say you *hope for*? Did you know in what manner this question must be put and determined at judgement, and how all your comfort will then depend upon the answer, and how near that day is, when you must all be sentenced to *Heaven* or *Hell*, as you are found to be *Believers* or *Unbelievers*, it would make you hearken to my counsel, and presently try whether you have a *saving Faith*.

2. But lest you be deceived in your trial, and lest you mistake me as if I tryed the weak by the measure of the strong, and laid all your comfort upon such *strong affections*, and *high degrees*, as *sight* it self would work within you, I shall briefly tell you, how you may know whether you have *any faith* that's *true and saving*, though in the *least degree*. Though *none of us* are affected to that *height* as we should be, if we had the *sight* of all that we do believe, yet all that have *any saving belief* of *invisible things*, will have these four signs of faith within them.

1. *A sound belief of things unseen, will cause a practical estimation of them, and that above all earthly things.* A glimpse of the
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the heavenly glory as in a glass, will cause the soul deliberately to say, [This is the chief desirable felicity; this is the Crown, the Pearl, the Treasure; nothing but this can serve my turn. It will debase the greatest pleasures, or riches, or honours of the world in your esteem. How contemptible will they seem, while you see God stand by, and Heaven as it were set open to your view; you'll see there's little cause to envy the prosperous servants of the world; you will pity them, as miserable in their mirth, and bound in the fetters of their folly and concupiscence; and as strangers to all solid joy and honour. You will be moved with some compassion to them in their misery, when they are braving it among men, and domineering for a little while; and you will think, alas poor man! Is this all thy glory! Hast thou no better wealth, no higher honour, no sweeter pleasures than these husks? With such a practical judgment as you value gold above dirt, and jewels above common stones; you will value Heaven above all the riches and pleasures of this world, if you have indeed a living saving faith, Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9.

2. A sound belief of the things unseen will habitually incline your wills to embrace them, with consent and complacence, and resolution, above and against those worldly things, that would be set above them, and preferred before them. If you are true believers, you have made your choice, you have fixed your hopes, you have taken up your resolutions, that God must be your portion, or you can have none that's worth the having: that Christ must be your Saviour, or you cannot be saved: and therefore you are at a point with all things else: they may be your Helps, but not your Happiness: you are resolved on what Rock to build, and where to cast anchor, and at what port and prize your life shall aim. You are resolved what to seek, and trust to God or none: Heaven or nothing: Christ or none; is the voice of your rooted, stable resolutions. Though you are full of fears sometimes whether you shall be accepted, and have a part in Christ, or no? and whether ever you shall attain the Glory which you aim at; yet you are off all other hopes; having seen an end of all perfections, and read vanity and vexation written upon all creatures, even on the most flattering state on earth, and are unchangeably resolved.

solved not to change your *Master*, and your *hopes*, and your *holy course*, for any other *life* or *hopes*. Whatever come of it you are resolved that here you will venture all: Knowing that you have no other game to play, at which you are not sure to lose, and that you can lay out your love, and care, and labour on nothing else that will answer your expectations; nor make any other bargain whatsoever, but what you are sure to be utterly undone by, *Psal.* 73. 25. & 4. 6, 7. *Mat.* 6. 20, 21. & 13. 45, 46. *Luke* 18. 33.

3. A sound belief of things invisible, will be so far an effectual spring of a holy life, as that you will [*seek first the Kingdom of God, and its Righteousness,*] *Mat.* 6. 33. and not in your Resolutions only, but in your Practices, the bent of your lives will be for God, and your invisible felicity. It is not possible that you should see by faith, the wonders of the world to come, and yet prefer this world before it. A dead opinionative belief, may stand with a worldly fleshly life; but a working faith will make you stir, and make the things of God your business: and the labour and industry of your lives will shew whether you soundly believe the things unseen.

4. If you savingly believe the invisible things, you will purchase them at any rate, and hold them faster than your worldly accommodations; and will suffer the loss of all things visible, rather than you will cast away your hopes of the glory which you never saw. A humane faith and bare opinion, will not hold fast when trial comes. For such men take Heaven but for a reserve, because they must leave earth against their wills, and are loth to go to Hell: but they are resolved to hold the world as long as they can, because their faith apprehendeth no such satisfying certainty of the things unseen, as will encourage them to let go all that they see, and have in sensible possession. But the weakest faith that's true and saving, doth habitually dispose the soul, to let go all the hopes and happiness of this world, when they are inconsistent with our spiritual hopes and happiness, *Luke* 14. 33.

And now I have gone before you with the light, and shewed you what a Believer is, will you presently consider how far your hearts and lives agree to this description? To know [*Whether you live by faith or not*] is consequentially to know, *whether*

whether God or the world be your portion and felicity; and to whether you are the heirs of Heaven or Hell. And is not this a question that you are most nearly concerned in? O therefore for your souls sakes, and as ever you love your everlasting peace, *Examine your selves, whether you are in the faith or not? Know you not that Christ is in you (by faith) except you be reprobates?* 2 Cor. 13. 5. will you hearken now as long to your consciences, as you have done to me? As you have heard me telling you, *what is the nature of a living, saving faith* will you hearken to your consciences, while they impartially tell you, *whether you have this life of faith, or not?* It may be known if you are *willing, and diligent, and impartial:* If you search on purpose as men that would know whether they are alive or dead, and whether they shall live or die for ever: and not as men that would be flattered and deceived, and are resolved to think *well* of their state, be it true or false.

Let conscience tell you: What eyes do you see by, for the conduct of the chief employment of your lives? Is it by the eye of sense, or faith? I take it for granted that it's by the eye of Reason. But is it by Reason corrupted and byassed by sense, or is it by Reason elevated by faith? What Country is it that your hearts converse in? Is it in Heaven or Earth? What company is it that you solace your selves with? Is it with Angels and Saints? Do you walk with them in the Spirit, and joyn your eccho's to their triumphant praises, and say, Amen, when by faith you hear them ascribing honour, and praise, and glory to the ancient of daies, the Omnipotent *Jehovah*, that is, and that was, and is to come? Do you fetch your Joyes from Heaven or Earth? from things unseen or seen? things future or present? things hoped for, or things possessed? What Garden yieldeth you your sweetest flowers? Whence is the food, that your hopes and comforts live upon? Whence are the spirits and cordials that revive you; when a frowning world doth cast you into a fainting fit, or swoon? Where is it that you repose your souls for Rest, when sin or sufferings have made you weary? Deal truly, Is it in Heaven or Earth? Which world do you take for your pilgrimage, and which for your home? I do not ask you, *where you are,* but *where you dwell?* not where are your persons, but where

are your hearts? In a word, Are you in good earnest, when you say, you believe a Heaven and Hell? And do you think, and speak, and pray, and live, as those that do indeed believe it? Do you spend your time, and abuse your condition of life, and dispose of your affairs, and answer temptations to worldly things, as those that are serious in their belief? Speak out; do you live the life of faith upon things unseen? or the life of sense on things that you behold? Deal truly; for your endless joy or sorrow doth much depend on it. The life of faith is the certain passage to the life of glory. The fleshly life on things here seen, is the certain way to endless misery. If you live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye by the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the loe, ye shall live, Rom. 8. 13. Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap everlasting life, Gal. 6. 7, 8. If you would know where you must live for ever, know how, and for what, and upon what it is, that you live here.

Use 4. Having enquired whether you are Believers, I am next to ask you, what you will be for the time to come? will you live upon things seen or unseen? While you arrogate the name and honour of being Christians, will you be-think you what Christianity is? and will you be indeed what you say you are, and would be thought to be? Oh that you would give credit to the Word of God? that the God of Heaven might be but heartily believed by you! And that you would but take his Word to be as sure as sense? and what he hath told you is or will be, to be as certain as if you saw it with your eyes? Oh what manner of persons would you then be? how carefully and fruitfully would you speak and live? How impossible were it then that you should be careless and prophane? And here that I may by seriousness bring you to be serious, in so serious a business, I shall first put a few suppositions to you, about the invisible objects of faith; and then I shall put some applicatory questions to you, concerning your own resolutions and practice thereupon.

1. Suppose you saw the Lord in glory continually before you; When you are hearing, praying, talking, jesting, eating, drinking,

drinking, and when you are tempted to any wilful sin : Suppose you saw the Lord stand over you, as verily as you see a man ! (As you might do if your eyes could see him : for it's most certain that he is still present with you) suppose you saw but such a glimpse of his back parts as *Moses* did, *Exod.* 34. when God put him into a cleft of the Rock, and covered him while he passed by (*Chap.* 33. 23.) when the face of *Moses* shined with the light, that he was fain to veil it from the people, *Exod.* 34. 33, 34, 35. Or if you had seen but what the Prophet saw, *Isa.* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. when he beheld the Lord upon a Throne, high and lifted up, &c. and heard the Seraphim cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* When he said, *Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips ! for mine eyes have seen the King the Lord of Hosts.* Or if you had seen but what *Job* saw, *Job* 42. 5, 6. when he said, [*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye seeth thee ; wherefore I abhor my self and repent in dust and ashes.*] What course would you take, what manner of persons would you be after such a sight as this ? If you had seen but *Christ* appearing in his glory, as the Disciples on the holy Mount, *Matth.* 17. or as *Paul* saw him at his conversion, when he was smitten to the earth, *Acts* 9. or as *John* saw him, *Rev.* 1. 13. where he saith [*He was clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt with a golden girdle ; his head and his hairs were white like Wool or Snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters ; and he had in his right hand seven Stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two edged Sword, and his countenance was as the Sun shineth in his strength : and when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead ; and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, fear not ; I am the first and the last ; I am he that liveth and was dead ; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and death.*] What do you think you should be and do, if you had seen but such a sight as this ? Would you be godly or ungodly after it ? As sure as you live, and see one another, God always seeth you : He seeth your secret filthiness, and deceit, and malice, which you think

is hid; he seeth you in the dark: the locking of your doors, the drawing of your curtains, the setting of the Sun, or the putting out of the Candle, doth hide nothing from him that is *Omniscient*, Psal. 94. 8, 9. [*Understand oh ye brutists among the people! and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?*] The lust and filthiness, and covetousness, and envy, and vanity of your very *thoughts* are as open to his view as the Sun at noon. And therefore you may well suppose him *present* that cannot be *absent*; and you may suppose you saw him that still seeth you, and whom you must see. Oh what a change, a *glimpse* of the glory of his *Majesty*, would make in this Assembly! Oh what amazements, what passionate workings of soul would it excite! Were it but an *Angel* that did thus appear to you, what manner of hearers would you be? how serious? how affectionate? how sensible? And yet are you *Believers*, and have *none* of this? when faith makes unseen things to be as seen? If thou have *faith* indeed, thou seest him that is invisible: thou speakest to him: thou hearest him in his Word: thou seest him in his Works: thou walkest with him: he is the life of thy comforts, thy converse and thy life.

2. Suppose you had *seen the matters revealed in the Gospel to your faith, as to what is past and done already?* If you had seen the deluge and the *Ark*, and preservation of one righteous family: the burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* with fire from Heaven; and the saving of *Lot* whose *righteous soul was grieved* at their sins, and hunted after as a prey to their ungodly rage, because he would have hindered them from transgressing? Suppose you had *seen* the opening of the Red Sea, the passage of the *Israelites*, the drowning of *Pharaoh* and his *Ægyptians*; the *Manna* and the *Quails* that fell from Heaven, the flaming Mount, with the terrible Thunder, when God delivered the Law to *Moses*! what manner of people would you have been? what lives would you have led, after such sights, as all or any one of these? Suppose you had *seen* Christ in his state of Incarnation, in his examples of lowliness, meekness, contempt of all the glory and vanities of this world, and had heard him speak his heavenly Doctrine with power and authority, as never man spake. Suppose you had seen him heal the blind, the

the lame, the sick, and raise the dead ; and teen him after all this made the scorn of sinners, buffeted, spit upon, when they had crowned him with thorns, and arrayed him gorgeously in scorn ; and then nailed between malefactors on a Cross, and pierced, and die a shameful death, and this for such as you and I. Suppose you had seen the Sun darkned without any ecclipse, the Vail of the Temple rent, the Earth tremble ; the Angels terrifying the Keepers, and Christ rise again ! Suppose you had been among the Disciples when he appeared in the midst of them, and with *Thomas*, had put your fingers into his wounded side : and had seen him walking on the waters, and at last seen him ascending up to Heaven. Suppose you had seen when the Holy Ghost came down on the Disciples in the similitude of cloven tongues, and had heard them speak in the various languages of the Nations, and seen the variety of Miracles, by which they convinced the unbelieving world : What persons would you have been ? what lives would you have led, if you had been eye-witnesses of all these things ? And do you not profess to believe all this ? and that these things are as certain truths, as if you had seen them ? why then doth not your belief affect you, or command you more ? why doth it not do what sight would do, in some good measure, if it were but a lively saving faith indeed that serveth instead of sense ? Yea I must tell you, Faith must do more with you, in *this case*, than the *sight* of Christ *alone*, could do, or the *sight* of his *Miracles* did on most. For many that saw him, and saw his works, & heard his Word, yet perished in their unbelief.

