

THE
POOR MAN'S FAMILY BOOK.

IN
PLAIN FAMILIAR CONFERENCE

BETWEEN
A TEACHER AND A LEARNER.

WITH
**A FORM OF EXHORTATION TO THE SICK; TWO CATECHISMS;
A PROFESSION OF CHRISTIANITY; FORMS OF PRAYER FOR
VARIOUS USES,**

AND
SOME PSALMS AND HYMNS FOR THE LORD'S DAY.

A REQUEST TO THE RICH.

THIS book was intended for the use of poor families, which have neither money to buy many, nor time to read them : I much desired therefore to have made it shorter ; but I could not do it, without leaving out that which I think they cannot well spare. That which is spoken accurately, and in few words, the ignorant understand not : and that which is large, they have neither money, leisure, nor memory to make their own. Being unavoidably in this strait, the first remedy lieth in your hands ; I humbly propose it to you for the souls of men, and the comfort of your own, and the common good, on the behalf of Christ, the Saviour of your souls and theirs, that you will bestow one book (either this or some fitter) upon as many poor families as you well can. If every landlord would give one to every poor tenant that he hath, once in his life, out of one year's rent, it would be no great charge in comparison of the benefit which may be hoped for, and in comparison of what prodigality consumeth. The price of one ordinary dish of meat will buy a book : and to abate, for every tenant, but one dish in your lives, is no great self-denial. If you, indeed, lay out all that you have better, I have done. If not, grudge not this little to the poor, and to yourselves : it will be more comfortable to your review, when the reckoning cometh, than that which is spent on pomp and ceremony, and superfluities, and fleshly pleasures. And if landlords (whose power with their tenants is usually great) would also require them seriously to read it (at least on the Lord's days) it may further the success. And I hope rich citizens, and ladies, and rich women, who cannot themselves go talk to poor families, will send them such a messenger as this, or some fitter book to instruct them, seeing no preacher can be got at so cheap a rate. The Father of Spirits, and the Redeemer of souls, persuade and assist us all to work while it is day, and serve his love and grace for our own and other men's salvation. Amen.

Your humble Monitor,

RICHARD BAXTER.

Aug. 26, 1672.

TO THE READER.

MR. ARTHUR DENT's book, called "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven," was so well accepted, because it was a plain, familiar dialogue, that about forty years ago, I had one, said to be of the thirtieth impression. While I was thinking to endeavour the re-printing of it, those reasons that hindered me, did persuade me to do somewhat like it to the same ends. Accordingly I began in the three or four first days' conference, to speak as much as I could in the language of the vulgar, though I thought it not best so to hold on to the end; 1. Because it would have made the book too big, or else have necessitated me to leave out much that cannot (in order to practice) be well spared. 2. Because I may suppose, that riper Christians need not so loose a style, or method, as the ignorant or vulgar do: and the latter part of the book supposeth the reader to be got above the lowest form, though not to be a learned, accurate man. The title of the book is rough, according to the design. In the conference with the malignant, I have brought in only such objections as are now most commonly used, and therefore which the ignorant most need our help against.

I have two things which some readers will think need an excuse. I. That I have put in the sixth day's conference two sheets of instructions published heretofore; which I did because such small things alone are cast away, and lost; and because I would neither write oftener than is needful the same things, nor yet omit so necessary a part.

II. That I have published forms of prayer and catechising: but I have not now so little to do as to confute their conceits, who think such forms to be unlawful or unuseful. But that they are not better done, I confess doth need more excuse than I can give you. I expect that the catechism should satisfy but few; for neither it, nor any that I ever saw, doth fully satisfy myself. It is harder than most think, to suit the words both to the matter and to the learners. Had I used fewer words, I must have left out some of the necessary matter. Had I used more, I had

overmatched the memories of the weaker sort. The more ignorant any one is, the more words his understanding needeth, and the fewer words his memory needeth : and who can give the same man few and many ? I have therefore put but few into the catechism to be remembered, and put the rest in the exposition to be read. Those that think that so short a summary as the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Decalogue, with the baptismal covenant, which make up the first catechism, is unuseful, are not of my judgment, nor of the ancient churches, who made these the test of men's Christianity, and fitness for christian communion. I know that the exposition of the longer catechism is too hard for the ignorant that have no instructor to open it further to them, and that the first part (about God) is harder than the rest : but that is from the incomprehensibleness of God, with whom yet order requireth us to begin ; and it is so in most systems of theology : and the reader that understandeth it not at first, must come back, and study it again ; for he that is the first and the last, must be first and last of all these studies. I had thought to have done as others, and have added another catechism, with numerous and shorter answers ; but I was afraid of overdoing. The hard passages which the younger do not reach, are not unuseful to the riper, who must have their parts. The Lord be your teachers, and bless (when we are dead and gone) the instructions which we leave you, according to his word and will !

THE
POOR MAN'S FAMILY BOOK.

- I. TEACHING HIM HOW TO BECOME A TRUE CHRISTIAN.
 - II. HOW TO LIVE AS A CHRISTIAN TOWARDS GOD, HIMSELF,
AND OTHERS, IN ALL HIS RELATIONS; ESPECIALLY IN
HIS FAMILY.
 - III. HOW TO DIE AS A CHRISTIAN IN HOPE AND COMFORT,
AND SO TO BE GLORIFIED WITH CHRIST FOR EVER.
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THE FIRST DAY'S CONFERENCE.

The Conviction of an Unconverted Sinner.

Speakers.—Paul, a pastor; and Saul, an ignorant sinner.

PAUL. WHEN I saw you last, neighbour, I told you, that both my love to you, and my office, do bind me, besides my public preaching, to watch over every person of my flock, and to instruct and help them, man by man, as far as I am able, and they consent: thus * Christ himself instructed sinners, and thus must we: you know we cannot speak so familiarly, and come so close to every one's case, in a common sermon, as we may do by conference: and in conference it is not a little rambling discourse upon the by that is fit for so great a business; and therefore I entreated you to allow me now and then an hour's set and sober talk with you, when all other matters might for that time be laid by: and I am now come to claim it, as you promised.

SAUL. You are welcome, Sir. I confess to you that, being ig-

* John iv., and iii. 1, 2, &c.

norant and unlearned, I am loth to talk with such a man as you about high matters and things of religion, which I do not well understand. But because you desired it, I could not say you nay.

P. You shall see that I come not to dispute with you, or to cavil, or to do you any harm, nor to pose you with any needless questions, nor to try your learning : but only to help you, before you die, to make sure of everlasting life.

S. I have so much reason myself as to know, that Christ's ministers are like nurses, that must cut every child his meat as it is fit for him; and that if I were sick, it is not a long speech of my physician that will serve to cure me; but he must come and see me, and feel my pulse, and find out my disease, and then tell me what will do me good, and how to take it. But to tell you the truth, sir, there are so many busy fellows that love to meddle with other folk's matters, and censure others, and do but trouble men, either to draw them to their own opinions, or else to make themselves teachers, and to seem better than they are themselves, that I was at first unwilling you should trouble me with such matters; till I thought with myself that I am one of your charge; and till I heard how discreetly, and tenderly, and well you speak to those that have been with you. And now I am ready to receive your instruction.

P. But I have this one request to you before we begin, that we may do all with reverence, as in the presence of God, and beg his blessing; and that you will not be offended with me if I speak freely, and come close to you, as long as you know that I have no ends of my own, but only, in love, to seek the salvation of your soul: and it is not flattery that will cure diseases, or save souls.

S. I confess man's nature loveth not to be shamed, or galled, or troubled; but yet God forbid that I should be offended with you for seeking my own good: for I know you are wiser than I, and know by your life and labour that it is nothing but all our salvation that you seek.

P. I pray you^b tell me what case do you take your soul to be in for another world; and what do you think would become of you if you should die this day?

S. God knows what he will do with us all, I know not. But we must hope the best, and put our trust in the mercy of God.

P. No doubt but God knows; but do you think that we may

^b 1 Pet. iii. 15.

not^c know ourselves? May not a man know certainly whether he shall be saved or not?

S. I think not. We can but hope well, but not be sure, for who can tell the secrets of God?

P. Cannot a man know it, if God should tell him?

S. Yes, but God tells nobody his mind.

P. Do you not think the^d holy Scripture is God's word; and that whatever it tells us, God tells us?

S. Yes, I cannot deny that.

P. Do you believe that there is^e another life after this, and that man dieth not like a dog, but that his soul goeth either to heaven or hell?

S. Yes, that must not be denied.

P. Seeing heaven is an inconceivable glory, and hell the most inexpressible misery, do you not think but there must needs be a^f very great difference between those that go to heaven, and those that go to hell?

S. Yes, no doubt; God is not unjust: he would not take one to heaven, and send another to hell, if they were both alike.

P. And do you think that there is so great difference, and yet that it cannot be known? Is a godly man and a wicked man so like that they cannot be known asunder by themselves, if they will?

S. Nobody knoweth the heart but God.

P. Another cannot infallibly know it, further than the life declareth it. But cannot you^g know your own? Cannot you know what you love and what you hate?

S. No doubt but a man may know his own mind.

P. Very good. And you hear the Scriptures read at church, where there are abundance of promises made to the godly, both for this life and that to come, and terrible threatenings to the ungodly? To what use and purpose were all these, if no one could know whether he were godly or ungodly? Who could take any comfort in the promises, if he could not know that they belong to him?

S. Not unless he have some guess, or hope.

P. And do you not hear, that "We must give all diligence to make our calling and election sure?" (2 Pet. i. 10.) And "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith or no

^c 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

^d John v. 39; Matt. xiv. 49, and xii. 24; 2 Tim. iii. 16.

^e Matt. xxv.; Heb. ix. 27.

^f Matt. xxv.; Psalm i.; Mal. iii. 17, 18; Rom. viii. 5-7, 9.

^g 2 Cor. i. 5; 1 John iii. 14, 24; iv. 13, and v. 19, 20.

Prove yourselves. Know you not your own selves that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) Do you think God would bid men try and examine, and make sure, if it were impossible?

S. No, sure, we must do our best. But who can tell who are elected and who are reprobates, which are God's secrets?

P. You cannot know, before they are converted, whom God will convert and whom not. But when he converteth a sinner, he sets his name and mark upon him; not outwardly only, as you do on your sheep, or goods; but inwardly,^a as the parents convey their own nature and likeness to their children. That is, he regenerateth and sanctifieth them: he putteth into them a holy nature, a new mind, and a new will, and turneth them to a new life. And may not all this be known? Cannot God's elect be known to themselves, when he hath given them the Spirit of Christ, and made them new creatures, and set his certain mark upon them? Did you never hear, "The foundation (or obligation) of God standeth sure, having this seal; the Lord knoweth them that are his; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity?" (2 Tim. ii. 19.) God knoweth whom he will convert and save from eternity. But when men believe in Christ, and depart from iniquity, then they have his seal of election on them, and by it they may know themselves that they are his.

S. I cannot deny what you say, for it is plain.

P. I pray you tell me further, have you not read, or heard, that one sort are called in Scripture the children of God, and said to¹ have his nature and his image? and therefore are said to be regenerated and born again, and born of God, and begotten by incorruptible seed to a lively hope, and a never-fading crown in heaven, and are made holy as he is holy? And the other sort are called^k the children of the devil, and said to be of him, and to be ruled as captives by him, and to do his works and will? And dare you think that God and the devil are so like, as that their image, and nature, and works, and children, cannot be known one from another?

S. I dare not think so. God forbid!

P. And have you not heard in Scripture abundance of particular marks laid down, by which we may know whether we

^a John iii. 3, 5; Rom. viii. 9; Matt. xiii. 3; Tit. ii. 13, 14; 2 Cor. v. 17.

¹ 2 Pet. i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 3, 4, 15—17.

^k John viii. 48; 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26; 1 John iii. 8—10; Acts xiii. 10.

are the children of God? And can you think they are all laid down in vain?

S. No; none of the word of God is in vain.

P. And do you not hear expressly, that by these marks we may know that we¹ are the children of God? And that, knowing it, we may rejoice, even with unspeakable, glorious joy; and that believers are commanded to rejoice in the Lord, yea, always to rejoice? And God's word cannot be false, nor doth it command the^m ungodly thus to rejoice. Therefore, certainly a man may know whether he is the child of God, or not.

S. I never thought of so much before as you have told me: I cannot deny it. But I must confess that I have no such knowledge of myself.

P. Be not offended with me, if I freely proceed upon your own confession. Have you no assurance of your salvation? Nor certain knowledge what case your soul is in? Tell me truly, what care, whatⁿ diligent labour have you used to have made all sure? Is it because you could not get assurance? or because you would not do your part? Can you truly say that you have set your heart upon the matter, and made it the greatest of your care and labour in this world, and left nothing undone which you were able to do, to make sure of everlasting life?

S. I would I could say so, but I confess I cannot. God forgive me! I have had some shallow thoughts of these matters upon the by, but I never laid out such serious thoughts, such earnest labours, upon them as you speak of.

P. Have you not? I am sorry to know it. But I pray you tell me what is it that hath hindered you?

S. Alas, sir, many things have^o hindered me. One is the cares, and business, and crosses of this world, which have taken up my mind and time: and another is the vain pleasures of the flesh, the delights of sense, and a daily contentedness in the particulars of my prosperity. Something or other so took me up, that my mind had no leisure, nor room, for God.

P. And do you think you have done well and wisely? Will this course serve your turn for ever? What have you now to show of all the pleasures that sin afforded you ever since you

¹ 2 Cor. i. 12; Gal. vi. 4; Heb. iii. 6; Phil. iii. 1, and iv. 4; Palm xxxiii. 1; Rom. v. 2; 1 Thess. v. 16; 1 Pet. i. 6, 8.

ⁿ Hos. ix. 1. ^o 2 Pet. i. 10; Isa. lv. 1, 6, 10; Matt. vi. 33; John vi. 27.

^o Matt. xiii. 22; Luke viii. 14, and xxi. 34; Rom. viii. 6—8; Phil. iii. 19; Psalm x. 3, 4.

were born? What now are you the^p better for every merry hour that is past; for every sweet, delicious dish; for every pleasant, merry cup; for every playful day, or company; for every wanton lust and dalliance? Tell me now, what good, what sweetness, what inward comfort, is left behind? What the better are you now for all?

S. You need not ask me such a question. The pleasure is gone of all that is past, but I am still in hope of more.

P. And how long will that endure which you hope for? Are you sure to live another week, or day, or hour? And are you not sure that an end will come, and^q shortly come, and irresistibly come? And where then are all your delights and merriments? Do you think that death is made more safe and comfortable, or more dangerous and terrible, by the remembrance of all the sinful pleasures of a fleshly life? Go, try if you can comfort a dying man, that is not mad, by telling him that he hath had a life of sport and pleasure; or that he had his cups, and feasts, and whores, and honours, for so long a time; and that he^r hath had his good things here; and that this world hath done for him all that it can do, and now he must part with it for ever. Go, try whether death be more comfortable to Dives, who is clothed in purple and silk, and fareth sumptuously or deliciously every day, than to a Lazarus that waiteth in patient poverty for a better life.

And as for all your possessions and wealth, what will they do for you, more than to be the fuel of these transitory delights, that your fleshly lusts may not lack provision? Will you carry any of it with you? Will it make your death more safe or easy? Or, do you not know that unsanctified wealth and pleasures do all leave nothing but their sting behind, and prepare for everlasting wo?

S. I know all this. And yet this world hath a marvellous power to blind men's minds, and take up their hearts, and turn their thoughts from better things.

P. It is true with those that are blind already, and never had spiritual wisdom, or holy inclination, to mind God, or any thing truly good. But if men were well in their wits, could the beastly pleasures of the flesh for a moment be preferred before holy, everlasting pleasures? Could they be quieted in all their misery with the pride and pelf of a few days, and which they

^p Eccl. i. 2, 3, &c. "All is vanity and vexation."

^q Luke xii. 19, 20.

^r Luke xvi. 25.

know they must shortly leave for ever? Could a life, that is posting so speedily to its end, make men forget an endless life?

But tell me, neighbour, did you not know all this while that you must die; you must certainly die; you must shortly die? And did you not know, that when death cometh, time is gone, for ever gone, and all the world cannot recall it? Did you not know that your * business in this world was to prepare for heaven, and to do all that ever must be done for your everlasting hope and happiness? And that it must go with all men in heaven and hell as they have prepared here?

S. I have heard all this, but it was with a dull and sleepy mind; it did not stir me up to sober consideration, because I hoped still for longer life.

P. But you know that the longest life must have an end: where now are all that lived before us? And, alas! what are an hundred years when they are gone? What now is all your time that is past? But tell me further; what shift make you all this while with your conscience? Did you never think of the end of all your prosperity, and of your soul's appearing in another world? Do you not pass through the churchyard, and see the graves, and tread upon the dust of those that have lived in the pleasures of the world before you? Have you not seen the graves opened, and the carcasses of your neighbours left there in the silent darkness, to rot into ugly loathsomeness and dust? Have you not seen the boues, the skulls of your forefathers, and the holes where meat and drink went in? And did you not know that all this must be your own condition? And is such a life better than heaven? And such a corruptible body fit to be pampered with all the care and labour of our lives, whilst our souls are almost forgotten and neglected?

S. God forgive us! we forget all this, though we have daily and hourly remembrancers, till death is just upon us, and then we do" perceive our folly. I was once sick, and like to die, and then I was troubled for fear what would become of me; and I was fully resolved to mend my life: but when I was recovered, all wore off, and the world and the flesh took place again.

P. But you are a man, and have the use of reason. When you confess that you are unready to die, and have done no more to make sure work for your soul, tell me, what shift make you

* Matt. vi. 19, 20, 33.

† 1 Pet. iv. 7; Luke xii. 19, 20; 2 Pet. iii. 11; Psalm xxxvii. 37, 38, &c.; Rom. vi. 21, 22; 2 Cor. xi. 15; Phil. iii. 19.

‡ Psalm lxxviii. 33-35, &c.

to lie down quietly to sleep, lest you should die, and be past hope, before the morning? Are you not afraid in the morning lest you should die before night, and never have time of repentance more? What shift make you to forget that, if you die unready and unconverted, you are a lost and miserable man for ever? Are you sure at ^{*} night to live till morning? Are you sure in the morning to live till night? Are you not sure that it will not be long? Do you not know by what a wonder of providence we live? How many hundred veins, and arteries, and sinews, and other parts, our bodies have, which must every one be kept in order? So that if one break, or be stopped, or if our blood do but corrupt or sour, or our other nourishing moisture be distempered, or our spirits be quenched, how quickly are we gone! And dare you wilfully or negligently live one day unprepared for death in so slippery and uncertain a life as this?

S. You say well: but, for all this uncertainty, I thank God I have lived until now.

P. And will you turn God's patience and mercy into presumption, to the hardening of your heart, and the delaying of your repentance? Will he always wait your leisure? As long as you have lived, will not death come, and shortly come? And where are you then? And what will you do next? Have you ever soberly bethought you what it is for a soul to take its farewell of this world, and presently to appear in another world, a world of spirits, good or bad, and to be [†] judged according to our preparation in this life, and to take up a place in heaven or hell, without any hope of ever changing?

S. You trouble me and make me afraid by this talk: but death will not be prevented; and why then should we begin our fears too soon? They will come time enough of themselves. The fear of death is a greater pain than death itself.

P. Alas! is dying all that you look at? Though death cannot be prevented, damnation may be prevented. Dying is a small matter, were it not for what cometh next. But can hell be escaped without fear, and care, and serious diligence? Or had you rather be condemned for ever, than be frightened to your duty, and from your sin and danger? Is hell easier than a little necessary fear and care? If you were either a beast or a devil, there were some sense in what you say. For if you were

^{*} Prov. xxvii. 1; Matt. xxiv. 44; Luke xii. 19, 20, 40,

[†] Matt. xxv.

a beast, you had nothing after death to fear; and therefore the fear of death beforehand would do no good, but increase your sorrow: and if you were a devil, there were no hope; and therefore you might desire not to be tormented before the time, for it will come time enough at last. But, God be thanked, neither of these is your case: you must live for ever; and you may live in heavenly joys for ever if you will. And are not these things, then, to be forethought of?

S. Really, sir, I am afraid if I should but set myself to think of another world, and the state of my soul as seriously as you talk of it, it would frighten me out of my wits; it would make me melancholy or mad. I have seen some people moped and melancholy with being so serious about such things; and therefore do not blame me to be afraid of it.

P. God be thanked that you have yet your reason; and seeing you have it, will you study these few questions following?

1. What did God give you your reason for, and difference you from a beast, but to use it in preparation for an endless life? And is it madness to use our reason for that which it was given us for, and which we are made and live for?

2. Is not that man actually mad already, who hath a God to serve, and a soul to save, and a heaven to get, and a hell to escape, and a death to prepare for, and spends his life in worldly fooleries that all perish in the using, and leaveth all this work undone? Is he not mad, and worse than mad, that setteth more by these trifles than by his God? And setteth more by a little meat and drink, and beastly pleasure, for a few days, than by an endless, heavenly glory? That careth more for a body, that must rot in the earth, than for a never-dying soul? That spareth no pains to avoid shame, and poverty, and sickness; and will do little or nothing to avoid everlasting shame, and pain, and horror, in hell? Tell me, if your wife and child should behave themselves but half as madly about the things of this world, would you not send them to Bedlam, or to a physician, presently, or bind them, and use them as the mad are used? And is it not a pitiful hearing, to hear one that is thus mad for his poor soul, neglect it still, and cast it away, and say he doth it for fear of being mad? More pitiful a thousand times, than to hear one in Bedlam say, 'I dare not take physic.

* Luke xii. 20; Psalm xiv. 1, and xcii. 6; Jer. xvii. 11; Prov. xiv. 9; Eccl. v. 1, 4; Luke xxiv. 25.

lest it make me mad.' Were such madness a disease, it were but like a fever, or another sickness, for which God would not punish us, but pity us: if you should fall into diseased madness, or melancholy, though it is a sad disease, it would not damn you; for it is no sin. But when men have reason for trifles and none for their salvation, and are wise in nothing but unprofitable vanities, and cunning to cheat themselves out of all their hopes of heaven, and to go to hell with ease and honour; God bless us from such wit as this!

3. But I ask you further, What is there in God, in Christ, in heaven, or in a holy life, that should make a man mad to think of it? I beseech you, neighbour, consider what we are talking of. Is not ^a God better than your house, and land, and sports? Is he not a better friend to you than any you have in the world? And will it make you mad to think of your house, or land, or pleasures? Do not all men confess that we should love God above all? And if it make you not mad to love your friend, or your riches, or yourself, why should it make you mad to live in the love of God? Is not love, and the noblest love, the sweetest delight? And will delight, and the highest delight, distract you? Tell me, do you think that heaven is a desirable place, and better than this miserable world, or not? If you say 'No,' you bear witness against yourself; that you are unfit for heaven, who do not love it, or desire it; and God will deny you but that which you had no mind of. But if you say 'Yea,' then tell me why the hopes of everlasting, heavenly joys, and the forethoughts thereof, should make one mad? Alas! man, we have no other cordial against all our calamities in this world, but the hopes and forethoughts of the joys of heaven. What have I to keep me from being melancholy, or mad, but the promise and belief of endless glory? If God and heaven be not our best, what are we but beasts, or worse? And what do we live for in the world? And what have we, for one day, to keep up our hearts under all our crosses, but the comfortable forethought that we shall for ever be with the Lord, and all his holy ones? Take away this, and you will kill our comforts. Our hearts would sink and die within us. And do men use to go mad for fear of their felicity, and with delightful thoughts of the only good?

S. All this is true, if a man were sure of heaven: but when he must think of hell too, and his fears are greater than his hopes, the case is otherwise.

^a Psalm iv.; xliii. 3; and lxxiii. 25, 26, 28; Phil. iii. 7, 8.

P. Now you say something. But I pray you consider, that it is one thing to think of hell despairingly, as those that have little or no hopes to escape it : this might make a man mad indeed ; but this is not your case. But it is another thing to fear hell as that which you^b may most certainly avoid, and withal attain eternal life, if you will but consent to the offers of that Saviour who will freely save you. No man shall be damned that is truly willing to be saved ; to be saved, I say, from sin and hell.

S. I pray you tell me, then, what maketh the thoughts of the world to come so terrible to us ? And what maketh so many that are troubled in conscience to be melancholy, or to live so sad a life ?

P. I will tell you what. I have had to do with as many melancholy, conscientious persons as any one that I know of in England ; and I have found that, 1. There is not one of many of them, but it is some^c worldly cross which makes them melancholy ; and then it turneth to matters of conscience afterwards, when they have awhile had the disease. 2. And for the most part it befalleth very few, but either weak-spirited, tender women, whose brains are so weak, and their fancies and passions so strong and violent that they can bear no trouble, nor serious thoughts, but their reason is presently disturbed and borne down ; or else some men, that by natural distempers of body, either from their parents, or contracted by some disease, are specially inclined to it.

2. And when I have known it befall some few in their first repentance, it hath usually been some very heinous sinners, who have lived so debauchedly in drunkenness or whoredom, or committed perjury, or murder, that conscience did more terrify them than they were able to bear. But this was not from any harm that they apprehended in a godly life, but because they had been so ungodly. This was but the fruit of their former wickedness, and partly God's justice, that will not pardon heinous sinners till he hath made them perceive sin is evil, and that they must indeed be beholden to his mercy, and to Christ. But, usually, when God hath broken the hearts of such men by his terrors, he tenderly binds them up with comforts, and maketh those terrors very profitable to them as long as they live. O

^b Isa. lv. 1—3, 6, 7 ; Matt. xi. 28 ; Rev. xxii. 17 ; Mark xvi. 10 ; John iii. 16, 18, 19.

^c 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

how precious is Christ to such ! How sweet are the promises of pardon and salvation ! How odious is sin to them all their lives after ! But if it should fall out, that such a wicked man, repenting, should never recover from his melancholy sadness, it is a thousand times better, and a more hopeful state, than he was in before, when he went on in sin with presumption and delight.

3. And there is another case too common ; like the case of some women that, in travail, are hurt by an unskilful midwife. Every poor, repenting sinner is not so happy as to fall into the hands of a wise, experienced counsellor to direct him : but some do distract men's minds about different opinions in religion, and talk to a poor sinner for this side, and against that side, or about matters that are past their understandings. And some do not clearly and fully open the nature of the covenant of grace, which giveth Christ and life to all true consenters ; nor seek sufficiently, by opening the riches of grace and glory, to win men's hearts or love to God ; but bend themselves much more to raise men's fears, and tell them more of what they deserve, and what they are in danger of, if they repent not, than of what they shall enjoy with God, through Christ, when they come home. The first must, in its time and place, be done ; but the ^d latter is the great work that must save the soul. For a man is not converted and sanctified indeed, by any change that is made by fear alone, till love come in, and win his heart, and repair his nature.

S. You have said so much as doth convince me that I must not, for fear of the trouble, cast away the thoughts of my soul and eternity ; but, truly, sir, I have thought of these things so little, that I am but puzzled and lost, and know not what to do. And, therefore, you must help to guide my thoughts, or I can do nothing with them.

P. You have now hinted yourself another cause that so many are puzzled about religion, and turn it to a melancholy life. When a sinner hath lived ignorantly, carelessly, and sinfully, all his days, and cometh at last, by the mercy of God, to see his misery, it cannot be expected that he should presently be acquainted with all those great mysterious things which he never did seriously mind before. And so is like a man that hath a way to go that he never went, and a book to learn that he never learned before. And all young scholars do find the easiest lessons hard, till they have time to be acquainted with them. They are

^d Tit. iii. 3—5 ; Rom. v. 5, and viii. 28 ; 1 Pet. i. 8, 9 ; read Luke xv. ; John v. 42 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 22, and ii. 9 ; Eph. vi. 24 ; Jam. i. 12, and ii. 5.

like a man that was born and bred in a dungeon, where he had only candle-light; who, when he first cometh into the open world, and seeth the sun, is astonished at the change, but must have a time before (by all that light) he can be acquainted with all the things and persons which he never before saw. Long ignorance * will not be cured in a day: and darkness naturally feedeth fears; but time and patience in the light will overcome them.

But to answer your desire, I will direct your thoughts: and I think that now the next thing you have to think on is to look into your heart, and look back upon your life, and come to a clear resolution of this question, whether you are yet a truly converted sinner, and are forgiven and reconciled to God, or not? And whether you are yet in the way to heaven or no? I pray you tell me now what you think of yourself. If you die this night in the case you are now in, do you think you shall be saved, or not?

S. God knows; I told you that I do not know, but I hope well, for no man must despair.

P. To despair of ever being converted and saved, is one thing that you must not do. And to know that a man is not yet converted, and to despair of being saved without conversion, is another thing; that is your duty, if you are yet unrenewed. But as for your hoping well, I must tell you that there is a hope of God's giving, and there is a hope of our own, and of the devil's making. And you must not think that God will make good the devil's word, nor our word, but only his own word. To a repenting believer, God promiseth forgiveness and salvation; and such a one must hope for it; and God will never disappoint his hopes. But to unbelievers, ungodly, impenitent persons, the devil and their own deceitful hearts only do promise forgiveness and salvation. And they that do promise it must perform it, if they can; for God will not. Do you think that God hath promised that all men should be saved, any where in his word?

S. No; I dare not say so.

P. Do you think, then, that if all men shall hope to be saved, that this would save them ever the more?

S. No; but yet there is some comfort in hoping well.

P. But how little a while will deceitful comfort last. Do

* John iii. 4, 6—8; Heb. v. 11—14; Acts viii. 30, 31.

† 1 Cor. vi. 9, and iii. 18; Gal. vi. 7; Eph. v. 6; 1 John i. 8; Jam. i. 22, 26.

you not know that there are some men that God hath told us that he will not save? As Luke xiii. 3, 5, "Except ye repent ye shall all perish?" "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven?" (Matt. viii. 13.) "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die?" (Rom. viii. 13.) The text is plain, you cannot deny it. Tell me, then, if any one of these shall hope to be saved, in such a condition in which God saith, that no man shall be saved, should such a man do well to hope for the contrary? Is not this to hope that God's word is false? And should a man hope that God will lie? Or will God go contrary to his word?

S. But may we not hope that God will be better than his word? There is no harm in that.

P. That which you call better is not better, but worse. The king hath made laws for the hanging of murderers: if he should pardon them all, they would call it better to them; but the commonwealth would call it worse. For no man could have any security for his life; but every one that had a mind of his money, or that hated him, would kill him if he could. And where, then, were justice? What is the law made for, but to be the rule of the subject's life, and of the judge's sentence, and to tell men what they must expect? And if it be not fulfilled, it is vain and deceitful, and sheweth that the law-maker either had not wit enough to make it well, or had not power enough to execute it. A benefactor or friend, indeed, may give more than he hath promised, if he see cause; but a^s righteous governor must rule according to his laws, or else he deceiveth men by them, which is not to be imputed to God. At least, he will not^b lie, and falsify his word.

S. But for all that, the king may pardon an offender.

P. That is, because that weak man can make no law so perfect, but on some occasions there will be need of a dispensation. But it is not so with God. And a righteous king will never pardon crimes, but in some rare, extraordinary case, which shall be no disparagement to his law, nor hurt to his subjects; which is no comfort to all the rest of the malefactors.

But I doubt you do not understand that God did at first make a perfect¹ law, which forbade all sin on pain of death: and man did break this law, and we all still break it from day

^s Job viii. 3; Psalm lxxxix. 14; Heb. xii. 28, 29.

^b Tit. i. 2; Heb. vi. 18; Rom. iil. 4; 1 John v. 10.

¹ Rom. iii. 21, &c., and v., throughout.

to day, by every sin ; and God, being merciful, hath given us a Saviour, and by him the forgiveness of all our sins. But how ? not absolutely ; but he pardoneth us all by an act of oblivion, a pardoning law : and this law maketh our faith and true repentance (or conversion) to be the condition of pardon. And in it God affirmeth and protesteth, that he will pardon and save^k all that believe and are converted ; and that he will never pardon or save them that continue unconverted in their sin and unbelief. God hath already given out a pardon to all the world, if they will but take it thankfully on his terms, and cease their rebellion, and turn to him : and hath resolved, that they that continue to refuse this pardon and mercy shall be doubly punished, first for their common sins, and then for their base unthankfulness and contempt of mercy. And now bethink you whether it be not foolishness for any to say, ' I hope God will forgive me, and be better than his word ? ' He hath already forgiven you, if you repent and turn to him ; but if you will not, it is impudence for a man, at the same time, to refuse forgiveness and yet to hope for it ; to despise mercy, and say ' I hope for mercy.'

What if the king make an act of pardon to the Irish rebels, forgiving them all, on condition they will thankfully take his pardon, and lay down their rebellious arms, were it not impudency in them to continue in arms, and refuse these conditions, and yet say, ' We hope the king will pardon us ?'

There are two things that may fully resolve you that God will pardon and save no unconverted sinner: the first is, because that, in his pardoning law itself, (that is, the gospel,) he hath said and protested that he will not ; and it is impossible for God to lie. The second is, that the thing itself is incongruous and unfit for the wise, holy, and righteous God to do. For a pardoned person is reconciled to God, and hath communion with him. And what communion hath light with darkness, or God with the devil and his works ? It is blasphemy to say, that God can be actually reconciled to ungodly souls, and take them into his complacency and kingdom. Yea, what if I said, that it is a thing impossible, and a contradiction for a man to be forgiven and saved, that is unholy and unconverted ? If you knew what sin is, you would know that it is a self-punishment, and the sorest evil ; the sickness and misery of the soul : and to forgive a man is to deliver him from this misery ; and to save

^k Mark xvi. 16 ; John iii. 1, 16, 18, 19 ; 1 Thess. ii. 7—10 ; Heb. ii. 3, 4 ; iv. 1, and xii. 27—29.

him, is to¹ save him from his sin. For it is, as it were, a spark of hell fire kindled in the soul, which is not saved till it be quenched. And what is heaven itself but the perfect light and love of God? And to say that a man is saved, that loveth not God above his sin, and is not holy, is to say that he is saved and not saved.

S. I understand these things better than I did; but I can hardly digest it, that you thus seem to drive men to despair.

P. You greatly mistake; I am driving you from despair. There is no hope of the salvation of a sinner that continueth unconverted; flatter not yourselves with foolish hopes of the devil's making; as sure as God's word is true, there is no hopes of it. Everlasting despair in hell is the portion of all that die unconverted and unsanctified. They will then cry out for ever, 'All our^m hope is past and gone; we had once hope of mercy, but we refused it, and now there is no hope.' This thought, that there is no more hope, will tear the sinner's heart for ever. This is the state that I would keep you from, and do I not then seek to keep you from despair?

Suppose you met a man riding post towards York, and thinketh verily he is in the way to London, and tells you, 'I ride for life, and must be at London at night;' you tell him that he must turn back again, then, for he is going the quite contrary way, and the further he goeth, the further he hath to go back again; He answereth you, 'Alas! I hope I have not lost all this time and travel; I hope I may come this way to London.' Will not you tell him that his hopes will deceive him? there is no hope of coming to London that way, but he must needs turn back; and if he answer you, 'You would drive me to despair; I will hope well, and go on;' what would you say to this man? Would you not take him for a fool? and tell him, 'If you will not believe me, ask somebody else, and know better, before you go on any further.'

So say I to you, if you are out of the way to heaven, you must despair of ever coming thither,ⁿ till you turn; but this is not to despair of conversion and salvation, but despair of being saved in the devil's way, that you may be saved in God's way, and not despair for evermore. Changing false hopes for sound

¹ Matt. i. 21; Tit. iii. 3, 5.

^m Job viii. 13, 14; xi. 20, and xxvii. 8; Prov. xi. 7, and xiv. 32; Isa. lviii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 3, 21, and iii. 15; 1 John iii. 3.

ⁿ Luke xiii. 3, 5.

hopes is not to cast away all hope. There is nothing more hindereth men from repenting and being saved, than hoping to be saved without true repentance. For who will ever^o turn to God, that still hopeth to be saved in the worldly, ungodly way that he is in ? who will turn back again that hopeth he is right and safe already ?

Tell me, I pray you, must not every wise man have some ground and reason for his hope ? And should a man's soul and everlasting state be ventured upon unsound and uncertain hopes ?

S. No, if we can have better.

P. Tell me freely, then, what are the grounds and reasons of your hopes ? Heaven is not for all men. What have you to show that will truly prove your title to it ?

S. I ground my hope on the great mercy of God.

P. But God's mercy saveth none but by conversion ; devils nor^p unconverted men are not saved by it. It is the refusing and abusing of mercy that condemneth men : the question is, whether this mercy will save you ?

S. I place my hope in Jesus Christ, who is my Saviour.

P. I say as before, Christ saveth not all men ; what hope have you that he will save you more than others ?

S. Is it not said, that he is the Saviour of all men, and that he is the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world ?

P. That is, because^q saving is his office, for which he is all-sufficient, and by his sacrifice he hath pardoned all the world, on condition that they believe and turn to God, but till they believe and repent they are not actually pardoned. He may be the physioian of all the city or hospital, who undertaketh to cure all in the city or hospital that will trust him, and take his remedies ; and yet all may die that will not trust him, and be ruled by him.

S. But I do believe in Christ, and believers are forgiven.

P. If you truly believe, you have good reason for your hopes : but I am loth you should be mistaken in so great a business. I must first tell you, therefore, what true believing is : every true believer doth at once believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And he believeth all God's word to be true, and he heartily consenteth that God be his only God, and that Christ be his only Saviour, and the Holy Ghost his Sancti-

^o Jam. iii. 40 ; Ezek. xxxiii. 9, 11, 49 ; xviii. 21, 30, 32, and xiv. 6.

^p Isa. xxvii. 11 ; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, &c., and ii. 10, 12 ; Rom. i. 20, to the end.

^q John iii. 16 ; 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.

fier, and he trusteth himself wholly to God alone, for happiness, and for justification, and sanctification, and salvation. Do you do this ?

S. I hope I do ; I believe in God, and trust him.

P. Let us a little consider all the parts of faith, and try whether you thus believe or not. 1. Do you truly believe that without regeneration, repentance, conversion, and holiness, none can be saved and see God ? (John iii. 3, 6 ; Luke xiii. 3, 5 ; Matt. xviii. 3 ; Heb. xii. 14.) And that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (Rom. viii. 9.) If you do not, you believe not the word of God.

2. Do you take the^r love of God and the heavenly glory to be your only happiness, and trust to nothing in this world, neither health, life, wealth, or pleasure, for your daily comfort, and greatest content.

3. Do you desire and trust that Christ will save you from all your sins, and will teach you all the will of God : and that he will sanctify you by the Holy Ghost, that you may live aⁿ holy and heavenly life in the love of God ; and may forsake, not only lust, and wantonness, and gluttony, and drunkenness, and pride and ambition, and deceit and covetousness, but also mortify all fleshly desires, and destroy all your own will, which is against the will of God, and bring you up to the greatest holiness ?

S. You put me hard to it now. I know not what to say to this.

P. You may know whether you believe and trust in God and Christ, or not, if you will but consider these three things. 1. What you must believe and trust him for. 2. What word of his it is that you believe. 3. What are the effects which are always brought forth by a serious faith.

And, 1. You must trust in God for that which he hath promised to give, and you must take all together, or else it is not trusting God : as you trust a physician to cure you, and trust a schoolmaster to teach you, and trust a lawyer to counsel you in his way, and so you trust every man in his own undertaken work : so must you trust in God to be your only everlasting joy, and better to you than all the world, and to be the Law-giver and Ruler of your life : and you must trust^t Christ to justify you, and save you from your sins, and you must trust

^r Psalm lxxiii. 25 ; lxiii. 3, and lv. 6, 7.

ⁿ Rom. viii. 1, 6—8, 13 ; Heb. xi. 6 ; 2 Tim. ii. 4 ; 1 Thess. iv. 1 ; Isa. lvi. 4 ; Col. i. 10.

^t Acts xxvi. 18 ; Tit. ii. 14.

the Holy Ghost to kill your sins, and to illuminate, sanctify, and quicken you, and, by degrees, to make you perfectly holy : for these are the things that God is to be trusted for. But, if any should trust God to save them from hell and not from sin, or from the guilt of sin, and not from the power of it ; or to let them keep their fleshly lusts while they live, and then to give them heaven at death, this is not to trust God, but to abuse him, not to trust his mercy, but to refuse it. How doth he trust in Christ to save him, that is not willing to be saved by him ? And he that will not be saved from his sin, will not be saved by Christ. And how can he trust the Holy Ghost to sanctify him, who is not willing to be sanctified, but thinketh a holy life to be an intolerable toil and misery ?

II. To believe God is to believe his word. And what word of God have you to believe, but that he will save converted believers, and condemn all ungodly unbelievers ? If now you will believe that God will save any unconverted, ungodly sinners, this is, to believe the devil and yourselves, and not God ; for God never said any such word in all the Bible, but protesteth the contrary. And what a self-deceit is it to hope to be saved for believing a lie, and fathering it upon God ! And what blasphemy is it to call it a believing God, when you believe the devil that contradicteth him !

III. Believing and trusting will be seen in their effects. Is it possible for a man truly to believe that he shall have a life of joys in heaven for ever, if he will turn from the flesh and the world to God, and value and seek heaven more than earth, and yet not do it, but be a carnal worldling still ? Is it possible truly to believe that the wicked shall be turned into hell, (Psalm ix. 17,) and yet to go on still in wickedness ?

If you were a beggar or a slave in England, and the king should promise you a kingdom in the Indies, if you will but trust yourself in the ship with his own son, who undertaketh to bring you thither, I pray you tell me now, what is the meaning of this trusting his son, and how may it appear whether you trust the king's promise and his son's conduct, or not ? If you trust him, you will pack up and be gone ; you will leave your own country, and all that is in it, and on ship-board you will go, and venture^u all that you have in the voyage, in hope of the kingdom which is promised you. But if you fear that the king deceiveth you, or that his son wanteth either skill, or

^u Luke xi. 22, 23, and xiv. 26, 33 ; Matt. xiii. 45, 46.

will, or power, to bring you to the promised place, and that the ship is unsafe, or the waves and tempests like to drown you, then you will stay at home, and will not venture.

So when God offereth you a heavenly kingdom, if so be you will, in heart, forsake the world, and all its pomp and pleasures, and all the sinful desires of the flesh. If now you trust this promise of God, you will forsake all and follow a crucified Saviour as a cross-bearer; you will take shipping with Christ and his servants, and let go all in hope of heaven. But if you do not forsake all (in heart) and follow him, resolving to take heaven instead of all, you do not trust him, whatever you may pretend.

S. I cannot deny but what you say is the plain truth.

P. Suppose that you were sick, and only one physician could cure you, and he offereth to do it freely if you trust him, that is, will trust your life to his skill and care: and some give out that he is but a deceiver, and not to be trusted, and others tell you that he never failed any that he undertook. If you trust him now, you will commit yourself wholly to his care, and follow his counsel, and take his medicines, and forsake all others. But if you distrust him you will neglect him. And if any should say, 'I trust this physician with my life,' and yet stay at home, and never come near him, nor take any of his counsel, or, at least, none of his medicines, would you not count him mad that looked to be cured by such a trust?

S. I confess this helpeth me better to understand what trusting in God, and believing in Christ, is. I doubt but many* say they trust him, that keep their sins, and hold fast the world, and never dreamt of forsaking all for the hopes of heaven.

But I thought, sir, that this command of forsaking all, and taking up our cross, had been spoken only to such as lived in times of persecution, when they must deny Christ or die, and not to us that live where Christianity is professed. God forbid that none should be saved but martyrs.

P. But do you not find, 1. That it is the very covenant and common law of Christ, imposed on all that will be saved, that they deny themselves, and forsake all, and take up the cross, and follow him, or else they cannot be his disciples? (Matt. x. 37, &c.; Luke xiv. 24, to the end, and xviii. 21, 22, &c.) 2. And doth not every one that is baptised covenant and vow to forsake the world, the flesh, and the devil; and to take God

* Tit. i. 16.

for their only God, which is their all? For if he be not enough for them, and taken as their portion, and loved above the world, he is not taken for their God. But it is well that you confess that you^r must forsake life and all for Christ rather than deny him: for if a man must do this actually in persecution, then he must do it before, in affection and resolution. Can you die for Christ, then, unless your heart be prepared for it now? Can you, then, leave all this world for God and heaven, unless you beforehand love God and heaven better than all the world, and resolve to forsake it when you are called to do it?

S. No man is like to do that which his heart is not disposed to before, and which he is not purposed to do.

P. Why then you see the case is plain, that every one that will be Christ's disciple must forsake the world in heart and resolution, and be a martyr in true preparation and disposition, though no one must cast away his estate or life, nor be a martyr, by suffering, till God call him to it. "He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John ii. 15.)