3. Suppose you saw the *everlasting Glory* which Christ hath purchased and prepared for his Saints : That you had been once with *Paul*, *rapt up into the third Heavens*, and seen the things that are *unutterable* : would you not after that have rather *lived like Paul*, and undergone his sufferings and contempt, than to have lived like the brain-sick brutish world ? If you had seen what *Stephen* saw before his death, *Acts* 7. 55, 56. the *Glory of God*, and *Christ standing at his right hand* ; If you had seen the thousands and millions of holy glorious spirits, that are continually attending the Majesty of the Lord ; If you had seen the glorified spirits of the just, that were once in flesh, despised by the blind ungodly world, while they

waited on God in faith, and holiness, and hope, for that blessed Crown which now they were : If you had felt one moment of their joys ; if you had seen them shine as the Sun in glory, and made like unto the Angels of God ; if you had heard them sing the song of the Lamb, and the joyful Hallelujahs, and praise to their eternal King : what would you be, and what would you resolve on after such a sight as this ? If the rich man *Luke 16.* had seen *Lazarus* in *Abrahams* bosom in the midst of his bravery, and honour, and feasting, and other sensual delights, as afterwards he saw it when he was tormented in the flames of Hell, do you think such a sight would not have cooled his mirth and jollity, and helpt him to understand the nature and value of his earthly felicity ; and have proved a more effectual argument than a despised Preachers words ? at least to have brought him to a freer exercise of his Reason, in a sober consideration of his state and waies ? Had you seen one hour what *Abraham, David, Paul,* and all the Saints now see, while sin and flesh doth keep us here in the dark, what work do you think your selves it would make upon your hearts and lives ?

4. Suppose you saw the face of Death, and that you were now lying under the power of some mortal sickness, Physicians having forsaken you, and said, There is no hope : Your friends weeping over you, and preparing your winding sheet and coffin, digging your graves, and casting up the skulls, and bones, and earth, that must again be cast in to be your covering and company : Suppose you saw a Messenger from God to tell you that you must die to morrow ; or heard but what one of your predecessors heard, *Luke 12. 20.* *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee : then whose shall these things be that thou hast provided ?*] How would such a Message work with you ? would it leave you as you are ? If you heard a voice from God this night in your chamber in the dark, telling you, that *this is the last night that you shall live on earth, and before to morrow your souls must be in another world, and come before the dreadful God :* what would be the effect of such a Message ? And do you not verily believe that all this will very shortly be ? Nay, do you not know without believing, that you must die, and leave your worldly glory ?
and

and that all your pleasures and contents on earth, will be as if they had never been, (and much worse!) O wonderful! that a change so sure, so great, so near, should no more affect you, and no more be fore-thought on, and no more prepared for! and that you be not awakened by so full and certain a fore-knowledge, to be in good sadness for eternal life, as you seem to be when death is at hand!

5. Suppose you saw the great and dreadful day of Judgement, as it is described by Christ himself in *Matth.* 25. [*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy Angels with him, and shall sit upon his glorious Throne, and all Nations shall be gathered before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left.*] v. 31, 32, 33. and shall sentence the righteous to eternal life, and the rest into everlasting punishment. If you did now behold the glory and terror of that great appearance, how the Saints will be magnified, and rejoyce, and be justified against all the accusations of Satan, and calumnies of wicked men; and how the ungodly then would fain deny the words and deeds that now they glory in; and what horrour and confusion will then overwhelm those wretched souls, that now out-face the Messengers of the Lord? Had you seen them trembling before the Lord, that now are braving it out in the pride and arrogance of their hearts: Had you heard how then they will change their tune, and wish they had never known their sins: and wish they had lived in greater holiness than those whom they derided for it: What would you say, and do, and be, after such an amazing sight as this? Would you sport it out in sin as you have done? Would you take no better care for your salvation? If you had seen those sayings out of the holy Ghost fulfilled, *Jude* 14, 15. *2 Thes.* 1. 7, 8, 9. [*When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*] What mind do you think you should be of? What course would you take, if you had but seen this dreadful day? Could you go on to think, and speak,

Speak, and live as sensually, stupidly and negligently as now you do? 2 Pet. 3: 10, 11, 12. [*The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up: Is it possible soundly to believe such a day, so sure, so near, and no more regard it, nor make ready for it, than the careless and ungodly do?*

6. Suppose at that day you had heard the Devil accusing you of all the sins that you have committed; and set them out in the most odious aggravations, and call for justice against you to your Judge: If you heard him pleading all those sins against you that now he daily tempts you to commit, and now maketh you believe are harmless, or small inconsiderable things: If you heard him saying, At such a time this sinner refused grace, neglected Christ, despised Heaven, and preferred Earth: at such a time he derided godliness, and made a mock of the holy Word and Counsels of the Lord: at such a time he profaned the name of God, he coveted his neighbours wealth; he cherished thoughts of envy or of lust; he was drunk, or gluttonous, or committed fornication, and he was never thoroughly converted by renewing grace, and therefore he is an heir of Hell, and belongs to me: I ruled him, and I must have him.] What would you think of a life of sin, if once you had heard such accusations as these? How would you deal by the next temptation, if you had heard what use the tempter will hereafter make of all your sins?

7. What if you had seen the damned in their misery, and heard them cry out of the folly of their impenitent careless lives; and wishing as Dives, Luke 16. that their friends on earth might have one sent from the dead, to warn them that they come not to that place of torment (I speak to men that say they are believers) what would you do upon such a sight? If you had heard them there torment themselves in the remembrance of the time they lost, the mercy they neglected, the grace resisted, and wish it were all to do again, and that they might once more be tried with another life. If you saw how the world is altered with those, that once were as proud and confident as others, what do you think such a sight would do with you?

And

And why then doth the *believing* of it do no more, when the thing is certain?

8. Once more; suppose that in your *temptations* you saw the tempter appearing to you, and *pleading* with you as he doth by his inward suggestions, or by the mouths of his instruments. If you saw him, and heard him hissing you on to sin, perswading you to gluttony, drunkenness, or uncleanness? If the Devil appeared to you, and led you to the place of lust, and offered you the harlot, or the cup of excess, and urged you to swear, or curse, or rail, or scorn at a holy life; would not the sight of the Angler mar his game, and cool your courage, and spoil your sport, and turn your stomachs? would you be drunk, or filthy, if you saw him stand by you? Think on it the next time you are tempted. Stout men have been apaled by such a sight. And do you not *believe* that it's *be indeed* that tempteth you? As sure as if your eyes beheld him, it's he that prompteth men to jeer at god incels; and puts your wanton ribbald speeches, and oaths, and curses into your mouths: *He* is the Tutor of the enemies of grace, that teacheth them *do&e delirare, ingeniosè insanire*, ingeniously to quarrel with the way of life, and learnedly to confute the arguments that would have saved them; and subtilly to dispute themselves out of the hands of mercy, and gallantly to scorn to stoop to Christ, till there be no remedy; and with plausible eloquence to commend the plague and sickness of their souls; and irrefragably maintain it, that the way to Hell will lead to Heaven; and to *justify* the sins that will condemn them; and honourably and triumphantly to overcome their friends, and to serve the Devil in mood and figure, and valiantly to cast themselves into Hell, in despite of all the laws and reproofs of God or man that would have hindered them. It being most certain that this is the Devils work, and you durst not do it if he moved you to it with open face, how dare you do it when *faith* would assure you, that it's as verily he, as if you saw him?

More distinctly, answer these following Questions, upon the foregoing suppositions.

Quest. 1. If you saw but what you say you do *believe*, would you not be convinced that the most pleasant gainful sin, is worse

than madness? and would you not spit at the very name of it, and openly cry out of your open folly, and beg for prayers, and love reprovers, and resolve to turn without delay?

Quest. 2. What would you think of the most serious holy life, if you had seen the things that you say you do believe? would you ever again reproach it as preciseness? or count it more ado than needs? and think your time were better spent in playing, than in praying; in drinking, and sports, and filthy lusts, than in the holy services of the Lord? would you think then that one day in seven, were too much for the work for which you live; and that an hour on this holy day were enough to be spent in instructing you for eternity? Or would you not believe that he is the blessed man, whose delight is in the Law of God, and meditateth in it day and night? Could you plead for sensuality or ungodly negligence, or open your mouths against the most serious holiness of life, if Heaven and Hell stood open to your view?

Quest. 3. If you saw but what you say you do believe, would you ever again be offended with the Ministers of Christ, for the plainest reproofs, and closest exhortations, and strictest precepts and discipline, that now are disrelished so much? Or rather, would you not desire them to help you presently to try your states, and to search you to the quick, and to be more solicitous to save you than to please you? The patient that will take no bitter medicine in time, when he sees he must die, would then take any thing. When you see the things that now you bear of, then you would do any thing: O then might you have these daies again, Sermons would not be too plain or long: In season and out of season would then be allowed of. Then you would understand what moved Ministers to be so importunate with you for conversion; and whether trifling or serious preaching was the best.

Quest. 4. Had you seen the things that you say you do believe, what effect would Sermons have upon you, after such a sight as this? O what a change it would make upon our preaching, and your hearing, if we saw the things that we speak and hear of? How fervently should we importune you, in the name of Christ? How attentively would you hear, and carefully consider and obey? we should then have no such sleepy preaching and

and hearing, as now we have. Could I but shew to all this Congregation, while I am preaching, the invisible world of which we preach, and did you hear with Heaven and Hell in your eye sight, how confident should I be (though not of the saving change of all) that I should this hour teach you to plead for sin, and against a holy life no more? and send you home another people than you came hither. I durst then ask the worst that heareth me, [Dare you now be drunk, or gluttonous, or worldly? dare you be voluptuous, proud, or fornicators any more? Dare you go home, and make a jest at piety, and neglect your souls as you have done?] And why then should not the *believed* truth prevail, if indeed you *did believe* it, when the thing is as *sure*, as if you *saw* it?

Quest. 5. If you had seen what you say you do *believe*, would you *hunt as eagerly for wealth, or honour*, and regard the thoughts or words of men, as you did before? Though it's only the *Believer* that truly honoureth his Rulers, (for none else honour them for God, but use them for themselves;) yet wonder not if he fear not much the face of man, and be no admirer of worldly greatness, when he *seeth* what they *will be*, as well as what they *are*. Would not usurpers have been less scared, if all could have *foreseen* their fall? Even common *reason* can *foresee*, that shortly you will all be dust: Methinks I *foresee* your ghastly paleness, your loathsome blackness, and your habitation in the dark: And who can much envy, or desire the advancements that have such an end? One sight of God would *blast all the glory* of the world, that's now the bait for mans perdition.

Quest. 6. Would *temptations be as powerful*, as now they are, if you did but *see* the things you *hear* of? Could all the beauty or pleasures in the world, entice you to filchiness or sensuality, if you saw God over you, and judgement before you, and saw what damned souls now suffer, and what believers now enjoy? Could you be persuaded by *any* company or recreation, to waste your precious time in vain, with such things in your eye? I am confident you would abhor the motion; and entertain temptations to the most honoured, gainful, pleasant sin, as now you would do a motion to cut your own throats, or leap into a coal-pit, or thrust your head into a burning-oven.

Why then doth not *faith* thus shame *temptations*, if indeed you do believe these things? Will you say, [It is your *weakness*, you cannot *chuse*] or that [it is your nature to be *lustful*, *revengeful*, *sensual*, and you cannot overcome it.] But if you had a sight of *Heaven and Hell*, you could then resist: you cannot now, because you will not: But did you see that which would make you willing, your power would appear. The sight of a Judge or Gallows can restrain men: The sight of a person whom you reverence, can restrain the exercise of your disgraceful sins; much more would the sight of *Heaven and Hell*. If you were but *dying*, you would shake the head at him that would then tempt you to the committing of your former sins. And is not a lively *foreseeing faith* as effectual?

Quest. 7. Had you seen what you say you do believe, you would not so much stick at *sufferings*, nor make so great a matter of it, to be reproached, slandered, imprisoned, or condemned by man, when God and your salvation command your patience. A sight of Hell would make you think it worse than madness, to run thither to escape the wrath of man, or any sufferings on earth, Rom. 8. 18.

Quest. 8. And O how such a sight would advance the Redeemer, and his Grace, and Promises, and Word, and Ordinances, in your esteem! It would quicken your desires, and make you fly to Christ for life, as a drowning man to that which may support him. How sweetly then would you relish the name, the word, the waics of Christ, which now seem dry and common things!

Quest. 9. Could you live as merrily, and sleep as quietly in a negligent uncertainty of your salvation, if you had seen these things, as now you do? Could you live at hearts ease, while you know not where you shall be to morrow, or must live for ever? Oh no: Were *Heaven and Hell* but seen before you, your Consciences would be more busie in putting such questions [Am I regenerate, sanctified, reconciled, justified, or not?] Then any the most zealous Minister is now.

Quest. 10. I will put to you but one Question more. If we saw God, and Heaven, and Hell before us, do you think it would not effectually reconcile our differences, and heal our unbrotherly exasperations and divisions? would it not hold the bands that

that itch to be using violence, against those that are not in all things of their minds ! what abundance of vain controversies would it reconcile ! As the coming in of the Master doth part the fray among the School-boys ; so the sight of God would frighten us from contentions, or uncharitable violence. This would teach us how to preach and pray better than a storm at Sea can do ; which yet doth it better than some in prosperity will learn : Did we see what we *preach* of, it would drive us out of our man-pleasing, self-seeking, sleepy strain, as the cudgel drives the beggar from his canting, and the breaking loose of the Bear did teach the affected cripple to find his legs, and cast away his crutches. I would desire no better outward help to end our controversies about indifferent modes of worship, than a sight of the things of which we speak : This would excite such a serious frame of soul, as would not suffer Religion to evaporate into formality, nor dwindle into affectation, complement and ceremony : nor should we dare to beat our fellow-servants, and thrust them out of the vineyard, and say, you shall not *preach*, or *pray*, or *live*, but upon these or those unnecessary terms : But the sense of our own frailty, and fear of a severe disquisition of our failings, would make us compassionate to others, and content that *necessaries* be the matter of our unity, *unnecessaries* of our liberty, and *both* of charity.