By this time you may perceive, if you are willing, whether your faith in Christ, and trust in God, have been true or false: and now tell me what else you have to prove that you are a justified Christian, and that your hope of salvation is built on God?

S. My next proof is, that I repent of my sins; and God hath promised to forgive them that repent.

P. Repentance is a good evidence, as well as faith. But here, also, you must take heed of that which is counterfeit; and therefore you must be sure to understand well what true repentance is.

S. Repentance is to be sorry for my sins when I have committed them, and to wish I had never done them.

P. If you know repentance no better than so, you may be undone by the mistake. True repentance is the same with true conversion;¹ and it is such a settled change of the mind, will, and life, from fleshly, worldly, and ungodly, to spiritual, heavenly, and holy, as maketh us hate all the sin which we loved, and heartily love a holy life, and all those duties to God and man which before our hearts were set against. And this change is so firmly rooted in us, as that it is become as a new nature to us; so that all the same temptations which before prevailed

¹ Rom. vii. 16—18; 2 Tim. ii. 12; Matt. x. 33, and xvi. 24—26; Luke ii. 9.

² Matt. xviii. 3; 1 Cor. vi. 11; 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11; Tit. iii. 3, 5.

with us, would not draw us to the same sins again, nor turn us from a holy life, if we were exposed to them as we were.

S. There is a great deal in this. I pray you open it to me more fully in the particulars.

P. By this you may see what goeth to make up true repentance, and how many sorts of repentance are counterfeit.

1. True repentance is a change of the whole soul,^a the judgment, the will, and the life, and not of any one of these alone. It is a counterfeit repentance which changeth only a man's opinion, and not his heart and his conversation: and it is counterfeit repentance when men pretend that their wills are changed, and they are willing to live a godly life, when they do it not, and their lives are not changed.

2. True repentance doth not only turn a man's heart and life from this or that particular sin, but from a fleshly, worldly, ungodly state;^b so that he that before did seek, above all, to fulfil the desires of his flesh, and to prosper in the world, doth now strive as hard to kill those desires as he did to satisfy them, and now taketh the world for vanity and vexation, and turneth it out of his heart. It is counterfeit repentance which reformeth only some open, shameful sin, as drunkenness, prodigality, fornication, deceiving, or the like, and still keepeth up a worldly mind, and the pleasing of the flesh in a cleanlier way. No one sin is rightly killed, till the love of every sin be killed.

3. True repentance is a turning to God, and setting of our hearts and hopes on heaven;^c so that we now love holiness, and seek God's kingdom above this world. It is counterfeit repentance, or mere melancholy, when men, by affliction, or conviction, cry out of the vanity of this world, and set not their hearts upon a better, and seek not after the heavenly felicity.

4. True repentance is a settled and an effectual change. It maketh a man^d love that which is good, as if it were now natural to him, and not only to do some good for fear, which he had rather leave undone; nor only to forbear some sins for fear, which he had rather he might keep: and therefore the very heart and love being changed, temptations, even the same that before prevailed, would not now prevail again, if he were under them. It is but a counterfeit repentance, when men are sorry for sinning, but amend not, or are sorry to-day and sin again to-

^a 2 Cor. v. 17; Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. viii. 30.

^b John iii. 6; 1 John ii. 15; Rom. viii. 1, 8, 13, and xiii. 12—14.

^c Phil. iii. 18—20; Col. iii. 1, 3—5; Matt. vi. 21, 33.

^d Psalm i. 2, 3; xix. 7—9, cxix, &c.

morrow; and that by such gross and wilful sin, which they might forsake, if they were truly willing.* By this time, then, you may try whether you have repented indeed, as you supposed.

S. But (Luke xvii. 4) Christ bids us forgive those that seven times in a day trespass, and seven times in a day return and say they repent: and will not God then do so?

P. 1. Christ speaketh of true repentance, as far as we can judge, and not of saying, 'I repent,' when it is an apparent lie, or mockery. 2. And he speaketh of such trespasses, the oft committing of which is consistent with true repentance: for instance, it is possible that a man may seven times a-day think a vain thought, speak a vain word, or, if he pray seven times a-day, he may have, every time, some coldness or imperfections in his prayers; and such like infirmities oft returning, may stand with true repentance, because the sinner would fain overcome them if he could. And so, if a man often wrong you through infirmity, and oft repent, you must forgive him. But, tell me truly, if one of your own servants or children should, seven times a day, or but once a week, or once a month, spit in your face, and beat and buffet you, or wound you, and set your house on fire, and as oft come and say, 'I repent of it,' would you take this for true repentance, or think that this is it that Christ here meant? Or, if your servant should every night come to you and say, 'Master, I have done no work to-day, but I repent; I wish I had done it;' and so hold on from day to day, will you take this for repentance? Do you think it possible for an ungodly, worldly, fleshly man, to repent truly of such a life to-day, and turn to it again to-morrow, and so on? It cannot be. A man may repent of an angry look, or a vain word, to-day, and, through infirmity, commit the same to-morrow; but a man cannot repent of an ungodly, sensual life, and turn to it again to-morrow.

I do not think that there is one wicked man of many, but when he hath been guilty of fornication, drunkenness, or any such sin of sensual pleasure, doth repent of it when the pleasure is gone, and wisheth that he had not done it, when yet he goeth on, and is a lover of such beastly pleasure more than of God; for there needeth no saving grace to such a kind of repentance; sense and experience may serve the turn. For when the pleasure of the sin is gone, it is nothing: and therefore is no matter for the sinner's love, (unless it be the fanciful remembrance

* Matt. vii. 20—23; 2 Tim. ii. 19.

of it, which is another thing.) But it is the future pleasure which is still desired. When the drunkard is sick, and findeth the next day the sweetness all gone, and nothing left but shame, or poverty, or a wounded conscience, no thanks to him to say, 'I am sorry, and wish I had been sober : ' but still he loveth the sin, and will not leave it, and therefore hath no true change of heart and life, which is the true repentance. And now consider well what I have said, and judge yourself whether you have ever truly repented of a worldly, a fleshly, and an unholy heart and life.

S. You put me so hard to it that I know not what to say. I know not well what to think of myself: and therefore, sir, as you have examined my case, I shall entreat you to help me to pass a right judgment of it, for you are wiser in these things than I. And though the patient feel the pains, yet the physician can better judge of the cause, and nature, and danger of the disease.

P. You say well: but then the patient must tell what he feeleth, and you must answer me these few questions.

1. Hath your soul and everlasting state had your more deep and^c serious thoughts and regard than your body and your worldly welfare?

S. I cannot say so, though I have often thought of it.

P. 2. Do you verily believe that your sins are so odious, as that if God should condemn you to hell,^e he should do worse by you than you deserve?

S. I know you would not have me lie. I have been taught, indeed, that so it is; but my heart never perceived my sins to be so great as to deserve hell. I should think it unjust to be so used as I would not use my greatest enemy.

P. 3. Have you not only heard, but believed, and perceived that you have as much need of Christ to be your Saviour, as a condemned malefactor hath of a pardon; and is Christ more precious^b to you than all the riches of the world, his ransom and mediation being your hope, and his grace your earnest desire?

S. I know that we cannot be saved without Christ: but I cannot say that I have so much desired him.

P. 4. Have you perceived at the heart, that the love and

^c Matt. vi. 23—25.

^e Rom. vi. 23; iii. 23; vii. 24, and viii. 1; Eph. ii. 3; 1 Thess. i. 10.

^b Phil. iii. 7—9; 1 Pet. ii. 4, 6, 7.

favour of God is far ¹ better than all the treasures and pleasures of this world? And do you verily believe that all the blessed shall see his glory in heaven, and perfectly love, and praise, and serve him, and be filled with perfect joy for ever, in this blessed sight and love of God? And do you set more by the hope of this heavenly glory than by your life and all this world? And do you prefer heaven before earth, in your esteem, your desire, and heartiest labour and diligence to make it sure?

S. I would I could say so: I doubt there be but few that reach so high as that.

P. 5. Have you truly believed, that all ^k that will come to heaven must be a regenerate, sanctified people, in mind, and will, and life; and that this must be done by the Holy Ghost? And have you earnestly desired that he would sanctify you thoroughly, and kill all your sins, and make you fervently in love with God, and all that is good, and fully obedient to his will? And have you given up yourself to Jesus Christ, in a well-considered, resolved covenant; consenting to be taught and governed by him, and willing to imitate him, and to receive his Spirit?

S. I cannot say so; though I desire to amend.

P. 6. Do you feel the ^l evil and odiousness of a worldly, carnal, unrenewed heart, and of an unholy life? Yea, of your own want of faith and love to God, as well as of outward, shameful sins? And are these sins of heart and practice the greatest trouble and burden to you in the world?

S. I would it were so; but I do not find it so.

P. 7. Can you truly say that you ^m live not wilfully in any known gross sin, and that you have no sin, no, not the least known infirmity, which you had not rather leave than keep? And that you had rather be perfectly holy (in perfect knowledge, love, and obedience) than to have all the riches, and pleasures, and honours of this world?

S. I should dissemble if I should say so.

P. 8. Can you truly say, that when a temptation cometh to your most beloved sin, God's authority, which forbiddeth it, is

¹ Matt. vi. 20, 21, and vi. 33; Col. iii. 1, 3, 4, &c.; Psalm lxxvii. 25, and lxxiii. 3; Phil. iii. 20, 21; John vi. 27; 2 Pet. i. 10, and iii. 11.

^k 2 Cor. v. 19, 20; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, and xi. 28, 29; Rom. viii. 9; Gal. v. 17, 21; Acts iii. 22, and vii. 37; Luke xix. 27; Heb. xii. 14.

^l Rom. vii. 14, 24; Ezek. vi. 9; xx. 43, and xxxvi. 31.

^m 1 John iii. 4, 8, 9; Mal. vii. 21; Psalm v. 5; Rom. vii. 17, 24; Luke xiv. 26.

more ^a powerful to keep you from it than the temptation and your lust to draw you to it ?

S. I would it were : I should then sin less.

P. 9. Are you truly willing to ^o wait on God to obtain his grace, in the constant use of hearing, prayer, meditation, and the company and counsel of the godly ; even in the strictest means which God appointeth you to use for your salvation ?

S. I think they are happy that can do so ; but I cannot.

P. 10. Can you truly say that you are at a ^p point with all this world, resolving to let go estate, honour, liberty, and life, rather than let go your faith and obedience ; or, by wilful sin, to turn from God ?

S. I know I should do so ; but I am not come to that.

P. In a word : if you were now to be ^q baptised first, and understood what you did, would you take God for your only God and Father, and Christ for your only Saviour, and the Holy Ghost for your Sanctifier ; to save you from lust, and sin, and hell, and to bring you to perfect holiness and glory ; forsaking the world, the flesh, and the devil, and totally giving up yourself to God : and this by a solemn, sacred vow ; which, if you keep not, you are lost for ever ? Would you, thus considerably, be baptised, if it were to do again ?

S. I should promise, and be baptised : but whether I should consent to all this heartily, I doubt.

P. By all these answers set together, you have enabled me how to judge of your condition. If all this be so as you have answered, I must needs tell you, that I think you are yet unconverted and unjustified, and under the guilt and power of your sins, even in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, and that if you should die as you are, without conversion, you are lost for ever : you must be made a new creature, or you are undone. I know this judgment may possibly seem harsh, and be displeasing to you, but it is foolish to flatter our friends or ourselves, when we stand so near the world of light.

But withal I tell you, 1. That your case is not remediless, and that you may be saved from it whenever you are truly willing. 2. And that you are not so far from grace and recovery, as many hardened sinners are, for I perceive that you deal

^a Gen. xxxix. 9 ; Rom. xli. 21 ; 2 Pet. ii. 19, 20 ; 1 John v. 4, 5 ; Rev. ii. 7, 11, &c.

^o Psalm i. 1, 2 ; Matt. vii. 13 ; Prov. ii. 1—4 ; Luke x. 42.

^p Luke xiv. 26, 33, and xviii. 22, 23 ; Matt. x. 38, 39.

^q Matt. xxviii. 18—20 ; Mark xvi. 16 ; Luke xiv. 29, 30.

openly, and are not so desperately set against conviction and conversion as too many are.

S. I thank you for dealing plainly with me: but what makes you judge so hardly of my case?

P. Out of your own mouth I pass my judgment; for you confess that it is not yet with you as it is with all that have the Spirit of Christ. And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (Rom. viii. 9.)

And I will here take the boldness to add some observations of my own, which have long made me fear that yet you have not the Spirit of Christ, nor true repentance unto life. For, 1. I have never perceived that you did seriously mind the case of your soul. One might be often in your company, and hear nothing but of common, worldly things, (which may be talked of in due time and measure,) not a word of heaven, nor that savoured of any care of your salvation. And sure one cannot truly believe, and mind, and regard so great a matter as life everlasting, and never show it, by any serious inquiries, or^r discourse.

2. And I have observed that you were very indifferent for your company,^u and were more with ignorant, worldly men, or merry sensualists, than with those that set their hearts on heaven, and might have helped you thitherward, by their counsel and example.

3. And I never heard that you^t set up the worship of God in your family. You seldom prayed with them at all, unless now and then that you said over hastily a few cold words, without any fervency. You never^u instructed or catechised them, nor took care of the souls of children or servants, but only used them like your beasts, to eat and drink, and do your work. And you are often from the church assemblies, and seem not much moved with what you hear: and neither neighbours or your family hear a word of it from you, when you are once out of the church.

4. And you can now and then drop a petty oath, and curse when you are angry. And you spend the Lord's day almost all in common talk and business, except just while you are at church. And though I never took you for a drunkard, nor whore-monger, nor heard you scorn or rail at godliness, you can sit by them that do it, and easily bear it, as if it were but a small matter. And I heard of one that you once overreached by an

^r Psalm xxxvii. 30—32.

^t John xxiv. 15.

^u Psalm i. 1, 2, and xv. 4.

^u Deut. vi. 7, 8, and xi.

unconscionable bargain, but you never made him any restitution. And I perceive that you are all for yourself, though you are a quiet and good neighbour. You speak best of those that do you any good, be they what they will in other respects: and you have always an ill word for those that you are fallen out with, and that you think have wronged you, or that think ill or meanly of you, let them be never so honest in all other respects. In a word, the love of God, and a heavenly mind, is a thing that will, in some measure, show itself, by preferring God and heaven still before all: and I could never perceive any such thing by you, which made me fear your case was as bad as you now confess it.

I do not name these things as if each one of them by itself were a certain sign of an ungodly person. How far an honest-minded man may be carried in a passion to a curse, or railing speech, or an oath, or, through disability, may omit any family duty, or, through a wrong opinion of it, may neglect the Lord's day, I am not now determining. But sure I am, that God saveth none but those that love, honour, and obey him above all others, and make him their trust, and hope, and happiness; and that Christ saveth none but those that value him as their Saviour, and give up themselves to be taught and ruled by him, and sanctified by his Spirit; and that heaven is a place for no carnal worldling, that loveth the world above it, and seeketh this world before it, and that mindeth most the things of the flesh, and had rather^{*} satisfy than mortify his sinful lusts and will. And as far as I could perceive by your conversation, this is your case, though you are not so grossly wicked and unconscionable as the debauched sort.

S. I confess I never made the saving of my soul so much of my care, and so serious a business as you talk of; nor hath my heart been so sensible of the need that I have of Christ, or of the greatness of God's love and mercy to sinners in our redemption; nor have I had such believing and serious thoughts of the life to come, as to make it seem more desirable to me than this world; nor can I say, and not lie, that I loved God better than my money, and estate, and fleshly pleasure: nor that I ever made so great a matter of sinning as to avoid it at the rate of any great suffering or loss; or that ever I was very desirous to lead a holy and a heavenly life; nor that I had any great delight in the thoughts or practice of such things, much less that ever

^{*} John viii. 34.

I made the pleasing of God, and the obtaining of perfect and everlasting holiness and happiness with him in heaven, to be the chief care, and end, and labour of my life. But yet I thought that all being sinners, and God being merciful, I might be saved if I believed in Christ, and put my trust in him alone. But now you have made me better to understand what it is to believe and trust in Christ, I perceive that I did not indeed believe and trust in him when I thought I had.

P. I pray you tell me : do you not think there are such sins as presumption, carnal security, false believing, and false hope, whereby the devil undoeth souls ?

S. Yes ; I have heard preachers often say so.

P. What do you think presumption is ?

S. Presuming or thinking that God doth accept us,^r and we are in a state of grace, when it is not so.

P. What do you think carnal security is ?

S. To be^s careless about the state of our souls, when our danger calleth for our greatest care.

P. What is false believing ?

S. To believe ourselves, or ^a bad men, or the devil, against God, or instead of God ; or to believe that God hath promised that which he hath not promised ; or to trust that Christ will give heaven to such as he hath told us shall not have it.

P. And what is false hope ?

S. To hope for heaven or mercy^b without any such ground, upon terms that God never promised to give it on, or hath plainly said, he will not give it.

P. You have answered very well and truly. And do you not think that all these have been your sins ?

S. I am now afraid so : but I am loth to think that it is so bad with me, and therefore I would fain hope still that it is better. But if it should be so, I pray you tell me, what would you yet advise me to do ?

P. God knoweth, I have no desire to trouble you, nor to put you into any needless fears, much less to drive you into despair ; nor would I have you conclude that your state is bad, upon my word alone : but I will here cite you some texts of Scripture, by which you may certainly judge yourself, and I will entreat you, when you come home, to bestow a few hours in secret, as in God's presence, in a true and impartial examination of yourself

^r John viii. 39, 41, 44, and ix. 40.

^a Matt. xxiv. 23, 26 ; 1 John iv. 1.

^s Matt. xxiv. 39 ; 1 Thess. v. 3.

^b Prov. xi. 7.

by them, and tell me when I next see you how you find the case yourself.

S. But if I do find it bad, I pray you tell me now what I must do to be pardoned and saved?

P. I will now only tell you these generals. 1. That you must well consider how bad and sad an unconverted man's condition is, that you may not delay to seek for mercy, and to come out of such a miserable state. 2: That yet you need not despair or be discouraged, for Christ is a sufficient Saviour and remedy.

And for the first, believe it, till you repent and are converted, you are void of the holy image of God, and have the image of the devil in ignorance, unbelief, and averseness or enmity to God and holiness, in pride, sensuality, worldliness, disobedience, and carnal selfishness. Your heart is against the holy laws and ways of God: you have a fleshly will and concupiscence of your own, which is your idol, and the great rebel against God, which will still be striving against his will, and will draw you to be still pleasing it, though it displease God. You will be a slave to the devil, by your slavery to this fleshly mind and appetite; and you will spend your little time in the world, in pleasing that^c flesh, if God convert you not. You will never truly love God and heaven, nor make him your end, nor take him for your God, and so you will live in enmity and rebellion against him: you are yet unreconciled, unpardoned, unjustified, unsanctified: all your sins that ever you committed are yet upon you in their guilt. And, in a word, (pardon my plain dealing,) if you die as you are, you will be certainly damned; and as you have departed from God's grace, he will judge you to depart for ever from his glory also. And it will go much the worse with you in hell, because that you might have had the grace of a Redeemer, and you refused Christ, and resisted his Spirit, and neglected his great salvation. So that to deal freely with you, I would not be in your case one day for all the riches in the world, for you have no assurance of your life a minute, and you are certain it cannot be long, and you are still in the power of that God whom you offend: and if you thus die before a true and sound conversion, you are lost for ever, and all your time, your mercies, your comforts, and your hopes, are gone for ever, past all remedy. This is as sure the state of every unregenerate, unholy, impenitent sinner, as the^d word of God is true. And,

^c Gal. v. 21, 22; Rom. viii. 5, 6, 8, 9; Eph. ii. 1—3, &c.; Mark iv. 12.

^d John lii. 3, 5; Heb. xii. 14.

therefore, as you love yourself, and as ever you care what becomes of your soul, when it must shortly leave your body, go presently try, and truly try, whether you are a regenerate, holy person or not?

S. Alas! sir, I know not how to do it, for I have left my soul hitherto carelessly to a venture, thinking that this had been trusting Christ with it, and now I am unskilful in such matters, and know not how to examine myself. Therefore, I pray you give me your directions.

P. With all my heart, if you will but promise me to do your best. Will you set yourself some time apart for the business, and do it as a man would cast up an account with your most serious thoughts? And will you examine yourself as you would do another man, with an unfeigned willingness to know the truth, be it better or be it worse?

S. Alas! what good will it do me to flatter and deceive myself, when God knoweth all, and will not be deceived? I desire to know what case I am in, and that I may know what course to take hereafter?

P. Indeed, till you know that, you know not well whether comfort or sorrow best become you, nor whether the promises or threatenings should be first applied by you, nor how well to use any text you read, or sermon you hear. And methinks that a mere uncertainty, what shall become of you when you die, and whether you shall be in heaven or hell for ever, should mar your mirth, and make you sleep with little quietness, till at least you had done your best to make your calling and election sure, and get some good, well-grounded hopes.

I will put you to no longer work than is necessary. 1. Take the Scriptures, especially these texts here transcribed, and set them before you, and well consider them as the word of God. 2. Fall down on your knees, and earnestly beg God's help and mercy to convince you, and show you the truth of your condition. 3. Look back upon all your life, and look into the inwards of your soul, and let conscience compare your heart and life with the word of God, and urge it to speak plainly, and to judge you truly as you are. 4. Do not only try and judge yourself by some few actions which have been extraordinary with you; but by the main design, and scope, and tenor of your heart and life; for there is some good in the worst of men, and some evil in the best: and if you will judge of a good man by his worst actions, or of a bad man by his best, you will be unright-

eous and misjudge them. Simon Magus, when he was professing his faith at his baptism, seemed better than Simon Peter when he was denying Christ. And judge not your heart by some good thoughts, or some bad thoughts, which have been rare; but judge it by that which hath had your chief esteem, your chief love, or choice, and been the main design which you have driven on, and had your chiefest care and diligence in seeking it. Be sure find out what it is, whether God or the flesh, that hath been uppermost, that hath had your heart and life, and been that to which the other hath stooped, and subserved.

These are all the directions that I will trouble you with, saving that I would have you, 5. To follow on the search till you know the truth; and what you cannot do at once, come to it again, till you are resolved. And come and tell me how you have found the case to stand with you, and the Lord assist you.

The texts which I set before you are these.

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.” (John iii. 3, 5, 6.)

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already.—And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” (John iii. 16, 18—21.)

“Go and teach (or disciple) all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.” (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. So Mark xvi. 16.)

“Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. xviii. 3.)

“To open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among the sanctified, by faith that is in me.” (Acts xxvi. 18.)

“Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Luke xiii. 3, 5.)

"There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.—For 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. For 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. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (13, &c.) For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if by the Spirit, ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live: for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God.—Ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness to (or with) our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. viii. 1, 2, &c.)

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.—They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law; and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof." (Gal. v. 19, &c.) "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14.)

"Now if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.) "Know ye not the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 9—11; so Ephes. v. 3—11.)

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14.)

"For the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and

worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." (Tit. ii. 11—14.)

"Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (John ii. 15.)

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Luke xvi. 13.)

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world—And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." (1 John v. 4, 5.)

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his. And, Let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

"By this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death." (1 John iii. 10, 14.)

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." (Psalm i. 1, 2.)

"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts or wills thereof." (Rom. xiii. 13, 14.)

"He shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sin." (Matt. i. 21.)

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, (that is, love them not so much less than me, that he can cast them by, as we do things hated, when they stand against me,) he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.—Whosoever he be of you that biddeth not farewell to, or forsaketh, all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke xiv. 26, 33.)

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." (Rev. iii. 12.)

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." (Rev. xxi. 7, 8.)

"There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which God the Righteous Judge will give me, and to all them that love his appearing." (2 Tim. iv. 8; read Matt. xxv.)

THE SECOND DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Of the Conversion of a Sinner, what it is.

Speakers.—Paul, a teacher; and Saul, a learner.

PAUL. Well, neighbour, have you examined yourself by the word of God, since I saw you, as I directed you?

SAUL. I have done what I can in it.

P. And what do you think now of your case, upon trial?

S. I think it is much worse than I had hoped it was, and as bad as you feared. When I first read the promises to all that believe in Christ, I was ready again to hope that I was safe; but when I read further, I found that it was as you had told me; and that I had none of Christ's Spirit, and therefore am none of his; and that I am not a penitent convert, and am not in a state of life. But I now beseech you, sir, upon my knees, as you pity a poor sinner, tell me^e what I must do to be saved.

P. Are you willing and resolved to do it if I tell it you, and prove it to you fully by the word of God?

S. By the grace of God I am resolved to do it, be it what it will, for I know it cannot be so bad as sin and hell.

P. You say well. I will first tell you this again in the general, 1. That your case is^f not remediless, but a full and sufficient salvation is purchased, and tendered in the gospel to you as well as to any others.

2. That Christ and his grace is this remedy; and^g that God

^e Acts ii. 37, and xvi. 30.

^f Matt. xi. 28.

^g 1 John v. 11, 12.

hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life, but remaineth in his guilt and sin.

3. That Christ having already made himself a sufficient sacrifice for sins, and merited our reconciliation, pardon, and salvation, to be given in his way,^h hath made a covenant of grace (conditional) with sinful man, by the promise of which he forgiveth us all our sins, and giveth right to everlasting life.

4. That Christ's way of saving men from sin is by sending his^l ministry and word to call them, and giving his^k Spirit within to sanctify them. And this Spirit is Christ's advocate to plead his cause, and do his work, and prepare us by holiness for the heavenly glory.

5. That all the condition required of you, that you may have all these blessings of the covenant of grace, is but sincerely to^l believe and consent, and give up yourself in covenant to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and continue true to the covenant which you make.

Read over these five points well, and consider of them; and then tell me whether this be not glad tidings to an undone miserable sinner? Have you read them over?

S. I have read them, and I perceive that they are glad tidings of hope indeed. But truly, sir, I have heard the Gospel so carelessly, that I do not thoroughly understand these things; and therefore entreat you to open them to me more fully and plainly.

P. I know you were baptised in your infancy; which was your privilege, being entered by your parents into the covenant of God. But their consent and dedication will serve your turn no longer than till you come to age and natural capacity to consent and covenant for yourself. Tell me, then, have you ever soberly considered what your baptism was, and what covenant was then made between God and you? And have you seriously renewed that covenant yourself, and so given up yourself to God?

S. Alas! I never either seriously considered or renewed it; but I thought I was made a Christian by it, and was sufficiently regenerated, and my sins done away, and that I was a child of God, and an heir of heaven.

^h Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; John iii. 16.

^l Acts xxvi. 16—18; Rom. x. 8—10, 14, 15.

^k Rom. viii. 9.

^l Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 16; Rev. xxii. 17.

P. And how did you think all your sins, since your baptism, were forgiven you ?

S. I confessed them to God, and some of them to the minister, and I received the Lord's Supper ; and I thought that then I was forgiven, though I never had the true sense and power thereof on my heart and life.

P. What if you had never been baptised, and were now first to be baptised, what would you do ?

S. I would understand and consider better of it, that I might not do I know not what.

P. Why truly, baptising is well called christening ; for baptism is such a covenant between God and man, as maketh the receiver of it a visible Christian ; and if you had sincerely renewed and kept this same covenant, you had needed no new conversion or regeneration, but only particular repentance for your particular following sins. Baptism is to our Christianity what matrimony is to a state of marriage ; or like the enlisting and oath of a soldier to his captain, or of a subject to his prince. And therefore I will put you upon no other conversion than to review your baptism, and understand it well, and after the most serious deliberation to make the same covenant with God over again, as if you had never yourself made it before, or rather as one that hath not kept the covenant which once you made.

Now, if you were to be baptised presently, there are these three things which you must do : 1. Your understanding must know the meaning of the covenant, and^m believe the truth of the word of God, which is his part. 2. Your will must heartily desire and accept of the benefits of God's covenant offered you, and resolvedly consent to the conditionsⁿ required of you. 3. And you must presently oblige yourself to the faithful practice of them, and to continue true to your covenant, from the time of your baptism till death.

S. Truly, if conversion be no more than to do what I vowed to do, and to be a Christian seriously which before I was but by name and hypocritical profession, I have no more reason to stick at it than to be against baptism and Christianity itself. First, then, will you help my understanding about it ?

P. 1. You must understand and believe the articles of the christian faith, expressed in the common Creed, which you hear every day at church, and profess assent to it.

^m John xviii. 12 ; Acts i. 37, and xvi. 31 ; 2 Cor. viii. 6.

ⁿ Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

S. Alas ! I hear it, and say it by rote, but I never well understood it, or considered it.

P. The christian belief hath three principal parts : that is, our believing in ° God the Father, and in God the Son, and in God the Holy Ghost. And each of these hath divers articles. I. In the first part all these things must be understood and believed. 1. That there is ^p one only God, in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; who is an infinite, eternal, perfect Spirit ; a perfect life, understanding, and will ; perfectly powerful, wise, and good ; the first efficient, chief-governing, and final Cause, or End, of all ; of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things ; the Creator, and therefore the Owner, the Ruler, and the Benefactor, and End, especially of man.

2. That this God made Adam and Eve in his own^a image, under a perfect law of innocency, requiring perfect obedience of them on pain of death.

3. That they^r broke this perfect law by wilful sin, and thereby fell under the sentence of death, the displeasure of God, the forfeiture of his grace, and of all their happiness.

4. That all of us having our very beings and natures from them, (and their successors,) ^a derive corruption or pravity of nature also from them, and a participation of guilt : and these corrupted natures are disposed to all actual sin, by which we should grow much worse, and more miserable.

5. That God, of his mercy and wisdom, took advantage of man's sin and misery to glorify his grace, and^t promised man a Redeemer, and made a new law or covenant for his government and salvation, forgiving him all his sins, and promising him salvation, if he believe and trust in God his Saviour, and repent of sin, and live in thankful, sincere obedience, though imperfect.

6. In the^u fulness of time, God sent his Son, his eternal

^o Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

^p 1 Cor. viii. 4, 6 ; 1 John v. 7 ; 1 Tim. i. 17 ; Psalm cxxiv. 7—9 ; cxlvii. 5 ; xlvii. 7, and cxlv. 9 ; Isa. xl. 17 ; Neh. ix. 6 ; Rev. iv. 8, and xv. 3 ; Fœk. xviii. 4.

^a Gen. i. 27, and ii. 16, 17 ; Eccl. vii. 29.

^r Gen. iii. ; Rom. iii. 23, and vi. 23.

^s Rom. v. 12, 18, and iii. 9, 19 ; Gen. ii. 16, 17 ; Eph. ii. 2, 3 ; Heb. ii. 14 ; John viii. 44.

^t Gen. iii. 15 ; John iii. 16.

^u Gal. iv. 4 ; John i. 1—3 ; xlv. 2, 3, and iii. 16 ; 1 John ii. ; John x. 30 ; 1 Tim. ii. 5 ; Matt. i. 20, 21 ; Heb. iv. 15 ; vii. 26 ; ix. 26 ; viii. 2, and x. 21 ; 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4 ; Luke xxiii. 43, and i. 27, 28 ; 2 Tim. i. 10 ; Acts ii. 9 ; iii. 21 ; ii. 36, and x. 36.

Word, made man, to be our Redeemer ; who was conceived in a virgin by the Holy Ghost, and, by perfect obedience, fulfilled God's law, and became our example, and conquered all temptations, and gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, in suffering, after a life of humiliation, a cursed, shameful death upon the cross ; and being buried, he arose again the third day, and having conquered death, assured us of a resurrection ; and after forty days' continuance upon earth, he ascended bodily, in the sight of his disciples, into heaven, where he is the Teacher, the King, and the Intercessor for the church with God ; by whom alone we must come unto the Father, and who prepareth for us the heavenly glory, and us for it.

7. Before he ascended, he made a more full and plain edition of the aforesaid law or covenant of grace ; and he ^x gave authority to his chosen ministers, to go and preach it to all the world, and promised them the extraordinary gift and assistance of his Holy Spirit : and he ordained baptism to be used as the solemn initiation of all that will come into his church, and enter into the covenant of God : in which covenant God the Father ^y consenteth to be our reconciled God and Father, to pardon our sins for the sake of Christ, and give us his Holy Spirit, and glorify us in heaven for ever : and God the Son consenteth to be our Saviour, our King and Head, our Teacher and Mediator, to bring us reconciled to his Father, and to justify us, and give us his Spirit, and eternal life : and God the Holy Ghost consenteth to ^z dwell in us as the Agent and Advocate of Christ, to be our Quickener, our Illuminator and Sanctifier, the Witness of Christ, and the earnest of our salvation. And we, on our part, must profess unfeigned belief of this gospel of Christ, and repentance for our former sins, and consent to ^a receive these gifts of God, giving up ourselves, soul and body, to him, as our only God, our Saviour and our Sanctifier, as our chiefest Owner, Ruler, and Benefactor ; resolving to live as his own, as his subjects and his children, in true resignation of ourselves to him, in true obedience and thankful love : ^b renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devil, that would tempt us to the contrary ; and this is the end ; but not in our own strength, but by the gracious help of the Spirit of God.

^x Matt. xxviii. 19, 20 ; Mark xvi. 16 ; Rom. x. 10.

^y 2 Cor. v. 18—20 ; 1 John v. 9—12 ; John vi.

^z Gal. iv. 6 ; Tit. iii. 3, 5.

^a John i. 10—12 ; Rom. xii. 1, 2.

^b Rom. viii. 13 ; Luke xiv. 26 ; Acts xxvi. 18.

This is the baptismal covenant, the manner of whose outward administration you have often seen.

By this covenant, as it is God's law and act on his part, all that truly consent and give up themselves thus absolutely to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are presently pardoned all the sins that ever they were guilty of, as by God's instrumental act of oblivion : and in it they have the gift of their right to the Spirit, and to everlasting life, and of all the mercies necessary thereunto.

8. The ^c Holy Ghost, in a peculiar manner, is given to all that thus truly believe and consent to the holy covenant : to dwell and work in them, and regenerate them more fully to the nature and image of God, working in them, 1. A holy liveliness and activity for God. 2. A holy light and knowledge of God. 3. A holy love and desire after God, and all that by which God is manifested unto man. And they that have not this renewing Spirit of Christ, are none of his : and by this the temptations of the flesh, the world, and the devil, must be overcome.

9. At death men's souls are judged particularly and ^d enter into joy or misery ; and, at the end of this world, Christ will come in glory, and raise the dead, and judge all the world according to their works. And they that have sincerely kept this covenant (according to the several editions of it, which they were under) shall be openly justified and glorified with Christ : where they shall be made perfect themselves in soul and body, and perfectly know, love, praise, and please the most blessed God for evermore, among the blessed saints and angels : and those that have not performed this covenant shall be for ever deprived of this glory, and suffer in hell everlasting misery, with devils and ungodly men.

These nine points must all be competently understood by you ; or else you cannot understand what baptism, repentance, conversion, Christianity, is : and you consent to you know not what.

S. Alas ! Sir, when shall I ever be able to understand and remember all this ?

P. It is all but your common catechism ; yea, it is all but the creed which you daily repeat, a little opened. But if you do

^c Cor. xii. 12, 13 ; Rom. viii. 9, 16, 26, 30 ; Gal. iv. 6, and v. 17, 24 ; John iii. 6—8 ; Eph. ii. 1, 2 ; Tit. iii. 3, 5 ; Acts xxvi. 18 ; 2 Tim. v. 7 ; 1 John ii. 15.

^d Luke xxiii. 43, and xvi. 22, 26 ; 2 Cor. v. 18 ; Phil. i. 23 ; Acts i. 11 ; 1 Cor. xv. ; John v. 22, 29, and xvii. 24 ; Matt. xxv., and xlii. 41—43 ; 2 Tim. iv. 8, 18 ; 2 Thess. i. 8—10, and ii. 12.

not remember all these words; if yet you remember the sense and matter of them, it will suffice.

S. But you told me, that besides understanding and belief, the * will's true consent is also necessary.

P. II. That is the second part of religion and holiness, and, indeed, the very heart of all: for what the will is, that the man is. But I need not here many words to tell you, that when you have considered the terms of the baptismal covenant, your hearty, resolved, full consent to it, is the condition of your present right, upon which Christ taketh you as his own.

S. But hath my will no more to do but to consent to that covenant?

P. That implieth that your consent must still continue, and that it reach to the particular means and duties which Christ shall appoint you. And the Lord's Prayer is given as the more particular rule of all the desires of your will. Wherefore you must well study the meaning of that prayer.

S. You told me also that practice is the third part of religion: how shall I know what that must be?

P. III. You must here know, 1. The rule of your practice. 2. That your practice must be according to that rule. The foundation and end of all your practice is laid down already in what is said.

I. The foundation and root of all is your relation to God, according to this covenant. 1. You are devoted to him as being totally his own;^f and therefore you must live to him, and seek his glory, and rest in his disposals. 2. You are related to him as his subject,^g and therefore must endeavour absolutely to obey him above all the world. 3. You are related to him, when you are a true believer, as his child and friend;^h and therefore must live in faithfulness and love. And this is the foundation and sum of all your holy life.

II. And the ends of all your practice must be, 1. That you may be fully delivered from all sin and misery, be made more holy and more serviceable to God and profitable to men,ⁱ and

* Exod. xx. 3; Jos. xxiv. 16, 25; 2 Cor. viii. 5; Mark xvi. 16; 1 Pet. iii. 21; Rev. xxii. 17; Matt. xi. 29, and xxviii. 24; John xiv. 8; Luke v. 14, and xiv. 26, 33; Acts ix. 6, 7; Eph. ii. 18, 22, and iii. 5, 16.

^f 1 Cor. vi. 19; Psalm c. 2—5.

^g Psalm v. 2; x. 16, and xlvii. 6, 7.

^h Gal. iii. 26, and iv. 6; John xi. 52; Rom. viii. 16, 17, 26.

ⁱ Tit. ii. 14, and iii. 3, 5, 6; 1 Cor. vi. 20, and vii. 32; John xv. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4, 12; 2 Thess. i. 9, 10; Col. iii. 1, 4, 5; Luke xii. 32; Jam. ii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 11.

may glorify your Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, by the glory of his image on you, and so may be more pleasing to him; and, 2. That you may be perfectly holy and glorious, and happy in heaven, and may with saints and angels dwell with Christ, and know, and love, and praise, and serve the Lord in glory, in perfect joy for evermore. These ends being all most excellent and sure, must be still in your eye, as the great and constant poise and motive of all your practice.

III. As you are a subject, your obedience hath its rule; and the rule is the law of your Redeemer and Creator.^k This law is the law of nature, and the commands of Christ superadded in the gospel, set together. The law of nature^l is the whole nature and order of all things in the world, and especially of man himself, as it signifieth the will of God about man's duty, and his reward or punishment.

The special superadded commands of Christ are, that we^m believe in him as our Saviour, and believe all the added articles of faith, and hope for life by his purchase and promise, and love God as his goodness appeareth in his Son and Gospel, and love Christ's members for his sake, that we pray for the Spirit of Christ, and obey him; and that we observe that church order, as to ministry, church assemblies, the Lord's day, the two sacraments, public worship, and discipline, which Christ, by himself, or his Spirit in his apostles, hath commanded us.

And yet you must understand, 1. That the law of nature itself is muchⁿ more plainly described and opened in the holy Scripture than you are able to read it in itself. 2. That even these gospel superadded laws have somewhat of natural obligation in them, supposing but foregoing matters of fact, that Christ did all that indeed he did. So much for your rule.

IV. The degree of obedience, which is your duty, is indeed^o perfection without further sin: but your daily infirmities have a pardon; and therefore the degree of obedience necessary to your salvation is but that it be sincere, that is, that as to the predominant bent of your heart and life, you truly obey your

^k Psalm i. 2; Matt. xi. 20, xxviii. 20.

^l Psalm xix. 1, 2, &c.; Rom. i. 19, 20, and ii.

^m John xiv. 1; i. 12; vi. 29; xvi. 27, and xvii. 1—3; 1 John iii. 16, 17, and iv. 9; Tit. iii. 4; Luke xi. 13, and x. 16; Heb. xiii. 7, 17; 1 Thess. v. 12; 1 Cor. xvi. 16.

ⁿ Psalm xix. 7—10; John i. 8—10, and iii. 19—21.

^o Matt. v. 48; Psalm xix. 7, and xxxii. 1, 2; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Eph. iv. 12; Matt. vi. 23.

Creator and Redeemer, and make this the chief trade or business which you live for and manage in the world.

V. I must also add that, in all this, you must still remember that, 1. The devil; and, 2. The world; 3. But, above all, your own^p fleshly mind and appetite, will be the great enemies of all this holiness and obedience; and therefore you must understand their enmity, and the danger of it, and resolve, by God's grace, to renounce them and resist them, as your enemies, to the last.

And though only sincerity is necessary to salvation, yet, 1. You have not sincerity, unless you have a desire and endeavour after perfection.^q 2. And a greater degree of holiness is necessary to a great degree of glory.

S. Alas! sir, I shall never remember all this.

P. You may see, then, how foolishly you have done, to lose your time in childhood and youth, which you should have spent in learning the will of God, and the way to your salvation. If you had, morning and night, desirously meditated on these things, and read God's word, and asked counsel of your teachers, and learned catechisms, and read good books, and if you had marked well what you heard at church, and had spent all the Lord's days in such work as this, which you spent in play and idleness, and vain talk, you might have been acquainted familiarly with all this, and more. But that which is past cannot be recalled. If you cannot remember all this, 1. Labour to understand it well. 2. And remember that which is the sum of all.

S. What is that?

P. 1. The shortest sum is the baptismal covenant itself, to believe in,^r and give up yourself to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, your Owner, Ruler, and chief Good and End; renouncing the flesh, the world, and the devil.

2. The next summary, explaining this more largely, is, 1. The Creed,^s as the sum of what you must believe. 2. The Lord's Prayer,^t as the sum of what you must desire. 3. And the sum of the law of nature is in the ten commandments;^u and the church laws of Christ, about ministry, communion, sacraments, and other worship, you will be taught in the church by sense

^p Rom. viii. 5—8, 13; Gal. v. 17.

^q Psalm cxix. 1—5; Matt. xxv. 20, 21, 23.

^r Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 16.

^s Matt. vi. 6.

^t 1 Cor. xv. 2—5.

^u Matt. ix. 17, 18; Rom. xiii. 8, 9.

and use, and daily teaching. Cannot you say the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments?

S. Yes, I learned the words, but I never laid the sense and substance of them to heart.

P. All that I have said to you is but the sense of those three. Understand the exposition, and remember the forms or words themselves. But even your duty is shortlier summed up in Love,^{*} which is the fulfilling of the law; for justice is comprehended in love, which will teach you to do as you would be done by.

S. What love is it that you mean?

P. The love of God, the love of yourself, and the love of your neighbour, is the sum of all your duty.

S. This is but reasonable duty, which no man can deny or speak against: and one part of it I shall easily keep, which is to love myself.

P. Alas, poor man! Have you kept it hitherto? What enemy have you had in all the world comparable to yourself?[†] All that your enemies could do against you is but as a flea-biting. What if they slander you, oppress you, imprison you, or otherwise abuse you? Wrong not yourself, and all this cannot hinder your salvation, nor make God love you ever the less, nor make death ever the more terrible; nor will it ever be your sorrow in heaven to think of it. All your enemies in the world cannot force you to commit one sin, or make you a jot displeasing unto God. But you yourself have committed thousands of sins, and made yourself an enemy to God. O the folly of ungodly men! They can hardly forgive another if he do but beat them, or slander them, or impoverish them: and yet they can go on to abuse, undo, and destroy their souls, and run towards hell, and easily forgive themselves all this; yea, take it for their benefit,[‡] and will not be restrained,[§] nor persuaded to forbear, nor show any mercy to their own miserable souls. I tell you, though the devil hate you, yet all the devils in the world have not done so much against you as you have done against yourself. The devils did but tempt you to sin, but never did nor could compel you; but it is you that have wilfully sinned yourself, and sold your soul, as Esau his birthright, for a morsel, for a pleasant cup or game, or for a lust or filthy pleasure, and for a thing that is worse than nothing.

^{*} Rom. xiii. 8, 9; Mark xii. 30, 33; Matt. xxii. 37, 39.

[†] Hos. xiii. 9; Prov. xxix. 24, and viii. 36.

[‡] Tit. iii. 2-6.

[§] 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.