If *fight* in all these ten particulars would do so much, should not *faith* do much, if you verily believe the things you see not ?

Alas, corrupted reason is asleep, (with men that seem wise in other things) till it be awakt by *faith* or *fight*. And sleeping reason is as unserviceable as folly. It doth no work : it avoids no danger. A Doctor that's asleep, can defend the truth no better than a waking child. But reason will be reason, and conscience will be conscience, when the dust is blown out of mens eyes, and *fight* and *feeling* have awakened, and so recovered their understandings ; or *Faith* more *seasonably* and *happily* awaked them.

AND O that now we might all consent to addict our selves to the *Life of Faith* : And

1. That we live not too much on visibles. 2. That we live on the things invisible.

1. One would think that worldliness is a disease that carryeth with it a cure for it self; and that the rational nature should be loth to love at so dear a rate, and to labour for so poor a recompence. It is pittie that Gebzi's leprosie, and Judas's death, should no more prevent a succession of Gebzi's and Judas's in all generations. Our Lord went before us most eminently in a contempt of earth: His Kingdom was not of this world. No men are more unlike him than the worldlings. I know necessity is the pretence: But it is the droppe of Covetousness that causeth the thirst which they call Necessity: And therefore the cure is non addere opulus, sed imminuere cupiditatem: The disease must not be fed but healed, Satis est divitiarum non amplius velle. It hath lately been a controversie, whether this be not the golden age? that it is *etas ferrea* we have felt; our demonstrations are undeniable: that it is *etas aurata*, we have sufficient proof: and while gold is the god that rules the most, we will not deny it to be *etas aurea*, in the Poets sense,

*Aurea nunc vere sunt secula: plurimus auro
Vanis honor: auro conciliatur amor.*

This prevalency of things seen, against thing unseen, is the Idolatry of the world; the subversion of nature; the perversion of our faculties and actions; making the soul a drudge to flesh, and God to be used as a servant to the world. It destroyeth Piety, Justice and Charity: It turneth JUS by perversion into VIS; or by reversion into SUI. No wonder then if it be the ruine of societies, when

Gens sine justitiâ, sine remige navis in undâ.

It can possess even Demosthenes with a Squinancy, if there be but an Harpalus to bring him the infection. It can make a Judicature to be as Plutarch called that of Rome, [*ἀσεβῶν χάραξ*] *impiorum regionem*;] contrary to Cicero's description of Sulpitius, who was [*magis justitiæ quam juris consultus, & ad facilitatem*

facilitatem equitatemque omnia contulit; nec maluit litium actiones constituere, quam controversias tollere.] In a word, if you live by *sense* and not by *Faith*, on *things present*, and not on *things unseen*, you go *backward*; you stand on your *heads*, and turn your heels against Heaven; you cause the *beast* to ride the *man*; and by *turning all things upside down*, will turn your selves into confusion.

2. Consider that it is the *unseen things* that are only *Great* and *Necessary*, that are worthy of a man, and answer the excellency of our nature, and the ends of our lives, and all our mercies. All other things are inconsiderable toys, except as they are dignified by their relation to these. Whether a man step into eternity from a Palace or a Prison, a Lordship or a *Lazarus* state, is little to be regarded. All men in the world, whose designs and business take up with any thing short of Heaven, are in the main of *one condition*, and are but in several *degrees* and *forms* in the School of folly. If the intendment of your lives fall short of God, it matters not much what it is you seek, as to any great difference. If *lesser children* play for *pins*, and bigger boyes for *points* and *pence*, and *aged children* for lands and money, for titles of honour, and command, What difference is there between these, in point of wisdom and felicity? but that the little ones have more *innocent* delights, and at a cheaper rate, than the aged have, without the vexatious cares and dangers that attend more grave and serious dotage. As *Holiness to the Lord* is written upon all that is faithfully referred to his *Will* and *Glory*; so *Vanity* and *Sin*, is written upon *all* that is but made *provision for the flesh*, and hath no higher end than *Self*. To go to Hell with *greater stir*, and *attendance*, and *repute*, with greater pomp and pleasure than the poor, is a poor consolation, a pitiful felicity!

3. *Faith* is the *wisdom* of the *soul*: and *unbelief* and *sensuality* are its *blindness*, *folly* and *brutishness*. How *short* is the *knowledge* of the wisest unbelievers? They know not much of what is past; (and less they would know, if *Historians* were not of more credit with them, than the *Word of God*;) But alas, how little do they know of what is to come? *sense* tells them *where* they are, and what they are *now doing*; but it tells them not where they shall be: to morrow. But *Faith* can tell a true Believer,

Believer, what will be when this world is ended, and where he shall live to all eternity, and what he shall be *doing*, what thoughts he shall be thinking, what affections shall be the temper and employment of his soul: what he shall *see*, and *feel*, and *enjoy*; and with what company he shall converse for ever. If the pretenders to Astrological prediction, could but foretel the changes of mens lives, and the time and manner of their deaths, what resort would be to them? and how *wise* would they be esteemed? but what is all this to the infallible predictions of the All-knowing God, that hath given us a prospect into another world, and shewed us what will be for ever, more certainly than you know what a day may bring forth.

So necessary is *fore-knowledge* in the common affairs of men, that without it the actions of the world would be but mad tumultuary confusion: What would you think of that mans understanding, or how would you value the employments of his life, that lookt no further in all his actions, than the present hour, and saw no more than the things in hand? What would you call him that so spends the day, as one that knoweth not there will be any night: and so pass the night, as one that looked not for that day? that knew not in the Spring, there would be an Harvest, or in the Summer, that there would be any Winter: or in Youth, that there would be Age or Death? The silly brutes that have no fore-knowledge, are furnished with an instinct that supplieth the want of it, and also have the help of mans fore-knowledge, or else their kind would be soon extinct. The Bees labour in Summer, as if they foresaw the Winters need. And can that man be wise, that *foreseeth* not his everlasting state? Indeed he that knoweth not what is to come, hath no true knowledge of what is present: For the worth and use of present things, is only in their respect to things eternal: And there is no *means*, where there is no end. What *wisdom* then remains in Unbelievers, when all their *trues* are mis-employed, because they know not the *end* of life? and when all their actions are utterly debased, by the baseness of those brutish ends, to which they serve and are referred. Nothing is truly wise or honourable, that is done for small and worthless things. To draw a curious picture of a shadow,

shadow, or elegantly write the history of a dream, may be an ingenuous kind of foolery; but the *end* will not allow it the name of *Wisdom*: And such are all the actions of the world (though called Heroick, Valiant and Honourable) that aim at transitory trifles, and tend not to the everlasting *end*. A bird can neatly build her nest, but is not therefore counted *Wise*. How contrary is the judgement of the world to Christs? When the same description that he giveth of a *fool*, is it that worldlings give of a wise and happy man, *Luke* 12. 20, 21. [*One that layeth up riches for himself, and is not rich towards God.*] Will you perswade us that the man is *wise*, that can climb a little higher than his neighbours, that he may have the greater fall? That is attended in his way to Hell with greater pomp and state than others? That can sin more Syllogistically and Rhetorically than the vulgar; and more prudently and gravely run into damnation; and can learnedly defend his madness, and prove that he is safe at the brink of Hell? Would you perswade us that he is *wise*, that contradicts the God and Rule of Wisdom, and that parts with Heaven for a few merry hours, and hath not wit to save his soul? When they see the *end*, and are arrived at eternity, let them boast of their Wisdom, as they find cause: We will take them then for more competent Judges. Let the Eternal God be the portion of my soul; let Heaven be my inheritance and hope; let Christ be my Head, and the promise, my security, let *Faith* be my *Wisdom*, and Love be my very heart and will, and patient persevering Obedience be my life; and then I can spare the *wisdom of the world*, because I can spare the trifles that it seeks, and all that they are like to get by it.

What abundance of complaints and calamity would *forefighe* prevent? Had the events of this one year been (conditionally) *foreseen*, the actions of thou sands would have been otherwise ordered, and much sin and shame have been prevented. What a change would it make on the *judgements* of the world? how many words would be otherwise spoken? and how many deeds would be otherwise done? and how many hours would be otherwise spent, if the change that will be made by Judgement and Execution, were well foreseen? And *why is it not foreseen*, when it is *foreshewn*? When the omniscient God, that will certainly perform his Word, hath so plainly

revealed it, and so frequently and loudly warns you of it? Is he wise, that after all these warnings will lie down in everlasting woe, and say, [*I little thought of such a day: I did not believe I should ever have seen so great a change?*]

Would the servants of Christ be used as they are, if the malicious world foresaw the day, when *Christ shall come with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute Judgement on all that are ungodly?* Jude 14, 15. When he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that do believe, 2 Thes. 1. 10. When the Saints shall judge the world, 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. and when the ungodly seeing them on Christs right hand, must hear their sentence on this account [*Verily I say unto you, in as much as you did it (or, did it not) to one of the least of these (my Brethren) you did it unto me.*] Matth. 25. Yet a few daies, and all this will be done before your eyes: but the unbelieving world will not foresee it.

Would malignant *Cain* have slain his brother, if he had foreseen the punishment, which he calleth afterward intolerable, Gen. 4. 13. Would the world have despised the preaching of *Noah*, if they had believed the deluge? Would *Sodom* have been *Sodom*, if they had foreseen that an Hell from Heaven would have consumed them? Would *Achan* have medled with his prey, if he had foreseen the stones that were his Executioners and his Tomb? Would *Gebezi* have obeyed his covetous desire, if he had foreseen the leprosie? Or *Judas* have betrayed Christ, if he had foreseen the hanging himself in his despair? It is *fore-seeing Faith* that saves those that are saved; and *blind unbelief* that causeth mens perdition.

Yea present things as well as future, are unknown to foolish Unbelievers. Do they know who seeth them in their sin? and what many thousands are suffering for the like, while they see no danger? Whatever their tongues say, the hearts and lives of fools deny that there is a God that seeth them, and will be their Judge, Psalm 14. 1. You see then that you must live by Faith, or perish by folly.

4. Consider that things visible are so transitory, and of so short continuance, that they do but deserve the name of things; being nothings, and less than nothing, and lighter than vanity it self, compared to the necessary eternal Being, whose name is

is *I AM*. There is but a few daies difference between a Prince and no Prince; a Lord and no Lord; a man and no man; a world and no world. And if *this be all*, let the time that is past inform you how *small* a difference this is. Rational foresight may teach a *Xerxes* to weep over his numerous Army, as knowing how soon they were all to be dead men. Can you forget that death is ready to undress you? and tell you, that your sport and mirth is done? and that now you have had all that the world can do, for those that serve it, and take it for their part? How quickly can a seaver, or the choice of an hundred Messengers of death, bereave you of all that earth afforded you, and turn your sweetest pleasures into gall, and turn a Lord into a lump of clay? It is but as a wink, an inch of time, till you must quit the stage; and speak, and breath, and see the face of man no more. If you foresee this, O live as men that do foresee it. I never heard of any that stole his winding-sheet, or fought for a Coffin, or went to Law for his grave. And if you did but see (as wise men should) how near your Honours and Wealth, and Pleasures do stand unto Eternity, as well as your Winding sheets, your Coffins, and your Graves, you would then value, and desire, and seek them regularly and moderately, as you do these. Oh what a fading flower is your strength? How soon will all your gallantry shrink into the shell? *Si vestra sunt tollite ea vobiscum. Bern.* But yet this is not the great part of the change. The terminus ad quem doth make it greater: It is great, for persons of renown and honour, to change their Palaces for graves, and turn to noisom rottenness and dirt: and their Power and Command into silent impotency, unable to rebuke the poorest worm, that sawcily feedeth on their hearts or faces. But if you are Believers, you can look further, and foresee much more. The largest and most capacious heart alive, is unable fully to conceive what a change the stroak of death will make.

For the holy soul so suddenly to pass from prayer to Angelical praise, from sorrow unto boundless joyes: from the slanders, and contempt, and violence of men, to the bosom of eternal Love; from the clamours of a tumultuous world, to the universal harmony and perfect uninterrupted Love and Peace; O what a blessed change is this; which believing now, we shall shortly feel.

For an *unboly unrenewed soul*, that yesterday was drowned in flesh, and laught at threatnings, and scorned reproofs, to be suddenly snatcht into another world; and see the *Heaven* that he hath lost; and feel the *Hell* which he would not believe: to fall into the gulf of *bottomless eternity*, and at once to find, that *Joy* and *Hope* are both departed; that *horror* and *grief* must be his company, and *Desperation* hath lockt up the door: O what an amazing change is this! If you think me troublesome for mentioning such ungrateful things, what a trouble wil it be to feel them? May it teach you to prevent that greater trouble, you may well bear this. Find but a medicine against death, or any security for your continuance here, or any prevention of the *Change*, and *I have done*: But that which unavoidably must be seen, should be foreseen.

But the *unseen world* is not thus mutable; *Eternal life* is begun in the *Believer*. The *Church* is built on *Christ the Rock*; and the *gates of Hell* shall not prevail against it. Fix here, and you shall never be removed.

4. Hence followeth another difference: The *mutable creature* doth impart a *disgraceful mutability* to the soul that abuseth it. It disappointeth and deceiveth: And therefore the ungodly are of one mind to day, and another to morrow! In health they are all for *pleasure*, and *commodity*, and *honour*: and at death they cry out on it as *deceitful Vanity*: In health they cannot abide this *strictness*, this *meditating*, and *seeking*, and *preparing* for the life to come; but at death or judgement, they will all be of another mind! Then O that they had been so wise as to know their time: and O that they had lived as *holy* as the best! They are now the bold opposers and reproachers of an holy life: But then they would be glad it had been their own: They would eat their words, and will be down in the mouth, and stand to never a word they say, when *fight*, and *sense*, and *judgement*, shall convince them.

But *things unchangeable* do fix the soul. Piety is no matter for Repentance. Doth the *Believer* speak against sin and sinners: and for an holy, sober, righteous life? He will do so to the last: Death and Judgement shall not change his mind in this, but much confirm it. And therefore he perseveres through sufferings, to death, *Rom. 8. 35, 36, 37.* [For this

cause

cause we faint not: but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day: For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory: While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen: For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal, 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17.

6. Lastly, let this move you to live by a foreseeing Faith, that it is of necessity to your salvation. Believing Heaven, must prepare you for it, before you can enjoy it. Believing Hell, is necessary to prevent it. Mark 16. 16. John 3. 18, 36. [The just shall live by Faith; but if any man draw back (or, be lifted up) the Lord will have no pleasure in him. Heb. 10. 38. Hab. 2. 4. Take heed that there be not in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, to depart from the living God. Heb. 3. 12. And be not of them that draw back to perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Heb. 10. 39. It is God that saith [They shall all be damned that believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.] 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.

May I now in the conclusion more particularly exhort you,
1. That you will live upon things foreseen. 2. That you will promote this life of faith in others, according to your several capacities.

Princes and Nobles live not alwaies: You are not the Rulers of the unmoveable Kingdom; but of a boat that is in an hasty stream, or a ship under sail, that will speed both Pilot and Passengers to the shore. Dixi, estis Dii: at moriemini ut homines. It was not the least or worst of Kings, that said, [I am a stranger upon earth] Psal. 119. 19. Vermis sum, non homo: I am a worm, and no man, Psal. 22. 6. You are the greater worms, and we the little ones: but we must all say with Job, ch. 17. 13, 14. [The grave is our house, and we must make our beds in darkness: Corruption is our Father, and the Worm our Mother and our Sister.] The inexorable Leveller is ready at your backs, to convince you by irresistible argument, that dust you are, and to dust you shall return. Heaven should be as desirable, and Hell as terrible to you as to others. No man will

fear you after death : much less will Christ be afraid to judge you. Luke 19. 27. As the Kingdoms and glory of the world were contemned by him in the hour of his temptation ; so are they *inconsiderable* to procure his approbation. Trust not therefore to *uncertain* riches. Value them but as they will prove at last. As you stand on *higher ground* than others, it is meet that you should see further. The greater are your advantages, the wiser and better you should be : and therefore should better perceive the *difference* between things *temporal* and *eternal*. It is alwaies dark where these glow-worms shine, and a rotten post doth seem a fire.

Your *difficulties* also should excite you ; You must go as through a *Needles eye* to Heaven. To live as in Heaven, in a crowd of business, and stream of temptations, from the confluence of all worldly things, is so hard, that few such come to Heaven. Withdraw your selves therefore to the frequent serious fore-thoughts of eternity, and live by faith.

Had time allowed it, I should have come down to some particular instances : As, 1. Let the *things unseen* be still at hand, to answer every temptation, and shame and repel each motion to sin.

2. Let them be still at hand, to quicken us to duty, when backwardness and coldness doth surprize us. What, shall we do any thing-coldly for eternity ?

3. Let it resolve you what *company to delight in* ; and what society to be of ; even those with whom you must dwell for ever : What *side* soever is uppermost on earth, you may foresee which *side* shall reign for ever.

4. Let the *things invisible* be your *daily solace*, and the *satisfaction* of your souls. Are you slandered by men ? Faith tells you, it is enough that Christ will justify you. O happy day, when he will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and set all strait, which all the false histories, or slanderous tongues or pens in all the world made crooked. Are you frowned on or contemned by men ? Is it not enough that you shall everlastingly be honoured by the Lord ? Are you wronged, oppressed, or trodden on by pride or malice ? Is not Heaven enough to make you reparation ? and eternity long enough for your joyes ? O pray for your malicious enemies, lest they suffer more than you can wish them.

2. Lastly,

2. Lastly, I should have become on the behalf of Christ, a petitioner to you for protection and encouragement to the heirs of the invisible world. For them that *preach*, and them that *live this life of faith*: not for the honours and riches of the world; but for *leave and countenance* to work in the Vineyard, and peaceably travel through the world as strangers, and live in the *Communion of Saints*, as they believe. But, though it be for the beloved of the Lord, the apple of his eye, the people that are sure to prevail and reign with Christ for ever; whose prayers can do more for the greatest Princes, than you can do for them; whose joy is hastened by that which is intended for their sorrow, I shall now lay by any further suit on their behalf.

But for your selves, O use your *seeing* and *fore-seeing* faculties: Be often looking through the prospective of the promise: and live not by sense on present things; but live as if you saw the glorious things which you say you do believe. That when worldly titles are insignificant words, and fleshly pleasures have an end, and Faith and Holiness will be the marks of honour; and *unbelief* and *ungodliness* the badges of perpetual shame, and when you must give account of your Stewardship, and shall be no longer Stewards, you may then be brought by *Faith* unto *Fruition*, and see with joy the glorious things that you now believe. Write upon your Palaces and goods, that sentence, 2 Pet. 3. 11. *Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hastening to the coming of the day of God!*

H E B.



HEBREWS II. I.

Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for ; the evidence of things not seen.

CHAP. I.

For Conviction.

IN the opening of this Text, I have already shewed, that [it is the nature and use of Faith to be instead of presence and sight ; or to make things absent future and unseen, to be to us, as to our Estimation, Resolution and Conversation, as if they were present, and before our eyes : Though not as to the degree, yet as to the sincerity of our acts.

In the handling of this Doctrine, I have already shewed, that this Faith is a grounded justifiable knowledge, and not a fancy, or uneffectual opinion ; having for its object the infallible Revelation, and certain Truth of God ; and not a fallhood, nor a meer probability or *verisimile*. I have shewed how such a Faith will work ; how far it should carry us, if its evidence were fully entertained and improved ; and how far it doth carry all that have it sincerely in the least degree ; and I have shewed some of the moving considerations, that should prevail with us to live upon the things *unseen*, as if they were open to our sight.

I think I may suddenly proceed here to the remaining part of the Application, without any recital of the *explication* or *confirmation*, the truth lying so naked in the Text it self.

The *Life of Faith*, and the *Life of Sense*, are the two waies that

that all the world do walk in, to the two extremely different ends, which appear when death withdraws the veil. It is the ordination of God, that mens own estimation, choice and endeavours, shall be the necessary preparative to their Fruition. *Nemo nolens bonus aut beatus est.* Men shall have no better than they value, and chuse, and seek: Where earthly things are highest in the esteem, and dearest to the mind of man, such persons have no higher, nor more durable a portion. Where the heavenly things are highest and dearest to the soul, and are practically preferred, they are the portion of that soul. Where the Treasure is, the heart will be, Matth. 6. 21. The sanctifying spirit doth lead the spiritual man, by a spiritual Rule, in a spiritual way, to a spiritual, glorious, durable felicity. The sensual part, with the sensual inclination communicated to the corrupted mind and will, doth by carnal reasonings, and by carnal means, pursue and embrace a present, fading, carnal interest: and therefore it findeth and attaineth no more. *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other,* Gal. 5. 17. *They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be: So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his. If we live after the flesh, we shall die: but if by the spirit we mortifie the deeds of the body, we shall live.* Rom. 8. to v. 14. *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap everlasting life,* Gal. 6. 7, 8. As a man is, so he loveth and desireth; as he desireth, he seeketh; and as he seeketh, he findeth and possesseth. If you know which world, what riches a man prefers, intends, and liveth for, you may know which world is his inheritance, and whither he is going as to his perpetual abode.

Reason enableth a man to know and seek more than he seeth: And Faith informeth and advanceth Reason, to know, that by the means of supernatural Revelation, that by no other means

is fully known. To seek and hope for no better than we know, and to know no more than is objectively revealed, (while we hinder not the revelation) is the blameless imperfection of a creature, that hath limited faculties and capacities. To know what's Best, and yet to *chuse*, and seek an inferiour inconsistent Good; and to refuse and neglect the Best, when it is discerned; is the course of such as have but a superficial opinion of the good refused, or a knowledge not wakened to speak so loudly as may be effectual for *choice*; and whose sensuality mastereth their wills and reason, and leads them *backward*: And those that *know not*, because they *would not know*; or *hear not*, because they *would not hear*, are under that same dominion of the flesh, which is an enemy to all knowledge, that is an enemy to *its* delights and interest. To profess to know good, and yet refuse it; and to profess to know evil, and yet to *chuse* it, and this *predominantly*, and *in the main*, is the description of a self-condemning Hypocrite: And if *malignity* and *opposition* of the Truth profess'd, be added to the *Hypocrisie*, it comes up to that Pharisaical blindness and obdurateness, which prepareth men for the *remediless* sin.

Consider then but of the *profession* of many of the people of this Land, and compare their *practice* with it, and judge what compassion the condition of many doth bespeak. If you will believe them, they *profess* that they verily believe in the invisible God; in a Christ unseen to them; in the Holy Spirit, gathering a holy Church to Christ, and imploying them in a communion of Saints: that they believe a judgement to come, upon the glorious coming of the Lord; and an everlasting life of joy or torment thereupon. All this is in their Creed: they would take him for a damnable Heretick that denyeth it; and perhaps would consent that he be burnt at a stake: So that you would think these men should live, as if Heaven and Hell were open to their sight. But O what an *Hypocritical* Generation are the *ungodly*! how their *lives* do give their *tongues* the lye! (Remember that I apply this to no better men.) It is a wonder that such men can *believe themselves*, when they say they *do indeed believe the Gospel*: And shews what a monster the *blind deceitful heart* of an impenitent sinner is: In good sadness can they think that they truly *believe* that God is God,

God, and yet so wilfully disobey him? that Heaven is Heaven, and yet prefer the world before it? that Hell is Hell, and yet will venture upon it for a lust, or a thing of nought? What! believe that there is at hand a life of endless joy! and no more mind it! but hate them that set their hearts upon it! Do they believe, that except a man be converted and new born, he shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? as Christ hath told them, *Matth. 18. 3. John 3. 3, 5.* and yet never trouble their minds about it, to try whether they are converted and new born, or not? Do they believe God, that no man shall see him without holiness? *Heb. 12. 14.* and yet dare they be unholy? and perhaps deride it? Do they believe that Christ will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, *2 Thes. 2. 8, 9.* and yet dare they disobey the Gospel! Do they take God for their absolute Lord and Governour, while they will not so much as meditate on his Laws, but care more what a mortal man saith, or what their flesh and carnal reason saith, than what he saith to them in his holy Word? Do they take Christ for their Saviour, and yet would not be saved by him from their sins, but had rather keep them? Do they take the Holy Ghost for their Sanctifier, while they will not have a sanctified heart or life, and love it not in those that have it? Do they take Heaven for their endless home and happiness? while they neither mind nor seek it, in comparison of the world? And do they take the world for vanity and vexation, while they mind and seek it more than Heaven? Do they believe the communion of Saints, while they fly from it, and perhaps detest and persecute it? Is light and darkness more contrary than their words and deeds? And is not **HYPOCRISIE** as visible in their practice, as Christianity in their profession? It is the complexion of their Religion. **HYPOCRITE** is legibly written in the forehead of it. They proclaim their shame to all that they converse with. When they have said, they believe the life to come, they tell men by your ungodly worldly lives, that they are dissemblers. When their tongue hath loudly said, that they are Christians, their tongue and

hand more loudly say, that they are *Hypocrites*. And when they profess their *Faith* but *now and then*, in a lifeless outside piece of worship, they profess their *Hypocrisie* *all the day long*: in their impious neglect of God and their salvation; in their carnal speeches; in their worldly lives, and in their enmity to the practice of the same Religion which they profess. Their *Hypocrisie* is a web, so thin, and so transparent, that it leaves their nakedness open to their shame. They have not *Profession enough* to make a considerable cover for their *unbelief*. They hide but their tongues: the rest even, heart and all, is bare.

O the stupendous power of *self-love*! the wonderful blindness and stupidity of the ungodly! the dreadfulnes of the judgement of God in thus deserting the wilful resisters of his grace! That ever men (in other things of seeming wisdom) should be such strangers to themselves, and so deceived by themselves, as to think they *love* the thing they *bate*! and to think that their hearts are set upon Heaven, when they neither love it; nor the way that leadeth to it; but are principally bent another way: that when they are strangers or enemies to a holy life, they can yet make themselves believe, that they are holy; and that they *seek* that *first*, which they *never seek*; and make that the *drift and business* of their lives, which was never the *serious business* of an *hour*! O Hypocrites! ask any impartial man of reason, that sees your lives, and hears your prayers, whether you *pray*, and *live*, like men that believe that Heaven or Hell must be their reward! Ask your families, whether they perceive by your constant prayer, and diligent endeavours, and holy conversations, that your hearts are set on a life to come! It was a cutting answer of a late Apostate, to one that told him of the unreasonableness of Infidels that denied the life to come; saith he, *There's none in the world so unreasonable as you Christians, that believe that there is an endless life of joy or misery to come, and do no more to obtain the one, and escape the other. Did I believe such a life as this, I would think all too little that I could do or suffer, to make it sure. Who sees the certainty, greatness, and eternity of the Crown of Life, in the resolvedness, fervency, and constancy of your holy labour! You take up with the picture of Sermons and Prayers,*

and

and with the *name* of Christianity and holy obedience: A little more Religion you will admit, than a Parrot may learn, or a Poppet may exercise. Compare your care, and labour, and cost, for Heaven, and for this world. That you *believe* the flattering deceitful world, we *see* by your daily sollicitousness about it: You *seek* it; you *strive* for it; you *fall out* with all that stand in your way; you are at it daily, and have never done: But who can *see*, that you seriously believe another world? you talk idly, and wantonly, and proudly by the *hours*; but you talk of Heaven and holiness but by the *minutes*: You do not turn the glass when you go to your unnecessary recreations, or your vain discourse; or at least, you can stay when the glass is run: But in hearing the most necessary truths of God, or in praying for everlasting life, the hour seems long to you; and the tedious Preacher is your weariness and molestation. You do not feast and play by the glass; but if we do not preach and pray by it *exactly*, but exceed our hour, though in speaking of, and for eternity, we are your burden, and put your languid patience to it, as if we were doing you some intollerable wrong.