Was it not you, even you yourself, that forgot your God, neglected your Saviour, resisted the Holy Spirit, refused sanctifying grace, despised heaven, and set more by this dirty world? Was it not you yourself that loved not holiness, nor a holy God, nor the holy Scriptures, nor holy persons, nor holy thoughts, or words, or ways that lost your precious time, and omitted almost all your duty, and ran into a multitude of sins? And if the devil studied his worst to hurt you, what could he do more than to tempt you unto sin? If you had been a sworn enemy to yourself, and plotted how to do yourself the greatest mischief, what could you do worse than to sin and run on God's displeasure? Which is the way to the gallows, but by breaking the law, by murder, by felony, or the like; and which is the way to hell, but loving sin, and refusing grace? And yet are you a lover of yourself?

S. All this is too true, and yet I am sure that I love myself: how then comes all this to pass?

P. You love yourself with a sensitive love, that goeth all by sense, and little by reason, much less by faith. As a swine loveth himself when he is bursting his belly with whey, or a rat when he is eating ratsbane. You love your appetite, but you have little care of your soul. You love yourself, but you love not that which is good for yourself: as a sick man loveth his life, but abhorreth his meat and medicine.

Indeed, God hath planted a love to ourselves so deep in nature, that no man can choose but love himself: and, therefore, in the commandments, the love of God and our neighbour only are expressed, and the love of ourselves is presupposed. But Christ, knowing what destroyers men are of themselves, and forsakers of their own salvation, doth call upon sinners to love, care, and labour, for their own souls.

These things conjunctly make up man's enmity against his own salvation. 1. The soul hath lost much of the knowledge of its own excellency in its higher faculties. 2. Its love to itself, as rational, is dulled, and wanteth stirring up. 3. It is inordinately fallen in love with itself as sensitive, and its lower faculties. 4. It doateth on all sensual objects that are delightful. 5. It is as dead and averse to those noble, spiritual, higher objects in which it must be happy. And in this sense man is his own greatest enemy.

I the rather speak all this to you on this point, because your very repentance consisteth in being angry with yourself, and

falling out with, and even loathing, yourself, for your sins, and your self-undoing. And till you come to see what you have done against yourself, you will never come to that true humiliation and self-distrust as is needful to your salvation. And also because that it is here, and here only, that your safety and happiness is like to stick for the time to come. Do but as a man that loveth himself, and you are safe. God entreateth you to have mercy on yourself. He hath resolved on what terms he will have mercy upon sinners: they are unchangeably set down in his gospel. And sinners will not yield unto his terms. Though they be no harder than to receive his gifts according to their nature, men will not be entreated to receive them. They would have fleshly and worldly prosperity, but deliverance from sin, and holy communion with God, they will not have. Here is the only stop of their salvation. All men^b might be holy and happy if they would, but most men will not. This is the woful state of sinners. They will cry to God for mercy, mercy, when judgment cometh, and it is too late, and yet now no counsel, no reason, no entreaty, will persuade them to accept it. It is a pitiful thing to hear Christ's ministers, in his name, beseech men to accept of sanctifying, saving mercy, from day to day, and all in vain, and to think how these same men will cry for mercy when mercy hath done with them, and the door is shut. Yea, how they still say, 'We hope to be saved because God is merciful,' while they will not have his saving mercy. As if mercy stuck in the hand of God as an unwilling giver, while it is they that refuse it as unwilling to receive it. Like a thief that is entreated by the judge to give over in time, and to have mercy on himself, and not to cast away his life, and will not hear nor be persuaded; and yet at the bar or gallows will cry out for mercy. What would you say to a famished beggar that should stand begging for an alms, and will not take it? Would it not be a strange sight at once to hear the beggar say, 'I pray you give me money or bread,' and the giver offering it, and say, 'I entreat thee to take it, and have pity on thyself, and do not famish,' and cannot prevail?

S. It is a sad and mad condition that you describe, and it is too true: but methinks it were a fitter comparison if you likened them to a sick man that begs for health of the physician, but will take no physic; while the physician begs of him in vain, to take physic that he may have health. For it is not the health

^b Jos. xxiv. 15; Isa. lv. 1—4.

that men are unwilling of, but the physic. It is not salvation, but the strait gate and narrow way.

P. There is some truth in what you say, (that they are against the means,) but you are mistaken in the rest. For holiness, which they refuse, is not only a means, but it is much of ^c salvation itself. Holiness is the soul's health, and not only its medicine: and perfect holiness, which is the perfect knowledge and love of God, will be heaven itself. And to refuse holiness is to refuse health and heaven.

S. The Lord knoweth that this hath been my case. I have been my own most hurtful enemy, and done more against myself than all the world hath done, and while I loved myself carnally, I undid myself foolishly: and I understand now that it is not so easy a matter to love one's own soul aright as I had thought. But he that will not love God, it is pity he should live, for God is all goodness.

P. Alas! man, it is far harder to ^d love God truly than yourself: I tell you, that your want of love to God is the greatest sin that ever you were guilty of, and the very sum of all your sins. And were the true love of God more common, salvation would be more common, for no true lover of God shall be condemned. I know that there is something of God that all men love. They love him as he is the Maker and Maintainer of the world, and of their own lives and bodily prosperity; and as he giveth them food and raiment, and all the mercies which they abuse, to gratify their lusts. But they love him not as he is a holy and a righteous Governor, forbidding sin, requiring holiness, hating and punishing the ungodly, restraining fleshly lusts, and not forgiving nor saving the impenitent.

If you had loved God all this while indeed, would you not have loved his word, and loved to praise him, and call upon his name, and loved what he loveth, and delighted to do his will and please him? Did you love God when you broke his laws, and hated holiness, and could not abide an obedient, holy, heavenly life, and loved not to think or talk much of him, nor to call upon him? You may as well say that he loveth the king who spits in his face, and rebelleth against him.

As long as you think you have been a lover of God in your ^e sinful state of life, and think it so easy still to love him, you

^c Matt. i. 21; Tit. ii. 14; Eph. v. 27; Col. i. 22; 1 Pet. i. 16.

^d Lnke xviii. 22—24, and xiv. 26, 33; Rom. viii. 8.

^e Eph. ii. 1—3; Rom. v. 9, 10, and viii. 6, 7.

know not God, you know not yourself, you know not the need or the nature of true conversion, nor can you repent of this greatest sin while you know not that you are guilty of it. Do you not know that you have all this while been an enemy to God, and a hater of him ?

S. I have been an enemy to myself, but sure nobody can hate God.

P. Where there is enmity, loathing, aversion of mind, and unwillingness, there is hatred. The carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. (Rom. viii. 5—7.) If there were no enmity between God and man, what need was there of a Mediator, or Reconciler ? And will you think so ill of the most gracious God, and so well of yourself, a naughty sinner, as to think that the enmity is ' only in God, and not in you ? Is he an enemy to any man that is not first an enemy to him ? " He hateth all the workers of iniquity," (Psalm v. 5,) because they are all enemies to him, and contrary to his holiness as darkness is to light. It is the very case of all ungodly persons, that their hearts are turned away from God to this^s world, and the pleasures of the flesh, and being in love with these, they^h love not that God, nor that holy word, which calls them off, and condemneth them for their sinful minds and pleasures. Let your conscience speak plainly ; had not the world more of your heart than heaven ? Were you not a lover of pleasure more than of God ? Were not your thoughts, lying down, and rising up, and all the day, more forward and ready to think of your worldly and fleshly concerns, than of God ? And were not those thoughts more sweet and welcome to you ? Was not your heart so loth and backward to think of God with pleasure, that you never did seriously set yourself one hour together, in your life, to meditate of him and of the heavenly glory ? Nay, in sermons and prayer you could not keep your thoughts upon him. You know what it is to love your friend, to love your money, lands, and pleasure ; do you know, by as good experience, what it is to love God ? And if you love him not above all, you love him not indeed as God. Were you not more weary of holy thoughts, or holy conference, or prayer, than of your worldly business and discourse ? Was not your heart against the holiness and strictness of God's word and of his servants ? In a word, if you had no^l enmity

^s Zech. xi. 8 ; Eph. iii. 18, 19.

^h Phil. iii. 18, 19 ; Col. i. 21.

^h Heb. x. 13 ; Luke xiv. 27 ; Isa. i. 24 ; Psalm xxxvii. 20.

^l Gen. iii. 15 ; Jam. iv. 4 ; Rom. viii. 7.

to a holy and heavenly mind and life, why did you not choose it? And why could not all God's mercies invite you to it? Nor all teaching and entreaties ever persuade you to it? Why are you yet so backward to it? Is this no enmity? And if you were an enemy to holiness, and to the holy word and government of God, was not this to be an enemy to God? I tell you, we are all enemies to God till Christ have reconciled us, and the Holy Ghost renewed us, and turned the enmity into love.

S. I never laid this state of enmity to heart till now. I knew that I was a sinner; but I knew not that I was an enemy to God, even when I began to fear that he was for my sin an enemy to me. But I find now that it hath been with me just as you say; and I perceive that all sin hath some enmity to God in it.

P. Where God is not loved as God, he is in some sort^k hated; and between love and enmity there is in man no middle state. For none in this are perfect neuters, or indifferent. Have you not heard that enmity between the seed of the woman and of the serpent was put from the beginning of the covenant of grace? And how this was presently manifested in Cain and Abel, the two first men and brothers that were born into the world: "Cain was of that wicked one (the devil) and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous." (1 John iii. 12.) If you have read the Scripture, and other history, and have but heeded what is done about you in the world, you might easily perceive that the world hath ever consisted of two contrary sorts of men, who, as two armies, are still to this day in constant opposition to each other. The wicked are the^l devil's seed and army; and the godly are the army of Christ, and the regenerate seed of God. Whence is all the hatred of godliness on the earth, all the scorns, and slanders, and cruel persecutions and butcheries of holy persons, and the number of martyrs and sufferers, but from this inbred enmity? This is Christ's meaning when he saith, that he came not to send peace, but a sword: because he came to cause that holiness which the wicked will still hate and persecute. Look about you, and see whether we may not yet truly say with St. Paul, "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the

^k Rom. i. 30; Psalm lxxxi. 15; lxviii. 1, and xxi. 8; Command. ii.; Dent. vii. 10; 2 Chron. xix. 2.

^l John viii. 44.

Spirit, even so it is now." (Gal. iv. 29.) And we are all of this malignant disposition in some degree till grace recover us; "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." (Rom. v. 10.) So "He that will be a friend of the world is an enemy to God. The friendship of the world is enmity to God." (Col. i. 21; James iv. 4.) I will mind you of no other proof, more than Christ's own sentence, which is not unjust. "Those mine enemies that would not I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me." (Luke xix. 27.) Those that would not have Christ reign over them, and subdue their worldly minds, and fleshly lusts, and make them holy, are his enemies. And hath not this been your case?

S. I cannot deny it; the Lord forgive me, and have mercy on me. I see now that it is not so easy a matter, nor so common to love God truly, as I thought it was.

P. To^m love God as God, with all our mind, and heart, and might, is the sum of holiness, the proper fruit of the Spirit, the certain mark of God on the soul, and the surest evidence of his love to us, and the very beginning and foretaste of heaven. It is that which Christ came into the world to effect, by the most wonderful demonstration of God's love to sinners, as the fittest means to win their love. Faith in Christ is but the bellows to kindle in us the love of God; and faith working by love is all our religion in a few words. Therefore, if love to God were easy and common, all goodness would be so, and salvation would be so.

But having said thus much of the love of your soul, and the love of God, what think you next of the love of others? Is that also easy to you?

S. I am sometimes angry when I am wronged, or provoked, but I know no one in the world that I wish ill to.

P. So far it is well. But 1. Do you love men more for God and his image on them than for yourself? 2. Do youⁿ love your neighbour as yourself? I pray you understand the matter aright. 1. God must be first and principally loved, as the chief and infinite Good: he must be loved for himself, as being goodness itself, and most amiable in himself, and that unlimit-

^m 2 Thess. iii. 5; Luke xi. 42; Rom. v. 5; Gal. v. 6; Jude 21.

ⁿ Gal. v. 6, 13, 14, 22; Jam. ii. 8; 1 Pet. ii. 17, and iii. 8; Rom. xii. 9, 10, and xiii. 9, 10; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Col. i. 4; 1 Thess. iv. 9; 1 Pet. i. 22; 1 John iv. 7, 8, 11, 12, 20, 21, and v. 2; John xiii. 34, and xv. 12, 17; 2 John iv.; Col. ii. 2; Eph. iv. 2, 15, 16, and v. 2.

edly with all the soul. The creature must be loved only for God, as bearing his image, or the marks of his perfection, and as a means to know, and please, and glorify him. Those must be most loved who have most of the image of God, in wisdom, righteousness, and holiness. The godly must be loved as godly, with a special love. Professed Christians must be beloved as such. All men, even our^o enemies, must be loved as men, with a common love; and all this for God's work upon them, and his interest in them.

But a selfish, carnal man, loving his carnal self more than God, doth make himself the standard and reason of his love to others. He loveth not those best who are best, and most holy, or serviceable to God and the public good, but those that love and honour him most, and those that are most of his opinion, and those that will be ruled by his will, and never cross it; and those that do most for him, and are most profitable to him. A true Christian loveth his neighbour, as you love the children of your dearest friend, for the parents' sake. But a carnal man loveth his neighbour partly as a dog loveth his master for feeding him, and partly as all creatures, birds, and beasts, do love their companions, for likeness of kind, and from sociableness and acquaintance. Have you not loved an ignorant worldling, a profane swearer, a derider of holiness, who loved you and spoke well of you, and took your part, and did you many friendly offices, better than a wise and godly person, that never did any thing for you, or that had low thoughts of your wit and honesty, though no worse than indeed you did deserve?

S. I cannot deny but you describe me rightly.

P. And did you never dishonour your governors, prince, or parents? Did you never seek to hurt another, nor desire revenge? Did you never deceive your neighbour, nor wrong him any way in his estate? Did you never belie nor slander him, or backbite him, nor falsely accuse him, nor seek to make him odious or contemptible to others? Did you never envy him, nor covet his estate, or honours, nor seek to draw any thing from him to yourself? If you did, what love was in all this but self-love?

Nay, what labour and cost have you been at to save the souls of miserable sinners, or to relieve their bodies? "And he^p that seeth his brother hath need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

^o Lev. xix. 18, 34; Matt. v. 44, 46.

^p 1 John iii. 17, and iv. 12.

At what rates, and with what condescension, self-denial, and diligence have you showed your neighbours that you love them ?

2. At least hath it been with any such love as you love yourself ? How easily can you bear your neighbour's wrongs, reproaches, slanders, poverty, sickness, in comparison of your own ? You can aggravate his faults, and extenuate your own ; and judge him very culpable, and censurable, and punishable, for that which you make nothing of in yourself.

S. I must confess I have sinned against the love of God, of myself, and of my neighbour. And I see that I must have a better heart, before I can truly love God, myself, and my neighbour, for the time to come.

P. I have plainly opened to you the nature of true conversion, even ^a faith and repentance ; that is, the nature of the covenant which your parents in your baptism made in your name, or entered you into, and which at age you must sincerely make yourself, if you will be saved. What say you now to it upon consideration of the whole ? Can you heartily consent to it, and thus give up yourself to God and to Jesus Christ, or not ?

S. O Sir, it is a great business : I must have many a thought of it yet before I shall understand it well ; and many a thought more to overcome all the backwardness of my heart : such a work is not to be rashly done.

P. I like your answer, so be it that it come not from unwillingness, nor imply not a purpose to delay : that which must needs be done, or you are for ever ^r undone, cannot be done too soon, so it be done well. But tell me, were you never confirmed by a bishop, by the laying on of his hands ?

S. Yes, to tell you the truth, I was ; though none of all the parish went to him but I myself.

P. And what was it that he did to you ? And what did you ?

S. He said a short prayer, and laid his hand on my head, which I took to be his blessing ; but what he said I know not. But I said not a word to him.

P. Did he not examine you of your knowledge, and faith, and repentance : and whether you have kept your baptismal covenant, and now consent to it ?

S. Not a word : we were all children that kneeled down to him, and had his blessing, and we knew no more. Only now you remember me, I heard him tell one at age that went before us, that we must stand to the covenant that we made in bap-

^a Acts xx. 21, xxvi. 18.

^r Luke xiii. 3, 5 ; Matt. xviii. 3.

tism : but little did I know or consider what that covenant was : nor could I have given any other account if I had been examined, but only that I could say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments ; though I understood them not.

P. If you will read the Church Liturgy about confirmation, you will see that, 1. You should have been able to say all the church catechism. 2. And that you should have had the curate's certificate thereof. 3. And that being come to years of discretion, and having learned what was promised for you in baptism, you should yourself, with your own mouth and consent, ratify and confirm the same; and also promise that, by the grace of God you will evermore endeavour yourself faithfully to observe it. And the Bishop, I suppose, though you understood him not, did put this question to you ; ' Do you here in the presence of God and this congregation renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your baptism, ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which your godfathers and godmothers then undertook for you ? ' And you were to say, ' I do.' And it is ordered, that ' none shall be admitted to the holy communion, till such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.' I confess these covenanting words are only in the New Common Prayer Book, 1662, and therefore it is like you heard no such thing ; but there was yet more in the old rubric of the reasons of it.

So that you see, that if the bishops and pastors would faithfully manage this great work, none should communicate at the Lord's table till he professed all this covenant consent, in which your true conversion doth consist.

S. I would it were so ; it would make a great reformation in the church. I had learned the church catechism at about seven years of age, but I knew little more than a parrot what I said, and soon forgot it, and never dreamt of such a solemn covenant with God as you describe, on which my whole salvation doth depend, which needeth the best understanding and deliberation.

P. I am so much the more of your mind, because it was the wisdom of all Christ's churches for many hundred years, to keep those that desired baptism at age a sufficient time in the order of catechised persons, long teaching them the meaning of Christianity and baptism before they baptised them. And because the Bereans (Acts xvi.) are commended forsearching the Scripture, to see whether that which was taught them was so

or not : but especially because Christ himself (Luke xiv. 28—30) would have all that come to him sit down first and count what it is like to cost them to be his true disciples, and to consider well of the work, and how they shall go through with it before they engage themselves to him.

S. But why then did Peter * baptise thousands in the day that he had converted them ?

P. 1. They were Jews, that had been instructed in the law, and known the true God, and had been solemnly entered into his covenant before, and so wanted no necessary knowledge, except only about the true Messiah, whom they themselves expected. So that their case much^t differed from that of the Gentiles, or any that are found in utter ignorance. 2. And though the time was short, yet they gave sufficient evidence of their conversion in their humiliation, confession, and penitent desires of being acquainted with the way of salvation in Christ ; and no doubt but they openly professed the christian faith with their repentance at their baptism. If you are just now truly acquainted with the meaning of the baptismal covenant, and fully resolved to consent to it, and perform it, I would have you renew it without delay : but else take time to be instructed and resolved.

S. Seeing I must make just the same preparation, and profession, and covenant, as if I were newly to be baptised, had it not been better to have forborne my baptism till now, than to be baptised in infancy, when I knew not what was done ? What warrant is there for being baptised before we believe ?

P. You are not now capable of disputes : when you are, read my book for infants' baptism. In the mean time I shall only tell you, 1. That all that are to be entered into Christ's church, as its members and his disciples, must enter by baptism ; which is proved, 1. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. " Disciple me all nations, baptising them : " baptism is made the door of entrance into the gospel church, and there is neither a word of command, nor example of entering any other way.

2. But the infants of believers are to be entered into Christ's church, as its infant members and disciples ; which is proved, 1. Because infants were members of the church before Christ's incarnation : and Christ came not to destroy the church's privileges, but to enlarge them. Circumcision entered the Jews' children : and the Ishmaelites and Edomites, and the posterity

* Acts ii. 38, 39, &c.

^t Rom. ii. 12—14, &c.

of Keturah, used circumcision, as well as the Jews : and though circumcision cease, infants' church membership ceaseth not; for these two were separable before. In the wilderness, for forty years, all the Jews' children were uncircumcised, and yet they ceased not to be church members; yea, (Deut. xxix.,) they were expressly entered into the covenant of God.

2. It appeareth, therefore, that the institution of circumcision proveth not that infants' church membership was then instituted; yea, it is plain that it continued from Adam's time.

1. Because there is not one word of intimation in the Scripture else when it began. 2. The word "seed," (Gen. iii. 15,) in the new covenant, is extensive to all ages; for though it be meant of Christ, as the Head and Captain, it is meant of all the holy seed as his members. 3. God did still join the children with the parents, in promises and threats; blessings and cursings, in all ages, before circumcision. 4. There is no proof that ever God had any church on earth of which infants were not members.

3. God hath, by nature and institution, (Deut. xxix. 10—12; Gen. xvii. 13,) made it the duty of parents to enter their children into the covenant of God, which is no where reversed; but under the gospel there is no appointed way of entering them into the covenant but by baptism. If God command us to dedicate them to him, he will surely receive them.

4. Scripture telleth us that Christ would not have cast off the Jewish nation, and consequently their children, from their church state, if their own unbelief and rejecting him had not done it. (Matt. xxiii. 37.) O Jerusalem! how oft would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. (Rom. xi.) They were broken off for unbelief. Therefore, but for unbelief, they had not been broken off; and the Gentiles are grafted into the same olive, or church state. And, mark it, it is plain here, that the believing part of the Jews were not broken off from a church state, though they ceased to be a kingdom and national church; and therefore their children lost their church and covenant right: and if the children of believing Jews had it, all had it, when the church was one.

5. He tells us that nations are capable of being disciplined; (Matt. xxviii. 19;) and the kingdoms of the world are to be the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ; but there is no nation or kingdom which infants are not a part of.

6. And Christ himself was angry with his disciples that would have kept little children from him, and said, "Forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven;" and therefore he is still ready to receive them, when dedicated to him, though he then baptised them not, because the common use of christian baptism was to begin after his death.

7. And the apostle, (1 Cor. vii. 14,) tells us, that our children are holy, which must needs signify more than legitimate, for so are heathen's children.

8. And the apostles still baptised whole households.

9. And the universal church, in all ages, hath observed it.

10. And infants have a visible way of sin and misery by generation; and if there were no visible way of their recovery by forgiveness, that is, if there were no promise or covenant of pardon which they had a certain part in, Christ's remedy would be so narrow as to exclude the age that is first miserable; and what hope could we have of the salvation of any of our infants without a promise?

S. But they believe not.

P. Nor they sin not, and yet they are guilty of original sin, and need a Saviour. Though they believe not actually, they are the infants of believers; and their parents' faith is as far imputed to them for their reception as the unbelief of the wicked is imputed to their children for their rejection and greater punishment, which is plain in Scripture. Indeed, while they have no reason and will of their own, their parents' reason and will hath the disposal of them, they being as their members.

S. But what good doth it to those that understand not?

P. Is it no good to have a solemn delivery of a sealed pardon of original sin, and a covenant relation to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and a visible title to the blessings of the covenant; and to be no more strangers, but fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the church or household of God; and if they die, to have right to life eternal; when it is the dogs that are without the doors? The benefit is the child's, and the comfort is the parents'. Is it not a privilege that you may take a lease of lands for your child's life as well as your own, and make him a party in the covenant, and bind him to pay the rent, though he understand it not? And if at age he thinks he is wronged, he may quit his part in Christ and heaven whenever he pleases.

S. But I perceive by my own case, we should do it more sensibly, if we stay till we understand what we do.

P. 1. Your parents should be as sensible when they dedicate you to God, though you could not. 2. And your former baptism hindereth not your personal covenanting now as understandingly and sensibly as if you never had been baptised before. All men are prone to outsideness and formality, even about God's own institutions. 'Too great stress is laid by many sorts upon the outward washing,' who weigh not enough the nature of the covenant. Though you may not be baptised again, you may as seriously and solemnly again covenant with God, even the same covenant which you made in baptism; and it is the same which is still renewed in the Lord's supper: so that it did you no harm to be baptised in infancy, though you have been so sinful as to neglect the due consideration of it, you may, nevertheless, upon your repentance, renew the same covenant; and the same covenant will give you the same benefits, though you be not re-baptised. Therefore now set to it, not only as if you had never done it before, but with double humiliation and seriousness, as beseemeth one that made and broke it.

S. Have you any more to say to me about it?

P. Yes. I must before let you know in what manner it is that this covenant must be made, if you will be a Christian indeed, and have the benefits. 1. You must consent to the whole covenant of God, and not only to some part of it. You must be devoted² to your Creator, your Redeemer, and your Sanctifier: you must take him for your Owner, your Ruler, and your Saviour: you must be willing to be sanctified as well as pardoned, and to be saved from sin, and not only from punishment.

2. You must understand all the terms well, and count your costs, and reckon upon taking up the cross, and denying yourself, and forsaking all this world, in heart and resolution, for Christ, and take God and heaven for your whole portion, and resolve to stick to God if you have nothing else; and if you meet with never so much tribulation in the world, you must believe that heaven is as sure as if you saw it, and take that and the necessary means thereto for all your part, and not reckon upon ease, pleasure, profit, or safety to the flesh.

3. You must covenant absolutely, without any secret exceptions or reserves.⁷ If you secretly keep a reserve in your heart

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 21; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 16; Jam. v. 20; 1 John ii. 1.

² Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, and xi. 28; Luke xix. 27; Rom. xiv. 9; Eph. i. 22; Luke xiv. 26, to the end; Rom. viii. 17; Matt. xlii. 46, and vi. 19, 20.

⁷ Luke xiv. 26, 33.

that you will come to Christ but upon trial, and that you will be religious as far as will stand with your prosperity and safety in the world, and so you may not be undone. If you except secretly either honour, estate, or life, which you resolve not to lay down if Christ require it, you then play the hypocrite and lose all.

4. You must consent to a present change, and at present thus wholly give up yourself to God, and not only that you will do it some time hereafter. As he that will not take up Christianity and a holy life till hereafter should not be baptised till hereafter, when he will do it; so, if you do but consent to repent and be converted till some time hence, this is at present no repentance, conversion, nor true covenanting with God. All this you must understand and do.

And now I will give you time to learn and resolve of all this that I have said to you. Read over and over the exposition of the covenant which I have written; and what you understand not, ask the meaning of it. And when you have done all, come to me, and tell me your resolution.

THE THIRD DAY'S CONFERENCE.

The Confutation of Ungodly Contradicters.

Speakers.—Paul, a Teacher; Saul, a Learner; Sir Elymas Dives, a malignant Contradictor.

PAUL. Welcome, neighbour. You are come sooner than I expected you. Are you well resolved of what we talked of?

SAUL. Since I saw you, I opened my case to my landlord, Sir Elymas Dives; and he is accounted a man of wit and learning; and he saith so much against all that you persuade me to, that I am perplexed between both, and know not what to say or do; but, at last, I got him to come to you, and say that to you which he said to me, that I may hear which seemeth in the right.

P. You did very wisely; and I have the more hope of your conversion and salvation, because you are diligent, and deal faithfully with yourself, and do not let deceivers carry you away

quietly, without hearing what can be said against them. Desire him to come in.

Sir Elymas Dives. Good-morrow, Mr. Paul. I perceive you have troubled the mind of my poor tenant, here ; so that he can scarce sleep. You, precise preachers, make such a stir with your religion in the world, that you will not let men live in quiet by you.

P. Sir, he that is called and consecrated to this office, to declare, from the word of God himself, things, ^a great, and necessary, and true, concerning the everlasting state of their souls, must needs call men to sober and serious thoughts. And if there be some trouble in these thoughts, to those that have foolishly neglected their own happiness, it is no wonder.

El. The man hath been all his time an honest, painful, labouring man. I never heard that he said, or did any man harm ; but hath followed his business, and gone to church, and received the sacrament, and lived in love and peace with his neighbour. I never saw him drunk, nor any harm by him ; and now you will make him doubt of his salvation.

P. Sir, I would have no man doubt of his salvation without cause ; nor no man presume of salvation without cause. The saving or losing of the soul, for ever, is a great business, and not to be cast upon presumptuous and blind hopes. I would but have him ^a make sure of heaven ; and can any man, think you, make too sure ? It is not you, nor I, that are the Judge of souls, but God ; and his laws are the rule of his judgment. His word tells us who it is that he will save. If I tell any man that Christ will not save him, to whom the Gospel promiseth salvation, condemn me, and spare not. But if you tell any man that God will save him, to whom God hath spoken no such thing, but the contrary, what wrong can be greater to God and him ? And as to his good life, which you talk of ; faith and repentance, and the love of God, and a holy life, are matters of another nature than all that you have said. Pardon me for telling you, that you speak out of your element, like an unlearned man about law, or physic, and not like one that had made divinity the study of his life, as we have done. I have but inquired of the man himself how the case standeth with his soul, and set the Word of God before him, and directed him how to judge himself. Ask him, whether he hath lived by faith, or sense ; after the Spirit, or after

^a Psalm iv. 5—7 ; li., and cxix. 59 ; Acts ii. 37.

^a 2 Cor. xiii. 5 ; 2 Pet. i. 10 ; Isa. iv. 5, 6.

the flesh ; whether he hath ^b loved God or pleasure better ; whether he hath sought heaven, or earthly prosperity, with the greater care and diligence. If he have, I will assure him that he is in a state of grace. It is he that must answer you.

El. Are you a preacher, and think that to frighten men, and cast them into terrors, is the way to mend them ? It is believing well, and hoping well, that is the way to salvation.

P. Believing and hoping falsely, is not the believing and hoping well. He that knoweth not and feareth not a danger, will not sufficiently labour to escape it. Did you never read, that "The ^c fear of God is the beginning of wisdom : a good understanding have all they that do hereafter ?" Doth not Christ say, " Fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell ?" Yea, I say unto you (whosoever saith the contrary), " Fear him !" (Matt. x. 28 ; and Luke xii. 5.) " Seeing we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear ; for our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. xii. 28, 29.) " Having a promise left us of entering into his rest, let us fear, lest any of you come short of it." (Heb. iv. 1.) The Scripture is full of such like passages.

Suppose I am a physician, and have a medicine that infallibly cureth all dropsies and consumptions in time ; and I see the signs of a dropsy or consumption on one of your servants, and I tell him my opinion of his case and danger, that he will die, unless he presently take this certain remedy ; and you come, and chide me for frightening and discomfoting him ; and tell him that there is no danger. Which of us is the most comfortable friend to the man ? I assure him of recovery, if he will use the means : you flatter him with false hopes, to keep him from using them : and I am a physician, and you are none. Which of us may he wiselier believe ?

El. When you should draw men to believe, you drive them to unbelief and doubting.

P. Faith is not merely to believe that we are already forgiven, and shall be saved. If it would prove a man good, to believe that he is good ; or prove that a man shall be saved, to believe that he shall be saved ; and that he hath true grace when he hath none ; then all the heathens and wicked men in the world, may be saved, by believing it shall be so. Then let your tenant be-

^b 2 Tim. iii. 4 ; Matt. vi. 20, 21, 23.

^c Psalm cxi. 10 ; Prov. i. 10 ; xv. 33.

lieve that he hath money when he hath none ; and believe that he hath paid your rent when he hath not. Believing God, supposeth some word of his to be believed. And what word of his promiseth salvation to the ungodly ? We must believe the Gospel, that Christ pardoneth and saveth all that truly^d believe in him : that is, take him practically for their Teacher, their Saviour, and Lord ; to sanctify them by his Spirit, and mortify their worldly, fleshly lusts, and make them a holy and heavenly people. To take Christ for such a Physician and Saviour of your soul, is truly to believe ; and to doubt of the truth of his Word, is the doubting of unbelief : but so is not every doubting of our own sincerity. A drunkard may doubt he is not sober, and yet not thereby doubt of the Gospel of Christ.

El. If poor men have no more wit than to hearken to all that you would put into their heads, you will drive them all into despair at last.

P. We do but teach them how to prevent everlasting despair. There is no hope of being saved in despite of God, or against his will. And to cherish such^e hopes (of being saved without holiness) till time be past, is the way to hellish desperation. What, if the king tell his subjects, ‘ If you murder, there is no hope of your lives ; I will not pardon you.’ Will you say to them, ‘ Go on, and kill men ; do not despair ; the king doth ill to put you upon desperation ?’ What, if you had been with Paul in the shipwreck, when he said, “ There shall not a hair of your head perish ; but if these stay not in the ship, ye cannot be saved ;” would you have said, ‘ He preacheth despair ; go forth, and fear not ?’ What, if you had heard Christ himself say, “ Verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God ;” (John iii. 3, 5 ;) and “ Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven ;” (Matt. xviii. 3 ;) or “ Except ye repent, ye shall all perish.” (Luke xiii. 3, 5.) Would you have said, ‘ Believe him not ; he preacheth desperation ?’ What, if you say to your servant, ‘ If thou do not work, thou shalt have no wages.’ Shall he say, ‘ I will not despair ; but I will hope well, though I work not ?’ What do you by this talk, but the same that the devil did to Eve ? God said, “ In the day that thou eatest, thou shalt die :” the devil

^d John i. 6—12, and iii. 16, 19 ; Luke xix. 27 ; Matt. vii. 21—23.

^e Isa. xlviii. 18, 22 ; lvii. 21, and lix. 8 ; Jer. iv. 10 ; vi. 14 ; viii. 11, and xxviii. 9 ; Ezek. xiii. 10, 16 ; 1 Thess. v. 3.

said, "Ye shall not surely die." Did God preach despair, and the devil preach better? Till men despair of being saved without holiness, they will never seek holiness, and so never be saved. I do despair that ever the devil should make good his word, and save any souls that God hath said shall not be saved.

El. Christ came to abolish the law, and set up the Gospel; and you preach nothing but the law, when mercy better becometh the mouth of a gospel-preacher.

P. Do I preach either the law of innocency, which giveth no pardon, or the Jewish law? It was these that Christ abolished, (in a sort,) and not his own law of grace. Doth not he preach mercy, who proclaimed pardon to all that will truly repent, and turn to God by faith in Christ? Repentance and conversion are gospel mercies. The law knoweth no place for repentance: but, sin and die, is all that it saith. Is it all our work, from year to year, to magnify the mercy of God in Christ, and 'to entreat men to accept of mercy, and not to refuse it, or abuse it? And yet must it be said, that we preach not mercy? I pray you, tell me, sir, what is the doctrine of mercy that you would preach, if you were in our stead?

El. I would tell them of the mercy of God, and that it is greater than our sins; and that Christ died for sinners; and that they that believe in him, and trust God, shall be saved.

P. What it is to believe in Christ, and trust God, I have opened to Saul already, and must not oft repeat the same things. We doubt not but God's mercy is greater than our sins; but no unholy soul shall be saved by it. For this merciful God hath said, that "without holiness none shall see God." (Heb. xii. 14.) The sun is brighter than our eyes, and yet the blind cannot see by it. We tell them of the exceeding mercy of God, and of the sufficiency of the sacrifice and merits of Christ; but we tell them withal, that the rejecting of this Christ and mercy will increase their misery, and be the food of the never-dying worm, the torment of their conscience to remember it for ever. Read Heb. iii., and vi., and x., and xii., and see whether we say true or not. Would you tell the people that all men shall be saved; or that any other faith and repentance would save them, than such as I described?

El. I would tell them that a quiet and sober religion will be accepted better than all the stir you make; and that all this ado, and noise about religion, to trouble men's minds, instead

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. v. 19.

of making them better, is but the work of a few hot-brained coxcombs, that can neither let themselves nor other men live quietly.

P. O, sir, that you had but tried what ^a quietness there is in the conscience of a renewed, justified person, in comparison of what is in the galled, ulcerous conscience of the ungodly. O! it is a proud, a worldly, a fleshly heart and life, which is the sting that will give the sinner no rest; and the defiled, guilty conscience which will never let the soul be quiet; which hath a life of unpardoned sin to look back upon; a life of sensuality and ungodliness, of pride, fulness, and idleness; abundance of oaths, curses, lies, contempt of God! These are they that will not let the world be quiet, nor suffer the consciences of the wicked long to give them any rest. Twice God protesteth by the prophet, "There is no peace to the wicked." (Isa. xlvi. 22, and lvii. 21.) "The way of peace they know not. There is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace." (Isa. lix. 8.) "God hateth all the workers of iniquity." (Psalm lv.) And what peace is there, then, to such? "Because they have seduced my people; saying, Peace, and there was no peace: and one built up a wall, and others daubed it with untempered mortar: say unto them, that it shall fall. Lo! when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?" (Ezek. xiii. 11, 12.) "When they shall say, Peace and safety; sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail on a woman with child, and they shall not escape." (1 Thess. v. 3.)

I pray you tell me truly, do you think that he that hath truly repented of his careless, ignorant, worldly, proud, fleshly life, and hath forsaken it; or he that hath yet all this sin unrepented of to answer for, is like to live the quieter life? If sin be the way of peace, how did it drown the world? How did it kill Christ? How doth it cause hell? Then you may say also, that poison and wounds, and breaking our bones, and sickness, are the way to the body's ease.

I pray you, sir, yet answer me these two questions. 1. Do you not believe, in your conscience, that a truly penitent, godly man, that hath spent his days chiefly in laying up a treasure in heaven, is liker to die in hope and peace than a careless, fleshly, worldly man? 2. And may not he live in the greatest peace,

^a Hab. iii. 18; Psalm iv. 7, 8; Rom. xiv. 17; Heb. x. 34.

who will die in the greatest peace? Is not that course the fittest to give us peace in health which is the fittest to give us peace in sickness?

And will you tell me what is the quiet and sober religion which you are for yourself?

El. It is to love God and my neighbour, and do as I would be done by, and go to church, and say my prayers, and, when I have sinned, repent, and cry God mercy, and trust in Christ, and so be quiet, and trouble myself no further.

P. You have said a great deal in a few words. But I hope you do not think that saying this will save them that do it not. Give me leave, then, to go over all particularly. 1. If you love God, you will love his ^b laws, and his government, and his service, and his servants, and you will love to please him, and you will long to be with him, and you will love him better than fleshly pleasure, or all this world. Will you think he loveth you, that loveth the dirt in the streets better than you? or that careth not how far he is from you, nor how little he hath to do with you? That loveth not much to hear, or think, or speak of you? If you love God, you will make him your delight, and not think his word and service the trouble of the world: and you will keep his commandments, and not think sin your greatest pleasure, and obedience to God your greatest pain.

2. And if you love your neighbour as yourself, you will not let Lazarus lie in hunger at your doors, nor your poor tenants and neighbours feel cold and want, while you are clothed in purple and silk, and fare sumptuously and deliciously every day. You will not lay out hundreds by the year, on hounds, and sports, and idle gentlemen servants, and on feasting and gallantry, and excess of bravery ¹ and furniture, while your poor tenants live in toil and misery. You will not rack your rents so as poor men, with all their care and labour, cannot live. You will not see your brother have need, and shut up the bowels of your compassion from him, and then say that you love God and your neighbour. You will not hate, and scorn, and persecute God's servants that are most careful to please him, and still say you love both God and them. You will not think that to love your riotous companions and playfellows, is to love your neighbour as yourself.

3. And for your repenting when you have sinned, and crying

^b John xiv. 15, 13; 1 John v. 3.

¹ 1 John iii. 16, 17; Jam. ii. 14-16, and v., throughout.

God mercy, I hope you do not mean a mocking of God, with saying that you repent when you do not. I hope it is not only to be sorry and wish you had not sinned, when you have got all that sin can give you, and still to go on and do the same: to cry God mercy for a worldly, fleshly, voluptuous life of pride, fulness, and idleness, (the sins of Sodom, (Ezek. xvi. 49,) and of too many gentlemen,) and^k to continue it still, and hate those that are against it: nor to repent of oppressing the poor, and racking your tenants, and to do so still. Repentance is a true change of mind, will, and conversation: true repentance is all that I persuade this man to, when you say that I trouble him, and break his peace.

El. You are an arrogant, saucy fellow. What have you to do to meddle with my bravery, or sports, or tenants' rents? You think your priestly calling may warrant all your incivilities and insolence. Were it not for the reverence of your coat, I would kick you out of doors, or lay you by the heels. It was never a good world since such fellows as you were suffered to prate your pleasure against your betters, under pretence of reproving sin.

P. I knew, sir, on what disadvantage I should discourse with such a one as you, but I do it for this poor man's sake, who desired it. If I were discoursing with you about common things, I would keep such a distance as should no way offend you. If any submissiveness would excuse me, I would not seem insolent or uncivil. I would not stand covered before you. I would not press into your presence, nor expect honour from you, but would be content to stand with your poorest servants. But when it is a business that God's truth and holiness, and men's salvation, and my ministerial fidelity, lieth on, it is cowardice and base treachery, and not civility, to desert the truth for want of^l plain dealing. I hope you know that not only the prophets and apostles, but Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and such others, have dealt much plainer with emperors than I have done with you: and Gildas spake homelier of the British princes and nobility. As long as you may use us at your pleasure, you may give us leave to speak according to our Master's pleasure. For we do not fear but at last he will bear us out.

El. It is the trick of you all to claw the vulgar by accusing the gentry and nobility of oppression, yea, and you would say as much by the king himself, if you durst.

^k 1 Cor. vi. 9, 11; Tit. iii. 3, 5; Acts xviii. 26.

^l Isa. lviii. 1; vii. 4, and li. 7, 8; Matt. xvi. 26, 28, 31; Heb. xiii. 6.

P. The worst I wish you, sir, is but that you would go now and then into the houses of the poor, and see how they live; and that you would read over Luke xii., and Luke xvi., and James iv. and v., and Matt. xxv., and try to write yourself a commentary on them. And that you would remember how you must leave this world, and what comes next.

El. It is such as you that set up levellers; you would have rich and poor live all alike, and we must fare and go no better than they, nor live at more ease.

P. No, Sir: but death will shortly play the leveller with you, and call away your soul, and turn your flesh to corruption and common earth: and then^m whose are those things that you possessed? I would have all honour done to magistrates, though I reverence not riches so much as I do magistracy. And I would not have you put yourself into any of the afflicting or hindering cases of the poor, in your food, raiment, or employment: but I must needs tell you, that in your place and way, you must labour as diligently, and live a mortified, self-denying life, as well as the poor. Andⁿ riches will excuse no man for idleness, or voluptuous living, nor allow you to waste one groat in vain.

El. The poor live in their way as well as we in ours: their diet and their labour is as suitable to them as our plenty and ease is to us.

P. It is but from use, then, for their flesh is of the same kind with yours: and if so, I hope if you be put to it, you can use yourself to live so too. And if so, methinks a due abatement of excesses and voluptuousness should be much more easy to you.

But, Sir, it is not the mere labour of the poor that I pity them for, nor the unpleasantness of their diet. I am persuaded the minds of many of them are quieter, and that their meat and sleep is sweeter than yours, but, pardon me for telling you that I am much among them, and I find, 1. That some of them drink nothing but water, or beer that is little better, and use a diet so unwholesome, that it breedeth dropsies, consumptions, and deadly sicknesses, having not fire and clothes to keep them warm. 2. That many are so full of cares how to pay their rents and debts, that they have no heart to think of the greater business of their souls; and many are so tired with their excessive labour, that when they should pray, or read a chapter, or instruct their families, either they have no time, or they are presently,

^m Luke xii. 18—21.

ⁿ Jam. v.

with weariness, asleep : yea, tired on the Lord's days with the week days' labour. 3. And worst of all, they cannot spare their children from work while they learn to read, though I offer them to pay the schoolmaster myself, much less have they time to catechise and teach them. So that poverty causeth a generation of barbarians in a christian, happy land. You would forgive my boldness, if you understood the sadness and sinfulness of all this, and that some rich men, that have caused such things as these, do now want themselves a drop of water to cool their tongues.

But all this is by a digression. I pray you tell me next what that is which you accuse me of as over-troublesome to my neighbour, or to the world, in my doctrine ?

El. I have told you : it is disquieting men's consciences.

P. But what is it that I say amiss to disquiet them ?

El. You would make them believe that God made us to damn us, and make his mercy as narrow as your conceits.

P. Do you not think that^o some shall be damned for their sins ; and that God best knoweth who ? and that he best knoweth how to use his own mercy ? and that we must believe his word ? If you think that all shall be saved, speak out, and let us hear your proof. If not, tell me to whom I deny salvation that God hath promised it to ?

El. You make strict laws and opinions of your own brains, and then damn all who do not keep them.

P. What be those laws and opinions of ours ?

El. What ! more than a good many. If a man go finer than yourselves ; if he be not of your fashion ; if a woman wear black spots, or go with bare breasts ; if we play at cards or dice, or go to a play-house ; if the people set up a may-pole, or dance on Sundays ; if one drink a cup, and be but merry ; O, these are profane people ; they are not precise enough to be saved.

P. There is nothing so small in which a true servant of God would not be obedient : and great sin is oft committed in^p small things. And their signification, and the omissions which they import, are oft sadder than the things themselves. If your harvest were out, or your house were on fire, and your servant should let all alone, and go to cards, or a play-house, the while, and say, ' How precise is my master to think that there is any harm in this,' you know how to answer him. Truly, sir, our

^o 2 Thess. i. 7—10, and ii. 11, 12.