In worldly matters, you are weary of *giving*, but seldom of *receiving*: you grudge at the *asker*, but seldom at the *giver*. But if the gift be *spiritual* and *heavenly*, you are awearry to *hear talk* of it, and expostulate the case with him that offereth it: and he must shew by what authority he would do you good: If by serious holy conference he would further your preparations for the life to come, or help you to make sure of life eternal, he is examined what power he hath to meddle with you, and promote your salvation: And perhaps he is snappishly told, he is a busie, sawcy fellow, and you bid him meddle with his own matters, and let you speed as you can, and keep his compassion and charity for himself; you give him no thanks for his undesired help. The most laborious faithful *servant* you like best, that will do you the *most work*, with *greatest skill*, and care, and diligence: But the most laborious faithful instructor and watchman for your souls, you most ungratefully vilifie, as if he were more busie and precise than needs, and were upon some unprofitable work; and you love a superficial hypocritical Ministry, that

teacheth you but to complement with Heaven, and leads you such a dance of comical, outside, hypocritical worship, as is agreeable to your own hypocrisy: And thus when you are mocking God, you think you worship him, and merit Heaven by the abuse. Should a Minister or other friend be but half as earnest with you, for the life of your immortal souls, as you are your selves for your estates, or friends, or lives in any danger, you would take them for Fanaticks, and perhaps do by them as his carnal friends did once by Christ, *Mark 3. 21.* that went out to lay hold on him, and said, *He is beside himself.*] For trifles you account it wisdom to be serious: but for everlasting things, you account it folly, or to be more busie and solicitous than needs. You can believe an act of pardon and indemnity from man; when as you are little solicitous about a pardon from God, to whose Justice you have forfeited your souls: and if a man be but earnest in begging his pardon, and praying to be saved from everlasting misery, you scorn him, because he does it without book, and say, he *whines*, or speaks through the nose; forgetting that we shall have you one of these daies, as earnest in vain, as they are that shall prevail for their salvation; and that the terrible approach of death and judgement, shall teach you also to pray without book, and cry, *Lord, Lord, open to us, when the door is shut, and it's all too late, Mat. 25. 11.*

O Sirs, had you but a *lively, serious foreseeing faith*; that openeth Heaven and Hell as to your sight, what a cure would it work of this Hypocrisy!

1. Such a sight would quicken you from your *sloth*, and put more *life* into your thoughts, and words, and all that you attempt for God.
2. Such a sight would soon abate your *pride*, and humble you before the Lord, and make you see how short you are of what you should be.
3. Such a sight would dull the edge of your *covetous desires*, and shew you that you have greater things to mind, and another kind of world than this to seek.
4. Such a sight would make you esteem the temptations of *mens reports*, but as the shaking of a leaf, and their *assurances* and threats as impertinent speeches, that would cast a feather

or a fly into the ballance against a mountain, or against the world.

5. Such a fight would allay the itch of *lust*, and quench the drunkards insatiable *thirst*, and turn your *gulosity* into moderation and abstinence; and acquaint you with a *higher* sort of pleasures, that are durable, and worthy of a man.

6. Such a fight would cure your desire of *pastime*, and shew you that you have *no time to spare*, when all is done that necessity and everlasting things require.

7. Such a fight would change your relish of Gods Ordinances, and esteem of Ministers, and teach you to love and favour that which is spiritual and *serious*, rather than *hypocritical strains and shews*: It would teach you better how to judge of Sermons and of Prayers, than unexperienced minds will ever do.

8. Such a fight would cure your malignity against the waies, and diligent servants of the Lord; and instead of opposing them, it would make you glad to be among them, and fast, and pray, and watch, and rejoyce with them, and better to understand what it is to *believe the communion of Saints*.

In a word, did you but see *what God reveals*, and *Saints believe*, and *must be seen*, I would scarce thank you to be all as serious and solicitous for your souls, as the holiest man alive; and presently to repent and lament the folly of your negligence and delays, and to live as men that know no other work to mind, in comparison of that which extendeth to eternity. I would scarce thank the proudest of you all, to lie down in the dust, and in sackcloth and ashes, with tears and cries, to beg the pardon of those sins, which before you felt no weight in. Nor the most sensual wretch, that now sticks so close to his ambition, covetousness and lust, that he saith, he *cannot* leave them, to spit them out as loathsome bitterness, and be ashamed of them as fruitless things. You would then say to the most godly, that now seem too precise, [O why do you not make more haste, and lay hold on Heaven with greater violence! why do you pray with no more fervency, and bear witness against the sins of the world with no more undaunted courage and resolution; and why do you not

not more freely lay out your time, and strength, and wealth, and all that you have on the work of God? Is Heaven worth no more ado than this? Can you do no more for an endless life, and the escaping of the wrath to come? Shall worldlings over-do you?] These would be your thoughts on such a sight.

CHAP. II.

Use of Exhortation.

WHAT now remains but that you come into the light and beg of God, as the Prophet for his servant, 2 King 6. 17. to open your eyes, that you may see the things that would do so much [That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of revelation, in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints, Ephes. 1. 17, 18.] O set those things continually before your eyes, that must forever be before them! Look seriously into the infallible word; and whatsoever that fore-tells, believe it as if it were come to pass. The unbelief of Gods threatnings, and penal Laws, is the perdition of souls, as well as the unbelief of Promises. God giveth not false fire, when he dischargeth the Canons of his terrible comminations: If you fall not down, you shall find that the lightening is attended with the thunder, and execution will be done before you are aware. If there were any doubt of the things unseen, yet you know it is past all doubt, that there's nothing else that's durable and worthy of your estimation and regard: You must be Knights and Gentlemen but a little while: speak but a few words more, and you'll have spoke your last. When you have slept a few nights more, you must sleep till the Resurrection awake you (as to the flesh.) Then where are your pleasant habitations and contents? your honours and attendance? Is a day that is spent, or a life that is spent, any thing, or nothing? Is there any sweetness in a feast that was eaten, or drink that was drunk, or time that

was spent in sports and mirth, a year ago? Certainly a known vanity should not be preferred before a probable endless joy: But when we have certainty as well as excellency and eternity, to set against certain, transitory vanity, what room is left for further deliberation? whether we should prefer the Sun before a squib, or a flash of lightening that suddenly leaves us in the dark, one would think should be an easie question to resolve.

(Up then, and work while it is day: and let us run and strive with all our might. Heaven is at hand as sure as if you saw it. You are certain you can be no losers by the choice. You part with nothing, for all things: you escape the tearing of your heart, by submitting to the scratching of a bryer: You that will bear the opening of a vein, for the cure of a Fever, and will not forbear a necessary Journey for the barking of a Dog, or the blowing of the wind: O leap not into Hell to scape the stinking breath of a scorner! Part not with God, with Conscience, and with Heaven, to save your purses or your flesh. Chuse not a merry way to misery, before a prudent sober preparation for a perfect everlasting joy. You would not prefer a merry cup before a Kingdom. You would let go a lesser delight or commodity for a greater here: Thus a greater sin can forbid the exercise of a less: And shall not endless joy weigh down a brutish lust or pleasure?

If you love pleasure, take that which is true, and full, and durable. For all that he calleth you to Repentance and Mortification, and necessary strictness, there is none that's more for your pleasure and delight than God: or else he would not offer you the rivers of pleasure that are at his right hand; nor himself to be your perpetual delight. If you come into a room where are variety of pictures, and one is gravely reading or meditating; and another with a cup or harlot in his hand, is profusely laughing, with a gaping grining mouth; would you take the latter or the former to be the picture of a wife and happy man? Do you approve of the state of those in Heaven? and do you like the way that brought them thither? If not, why speak you of them so honourably? and why would you keep holy-daies in remembrance of them? If you do; examine the sacred records, and see whether the Apostles and
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others that are now honoured as glorified Saints, did live as you do, or rather as those that you think are too precise? Did they spend the day in feasting and sports, and idle talk? Did they swagger it out in pride and wealth, & hate their brethren that were not in all things of their conceits? Did they come to Heaven by a worldly, formal, hypocritical, ceremonious Religion? or by faith, and love, and self-denial, and unweari'd labouring for their own and other mens salvation, while they became the wonder and the scorn of the ungodly, and as the off-scouring and refuse of the world? Do you like holiness, when it is far from you? in a dead man, that never troubled you with his presence or reproofs, or in a Saint in Heaven, that comes not near you? Why then do you not like it for your selves? If it be good, the nearer the better. Your own health, and your own wealth, do comfort you more than another mans: And so would your own holiness, if you had it. If you would speed as they that are now beholding the face of God, believe, and live, and wait, as they did. And as the righteous God did not forget their work and labour of love for his Name; so he will remember you with the same reward, if you shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; and be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the Promises, Heb. 6. 10, 11, 12.

O did you but see what they now enjoy, and what they see, and what they are, and what they do; you would never sure scorn or persecute a Saint more? If you believe, you see, though not as they, with open face. If you believe not, yet it is not your unbelief, that shall make Gods Word of none effect, Rom. 3. 3. God will be God if you be Atheists. Christ will be Christ if you be Infidels. Heaven will be Heaven if you by despising it go to Hell. Judgement sleepeth not when you sleep: 'Tis coming as fast when you laugh at it, or question it, as if your eyes were open to foresee it. If you would not believe that you must die, do you think that this would delay your death one year or hour? If ten or twenty years time more be allotted you, it passeth as swiftly, and death and judgement come as surely, if you spend it in voluptuousness, and unbelief, as if you watcht and waited for your change.

We preach not to you *Ifs* and *Ands*: It is not, perhaps there is a *Heaven and Hell*: But as sure as you are here, and must anon go hence, you must as shortly quit this world, and take up your abode in the world that's now to us invisible. And no tongue can express how sensible you will then be of the things that you will not now be made sensible of. O then with what a dreadful view will you look *before you and behind you*! *Behind you*, upon *Time*, and say, *It is gone, and never will return*: and hear conscience ask you, *How you spent it, and what you did with it*? *Before you* upon *Eternity*, and say, *It is come*; and to the ungodly will be an *Eternity of woe*. What a peal will conscience then ring in the unbelievers ears? [Now the day is come that I was forewarned of! the day and change which I would not believe! whither must I now go! what must I now do! what shall I say before the Lord for all the sin that I have wilfully committed! for all the time of mercy which I lost! How shall I answer my contempt of Christ! my neglect of means, and enmity to a holy serious life! What a distracted wretch was I, to condemn and dislike them that spent their lives, in preparation for this day! when now I would give a thousand worlds, to be but one of the meanest of them! O that the Church doors, and the door of grace, were open to me now, as once they were, when I refused to enter. Many a time did I hear of this day, and would not believe, or soberly consider of it. Many a time was I intreated to prepare: and I thought an hypocritical trifling shew, would have been taken for a sufficient preparation! Now who must be my companions! How long must I dwell with woe and horror! God by his Ministers was wont to call to me, *How long, O scorner, wilt thou delight in scorning? How long wilt thou go on impudently in thy folly? And now I must cry out, How long! How long must I feel the wrath of the Almighty! the unquenchable fire! the immortal worm! Alas, for ever!* When shall I receive one moments ease? when shall I see one glimpse of hope? O never, never, never! Now I perceive what Satan meant in his temptations! what sin intended! what God meant in the threatenings of his Law! what grace was good for! what Christ was sent for! and what was the design and meaning of the Gospel! and how I should have

valued the offers and promises of life ! Now I understand what Ministers meant to be so importunate with me for my conversion ; and what was the cause that they would even have kneeled to me, to have procured my return to God in time. Now I understand that holiness was not a needless thing ; that Christ and Grace deserved better entertainment than contempt ; that precious time was worth more than to be wasted idly ; that an immortal soul, and life eternal should have been more regarded, and not cast away for so short, so base a fleshly pleasure. Now all these things are plain and open to my understanding : But alas, it's now too late ! I know that now to my woe and torment, which I might have known in time to my recovery and joy.

For the Lords sake, and for your souls sake, open your eyes, and *foresee* the things that are even at hand, and prevent these fruitless lamentations. Judge but as you will *all shortly judge*, and live but as you *will wish that you had lived*, and I desire no more. Be serious as if you saw the things that you say you do believe.

I know this serious discourse of another life, is usually ungrateful, to men that are conscious of their strangeness to it, and taking up their portion here, are loth to be tormented before the time. This is not the smoothing pleasing way. But remember that *we have flesh* as well as you, which longs not to be accounted troublesome or precise : which loves not to displease or be displeas'd : And had we no higher light and life, we should talk as men that saw and felt no more than sight and flesh can reach : But when *we are preaching and dying*, and *you are hearing and dying*, and *we believe and know*, that you are *now going to see* the things we speak of, and death will straightway draw aside the veil, and shew you the great amazing sight, it's time for *us to speak*, and *you to bear*, with all our hearts. It's time for us to be *serious*, when we are so near the place where *all are serious*. There are none that are in jest in Heaven or Hell : pardon us therefore if we jest not at the door, and in the *way* to such a serious state. All that *see and feel* are serious : and therefore all that *truly believe*, must be so too. Were your eyes all opened this hour to see what *we believe*, we appeal to your own consciences, whether

it would not make you more serious than we.

Marvel not if you see Believers make another matter of their salvation, than those that have hired their understandings in service to their sense; and think the world is no bigger or better than their globe or map; and reacheth no further than they can know. As long as we see you serious about Lands and Lordships, and titles and honours, the rattles and tarrying Irons of the cheating world, you must give us leave (whether you will or no) to be serious about the life eternal. They that scramble so eagerly for the bonds of worldly riches, and devour so greedily the dross of sensual delights, methinks should blush (if such animals had the blushing property) to blame or deride us for being a little (alas, too little) earnest in the matters of God and our salvation. Can you not pardon us if we *love God a little more* than you love your lusts; and if we *run as fast* for the Crown of Life, as you run after a feather or a fly? or if we breath as hard after Christ in holy desires, as you do in blowing the bubble of vain-glory? If a thousand pound a year in passage to a grave, and the chains of darkness, be worth your labour; give us leave to believe that mercy in order to everlasting mercy, grace in order to glory, and glory as the end of grace, is worth our labour, and infinitely more.

Your *end* is narrow, though your *way* be broad: and our *end* is broad, though our *way* be narrow. You build as Miners in Cole-pits do, by digging *downwards* into the dark; and yet you are *laborious*: Though we begin on earth, we build towards Heaven, where an attractive loadstone draws up the workmen and the work; and shall we loiter under so great encouragements? Have you considered that *Faith* is the *beholding grace*? the evidence of things not *seen*? and yet have you the hearts to blame Believers, for doing all that they can do, in a case of such unspeakable everlasting consequence. If we are Believers, Heaven and Hell are as it were open to our sight? And would you wish us to trifle in the sight of Heaven? or to leap into Hell, when we see it as before us? what name can express the inhumane cruelty of such a wish or motion? or the unchristian folly of those that will obey you?

O give us leave to be *serious* for a Kingdom which by *Faith* we see! Blame us for this, and blame us that we are not beside our selves. Pardon us that we are *awake*, when the thunder of *Jehovah's* voice doth call to us, denouncing everlasting wrath to all that are sensual and ungodly. Were we asleep, as you are, we would lie still and take no heed what God or man said to us.

Pardon us that we are Christians, and believe these things, seeing you profess the same your selves. Disclaim not the *practice* till you dare disclaim the *profession*. If we were Infidels, we would do as the ungodly world: we would pursue our present pleasures and commodity, and say, that things above us are nothing to us; and would take Religion to be the Troubler of the world: But till we are Infidels or Atheists at the heart, we cannot do so.

Forgive us *that we are men*; if you take it to be pardonable. Were we bruits, we would eat, and drink, and play, and never trouble our selves or others, with the care of our salvation, or the fears of any death but one; or with resisting sensual inclinations, and meditating on the life to come; but would take our ease and pleasure while we may.

At least forgive us that we are *not blocks or stones*; that we have *life and feeling*. Were we insensate clods, we would not see the light of Heaven, nor hear the roaring of the Lion, nor fear the threats of God himself: we would not complain, or sigh, or groan, because we feel not.

If therefore we may have leave to be *awake*, and to be *in our wits*, to be *Christians*; to be *men*; to be creatures that have *life and sense*, forgive us that we believe the living God; that we cannot laugh at Heaven and Hell, nor jest at the threatned wrath of the Almighty. If these things must make us the object of the worlds reproach and malice, let me rather be a reproached *man*, than an honoured beast; and a *bated Christian*, than a *belov'd Infidel*; and rather let me live in the midst of *malice* and contempt, than pass through honour unto shame, through mirth to misery, and a *sensless*; to a *feeling death*. Hate us when we are in Heaven, and see who will be the sufferer by it. If ever we should begin to nod and relapse towards your hypocritical formality, and senseless indifferency,

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our lively fight of the world invisible, by a serious faith, would presently awake us, and force us confidently to conclude, *AUT SANCTUS AUT BRUTUS* : There is practically and predominantly no Mean. He'll prove a *BRUIT* that is not a *SAINTE*.

CHAP. III.

HAVING done with this general conviction and exhortation to unbelieving Hypocrites, I proceed to acquaint Believers with their Duty, in several particulars.

1. *Worship God as Believers; serve him with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire, Heb. 12. 28, 29.* A seeing faith, if well excited, would kindle love, desire, fear, and all praying graces. No man prays well, that doth not well know what he prays for. When it comes to seeing, all men can cry loud, and pray when praying will do no good. They will not then speak sleepily, or by rote, *Fides intuendo, amorem recipit, amorem suscitatur: Cor flagrans amore desideria, gemitus, orationes spirat.* Faith is the burning-glass which beholding God, receiveth the beams of his communicated love, and inflameth the heart with love to him again; which mounteth up by groans and prayers, till it reach its original, and love for ever rest in love.

2. *Desire and use the creature as Believers.* Interpret all things as they receive their meaning, from the things unseen: understand them in no other sense. It's only God and the life to come that can tell you what's good or bad for you in the world. And therefore the ungodly that cannot go to Heaven for counsel, are carryed about by meer deceits. Take heed what you love: and take heed of that you love. God is very jealous of our love: He sheds abroad his own love in our hearts, that our hearts may be fruitful in love to him, which is his chief delight. By love he commandeth love; that we may suitably move toward him, and center in him. He communicateth so much for the procuring of a little, that we should endeavour to give him all that little, and shed none of it inordinately upon the creature by the way. Nothing is great, or greatly.

greatly to be admired, while the great God is in sight. And it is unsuitable for *little things*, to have *great affections*; and for low matters to have a high esteem. It is the corruption and folly of the mind, and the delusion of the affections to exalt a Shrub above a Cedar, and magnifie a Mole-hill above a Mountain; to embrace a shadow or *spectrum* of felicity, which vanisheth into *Nothing*, when you bring in the light. The creature is *nihil & nullipotens*: *Nothing* should have no interest in us, and be able to do *Nothing* with us (as to the motions that are under the dominion of the will.) God is *All* and *Allmighty*: And he that is *All*, should have *All*, and command *All*: And the *Omnipotent* should do *All things* with us, by his *Interest* in *Morals*; as he *will do* by his *force* in *Naturals*. I deny not but we may *love a friend*: One soul in two bodies will have one mind, and will, and love. But as it is not the body of my *friend*, that I love or converse with principally, but the soul; (and therefore should have no mind of the case, the corps, the empty nest, if the bird were flown) so is it not the person, but Christ in him, or that of God which appeareth on him, that must be the principal object of our love. The man is *mutable*, and must be loved, as *Plato* did commend his friend to *Dionysius*: *Hæc tibi scribo de homine, viz. animante naturâ mutabili*: and therefore must be loved with a reserve. But God is unchangeable, and must be absolutely and unchangeably loved. That life is best that's likest Heaven: There God will be All; and yet even there, it will be no *god* honour or displeasure to the Deity, that the glorified humanity of *Christ*, and the *New Jerusalem*, and our holy society, are loved more dearly than we can love any creature here on earth: So here, God taketh not that affection as stoln from *him*, that's given to his servants for *his sake*, but accepts it as sent to *him* by *them*. Let the creature have it, so God have it finally in and by the creature; and then it is not so properly the creature that hath it, as God. If you *chuse*, and *love* your friends for God, you will *use* them for God: not flattering them, or desiring to be flattered by them; but to kindle in each other the holy flame which will aspire and mount, and know no bounds, till it reach the boundless element of love. You will not value them as friends, *qui omnia dicta & facta vestra laudant*,

laudant, sed qui errata & delicta amice reprehendunt : Not them that call you good ; but them that would make you better. And you will let them know, as Phocian did Antipater, that they can never use you, & amicus & adulatoribus ; as friends and flatterers ; that differ as a wife and a barlot.

It's hard to love the imperfect creature, without mistakes, and inordinacy in our love : And therefore usually where we love most, we sin most ; and our sin finds us out ; and then we suffer most : and too much affection is the forerunner of much affliction ; which will be much prevented, if Faith might be the guide of Love, and Humane Love might be made Divine ; and all to be referred to the things unseen, and animated by them. Love where you can never love too much ; where you are sure to have no disappointments ; where there is no unkindness to eclipse or interrupt ; where the only error is, that God hath not all ; and the only grief, that we love no more.

Especially in the midst of your enticing pleasures, or enticing employments and profits in the world, foresee the end ; do all in Faith, which telleth you, [*The time is short ; it remaineth therefore, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as though they used it not (or not abusing it :) for the fashion of this world passeth away,* 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30.

3. *Impley your time as becomes Believers.* Faith only can acquaint you, what an unconceivable weight doth lye upon this inch of hasty time. As you behave your selves for a few daies, it must go with you in joy or misery for ever : You have your appointed time, for your appointed work. God hath turned the glass upon you ; much of it is run out already. No price can call back one hour that you have lost. No power or policy can retard its course ; *Sic fugiunt freno non remor ante dies.* When it comes to the last sand, and time is gone, you'l know the worth of it : You'l then confess it should have seemed more precious in your eyes, than to have been cast away upon things of nought. O precious time ! more worth than all the riches of the world ! How highly is

it valued by all at *last*? And how basely is it esteemed *now* by the most? Now it is no more worth with them, than to be sold for unnecessary sports, and ease, and wasted in idleness and vain delights: But *then*, when it's gone, and all's too late, how loud would they cry, if cries could call back *Time* again! O then what a mercy would it seem, if God would try them once again! and trust them but with another life, or with *Hezekiah's* fifteen years! or but with fifteen daies, or hours, upon such terms of grace, as they held that life which they abused! It amazeth me to observe the lamentable stupidity of the world, how hard they beg for time when they think it is near an end! and how carelessly they let it slide away, when they have strength and faculties to improve it! They are grievously afraid lest death deprive them of it; and yet they are not afraid to deprive themselves of the use and fruit of it, and to cast it away as contemptuously, as if it were an useless thing. I seldom come near a dying man, but I hear him complain of the loss of *Time*, and wish it were to spend again, that it might be better valued and used. And yet the *living* will not be warned. O value *Time*, as wise men, while you have it; and not as miserable fools, when it is gone! If our Lord said, *I must do the work of him that sent me while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work*, Joh. 9.4. What need then have such as we to be doing, and make much of time? O let not company, mirth or business, make you forget the work of *Time*! Can you play, or loiter away your hours, with Eternity in your eye? Get the Sun to stand still, and *Time* to make a truce with you, and to waste no more of the oyl of life, before you lose another hour.

O what heads, what hearts have all those men, that standing against the verge of an endless world, can think they have any time to spare! Hath God given you too much? If not, why do you lose it? If he hath, why are you loth that he should shorten it? You would not throw away your gold, as contemptuously as you do your time; when an hours time is more valuable than gold. Frown on that company that would rob you of half an hours time. Tell them you have something else to do, than to feast, or play, or talk away your time unnecessarily. O tell them you were not made for nothing.

nothing. You are in a race, and must not stand still : You are in a fight, and must not cease. Your work is great ; much of it is undone. Your enemies are not idle : Death will not stop : the Judge is coming, and still beholds you : and Heaven or Hell are ready to receive our ending life, and tell us how we spent our time : And can you find time to spare ? You are not made as Weather-cocks, to stand up on high for men to look at, and by turning about with every wind, to shew them which way it standeth. Turn not your lives into that curse, *Levit.* 26. 20. [*You shall spend your strength in vain.*] Believe it, Time must be reviewed. The day is near, when every man of you had rather find it in your accounts, [so many hours spent in self-examination, and holy meditation ; so many in reading the Word of God ; so many spent in fervent prayer ; and so many in doing good to others] than [so many spent in needless sports and pleasures ; so many in idleness and vain discourses ; and so many in the less necessary matters of the world.] Ask those that tempt you to mis-spend your time, whether at death and Judgement they had rather themselves have a life of holy diligence to review, or a life consumed in vanity, and transitory delights.

You will not suffer impertinencies to interrupt your counsels, and serious business in the world : You'll tell intruders, that you are busie, and cannot have while to attend them. And are you going into Heaven or Hell, and have but a few daies time of preparation (God knows how few) and yet can you have while to pass this precious time in vain ? O what would you not give ere long for one of the hours that you now mis-spend ? When the oath is performed, *Rev.* 10. 6. [*That Time shall be no longer.*] Wonderful ! that men can find Time for any thing, save that for which they had their time ? *Non tam bene vivant, sed quamdiu considerant* (inquit *Seneca*) *cum omnibus possit contingere ut bene vivant ; ut diu nulli.*] To live well is both possible and necessary, and yet is disregarded ; To live long, is neither possible, nor necessary ; and yet is sought by almost all. *Incipiunt vivere cum desinendum est : immo quidam ante deserunt vivere, quam inciperent.* *Sen.* It's unreasonable we should begin to live, when we should make an end : but it's most unhappy to have made an end, before they do

begin: *Pulchrum est (inquit idem) consummare vitam ante mortem; & expectare secure reliquam temporis partem.*] Do the great work, and then you may comfortably spend the rest in waiting for the conclusion. Yet you have time, and leave, and helps: you may read, and meditate, and pray, if you will: but shortly Time will be no more. O let not Satan insult over your carcases and tormented souls, and say, [Now it is too late! Now murmur and repent as long as you will! Now pray, and cry, and spare not!] O use that Faith which beholdeth the invisible world, and maketh future things as present, and then delay and loiter if you can: Then waste your hours in idleness or vanity if you dare! either light or fire shall awake you.