^p Heb. xii. 16 ; Matt. v. 19.

lives are short ; our souls are precious ; our work is great, and much undone ; time makes haste ; we have lost much already ; hell is terrible ; heaven is glorious ; God is just, and all that ever must be done for our souls must be now done. And in this case, he that hath time to cast away on stage plays, and cards, and idleness, let him do it ; for my part, I have not. As strict as you think me, God knoweth that my work is yet so much to do, that I have no time to spare for such things as these. He that liveth by faith, foreseeeth heaven open all the way, and such a sight doth cool my appetite to sports. Oh, precious time ! how fearful am I lest thou wilt be gone, before my faith be strengthened, my hope confirmed, my love to God increased, and my preparation made for death and judgment ! O what hearts are in those men that can see time passing, death coming, God present, judgment and eternity at hand, and yet sit needlessly at dice or cards, or idle recreations ! Have we no more to do with time ? I speak not against needful recreations, which fit us for an ordinary, laborious calling, as whetting doth the mower's scythe. But wo to them that cast away so short and precious time in fooleries and idleness, which is all that ever they shall have to prepare for their everlasting state.

And I must tell you too, sir, that I need not such pleasures : the word of God, and the foresight of eternal glory, afford me better ; so much better, that these stink in comparison of them.

But yet, sir, it is not my custom to talk first or much of such things as these. Here stands your tenant, ask him whether I once named any such matters to him ? I remember old Mr. Dod's saying to one that would have him preach against long hair, 'Win their hearts to Christ, and they will cut their hair themselves.' I remember a person of great estate yet living, that in youth was ignorant, vain, and gaudy, and being often persuaded to leave some gaudy fashions, long despised all that was said ; but at last, by a sermon, being convinced of greater matters, and humbled, and suddenly changed to a godly life, all the beloved vanities and fashions were in two days cast away, and never taken up again, without any talk about such things, to the marvel of spectators.

Oh, sir, could I but persuade you to that due sense of things eternal, as their truth and greatness do bespeak even of reason itself ; could I prevail with you to engage your heart and life to such care and ^a diligence for God and your salvation, and the

^a Johu vi. 27.

common good, as God will require of you, I would leave you to pass away as much time as this work can reasonably spare.* One thing is necessary ; do that, and then go to play.

El. But you are the most censorious generation of men in the world. You make a sect and party for religion, of precise and self-conceited people, and then none must be saved but your precise party ; and how empty will heaven be, if none be there but puritans !

P. 1. I suppose you will grant, that if we should never so much flatter ungodly persons, with the hopes of salvation, their case might be the worse, but it could be never the better. God's will, or word, will not change with ours ; he will never save an unholy soul. If all the prelates and preachers in the world should agree to tell them that they shall be saved, they would stand before God never the more justified for all this ; it would but keep them from repentance, and consequently from being saved indeed. 2. And you cannot but know that all mankind is proner to security, presumption, self-flattery, and impenitence, than to overmuch fear, unless it be some persons that are melancholy. 3. And you cannot but know that false hopes are far more dangerous, though unjust fears be the more troublesome ; for presumption keepeth them more from repentance. 4. And if I may judge of others by myself, we ministers are more prone to be too tender of troubling people, than too terrible ; for naturally we all love our own ease and quiet, and the love of our neighbours ;* and we know that it is flattery that gets love, and plain dealing hatred ; and we long not to be hated. And most ministers have need of their neighbour's bounty ; and hatred is not the way to procure that, especially with the rich. Therefore you should rather charge us to deal plainly, and to take heed lest poverty, or cowardliness, or lukewarmness, tempts us to daubing flattery, or silence.

2. But, sir, what is the sect or party of puritans that you say we confine salvation to ? I pray you let us not spend time in mere words ! If you mean that we confine salvation to any that agree with us in by-matters, circumstances, doubtful opinions, or any thing not essential to Christianity and godliness, it is a sin which we detest. Prove it by me, if you can ; ask Saul, whether I spake a word to him of any doubtful controversy in religion.

* Luke x. 42.

* 1 Kings xxii. ; Amos. ii. 12 ; Mic. ii. 11 ; Job xxxii. 21, 22 ; 1 Thess. v. ; Prov. xxviii. 23 ; xx. 19, 28, and xxvi. 28 ; Ezek. xii. 24.

But, if the party you talk of be that which Christ calleth believers, penitent, regenerate, sanctified, godly persons, do you not believe yourself that God in Scripture hath confined salvation to such only? All the world is of two parties: the seed of the woman and of the serpent; the godly and the ungodly. Do you believe Christ himself, or not? If you do, doth he not most expressly and vehemently confine salvation to them that are born again of the Spirit; (John iii. 3, 5;) to them that are converted; (Matt. xviii. 3;) to them that are new creatures; (2 Cor. v. 17;) to them that have the Spirit of Christ, and mind the things of the Spirit, and live after the Spirit, and mortify the lusts of the flesh; (Rom. i. 5—9, 13, 14;) to them that have a heart in heaven; (Matt. vi. 21;) and a heavenly conversation; (Phil. iii. 20, 21;) to them that seek first God's kingdom and righteousness. (Matt. vi. 33.) Are these the words of man, or of God? Are they ours, or Christ's? Are we censorious for believing our Saviour, and for preaching his word, and persuading others to believe it?

O, how much better were it for men to judge themselves by the word of God, and not by their self-flattering, fleshly mind, before God judge them; rather than to call God, or his holy word, or his ministers that speak it, censorious.

El. Do you allege God's word against his goodness, and merciful nature? It is contrary to God's goodness to save none but a few puritans and precisians, and to condemn all the rest of the world to hell. Would you have us to believe things utterly incredible, as well as undesirable?

P. Your scornful names of puritans and precisians are but words of your own, thrust in to vent your spleen, and to darken the question. If you mean any other than repenting, sanctified believers, it is nothing to our case, I talk for no other. But, sir, we will not be mocked out of our duty and salvation: heaven were little worth, if it were not worth the bearing of derision, from poor souls that are hastening themselves to hell. But to the matter.

1. As to the number of those that God will save, I never presumed to determine of it. I only tell you, that none are saved but those that are sanctified by the Spirit of Christ: remember, I pray you, that this is all that I say. How many are sanctified I know not, but I would advise you, instead of such inquiries, as you love yourself, to make sure that you are

¹ Gen. iii. 15; Mal. iii. 17, 18; Matt. xxv.; 2 Thess. i. 9, 10; John iii. 3, 5.

one of them. But experience may help to make some conjectures : if all the world, or most of the world, be truly holy ; that is, do love God and heaven better than fleshly pleasure and worldly prosperity, then all, or most of the world, shall be saved. But if there be few such, there are few that will be saved. This is the truth, if God's word be true ; and instead of being offended at it, you had best to lay your hand upon your heart, and see whether or not it be so with you ; for God will not save you for your riches, nor high looks, nor for contending against his word.

2. Do you think that God doth not know his own nature and goodness, and what is consistent with it better than you ? Will you tell him, that he hath made a law, or given us a word, which is ^u contrary to his own nature and goodness ? If you will teach God to know himself better, or to amend his Word, he will convince you, ere he hath done with you, that you should rather have known yourself and God better.

3. Is it contrary to the goodness of God to shut men out of heaven who will have none of it, or who hate it, or who prefer a swinish lust before it ? Attend a little, sir, and I shall show you your unrighteous censure of God. If you can but forgive God for making you a man, you may perceive that it is you that damn yourself, and then quarrel with God for it. Is it not man himself that loveth the world and fleshly pleasure more than God ; that committeth all the sin that is committed ; that ^{*} turneth away his heart, his love, his delight, his thoughts from God, and from all that is heavenly and holy ? Are not your lusts your own, and your passions your own ? Is it not yourself that maketh yourself ungodly, and contrary to the holy nature of God and heaven ? And yourself you resist and refuse the Spirit and grace of God ? Do you know how much of hell is in sin itself, and of your own making, as well as of your own deserving ? To be saved, is to know God and love him, and delightfully serve him : this in perfection is heaven. And doth God deny you this when you truly desire it ; or do you not ^v deny it to yourself ? Is it not you that delight not in God and his service ; and that rather choose your fleshly pleasure ? And is it not you, then, that put yourself out of heaven ? Heaven is a state of perfect holiness ; and you will not have holiness, and yet you say you would

^u Rom. iii. 3, 4, &c.

^{*} Job xxviii. 28 ; Prov. xiii. 14 ; xiv. 27. and xv. 24.

^v Job xxi. 14, and xxii. 17.

have heaven. God setteth before you a feast of holy joys; and your appetite is against it: you loathe it, you refuse it; no entreaty will persuade you to taste it; you deride it as preciseness; and when you have done, you blame God because you have it not. If you would have a Mahometan heaven of lechery, and wine, and sports; a heaven of cards, and dice, and plays, and jesting; a heaven of proud domination over your brethren, or of money, and great estates, and pomp, you are mistaken; there is none such in another world. All this heaven was ^a here on earth; and here you chose it; and here you had it. Hereafter there is no heaven but the sight and delightful love of God, and perfection of holiness. Would you have this, or would you not? If you will, then refuse it not, deride it not, neglect it not; presently begin, and spit out your filthy, fleshly pleasures, and ^a seek the Lord, and he will assist you and accept you; but if you will not, remember who put you out of heaven.

And when death hath opened your eyes, and showed you what it is that you refused, and have ^b lost, and what it was that you preferred before it, your own conscience will tear you with perpetual torments, to think what a glory you might have had and would not; what a God you departed from; and what all the fleshly pleasures were which you preferred; and what is now become of all. I tell you, if God should no further meddle with you, your ^c conscience in the remembrance of this would torment you.

You see, then, that besides what they deserve from the hand of divine justice, what it is that sinners execute upon themselves. You cannot both refuse heaven and make yourself incapable of it, and yet have it; and you cannot lose it, and not for ever feel the loss.

4. And is not God just? and injustice contrary to his nature? Is it contrary to the goodness of the king or judge to hang a thief or murderer? And what if they be many? Must they, therefore, be ^d unpunished? If many should beat you or abuse you, doth not that rather aggravate the wrong than extenuate it? You scruple not killing a nest of wasps or hornets, though they be many. Millions of men are not so much to God as a swarm of flies are unto man.

5. And I would know whether you think it contrary to God's

^a Luke xvi. 25.

^a John v. 40; Rev. xxii. 17; Jos. xxiv. 15.

^b Matt. xxv. 6—8.

^c Rom. xxi. 15.

^d Psalm i. 5, 6, and i.; Matt. xxv.

goodness to condemn any at all, or not? If not, what numbers proportionably will you impose upon him to save? What if he saved a thousand or ten thousand for one that he condemneth; would that seem to you consistent with his goodness? And are you sure it is not so? We are sure that this earth is to the rest of the universe, but as one inch is to the whole earth; and how small a part is that! And you know not but * angels and pure inhabitants may possess all the rest, except what is allotted to the devils and the damned. And if so, if ten thousand to one in this wicked world (which is next to hell) were damned, it would not all be one to many millions of the pure and blessed ones in the rest of the creation. I only say that men that are ignorant of such matters, as we all are, are unfit to quarrel with God about them.

El. You have said much, I confess; but it is all no justification of your own arrogance, that lay claim to heaven before your neighbours. All we are profane and ungodly people; and you only are the holy brethren and the ' children of God. You say, 'Stand by, I am holier than thou?' and as the Pharisee, 'I thank thee, Lord, that I am not as other men, nor as this publican.'

P. 1. Who do you mean by 'us' and by 'you?' Speak plainly, that you may be understood. If any arrogate the name of holy or godly that is not so, he is an hypocrite. Do you hear me say that such shall be saved? And either you and the rest of our neighbours are really godly, sanctified persons, or you are not. If you are, we say you are the children of God, and the heirs of heaven as well as we or any others. Did you ever hear me say that any godly man is ungodly? or is not the child of God? Name the man that I have said so by. If your own conscience tell you that you love God better than the world, and † seek first his kingdom and righteousness, and if your conversation prove it, you have then the witness in yourself that you are sanctified, and need not care what others say of you; but if your conscience tell you that it is not so, but that you are a lover of the world and pleasure more than of God, silence not your conscience, and desire not that we should flatter you with lies, when your own conscience knoweth that the case is otherwise.

2. But, sir, do you think that there is no difference among

* Heb. xii. 22, 23; an innumerable company of angels, or myriads.

† 1 John v. 19, 20.

‡ Matt. vi. 33.

men? Are the good and bad, the godly and wicked, all alike? Then, indeed, there would be no difference hereafter. But if there be a difference, may it not be known? And must he that hath God's grace be unthankful, and falsely say that he hath none? Those are like the unhumbed Pharisees, who thank God for that grace which they have not; and not they that humbly thank him for what they have. Would you have a temperate, chaste, and just person think himself to be a drunkard, a fornicator, a thief, when it is not so, and all for fear of being proud? Then why are you angry with those that count you ungodly, if humility bind all men to think themselves ungodly? God neither desireth that we should think with the Pharisee, that we are sanctified when we are not, nor that we deny the grace which we have. Unthankfulness for the greatest mercy is no virtue.

El. You are the true offspring of the pharisees; a pack of godly hypocrites; a generation that are pure in your own eyes, but are not cleansed from your filthiness. In secret you are as bad as any others.

P. Who do you mean, sir?

El. I mean all, or the most of you, that take on you to be so godly and religious above other men.

P. 1. Would you have men profess ungodliness? Would you have us be drunkards, swearers, fornicators, covetous, for fear of being hypocrites? or would you have us say that we are such when we are not? Is this your confession of Christ? Would you have no man profess himself a Christian or a servant of God? What, then, must we profess the service of the flesh and the devil?

2. Do not you take on you to be a Christian, and to be godly? Why else are you angry with them that count you ungodly? Else you are an infidel and an atheist. But if you profess Christianity and godliness yourself, are you therefore an hypocrite? If not, profession makes not others to be hypocrites. I pray you tell me, what do you profess less than I do? You profess Christianity and godliness, and I profess no more. But which of us is the hypocrite our consciences and lives must tell. I hope you will not renounce God and Christ, for fear of being an hypocrite.

3. But alas! sir, too many people fearing God are so far from being pure in their own eyes, that the greatness of their sins overwhelmeth them: and we can hardly keep them from con-

cluding that they have no grace at all, and are as ready to call themselves hypocrites in their fears, as you are in your spleen against them. And why do you at once accuse us for over-terrifying them, and driving them to despair, and yet of puffing them up with a conceit of godliness ?

4. But how is it that you come to know our hypocrisy, and what we are in secret ? If you know it, it is no secret : if it be a secret, you know it not. If our lives be vicious, prove it, and reprove us : if they be not, how know you that our hearts are so ? Is not God only the searcher of hearts ?

5. I am glad if, indeed, you hate hypocrisy. The hypocrite is he that professeth to be that which indeed he is not. You and I do both profess the same Christianity : now the question is, which of us is the hypocrite ? If one man live according to his profession, and be serious in his religion, and hate all known sin, great and small, and seek God diligently, and use all the means that God commandeth him ; and if another, making the same profession of Christianity, do live in open worldliness and sensuality, in gluttony, drunkenness, gaming, idleness, fornication, and deride holy living, and all that are serious in the religion which he himself professeth, and counteth the practice of Christ's own commands to be needless preciseness ; do I need to ask you, which of these is like to be the hypocrite ? I have admired to hear debauched persons call serious Christians hypocrites, when the want of seriousness in professed Christianity is the very nature of hypocrisy. Do not all these railers call themselves Christians ? Is not^b holiness essential to Christianity ? Is not a drunken Christian, a worldly Christian, a fornicating Christian, a sensual, voluptuous Christian, a very self-contradicting stigmatized hypocrite ? Every gross sin which such wilfully live in, is the brand of an hypocrite.

El. Are not all men sinners ? And he that saith he hath no sin, deceiveth himself. Why then make you such differences between yourselves and others ?

P. You may try whether by that trick you can deceive the king and the judges first : go to the bar and to the gallows, and say, ' Why should these poor men be hanged rather than all you ? Are not all sinners ? If one of your servants beat you, excuse him, because all are sinners.' But, sir, do you not know that there are^c sinners that shall be saved in heaven, and sinners

^b 2 Cor. v. 17 ; Rom. viii. 8, 9, 13, 30 ; Acts xxvi. 18 ; Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33.

^c 1 John i. 7, 8 ; iii. 8, 9, and v. 16, 17 ; John v. 14 ; 1 Cor. vi. 10, 11.

that shall go to hell; Sinners that are pardoned, and sinners that are not pardoned? And why so? But that there are sinners that are penitent, contrite, and truly converted, and sinners that are not so. There are ^k sinners that are ungodly, and sin wilfully, and love their sin: and there are sinners that are godly, and sin only of infirmity, and hate their sins, and make it the care of their lives to avoid them. Some make provision for the flesh to satisfy its desires or lusts: and some make it their work to mortify such lusts, and not to please them. If you will not difference between these two sorts of sinners, God will: and you shall shortly see it. They that stand on Christ's right hand and on his left in judgment, and hear, "Come ye blessed," and "go ye cursed," were all sinners: but read Matt. xxv. whether Christ maketh no difference?

El. The difference is, that you are the pharisees, and we are the publicans: you justify yourselves, and we smite on our breasts, and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" And which of these was justified of God?

P. I pray you speak truly, sir; do you think that Christ meant a dissembling publican, that took on him to repent and did not? Doth God justify wicked hypocrites? Or was it not a truly penitent publican, that confessed his sins with true repentance, and went home with a changed mind and life? And is not this all that I persuade your tenant to? And are not these the persons that we say shall be saved? If you be this publican, go, and do likewise: repent, confess, and be converted to a holy life.

And I will make bold this once to paint out the pharisee to you in Christ's own words, and then you shall be judge yourself, who is the pharisee. The pharisees were a sect that set up the traditions of the elders against God's word. (Matt. xv. 3.) They were all for ceremony in religion, washing before meat, and washing cups, and formal, set fasting often. (Matt. ix. 14; Luke xi. 39.) They worshipped God in vain, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (Matt. xv. 9.) They drew near to God with their lips, saying over certain prayers, when their hearts were far from him. (Matt. xv. 8.) They were the rulers of the Jewish church. (Matt. xxiii. 2; John vii. 45, 47, 48.) They were called by high titles, and were set in the highest seats, and went in pomp and state, with the formalities of broad phylacteries, and such like. (Matt. xxiii. 5—7.) They were strict for tithing mint, annise, and cummin: they were tyrants and extortion-

^k Rom. vi. 10, and xiii. 13; Gen. xxxix. 9.

ers, and oppressors of the poor; they strained at a gnat, and saw the mote in another's eye, condemning Christ and his apostles for not observing their ceremonies, while they saw not the beam of malignity and persecution in their own eye, but could swallow a camel, even these heinous sins: for their way was to honour the memorials of the martyrs, and to make more: to erect monuments for the dead saints whom their forefathers persecuted, and to go on to do the like by the living. (Matt. xxiii. 24. to the end.) They were the deadliest enemies of Christ, the silencers of his apostles, as far as they could, and the persecutors of Christians. And now I pray you tell me, who are the pharisees?

El. But you leave out that which is against you: they devoured widows' houses, and, for a pretence, made long prayers; and so do you.

P. I pray, Sir, tell me what widow's house I have devoured, and I promise you to restore it quickly. Do I oppress my tenants, as I before described to you? Have I any house but a mean one that I dwell in? Am I not fain to take up with the common jail, when your worship sends me thither for preaching?

And as for long prayers I have two questions to put to you. 1. Was it the length of prayer, or the false pretence, which Christ reproved? If the length, why did he continue all night in prayer himself who had less need than I? (Luke vi. 12.) Why are we bid pray continually, and continue instant in prayer. (1 Thess. v. 17; Rom. xii. 12; Col. iv. 2.)

El. No: it was the false pretence that was blamed.

P. Was it not a proof that long prayer is a thing very good and laudable, when sincerely used? Else it would not have made a cloak for sin; for one evil is not a fit covering for another. My second question is, whether the pharisees' long prayers were free prayers, uttered from the habits of the mind, or forms of liturgy?

El. I think they were such as your extemporale prayers.

P. Then you will wound the cause of liturgies, which I would not have you do; for if the pharisees, that were so ceremonious, used none, it will scarce be probable that any were used in the Jewish church.

El. Well, then, suppose them to be set liturgies.

P. It is they, then, that are likeliest to the pharisees, who by long liturgies cloak their oppressions and covetousness.

El. You are noted to be as covetous a sort of people as any:

you will cheat a man in bargaining, and you will not swear; but you will lie like devils.

P. I assure you, sir, if we do so, it is contrary to our doctrine: for we profess that such persons are no children of God, nor can be saved in such a state. Therefore you must prove it against the particular persons whom you accuse. For if we know of such, we number them with wicked men, and bring them to repentance and restitution, or excommunicate them.

And for those ministers that are called puritans by you, whether they are in the right or wrong, I meddle not. But, 1. If they be so covetous, how come they these many years to live in pinching poverty, (except a few that have something of their own, or live in other men's houses,) and all to avoid that which they think is sin? 2. And if they are such liars, why do they not escape all their suffering? If they durst but once lie under their hands, and say that they assent and consent to what they do not, they might be as free as others.

E. There are as many villanies committed secretly among you as among others. Our faults are open, and known to all; but you are as bad in corners, as demurely as you carry it. Did you not hear lately of a great professor near you that was drunk, and another that got his servant-maid with child? 'This is your profession. If the truth might be known, on my conscience you are all alike.

P. Your own tongue still confuteth you, and honoureth those whom you would fain reproach. If you sin openly, it seemeth you are not ashamed of it; you tell us that it is no wonder among you, as if it were your profession: if we sin secretly, how do you know it? Your naming one or two defamations, implieth that with such as you mean, it is a rarity and strange thing. And slanders are so common against such persons, that when it is examined, it is two to one but it proves false. But if it be true, either the acts you mention are marvels, committed by one of a hundred, once perhaps in all their lifetime since their change; or else they are such as you describe that live secretly in such sin. If it be the latter, they are hypocrites, and such as we call to repentance and conversion, as being in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity; and all that I desire of you and your tenant here is, that you will not be such. If you like such, why do you blame them? If you dislike them, why will you be such yourselves? If you say that you make

¹ Isa. iii. 9. Jer. vi. 15, and viii. 12.

no profession of religion, I answer again ; unless you renounce Christ, you profess as much as the hypocrites named by you. for you profess Christianity, and they profess no more.

But if they were the falls of serious Christians, I ask you, which is the likelier sort of men to be true Christians, they that live impenitently and commonly in gross sin, and hate those that reprove them and live better ; or they that live blamelessly in the fear of God, save that ^m one among many of them doth once in his life commit some heinous sin, which layeth him in such shame and brokenness of heart, that oftentimes such never well recover their comforts again while they live ? If Noah was once drunk in his life ; if there were one Ham in his family ; if Lot was twice tempted to drunkenness and incest ; if David once was guilty of odious sin ; if Peter once, or thrice at once, denied his Master ; if there were one Judas in the family of Christ himself ; will any but the malicious thence conclude that they are all alike, or that one sin repented of is as bad as a life of sin never truly repented of ?

And do you know what your slanderous inference doth import ? No less than that Christ is no Christ, and that all the world shall be damned ; for mark, I pray you, that we are certain that open unconverted sinners ⁿ are not saved from their sins by Christ ; and that so dying they are lost for ever. Now you come in and say that the rest that profess repentance and obedience are in secret, and at the heart, as bad as they. And if so, they are all certainly lost men, for without holiness none shall see God ; and the ungodly shall not stand in judgment ; (Heb. xii. 14 ; Psalm i. 6 ;) and God hateth all the workers of iniquity.^o Now, to say that all are such, either openly or secretly, is to say that either God is a liar, or that no one shall be saved ; and yet you are the man that cannot believe that many are damned : and if Christ sanctify and save none from their sins ^p he is no Saviour, and so no Christ.

But, sir, if you will search after such scandals, and bring such sins to open shame and punishment wheresoever they be found and proved, you shall have all our help and thanks, and you shall not cry down hypocrisy and scandal more heartily than we will do.

El. Fain would you seem pure and perfect, without sin, as the old Catharists pretended themselves to be.

^m Psalm li.

^o Psalm v. 5.

ⁿ Luke xiii. 3, 5, and xv.

^p Matt. i. 21 ; Tit. ii. 14.

P. Did you never hear any of us pray? If you had, you would have heard that we are more large and earnest in confessing and lamenting our sins, even in public, before God and the congregation, than any others ordinarily are. In truth, every godly man is so humbled in the sense of his sins,^a that he is a greater burden and trouble to himself than all the world is besides, and he loatheth himself for all his sins. We confess ourselves sinners, with daily grief and shame; and if, indeed, the Catharists did otherwise, they were no kin to us, nor any of our acquaintance. Why do we exhort others so much to contrition and repentance, if we are not for the same ourselves? Would not all men make others of their own mind?

El. Come, come, when you have prated never so long, you must confess that you are a pack of rebels, and seditious rogues, the firebrands of your country, that would destroy the king and all of us, if we were in your power. The world hath had experience enough of you. You have learned to cant and talk smoothly in your way, and have God, and Christ, and heaven, and Scripture in your mouths; but, on my conscience, the devil and treason is in your hearts.

P. Whom do you mean, sir?

El. I mean all of you that pretend so much to godliness and preciseness, and make such ado with Scripture and religion. You will not swear, nor drink, nor whore, nor go to a play, but ye are traitors all.

P. Doth not every man profess godliness, who professeth to be a Christian? Do not the king himself, and his council, and nobles, and judges, and all the magistrates of the land almost, and all the bishops and clergy, profess Christianity, and godliness, and to believe the Scripture, and to hope for heaven? Do not they all pray in the Common Prayer, 'that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, that at the last we may come to eternal joy;' and 'that we may live a godly, righteous, and sober life;' and 'that we may fall into no sin;' and that 'we may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives:' with many more such passages? Are you good friends to your king and country, that would make men believe that it is a sign of a bad subject to be religious, and that to "fear God and honour the king" may not stand together? What! will you charge the king and all his magistrates with treason? Are they all traitors who obey him and defend him?

^a Rom. vii. 16, 17, 24; Psalm li.; Acts xxvi; Tit. iii. 2, 3.

El. You know who I mean well enough. I mean you puritans, all the pack of you.

P. A puritan is a word of so arbitrary interpretation, that sure it is too large to found a charge of treason upon. Mr. Robert Bolton, and Bishop Downname, and Bishop Robert Abbot, and many such, will tell you that it is commonly used in the mouths of the profane for any man that feareth God, and liveth holily, and avoideth wilful sin, and will not be debauched as sensualists are: and sometimes it is taken for one that is against the prelacy and ceremonies. In the first sense, as a puritan signifieth a serious Christian, and a godly man, dare you say that the king, nobles, judges, and bishops are not such? I am not acquainted with them: but our religion teacheth us to judge all men to be what they profess themselves to be, till the contrary be certain and notorious. Dare you say that all the magistrates, prelates, citizens, and subjects of the land are either ungodly men, or traitors? Sure this cannot be your meaning.

El. You are loath to know my meaning. I mean all the pack of the precisians that are for so much strictness, and preaching and praying, and talking of Scripture.

P. Dare you say that neither the king, nor his nobles, nor judges, nor bishops, nor clergy, are for Scripture, and for much preaching and praying, and for strict, precise obedience to God, and for strictness of justice, temperance, and sobriety? What, will you say that all are traitors to the king, that will not be rebels against God, and perfidious traitors against Christ and Christianity?

El. I mean your second sort of puritans, the non-conformists, if you are willing to understand.

P. Now, I understand you, sir, but it is but in part. But what is conformity or non-conformity to our case? What, if all non-conformists were as bad as you make them, will you, therefore, plead for non-conformity and rebellion against God? What an argument is this! Non-conformists are rebels. Therefore an ungodly man needeth no repentance and conversion, or we may be saved without a holy heart and life. Do you think this is wise reasoning? Do not conformists plead for holiness? Be you but a godly conformist, and I shall rejoice in your felicity. But, because I must love my neighbour as myself, I have three or four questions further to ask you. 1. Is it they that conform in nothing, or they that conform not in every thing? Such a one was Chillingworth; and I thought you had not taken the papists to be all traitors, who are non-conformists too.

2. Is it their doctrine that is traitorous? Or is it their hearts

and practice contrary to their doctrine? For the former, they defy their slanderers, and challenge them to cite one confession of any reformed church that hath in it any disloyal doctrine. Bishop Andrews, in *Tortura Torti*, will tell you that in this puritans are belied, and that they take the same oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and profess the same loyalty with others. But if it be their hearts and practices, as contrary to their own doctrine, are you not a slanderer if you charge such dissembling on any one that you cannot prove it by? Such charges must fall on particular persons, and be proved, and not on parties; for what shall notify any man's mind but his own profession, or his practice? When they readily swear allegiance and loyalty, are they not to be believed till some proof confute them? And if, in civil wars, you gentlemen, lawyers, and statesmen, say this is law, and that is law, and entangle poor men's consciences, will you afterwards conclude that no man's conscience will be true to his oath of allegiance, which scrupleth ecclesiastical oaths or subscriptions? Another man would think it a more probable arguing to say, 'He that scrupleth one oath or subscription is like to make conscience of another; for if he dare break an oath when he hath taken it, why should he not venture as far to take it?'

3. But, sir, all this is Satan's ordinary course, to endeavour to engage the interest of princes seemingly on his side, to make religion odious. Christ must be accused as forbidding to pay tribute to Cæsar, and as an usurper of the kingdom. Pilate must condemn him, lest he seem not Cæsar's friend. Paul goes for a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among the people, that taught things contrary to Cæsar and the law.

But, again, sir, what is all this to the case here that you come to treat about? Did I persuade your tenant to be a non-conformist? Did I speak one syllable to him of any such matter? Did I put any scruple into his mind against any orders of the church? Ask him whether I did? When I had nothing to say to him but to exhort him to repentance and the love of God, and a holy and heavenly life and conversation, and quickly to forsake his sins, how cometh non-conformity to have any thing to do here? What is that to the question in hand? Pray you, Saul, mark your landlord's argument; 'Non-conformists are all traitors and rebels,' if you will believe him: 'therefore, forsake not your sins, and turn not to God and a holy life by true repentance: or, other men are,' saith he, 'rebels against the king, therefore continue you a rebel against God.' Have not you natural logic enough to perceive the deceit of such an argument?

For my part, I here give you my plain profession, that all that fear God must honour the king, and not resist the higher powers, and that for conscience' sake, lest they receive damnation; and that rebellions and treasons against king or kingdom are the works of the devil and the flesh, which all true Christians must abhor.

El. However, you cannot deny but you are a pack of schismatics, that, for a ceremony, will tear the church, and set up conventicles of your own; and schism is kin to rebellion.

P. You shall not thus draw us away from the business in hand. I will not now dispute with you what schism is, who seem not to understand it, because it is impertinent, and tendeth but to divert us from our business. I ask you, 1. Do I persuade your tenant here to schism, or only to repentance and a holy life? 2. Are not conformists and non-conformists agreed in that? You know not what I am in those matters myself; but send for some able minister that is a conformist, and another that is a non-conformist, and try whether both agree not in the truth of all that I am persuading him to believe or practise.

El. The truth is, you are of so many sects and so many opinions, that he may sooner grow a Bedlam among you, than a good Christian. You are of as many minds as men. One tub-preacher saith, 'This is the word of God,' and another saith, 'That is the word of God;' scarce a whole house is of one religion; and if he must turn to any of you, how shall he know which party it must be? Must he be a presbyterian, or an independent, or a Brownist, or an anabaptist, or what? How shall he be sure which of all these is in the right, that he may rest?

P. Saul, you hear this terrible objection of your landlord. Will you but mark my answer in these three parts, and if it be not reason, spit in my face, and take your course.

1. Every different opinion^r is not a different religion. Our religion is but one thing, which is simple Christianity; and every by-opinion is not essential to Christianity. No two men in the world, I think, are, in every thing, of one opinion. He that will not take a journey which is for his estate or life, till all the clocks in London strike together, is as wise a man as he that will not turn from his sin to God till all Christians are of one opinion in all the difficult points of religion.

2. My earnest advice to you, Saul, is, that you become not ^a

^r Read Rom. xiv., and xv.

sectary* of any party whatsoever. Become a true Christian, and love the unity, peace, and concord of believers; and, for opinions, follow the right, as far as you can know it, but not to engage for doubtful things in any divisions, sects, or parties: but if men will needs quarrel, stand by, and pray for the church's peace.

3. Try whether Christians of all opinions do not agree in all that I exhort you to. If I have taught you, or persuaded you to, any one thing, but what the conformists and nonconformists, episcopal, presbyterian, independent, yea, and the papists are all of a mind in, and will all bear witness to, the certain truth, then let your conscience judge whether you be not a most inexcusable man, that will not be persuaded to that which even all differing Christians are agreed in; and whether this objection of sects and different religions condemn not you the more, that will not agree with them where they all agree? and I leave it also to Sir Elymas's conscience.

El. You would make me seem a fool, or an atheist; as if I persuaded him from religion. By — you are a set of the insolentest rogues in the world. I will stand talking with you no more. But for you, Saul, I tell you; if you hearken to such fellows, and turn a puritan, I will turn thee, and thy wife and children, out of doors the next week after it. And you, sir preacher, I will take another course with you, if you cease not thus to trouble my neighbours. I doubt not but I shall cause the bishop to trounce you; but if he do not, I will once more send you to the common jail, for all your sick night-cap, and there you shall lie among rogues like yourself.

P. I beseech you, let not loose your passion, sir: remember that you said you love your neighbour as yourself. Poverty, and a ' prison, are as near and sure a way to heaven as riches, and earthly prosperity, and pleasure. I must shortly die; and whether at home, or in a jail, or with Lazarus at your doors, among your dogs, it is not my interest or care: God is the Lord of your life and mine. Boast not of to-morrow; for who knoweth "what a day may bring forth?" (Prov. xxvii. 1.)

But, sir, seeing you are not against all religion, I beseech you, in the conclusion, yet, make us to understand what it is that you are against?

El. I am against being righteous overmuch; and making

* Rom. xvi. 17, 18; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; 1 Cor. i. 10, 11; ii., and iii.; Tit. iii. 10.

† Matt. v. 10—12.

men believe that they cannot be saved without being so holy and so strict ; and so frightening poor people out of their wits. A puritan is nothing but such a frightened protestant. Cannot you go to church, and sometimes say your prayers ; and so be quiet, and be moderate in your religion ? It is these bigots, and zealots, that trouble all the world ; and will neither let men live nor die in peace. Cannot you live as your neighbours do, and your forefathers have done ? What, are they all damned ; and will you be wiser than all the world ? Moderation is good in all things.

P. Your speech hath many parts which must be distinctly considered. I. To be righteous overmuch, in Solomon's sense, is to be stricter than God would have us ; by a preciseness, or a devised righteousness of our own : where righteousness is not taken formally, but materially, for a rigid preciseness and pretended exactness, which is not commanded ; and, indeed, is no duty, but a great hinderance of duty, and that which I use to call over-doing. As some men will be so accurate in their expressions in preaching and praying ; as that over-curiousness in words destroyeth the life and use. And some will pretend that every thing must be done better, and mended still, till nothing be done, or all be marred. As in household affairs, over-curiosity about every little thing is accompanied with the neglect of greater things ; because we are not sufficient for all. So in religion, some, upon pretence of strictness, lay out so much of their zeal, and talk, and time, about many lesser or doubtful points of church order, discipline, and modes, and circumstances of worship, and about controverted opinions, that thereby they neglect the great substantials. This ^u tithing of mint, anise, and cummin, and omitting the weighty matters of the law, faith, judgment, and mercy, and preferring sacrifice before mercy, is at once to be unrighteous, and to be righteous overmuch, even with an unrighteous righteousness ; that is, a strictness of our own devising. Do I persuade any one to this ?

II. We would make men believe nothing but God's own word. If that word say not, that " If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," (Rom. viii. 9,) let it not be believed. But if it do, what are we to preach for, but to persuade men to believe God's word, and obey it ? And will it save men's souls to be unbelievers ? Believing God is the way

^u Matt. xxiii. 23, and per totum ; ix. 13 ; xli. 7, and xvi. 3—6 ; Col. ii. 19, 20, &c.

which he hath appointed for salvation : and will you say, that not to believe him is the way ?

III. We would affright stupid sinners into their wits, and not out of them. When the prodigal came to himself, he returned to his Father. (Luke xv. 17.) We take that man to be much worse than mad, that will sell his soul for so base a price as a little worldly pelf, or fleshly pleasure ; and having but one short, uncertain life, in which he must win or lose salvation, will cast it away upon the fooleries of sin. And if you would have such a man to go quietly to hell for fear of being made mad, I wish that none may fall into the hands of such a physician for madmen. "Wisdom is justified of her children." (Matt. xi. 19.) He that sets less by heaven and his soul, than by lust and vanity, can scarce (in that) be madder than he is. And if that be your wit, we envy you not the honour of it. We are no friends to melancholy, because it is no friend to the holy, joyful life of a believer. We wish men so much ^{*} fear of God, and of sin, and hell, as is necessary to keep them out of these ; and we would encourage no more. The kingdom of God consisteth in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xiv. 17.) We would have no tormenting fear, which is contrary to love, but only that which doth prepare for it, and promote it, or subserve it. To call men from a life of brutes, to seek and hope for a life with angels in heavenly glory, is not the way to frighten them out of their wits. The derisions of self-destroyers are easy trials to us, and cut not so deep as an offended God, or a guilty conscience.

IV. Moderation is a good effect of prudence ; and we are greatly against imprudence and irregular zeal. But because I perceive that this is the very point of all our difference, and that you think that a godly, righteous, and sober life is more ado than needs, and an excess in religion ; and would take us down to some dead formality, under pretence of being moderate ; I entreat your patient consideration of these questions following :

Quest. 1. Is it possible to ^v love God too much ; and is not love an active, operative principle ?

2. Is it possible to please God too well, and obey him too exactly ?

3. Is it not blasphemy against God to say so ? For God made all his laws : and he chargeth God's laws with folly and

^{*} Luke xii. 4, 5.

^v Matt. xxii. 37 ; 2 Tim. ii. 4 ; 1 Thess. iv. 1, and ii. 4 ; Col. i. 10.

iniquity, who saith that any of them are such as should not be obeyed.

4. Do you think that you can ^a give God more than his own, and more true service than he deserveth ?

5. Are you afraid of paying ^a too dear for heaven ? Do you think it is not worth more than it will cost the most serious, laborious believers ?

6. Are such men as you and I fit to be pulled back and dissuaded from loving and serving God too much ? Do you not say that we are all sinners ? And what is a sinner, but one that obeyeth not God enough ? And is sin a thing to be justified ? Are not we all such as we are sure shall do ^b too little, and come far short of our duty, when we have done our best ? Do you need to entreat lame men to run towards heaven too fast ? If the best are imperfect, and do too little, why will you persuade even an ignorant sinner to do less ? If you had servants that would do but a day's work in a week, or scholars that would learn but a lesson in a month, you would think that he abused you, that should exclaim against their working or learning too much.

7. Can that man be sincere, who desireth not to be perfect ? Doth he love holiness, that would not have more ?

8. Doth not all God's word call us up still to higher degrees of obedience, and to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God ? (2 Cor. vii. 1.) And did not God know what he said ? Are you wiser than he ? And doth not the devil every where call men off from holiness, and make them believe that it is needless, or too troublesome ? And whose work is it, then, that you are doing ?

9. Doth too much holiness trouble any man when he is ^c dying, or too little, rather ? Had you rather yourself have too little, yea, none, or have much, when you come to die ?

10. Did you ever know any man so holy, and obedient, and good, that did not ^d earnestly desire to be better ? Nothing in the world doth half so much grieve the holiest persons that ever I knew, as that they can know, and love, and serve God no more. And if there were no excellency in it, or if they had enough already, why should they desire more ?

11. Is not sin the only plague of the world, the troubler of

^a 1 Cor. iv. 7.

^b Luke xvii. 10, 49.

^d Rom. vii. 24.

^a Luke xii. 32, 33 ; Matt. xvi. 26.

^c Num. xxiii. 10 ; Hos. v. 15.

souls, and churches, and kingdoms, that will not suffer the world to have peace? And were it not better if there were none? Would not the world be then like a heaven, a blessed place? And should men be then blamed for sinning too little? which is your sense who blame them for being religious too much.

12. What have you in this world to mind, which is worthier of your greatest care and labour than the pleasing of God and the saving of your soul? If doing nothing be the best condition, sleeping out your life is better than waking, and death is better than life. But if any thing at all should be minded and sought, should it not be that first and most which is most worth? And have you found out any thing that is more worthy of your love and labour than heaven, or the everlasting fruition of God in glory? I pray you, sir, what do you set your heart upon, yourself? What do you seek with your greatest diligence? Dare you say it is any thing better than God? If one come to you at death, will you say then that it is better? I beseech you think whether I may not much wiselier say to you, and to all that are of your minds, 'Why make you such a^f stir for nothing? Is a few nights' lodging in a wicked world, in the way to the grave, and hell, worth all this ado?' than you can say to others, 'What need all this ado for your salvation?' Do you know ever a one of us whom you account too religious, that in his love and service of God doth seem much to exceed the^g ungodly in their love and service of the flesh? How early rise your poor labouring tenants? How much toil and patience have your servants to please you? and the husbandman, for a poor living? and almost all men for provision for the body, till it be cast into a grave? Is not all this too much ado? And is our poor, dull labour too much for heaven? They think of the world as soon as they are awake. They speak of it the first words they say. They hold on thinking, and talking, and labouring, till they go to bed again. In company and alone, they forget it not: and thus they do from year to year. And yet men say, that this is good husbandry, and who blameth them for it, and asketh them whether their maintenance be worth all this ado? Yea, God saith, "Six days shalt thou labour." What if we should as early and late, as constantly and unweariably, in company, and alone, still think and talk of our God and Saviour, and labour as hard in all appointed means for

^c Matt. vi. 19, 20.

^f Isa. v. 11; Zech. iii. 7.

^g Luke xvi. 8.

salvation? Had we not a thousand times greater motives for it? And yet who is it that doth so much? And are we puritans, and precisians, and such as trouble ourselves and others with doing too much, when we let every worldling overdo us? Yea, when a drunkard, or ambitious seeker of preferment, will run faster and more unweariedly towards hell, than most of us dullards do towards heaven. O Lord, pardon our slothfulness for doing so little! and we will bear these gentlemen's scorns and hatred for doing so much. O may we but escape thy deserved wrath for loving thee so little, and let us hear from persecutors what thy wisdom shall permit, for loving thee so much! My God, thou knowest, who knowest my heart, if thou wilt but make me believe more strongly, and hope for heaven more confidently and confirmedly, and love thee more fervently, and serve thee more faithfully, and successfully, and bear the cross more patiently, I ask for no other reward nor happiness in this world, for all that I shall do or suffer! I will not call thee too hard a Master; nor say that thy service is a toil; nor such a life a tedious trouble. O let me have this feast, these sweet delights, these restful labours, and let worldlings take their dirt and shadows, and Bedlams call me mad or foolish! Thou art my portion, my first and last, my trust and hope, my desire, my all! O do not forsake me, and leave me to a dead and unbelieving heart, to a cold, unholy, disaffected heart, to a fleshly, worldly, selfish mind, to live or die a stranger to my God, and the heavenly society, Christ, and his triumphant church, and then I will never join with the accusers of thy pleasant service, nor crave one taste of the beastly, deceitful pleasures of sin!

El. Oh, holy soul! No doubt you were in a rapture now! Were you not in the third heaven? Those tears were sanctified! Would not that holy water work miracles! Sure this was the breathing of the Spirit! Were you not fanatics, how could you think that God is pleased with your weeping and whining, and speaking through the nose, and cutting faces, and such like hypocritical shows?

P. Sir, I have no weapons to use but reason and God's word, and scorning is like sense and appetite, a thing that reason hath nothing to do with but rebuke, nor do I purpose to answer you in that dialect. I doubt you cannot undertake that you will not weep or whine on your death-bed: but if not, it may be worse.

El. Come, sir, when you have all done, who made the way

to heaven so long? Why lead you the people so far about? What need so many sermons, and so long prayers, as if God were moved or pleased with our talk? I can say all that is in your sermons and volumes in three words. All is but 'think well,' and 'say well,' and 'do well.'

P. That is quickly said, sir; but if I desire you to spend all or half your life in thinking well, and saying well, and doing well, will you not say that I am a puritan, and ask what need all this ado? Is it any thing else that I have persuaded your tenant to, and that you are opposing all this while? See still how unhappily you confute yourself. Let us but agree of this, that we must labour faithfully to think well, and say well, and do well, and repent unfeignedly that ever we did otherwise, and trust in Christ for pardon and for help, and we will so conclude, and differ no more.

But you must know that well and ill do differ. And what thoughts, words, and deeds are well indeed. And that is well which God commandeth, whether you like it or not.

But if you mean that our sermons need to be no^b longer, will you try first this art of short writing in a scrivener? Let him tell his boys, 'You have nothing to do but to make your letters well, and set them together well.' Let a schoolmaster say no more to his scholar but, 'You must know your letters and syllables, words and sentences, matter and method, and there needs no more.' Let a carpenter tell his apprentice, 'There is nothing to do but frame the house and rear it; and in rearing, nothing but lay the foundation and erect the superstructure, and cover, and ceil it.' Why do men set boys so many years to schools, and to apprenticeships, when two or three words may serve the turn?

But as for long prayers, sir, we know that God is not moved by words; but we are ourselves. And, 1. The exercise of holy desires exciteth them: as all habits are increased by act, and all acts further us by excitation of the faculties. And our fervent desires are our receptive disposition: and if you have any philosophy, you know that *recipitur ad modum recipientis*, and what a wonderful variegation of effects there is in the world, from the same beams or influxes of the sun, by the great variety of receptive dispositions. Two ways prayer maketh us receptive of the blessing: by physical disposition, (as appetite maketh our food sweet and effectual,) and by¹ moral disposition, as we

^b Acts xx. 9—11, &c.

¹ Luke xviii. 1—8.

are in the way where mercy cometh, and in the use of the means which God will bless. What if you offer your children money, or what else you see best, and bid them ask it first, and thank you after, and one of them doth so, and the other saith, 'My father is not so childish, mutable, or unloving, as to be moved with my asking or thanking.' What good doth this do to him? Will you not say, 'No; but it is good for you to do your duty, without which you are unworthy of my gift; and it is not wisdom in me to encourage your disobedience, nor to give you what you think not worth the asking.' We cannot have God's mercies against his will, and prayer is one of his conditions. And what can be more reasonable than ask and have? He that valueth not mercy, will neither relish it well, nor use it well.

There is a sweet and admirable co-operation between the bountiful communications of God, and the holy and constant desires of the soul. The heavenly influx cometh down on the soul and exciteth those desires; and desires arise, and by receptive disposition cause us more plenteously to receive that influx; even as the influx of the sun, and the fiery spirits in the eye, concur to our sight. We are receiving grace all the while we are desiring it. Therefore the constant excitation of holy desires, by fervent prayer, is the constant way of our reception and heavenly benediction.

2. And also it is part of the due^{*} homage that we owe to the great Benefactor of the world. The eyes of all things look up to him, and all things praise him in their kind; but man must do it as man, understandingly and freely. What else have we reason for, but to know the original and end of all the good that we receive? What have we tongues for, but to glorify our Creator and Redeemer, and to speak his praise? This is the use of our faculties; this is our duty, and our honour, and our joy. God made all his creatures for himself; even for the pleasure of his holy will; therefore he made our reason and tongues for himself. And can we have a nobler, sweeter theme for our thoughts, our affections, or our words? Oh! what is there in our blessed Saviour, our glorious God, and the heavenly joys, that we should ever be backward to think or speak of them; or ever count such work a toil; or ever be weary of it? Would you have us think that heaven is a place of weariness? Or have us afraid, lest it be a house of correction? As no papist can rationally ever be willing to die, who believeth he shall go to

^{*} Psalm lxxv.

the pains of purgatory, which is sharper, they say, than their sufferings here ; so you would have none at all willing to die, if you would make them believe that long praising God is a wearisome employment to a well-disposed soul. If you do not think that an hour is too long for dinner and supper at your plenteous tables ; if you can feast long, and talk long, and play long, and game long, and read romances, and see plays long, I pray you pardon us for praying long. And I would whisper this word to your conscience : ask Sir Elymas, on his death-bed, when time is¹ ending, whether he could then wish it had been spent in longer feasting, and dressing, and playing, or in longer praying ?

Sir, the worst I wish you is, that you had felt but one hour what some of God's servants have felt in prayer, and in the joyful praise of their glorious Lord, and then our dispute about the troublesomeness of religion would be at an end ; as feasting would end the controversy, whether it would be a toil for a hungry man to eat ?

El. This hath ever been the custom of hypocrites, to place all their religion in words and strictness ; but where are your good works ? You will call good works a piece of popery ; you are as covetous and griping as any men in the world ; you will cut a man's throat for a groat, rather than give a poor man a groat. This is the precisian's holiness and religion.

P. You say as you are taught ; you are not their first accuser. But, sir, men's religion must be known by their doctrine and principles : if a Christian be an^m adulterer, or murderer, or malignant, will you say that the christian religion is for adultery, murder, or malignity. I will tell you our doctrine : it is, that we must love our neighbours as ourselves, and mustⁿ honour God with our substance, and with the first-fruits of our increase ; and that we must devote all that ever we have to God ; and that we are^o created in Christ Jesus to good works, and^p redeemed and purified, to be zealous of good works ; and that we must do^q good to all men, but especially to the household of faith ; and that what we^r do, or deny, to his members, is as done or denied to Christ himself ; and that^s to do good and communicate we must not forget, for with such sacrifice God is well pleased. In a word, that we must even pinch our own flesh, and^t labour hard, that we may have wherewith to

¹ Luke xvi. 26—27.

^o Eph. ii. 10.

^r Matt. xxv.

^m 1 Cor. 9, 10.

^p Tit. ii. 14.

^s Heb. xiii.

ⁿ Prov. iii. 9.

^q Gal. vi.

^t Eph. iv. 28.

relieve the needy ; and that, as God's stewards, we must not waste one farthing in sensuality, or superfluous pomp, or pleasure, because, if we do, we rob the poor of it ; and that we must give God an ^u account of every farthing, whether we used it according to his will ; and that we must lay out all, as we would hear of it at last ; and that he that ^x seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him, the love of God dwelleth not in him ; and that we must be judged according to our works ; without which pretended faith is dead. Is this the doctrine which you or the papists do reproach ?

El. These are good words, if your deeds were answerable.

P. 1. If men live not as they profess, blame not their profession, but their lives. 2. But then you, that are a justice, must be so just as to hear men speak for themselves, and condemn no man till it is proved by him : and condemn no more than it is proved by, and not precisians in the general. 3. He that liveth contrary to his profession doth, by his profession, but make a rack for his conscience, and a proclamation of his own shame to the world. If you like our doctrine, why do you blame us for persuading others to it ? If you like it not, why do you blame us for not practising it ?

But come, sir, you and I live near together ; I pray you name me the men that are such covetous villains as you describe, and compare the rest of your neighbours with them.

El. You would put me upon odious work, I will not defile my mouth with naming any of you.

P. Am I one of them whom you mean ?

El. I confess you have got you a good report, for a charitable man, but on my conscience it is but to be seen of men.

P. Nay, then, there is no ward against your calumnies. Before, you denied our good works ; and now it is but our hearts and hypocrisy that you accuse, which God only knoweth. If you gave half your revenue to the poor, should I do well to think that you did it in hypocrisy ?

But come, sir, I will do that for you which you avoid : you know in our country there are few gentlemen of estate called precisians, but Mr. T. F., and you know he hath built an hospital, and endowed it with many hundred pounds per annum.

You know Mr. N. N. in another county, who is called a precisian, and I have credibly heard, that he giveth five hundred

^u Matt. xxv.

^x 1 John iii. 17 ; Rom. xiv. 10 ; Jam. ii.

pounds a year to charitable uses these sixteen years at least; and both of them go plain, and forbear pomp and gallantry, that they may have to do it with.

I use to lodge but in two houses in London, and therefore am not acquainted with many men's secrets of this kind. One of them is a godly man of no great estate, and is readier to offer me money to any good use than I am (for shame) to receive it. The other is a tradesman also, not reputed now worth very many hundreds by the year; and he giveth in one county an hundred pounds a year to charitable uses; and I do not think that it is another hundred that excuseth him at home. I will offend them all by telling you this, because of the text, Matt. v. 16.

But why do I mention particulars: I here seriously profess to you and the world my ordinary experience, that if I have at any time a collection or contribution to motion for any poor widow, or orphans, or any real work of charity, those that you call precisians do usually give their 7 pounds more freely than most others give their crowns, and freelier give a crown, than most others a shilling, proportionable to their estates. Yea, they do now in London give many pounds, where men of far greater estates will give next nothing. Not but there are great men of great estates, that in gallantry, it is like, will sometimes be liberal. And I doubt not but there are some men that have liberal minds, who have little religion. But I tell you only my own experience. But still remember, that I speak not of men of any sect as such, but of such serious holy men as you call precisians, of what side soever.

And these things more I desire you to remember: 1. That you know not other men's estates, and therefore know not what they are able to give. 2. That such men as you and others will keep many of them poor enough whom you call precisians, that they shall have more cause to receive than to give. 3. That Christ hath^a charged them to give their alms in secret, and not to let the right hand know what the left hand doth; and therefore you are no competent judge of their charity. 4. That the great covetousness of abundance that we have to do with maketh them think that they have never enough; and they accuse all of covetousness that satisfy not their covetous desires. 5. That no man hath enough to satisfy all men: and if we give to nine only, the tenth man that hath none will call

^a Luke xix. 8; Acts iv.

^a Matt. vi. 1-5.

us cruel, as if we had never given to any. 6. That the malignant enmity of the world to godliness doth dispose men to^a slander all godly persons, without proof or reason, and to carry on any lie which they hear from others. 7. That there are more and greater good works than giving alms. A poor minister, that saith with Peter and John,^b "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give thee," shall be accepted for what he^c would have given if he had had it. And if he^d convert souls, and turn many to righteousness, and help men to heaven, and all the year long doth waste himself in study and labour to do it, and liveth a poor despised life, and suffereth poverty, scorn, and wrath, from the ungodly, which, if he would change his calling, he might escape; doth not this man do more and greater good works, at a dearer rate than he that should glut his flesh, and gratify his pride, and lust, and ease, with a thousand or six hundred pounds a-year, and give as much more to charitable uses? Though I never knew such a one that did so.

And because you have said so much for good works, I take the boldness to entreat you to do more. We that are your neighbours see nothing that you do, but only give Lazarus a few scraps at your door; but we see that you are clothed in purple and silk, and that not only you, but your children and servants, fare sumptuously and deliciously every day. How much you spend in taverns, and pomp, and state, and feasting, and gaming, and visits, and on your pride and pleasure, the country talks of; but we hear little of any impropriations that you buy in for the church, or of any free-schools, or hospitals, that you settle, or of any poor children that you set to school, or apprenticeships, or the like. The sins of Sodom are your daily business; pride, fulness of bread, and idleness, and want of compassion to the poor, make them up. (Ezek. xvi. 49.) O what a dreadful account will you have, when all this comes to be reckoned for, as is foretold; (Matt. xxv.;) when it is found, on your accounts, so many pounds on visits and needless entertainments, and pomp; so many on sports, and on superfluities of horses, dogs, and furniture; so many to tempt all in your house to gluttony, to say nothing of other wasteful lusts; and to pious and charitable uses, alas, how little! The Lord convert you, lest you hear, "Take the slothful and unprofitable

^a Matt. v. 10—12.

^c 2 Cor. viii. 12.

^b Acts iii. 6.

^d Jam. v. 20.

servant, and cast him into outer darkness ;” and lest you want a drop of water for your tongue. At least, O do less hurt, if you will do no good.

El. I will talk no longer with you, lest you think to make me tremble, with Felix, or to say, ‘Almost you persuade me to be a precisian,’ you put such a face of reason upon your religion.

P. Sir, I beseech you let me end all our controversy with one question more. You profess yourself a Christian. Had you denied the Scripture, or the life to come, or the immortality of the soul, I had proved them, and talked to you at another rate. I ask you, then, if Saul had never been baptised till now, would you advise him to be baptised or not ?

El. Yes ; do you think I would not have him a Christian ?

P. And would you have him do it understandingly ? or ignorantly to do he knoweth not what ?

El. Understandingly ; or else why is he a man ?

P. And would you have him do it seriously, or hypocritically ; dissemblingly, or in jest ?

El. Do you think I am for hypocrisy and jesting about our Christianity ?

P. I have done, sir. Saul, mark what your master saith. He would advise you to be baptised, if you had not been baptised before ; and, therefore, now to stand to your baptism (for I will never ask him whether he would have you renounce it as an apostate). He would have you do it understandingly and seriously : I desire no more of you. Remember that we are agreed of your duty. I call you to no other conversion nor holiness, than understandingly and seriously to renew your baptismal vow and covenant with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Whatever you hear scorners talk of puritans and preciseness, and troublesome religion, and of our many sects and many religions, of conformity and nonconformity, of a hundred controversies, remember that the serious renewing and faithful keeping your baptismal covenant is all that I preach to you and persuade you to. I will therefore write you out this covenant, desiring you to take it home with the exposition of it which I gave you, and consider of it with your most serious thoughts ; and when you are resolved, come and tell me.

THE HOLY COVENANT.

I do^e believe in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy

^e Matt. xxviii. 18—20 ; Mark xvi. 16, 16 ; Luke xiii. 3, 5, and xiv. 26, 33 ; Rom. viii. 8, 9, 17, 18.

Ghost, according to the particular articles of the christian faith ; and heartily repenting of my sinful life, I do personally, absolutely, and resolvedly give up myself to him, my Creator and reconciled God and Father in Christ, my Saviour and my Sanctifier ; renouncing the devil, the world, and the sinful desires of the flesh : that, taking up my cross, and denying myself, I may follow Christ, the Captain of my salvation, to the death, and live with him in endless glory.

Read but our church liturgy, yea the papists' liturgies, and you will see that here is not a word but what is in the sense of baptism, and what papists, and protestants, and all Christians, are agreed on.

I pray you, Sir Elymas, read it, and tell him here whether there be any word that you except against.

El. I cannot deny it without denying Christianity. God make us all better Christians ; for I perceive we are not what we promised to be. It was you that I talked against, I thought, all this while ; but I begin to perceive that it is Christianity itself (in the ' practice, though not in the name) which my heart is against. I cannot like this godliness, and self-denying, and mortification, and cross-bearing ; and yet I perceive that I vowed it, when I was baptised : and if I renounce it, I must renounce my Christianity itself. I would I had not talked with you, for you have disquieted my mind ; and I find that it is serious religion itself that is against my mind and course of life, and my mind against it, and that I must be either a saint or an atheist ; and which I shall prove I cannot tell. But if I must repent, there is no haste.

THE FOURTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

The Resolving and Actual Conversion of a Sinner.

Speakers.—Paul, a Teacher ; and Saul, a Learner.

PAUL. Welcome, neighbour ; you have been longer away than I expected ; what was the matter with you ?

SAUL. O, sir, I have seen and felt the heavy hand of God since I saw you. We had a violent fever common among us, and my laudlord, Sir Elymas, is dead, and so is his servant that

' Prov. lii. 18, 19.

was with him when you talked with him ; and I narrowly escaped with my life myself.

P. Alas ! is he dead ? I pray you tell me how he took our conference, and how he died ?

S. He told me that you were too bold and saucy with him ; but he thought you were an honest man, and that you had more reason for your religion than he thought any of you had : and that the truth is, you had the Scripture on your side ; and while he disputed with you on Scripture principles, you were too hard for him. But though he was loth to tell you so, he liked the papists better, who set not so much by Scripture ; and when a man hath sinned, if he confess to the priest, they absolve him. Yea, rather than believe that none but such godly people could be saved, and rather than live so strict a life, he would not believe that the Scripture was the word of God.

P. Alas, how the rebellious heart of man stands out against the law and grace of God ! As for the papists, I assure you they confess all the Scriptures to be the word of God, and of certain truth, as well as we ; and they will deny never a word of that which I persuaded you to consent to. They differ from us in this, and they take in more books into the canonical Scripture than we do ; and they say, that all that is in their Scripture and ours, is not religion enough for us ; but we must have a great deal more, which they call tradition. See, then, the ignorance of these men : that because they think we make them too much work, they will run to them that make them much more. Though I confess their additions consist so much in words, and ceremonies, and bodily exercise, that flesh and blood can the more easily bear it. When the papists dispute with us, they would make men believe that our religion is too loose and favoureth the flesh, and that theirs is far more strict and holy ; and yet our sensualists turn papists to escape the strictness of our religion.

And as for their pardons and absolutions, I assure you, their own doctrine is, that they profit and save none but the truly penitent. And even their Gregory VII., called Hildebrand (and the firebrand of the church and empire), and that, in a council at Rome, professeth, that neither false penitence, nor false baptism, is effectual : though some of them make attrition, without contrition, or bare fear without love, to serve the turn. And if their priests do flatter the presumption and false hopes of fornicators, drunkards, and such grosser sinners, by absolving them

as oft as they confess their sin, without telling them that it is all ineffectual, unless, by true conversion, they forsake it, they do this but as a mere cheat for worldly ends; to increase their church, and win the great and wealthy of the world to themselves; quite contrary to their own knowledge and professed religion.

But as for his not believing the Scriptures: the truth is, there lieth the core of all their errors. There are abundance amongst us, that call themselves Christians, because it is the religion of the king and country, who are no Christians at the heart, which made me say so much of the hypocrisy of ungodly men. And I cannot see how a man, that truly believeth the Scripture, can quiet himself in a fleshly and ungodly life, but his belief would either convert him or torment him.

S. But I am persuaded he had some convictions upon his conscience, which troubled him. When he was taken first with the fever, they all put him in hopes that there was no danger of death; and so he was kept from talking at all of his soul, or of another world, till the fever took away his understanding; but twice or thrice he came to himself for half an hour, and Mr. Zedekiah, his chaplain, advised him to lift up his heart to God, and believe in Christ; for he was going to a place of joys, and angels were ready to receive his soul. And he looked at him with a direful countenance, and said, 'Away, flatterer! You have betrayed my soul! Too late! too late!' And he trembled so that the bed shook under him.

P. And how died his servant, Malchus?

S. O, quite in another manner! He heard, in the next room, all the talk between his master and you, and, doubtless, it convinced him; but he went on in his former course of life, till [†] sickness took him, and then he was greatly terrified in conscience, especially when he heard that his master was dead. And he would often talk of you, and wish that he could have spoken with you; but none would endure to hear of sending for you. O! if you had but heard how he cried out toward the last: 'O, my madness! O, my sinful, wicked life! O, what will become of my miserable soul? O that I had the time again which I have lost! Would God but try me once again, I would lead another life than I have done; I would make nothing of all the scorns of fools, and all the temptations of the world!' His groans did strike me as a dagger at the heart: methinks I still hear them which way ever I go.

[†] Eccl. vii. 2-6.

P. And what hath been your own condition since I saw you ? And what thought you of your master's conference ?

S. O, sir, I would not, for a great deal, but I had heard it. I thought, till I heard you answer him, that there had been some sense in the talk of these revilers at a godly life ; but then I soon saw that it is all but a foolish scorn and railing ; any scolding woman could talk as wisely. His superiority, and confidence, and contempt, was all his wisdom.

P. It is no wonder if he talk foolishly, who talketh against the God of wisdom, and his holy word, and against the interest, health, and happiness of his own soul. He that can live so far below reason as to sell his salvation for the short and swinish pleasures of sin, may talk with as little reason as he liveth.

S. But how could I be any longer in doubt, when you constrained him, in the conclusion, to yield you all the cause ?

P. And what course did you resolve upon, and take ?

S. Alas ! sir, my own naughty heart did hinder me much more than his objections did. I went home, convinced that your words were true, and that I must become a ^h new creature, or be undone. And I perused the Baptismal Covenant which you wrote down, and the Articles of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Commandments. I studied the meaning of them, with that exposition which you gave me. My ignorance so darkened my mind, that all seemed strange and new to me, though I used to rote them over in the church from day to day. And being very unskilful in such matters myself, I went oft to my neighbour, Eusebius, as you advised me ; and, I thank him, he gladly helped me to understand the words and things which were too hard for me. But when I had done all this, my worldly business took up my thoughts so, and the cares of my family were so much at my heart, and my old companions so often tempted me, and my flesh was so loth to let go all my sinful pleasures, and the matters of religion were so strange to me, that I delayed my resolution, and continued still purposing that I would shortly turn ; but while I was purposing, and delaying, the fever took me. And having seen the death of Sir Elymas, and of Malchus, and then received the sentence of death in myself, God, by his terrors, did awaken me out of my delays.

P. O what an unreasonable thing is it to delay, when you are once convinced ! What ! delay to come out of the bondage of the devil ; the guilt of sin ; the flames of Sodom ; the wrath

^h 2 Cor. v. 17.

of God ! If death take you in an unconverted state, you are lost for ever ! What, if you had died formerly in your sin ? What, if you die this night ? What assurance have you to live an hour ? Alas ! how brittle and corruptible a thing is the body of a man ! And by what a wonder of providence do we live ! Is sin so good ? Is the state of a sinner so safe, or comfortable, that any should be loth to leave it ? Is God, and Christ, and heaven, so bad, that any should delay, and be loth to be godly ? Can you be happy too soon ; or too soon be a child of God ; or too soon get out of the danger of damnation ? Is God hateful ? Is sin and misery lovely, that you are so loth to change ? If sin be best, keep it still. If God and heaven be worst, never think of turning to him. But if best, do you not presently desire the best ? Must Christ, and his Holy Spirit, wait on you, while you take the other cup ; and stay your leisure, while you are destroying yourself ? How know you, but the Spirit of God may ⁱ forsake you, and leave you to your own will, and lust, and counsel ; and say, ' Be hardened, and be filthy still.' What a forlorn, miserable creature would you be ! Do you not know that every sin, and every ^k delay, and every resistance of the Spirit, doth tend to the greater hardening of your heart, and making your conversion less hopeful, and more hard ? Do you hope for pardon and mercy from God, or do you not ? If not, desperation would begin your hell : if you do, is it ingenuous to desire to commit more of that sin, which you mean to repent that ever you committed, and to beg for pardon of from God ? Dare you say, in your heart, ' Lord, I have abused thee, and thy Son, and Spirit, and mercy, long ; I will abuse thee yet a little longer, and then I will repent, and ask forgiveness ?' Do you love to spit a little longer in the face of that Saviour, and that mercy, which you must fly to, and trust too, at the last ? Do you not purpose to love him, and honour him, afterward, and for ever ; and yet would you a little longer despise and injure him ; would you gratify and please the devil a little longer ; and root, and strengthen sin a little more, before you pull it up ; and kindle a greater flame in your house, before you quench it ? Must you needs give yourself a few more stabs before you go to the physician ? Is your life too long ; and hath God given you too much time, that you are desirous to lose a little more ? Are you afraid of too easy an assurance of forgiveness, that you would make it harder, and would invite despair, by sinning wil-

ⁱ Psalm lxxxi. 11, 12.^k Psalm cxix. 60.

fully against knowledge and conviction? What will you delay for? Do you think ever to find the market fall, and Christ come down to lower terms; and change his law and Gospel, to excuse you for not changing your heart and life? Do you ever look to find conversion an easier work than now? Do you know how much more you have to do, when you are converted; what knowledge, faith, hope, assurance, and patience, and comfort, more to get; how many temptations to overcome, and how many duties to perform; and what a work it is to prepare for immortality? And are you afraid of having too much time, and beginning so great a work too soon? Believe it, Satan doth not loiter; time stands not still; sun, and moon, and all the creatures, delay not to afford you all their service. Delay is a denial: God needs not you, but you need him. You would not have him delay to help you, in the time of your pain and great extremity. Patience will not be abused for ever. Behold, this is the ¹accepted time! Behold, this is the ^mday of salvation! We, that are Christ's servants, are apt to be weary of calling and warning you in vain ourselves; and, usually, when the preacher hath done, God hath done his invitation; because he worketh by his appointed means. O that you knew what others are enjoying, and what you are losing, all the time that you delay, and on how slippery ground you stand; and what after sorrows you are preparing for yourself!

S. Sir, I thank you for your awakening, convincing reasons. But I was telling you, how God hath already, I hope, resolved me against any longer delay. When I thought I must presently die, all my sins, and all your counsels, came into my mind; and the fear of God's displeasure did overwhelm me. I thought I had but a few days to be out of hell; and, O what would I not have given for assurance of pardon by Jesus Christ; and for a little more time of preparation in the world, before my soul did enter upon eternity! Oh, I never saw the face of sin, the truth of God's threatenings, the need of a Saviour, the preciousness of time, the madness of delaying, thoroughly, until then! And now, Sir, the great mercy of God having restored me, I come presently to you, to profess my resolution, and to take your further good advice.

P. You see that God is merciful to us, when we think that he is destroying us.ⁿ Afflictions are not the least of God's mercies

¹ 2 Cor. vi. 2.

^m Heb. iii. 7, 13, 15, and iv. 7.

ⁿ Psalm cxix. 61, 71, 75; 1 Thess. i. 6.

which our dull and hardened hearts make necessary: such fools we are, that we will not understand without the rod. My advice is, that you read over here, again, the doctrine of Christianity, which I gave you in our second day's conference; and the covenant of Baptism, which I wrote you the third day; and let me see whether you understand and believe it, and consent thereto. (Here Saul readeth it over.)

S. You would have me understand what I do. I desire you, here, to answer me these few doubts, that I may clearer proceed, and make my covenant with God in ° judgment.

Question I. What must I trust to for the pardon of my sin; and which way, and on what terms, may I be sure of it?

P. The prime cause is God's mercy: this mercy hath given Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer. Christ hath, by perfect holiness and obedience, and by becoming a sacrifice to God for our sins, deserved and purchased our pardon and salvation. So that you must trust to the sacrifice and meritorious righteousness of Christ alone, as the purchasing, meritorious cause of your forgiveness, and of your reconciliation, justification, sanctification, and salvation. But the way that God, our Father and Redeemer, doth take to give us a right unto these blessings, is by making with man a law and ^p covenant of grace. By this law he commandeth us to become Christians; that is, to believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and to give up ourselves to him in the covenant of baptism, repenting of sin; and thus turning to God by Jesus Christ. To all that do this, he giveth right to ^q Christ himself, first as their Head and Saviour, and with him right to pardon, to the Spirit, and salvation: so that God is the Giver of Christ to redeem us. Christ is our Redeemer, and the Meriter of our life: the new law, or covenant, is the instrumental donation of life; like an act of oblivion. Your own covenanting, or giving up yourself to God in Christ, which is by a repenting, practical ^r faith, or (which is all one) your accepting the gift of the covenant as it is offered, according to its nature, is that condition, or duty, on your part, upon which the covenant giveth you right. So that God's covenant, gift, or grant, is your title, or the foundation of your right, (as Christ is the Meriter and Maker of the covenant,) and

° Jer. iv. 2; Hos. ii. 19.

^p Heb. ix. 15—17, and vii. 22; Matt. xxviii. 19, and xxvi. 28; 2 Cor. iii. 6; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 16.

^q 1 John v. 9—12.

^r John i. 10—12.

your practical faith is the condition on your part. And to every one of these, to 'God's mercies, to Christ's sacrifice, merits, and intercessions, to the covenant, or gift of God, and to your own sincere faith, consent, and acceptance, you must trust for its own proper part. And you must understand what the part of each one is, and not trust to any one of these for the other's part. The mercy of God as the fountain; the blood and righteousness of Christ as the merit and purchase; the covenant of Christ, or donation, as the instrument and title; and your faith and consent as the condition of your title: as thankful acceptance usually is, of all free gifts.

And then the gift itself, or benefit given, is Christ and life. (1 John v. 11, 12.) By life I mean, 1. Pardon. 2. The Spirit. 3. Right to glory, or justification, sanctification, adoption, and future glory. I have repeated things that I might make them as plain to you as I can.

S. Quest. II. Are all my sins pardonable whatsoever? I have been a greater sinner that you know of. I must here confess to you in secret what I did not before confess, I minded not my soul: I prayed not once in a week: I have been in the alehouse when I should have been at church: I have been drunken more than once or twice. When I was a servant, I robbed my master; I sold for more than I gave him, and I bought for less than I told him I paid. I was oft guilty of immodest carriage with women, and, to confess my shame, I was guilty of actual fornication. I made little conscience of a lie: alas! my sins have been so many and so great, that I can hardly think that God will pardon them!

P. The covenant of grace¹ forgiveth all sins without exception, which consist with the performance of the condition of pardon after them; that is, all sins are pardoned to the penitent believer; but to the impenitent unbeliever, no sin is pardoned (except conditionally); and final impenitence and unbelief are pardoned to none. So that a true Christian is not to doubt of the pardon of any of his former sins, any further than he doubteth of his faith and Christianity.

S. Quest. III. But I shall sin again, in some degree: how then must I have pardon of my sins hereafter? I have heard that baptism washeth away all sin: but it is long since I was baptised; and I am yet imperfect.

Rom. iv. 16, 22, 24, 25.

¹ Acts v. 31; xiii. 38, 39, and xxvi. 18; Jam. v. 15; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; Matt. xii. 31, 32; Luke vii. 47.

P. Baptism is said to wash away sin, because that God's covenant, celebrated in baptism, giveth pardon of all sin through the blood of Christ, to all that truly receive it, and consent, on their part, to the covenant. Now this covenant on God's part is a standing law and pardoning act; and it pardoneth all sin to our death to them that still repent and believe. But it is said to pardon all at baptism, because then there it is supposed that we have no more to be pardoned. But if any be ungodly after baptism, God's law or covenant pardoneth all that it findeth us guilty of, whenever we truly turn to God, by faith and repentance. But afterward it pardoneth daily our daily sins of infirmity only; and to the lapsed their extraordinary falls upon their extraordinary repentance: because the faithful^a have no other afterward to be forgiven. For being sanctified, they no more live an ungodly, sensual, worldly life. So that you must hereafter, for your particular sins, have a particular repentance, and recourse to Christ.

S. Quest. IV. How must I do for grace and strength to keep my covenant when I have made it?

P. ^a Of yourself you can do nothing that is good. Your heart is so corrupted with sin, till it be sanctified, that you will not be willing; and your mind so blind that you will not well understand your duty nor your interest; and your soul so dead and impotent, that you will have no life or strength to practise what you know. But if the^v Spirit of Christ do once give you faith, and repentance, and consent, by this you have right to him as an indwelling principle; and you are then entered into covenant relation to the Holy Ghost: and that which he will do in you is to sanctify your three faculties. 1. Your vital power, with spiritual^a life, strength, and activity. 2. Your understanding, with spiritual light, that is, knowledge and faith. 3. Your will, with holy love and willingness. And when he hath planted these in you, he will be ready still to preserve, excite, actuate, and increase them. So that it is the Holy Ghost that must be your life, light, and love. But you must know how to obey his motions, and not resist him.

S. Quest. V. What must I do to get, keep, and obey the Spirit, that I lose it not, and miss not of these benefits?

P. You must know that God hath first possessed Christ's hu-

^a 1 John i. 6-9; Rom. vi. 1-3, 16, &c.; 1 John iii. 9.

^v John xv. 5.

^v Rom. viii. 4, 9.

^a Eph. ii. 1-3, 5, 11, and i. 18, 19; Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. v. 3-6, 10; 2 Tim. i. 7.

man glorified nature with the Spirit, that he may have it as the Head, and from him it is to come to us as his members. Therefore I said that the whole gift of the covenant is ^a Christ and life. Now Christ giveth us his Spirit, both as a Saviour, freely, and as a Ruler, according to his law of grace, as to the order of conveyance. Therefore, as the first gift of the indwelling Spirit is on condition of your faith, so the continuance of it is on condition of your continuing in the faith. (For all that you neither had faith at first, nor in continuance without the antecedent work of the Spirit.) And the increase and actual helps and comfort of the Spirit are given you on condition of your dependence on Christ your Head for the daily communication of it.

Therefore you must remember, 1. That the giving or denying the helps of the Spirit to our souls, are the greatest rewards and punishments which Christ, as our King, doth exercise and administer on us in this world. And therefore look much at this in yourself, whether God's Spirit help you or forsake you.

2. That your means is to wait on Christ in the daily exercise of faith, and use of all his instituted ordinances, and to attend his Spirit, and not resist it.

S. But I am afraid I have sinned against the Holy Ghost, the unpardonable sin; for I have joined with profane persons in deriding the Spirit. Especially when I heard many young students, and ministers themselves, do the same, it emboldened me to imitate them. I have mocked at them that did but talk of the Spirit, or speak of the necessity of the Spirit: I have said, 'These be the spiritual men, the holy brethren, that pray by the Spirit, and preach by the Spirit, and whine by the Spirit, and cheat and lie, and dissemble by the Spirit. These are the gifted brethren!' with many such foolish scorns. And is not this the sin against the Holy Ghost?

P. The sin was very great, and the case of those that encouraged you, fearful; and no doubt but it was a sin against the Holy Ghost. But it is not every sin against the Holy Spirit which is unpardonable; but only the blasphemy of infidels described Matt. xii; which is, that when they cannot deny the miracles of Christ, they will rather hold and maintain that he^b wrought them by the power of the devil, than they will believe

^a John vi. 51, 52, &c.; lvii. 58, and xiv. 19; Gal. ii. 20; iii. 3, 14; iv. 6, and v. 17, 21—23; 1 Thess. v. 19; Heb. x. 29; Neh. ix. 20; Prov. i. 23; Luke xi. 13; Eph. iv. 30; Psalm li. 11; Col. i. 23.

^b Matt. xii.

in him. So that it is none but infidels, and but few of them, that have this blasphemy of the Holy Ghost.

S. Quest. VI. How shall I do to know the operations and motions of the Spirit from delusions, and how shall I know whether I have the Spirit or not?

P. 1. The Spirit is from God and our Saviour, and leadeth to them. I told you its operations are 1.^c Holy life, or vivacity toward God. 2. Holy light, to know and believe God. 3. Holy love, to love God, and his government, and children. If you have these, you have God's Spirit; for it is nothing else. These are God's restored image on the soul, and the new divine nature of his regenerate, adopted children.

II. The motions of the Spirit are, 1. Always fitted to God and holiness, as the end. 2. And always actuate the three afore-said habits, of holy life, light, and love. 3. And they are always agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and by them must be tried.

S. What is the reason of that?

1. Because God giveth the same Spirit indeed,^d but not in the same measure to all. Now, to the apostles and evangelists he gave it in the greatest extraordinary degree, purposely to plant his churches, and to indite an infallible Scripture, the records of that gospel, and to confirm it by miracles, and leave it to the world, as the rule of our faith and life; so that as a man first engraveth a seal, and then sets it on the wax, so the Holy Ghost first inspired the apostles to write us the infallible word and rule; and then he is given to all others, in a smaller degree, only^e to help us to understand, believe, and obey that word. Therefore the lower operations of the Spirit in us are to be tried by the higher operations in the apostles recorded.

S. Quest. VII. What then is the law and the rule that I must live by, according to the covenant that I make?

P. 1. God is the universal King, and Christ, our Redeemer, as man, his Administrator. God's law is written, as I told you, 1. In nature. 2. In Scripture, where also the law of nature is contained, in the main. This is God's law which you must live by.

2. But God hath officers under him in the world.^f 1. Parents and masters in families. 2. Pastors in the churches.

^c John iii. 5, 6; Col. iii. 10; 2 Tim. i. 7; 2 Cor. v. 17; Tit. iii. 3, 5; Gal. iv. 6.

^d 1 Cor. xii. 11—13, &c.; Eph. iii. 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16; Matt. xxviii. 20.

^e 2 Tim. iii. 16; John xvi. 13.

^f Deut. xi. 19; Rom. xiii. 3—5; 1 Thess. v. 2, 13; Eph. vi. 1, &c.

3: Kings in kingdoms. These are to promote the execution of God's laws; and, to that end, to make subordinate laws or commands of their own, about things subordinate, undetermined in God's universal law, and left to their determination. Like as are the by-laws of corporations under the laws of the king: and all these, under God, must, in their places, be obeyed.

S. Quest. VIII. What church must I join myself unto?

P. You were baptised only into Christ's universal church; and to be a Christian and to be a member of that church is all one.^f That church is nothing but, spiritually, all heart covenanters, or believers, and, visibly, all baptised, visible covenanters, or professors, united to, or with, Christ the Head: and no pope or general council is the head of it, supreme or official.

But you must join with that part of this church where you live, and God giveth you opportunity to worship him and learn his will, with the best advantage to your own soul, not violating the common good, and peace. But you must join actually with none that will not receive you unless you sin.

S. Quest. IX. What are the institutions or means which I must use, in attendance on Christ and his Spirit?

P. 1. The reading and ^h hearing of God's word, and its explanation and application by your teachers.

2. Prayer, thanksgiving, praises to God, and the Lord's supper, in communion with his church.

3. Holy discipline, in submission to your guides, in obedience, penitent confessing sins when necessary, and the like; if you live where such discipline is exercised.

S. Quest. X. What must I do with my calling, and labour, and estate in the world: must I forsake it or not?

P. Adam was to labour in innocency. Six days must you labour and do all that you have to do. (Exod. xx.) He that will not labour,ⁱ if able, is unworthy to eat. Idleness was one of Sodom's sins; religion must be no pretence for slothfulness. You must not love the world^j as your felicity,^k or for itself, or for your fleshly lust: but you must make use of the world in the service of your Creator, yea, and love it as a sanctified means of your salvation, and as a wilderness way to your promised in-

^f Eph. i. 22, and iv. 3, 4, 15; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 27—29; we never find in Scripture two churches in one city; Acts ii. 42; xiv. 23, and xx. 7, 8.

^h 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2; 1 Tim. iv. 13, 14; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; Acts ii. throughout; 1 Cor. xi. and xiv; Heb. xiii. 7, 17; James v. 16.

ⁱ 2 Thess. iii. 10.

^k 1 John ii. 15, 16.

heritance, as the mariner loveth not the sea for a dwelling, but as a passage to his desired port. Good husbandry is not unbecoming a good Christian. You must labour for your daily bread, as well as pray for it: yea, for the maintenance of your family, and that you may have things decent, and give to him that needeth. (Rom. xii. 17; 2 Cor. viii. 21; Eph. iv. 28; 1 Tim. v. 8.)

But this is the thing that you must principally remember, That God and the heavenly glory is your end,¹ which must still be desired for itself and before all; and the world, and all things in it, are but means to help you to that end; and only as they are such must be valued, loved, desired, and sought; and whenever they oppose God and your heavenly interest, must be forsaken, and used as we do hated things.^m

And when common, worldly things thus further your obedience, and are devoted to God, and referred to his will and service, then they are sanctified to you, which else will be but common, unclean, and your mortal enemy.

S. Quest. XI. What, if I am now uncertain whether my heart be sincere in this covenant which I make with God when I renounce all, and profess to prefer him before all? May I venture to covenant and profess that consent whose sincerity I am uncertain of? Will not this be a kind of lying unto God?

P. If your heart be false, it will be lying: but if it be not, it will be no lying, though you are uncertain. The truth of your consent is one thing, and your certainty of it is another. That it be true is necessary to your salvation; but not that you be sure that it is true. But there is much difference between,
1. One that flattereth himself with conceits that he consenteth, when he doth not. Such an one sinneth in professing a lie.
2. And one that is but yet deliberating, and is unresolved what to choose and do. This person must not covenant till he feel the scales turn by a true resolution.
3. And one that truly consenteth and resolveth, but is afraid lest his deceitful heart is not sincere in it: this person must covenant in this uncertainty, because all that can be expected from us is, that we speak our own minds, according to the best acquaintance with them that we can get; otherwise we must forbear all thanksgiving for special mercies, and a great part of our worship of God, till we

¹ Matt. vi. 19, 20, 33; John vi. 27; Col. iii. 3—5.

^m Luke xiv. 26, 33; Tit. i. 16.

ⁿ Acts ii. 38, and xxii. 16; John iii. 5, 6; Mark xvi. 16; Eph. iv. 5; Col. ii. 12; 1 Pet. iii. 21; Rom. vi. 3, 4; Gal. iii. 27.

are certain of the sincerity of our own hearts, which too many are not.

S. But some think that baptism is not to enter us into this special covenant which presently pardoneth; but only to enter us into Christ's school, as our teacher, that by him we may learn how to be regenerate and sincere, that we may then be pardoned. If this would serve, I could more easily consent.

P. I may not stand at large to show you the falseness of that opinion. The best is, baptism hath these sixteen hundred years been kept unchanged by the church in one form; and the church never knew any baptism but, 1. Such as was joined with a present profession of present faith and repentance, and renunciation of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and a total devotedness to God in Christ. 2. Such as had the promise of present pardon of sin to all sincere receivers of baptism. 3. Such as stated the receiver in a visible membership to Christ, and right to glory; so that in charity we are bound to take, and love, and use such as sincere, till they show the contrary. 4. The church never baptised any whom they took not thereby to be made visible Christians; and they took no man for a Christian that took not Christ presently for his Saviour, Priest, and King, as well as for his Teacher, yea, and God for his God, and the Holy Spirit for his Sanctifier. 5. And so much as you talk of maketh a man but one of the catechised, prepared for Christianity, whom the church never took for Christians till they were baptised. 6. And the few that are of the opinion which you mention yet confess that you cannot be saved till you consent sincerely to the covenant of grace itself.

S. Quest. XII. What if it prove that my heart is not sincere? or what if I should fall away again hereafter?

P. If your heart be not^e sincere in your consent to the covenant, you will remain unpardoned in your sin and misery, till it be sincere.

II. If you fall into a particular sin, I have told you how you must be restored, by renewed repentance for it, through faith in Christ. But as you love God and your soul, take heed of wilful sinning. But if (which God forbid) you should fall quite away from Christ, renouncing him, as if you believed him not to be the Messiah; I say, if you thus totally and settledly renounce Christ by unbelief, I cannot see but you must either be guilty of the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost, or come so near it as that,

^e Psalm xxxii. 1—3.

according to Heb. vi. 6—8, your recovery will be utterly improbable.

S. I am much afraid lest, when temptation cometh, I should turn again to my former folly (though God forbid I should renounce my Saviour). I am so entangled in ill company, and in a custom of sinning, and have so bad a nature, and so many temptations and worldly snares, that though I am now resolved, I am afraid lest I should yield, and lose my resolutions.

P. It becometh you to ^p fear it, that so you may prevent it. But this fear should not hinder you from resolving and consenting. For, 1. You know that sin is odious, and its pleasures are poison and deceit; and, therefore, that this world affordeth nothing to stand in competition with God and your salvation. If you will take this world for your part, you are undone; if you will not,^a resolve accordingly. But dream not of joining sin and holiness, or the worldly and the heavenly felicity into one, and dividing your heart and service between^r God and Mammon; for that is the damning self-deceit of hypocrites.

2. You shall not only have that which is an hundred-fold better than all you forsake; but you shall have the world itself, refined and sanctified to your greater good. You would have it as your fleshly felicity: God would have you renounce it in that sense; but he will give it you as your daily provision for his service, and as a blessed means to further your salvation, that you may see God in every creature, and thank him for it, and serve him by it. And one mercy thus sanctified is worth a thousand abused: ten pounds, or ten shillings, a-year used for God to further your salvation, is better than lordships and kingdoms, used to serve the flesh and the devil, and to prepare men for damnation. Read Jam. v.

3. When you are once entered well into the service of God, you will find the light which will shame all temptations, and that sweet experience of greater pleasures, which will make you loath what formerly you loved. The comforts of faith, and hope, and love, will make you spit out the filthy pleasures of the flesh.

4. And you will have the direction, encouragement, and example of those that fear God; and the help of all his holy ordinances.

5. And, which is more, you will be planted into Christ, and receive the communications of his Spirit, and his strength will be magnified in your weakness. You are not to trust in your

^p Heb. iv. 1.

^a Matt. vi. 24.

^r Matt. xiii. 46.

own strength, but in the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the communion and operation of the Holy Ghost.

6. And your resolution is a matter of absolute necessity : you must resolve, or perish for ever ; you must consent, or be condemned as a rejecter of salvation. God sets before you Christ, and holiness, and heaven ; the devil sets before you the^a pleasures of sin for a moment, and everlasting damnation in the end. Take which you will ; for one you must have. There is no middle way ; nor no reconciling both together.

The truth is, it is that shameful folly which you must lament, that in so great, so necessary, so plain a case, you should be unresolved to this day ! That a man in his wits should live twenty years so, as if he had been resolved to be damned ; and after that, stay so long delaying before he can resolve, whether he were best be saved or no ? What ! is it yet a hard question to you whether God or the devil be your owner, and the better friend and master ; and whether heaven or hell be the better dwelling ; and whether sin or holiness be the better life ; and whether you should consent that Christ and his Spirit save you from your sins or not ? Have you so long taken on you to be a Christian ; and are you yet unresolved, whether it is best to be a Christian indeed, or not ? Certainly you have had leisure enough, and reasons enough set before you, to have^t resolved you long ago. Till you firmly resolve, you are not a Christian and convert indeed. If you did well know what a case you stand in till you are resolved, and what a scorn and indignity you put upon your God and Saviour, and heaven, to make a question of it, whether the filth of sin, and the dreaming profits and pleasures of this world be not better than they ; and whether your Redeemer, after all his love, should be preferred before a fleshly lust, you would fear and blush to make such a question any more.