4. *Suffer as Believers.* Fear not the wrath of man; but *indure as seeing him that is invisible*, Heb. 11. 27. shew plainly, that you seek a better Country, *vers.* 14, 16. Read often, *Heb.* 11, and 12 *chapters*, Behold the Kingdom prepared and secured for you by Christ, and then you will be indifferent which way the wind of humane favour or applause shall sit; or what weather Lunatick influences and aspects shall produce. Such a Faith will make you with *Abraham*, to turn your back on all, and engage in Pilgrimage for an inheritance after to be received; though he *knew not whither he went*, (with a distinct particular knowledge) *Heb.* 11. 8. As strangers and travellers, you will not be troubled to leave towns and fields; buildings and wealth, and walks behind you; as knowing that you were but to pass by them, desiring and seeking a better, *that is, an heavenly*: And you shall lose nothing by this passing by all in the world: *For God will not be ashamed to be called your God; and he hath prepared for you a City*, Heb. 11. 13, 16. Seriously respect the recompence of reward, and it will make you chuse 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 the world, v. 25, 26. Stephen's sight would cause Stephen's patience. Hold on as Christians; the end is near: *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking to 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: Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your minds, Heb. 12. 2, 3.

You may well endure the buffeting, and scorn, if you foresee the honour. You may well endure the Crown of Thorns, if you foresee the Crown of Glory: You may endure to be forsaken of all, if you see him that will never fail you, nor forsake you: This foretaste of the Rivers of pleasure with the Lord, will drown the taste of the Vinegar and Gall. Whine not like worldlings that have lost their portion, when you are stript as bare as Job. If you are true Believers, you have All still, for God is All: You have lost Nothing; for Faith hath made the world as Nothing to you: And will you whine and vex your self for Nothing? Can you call it Nothing so frequently and easily in your prayers, and ordinary speech; and do you now recall this; or tell us by your serious grief, that you speak but in hypocrisie and jeast. [*Frangitur nimo molestia adversorum, qui non capitur delectatione prosperorum. August.* Had there been less Idolatrous Love, there would have been less tormenting grief and care. Our life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that we possess. He is not happy that hath them; but he that neither needeth nor desireth them. [*Cum in his que homines eripiunt, optant, custodiunt, nihil inveneris, non dico quod malis, sed quod velis. Sen.*] Superfluity doth but burden and break down: The Corn that's too rank lodgeth; and the branches break that are overladen with fruit. [*Omnia que superfluunt nocent: segetem nimia sternit ubertas: rami onere franguntur ad maturitatem non pervenit secunditas: Idem quoque animis evenit, quos immoderata prosperitas rumpit; quia non tantum in aliorum injuriam, sed etiam in suam utuntur. Sen.*] It's pleasure, and not pain, that is the worlds most deadly sting: It hath never so much hurt us, as when it hath flattered us into delights or hopes. [*Et fera & piscis spe aliqua oblectante decipitur. Sen.*] Hope is the bait; prosperity and pleasure the net, that souls are ordinarily ensnared by. Men lose not their souls for poverty, but for riches; nor for dishonour, but for honour; nor for sorrow, but for delights.

[*Luxuriant animi rebus plerumque secundis.*]

The luxuriances of prosperity, bring us so frequently under the pruning hook. The surfeits and summer fruits of fulness and carnal contentments and delights, do put us to the trouble of our sicknesses and our Physick. [*How hardly shall rich men enter into Heaven?*] saith he that well knew who should enter. Saith *Augustine* [*Difficile, immo impossibile est, ut presentibus & futuris quis fruatur bonis: ut hic ventrem, & ibi mentem impleat; ut à deliciis ad deliciis transeat; & in utroque seculo primus sit; ut in terrâ & in cælo appareat gloriosus?*] The hope is, that [*with God such humane impossibilities are possible*] But it's more terrible, than desirable to be put upon so great a difficulty. Sweet dishes will have wasps and flies; but most of them are drowned in their delights. Saith *Bætius* of Prosperity and Adversity; *Illâ fallit, hæc instruit: illa mendacium specie bonorum mentes fruentium ligat: hæc cogitatione fragilis felicitatis absoluit: Itaque illam videas ventrosam fluentem, sui que semper ignaram: hæc sobriam, succinctamque ac ipsius adversitatis exercitatione prudentem.* A full meal seems best in the eating; but a light meal is better the next day. More thank God in Heaven for adversity, than for prosperity: And more in Hell cry out of the fruit of prosperity, than of adversity. Many did never look towards Heaven, till affliction cast them on their backs, so that they could look no other way. [*It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes*] saith David, *Psal.* 119. 71. [*Before I was afflicted, I went astray.*] v. 67. [*In very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me*] v. 75. One sight of Heaven by faith will force you to reckon that the sufferings of this present time are unworthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us] *Rom.* 8. 18. To suffer for Christ and righteousness sake, is but to turn an unavoidable fruitless pain, into that which being voluntary, is the more easie, and hath a great reward in Heaven, *Matth.* 5. 11, 12. And to part with that for a Crown of Life, which else we must part with for nothing. Worldly friends, and wealth, and honour, are summer fruit, that will quickly fall. Hungry fowl know where it's harvest [*At simul intonuit fugiunt: Those that must dwell with you in Heaven, are your sure and steadfast friends* [*Cætera fortuna, &c.*] Those that are now highest, and least acquainted with the tongue

of malice, the unfaithfulness of friends, or rage of enemies, shall shortly say,

[*Atque hæc exemplis quondam cælestia priorum :
Nunc mihi sunt propriis, cognita vera malis.*]

There is but the difference of an *Est* and an *Erit*, between their mirth and endless sorrows: Their honour, and their endless shame; nor between our sorrow and our endless joy. Their final honour is to be *embalmed*, and their dust to be covered with a sumptuous monument, and their names extolled by the mouths of men, that little know how poor a comfort all this is to the miserable soul. In the height of their honour you may foresee the Chyrurgion opening their bowels, and shewing the receptacles of the treasure of the Epicure, and what remains of the price that he received for his betrayed soul. He cuts out the heart with a [*Hæ fedes livoris erant: jam pascua vermis*] you next tread on his interred corps, that's honoured but with a [*Hic jacet*] [*Here lyes the body of such a one*] And if he have the honour to be magnified by fame or history, it's a fool-trap to ensnare the living, but easeth not the soul in Hell. And shall we envy men such a happiness as this? what if they be able to command mens lives, and to hurt those that they hate for a little while? Is this a matter of honour or of delight? A Pestilence is more honourable, if destroying be an honour. The Devil is more powerful (if God permit him) to do men hurt, than the greatest Tyrant in the world: And yet I hope you envy not his happiness, nor are ambitious to partake of it. If Witches were not kin to Devils, they would never sell their souls for a power to do hurt: And how little do tyrannical worldlings consider, that under a mask of Government and Honour, they do the same?

Let the world then *rejoyce* while *we lament* and weep: Our sorrow shall be speedily turned into joy; and our joy shall no man then take from us, Joh. 16. 20, 22. Envy not a dying man the happiness of a feather-bed, or a merry dream. You think it hard *in them* to deny you the liberties and comforts of this life, though you look for Heaven: And will you be more

cruel

cruel than the ungodly? Will you envy the trifling commodities or delights of earth, to those that are like to have no more, but to lye in Hell when the sport is ended? It is unreasonable impatience that cannot endure to see them in silks and gallantry a few daies, that must be so extreemly miserable for ever. Your crums, and leavings, and overplus is their All: And will you grudge them *this much*? In this you are unlike your heavenly Father, that doth good to the just and unjust: would you change cales with them? would you change the *fruit of your adversity*, for the *fruit of their prosperity*.

Affliction maketh you somewhat more calm, and wise, and sober, and cautelous, and considerate, and preventeth as well as cureth sin. Prosperity makes them (through their abuse) inconsiderate, rash, insensible, foolish, proud, unperswadable. *And the turning away of the simple slayeth them, and the prosperity of fools destroyeth them*, Prov. 1. 32. It's long since Lazarus's sores were healed, and his wants relieved; and long since Dives feast was ended. O let me rather be afflicted, than rejected; and be a door-keeper in the house of God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness: and rather be under the rod, than turned out of doors. Look with a serious Faith upon Eternity, and then make a great matter of enjoyments or sufferings here if you can. Great joyes and sorrows forbid men to complain of the biting of a Flea. Thunder claps drown a whispering voice.

O what unbelief our impatency and disquietness in sufferings do discover! Is this living by faith? and conversing in another world? and taking God for All, and the world for Nothing? What! make such a do of poverty, imprisonment, injuries, disgrace, with Heaven and Hell before our eyes? *The Lord vouchsafe me that condition, in which I shall be nearest to himself, and have most communion with Heaven; be it what it will be for the things of earth.* These are the desires to which I'll stand.

To thank God for the fruit of *past afflictions*, as the most necessary mercies of our lives (as some of us have daily cause) and at the same time to be impatient under *present afflictions*, or inordinately afraid of those to come, is an irrational as well as unbelieving incongruity.

Are we derided, slandered, abused by the ungodly? If we repine that we have enemies and must fight; we repine that we are Christs souldiers, and that is, that we are Christians. [*Quomodo potest imperator militum suorum virtutem probare, nisi habuerit hostem*] saith Laëtantius. Enemies of God do not use to fight professedly against himself, but against his souldiers [*Non qui contra ipsam Deum pugnent, sed contra milites ejus inquit idem*] If the remnants of goodness had not been a derision among the Heathens themselves, in the more sober sort, a Heathen would not have said, [*Nondum salix es, si non te turba deriserit: sibeatus vis esse, cogit a hoc primum contemere, & ab aliis contemni. Sen.*] Thou art not yet happy, if the rabble deride thee not: If thou wilt be blessed, learn first to contemn this, and to be contemned of others.] No body will deride or persecute us in Heaven.

5. Improve your talents and opportunities in your callings as Believers; especially you that are Governours. God is the original and end of Government. The highest are but his ministers, Rom. 13. 6. This world is but the way unto another. Things seen are for things unseen: And Government is to order them to that end: Especially by terrifying evil doers, and by promoting holiness in the earth. The Moral as well as the Natural motion of inferiour agents, must proceed from the influence of the superiour. The spring and the end of every action truly good, are out of sight. Where these are not discerned, or are ignorantly or maliciously opposed, the action is vitiated, and tendeth to confusion and ruine. God is the end of all holy actions; and carnal self is the end of sin. If God and self are infinitely distinct; you may easily see that the actions materially the same, that are intended to such distant ends, must needs be very distant. Nothing but saving Faith and Holiness can conquer selfishness in the lowest of the people. But where the flesh hath more plentiful provision, and self is accommodated with the fullest contents of honour and pleasure that the world affords, how difficult a work then is self-denial! And the reign of the flesh is contrary to the reign of Christ. Where the flesh and visible things bear sway, the enemy of Christ bears sway. *The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to his Law, nor can be,* Rom, 8. 7. And how

Christ's enemies will receive his *Laws*, and use his *Messengers*, and regard his *waies* and *servants*, the most of the world have experience to their cost. The interest of the flesh, being contrary to Christ's interest, the competition maintaineth a continual conflict. The Word of God doth seem to be against them: The faithful Ministers that would save them from their sins, do seem to wrong them, and deal too boldly with them. Were it an *Elijah*, he would be called, *The troubler of Israel*; and met with an [*Hast thou found me O mine enemy*] No measure of prudense, knowledge, piety, innocency, meekness or self-denyal, will serve to appease the wrath and displeasure of this carnal enmity. If it would, the Apostles had escaped it: or at least it would not have fallen so furiously upon Christ himself. Nay, these are the oyl that increase the flame. And Satan hath still the bellows in his hand: He knoweth that if he can corrupt or win the Commander, he can rout the Army, and ruine them with the greatest ease. It hath been Satans grand design, since the Christian name was known on earth, to advance the *selfish* interest of men against the interest of Christ; and to entangle the Rulers of the world in some cause, that Christ, and his Word, and Servants cannot favour, and so to make them believe that there is a necessity on them to watch against, and subdue the interest of Christ. As if it were necessary that the shore be brought to the boat, and not the boat to the shore: And that the Physician be brought to the Patients mind, or else destroyed or used as his enemy. I am afraid to speak out the terrible words of God in Scripture, that are against such persons, lest you should misunderstand me, and think I misapply them. But Christ feareth no man, and hath not spoken his Word in vain; and his Messengers must be faithful; for he will bear them out; and preventive cautions are easier and safer than reprehensive corraives. I will but refer you to the texts, that you may peruse them, *Matth.* 21. 44. *Matth.* 18. 3. 6. *Matth.* 25. 40, 45. *Luke* 18. 7. *Psal.* 2. *Luke* 19. 27. *Acts* 9. 4, 5. *1 Th.* 5. 2. 15, 16. Read them with fear as the Words of God. Blessed are those Rulers and Nations of the Earth, that perceive and escape this pernicious snare of the grand deceiver; that with all his subtilty and industry, endeavoureth to breed quarrels, and sow dissentions between them and the universal King.