S. But I have been used so long to a looser life, that I am afraid I shall be weary of a strict, religious, godly course, and shall never be able to hold out.

P. I tell you again, that if you think of the life that you must turn to, as a tedious, melancholy, grievous state, you know it not ; and are not well informed what it is you have to do. It is the only honourable, the only profitable, the only safe, and the only pleasant life in the world, as to manly pleasure.

I will give you but a taste of it in some particulars.

^a Heb. xi. 25, 26, &c.

^t Josh. xxiv. 15 ; 1 Cor. xv. 58.

1. You must, indeed,^u repent of sin with shame and godly sorrow, and loathing of yourself; but it is no further than fitteth you for the comfort of pardoning and healing grace.

2. You must believe all the comfortable promises of the Gospel; all the love that Christ hath manifested; all the wonderful history of his life, and death, and resurrection, and ascension and heavenly glory; the certainty of his word and gracious covenant.

3. You must believe the wonderful^x love of the Father, in giving us his Son, and reconciling us to himself, and adopting us as his sons, and undertaking to secure us as his peculiar treasure, and giving us his Holy Spirit.

4. You must live under the helps and consolations of the Holy Ghost, still drawing you to God, and making you more holy, and helping your infirmities against your sins.

5. You must live in the hopes and desires of everlasting glory, verily to see Christ glorified, with all the saints and blessed angels, and to see the glory of God, and with a perfected soul and body, perfectly to feel his love, and perfectly to love and praise him to eternity.

6. In all your sickness, wants, persecutions, and^y death itself, you have all these comforts, and this hope of glory, to be a constant cordial at your heart; and when others fear death for fear of hell, you must welcome it as the door to endless life.

7. You must live in the church, in the communion of saints, where all God's ordinances must be your helps for the daily exercise of all these graces and delights. And your chiefest exercises of piety must be the hearing these glad tidings in the gospel opened to you; begging for more grace; joyful thanksgiving for all these mercies; singing forth, and speaking the praises of Jehovah; and, with joy and thankfulness, feasting upon Christ's flesh, and blood, and Spirit in the sacrament thereof, and there, in the renewing of this your covenant, receiving a renewed, sealed pardon, and new degrees of life and strength.

Tell me now, what trouble is in all this, that a man should be afraid or weary of it? Unless you take it for a trouble to be safe and happy; to have the greatest mercies, the greatest hopes, and to live in the love of your dearest friend, and in the

^u Luke xiii. 3, 5, and xv., throughout; 2 Cor. xi.

^x John iii. 16; 1 John iii. 1.

^y 1 Cor. xv. 55, &c; 1 Thess. iv. 13, 15—18; 1 Tim. iv. 8; Phil. i. 21, 23; 2 Cor. v. 1, 3, 5—9, and iv. 16—18.

foretastes of everlasting joys. In a word, "Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. iv. 7.)

S. You tell me of another kind of godliness than I thought of. And I was the more afraid it had been a melancholy, tedious life, because I saw many that professed it live so.

P. I told you the reasons of that before, which I must not repeat. And, moreover, to young beginners, that come new out of another kind of life, and whose souls are not by grace yet suited to the work, it may seem strange and troublesome. And the truth is, many converts, in the beginning, are moved at a sermon, and stifle their own convictions, and open not their case to their teachers, or else fall not into the hand of a judicious guide, who will clearly open to them the true nature of conversion; and so they set on they know not well what; which maketh me lay all these matters so plainly and distinctly before you; because it will be a wonderful prevention of your troubles and dangers after, if you do but set out well instructed in the beginning.

But the worst and common cause of all is, that people are so exceeding ignorant and dull, (together with their undisposedness,) that one must be whole months, if not years, before we can make them understand these few, plain things which here I have opened to you. But yet we must take up with a dark and general understanding, rather than delay too long, or be too strict with them.

S. I thank God for your counsel, and his grace; I am resolved, and ready to subscribe my resolution to be the Lord's, entirely upon his covenant terms.

P. I will go home with you to your house, and I will try whether you and I can instruct all your family that need it, and bring them to the same resolution. For as it is your duty to endeavour it, so God useth to bless his believing servants, with the conversion of their household with them; as the case of the jailer, and Lydia, (Acts xv.,) Zaccheus, Stephanus, and others, show us. You shall therefore delay your open profession of your resolved conversion till you do it in the presence of them all. And it will be a great mercy to you, if God give you but a family willing to go along with you in the way to heaven; and daily to worship the same God and obey him. Then your house will be part of the family of God, and under his continual blessing, and protection. [Here Paul goeth home with Saul, and openeth such things to his family as he did to

him, and convinceth them : and they promise him to take time, as Saul did, to learn the true knowledge of the covenant of grace, that so they may consent to it themselves : and Saul before them all lamenteth his sinful life, and openly professeth his consent to the covenant, and they pray together for his confirmation.]

S. I bless the Lord for this day of grace. What would you yet advise me do ?

P. One thing more, to God's glory and your comfort ; that you will the next Lord's day communicate with the church in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, which is appointed to be the renewal of the baptismal covenant before the church ; where God will set his seal to your pardon, and to his covenant part.

But withal, seeing you have been a known offender, that you will freely, before the congregation, confess your sinful life, and profess your repentance and resolution, for a new and holy course ; and crave their prayers to God for your pardon and strength, and their loving reception of you, and give God the glory, and warn others to take heed of sinning against God and their baptismal vows.

S. This is sweet and bitter ; I shall be glad to be admitted to the sacrament of communion ; but I shall be ashamed to make so public a confession.

P. It is a shame to sin, but it is an honour to confess it and repent. I persuade you not to confess your secret sins before the church ; but only those which are commonly known, and therefore are your shame already : and how will that shame be removed, till men have notice of your repentance ? And you must not be ashamed of your duty, if you would not have Christ be ashamed of you.

S. But where doth God require such confession ?

P. 1. Those that were baptised by John, confessed their sins. (Matt. iii. 6 ; Mark i. 5 ; Acts ii. 37.) The Jews confessed their killing of Christ, by being pricked at the heart, and crying out for help when it was charged on them. (Acts xix. 18.) The converts confessed their sinful deeds, and publicly testified it to their cost. (Jam. v. 16.) "Confess your faults one to another." (Prov. xxviii. 13.) "Whoso confesseth, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy." (See further Lev. xv. 5 ; vi. 21, and xxvi. 40 ; Numb. v. 7 ; Neh. i. 6 ; 1 John i. 9 ; Ezra x. 11 ; Neh. ix. 2, 3 ; Josh. vii. 19 ; 2 Chron. xxx. 22.)

2. You were publicly baptised, and you have openly sinned against that covenant ; therefore, if you will be openly taken

for a penitent into church communion, you must openly profess repentance. Unless you would have us take all impenitent persons to communion.

3. You are obliged to be more tender of^a God's honour than of your own; and therefore to honour him publicly, as you have publicly dishonoured him, and stick at nothing that tendeth to his glory, as this will do.

4. You are bound to cast the greatest shame that you can on sin; it is the shameful thing that hath deceived and defiled you: if you have set it up above God, and now refuse to cast it down, by open shame, how do you repent of it?

5. You owe all possible help to others, to save them from the sin which hath deceived you. You have encouraged men to sin, and, for aught you know, some of them may be in hell for ever, for that which you have drawn them to; and should you not do your best now to save the rest, and to undo the hurt that you have done? See, therefore, that you tell them, with deep repentance, how sin deceived you, and warn them, and beseech them to take warning by you, and to repent with you, as they sinned with you. Your companions that are not there, may hear of this and be convinced.

6. You owe this to the church and^a godly Christians, that they may rejoice in your conversion, and may see that you are indeed a due object of their special love.

7. You owe this to yourself, 1. That you may remove your public shame, and have the comfort of Christians' special love: as God cannot delight in an impenitent sinner, no more should his servants. 2. That your conscience may have the comfort that your repentance is sincere; which it will justly be still doubting of, if you cannot repent at as dear a rate as open confession. How will you forsake all, and die for Christ, if you cannot so far deny your pride as to confess your sin?

8. Lastly, you owe this to me, that the church may not take me for a polluter of its communion by admitting the impenitent thereto.

S. You have said more than ever I heard of this, and it fully satisfies me. But would you have all that are converted and repent do thus?

P. Some have lived with some kind of religiousness from

^a Paul frequently confesseth his sinful life; Acts xxii., and xxvi; Tit. iii. 3—5; 1 Tim. i. 13—15; Luke xxii. 32.

^a Jam. v. 13, &c.

their childhood, though with many ordinary sins, and have, by undiscerned degrees, grown up unto true godliness. These are uncertain when they first had special grace, and were not open scandalous violators of their baptismal vow; and, therefore, I can lay no such injunction on them.

But I would have all do thus, that have thus broken that vow, and are converted afterward to true repentance, for all the reasons which I now mentioned: and the universal church hath ever been for such public repentance in such a case; yea, and for particular gross lapses afterward. And the papists to this day call it the sacrament of penance, though they corrupt it by auricular confession, when it should be open; and by many unwarrantable adjuncts and formalities.

S. What would you have me do after that?

P. I will record your name in the church book among the church communicants, and we will all pray for your confirmation and perseverance; and you must live as a member of the holy catholic church of Christ, in the communion of saints, and return no more to your ungodly, sinful life: and come to me again, and I shall give you further counsel. In the mean time, you may do as the converted eunuch did, (the lord treasurer of the queen of Ethiopia, Acts viii. 39,) even go on your way rejoicing in this, that you are united to Christ, and are justified from all your former sins, and are sincerely entered into the covenant and family of God, and are made a^b fellow-citizen with the saints, and an heir of certain, endless glory.

THE FIFTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Directions to the converted against temptations.

Speakers.—Paul, a Teacher; and Saul, a Learner.

PAUL. Welcome, neighbour. How go matters with your soul?

SAUL. I thank God and my Redeemer, and you, his minister, since I publicly repented, renounced my sin, and gave up myself to my God, and Saviour, and Sanctifier. I find myself as in a new world. My^c hopes revive, and I have had already more

^b Eph. ii. 12; Rom. viii. 16—18, 30, 32.

^c Rom. v. 1—6, 10.

comfort in believing, and in seeking God, than ever I had in my life of sin. I am grieved and ashamed that I stood off so long, and have spent so much of my life in wickedness, and in wronging God, who gave me life. I am ashamed that ever such trifles and fooleries possessed my heart, and kept me so long from a holy life, and that I delayed after I was convinced. I could wish, from my very heart, that I had spent all that time of my life in beggary, slavery, or a gaol, which I have spent in a fleshly, sinful course. O had I not now a merciful God, a sufficient Saviour, a pardoning covenant of grace, and a comforting Sanctifier, which way should I look, or what should I do? It amazeth me to think what a dangerous state I so long lived in. O what if God had cut off my life, and taken away my unsanctified soul, what would have become of me for ever! O that I had sooner turned to my God, and sooner cast away my sins, and sooner tried a holy life! But my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour, that he hath pitied a self-destroying sinner, and at last his mercy hath^d abounded where my sin did abound.

P. It is but little of his goodness which as yet you have tasted of, in comparison of what you must find at last. But that you may yet make sure work, I shall spend this day's conference in acquainting you what temptations you have yet to overcome, and what dangers to escape, for yet you have but begun your race and warfare.

S. Your counsel hath hitherto been so good, that I shall gladly hear the rest.

P. 1. The first temptation that you are like to meet with, is a seeming^e difficulty and puzzling darkness in all, or many of the doctrines and practices of godliness. You will think strange of many things that are taught you, and you will be stalled at the difficulties of understanding and believing, of meditating and praying, of watching against sin, and of doing your duty. And by reason of this difficulty, Satan would make God's service seem wearisome, uncomfortable, and grievous to you, and so turn back your love from God.

And all this will be, because you are yet but as a stranger to it; like a scholar that entereth upon books and sciences, which he never meddled with before; or like an apprentice that newly learneth his trade; or like a traveller in a strange way and country. To an ignorant and inexperienced person, that never

^d Rom. v. 12, 13, to the end.

^e John vi. 60; Heb. v. 11, 12; 2 Pet. iii. 16.

meddled with such things before, but hath been used to a contrary course of life, all things will seem strange and difficult at first.

S. What course must I take to escape this temptation?

1. When you meet with any difficulty, you must still remember that it is your own dark mind, or backward heart, that is the cause, and never suspect God's word or ways, no more than a sick man will blame the meat, instead of his stomach, if he loath a feast. But take occasion to renew your repentance, and think, 'All this is along of myself, who spent my youth in sin and folly, which I should have spent in hearing the word of God, and practising a godly life. What need have I now to double my labour to overcome all this !'

2. Resolve to wait patiently on God in the use of all his means, and teaching, time, and use, and grace will make all more plain, and easy, and delightful to you. Do not expect that it should come all on a sudden, without time, and diligence, and patience.

3. Keep still as an humble disciple of Christ, in a learning mind and way, and turn not, in self-conceitedness, to cavil against what you do not understand. This is the chief thing in which conversion maketh us like little children. (Matt. xviii. 3.) Children are conscious of their ignorance, and are teachable, and set not their wits against their teachers, till they grow towards twenty years of age, and then they grow wise in their own conceits, and begin to think that their tutors are mistaken, and to set their wits against the truth which they should receive. But of this more anon.

II. The second temptation will be, upon these difficulties and your mistakes in religion, to grow so perplexed as to be overwhelmed with doubts and fears, and so to turn melancholy, and ready to despair.

The devil will strive to lose you, and bewilder you in some mistakes, or to make you think that your conversion was not true, because you had no more brokenness of heart for sin, or because you know not just the time when you were converted. Or he will make you think that all religion lieth in striving to weep and break your heart more; or that you have no grace, because you have not such a lively sense of things invisible, as you have of the things that are seen. Or he will tell you that now you must not think nor talk of the world, but all your thoughts and talk must be of God, and his word and holy things,

and that all other is idle thoughts and talk ; and that you must tie yourself to longer tasks of meditation and prayer than you have time and strength to carry on.

S. Sir, you make me admire to hear you. Can such motions of holiness come from the devil. If I did not know you, I should suspect some carnal malignity against holiness in your speeches.

P. Did not the devil plead Scripture with Christ in his temptations ? (Matt. iv.) And doth he not^t transform himself into an angel of light to deceive ? When he cannot keep you in security and profaneness, he will put on a visor of godliness : and whenever the devil will seem religious and righteous, he will be religious and righteous overmuch.

S. What getteth he by this ? Would he make us more religious ?

P. You little know what he hopeth to get by it. Overdoing is undoing all ; he would destroy all your religion by it. If you run your horse till you tire him or break his wind, is not that the way to lose your journey ? Nothing over violent is durable. If a scholar study so hard as to crack his brains, he will never be a good scholar, or wise man, till he is cured. Our souls here are united to our bodies, and must go on that pace that the body can endure. If Satan can tempt you into longer and deeper musing (especially on the sadder objects in religion) than your body and brain can bear, you will grow melancholy before you are aware, and then you little know how ill a guest you have entertained.

For when once you are melancholy, you will be disabled then from secret prayer and from meditating at all : it will but confound you ; you cannot bear it : and so by overdoing, you will come to do nothing of that sort of duty. And you will then have none but either fanatic whimsies, and visions, and prophecys, or else (more usually) sad despairing thoughts in your mind : all that you hear, and read, and see, you will think maketh against you ; you will believe nothing that soundeth comfortably to you ; you can think none but black and hideous thoughts. The devil will tell you a hundred times over, that you are an hypocrite and unsanctified, and all that ever you did was in hypocrisy, and that none of your sins are yet forgiven ; and that you shall as sure be in hell as if you were there already ; that God is your enemy ; that Christ is no Saviour for you ; that you have sinned against the Holy Ghost, or that the day of grace is

1 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.

past ; that the Spirit is departed, and God hath forsaken you ; that it is now too late, too late to repent and find mercy ; and that you are undone for ever. 'These black thoughts will be like a beginning of hell to you.

And it is not yourself only that will be the sufferer by this ; but many of the ignorant and wicked will, by seeing you, be hardened into a love of security and sensuality, and will fly from religion as a frightful thing which doth not illuminate men, but make them mad, or cast them into desperation. And so Satan will use you as some Papists have drawn the picture of a Protestant like a devil, or an ass, to affright men from religion ; or as we set up maukins to frighten birds from the corn ; as if he had written on your back for all to read, 'See what you must come to, if you will be religious.'

S. You describe to me so sad a case, as almost makes me melancholy to hear it, and it tempts me to be afraid of religion itself, if it tend to this : but what would you have me do to escape it ?

P. Religion itself, as God commandeth it, tendeth not to this. It is a life of holy faith, and hope, and joy : but it is errors about religion that tend to it. And especially when any great cross or disappointment in the world becometh an advantage to the tempter to cast you into worldly discontents and cares, and trouble and perplexity of mind : this is the most usual beginner of melancholy ; and then it turneth to religious trouble afterwards.

And I the rather tell you of it now, because you are capable, through God's mercy, of preventing it : but it is a disease which, when it seizeth on you, will disable you to think, or believe, or do any thing that much tendeth to your cure ; words are usually in vain ; it overcometh the freedom of the will.

The prevention is this : 1. Set not too much by any thing in the world, that so the losing of it may not be able to reach your heart. Take the world as nothing, and it can do nothing with you. Take it for dung, and the loss of it will not trouble you.

2. Keep true apprehensions of the nature of religion, that it lieth in faith, hope, and love ; * in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, in the forethoughts of everlasting glory ; and in comforting yourself and one another, with remembering that you shall for ever be with the Lord, in thanksgiving to your bountiful God, and in his joyful praises : let these be your

* Rom. xiv. 17 ; 1 Cor. xii. 31, and xiii ; 1 Thess. iv. 17, 18.

thoughts, your speeches, your exercise, publicly and secretly. Set yourself more to the daily exercise of divine praises and thanksgiving, to actuate love and joy, than to any other part of duty. Not that you have done repenting; but that these are the chief, the life, the top, the end of all the rest.

3. When you feel any scruples or troubles begin to seize upon you, open them-presently to a judicious minister or friend, before they fasten and take rooting in you. Remember and observe these things.

III. A third temptation that will assault you will be, to be in continual doubt of your own sincerity; so that though you be not melancholy before, Satan would bring you to it, by a life of continual doubts and fears.

And here he hath very great advantage, because man's heart is so dark and deceitful, and because our grace is usually very little and weak; and a little is hardly discerned from none; and because that the greatest assurance of sincerity is a work that requireth much skill, great diligence, and clear helps.

S. I easily believe that this will be my case: I feel some beginnings of it already: but what would you advise me to do to prevent it?

P. I have written a small book on this point alone, called 'The Right Method for Peace of Conscience,' &c. to which I must refer you: but briefly now I say,

1. You must still keep by you in writing the baptismal covenant of grace, with the explication of it, which I gave you, and never mistake the nature of that covenant and of true religion: and on all occasions of doubting, renew your part, that is, your consent; and go no further for marks of godliness and true conversion, if you can truly say, that you still consent to that same covenant: for this is your faith and repentance, and your certain evidence of your right to the benefits of God's part. Find still your true consent, and never doubt of your sincerity.

2. But because he that consenteth to learn will learn, and he that^b consenteth to obey will obey: your life must also testify the truth of your consent. Therefore, instead of over tedious trying and fearing whether you truly consent and obey or not, set yourself heartily to your duty; study to please God, and to live fruitfully in good works; resolve more against those sins which make you question your sincerity; and the practice of a godly life, and the increase of your grace, will be a constant

^b Tit. i. 16; Jam. ii. 14, &c.; Matt. 21, 30—33.

discernible evidence; and you will have the witness in yourself, that you are a son of God.

S. I thank you for this short and full direction. I pray go on to the next temptation.

P. IV. If you escape these sadder thoughts, Satan will tempt you to security, and tell you, that now you are converted, all is sure, and you never need to fear any more. Those that have true grace can never lose it; and sins once pardoned, are never unpardoned again; and therefore now all your danger is past. And if he can thus take off all your fear and care, he will quickly take off your zeal and diligence.

S. Why; Is not all my fear and danger past?

P. No; not as long as you are on earth: tormenting fear you must resist; but preventing¹ fear, and repenting fear, will be still your duty: you are but entered into the holy war. You have many a temptation yet to resist and conquer; temptations from Satan and from men, and from your flesh; temptations of prosperity and adversity. You have constant and various duties to perform, which require strength, and skill, and willingness. You have remaining corruptions yet to mortify, which will be striving to break out against, and to undo, you. You know not how many burdens you have to bear, where flesh, and heart, and friends may fail you. I tell you all the rest of your life must be the practice of what you have promised in your covenant; a labour, a race, a warfare: and you must defend yourself with one hand, as it were, while you build with the other: and all the way to heaven must, step by step, be carried on by labour and victory conjunct. Will you reward a man merely for promising to serve you? Will you excuse a soldier from fighting and watching, because he is enlisted, and engaged to do it? The two first articles of religion are, that God is, and that he is ^k the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. If you receive the immoveable kingdom, you must^l serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, as knowing that our God is a consuming fire. And though it be God that giveth you to will and to do, you must^m work out your salvation with fear and trembling. You must beⁿ "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." You must fight a

¹ Heb. iv. 1, and xii. 1, 2.

^l Heb. xii. 28, 29.

^m 1 Cor. xv. 58; 1 Tim. iv. 8.

^k Heb. xi. 6.

ⁿ Phil. ii. 12, 13.

good fight, and finish your course, and love the appearing of Jesus Christ, if you will expect the crown of righteousness. You must overcome, if you will inherit, and ° be faithful to the death, if you will receive the crown of life. Do you think that you come into Christ's army, vineyard, and family to be careless?

S. But if I cannot fall from grace, nor be unjustified, though there be duty, there is no danger, nor cause for fear.

P. Controversies of that kind are not yet fit for your head, much less to build security upon ; it is certain that God's grace will not forsake you, if you ^P forsake it not first : and it is certain that none of his elect shall fall away and perish. But it is certain that Adam lost true grace, and that such apostasy may be not only possible, but too easy in itself, which yet shall never come to pass. The church of Christ lived in joy and peace, without meddling much with that controversy, till Pelagius and Augustin's disputations : and Augustin's opinion was, that all the elect persevere, but not all that are truly sanctified and love God. But this is enough to the present case ; that as you have no cause to distrust God, so it is certain that God doth not decree to save men without danger, but to save them from danger ; and that your fear and care to escape that danger (of sin and misery) is the means decreed and commanded for your escape ; and that God hath no surelier decreed that you shall escape, than he hath decreed that you shall fear it, and so escape by rational care, excepting some unknown dangers which he puts by. (Heb. iv. 1.) " Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." The sum of all this is instanced in Heb. xi. 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 which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

Go on, therefore, with faith, and hope, and joy; but think not that all the danger is past till you are in heaven.

V. The most dangerous temptation of all will be the stirring up the remnants of your own corruption, of sensuality, and pride, and covetousness, to draw you back to your former pleasant sins, especially by appetite and fleshly lust.

1. If you be addicted to your appetite, though you be poor,

Rev. ii., and iii.

^P Jos. xxiv. 26, 40 ; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9, and xv. 2 ; Isa. i. 28 ; Jer. xvii. 13 ; Matt. xxiv. 24 ; Rom. viii. 21, 29, 30.

you will not want a bait, especially to excess of drinking. And the tempter will tell you, that because you fare hardly, and have small drink at home, you may lawfully comfort your heart with a cup of extraordinary abroad. And so from one cup to two, and so to three, you shall be tempted on, till your appetite become your master, and your love to the drink doth become so strong, that you cannot easily restrain it.

S. God forbid that ever I should again become a swine !

P. If you should but once be overtaken with this sin, you are in great danger of committing it again and again : for the remembrance of the pleasure in your fancy will be a continual temptation to you ; and when Satan hath deceived any man into sin, usually God leaveth that man proportionably to his power, and he gets that advantage of which he is very hardly dispossessed : as he ruleth by deceiving, so where he hath deceived once, he hath double advantage to deceive again.

And then I will foretell you, besides the danger of damnation, and the odious ingratitude to your Saviour, &c., you will live in a kind of hell on earth : the devil and the flesh will draw you one way, and God's Spirit and your conscience will draw you another way. The terrors of God will be upon you ; and no sooner will the pleasure of your sin be over, but conscience will be God's executioner upon you, and some sparks of hell will fall upon it ; so that you will think that the devil is ready to fetch you ; unless you sin yourself into stupidity, and then you are undone for ever.

S. I pray you tell me how to prevent such a misery.

P. Be not confident of your own strength : keep away from the tavern and alehouse : come not within the doors, except in cases of true necessity : keep out of the company of tipplers and drunkards. Let not the ^a tempting cup be in your sight : or if you be unwillingly cast upon temptation, let holy fear renew your resolution.

And so as to the case of fleshly lusts ; if your bodily temper be addicted to it, as you love your soul, keep at a sufficient distance from the bait. If you feel your fancy begin to be infected towards any person, whose comeliness enticeth you, be sure that you never be with them alone without necessity, and that you never be guilty of any immodest looks, or touch, or words ; but keep at such a distance that it may be almost impossible for you to sin. You little know what you have done, when you have

^a Matt. vi. 13, and xxvi. 41 ; Luke viii. 13.

first broken the bounds of modesty : you have set open the door of your fancy to the devil ; so that he can, almost at his pleasure, ever after, represent the same sinful pleasure to you anew : he hath now access to your fancy to stir up^{*} lustful thoughts and desires ; so that when you should think of your calling, or of your God, or of your soul, your thoughts will be worse than swinish, upon the filth that is not fit to be named. If the devil here get in a foot, he will not easily be got out. And if you should be once guilty of fornication, it will first strongly tempt you to it again, and the devil will say, if once may be pardoned, why not twice ? And if twice, why not thrice ? And next, the flames of hell will be hotter in your conscience than the flames of lust were in your flesh ; and if God do not give you up to hardness of heart, and utterly^{*} forsake you, you will have no rest till you return from sin to God : which, if you be so happy as to do, you little think how dear it may cost you ; what terrors, what^{*} heart-breaking, and, perhaps, a sad and disconsolate life, even to your death.

And you will not suffer alone : O what a grief will it be to all the godly, that know or hear of you ! What a reproach to religion ! What a hardening to the wicked, to make them hate religion, to their damnation ! The malignant will triumph, and say, ' No doubt, they are all alike : these are your puritans, your precisians, your holy brethren ! ' and if you thus wound religion, God will wound your conscience and reputation at the last.

S. You make me tremble to hear of such a horrid state. And the rather because, to confess the truth to you, my nature is not without some lustful inclinations : I entreat you, therefore, to tell me how to subdue and mortify them, and prevent such sin ?

P. You are married already ; and, therefore, I need not advise you to that lawful remedy ; but I charge you to take heed of all quarrels and fancies which would make your own wife distasteful to you. 2. And, above all, be sure that you be not idle in mind or body. You that are a poor labourer, are in ten-fold less danger than rich men and gentlemen are. When a man is idle, the devil findeth him at leisure for filthy thoughts, and immodest dalliance ; but if you will labour hard in your calling from morning to night, so that your business may necessarily take up your thoughts, and also weary and employ your body, you will neither have a mind to filthiness, nor time of dalliance. 3. And be sure that you fare hard for quantity and quality : the

^{*} Jam. i. 13, 14.

^{*} 1 Thess. iii. 7.

^{*} Psalm li.

fire of lust will go out, if it be not fed with idleness, fullness, and pride. Gluttons and drunkards are still laying in fuel for filthy lusts. And great lustful inclinations must have great fasting. And physic and diet will do much (as eating much cold herbs, and drinking cold water). But to have a body still employed in business and labour, and a mind never idle, but still taken up with your calling, or with God, together with a spare diet, is the sum of the cure, with keeping far enough from the baits, and casting out filthy thoughts before they fasten in the mind.

The story is commonly reported of a Lord Keeper in our time, who near Islington, as he passed by, saw a man that had newly hanged himself; and, causing him to be cut down, recovered him to health. And, upon examination, found that he hanged himself for love, as lust is called. He sent him to Bridewell, and gave orders that his labour should be hard, and his usage severe: till at last, the man being cured of love, came and thanked him for the healing of his soul, as well as for the saving of his life.

You will be tempted also to pride and ambition, to seek preferment and domination over others; and to a worldly mind, to thirst after "riches and great matters for yourself and your children after you in the world. And this pride and worldliness are the most mortal sins of all the rest, as possessing the very heart of love, which is the seat that God reserveth for himself. But, against these you must have daily instructions in the public ministry. I will now say no more to you but this: that he that thinketh on the grave, and what man's flesh must shortly turn to, and of the brevity of this life, which every hour expecteth its end; and thinketh how dreadful a thing it will be for a soul to appear in the guilt of pride or worldliness before the holy God, one would think should easily detest these sins, and use the world as if he used it not.

S. Proceed, I pray you, to the other temptations.

P. VI. The controversies and differences which you will hear about religion, and the many sects, and parties, and divisions which you will meet with, together with their speeches and usage of one another, will be a great temptation to you.

I. In doctrinals, you will hear some on one side, and some on the other, hotly contending about predestination and providence, and universal redemption, and free-will, and man's merits, and

* 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10; Luke xxii.

* 1 Cor. vii. 29—31.

in what sense Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, and about justification, and the law, and the covenants of works and of grace; and of the nature of faith, and repentance, of assurance of salvation, and whether any fall away from grace, with many such like.

II. In matters of church government and God's worship, you will meet with some that are for prelacy, and some against it; some for government by the pastors in equality, some for the people's power of the keys, and some for an universal government of all the world by the pope of Rome. And you will find some against all praying by the book, or a set form of words; and some against all other praying save that, at least, in public; some for images, and many symbolical ceremonies of men's making, in God's public worship, and some against them; some for keeping all from the sacrament, of whose conversion or holiness the people are not satisfied; and some for admitting the scandalous and ignorant, and some for a middle way; with many other differences about words, and gestures, and manner of serving God.

III. And it will increase your temptation to hear all these called by several names, some Greeks, some papists, some protestants; and of them, some Lutherans, and Arminians, some Calvinists, some antinomians, some libertines, some prelatical, some Erastians, some presbyterians, some independents, some anabaptists, besides seekers, quakers, familists, and many more that are truly heretic; and some (especially the papists) would make you believe that all these are so many several religions, of which none but one (that is, their own) is true and saving.

IV. But the greatest part of your temptation will be to see how all these do use one another, and to hear what language they give to one another. You shall find that the papists make it a part of their religion or church laws, that those whom they account heretics must be burnt to death and ashes; and that inquisitions, by torments, must force them to confess and detect themselves and others; and that temporal lords that will not exterminate all such from their dominions, are to be excommunicated first, and next deprived by the pope of their possessions, and their dominions given to others that will do it: and that preachers are to be silenced and cast out, that swear not, subscribe not, and conform not, as their church canons do require

7 Concil. Later. sub Innoc. 3. Can. i. 3.

them. Others, in all countries almost, you will find, inclining to the way of force in various degrees, and saying, that without it the church cannot stand, and discipline would be of no effect, and no union or concord would be maintained: these will call those that do not obey them schismatics, factious, seditious, and such like. Others you will find pleading for liberty of conscience, some for all, and some for many, and some for themselves only; some crying out against the prelates as antichristian persecutors, and formalists, and enemies to all serious, godly men; some will separate from them, as churches not fit for Christians to hold communion with. One party will charge you, as you would escape schism and damnation, not to join with the protestants, or nonconformists or separatists: another will charge you, as you would not be guilty of false worship, idolatry, popery, persecution, &c., not to hold communion with the conforming churches. And the anabaptists will tell you, that your infant baptism was nothing but a sin and a mockery, and that you must be baptised again if you will be saved, say some, or if you will be capable of church communion, say others. The antinomians will tell you, that if you turn not to their opinions, you are a legalist, and a stranger to free grace, and set up a righteousness of your own, against the righteousness of Christ, and are fallen from grace by adhering to the law. The arminians, and jesuits, and Lutherans will tell you, that if you are against them, you blasphemously make God a tyrant, an hypocrite, and the author of sin. The dominicans and anti-arminians will tell you, that if you be of the opinion which they oppose, you make man an idol, and ascribe to him that which is proper to God, and are enemies to God's grace and providence, and near to Socinianism. These, and such other temptations, you must meet with from disputers, who account themselves, or are accounted by their party, the best, the wisest, and most learned of men.

S. You greatly perplex me to hear such unexpected things as these: what then shall I do if I come to see them, and should be thus assaulted? Is religion no plainer or surer a way; or are Christians no wiser or better people than to live in such uncertainties, contentions, and confusions? I thought that their warfare had been only against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Do they live in such a war against each other? I am almost utterly discouraged to hear of such a war as you describe.

P. I had rather you knew it beforehand, that you may be

prepared for it, than to be overthrown hereafter by an unexpected surprise. 1. Religion, you must know, is a thing which consisteth of several parts; as a man's body hath, 1. A head, and a heart, and a liver, and a stomach. These we call essential parts; without which it is not a human body. 2. It hath arms, and hands, and legs, and feet, which we call integral parts; without these it may be a body, but not a whole body. These are, some of them, great and few, and some of them are exceeding small and almost innumerable; there are hundreds, or thousands, of capillary veins, arteries, nerves, and fibres, so small as that the most curious anatomists in the world, that open men's bodies, cannot see them while they are before their eyes; much less the true nature and causes of all the humours, and their motions and effects. 3. There are also nails, and millions of hairs, which are no parts of the body at all, but accidents; even so religion hath, 1. Its essential parts, which I have opened to you in the baptismal covenant. These all true Christians know, and are agreed in. 2. It hath its integral parts, which are next to these. The greater sort of these, some erroneous Christians wanting, are like men that are without a leg or an arm; but the smaller parts are so many that no Christian on earth is so perfect as to know and have them all.

Is not all plain and sure which I have opened to you, and engaged you in? And yet there are a thousand texts of Scripture, and hard points in divinity, which the most learned are disagreed about. All that without which a man cannot be a good and holy Christian and be saved, is plain and easy in itself, And Christ did choose, therefore, to speak to the capacity of the meanest, though it offend some subtle, curious wits, who expected that God should have sent from heaven a philosopher to resolve their doubts about unprofitable creature speculations, rather than a Redeemer to save their souls. Believe and repent, and love God above all, and heaven above earth, and your neighbour as yourself, and mortify the lusts of the flesh by the Spirit, and deny yourself, and suffer patiently, and forgive your enemies, &c. All these are doctrines harder to be practised than to be understood.

But yet the most subtle wits shall not complain for want of work, for God hath put many things into the Scriptures to exercise them. And the nature of the matter doth of itself make multitudes of the lesser things in divinity to be difficult.

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

II. And as for Christians themselves, you must know, 1. That there are ^a among them abundance of worldly hypocrites, such as you were before your repentance; for such men are of that opinion and side which is uppermost, and maketh most for their advantage and honour in the world. And these strive to get into places of wealth and power, to be the masters of all others. And it is not mere learning, or a doctor's habit, or pastor's chair, or power to hurt others, that will make a holy, mortified man. And what wonder is it if such as these be troublers of the church, and revilers or persecutors of good men; and if they use their religion to serve their pride, and passion, and worldly interest, and ends?

2. And among those that are sincerely devoted to God, there are abundance of lamentable imperfections. 1. Some are yet young and ^b raw of understanding, and never had time, and hard study, and helps sufficient to acquaint them with all these difficult, controverted points. 2. And then it is the common disease of mankind, to be too little distrustful of our own understandings, and to be too confident of our first apprehensions; whereas, alas! the understanding of man is a poor, dark, slippery, fumbling thing; and most men's first conceptions of doctrinal matters are very lame, if not false: because, at first, we come strangers to the matters, and we always leave out one half, at least, that is to be known. And a half knowledge hath half ignorance with it, if not error; because truths are like the parts of a clock, or watch, in such connexion that the ignorance of one part may make us err about the use of all, or many of the rest. And the truth is, wise and judicious Christians are very few; for it is but few that are born with strong natural wits, and few that fall into the hands of right teachers, and few that are patient, diligent students; all which, besides the special helps of God's Spirit, are necessary to make a judicious man.

3. And there are in most of us too much of our inordinate pride, and selfishness, and passion unmortified, according to the various degrees of grace. Most Christians are weak and ^c infants; and weak grace hath strong corruptions; and strong corruptions will be great troublers of the church and family, as they are great troublers of the soul that hath them.

Do you not hear in prayer what large and sad confessions all Christians make, both pastors and people, of their many and

^a John xiii. 10, 11.

^b Heb. v. 11—14.

^c 1 Cor. iii. 1—4; Gal. iii. 1, 2, &c.

great corruptions, of their ignorance, pride, passion, and the like? And do you not hear, by their complaints, that they are their own grievous trouble, and make their own lives a burden to them? And do you think that they dissemble, and mean not as they speak? And do you not think that those corruptions which disturb themselves will disturb the church? It is strange if a church, which consisteth of a thousand self-troublers, have not some hundreds of church troublers.

You will be apt, at your first conversion, to think that true Christians are nearer to perfection than they are; as if the godly had nothing but godliness in them; but when you have tried them longer you will find that grace is weak; and men's faults are many, and very stiff, and hardly cured; and your over-high estimation of the best may, by experience, receive a check, and you will see that men are still but men.

S. But I shall never be able to keep up that fervent love to the brethren which is my duty, if I find them as bad as you describe them. It will tempt me to think that grace itself is less excellent than I thought it, if it do no more, and make men no better. I feel already your very discourse abate my great estimation of religious persons; what then will such experience do?

P. If your estimation be erroneous, and you think them more perfect than they are, the abatement of it is your duty: for God would not have us judge falsely of them, nor ground our love to them upon mistake. But the excellency of holiness, and the true worth of the godly, may be discerned through all these troublesome faults. The use that you must make of all this is such as followeth:

1. You must consider how great God's^d mercy is to man that will bear with so much faultiness in the best; and how tender a physician we have who endureth all these stinking corruptions which we can scarce endure in one another, and the humble can scarce endure in themselves.

2. What constant need we have of a Saviour and a^e Sanctifier, and how much we must still live upon the healing grace of Christ.

3. How bad our case was before conversion, when it is so bad still; and what wretches we should have been if God had left us to ourselves; and what church-troublers the ungodly are, when the better sorts have such troublesome faults.

^d Matt. xviii. 32; Exod. xxxiv. 37; Col. iii. 13; Psalm ciii. 3; Eph. iv. 32.

^e John i. 9; Eph. v. 26.

4. What an excellent thing grace is, that doth not only keep alive under so much sin, but daily works it out, till at last it perfectly overcome it.

5. How ^f tender we must be of judging one another to be ungodly, for such faults as are too common among some of the penitent. Though sin be never the better, because we are all so bad, yet we are the unfitter to be hasty censurers of one another.

6. It is a help to the hope and comfort of a penitent burdened sinner, that yet Christ will ^s pardon him and heal him at the last, when he seeth how much God beareth with and pardoneth in all; as it is a comfort to the sick man to hear that thousands do live that have had the same disease. If almost all God's servants were perfect, it would be hard for the ^h imperfect to believe that they are his servants.

7. It sheweth you what need we have all to bear with one another, if ever we will have love and peace; and what a ^l self-condemning course it is of persecutors, to ruin the godly upon an accusation of some tolerable error or fault, when all men have such like.

8. It will tell you how little cause any of us have to be ^k proud, and how needful ^l humility and renewed repentance is to those that are still so bad.

9. It will tell you how little reason we have to be ^m secure and idle, and to think that our mortifying work is done, when still we have all so much sin to overcome.

10. It will keep us from too contemptuous and unmerciful carriage towards those that are unconverted, or that are lapsed into sin; and teach us to pity them and pray for them, rather than revile them, when we find so much faultiness among the better sort of Christians. And it will keep us from that ⁿ over-rigid, and censorious, and magisterial expectation or execution of church discipline when faults are so common under high professions.

11. It will make those ^o few Christians the more amiable in your eyes, whose great wisdom, piety, sobriety, peaceableness, and patience, not only keep them from joining with the church troublers, but also maketh them both the supporters and healers

^f Gal. vi. 1—3; Matt. vii. 1—3.

^h 1 John i. 7—9.

^k Isa. lxii. 5.

^l Heb. xii. 28, 29; Phil. ii. 12.

^m Phil. ii. 21.

^s 1 John ii. 1, 2.

^l Matt. xviii. 32; John viii. 6—8.

^h Matt. xviii. 3, and xi. 28, 29.

ⁿ 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.

of the rest. For through God's great mercy many such judicious, wise, humble, blameless, charitable, and peaceable men there are, who are to the ordinary weak professors what the healthful are in an hospital or family to the sick, and the aged to the children; that bear with the rest, and help to cure them by degrees, and keep the peace which they would break, and reconcile the differences which others make, and rid out of the church the excrements of reviling, and hatred, and divisions, wherewith the others do defile it. And ^p blessed are these peace-makers, who have the ^q pure and peaceable wisdom from above, for they are eminently the children of God.

12. Lastly, This must teach you to remember the difference between earth and heaven, and to look up with honour and desire to the perfect harmony of holy souls, united in one flame of love to God; and to say, 'Come, Lord Jesus! When shall I be in that peaceable, perfect world, where no ignorance, no sin, no pride, no passion, no carnal domination, troubleth the holy triumphant church?' And it must quicken your prayers, that God's "will may be done on earth, as it is in heaven." These are the true uses to be made of all our differences, contentions, scandals, persecutions, and church divisions.

S. O how great a mercy is a wise and seasonable monitor and guide! I was ready to think the scandal described to be so great, as might even warrant, if not necessitate my offence, and the abatement of my liking of godly men, if not of godliness itself. And you have showed me abundance of fruitful uses to be made of it; and that with undeniable evidence of reason.

P. To think ill of Christ, or Christianity, of God, or godliness, for the errors or faults of any man in the world, is a mad and a most disingenuous thing. For, 1. What is all sinfulness but a want of godliness, or that which is its contrary? And wilt you vilify health, because many are sick; or ease, because many have pain; or life, because many die; or light, because many are blind, or in darkness; when, on the contrary, it is pain and sickness that best teacheth men to value ease and health? And should not the sinful confusions in the world, then, and the miscarriages of Christians, cause us to value wisdom, holiness, and peace, the more? It is not godliness, but want of more godliness, that maketh men do all this amiss. There is nothing in the world but more wisdom, and more true godliness, that can

^p Matt. v.

^q Jam. iii. 17.

cure it; and when there is none, the world is so much worse, that it is almost like hell.

2. And is it not God that forbiddeth and condemneth all this? Is it not his law that every sinner breaketh? Is there any one in the world, or all the world, so much against all sin as God is? What would you have him do more to signify his dislike of it? He forbids it; he caused his Son to die for sin; he yet chastiseth the godly themselves for it: and he will cast the impenitent into hell for it; and he will never suffer any sin in his heavenly kingdom. And is it not madness of blasphemy, then, if any will lay the blame of men's sins on God, or on his holy laws?

3. And it is God that is most abused and injured by sin, and displeased with it: and for you to think hardly of him, or of those that please him, because that others, by sin, do injure him, is as unreasonable, and unrighteous, as if many of your neighbours should rob you and beat you; and, therefore, the rest should rob and beat you again, because the first did so, and should beat all that will not beat you. It is no more equal dealing, to think the worse of God, and godliness, and godly men, because that scandalous persons do offend him.

S. But could not God make men better, and cure all this, if he would? Why, then, is the world so bad?

P. God, who, in himself, is infinitely good, in his infinite wisdom, seeth it best to make his creatures in great variety, and not to communicate the same degrees of excellency to them all. As you see that every star is not a sun, nor all stars equal; nor the clouds like the stars; nor the earth and water so pure as the air, nor so active as the fire. As you see a difference between men, and beasts, and birds, and worms, and trees, and plants, and stones, in wonderful variety. And it is folly to accuse God for not making every worm a man, or every man an angel, or every stone a star or sun. Because he is a free Creator and Benefactor, and may make or not make, give or not give, as he pleaseth; and knoweth well why he doth what he doth, which we poor worms are unfit to know. Even so some reasonable creatures he hath made so glorious in holiness and perfection, that they cannot sin; that is, they never will sin; I mean the angels. And some he hath made such as may please him, and be happy, if they will; (assisting them by abundance of instructions, and mercies, and afflictions;) and yet may sin, and

^r Prov. i. 20—25, &c.

perish, if they will not be persuaded. And among these, even mortal men, he freely giveth more mercy to some than he doth to others: but, to all, so much, as that nothing can undo them, if they do not wilfully, obstinately, and impenitently, refuse and abuse the mercy which is given and offered them, even to the last.

Now, it is true, that God could make every man an angel, and every wicked man a saint: and all those to whom he hath left a possibility either to stand or fall, as themselves shall choose, he could have made such, as that to sin should have been impossible to them. But it pleaseth him to do otherwise, and he well knoweth why.

S. VII. You have brought to my mind, and almost here answered already, another temptation, which I have sometimes felt myself. It hath posed me to think that God, who is so good, should make hell for any, and damn men to such torments as I would not have my greatest enemy feel; much more that the far greatest part of the world should all be damned. For if Scripture had never said that few are saved, yet, as long as it saith that none but the holy and obedient are saved, it is all one; for I see that very few are holy; few love God, and his word, and heaven, above this world. Upon these thoughts I have sometimes been tempted to doubt whether God be good and merciful; and sometimes to doubt whether the Scripture, that saith these things, be true. For he that is good will do good: therefore, if God save but one of many, where is the abundance of his goodness?

P. That you may understand these matters well, you must begin at the bottom with the clearest certainties, and so proceed to the rest. And, 1. I ask you, Is it not absolutely certain that God is good; yea, better than all the world? If not, how came all that goodness into the whole world, which we find in nature and virtue, if God did not make it? And he cannot make that which is better than himself.

S. This is not to be questioned, else he were not God.

P. Quest. 2. Is it not certain that there is pain and misery found in the world, even on some creatures that never sinned? What toil do you put your ox and horse to? You beat and abuse them; they have painful diseases, and sometimes broken bones: and you take away the lives of multitudes of harmless creatures at your pleasures; yea, they torment and kill one another; the cat the mouse, and the dog the hare, and the

hawk the birds, &c. Doth not all this stand with the goodness of God?

S. Yes, experience telleth us that.

P. Quest. 3. Doth not a wilful sinner deserve to feel more than an innocent creature?

S. Yes, no doubt of that.

P. Quest. 4. Do not many feel great torments in this world by gout and stone, and many diseases, by poverty, and cares, and sorrow, and injuries from men? And yet God is good.

S. Yes, there needs no proof of that.

P. Quest. 5. Might not God take away the life of an innocent man if he had pleased, as well as of a bird or beast?

S. Yes, no doubt of it. They are all his own.

P. Quest. 6. Might not God freely have made you a labouring horse, a toad, a serpent, when he made you a man?

S. No doubt, if he would.

P. Quest. 7. Might he not then turn you to be a toad if you had never sinned; or lay on you such pain as any of the brutes do undergo?

S. That cannot be denied. It is no more contrary to his goodness to do it to me than unto them.

P. Quest. 8. How much pain would you choose to undergo for ever rather than be made a toad, or to be turned into nothing?

S. Just so much as might not be greater than the pleasure of living as a man.

P. Quest. 9. If God make man an immortal soul, and man afterwards sin, is God bound to change this immortal nature, and to end man's being; may he not continue our natures, when we have depraved them?

S. No doubt of that.

P. Quest. 10. If a man turn his own heart from God, and neither loveth him nor delighteth in him, but is troubled to think of him, who is the cause of this?

S. Himself that did it, and continueth it.

P. Quest. 11. If heaven be the joyful perfection of souls in the love and praise of God, and delight in him, who is it that depriveth this man of heaven?

S. Himself, by depriving himself of joyful love.

P. Quest. 12. If a man turn his own heart to the love of riches and honours, and sensual delights, of meat and drink, and ease and lust, may not God take away from man the things that he abuseth? Or when such a man dieth, is God bound to

supply him with wine and women, with sensual pleasures, in another world ?

S. No, he is not ; but I have heard that after death the sensitive powers cease, and the rational only continue.

P. You have heard men talk of that which they cannot prove, nor is likely. The sensitive soul, or faculties, is totally distinct from the body, which now it worketh in, and will be the same thing when separated. At least, I ask,

Quest. 13. Is God bound to separate a sinner's sensation from his soul ?

S. No doubt but he may continue it ; and I confess I think it likely that sinners who have subjected their reason to sense, should rather, after death, be less reasonable, than less sensitive.

P. Quest. 14. Will not a vehement desire of meat, drink, women, ease, honour, riches, turn to a continual torment, if they cannot have the things desired ?

S. No doubt of that. What else is hunger and thirst, and shame and grief, or scorn and disappointment ?

P. Quest. 15. If the very nature of God be to hate all sin, and to be displeased with sinners, who is it that maketh any man hated of God, and displeasing to him ?

S. He himself that maketh himself a sinner. As a weed or dunghill stinketh when the sun shineth on it, because it is a weed or dunghill.

P. Quest. 16. If a reasonable creature know that he hath brought himself into such a case, in which he hath lost both heaven and all his sensual pleasures, and made himself hateful to God, and angels, and good men, and all this for a little transitory pleasure, which he knew would quickly end, and when he was often told what it would cost him, and might have been happy for ever if he would, is it not likely or certain that the thoughts of this will be a torment to his mind ?

S. Yes, no doubt, unless he have great command of himself.

P. Quest. 17. Is it likely that he who lost the power of his own reason here, by a wilful subjecting it to sense, should, by God's grace, or his own strength, recover the power of it hereafter, so as to be able to restrain his own tormenting conscience or passions ?

S. I think that too late they may be wiser by experience, as knowing good and evil, but not to their own benefit.

P. Quest. 18. If an immortal soul hath thus cast out God

and holiness from itself, besides whom there is no true heaven and happiness; and if it have kindled hell fire in its own nature, in wicked, self-tormenting lusts, passions, and enmity to God, how do you think that it should ever be recovered, or this fire quenched? God pitied his enemies once, and did redeem them; but is he obliged to interpose, and save the final enemies of his grace from their own doings, when the time of grace is past? And no man can expect that such a wicked and enthralled nature should then change, and deliver itself. Therefore their everlasting misery is the everlasting self-tormenting of the wicked: and is God bound to hold all men's hands from cutting their own throats; or to cure every man as oft as he will wound himself, or to build every man's house as oft as he will burn it wilfully, when he is entreated to forbear; or to shut men's mouths for fear lest they should gnaw their own flesh?

S. I perceive that man is his own tormenter, and his every sin is a hell for ever to the sinner.

P. Quest. 19. If all this damnation be not only deserved, but executed by sinners on themselves, who will not be entreated to have mercy on themselves, is it not impudency to turn the accusation against God, and charge him with cruelty against these cruel and obstinate self-destroyers?

S. All that is to be said is, that it pleased not God to make their misery impossible, and to save them from themselves.

P. Quest. 20. Seeing that human government is necessary to the peace and order of the world, and justice as necessary as government, is not divine government, laws, and justice more necessary? else all the sovereigns of the world would be ungoverned, and all powerful wickedness be unpunished, and all heart sins, which are the roots of all the rest, and all secret villainies, would be as free as piety itself; and no universal order could be maintained without an universal Governor: and if all governors inflict more punishment on offenders than they are willing of themselves, must not God do so? Sin is voluntary, but punishment is most involuntary: and if sin against man deserve the gallows, or temporal death, sure sin against God deserveth more, even a punishment as durable as the sinner's soul, which is immortal.

S. You have silenced my murmuring thoughts as to the being of hell; but what say you of the numbers that are damned?

P. 1. Remember that it is proved to you that God doth, be-

fore their sin, no worse to any than as a free benefactor to give his own benefits, in various degrees : and that, in the lowest degree, he giveth to all men pardon and salvation, if they will have it, and will not finally and obstinately reject it ?

2. Remember that none are damned but those that wilfully damn themselves, and refuse salvation.

3. Consider that man is as nothing to God, and therefore there is no reason that he should spare sinners for their numbers' sake, when the number maketh the sin the greater, as many fire sticks make the greater flame. Millions of men are not so much to God as two or three flies or wasps to us, who never stick to destroy a thousand of them.

I ask you, Quest. 1. If God damned but one of a million, or of a kingdom, and that only for obstinacy and impenitency in sin, would it much offend you ?

S. No ; for I should see then that his mercy is greatest.

P. 2. If he damped none but the devils, and saved all mankind, would it offend you ?

S. Not much ; because their malice is so great.

P. 3. Do you not grudge sometimes that God doth not punish the wicked, especially the persecutors of his church ? And are not good men ready sometimes to call for fire from heaven, and sometimes to marvel that God doth no more show his hatred against them ? And yet will you grudge at him, because he will do it fully and seasonably in hell ?

S. The Lord pardon us ! we are hardly pleased with his judgments.

P. 4. Do you not know that all this earth is no bigger, in comparison of all the world, than one inch of ground is to all the earth ? And how many thousand, thousand, thousand times is all the earth greater than one inch ? And are not all the rest of the vast and glorious parts of the world as like to be fully inhabited as this ? How know you but those immeasurable regions have a thousand, thousand millions of blessed angels and spiritual inhabitants for one wicked man or devil that is damned ? Are you sure it is not so ?

S. How should I be sure ? God only knoweth. I confess it is likely enough, if we may judge by the different spaces as you compare them.

P. 5. If, when you come to heaven, you shall find that hell was the sinful place of devils, and earth by sin, was one spot of God's world, made next like hell ; and that millions of millions

of angels, and holy spirits, and inhabitants, are glorified for one wicked man or devil that is damned ; will you not be ashamed of murmuring at God ?

S. I see that it is unfit for poor, dark sinners to judge the Judge of all the world, or to presume to quarrel with his judgments, when we know no better what we say.

P. The uses which you should rather make of the numbers that are condemned, are such as these : 1. To consider how mad a creature an ungodly man is, when so great a number will by no warnings be kept from damning their own souls for ever.

2. That man hath exceeding need of a Saviour and a Sanctifier, who is such a pernicious enemy to himself.

3. How much you are beholden to God, who hath made you, by his grace, to be one of those few that shall be saved.

4. How foolish and unsafe it is to think, and speak, and do as the most do, unless you would speed as the most do for ever : and how unmeet it is for them to be conformed to this world, who hope to be for ever separated from them.

5. How excellent a people those few should be, above the common rates of men, whom God hath called out of so great a number to himself. How fervently should they love him, and how holily and heartily should they serve him.

S. O that we could be such as this mercy doth deserve !

P. Two things more I will conclude with, for your satisfaction.

1. That hell is not to be thought of as a mere furnace of fire, where sinners are fried, as abiding in one place ; but the state of the devils, who are now at once tormented in hell, and yet^a rule in the air under one Beelzebub, or prince, and night and day compass the earth, as seeking whom to deceive and devour. This, I say, sheweth us, that hell is a state of sin and misery, continued partly by the voluntary pravity of the damned, and consistent with a kind of active and political life. And the greatest resemblance of it is the case of wicked men in deep melancholy, who can neither cease to be wicked nor to torment themselves ; or of rogues in irons in the gaol, compared with the state of the angels in heaven.

2. That all great excellencies are rare : there is but one sun (that we know of). The number of men on earth is small, to the number of flies, and worms, and fishes, &c. Gold is not so common as iron, or clay ; nor diamonds, or other jewels, so common as pebblestones. The woods are covered with thorns and

^a Eph. ii. 2 ; Job i. 6—8 ; 1 Pet. v. 8 ; Rom. ii. 10 ; Heb. xiv.

briers, and the commons with heath, and furze, and weeds, without any care and labour of man ; but orchards and gardens must have greater care, and lie in a much narrower room : kings, and nobles, and judges, and doctors, are but a small part of mankind. And if God will have but few of us come to heaven, one of those few shall be of more worth than thousands of the wicked reprobates that perish.

S. But, sir, the chief matter is yet behind. You have told me before of the scandals, errors, and sects, and temptations by them, which will be in the church ; and you have told me now of the multitudes that are wicked ; but you have not told me how I may escape either of these temptations. What shall such an ignorant sinner as I do, when I not only see the ill example of the multitude, high and low, but also hear men that seem learned and godly, condemning one another ; when one saith, this is the true church, and another saith nay, but they are heretics, or antichristian ; one saith, you are damned if you be not of our way, and another saith you are damned if you be not of our way, alas ! I am not able to judge which of them is in the right ; I know not what a Socinian, a quaker, a papist, an antinomian, or any of these parties are, nor what they hold : how, then, shall I answer them, or know whether they be in the right ? what will you advise me to do in this difficulty ?

P. 1. I will first remember you, that all this is no more than Christ foretold us of, and warned all his disciples to prepare for. That false Christs and false prophets should arise, who should deceive, were it possible, the very elect. (Matt. xxiv. 24.) "When they say, here is Christ, and there is Christ, go not after them." (Ver. 26.) That of our own selves, men should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. (Acts xx. 30.) That it must be that heresies must arise, that they which are approved may be made manifest. (1 Cor. xi. 19.) That Satan would transform himself into an angel of light, and his ministers into ministers of righteousness, to deceive. (2 Cor. xi. 14.) That some would cause divisions and offences contrary to the apostles' doctrine ; even such as serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies, and by good, fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple. (Rom. xvi. 16, 17.) Among the Corinthians, how quickly did the more carnal sort of Christians fall into factions and divisions, some being of Paul, and some of Apollos, and some of Cephas ? And the Galatians so followed the Jewish teachers, that Paul was afraid of them,

lest he had laboured in vain. And in many of the churches, the Nicolaitans and deceivers (called the woman Jezebel) did teach and seduce the people from the truth. (Rev ii. 3.)

But your safety in this great danger must be thus maintained:

I. You must¹ hold fast to your baptismal Covenant, as explained in the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Commandments; and take all for Christians who are true to that; and take all such Christians for the true catholic church: for that which maketh a man a Christian, maketh him a member of the body politic of Christ, which is his church. So that if any man teacheth you any thing contrary to that, you must reject it; for your baptismal covenant is your Christianity. And if any call him a heretic that owneth this christian covenant, as opened in the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Commandments, believe him not, but take him for a slanderer of your brother, except he prove it, 1. By some proved, contrary profession, which will prove that he doth not indeed believe as he professeth to believe. 2. Or by some impenitent wickedness of life. So that the same covenant which your own Christianity consisteth in, will serve both for a test to try men's doctrines by, and also to try which is the true church, and who are the members of it with whom you must have communion, and who are heretics, whom you must avoid.

II. Adhere to those truths wherein all Christians are² agreed. papists, and protestants, and Greeks, and all sorts truly christian, are agreed in the points forenamed, of the baptismal covenant, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments: and they all confess, that all which we receive for canonical Scripture, is the true, infallible word of God. In all this our divisions are no temptation to you, because we are all of a mind in these.

III. The holy³ Scripture then being acknowledged by all for the word of God, you must receive no doctrine which contradicteth it; nor refuse any doctrine which is asserted in it: but try all by this divine and certain rule.

IV. Because that the doubtful sense of many texts is the occasion of men's different opinions, you may well take up with that sense which hath either of these two marks: 1. That which is so plain and frequently repeated, that to an impartial, sober

¹ 2 Tim. i. 13; Eph. iv. 3—7, 14, 15; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, &c.; Mark xvi. 16.

² 1 Tim. iv. 6, and vi. 3; Rom. xvi. 16, 17.

³ John v. 39.

man it is past controversy; and if any pervert it, the plainness of the text will certainly shame him. 2. That which all Christians (unless some inconsiderate dotards) are agreed in, as the proper sense in all the commentaries of their learned men. And if you hold fast all the texts which are thus plain, and all which papists, Greeks, protestants, &c., do give the same exposition of, you will have a great stock of saving truths.

V. Be sure that you faithfully love and^r practise this much forementioned, which all are agreed in. And then, 1. The very love and practice will help you to such a lively, experimental kind of knowledge as will certainly save your soul, and keep you from every damning error; yea, and will greatly advantage you in all practical, and many doctrinal, controversies. 2. And God will bless you with^a more of his illuminating help. Whereas false hypocrites, that have no religion but opinion, and talk, and proud self-conceit, and contending zeal, deserve to be forsaken of God, and given up to believe many falsehoods, and to lose the truth which they perfidiously abused. Holy souls have great advantage of worldly or opinionative hypocrites, in times of differences and contentions. At least^a these souls shall certainly be saved.

VI. Learn all that you yet understand not,^b in the same humble teachableness from the ministers of Christ in which you first entered into his church. Think not that you are grown too wise to^c need their further teaching. When you once grow proud of your own understanding, and think that you can judge of all things at the first hearing, and that all is false which crosseth your first conceits, and that ministers can add but little to what you know already, then you are as bad as perverted already: for this is the root of a multitude of errors.

VII. The^d judgment of the generality of able, godly, self-denying, impartial ministers, should prevail more with you than the judgment of any partial sect, whether it be great or small, either such as stand for worldly interest, or such as run into parties by division. For the church of Christ hath ever suffered by these two sorts, and therefore they are still both to be suspected.

^r John vii. 17; xiii. 17, and xv. 14; Matt. vii. 22—24.

^a John xv. 3—9; Matt. xxviii. 20; John xiv. 21.

^b Rev. xlii. 14.

^b Matt. xviii. 3.

^c 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24.

^d Rom. xvi. 16—18; 1 Cor. i. 10; Eph. iv. 14—16.

1. Ungodly, carnal men, that thrust themselves into the sacred ministry for preferment, will teach you such doctrine as tendeth to their worldly ends, to magnify themselves, and* keep the world in subjection to them, that all may honour them, and be ruled by their wills. Domination is evidently their work and end; and no wonder if they fit their doctrine to it.

2. On the other side, the raw, injudicious sort of Christians, if once they grow into an over-high esteem of their own understandings and godliness, are exceedingly apt to fasten with confidence upon their own first undigested notions, and publish them as saving truths, when, after twenty years' experience, they will be ashamed of them themselves. And they are as apt to desire to be made conspicuous for their godliness in the world, and to that end to separate from ordinary Christians, as below them, and unworthy of their communion; as among the papists the religious must separate themselves from others, into religious houses and societies, which are accounted holier than the rest. These sects have ever been the nest of errors; and divisions have still tended to sub-divisions; and all to the ruin of love, peace, and godliness, and consequently of the church.

So that the generality of divines and godly people, who you plainly perceive to avoid both these extremes, and to live in concord among themselves, in a self-denying, sober, holy life, neither seeking worldly honours and preferments, nor running from concord into^f proud self-opinionated sects, are they whom you may best trust with the resolution of your doubts, and the conduct of your soul, so far as ministers must be trusted.

For, 1. God is not so likely to guide by his Spirit false-hearted, worldly hypocrites^g whose God is their belly and mainmon, as the humble, holy, faithful pastors of his churches. And Christ himself hath given you this direction, (Matt. vii.) "By their fruits ye shall know them." For though a bad man may be in the right, and a good man in the wrong, yet, if in practical controversy you see the generality of bad men go one way, and the generality of good men go the other way, the far greater probability of truth is on the good men's side.

2. But yet it is not so likely that God should reveal his mind to a few good men, and those of the rawer, injudicious sort, and such as are most infected with proud overvaluing their own wisdom and goodness, and such as have had least time, and

* 1 Pet. v. 3, 4.

^f 1 Tim. iii. 6; Acts xx. 30.

^g Phil. iii. 18, 19; Tit. i. 9, 10.

study, and means to come to great understanding, and such as show themselves the proudest censurers of others, and least tender of the church's peace and concord, and such as are aptest to break all to pieces among themselves. I say, it is not so likely that these are in the right, as the main body of agreeing, humble, godly, peaceable, studious ministers, who have had longer time and better means to know the truth: and the body of Christians, even the church, hath more promises from Christ than particular, dividing persons have.

VIII. The light and law of nature is the primitive, original light and law of God: therefore, receive nothing from any teachers which is certainly against it.

IX. Pray earnestly to God to preserve you from error, and when conscience and experience tell you that any opinion or party would lead you to plain sin, (as to dishonour your superiors, to favour persecution or idolatry, to divide Christians, and set them against each other, to destroy christian love, to favour loose and fleshly living, to neglect God's ordinances, or the like,) be sure so far it must needs be false.

X. Wait still as a doubting learner, where you cannot yet reach to a divine belief.

If you understand but these two lines, it will help you to escape all the cheats of the papists, and the chief perplexities of mind which all our sects would draw you into.

1. Remember that the christian faith and religion is of God, and if you believe the same articles merely upon the word of men, (whether few or many,) it is not formally true faith and religion in you, because it is human only, and not divine. If you believe the priest only, or the church, that there is a resurrection of the body, and a life everlasting, this is not a believing God.

2. Therefore the use that you must make of the teachers of the church is, to help you to know what God hath revealed, what is his word, and so to believe and practise it, and not merely to believe the priests themselves.

3. Yet a certain belief of them in their places is needful towards the promoting of your belief of God. As he that cannot read, and is unlearned, must believe that what is read is in the bible, and that the translation in the main agreeth with the original, and that this bible is the same which the church received from the apostles, and such like. He that will believe his teacher in nothing, can learn nothing of him.

4. But this human faith is another thing, quite different from the belief of God, and it is but a subordinate help to it, and no part of it. If man be not God, to believe man is not to believe God. Therefore, if you should believe all the creed, and all the volumes of councils and canons, merely as the testimony of the church, or whatsoever else you take only on the teacher's word, remember that it is no part of your divine faith or religion, but only an appurtenance to it (good or bad, as the matter is). So far as you learn of, and believe, your teachers, you are a learner and disciple of theirs, and by them may be taught to know what is the word and will of^h Christ, which must be known by its proper evidence, which they must show you, and not upon their bare word alone: for to be a teacher, is to show you that truth and reason of believing which they have learned themselves. But to be an authoritative^l lord of your faith, is another thing; and such say, 'Believe, because we speak it.' But so far as you have learned by your teachers, what is the word and will of Christ,^k and believe and obey it because it is his word, so far you are indeed a Christian, and religious.

5. Therefore, if any tell you this or that is the word of God, or this is the true meaning of the word of God, this is my counsel, and this is your duty: 1. If they be such as you are obliged to hearken to, as being your teachers, or men of credit in such things, hear what they can say, as one that is willing to learn the truth, and hear what others say against it, for it is hard to judge in controversies where both sides are not heard, if the difficulty be considerable. 2. Be not hasty to conclude off or on, that it is true or false; but continue merely as a learner, till you know by all their teaching that the thing is true. And tell them, in the mean time, 'I know not whether it be so or not. I will not pretend to be wiser than I am. I will be a learner, that so I may come to be a believer of it as a truth of God, as soon as I have learned it to be so.'

Either the thing is true or false, before you believe it. If it be false, no teachers or church can make it true, nor can show you the real evidence of truth in it: therefore, if you believe it, whoever tell it you, you are guilty of believing a falsehood fathered upon God, when it had no evidence. If you say that their evidence seemed good to you, that was because you were sinfully rash and hasty in receiving falsehood, and not staying

^h 1 Pet. i. 21.

^l 2 Cor. i. 24, and x. 15.

^k 1 Cor. ii. 5; 1 Thess. i. 8.

till you had time to¹ try it to the full. But if the thing prove true, yet it cannot be expected that you receive it till you have time sufficiently to^m try it. Nor can it be said, that your delay being dangerous, you must presently receive it on your teacher's word: for that is but to be a believer of a man: and which a man cannot know to be God's word without time to try and see the evidence, it is in vain to say, he must do it. And when a man hath first received both all the essentials of the christian religion before mentioned, and all the doctrines, and all the expositions of Scripture, which the generality of Christians in all ages have agreed in, together with all the light and law of nature, the controversies which remain can be of no such necessity, as that we must needs make haste to believe men that tell us they are God's truth, before we have time to prove and learn it to be so indeed.

Whoever, therefore, be your teachers, or whatever church pretendeth to inform you, call nothing God's truth, or word, till you have sufficient evidence to prove it so; but continue as learners in that doubt which you cannot overcome, till you can beⁿ divine believers: and if you do believe any thing merely on your teacher's word, say plainly, 'I believe you as a man in this; but it is no part of my religion and belief of God, till I find, indeed, that it is his word.'

Follow these ten directions, and you will be safe against all the divisions and clamours of contenders, that say, 'Here is the church and truth, and there is the church and truth.' And when sects and reasonings make others at their wits' end, your way will be sure and plain before you.

S. How clear have you made that case to me which I thought would have utterly bewildered and confounded me.

P. VIII. The eighth temptation which I must forewarn you of, is this; you will be in danger to mistake the nature of the christian religion, by minding only some parts of it, and overlooking the rest, and perhaps the greatest, and taking up with the separated parts alone.

God's word is large, and man's mind is narrow: and we are apt, when we observe something, to think that it is all. So some are so intent on duty, that they have poor thoughts of grace and mercy; and some think that the magnifying of grace obligeth them to vilify inherent holiness, and performed duty. And nothing is now more common than to set truth against

¹ 1 Thess. v. 21.

^m Gal. vi. 4.

ⁿ 1 Thess. ii. 13.

truth, and duty against duty; when they are such as God conjoineth. But the instance that I will now warn you of, is this; the true nature of religion is nothing else, but faith turning the soul by repentance from the flesh and world, to the love, and praise, and obedience of God, in the joyful hope of the heavenly glory. Read this over and over again. Now the too common case of Christians is to live so much in the use of mere self-love and fear, as that almost all the notable exercise of their religion is but a timorous care to be saved; and an inquiring after marks, or other ways, by which they may know that they shall be saved; and a performing of duty, as an heavy, but necessary task, that they may be saved; but that which you must aim at is, to study much God's wondrous love in Christ, and the certainty and greatness of the heavenly glory; and so far to mourn for sin as it tendeth to magnify grace, and to cleanse and preserve the heart and life; and to live in the constant delights of divine love, and joyful thankgivings, and praises to our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, and in the belief and hopes of life everlasting; and, out of love to God and man, to delight in constant obedience to God, and in doing all the good that we can do in the world; and in this way to trust God quietly and gladly with body and soul.

This is true religion; and weeping for sin, and particular ordinances must not be neglected, but esteemed only as lower parts, which are but stepping-stones to this ascent, and never to be set against it, nor our chiefest care to be spent upon them.

S. I thank you for this warning; for I perceive by this that true religion is a very noble and a pleasant life. But most good people that I have known do but ask what they shall do to be saved, and beg for a softer heart that can weep for sin, and keep on in hearing, prayer, and sacraments. And the praises of God do take but little room in their devotions (except some that do it by way of erroneous opposition to humiliation, and confession of sin). And divine love, and the joys of faith, and hope, and holiness are little seen.

P. IX. Your next and sore temptation will be, to^o abate your zeal and diligence by degrees, and to grow to a customary coldness and formality, and lose all the life of your religion. All your spiritual vigour will die away into a carcass and image, if you be not careful to prevent it.

S. What would you have me do to prevent it?

^o Rev. ii. 4, 5, and iii. 15, 16; Matt. xxiv. 12.

P. 1. Let your first and chief labour be every day about your heart; stir up your soul when you find it sluggish. Learn how to preach to it in your meditations, and to ^p chide it, and urge it to its work.

2. Live under the liveliest ministry, and in the most serious christian company you can get; or if that may not be, supply that want by reading the most lively, serious books.

3. Take heed of turning your religion and zeal to by-opinions and parties, instead of the life and practice of faith, hope, and love. For a factious, wrangling, contentious zeal is as destructive of true, holy zeal as a fever is of natural heat and life.

4. Take heed of growhug in love with the world; for, as the thoughts of riches, and rising, grow sweet to you, the thoughts of God and heaven will grow lifeless and unpleasant.

5. Take heed of sinning wilfully; for all such sin doth harden the heart, and forfeit the quickening help of the Spirit.

6. Hold on in the use of all God's ordinances; for intermissions and unconstaney tendeth to a total neglect; and a contented course of lifeless duty tendeth to spiritual death itself.

P. X. Your next temptation is the most dreadful of all the rest: you may be tempted at last to doubt whether the Scripture be the word of God, and whether Christ be indeed the Son of God, and whether there be a heaven and hell, an immortality of the soul. And this may befall you, 1. Either by the company or books of infidels or atheists, who prate against the Scripture and the life to come. 2. Or else by the malicious suggestions of Satan, stirring up in you unbelieving thoughts. 3. But especially in case of melancholy, which is a disease of the body, which giveth him great advantage to molest the mind with blasphemous temptations; so that he will draw you to doubt whether there be a God, or whether he be the Governor of the world, or whether Christ be true; or whether Scripture be God's word: and here he will set before you the texts which you understand not, and persuade you that they are contradictory, and ask you, is it likely that this or this should be true. And thus will your very foundation be assaulted: and the consequence may be either very troublesome or very dangerous to you. If you do abhor these suggestions, it will be a torment to you to be followed with such odious, hideous motions; though as long as you abhor them, they will not condemn you. But if you patiently hearken to them, then your danger will be great.

^r Psalm xlii. 5, 11, and xliii. 5.

S. I pray you open the danger to me, that I may the more dread it and avoid it.

P. If God do not, by his grace, stir up your soul to detest and cast away such thoughts, or show you, by his light, the falseness of them, they may bring you to atheism or infidelity itself ; and your latter end will be worse than your beginning.

But if you do not turn professed infidel, yet if your doubts or unbelief be the stronger party in you, they will make you an hypocrite, which is a secret infidel. For while you prevalently doubt of the life to come, and whether the Scripture be God's word, you will take this life as your surest portion, and you will secretly resolve to save your life and worldly prosperity, and put the matters of the life to come upon a venture ; you will never die nor be undone for Christ, nor ever win heaven for the loss of earth ; but only take up that religion which is most in fashion, or which may best quiet your conscience in a fleshly, worldly life : and you will hope, that if there be a heaven, you may have it as a reserve when you can keep the world no longer. But because it seemeth so uncertain to you, you will hold fast what you have in present as long as you can. Therefore, in all controversies and matters of religion you will have an indifferency, covered with the name of moderation ; for he that doubteth of all religion, can, in case of danger, be of any, while, indeed, he is heartily of none : and he that doubteth whether there be a heaven will not much stick with you about the way to it ; and he that heartily believeth not in Christ will not be very scrupulous about his doctrines or commands. Thus secret unbelief, or prevalent doubting of the christian truth, will make men miserable infidel hypocrites.

S. I tremble to think of so great a danger ; and the more, because that I find not myself able to defend the faith against a subtle adversary and deceiver. But what if I should be brought into doubting, will all doubting have such sad and damnable effects ?

P. No : the question will be, whether your faith or your unbelief be the stronger and more prevalent. If your doubting be stronger than your belief, then you will be an infidel hypocrite, and will have no religion but what shall give place to your worldly interest, and will never forsake all for Christ ; and God, and Christ, and heaven, must come under the world and the flesh ; and while, lest it should prove true that there is a life to come, you will think it necessary to have some religion, it will indeed

be none ; because it maketh God no God, and Christ no Christ, and heaven no heaven, by putting them after or below the world.

But if your belief be stronger than your unbelief or doubting; then it will not only resist such temptations, but it will still keep up the interest of God, and heaven, and Christ, and holiness in your heart ; and your faith, though weak, will ^a overcome the world ; your resolutions to forsake all for Christ and heaven will be firm and constant ; you will go on in the serious use of all the means of your salvation ; you will forsake the most gainful and sweetest sins ; you will perform the hardest and the dearest duties ; and though your graces will be all the weaker, and your life the worse for the weakness of your faith, yet you will rather die, or let go all, than forsake your Master, or hazard your hopes of life eternal. And as long as your doubts or unbelief are thus overcome by a faith that is weak, but stronger than they, though you cannot say I am certain that there is another life, or that the Scripture is the word of God, yet Christ will take you for a true believer.

S. This is comfortable ; but methinks, then, all men should be saved, though they have no belief but the mere discerning of a possibility of another life. For all men are most certain that they must die ; and a little time is even as nothing ; and all the pleasures of this little time are but a doting dream ; and vanity and vexation shameth them all. If, then, we are most certain that there is no true felicity here, and that by seeking a better we have nothing here to lose that is worth the keeping, common reason will tell any man that he should let go all for the smallest hope or possibility of an endless, heavenly glory ; for no man in the world can say, ' I am sure that there is no heaven or hell : ' and all can say, we are sure there is nothing but a very short dream of vanity here. And what need faith, then, for the determining of so plain a case ?

P. You speak a great deal of reason ; but you must consider,
1. That reason in all ^r carnal men is much enslaved to their sense, and cannot rightly do its office. Do you not see it in drunkards, fornicators, gluttons, and all voluptuous persons, how they daily go against the plainest reason, yea and their own knowledge, through the violence of sense ? And reason itself, also, is oft bribed and ^s blinded to take part with sensuality. As vain as this world is, it hath the heart of every carnal man ;

^a 1 John v. 4 ; Heb. xi.

^r Rom. viii. 5—9.

^s 1 Cor. ii. 14.

and that reason which shall turn it out of his heart must show him a better in a powerful manner, and that must be with a certainty, or with so strong a probability as seemeth to him near to certainty ; yea, and this must be powerfully presented to his mind by God's Spirit within (to heal his blindness and sensual violence), as well as by the word without.

2. And this apprehension of reason must be by¹ faith, which is a rational act. How far the natural evidence of a life to come may carry those that have not the gospel, I now pass by ; but we that have both natural and supernatural revelation of it do find all little enough : and that without a prevalent belief of the gospel the heart will not be turned from this world to God, nor sensuality be truly turned into holiness, or overcome.

S. But I heard a learned man say, that if infidels were turned loose, to dispute with professors against Christianity and the Scriptures, they would silence most of the very ministers themselves ; and find us far harder work than anabaptists, antinomians, or separatists, or any other sect. And if so, what shall such ignorant persons as I do, and what certainty or stability of faith can I expect to have and keep ?

P. 1. It is the merciful providence of God which commonly so ordereth it, that weak and young Christians have but weak temptations to unbelief. Their temptations at first are strongest unto sensuality and the love of the world, and not to infidelity itself. And then they are more troubled with doubtings about their own sincerity, than about the truth of the word of God. You see somewhat like it in every tree that groweth in the earth : whether do you find more young plants and little trees, or more old and great ones, overturned by the winds ?

S. More of the old and great ones.

P. And what is the cause of it ?

S. Because the great ones more resist the wind, and it hath the fuller stroke at them.

P. And yet the young and little ones have so little rooting, that if they felt the tenth part of the force which falleth on the bigger, it would overthrow them. But the wise God so ordereth it, that the roots and the top shall equally grow together that so the winds may assault the top no more strongly than the roots can bear. And so he dealeth with young believers. But those hypocrites that grow all in the top of outside actions and

¹ Heb. xi. 6 ; Matt. xi. 27.

professions, and not at all in the roots of inward faith and love, are they that fall in times of trial.

2. And then you must know that it is not the most "subtle wit, but the most sanctified heart, which hath the best advantage against temptations to unbelief; and therefore young * Christians, that have but little learning, may stand, when learned doctors † fall and perish. And God hath not so ordered the evidences of Christianity as that the finest wits must always make the best believers.

S. I pray you tell me then, how I must be established against all temptations to unbelief, and how I must prove the truth of Christ and the Gospel to be indeed the word of God, so as that I may stand fast against the most subtle reasonings of unbelievers, and may trust God's word to the forsaking of life and all.

P. This case is of itself so great and weighty, as that I cannot sufficiently speak to it in this short discourse; but I advise you seriously to read of it what I have written in a book, called 'The Life of Faith,' Part 2. And if that do not satisfy you, read thoroughly what I have written in four books more: 1. In one called 'The Reasons of the Christian Religion.' 2. One called 'More Reasons for the Christian Religion.' 3. One called 'The Unreasonableness of Infidelity.' And, 4. In the Second Part of 'The Saint's Rest.'

But yet I shall now tell you enough to establish you, if you can but understand much in few words.

You must know, therefore, what your baptismal profession doth contain, when you believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

S. I think you will make the baptismal covenant serve for all things, from first to last!

P. As the Father reconcileth us to himself by the Son, who came as his Messenger from heaven, to make known God, and life eternal, to mankind; so the Father and the Son do send the Holy Ghost into the souls of men to be Christ's Advocate, Agent, and Witness, in the world. So that in one word it is * the Holy Spirit that is the proof of the truth of Christ, and of the gospel.

S. But I have heard preachers speak much against this argument, and say, that, 1. Thus no man can know that Christ and the gospel are true, but he that hath the Spirit. And what

* Matt. xi. 25, and xvi. 17.

† Matt. xiii. 6, 21.

* Eph. iii. 17—19; Col. ii. 7.

† Heb. x. 15; 1 John v. 10.

then shall we say to infidels to convince them? 2. And that thus every fanatic that thinks he hath the Spirit will make himself the only judge. 3. And that few godly men do feel such a testimony of the Spirit in themselves, as to tell them what is, and what is not, God's word. 4. And if they did, how shall they prove that it is indeed God's Spirit, and no delusion? So that when our catechisms say, that only the witness of the Spirit can assure us that the Gospel is the word of God, many learned men cry shame upon that assertion.

P. That is, because that those catechisms have not made them understand the matter, one side or both not knowing what is meant here by the testimony of the Spirit; or else they speak of another thing.

Fanatics mean, an inward impulse, or actual word, or suggestion of the Spirit within them, saying, or persuading their minds, that this is the word of God. But this is not the thing that I am speaking of. But I will better tell you how the Holy Spirit is the Advocate and Witness of Christ.

The Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son, to do that on souls which none but God can do, and which God doth not do by any other means but by Christ, his servants, and his doctrine. This work of the ^a Spirit is the extraordinary expression and impression of God's three-fold perfections, his power, his wisdom, and his goodness. This way the Spirit is witness of Christ.

I. Before his coming, in the ^b prophets, and the first edition of the covenant of grace, where, 1. Many miracles; 2. A word of divine wisdom and prophecies fulfilled; 3. And the mercy and holiness of God, were all expressed.

II. In Christ's own ^c person, and his life, appeared the same divine impressions and expressions of the Holy Spirit. 1. In the ^d power which he exercised in working abundance of uncontrolled miracles; healing all diseases by his word, raising the dead, and finally rising from the dead himself, and, after forty days' abode on earth, ascending visibly up to heaven, while his disciples gazed after him. 2. The wisdom of God was notably imprinted on all that holy doctrine, by which he brought life and immortality to light, and taught men to know God and life eternal. 3. Love and goodness were most conspicuous in

^a 2 Tim. i. 7; 1 Pet. i. 2.

^b 1 Pet. i. 11; Isa. lix. 21.

^c John iii. 34, and i. 32, 33; Isa. xlii. 1; Matt. xli. 18; Isa. xi. 2.

^d Rom. i. 4; Heb. iii. 3, 4; Acts vii. 22.

his wonderful work of man's redemption, his condescension, his sufferings, his covenant of grace, with all the rest of his declarations of the Father's love and holiness. And thus the Spirit on Christ himself (which also in a visible shape fell upon him at his baptism) was his witness.

III. In the persons and lives of Christ's * apostles and chief disciples, who were the witnesses and reporters of his own words and miracles, the same impressions and expressions of the Holy Spirit appeared as the witness of the truth of Christ. 1. While they declared his word and miracles, they wrought abundance themselves, (or rather God by them,) to prove that they were true witnesses of Christ. They healed the sick, and raised the dead, and judged and destroyed some obstinate enemies of Christ, by the mere power of God. 2. The wisdom of God did notably appear in the light and harmony of their doctrine and lives. 3. The goodness and love of God appeared in their wonderful holiness, self-denial, and love to souls.

IV. All the same impressions of the Holy Spirit appeared on the Christians who were converted by the apostles, and received their testimony of Christ, and delivered it downwards to us. 1. Miracles of one kind or other were common among them long; even among such culpable churches as the Galatians, (Gal. iii. 1, 3,) and the Corinthians. (2 Cor. xiii. 1, 5.) 2. Prophets, and teachers of eminent wisdom, without universities, or much previous study, were suddenly made such by the Holy Ghost. (1 Cor. vii. and xii. 13.) Their love and holiness were wonderful, God was all to them, and the world and life itself was as nothing; so that they stand yet as patterns of love, and goodness, and patience, to this day.

V. The sacred † Gospel and doctrine itself, delivered by Christ and his apostles, doth to this day visibly bear this image and superscription of God. 1. In the works of power there recorded, and in the powerful truth of it, which conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil. 2. In its wonderful wisdom, and prophecies fulfilled, and clear directions for man's salvation. 3. In the goodness of itself and its design, being the glass in which we see God's face, the immortal Seed, the Sanctifier of souls, the

* Rev. xix. 10; Acts ii. 16, 18; ii. 4; vi. 10, and v. 3, 5; Joel ii. 28; Gal. iii. 2, 3; Zech. iv. 6; 1 Cor. iv. 10, 12; xii. 4, 7-9, 11; x.v. 2, and v. 4, 5; Eph. iii. 5.

† 1 Pet. i. 23, and ii. 2; John vi. 63; Acts xi. 14; Rom. x. 8; Col. i. 5; Heb. iv. 12; Prov. xxv. 5; Psalm xii. 5, 6, and xix. 7-9; 1 John v. 9-12.

most wonderful declaration of God's love and amiableness, and his deed of gift of life eternal. So that God's deep imprinted image and superscription telleth us that it is the word of God.

IV. Lastly. The same ⁸ Holy Spirit doth, by this same word, imprint the same image of God on every believer, from Adam to this day ; but in a greater degree since the ascension of Christ, and promulgation of the Gospel : so that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, it is because he is none of his. (Rom. viii. 9.) All that are saved have, 1. The spirit of power, which quickeneth them to God as from the dead, and enableth them to overcome the world and the flesh, and to forsake their dearest sins. 2. They have all the spirit of wisdom, or a sound mind, by which they practically, and powerfully, and savingly know God, and Christ, and heaven, and the beauties and mysteries of holiness, and the evil of sin, the vanity of the world, and the madness and misery of the wicked : in a word, they are wise to God and to salvation, though, in their generation, the men of this world may be wiser than they.

3. They have the spirit of holy love, to God and man, and to themselves for God's sake. (2 Tim. i. 7.) They love God above all, and love him in his works, and especially in his word and saints, and love to do good to all they can, and think not life too dear to exercise and manifest this love.

Now this holy image of God is first printed on the Gospel as a seal ; and by it, as the instrument, and by the Spirit, as the hand, it is imprinted on the souls of all believers. And how is it possible for God to set a plainer mark of his approbation on Christ's Gospel, and to tell the world that it is his own, more clearly than by the Holy Spirit, thus witnessing to Christ by all these six particular instances ? 1. The Spirit on the prophets and covenant that foretold Christ. 2. The Spirit on Christ himself. 3. The Spirit on the apostles. 4. The Spirit on the first churches. 5. The impress of the Spirit on the Gospel itself. And, 6. The Spirit on all believers, in all generations.

And now you may see why I told you, that by the Spirit, as Christ's advocate, agent, and witness, I mean another thing, than an inward suggestion of the Spirit, telling us that this is the word of God ; that by witness, I mean especially ' evidence.'

⁸ 2 Thess. ii. 13 ; 1 John iii. 24 ; iv. 18, and v. 6, 9, 10 ; Rom. viii. 1, 9, 18, 16, 23, 26 ; xii. 11, and ii. 29 ; Gal. iv. 6 ; iii. 14, and v. 5, to the end ; Phil. i. 19, 27 ; ii. 1, and iii. 3 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27 ; xxxvii. 14 ; xxxix. 29 ; xl. 10, and xviii. 31, &c. ; Eph. i. 13, 17 ; ii. 18, 22 ; iii. 16 ; iv. 3, 4, and v. 9, 18 ; John iii. 5, 6, and vii. 39 ; 1 Cor. vi. 11, 17, and xii. 12, 13 ; 2 Cor. iii. 3, 17.

Even as the being of a rational soul in all men, having the faculties of vital action, understanding, and free-will, do prove by evidence, that a God who hath life, understanding, and will, is their Creator; so the regenerating of (not one or few, but) all true believers, by the quickening, illuminating, and converting work of the word and Spirit conjunct, powerfully giving us a new vital activity, wisdom, and love to God and holiness, doth in the same sort prove, by way of evidence, that God is the author of the new creature, and consequently the owner of the Gospel that is used thereunto.