The more God giveth to the carnal and unwise, the more they think themselves engaged against him ; because by his commands he seems to take it from them again, by crossing the flesh, which would use it only to fulfil its lusts. Like a Dog that fawneth on you till he have his bone ; and then snarleth at you, lest you take it from him ; and will fly in your face if you offer to meddle with it. Men readily confess that they have their wealth *from God* ; because it cannot be denyed, and because they would use the name of God, as a cover to hide their covetousness, and unlawful waies of getting : But if you judge by their *usage* of it, and their returns to God ; you would think that they believed, that they had nothing at all from God, but some injuries ; and that all their benefits and good were from themselves. The Turkish and Tartarian Emperour will say, that all his grandeur and power is from God ; that by making it most Divine, he may procure the more reverence and obedience to himself : But when he hath said so for his own interest, he useth the same power *against God and his interest* ; to the banishing of his Word and holy Worship, and the forbidding the preaching of the Gospel of salvation ; and to the cherishing of tyranny, pride and lust : As if God had armed them against himself, and made his *Officers* to be his enemies ; and gave them power that they might powerfully hinder mens salvation, and made great, to be great oppressors.

As a *believing Pastor* is a *Priest* that standeth between God and the people, to mediate under the great Mediatour ; to receive from God his Word and Ordinances, and deliver them to the flocks ; and to offer up supplications in their names to God : So *believing Governours* of civil Societies or Families, receive from God a power to rule the subjects for their good, and they use it to make the subjects good, that God may be pleased and honoured by all ! And the obedience which they require, is such as may be given to *God in them*. They take power from God to use it for God, and are so much more excellent than the greatest of ambitious carnal Princes, as the pleasing and honouring of God, is a more excellent design and work, than the gratifying of fleshly lust, and the advancement of a lump of clay. The Kingdoms of the world would all be

used as the Kingdoms of the Lord, if the everlasting Kingdom were well believed. The families of men would be sanctified as Churches unto God, if the eternal house not made with hands, were truly taken for their home, and their trade were to lay up a treasure in Heaven. In Cities and Countries Brethren would dwell in holy peace, and all concur in honouring God, if once they were made fellow Citizens with the Saints, and their Burghship and conversation were in Heaven, *Ephes. 2. 19 Phil 3. 20, 21.*

6. *Resist Temptations as Believers.* If you live by Faith, then fight against the *world* and *flesh* by Faith. Faith must be your *helmet*, and the Word of Faith must be your shield, *Eph. 6. 16.* And your victory it self must be by Faith, 1 *Job. 5. 4.* If Satan tell the flesh of the preferment, riches, or the pleasures of lust, answer him with a *believing foresight* of Gods Judgement, and the life to come. Never look on the baits of sin alone, but still look at once on God and on Eternity: As a just Judge will hear both parties speak, or see their evidences before he will determine: So tell the Tempter, that as you have heard what fleshly allurements can say, you will see also what the Word of God saith, and take a view of Heaven and Hell, and then you will answer him.

7. *Rejoyce as Believers.* Can Faith set open the windows of the soul, and no light of heavenly pleasures enter? Can it peruse the *Map* of the Land of Promise, or see and taste the bunch of Grapes, without any sweetness to the soul? That is the truest *Belief* of Heaven, which maketh men likest those that are in Heaven: And what is their *character, work* and *portion*, but the Joies of Heavenly Light and Love! Can we believe that we shall live in Heaven for ever? Can we believe that very shortly we shall be there? and not rejoyce in such believing? I know we commonly say, that the uncertainty of our proper title, is the cause of all our want of joy: But if that were all, if that were the *first* and *greatest* cause, and our belief of the *promise* it self were *truly*; we should at least set our hearts on Heaven as the most *delightful* and *desirable* state: and Love would work by more eager *desires*, and diligent *seekings*, till it had reacht assurance, and cast out the hinderances of our joy. How much would a meer Philosopher rejoyce, if he

he could find out natural evidence, of so much as we know by Faith? You may perceive what their content in *finding* it, would be, by their exceeding pains in *seeking*. The unwearied studies by day and night, which many of them used, with the contempt of the riches and greatness of the world, do tell us how glad they would have been, to have seen but half so far as we may. If they could but discover more clearly and certainly, the principles, and elements, and forms of Beings; the nature of spirits; the causes of motion; the nature and cause of light and heat; the order, course and harmony of the universal systeme of the world; what joyful acclamations would this produce, in the literal studious sort of men! what joy then should it be to us, to know by Faith the God that made us; the Creation of the world, the Laws and Promises of our Creatour, the Mysteries of Redemption and Regeneration; the frame of the new Creature, the entertainment of the spirits of the just with Christ, the Judgement which all the world must undergo, the work and company which we shall have hereafter, and the endless joyes which all the sanctified shall possess in the sight and Love of God for ever? How blessed an invention would it be, if all the world could be brought again to the use of one universal language? Or if all the Churches could be perfectly reconciled, how joyful would the Author of so great a work be? should we not then rejoyce who foresee by *Faith*, a far more perfect union and consent, than ever must be expected here on earth.

Alas, the ordinary *lowness* of our *Comforts* doth tell us, that our Faith is very small! I say not so much [*The sorrows of a doubting heart*] as the *litttle joy* which we have in the forethoughts of Heaven, when our title seemeth not much doubtful to us: For *those sorrows* shew, that such esteem it a joyful place, and would rejoyce if their title were but cleared: But when we have neither the *sorrow* or solicitousness of the afflicted soul, nor yet the joy which is any whit suitable to the belief of such everlasting joyes, we may know what to judge of such an uneffectual belief; at best, it is very low and feeble. It is a joy *unspeakable*, and full of glory, which *unseen things* should cause in a Believer, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7, 8. Because it is an exceeding eternal weight of glory, which he believeth, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18.

8. Finally, Learn to *Die also as Believers*. The *life of Faith* must bring you to the very entrance into *glory*: where one doth *end*, the other *begins*. As our dark life in the womb by nutriment from the Mother, continueth till our passage into the open world. You would die in the womb, if Faith should cease, before it bring you to full intuition and fruition, *Heb. 11. 22*. By faith Joseph when he died made mention of the departing of the children of Israel. Josephs faith did not die before him, *Heb. 11. 3*. These all died in faith, confessing that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and declaring that they sought a better Country. They that live by faith, must die in faith; yea and die by faith too. Faith must fetch in their dying comforts. And O how full, and how near a treasure hath it to go to? To die to this world, is to be born into another. Beggars are best when they are abroad. The *travail* of the ungodly is better to them than their home. But the Believers home is so much better than his *travail*, that he hath little cause to be afraid of coming to his Journeys end; but should rather every step cry out, O when shall I be at home with Christ! Is it *Earth* or *Heaven* that you have prayed for, and laboured for, and waited, and suffered for till now? And doth he indeed pray, and labour, and suffer for *Heaven*, who would not come thither?

It is *Faith* which overcometh the world and the flesh, which must also overcome the fears of death; and can look with boldness into the loathsome grave, and can triumph over both as victorious through Christ. "It is *Faith* which can
 "say, [Go forth O my soul; depart in peace: Thy course is
 "finished: Thy warfare is accomplished: The day of triumph
 "is now at hand: Thy patience hath no longer work: Go
 "forth with joy: The-morning of thy endless joys is near;
 "and the night of fears and darkness at an end. Thy terrible
 "dreams are ending in eternal pleasures: The glorious light
 "will banish all thy dreadful specters, and resolve all those
 "doubts which were bred and cherished in the dark: They
 "whose employment is their weariness and toil, do take the
 "night of darkness and cessation for their rest: But this is thy
 "weariness: Deseñ of action is thy toil; and thy most grie-
 "vous labour is to do too little work: And thy uncessant

"*Vision,*

" *Vision, Love and Praise*, will be thy unceſſant eaſe and plea-
 ſure; and thy endleſs work, will be thy endleſs reſt! De-
 part, O my ſoul, with peace and gladneſs! Thou leaveſt
 not a world, where Wiſdom and Piety, Juſtice and Sobrie-
 ty, Love, and Peace, and Order, do prevail; but a world
 of ignorance and folly; of brutiſh ſenſuality and rage; of
 impiety and malignant enmity to good; a world of inju-
 ſtice and oppreſſion; and of confuſion and diſtracting ſtrifes!
 Thou goeſt not to a world of darkneſs, and of wrath; but
 of Light and Love! From helliſh malice, to perfect amity;
 from Bedlam rage, to perfect wiſdom; from mad confuſion,
 to perfect order; to ſweeteſt unity and peace; even to the
 ſpirits of the juſt made perfect, and to the celeftial glorious
 City of God! Thou goeſt not from Heaven to Earth, from
 holineſs to ſin, from the ſight of God, into an infernal dun-
 geon; but from Earth to Heaven; from ſin and imper-
 fection unto perfect holineſs; and from palpable darkneſs,
 into the vital ſplendour of the face of God! Thou goeſt
 not amongſt enemies, but to deareſt friends; nor amongſt
 meer ſtrangers, but to many whom thou haſt known by
 ſight, and to more whom thou haſt known by faith, and
 muſt know by the ſweeteſt communion for ever. Thou
 goeſt not to unſatisfied Juſtice, nor to a condemning unre-
 conciled God; but to Love it ſelf; to infinite Goodneſs; the
 fountain of all created and communicated good; to the
 Maker, Redeemer and Sanctifier of ſouls; to him who pre-
 pared Heaven for thee, and now hath prepared thee for
 Heaven! Go forth then in triumph, and not with terrour,
 O my ſoul! The prize is won: Poſſeſs the things which
 thou haſt ſo long prayed for, and fought! Make haſte and
 enter into thy Maſters joy! Go view the glory which thou
 haſt ſo long heard of; and take thy place in the heavenly
 Chore; and bear thy part in their celeftial melody! Sit
 down with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* in the Kingdom of
 God! And receive that which Chriſt in his Covenant did
 promiſe to give thee at the laſt. Go boldly to that bleſſed
 God, with whom thou haſt ſo powerful a Mediatour; and
 to the Throne of whoſe grace, thou haſt had ſo oft and
 ſweet acceſs. If Heaven be thy fear or ſorrow, what can
 be

"be thy joy? and where wilt thou have refuge, if thou fly
 "from God? If perfect endless pleasures be thy terrour,
 "where then dost thou expect content! If grace have taught
 "thee long ago, to prefer the heavenly and durable felicity;
 "refuse it not now when thou art so near the port! if it have
 "taught thee long ago, to be as a stranger in this *Sodom*, and
 "to renounce this sinful world and flesh; linger not now as
 "unwilling to depart; repent not of thy choice, when all
 "that the world can do for thee is past, repent not of thy
 "warfare, when thou hast got the victory; nor of thy voy-
 "age, when thou art past the storms and waves, and ready
 "to land at the haven of felicity.

Thus Faith may sing our *Nunc dimitte*, when the flesh is lothest to be dissolved.

But we must *live* by faith, if we would thus *die* by faith. Such a death doth not use to be the period of a fleshly worldly life; nor of a careless, dull and negligent life. Nature, which brought us into the world, without our forecast or care, will turn us out of the world without it: But it will not give us a joyful passage, nor bring us to a *better* world without it. It costeth worldlings no small care to *die* in an *honourable* or *plentiful estate*, (that they may fall from an higher place than others, and may have something to make death more grievous and unwelcome to them, and may have a greater account to make at Judgement; and that their passage to Heaven may be as a Camels through a Needle.) And may a believing joyful death be expected, without the preparations of *exercise* and *experience* in a *believing life*? Nature is so much afraid of dying, and an *incorporated soul* is so incarcerated in *sense*, and so hardly riseth to serious and satisfying apprehensions of the unseen world, that even true Believers, do find it a work of no small difficulty, to desire to depart, and be with Christ, and to die in the joyful hopes of faith. A little *abatement* of the *terrors* of death, a little *supporting hope* and *peace*, is all that the greater part of them attain, instead of the fervent desires, and triumphant joys, which the lively belief of endless glory should produce. O therefore make it the work of your lives! of all your lives! your greatest work, your constant work, to live by faith; that the faith which hath

first conquered all the rest of your enemies, may be able also to overcome the last; and may do your last work well, when it hath done the rest.

PART. II.

CHAP. I.

Directions how to live by Faith: And first how to strengthen Faith: And secondly, the natural Truths presupposed to be considered.

THE Directions which I shall give you, as helps to *live by Faith*, are of two ranks. 1. Such as tend to the *strengthening* of your Faith. 2. Such as tell you how to *use it*.

The first is the greatest part of our task: for no man can use that faith which he hath not; nor can use more of it than he hath. And the commonest reason why we *use but little*, is because we *have but little* to use.

But on this subject (supposing it most weighty) I have written many Treatises already (The second part of the Saints Rest: The Unreasonableness of Infidelity: And last of all, The Reasons of the Christian Religion: Besides others which handle it on the by.) And somewhat is said in the beginning of this discourse. But yet because in so great a matter I am more afraid of doing too little than too much; I will here give you an Index of some of the chief *Helps*, to be close together before you for your memories, to be the constant fuel of your Faith.

In the work of *Faith*, it is first needful that you get all the prerequisite Helps of *Natural Light*, and be well acquainted with their *Order* and *Evidence*, and their *Usefulness* to befriend the supernatural revelations: For it is supposed that we are *men* before we are *Christians*: We were *created* before we were *redeemed*: And we must know that there *is a God*, before we can know that we have *offended him*, or that we need a *Saviour* to reconcile us to him: And we must know that we