And also hence you may see why I told you, that it is not only the subtle wit of the learned, but much more the holiness of every regenerate soul, that best helpeth men to a confirmed belief of the Gospel. If you are truly sanctified, you have the witness in yourself. (1 John v. 7—11.) You have Christ's sanctifying Spirit, which is his mark, his advocate, and agent in you, and your earnest, and pledge, and first-fruits of eternal life. By this you may know that Christ is true, and that you are the child of God, even by the Spirit which he hath given you. (1 John iii. 24; Rom. viii. 9, 16, 26; Gal. iv. 6.) As the likeness of the child to the father is his evidence, so is the divine nature and image on the regenerate. None but God can thus regenerate souls: and God would not do it by a doctrine that is false, to honour it and to deceive the world. And this love to God and holy nature which is in you is the seed of God, which will not suffer you to deny your Father, your Saviour, and your Regenerator. You see now how the weakest may prove Christ and his Gospel to be true, and may stand fast against all the assaults of the devil, even by the great witness of the Holy Spirit, and not in any fanatic sence or feigned operations.

S. The Lord help me to understand and remember it. You have said that which already I see to be the light itself, and feel it give some strength to my belief. And though I was ready to ask you, how I shall be sure that the history of all these things and miracles is true; yet now I am answered by this continued evidence, which is not far off, but is in me, and, down to the end of the world, is continually at hand to answer doubts.

P. The history of these miracles and other facts is also delivered down to us with as great advantage as our acts of parliament, and that there were such men as Alexander, Cæsar, and Constantine in the world, which are most easily proved true.

S. But have none of the heathens had the Spirit, who knew not Jesus Christ?

P. In what measure they had it, and whether to their salvation, I pass by. But as it is the light of the sun itself, which appeareth before sunrise, so was it the Spirit of Christ himself, which illuminated good men before Christ's incarnation, under the first edition of the covenant of grace; and also which gave the heathens that measure of wisdom and virtue which they had. But all was much less than what true Christians commonly have, since the sun is risen.

S. But you have not yet told me, how they that have not the Spirit shall be convinced of the truth of Christ?

P. Do you not see that the works of the Spirit, which I have opened to you, are such as a stander-by, that is rational and true to his own conscience, cannot deny? Might not an unregenerate man have seen the miracles of the prophets, and Christ, and the apostles, and been convinced of them, and of Christ's resurrection, by historical, certain evidence? May he not be convinced of God's image on the Gospel itself, and of the holiness and wisdom of the godly, and plainly see that the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour, and perceive the Spirit by its fruits? Doubtless he may, if malignity blind him not.

S. I perceive by this, that it greatly concerneth all Christ's servants to cherish and obey the Spirit, and to grow in grace, and live very holy and heavenly, and especially loving and fruitful lives, when their holiness is to be the standing witness for Christ and the Gospel to the world, from age to age? And that the sins of Christians are a greater wrong to Christ than ever I before imagined.

P. I will give you one proof of that from the words of Christ himself. Christ prayeth for them that shall believe on him by the word, "that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me: and the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect into one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (John xvii. 21—23.)

S. This text is so vehement, and layeth so much of the glory of Christians, and so much of the convincing evidence of Christianity to convert the world, upon the unity of believers, that it

stirreth up in me a greater fear of schisms, and divisions, and sects, than I had before. I pray you, therefore, add a short character of each sect, telling me what that evil is in each one which I must avoid.

P. That I must not do now, 1. Lest I be tedious. 2. And what I give you in writing will not be read by any of those sects, if they find a word against themselves.

I will now conclude with these five graces and duties, which must be your general helps against all temptations whatsoever.

I. You must ^h grow in holy knowledge: children and fools are more easily cheated than the wise.

II. You must come to a full resolution. Resolve rather to die than wilfully sin. An unresolved person encourageth the tempter, and is more than half overcome already.

III. Be fearful of sinning, as conscious of your badness, and the multitude of temptations; and let watchfulness be your constant work.

IV. Be sure that your heart and life be wholly given up to God, and filled with good, and still employed in his service; and then the tempter will never find you disposed, or at leisure, for his turn. An empty heart (much more a carnal) and an idle life, is ready to entertain any motion unto sin.

V. Look still by faith to Christ and his Spirit, as your only strength. And trust not to your own understanding, goodness, or resolutions: for man, of himself, is very mutable. The Lord that hath converted you, confirm you, and preserve you.

THE SIXTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Instructions for a Holy Life.

I. THE NECESSITY, REASON, AND MEANS OF HOLINESS.

II. THE PARTS AND PRACTICE OF A HOLY LIFE.

1. FOR PERSONAL DIRECTION.

2. FOR FAMILY INSTRUCTION.

Speakers.—Paul, a Teacher; Saul, a Learner.

PAUL. Come, neighbour, methinks by this time you should so well understand your own condition, as to know yourself what further instructions to desire. What would you have me teach you next?

^h 1 Pet. ii. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 18; 2 Thess. i. 3; Eph. i. 17, 18; Phil. i. 9; Col. i. 9, and iii. 10; Prov. xiv. 10.

SAUL. You have already, in your familiar conference, made known to me what is the nature of Christianity and holiness, and what are the temptations which must be resisted. And I truly approve your wisdom in rather acquainting me with them beforehand, that I may be prepared, or may prevent them, than (as many do) to stay till I come to you in a temptation for resolution to help me out. For I know it is easier and cheaper to prevent the kindling of this fire than to quench it. And sometimes it falls among stubble, or gunpowder, and hath done its work before the sinner cometh to a minister for help. They are strange physicians who choose rather to cure diseases at the height, than to teach men how to prevent them. But I would yet entreat you to give me in writing some distinct instructions for a holy life. My reasons are, 1. I am afraid I shall not well set together what you gave me in conference, nor well remember it; and therefore would have it orderly before my eyes. 2. I would have somewhat to instruct my family with; and therefore desire you to write it me so as I may oft read it to them.

P. What is it particularly that you would have?

S. I. I would have you distinctly to write me down the true reasons and means of conversion and a holy life; for I know that it is the same reasons which made me a Christian which must keep me one. And, therefore, I would oft review them, as if I had never been converted; for if I forget what moved and turned my heart to God by Christ, I shall be ready to lose the effect, and to turn back. And I would read the same reasons often to my family.

II. I would desire you to set before me all the duties of a christian life, that I may see them together, and have the sum of them imprinted on my mind, and know how to enjoin them in my practice. And this summary, also, I would read often to my family.

P. Your desires are reasonable and seasonable: and both these are done in the two sheets which I published for families, some years ago. It is them, therefore, that I shall give you in answer to your desires.

But I must tell you, that the necessity of brevity constrained me to bring much into so narrow a room, that the style is too close and concise for your ignorant family; unless you will read it very often over to them, and remember that every word is to be marked, and explain it to them in more words as you go. For once reading, especially if it be carelessly, will not serve for the

understanding of so short and close a style. Ignorant hearers cannot receive much in few words; but must have a little matter in many words, oft and oft repeated, that their wits may have leisure to work upon it. And this will serve you instead of a catechism, while, in one discourse, all the heads of the catechism are delivered in a plain and practical manner. So that if you will read it over once a month to your family, and make them learn the heads of the second part by memory, it will help them unto a practical knowledge. But yet that you may have the same thing several ways, for fear of losing it, I will hereafter give you a catechism for your family besides; but this shall serve for this day's work.

I. The Necessity, Reason, and Means of Holiness.

1. To keep up the resolutions of the converted; and
2. To instruct those in families that need them.

Though the¹ saving of souls be a matter of inexpressible importance, yet (the Lord have mercy upon them) what abundance are there that think it not worthy of their serious inquiry; the reading of a good book one hour in a week. For the sake of these careless, slothful sinners, I have here spoken much in a little room, that they may not refuse to read and consider so short a lesson, unless they think their souls worth nothing. Sinner, as thou wilt shortly answer it before God, deny not to God, to thyself, and me, the sober pondering, and faithful practising, these few directions.

I. Begin at home, and know thyself: consider what it is to be a^k man. Thou art made a nobler creature than the brutes: they serve thee, and are governed by thee; and death ends all their pains and pleasures. But thou hast reason to rule thyself and them; to know thy God, and foresee thy end, and know thy way, and do thy duty. Thy reason, and free-will, and executive power, are part of the image of God upon thy nature; so is thy dominion over the brutes, as (under him) thou art their owner, their ruler, and their end. But thy holy wisdom, and goodness, and ability, is the chief part of his image, on which thy happiness depends. Thou hast a soul, that cannot be satisfied in knowing, till thy¹ knowledge reach to God himself; nor can it be disposed by any other; nor can it (or the societies of the

¹ Mark viii. 36; Matt. vi. 33; Job xxi. 14, and xxii. 17; Psalm i. 2, 3; xii., and xiv.

^k Psalm viii. 4—6; Gen. i. 26, 27, and ix. 6; Col. iii. 10.

¹ John xvii. 3, and iv. 6, 7; Jer. ix. 21.

world) be well governed, according to its nature, without regard to his sovereign authority, and without the hopes and ^m fears of joy and misery hereafter; nor can it be ⁿ happy in any thing, but seeing, and loving, and delighting in this God, as he is revealed in the other world. And is this nature given thee in vain? If the nature of all things be fitted to its ^o use and end, then it must needs be so with thine.

II. By knowing thyself, then, thou must needs know that there is a God; ^p and that he is thy Maker, and infinite in all perfections; and that he is thy Owner, thy Ruler, and thy Felicity, or End. He is mad that seeth not that such creatures have a cause, or maker, and that all the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the world is caused by a power, and wisdom, and goodness, which is greater than that of all the world. And who can be our owner, but he that made us? and who can be our highest governor but our owner; whose infinite, power, wisdom and goodness, maketh him only fit thereto. And if he be our Governor, he must needs have laws, with rewards for the good, and punishments for the bad, and must judge and execute accordingly. And if he be our chiefest Benefactor, and all that we have is from him, and all our hope and happiness is in him, nothing can be more clear than that the very nature of man doth prove that, in hope of future happiness, he should absolutely resign himself to the will and disposal of this God, and that he should ^q absolutely obey him, and that he should love and serve him with all his powers; it being impossible to love, obey, and please that God too much who is thus our Cause, our End, our All.

III. By knowing thus thyself and God, it is easy to know what primitive holiness and godliness is. Even this hearty, entire, and absolute resignation of the soul to God, as the infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, as our Creator, our Owner, Governor, and Felicity, or End; fully submitting to his disposals, obeying his laws, in hope of his promised rewards, and fear of his threatened punishments; and loving and delighting in himself, and all his appearances in the world; and desiring and seeking the endless sight and enjoyment of him in heavenly glory, and expressing these affections in daily prayer, thanksgiving, and praise. This is the use of all thy faculties,

^m Luke xii. 4, 5.

ⁿ Psalm xvi. 5—11.

^o Isa. xlv. 18.

^p Psalm xiv. 1; xlv. 10; ix. 10; c.; xxiii.; xix. 1—3, and xlvii. 7; Gen. i. 1, and xviii. 25; Rev. i. 8; Rom. i. 19, 20; Ezek. xviii. 4; Mal. i. 6.

^q Matt. xxii. 37, and vi. 20, 21; Jer. v. 22; 2 Cor. v. 8, 9; viii. 5; vi. 16—18, and iv. 17, 18; Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Psalm x.; xxxvii. 4, and xl. 8; Col. iii. 1, 2.

the end and business of thy life, the health and happiness of thy soul. This is that holiness or godliness which God doth so much call for.

IV. And by this it is easy to know what a state of sin and ungodliness is.^r Even the want of all this holiness, and the setting up of carnal self instead of God. When men are proudly great, and wise, and good, in their own eyes, and would dispose of themselves, and all their concernments, and would rule themselves, and please themselves, according to the fleshly appetite and fancy; and therefore love most the pleasures, and profits, and honours of the world, as the provision to satisfy the desires of the flesh; and God shall be no further loved, obeyed, or pleased, than the love of fleshly pleasure will give leave; nor shall have any thing but what the flesh can spare. This is a wicked, a carnal, an ungodly state, though it break forth in various ways of sinning.

V. By this, experience itself may tell you that most men,^a yea, all, till grace renew them, are in this ungodly, miserable state, though only the Scripture tells us how this came to pass. Though all are not fornicators, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, nor persecutors, nor live not in the same way of sinning; yet selfishness, and pride, and sensuality, and the love of worldly things, ignorance, and ungodliness, are plainly become the common corruption of the nature of man; so that their hearts are turned to the world from God, and filled with impiety, filthiness, and injustice; and their reason is but a servant to their senses; and their mind,^t and love, and life is carnal: and this carnal mind is enmity to the holiness of God, and cannot be subject to his law. This corruption is hereditary, and is become, as it were, a nature to us, being the mortal malady of all our natures. And it is easy to know that such an unholy, wicked nature must needs be loathsome to God, and unfit for the happy enjoyment of his love,^u either here, or in the life to come; for what communion hath light with darkness?

VI. Hence, then, it is easy to see what grace is needful to a man's salvation. So odious a creature, such an unthankful rebel, that is turned away from God, and set against him, and defiled with all this filth of sin, must needs be both renewed

^r Psalm i., and xiv.; Heb. xii. 14; Rom. viii. 13, 19; xiii. 14, 15, and vi. 16; John iii. 3, 5, 6; 1 John ii. 15, 16; Luke xviii. 23, and xiv. 26, 28.

^a Rom. iii., and v. 12, 17, 19; Psalm xiv.; Eph. ii. 2, 3; John iii. 6.

^t Rom. viii. 5-7.

^u Psalm iv. 3; 2 Cor. vi. 14, 17.

and reconciled,^{*} sanctified and pardoned, if ever he will be saved. To love God, and be beloved by him, and to be delighted herein, in the sight of his glory, is the heaven and happiness of souls; and all this is contrary to an unholy state. Till men have new and holy hearts, they can neither see God, nor love him, nor delight in him, nor take him for their chief content, for the flesh and world have their delight and love: and till sin be pardoned,[†] and God reconciled to the soul, what joy or peace can it expect from him whose nature and justice engageth him to loathe and punish it?

VII. And experience will tell you how insufficient^{*} you are for either of these two works yourselves, to renew your souls, or to reconcile them unto God. Will a nature that is carnal resist and overcome the flesh, and abhor the sin which it most dearly loveth? Will a worldly mind overcome the world? When custom hath rooted your natural corruptions, are they easily rooted up? Oh! how great and hard a work is it, to cause a blind, unbelieving sinner to set his heart on another world, and lay all his hopes in heaven, and to cast off all the things he seeth, for that God and glory which he never saw: and for a hardened, worldly, fleshly heart, to become wise and tender, and holy and heavenly, and abhor the sin which it most fondly loveth. And what can we do to satisfy justice, and reconcile such a rebel soul to God?

VIII. Nature and experience having thus acquainted you with your sin and misery, and what you want, will further tell you, that God^{*} doth not yet deal with you according to your deserts. He giveth you life, and time, and mercies, when your sin had forfeited all these. He obligeth you to repent and turn unto him. And, therefore, experience telling you that there is some hope, and that God hath found out some way of showing mercy to the children of wrath, reason will command you to inquire of all that are fit to teach you, what way of remedy God hath made known. And, as you may soon discover, that the religion of heathens and Mahometans is so far from showing the true remedy, that they are part of the disease itself: so you may learn, that a^b wonderful person, the Lord Jesus Christ, hath undertaken

^{*} Psalm xxxii. 1, 2; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Tit. ii. 14, and iii. 5—7; Heb. xiv. 14; Matt. v. 8.

[†] Rom. v. 1—3.

^{*} Psalm xlix. 7, 8, 15; 1 Cor. ii. 11; Luke xi. 21; Heb. xiv. 12; 2 Pet. i. 3.

^a Acts xiv. 27, and xvii. 24, 27, 28; Rom. i. 19, 20, and ii. 4; Job xxxiii. 14—25; Matt. xii. 42, 43.

^b Isa. ix. 6, 7, and liii.; John iii. 16, 19; i. 1, 3, 4, and iii. 2.

the office of being the Redeemer and Saviour of the world, and that he, who is the eternal Word and Wisdom of the Father, hath wonderfully appeared in the nature of man, which he took from the Virgin Mary, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, that we might have a teacher sent from ^c heaven, infallibly and easily to acquaint the world with the will of God, and the unseen things of life eternal; how God ^d bare witness of his truth, by abundant, open, uncontrolled miracles; ^e how he conquered Satan and the world, and ^f gave us an example of perfect righteousness, and underwent the scorn and cruelty of sinners, and suffered the death of the cross, as a sacrifice for our sins, to reconcile us unto God; how he rose again the third day, and conquered death, and lived forty days longer on the earth, instructing his apostles, and giving them commission to preach the gospel to all the world, and then ascending bodily into heaven while they gazed after him; how he is now in heaven, both God and man in one person, the Teacher, and King, and High Priest of his church. Of him must we learn the way of life; by him must we be ruled, as the Physician of souls. All power is given him in heaven and earth. By his sacrifice, and merit, and intercession, must we be pardoned, and accepted with the Father; and only by him must we come to God. He hath procured and established a covenant of Grace, which baptism is the seal of, even that God will in him be our God and reconciled Father, and Christ will be our Saviour, and the Holy Ghost will be our Sanctifier, if we will unfeignedly consent; that is, if penitently and believingly we give up ourselves to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in these resolutions. This covenant, in the tenour of it, is a deed of gift of Christ, and pardon and salvation to all the world, if, by true faith and repentance, they will turn to God. And this shall be the law according to which he shall judge all that hear it at the last; for he is made a Judge of all, and will raise all the dead, and will justify his saints, and will judge them unto endless joy and glory, and condemn the unbelievers, impenitent and ^g ungodly, unto endless misery. The soul alone is judged at death; and body and soul at the resurrection. This Gospel the apostles preached to the world; and that it might be effectual to men's salvation, the ^h Holy Ghost

^c John i. 18.^d Acts ii. 22; Heb. ii. 3, 4.^e Matt. iv.^f 1 Pet. ii. 22—25; Matt. xxvi. 27, 28, and xxv.; Acts i.; Heb. iv.; viii. 9, 13; viii. 6, 7, and vii. 25; Eph. i. 22, 23; Rom. v. 1, 3, 9; 1 John v. 10, 12; John v. 22, and iii. 18, 19.^g Luke xvi.^h Acts ii.; John xvii. 23.

was first given to inspire the preachers of it, and enable them to speak in various languages, and infallibly agree in one, and to work many great and open miracles to prove their word to those they preached to; and by this means they¹ planted the church, which ordinary ministers must increase, and teach, and oversee, to the end of the world, till all the elect be gathered in. And the same^k Holy Spirit hath undertaken it, as his work, to accompany this Gospel, and by it to convert men's souls, illuminating and sanctifying them; and, by a secret^l regeneration, to renew their natures, and bring them to that knowledge, and obedience, and love of God, which is the primitive holiness for which we were created, and from which we fell. And thus, by a Saviour and a Sanctifier, must all be reconciled and renewed, that will be glorified with God in heaven. All this you may learn from the sacred Scriptures, which were^m written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and sealed by multitudes of openⁿ miracles, and contain the very image and superscription of God, and have been received and preserved by the church, as the certain oracles of God, and blessed by him through all generations, to the sanctifying of many souls.

IX. When you understand all this, it is time for you to^o look home, and understand now what state your souls are in. That you were made capable of holiness and happiness, you know; that you and all men are fallen from God, and holiness, and happiness, unto self, and sin, and misery, you know; that you are so far redeemed by Christ, you know, as to have a pardoning and saving covenant tendered you, and Christ and mercy offered to your choice. But whether you are truly penitent believers, and renewed by the Holy Ghost, and so united unto Christ, this is the question yet unresolved; this is the work that is yet to do, without which there is no salvation; and if thou die before it is done, wo to thee that ever thou wast a man! Except a man be^p regenerate by the Spirit, and converted, and made a new creature, and of carnal be made spiritual, and of earthly be made heavenly, and of selfish and sinful be made holy and obedient to God, he can never be saved, no more than the devil himself can be saved. And if this be so, (as nothing is more sure,) I require thee now, who readest these words, as thou re-

¹ Matt. xxv. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20; Acts xiv. 23; xx., and xxvi. 17, 18.

^k Rom. viii. 9.

^l Tit. iii. 5, 6; John xiii. 5, 6.

^m 2 Tim. iii. 16.

ⁿ Heb. ii. 3, 4.

^o 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Psalm iv. 4; 2 Pet. i. 10.

^p John iii. 5; 2 Cor. v. 17; Rom. viii. 7, 9; Phil. iii. 18, 20.

gardest thy salvation, as thou wouldest escape hell fire, and stand with comfort before Christ and his angels at the last, that thou soberly consider whether reason command thee not to try thy state, whether thou art thus ^a renewed by the Spirit of Christ or not ; and to ^r call for help to those that can advise thee, and follow on the search till thou know thy case ; and if thy soul be a stranger to this sanctifying work, whether reason command thee not, without any delay, to make out to Christ, and beg his Spirit, and cast away thy sins, and give up thyself entirely to thy God, thy Saviour, and Sanctifier, and enter into his covenant with a full resolution never to forsake him ; to deny thyself, and the desires of the flesh, and this deceitful, transitory world, and lay out all thy hopes on heaven, and speedily, whatever it cost thee, to make sure of the felicity which hath no end. And darest thou refuse this, when God and conscience do command it ? And, further, I advise you,

X. Understand how it is that Satan hindereth souls from being sanctified, that you may know how to resist his wiles. Some he deceiveth by ^a malicious suggestions, that holiness is nothing but fancy or hypocrisy ! (And if God, and death, and heaven, and hell were fancies, this might be believed). Some he debaucheth by the power of fleshly appetite and lust, so that their sins will not let their reason speak ; some he keepeth in utter ignorance, by the evil education of ignorant parents, and the negligence of ^t ungodly, soul-murdering teachers ; some he deceiveth by worldly hopes, and keepeth their minds so taken up with worldly things, that the matters of eternity can have but some loose, ineffectual thoughts, as bad as none ; some are entangled in ^u ill company, who make a scorn of a holy life, or feed them with continual diversions and vain delights ; and some are so ^x hardened in their sin, that they are even past feeling, and neither fear God's wrath, nor care for their salvation, but hear these things as men asleep, and nothing will awake them. Some are discouraged with a conceit that godliness is a life so ^y grievous, sad, and melancholy, that, rather than endure it, they will venture their souls, come on it what will, as if it were a grievous life to love God and hope for endless joys, and a pleasant life to love the world and sin, and live within a step of

^a Acts xvi. 14.

^r Acts ii. 37 ; xvi. 30, and xi. 23 ; 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2 ; Rev. ii. 7.

^t Acts xxiv. 14 ; xxviii. 23, and xxiv. 5, 6.

^u Mal. ii. 7, 9 ; Hos. iv. 9.

^x Eph. iv. 18, 19.

^u Prov. xiii. 20.

^y Mal. i. 13.

hell! Some that are convinced, do^a put off their conversion with delays, and think it is time enough hereafter, and are purposing and promising till it be too late, and life, and time, and hope be ended; and some that see there is a necessity of holiness, are^a cheated by some dead opinions, or names, or shows, or images of holiness, either because they hold a strict opinion, or because they join with a religious party, or because they are of that which they think is the true church, or because they are baptised with water, and observe the outward parts of worship; and perhaps because they offer God a great deal of lip-service, and lifeless ceremony, which never savoured of a holy soul. Thus deadness, sensuality, worldliness, and hypocrisy do hinder millions from sanctification and salvation.

XI. If ever thou wouldest be saved, oppress not reason by sensuality or diversions; but sometimes^b retire for sober consideration. Distracted and sleepy reason is unuseful; God and conscience have a great deal to say to thee, which in a crowd of company and business thou art not fit to hear. It is a^c doleful case, that a man who hath a God, a Christ, a soul, a heaven, a hell to think of, will allow them none but running thoughts, and not once in a week bestow one hour in manlike, serious^d consideration of them! Sure thou hast no greater things to mind. Resolve, then, sometimes to spend half an hour in the deepest thoughts of thy everlasting state.

XII. ^e Look upon this world and all its pleasures as a man of reason, who foreseeeth the end, and not as a beast, that liveth but by sense, or present objects. Do I need to tell thee, man, that thou must die? Cannot carcasses, and bones, and dust instruct thee to see the end of earthly glory, and all the pleasures of the flesh? Is it a controversy whether thy flesh must shortly perish? and wilt thou yet provide for it before thy soul? What a sad farewell must thou shortly take, of all that worldlings sell their souls for! And O how quickly will this be! Alas, man, the day is even at hand. A few days more, and thou art gone! And darest thou live unready, and part with heaven for such a world as this?

^a Matt. xxv. 3, 8, 12, and xxiv. 43, 44.

^b John viii. 39, 42, 44; Rom. iii. 1, 2; Gal. iv. 29, and i. 14; Matt. xiii. 19—22, and xv. 2, 3, 6.

^c Psalm iv. 4; Hag. i. 5; Deut. xxxii. 7, 29.

^d Isa. i. 3.

^e Job xxxiv. 27; Jer. xxiii. 20; Psalm cxix. 69.

^f 2 Cor. iv. 18; Deut. xxxii. 29; 1 John ii. 17; 1 Cor. vii. 31; Luke xii. 19, 20; John xiv. 1, 2; 1 Thess. v. 13.

XIII. And then think soberly of the^f life to come. What it is for a soul to appear before the living God, and be judged to endless joy or misery. If the devil tempt thee to doubt of such a life, remember that nature, and Scripture, and the world's consent, and his own temptations, are witnesses against him. O man! canst thou pass one day, in company, or alone, in business, or in idleness, without some sober thoughts of everlastingness? Nothing more showeth that the hearts of men are asleep or dead, than that the thoughts of endless joy or pain, so near at hand, constrain them not to be holy, and overcome not all the temptations of the flesh, as toys, and inconsiderable things.

XIV. Mark well what mind most men are of, when they come to^s die. Unless it be some desperate, forsaken wretch, do they not all speak well of a holy life; and wish that their lives had been spent in the most fervent love of God, and strictest obedience to his laws? Do they then speak well of lust and pleasures, and magnify the wealth and honours of the world? Had they not then rather die as the most mortified saints, than as careless, fleshly, worldly sinners? And dost thou see and know this, and yet wilt thou not be instructed, and be wise in time?

XV. Think well what manner of men those were, whose^h names are now honoured for their holiness. What manner of life did St. Peter, and Paul, St. Cyprian, St. Augustin, and all other saints and martyrs live? Was it a life of fleshly sports and pleasures? Did they deride or persecute a holy life? Were they not more strictly holy than any that thou knowest? And is he not self-condemned that honoureth the names of saints, and will not imitate them?

XVI. Think what the difference is between a Christian and anⁱ heathen. You are loth to be heathens or infidels, but do you think a Christian excelleth them but in opinion? He that is not holier than they, is worse, and shall suffer more than they.

XVII. Think what the difference is between a^k godly Christian and an ungodly. Do not all the opposers of holiness among us yet speak for the same God, and Christ, and Scripture, and

^f Luke xii. 4; Eccl. xii. 7; 2 Pet. iii. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 18; Phil. iii. 18, 20.

^s Num. xxiii. 10; Matt. xxv. 8, and vii. 21, 22; Prov. i. 28, 29.

^h Matt. xxiii. 29—31, 33; Heb. xi. 38; John viii. 39.

ⁱ Matt. x. 15; Rom. ii.; Acts. x. 34, 35.

^k Rom. ii. 12, 23, 29; Matt. xxv. 28; Luke xix. 22; Acts xxiv. 15; Gal. iv. 29.

profess the same creed, and religion, with those whom they oppose? And is not this Christ the Author of our holiness, and this Scripture the commander of it? Search and see, whether the difference be not this, that the godly are serious in their profession, and the ungodly are hypocrites, who hate and oppose the practice of the very things which themselves profess; whose religion serveth but to condemn them, while their lives are contrary to their tongues.

XVIII. Understand what the devil's policy is, by raising so many¹ sects, and factions, and controversies about religion in the world. Even to make some think that they are religious, because they can prate for their opinions, or because they think their party is the best, because their faction is the greatest, or the least, the uppermost, or the suffering side. And to turr holy, edifying conference into vain jangling, and to make men atheists, suspecting all religion, and true to none, because of men's diversity of minds: but remember that christian religion is but one, and a thing easily known by its ancient rule; and the universal church, containing all Christians, is but one. And if carnal interest or opinions so distract men, that one party saith, 'We are all the church,' and another saith, 'It is we,' (as if the kitchen were all the house, or one town or village all the kingdom,) wilt thou be mad with seeing this distraction? Hearken, sinner. All these sects, in the day of judgment, shall concur as witnesses against thee, if thou be unholy, because, however else they differed,^m all of them, that are Christians, professed the necessity of holiness, and subscribed to that Scripture which requireth it. Though thou canst not easily resolve every controversy, thou mayest easily know the true religion. It is that which Christ and his apostles taught; which all Christians have professed; which Scripture requireth; which is firstⁿ pure, and then peaceable; most spiritual, heavenly, charitable, and just.

XIX. Away from that^o company which is sensual, and an enemy to reason, sobriety, and holiness; and consequently to God, themselves, and thee. Can they be wise for thee, that are foolish for themselves? or friends to thee, that are undoing themselves? or have any pity on thy soul, when they make a

¹ Eph. iv. 3, 14, &c.; Acts xx. 30; 1 Cor. xi. 19, and xii.; 2 Tim. iv. 3, and ii. 14, 16; 1 Tim. i. 5, 6; Tit. iii. 9; Matt. xii. 25; Rom. ii. 12, 27—29.

^m Gal. i. 7, 8; Matt. xxviii. 20.

ⁿ Jam. iii. 17.

^o Eph. v. 11; Prov. xxiii. 20; 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18; Psalm xv. 4; Deut. xlii. 3.

jest of their own damnation? • Will they help thee to heaven, who are running so furiously to hell? Choose better familiars, if thou wouldest be better.

XX. Judge not of a holy life by hearsay, for it cannot so be known.^p Try it awhile, and then judge as thou findest it. Speak not against the things thou knowest not. Hadst thou but lived in the love of God, and the lively belief of endless glory, and the delights of holiness, and fears of hell, but for one month or day, and with such a heart hadst^q cast away thy sin, and called upon God, and ordered thy family in a holy manner, especially on the Lord's day, I dare boldly say experience would constrain thee to^r justify a holy life. But yet I must tell thee, it is not true holiness, if thou do but try it with^s exceptions and reserves. If, therefore, God hath convinced thee that this is his will and way, I adjure thee, as in his dreadful presence, that thou^t delay no longer, but resolve, and absolutely give up thyself to God, as thy heavenly Father, thy Saviour, and thy Sanctifier, and make an everlasting covenant with him, and then he and all his mercies will be thine. His grace will help thee, and his mercy pardon thee. His ministers will instruct thee, and his people pray for thee and assist thee. His angels will guard thee, and his Spirit comfort thee: and when flesh must fail, and thou must leave this world, thy Saviour will then receive thy soul, and bring it into the participation of his glory: and he will raise thy body, and justify thee before the world, and make thee equal to the angels; and thou shalt live in the sight and love of God, and in the everlasting pleasures of his glory. This is the end of faith and holiness. But if thou harden thy heart, and refusest mercy,^u everlasting wo will be thy portion, and then there will be no remedy.

And now, reader, I beg of thee, and I beg of God, on my bended knees, that these few words may sink into thy heart, and that thou wouldest read them over and over again, and bethink thee, as a man that must shortly die, whether any deserve thy love and obedience more than God; and thy thankful remembrance more than Christ; and thy care and diligence more than thy salvation? Is there any felicity more desirable than heaven?

^p John v. 40, and vi. 35, 37, 45; Luke xiv. 29, 30.

Isa. lv. 6, 7.

^r Matt. xi. 19.

Luke xiv. 33.

^s Rev. xlii. 17; ii., and iii.; John i. 12; 1 John v. 12; Psalm xxxiv. 7, and lxxiii. 20; Matt. xxv.; Luke xx. 36; Heb. ii. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 12.

^u Luke xix. 27; Prov. xxix. 1, and i. 25.

or any misery more terrible than hell? or any thing so regardable as that which is everlasting? will a few days' fleshly pleasures pay for the loss of heaven and thy immortal soul? or will thy sin and prosperity be sweet at death, and in the day of judgment? As thou art a man, and as ever thou believest there is a God, and a world to come, and as thou carest for thy soul, whether it be saved or damned; I beseech thee, I charge thee, think of these things; think of them once a day at least! think of them with thy most sober, serious thoughts! Heaven is not a maygame, and hell is not a flea-biting: make not a jest of salvation or damnation. I know thou livest in a distracted world, where thou mayest hear some laughing at such things as these, and scorning at a holy life, and fastening odious reproaches on the godly, and merrily drinking, and playing, and prating away their time, and then saying that they will trust God with their souls, and hope to be saved without so much ado! But if all these men do not change their minds, and be not shortly down in the mouth, and would not be glad to eat their words, and wish that they had lived a holy life, though it had cost them scorn and suffering in the world, let me bear the shame of a deceiver for ever: but if God and thy conscience bear witness against thy sin, and tell thee that a holy life is best; regard not the gainsayings of a Bedlam world, which is drunk with the delusions of the flesh: but give up thy soul and life to God, by Jesus Christ, in a faithful covenant! Delay no longer, man, but resolve; resolve immediately, resolve unchangeably; and God will be thine, and thou shalt be his for ever. Amen. Lord, have mercy on this sinner! and so let it be resolved by thee and him.

The Parts and Practice of a Holy Life; for Personal and Family Instruction.

All is not ^{*} done when men have begun a religious life. All trees that blossom prove not fruitful; and all fruit comes not to perfection. Many fall off, who seemed to have good beginnings: and many dishonour the name of Christ, by their scandals and infirmities. Many do grieve their teachers' hearts, and lamentably disturb the church of Christ, by their ignorance, errors, self-conceitedness, unruliness, headiness, contentiousness, sidings

^{*} Col. i. 23; Heb. iv. 1; 2 Pet. ii. 20; 1 Cor. iii.; Gal. iii., and iv.; Matt. xiii. 41, and xviii. 7.

and divisions: insomuch that the^r scandals and the feuds of Christians are the great impediments of the conversion of the infidel and heathen world, by exposing Christianity to their contempt and scorn, as if it were but the error of men, as unholy, and worldly, and proud as others, that can never agree among themselves: and many, by their passions and selfishness, are a trouble to the families and neighbours where they live: and more by their weaknesses and great distempers, are snares, vexations, and burdens to themselves. Whereas Christianity in its true constitution is a life of such holy^a light and love, such purity and peace, such fruitfulness and heavenliness, as if it were accordingly showed forth in the lives of Christians, would command admiration and reverence from the world, and do more to their conversion than swords or words alone can do: and it would make Christians useful and amiable to each other; and their lives a feast and pleasure to themselves. I hope it may prove some help to those excellent ends, and to the securing men's salvation, if, in a few sound, experienced directions, I open to you the duties of a christian life.

I. Keep still the true^a form of christian doctrine, desire, and duty, orderly printed on your minds: that is, understand it clearly and distinctly, and remember it. I mean the great points of religion contained in catechisms: you may still grow in the clearer understanding of your catechisms, if you live an hundred years: let not the words only, but the matter, be as familiar in your minds as the rooms of your house are. Such^b solid knowledge will establish you against seduction and unbelief, and will be still within you a ready help for every grace, and every duty, as the skill of an artificer is for his work: and for want of this, when you come among infidels or heretics, their reasonings may seem unanswerable to you, and shake, if not overthrow, your faith: and you will easily err in lesser points, and trouble the church with your dreams and wranglings. This is the calamity of many professors; that while they will be most censorious judges in every controversy about church matters, they know not well the doctrine of the catechism.

II. Live daily by faith on^c Jesus Christ, as the Mediator

^r Phil. iii. 18, 19; Acts xx. 30.

^a Matt. v. 16; 1 Pet. iii. 1; ii. 15, and i. 8; 2 Cor. i. 12.

^a 2 Tim. i. 13, and iii. 7; Heb. v. 12; Phil. i. 9; Rom. xv. 14.

^b Eph. iv. 13, 14; Col. i. 9; ii. 3, and iii. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 4.

^c John xvii. 3, and xvi. 33; Eph. iii. 17, 18; i. 22, 23, and iv. 6, 16; Matt. xxviii. 19; Rom. v.; 2 Cor. xii. 9; 1 John v. 4; Heb. iv. 14, 16; Col. iii. 3, 4; Acts vii. 59.

between God and you : being well grounded in the belief of the Gospel, and understanding Christ's office, make use of him still in all your wants. Think on the fatherly love of God, as coming to you through him alone ; and of the Spirit, as given by him, your Head ; and of the covenant of grace, as enacted and sealed by him ; and of the ministry as sent by him ; and of all time, and helps, and hope, as procured and given by him. When you think of sin and infirmity, and temptations, think also of his sufficient pardoning, justifying, and victorious grace. When thou thinkest of the world, the flesh, and the devil, think how he overcometh them. Let his doctrine, and the pattern of his most perfect life, be always before you as your rule. In all your doubts, and fears, and wants, go to him in the Spirit, and to the Father by him, and him alone. Take him as the root of your life and mercies, and live as upon him and by his life. And when you die, resign your souls to him, that they may be with him where he is, and see his glory. To live on Christ, and use him in every want and address to God, is more than a general, confused believing in him.

III. So believe in the Holy Ghost as to ^d live and work by him, as the body doth by the soul. You are not ^e baptised into his name in vain ; but too few understand the sense and reason of it. The Spirit is sent by Christ for two great works : 1. To the apostles (and prophets) to ^f inspire them infallibly to preach the Gospel, and confirm it by miracles, and leave it on record for following ages in the holy Scriptures. 2. To all his ^g members, to illuminate and sanctify them, to believe and obey this sacred doctrine, beside his common gift to many to understand and preach it. The Spirit, having first indited the Gospel, doth by it first regenerate, and after govern, all true believers. He is not now given us for the revealing of new doctrines, but to understand and obey the ^h doctrine revealed and sealed by him long ago. As the sun doth, by its sweet and secret influence, both give and cherish the natural life of things, sensitive and vegetative, so doth Christ, by his ⁱ Spirit, our spiritual life. As you do no work but by your natural life, you should do none but by your spiritual life. You must not only believe, and love, and pray by it, but manage all your calling by it ; for "Holiness to the Lord,"

^d Gal. v. 16, 25.

^e Matt. xxviii. 19.

^f John xvi. 13 ; Heb. ii. 3, 4.

^g 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13 ; Rom. viii. 9, 13 ; John iii. 5, 6.

^h 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16 ; Jude 19, 20.

ⁱ Ezek. xxxvi. 27 ; Isa. xlv. 3 ; Rom. viii. 1, 5 ; 1 Cor. vi. 11 ; Zech. xiv. 20.

must be written upon all. All things are sanctified to you, because you, being sanctified to God, devote all to him, and use all for him ; and, therefore, must do all in the strength and conduct of the Spirit.

IV. Live wholly upon God, ^k as all in all ; as the first efficient, principal dirigent, and final cause of all things. Let faith, hope, and love, be daily feeding on him. Let " Our Father which art in heaven," be first inscribed on your hearts, that he may seem most amiable to you, and you may boldly trust him, and filial love may be the spring of duty. Make use of the Son and Spirit to lead you to the Father ; and of faith in Christ, to kindle and keep alive the love of God. The love of God is our primitive holiness, and specially called, with its fruits, our sanctification, which faith in Christ is but a means to. Let it be your principal end, in studying Christ, to see the goodness, love, and amiableness of God in him : a condemning God is not so easily loved as a gracious, reconciled God. You have so much of the Spirit as you have love to God : this is the proper gift of the Spirit to all the adopted sons of God, to cause them, with filial affection and dependence, to cry " Abba, Father." Know not, desire not, love not any creature, but purely as subordinate to God. Without him, let it be nothing to you but as the glass without the face, or scattered letters without the sense, or as the corpse without the soul. ^l Call nothing prosperity, or pleasure, but his love ; and nothing adversity, or misery, but his displeasure, and the cause and fruits of it. When any thing would seem lovely and desirable, which is against him, call it ^m dung. And hear that man as ⁿ Satan, or the serpent, that would entice you from him ; and count him but vanity, a worm, and dust, that would affright you from your duty to him. Fear him much, but love him more. Let ^o love be the soul and end of every other duty ; it is the end and reason of all the rest ; but it hath no end, or reason, but its object. Think of no other heaven, and end, and happiness of man, but love, the final act, and God, the final object. Place not your religion in any thing but the love of God, with its means and fruits. Own no grief, desire, or joy, but a mourning, a seeking, and a rejoicing love.

^k 1 Cor. x. 31 ; Rom. xi. 36, and v. 1, 3 ; 2 Cor. v. 7, 8, 19 ; 1 John iii. 1 ; Matt. xxii. 37 ; Eph. i. 6 ; Gal. iv. 4—6.

^l Psalm xxx. 5, and lxiii. 3.

^m Phil. iii. 7, 8.

ⁿ Matt. xvi. 23.

^o 2 Thess. iii. 5 ; 2 Cor. xlii. 14.

V. Live in the belief and hopes of heaven, and^p seek it as your part and end; and daily delight your souls in the forethoughts of the endless sight and love of God. As God is seen on earth but as in a glass, so he is proportionably enjoyed. But when mourning, seeking love hath done, and sin and enemies are overcome, and we behold the glory of God in heaven, the delights of love will then be perfect. You may desire more on earth than you may hope for. Look not for a kingdom of this world, nor for Mount Zion in the wilderness. Christ reigneth on earth, as Moses in the camp, to guide us to the land of promise: our perfect blessedness will be, where the kingdom is delivered up to the Father, and God is all in all. A doubt, or a strange heartless thought of heaven, is water cast on the sacred fire, to quench your holiness and your joy. Can you travel one whole day to such an end, and never think of the place that you are going to? Which must be intended in every righteous act, either notedly, or by the ready, unobserved act of a potent habit. When earth is at the best, it will not be heaven. You live no further by faith like Christians, than you either live for heaven in seeking it, or else upon heaven, in hope and joy.

VI. Labour to make religion your pleasure and^q delight. Look often to God, to heaven, to Christ, to the Spirit, to the promises, to all your mercies. Call over your experiences, and think what matter of high delight is still before you, and how unseemly it is, and how injurious to your profession, for one, that saith he hopes for heaven, to live as sadly as those that have no higher hopes than earth. How should that man be filled with joy, who must live in the joys of heaven for ever? Especially rejoice when the messengers of death do tell you that your endless joy is near. If God and heaven, with all our mercies in the way, be not reason enough for a joyful life, there can be none at all. Abhor all suggestions which would make religion seem a tedious, irksome life. And take heed that you represent it not so to others: for you will never make them in love with that which you make them not perceive to be delectable and lovely. Not as the hypocrite, by forcing and framing his reli-

^p Col. iii. 1, 2, 4; Matt. vi. 19—21, 33; 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18, and v. 7; Luke xii. 20; Heb. vi. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 28; Eph. iv. 6, and i. 23; Phil. iii. 18, 20; Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26; John xviii. 36.

^q Psalm i. 2, 3; lxxxiv. 2, 10; lxiii. 3, 5; xxxvii. 4; ix. 19; cxix. 48, 70, cxii. 1, and xxxii. 11; Isa. lviii. 14; Rom. xiv. 17, and v. 1, 3, 5; 1 Pet. i. 8; Matt. v. 11, 12.

gion to his carnal mind and pleasure; but bringing up the heart to a holy suitableness, to the pleasure of religion.

VII. Watch, as for your souls, against this flattering, tempting^r world; especially when it is represented as more sweet and delectable than God, and holiness, and heaven. This world, with its pleasure, wealth, and honours, is it that is put in the balance by Satan, against God, and holiness, and heaven; and no man shall have better than he chooseth and preferreth. The bait taketh advantage of the brutish part, when reason is asleep; and if, by the help of sense it get the throne, the beast will ride and rule the man, and reason become a slave to sensuality. When you hear the serpent, see his sting, and see death attending the forbidden fruit. When you are rising, look down and see how far you have to fall. His reason, as well as faith, is weak, who for such fool gauds as the pomp and vanities of this world, can forget God, and his soul, and death, and judgment, heaven and hell, yea, and deliberately command them to stand by. What knowledge or experience can do good on that man who will venture so much for such a world, which all that have tried it call vanity at the last? How deplorable, then, is a worldling's case! O fear the world, when it smileth, or seems sweet and amiable. Love it not, if you love your God, and your salvation.

VIII. Fly from temptations, and crucify the^a flesh, and keep a constant government over your appetite and senses. Many who had no designed stated vice, or worldly interest, have shamefully fallen by the sudden surprise of appetite or lust. When custom hath taught these to be greedy, and violent, like a hungry dog, or a lusting boar, it is not a sluggish wish or purpose that will mortify or rule them. How dangerous a case is that man in, who hath so greedy a beast continually to restrain, that if he do but neglect his watch one hour, is ready to run him headlong into hell! Who can be safe, that standeth long on so terrible a precipice? The tears and sorrows of many years may, perhaps, not repair the loss which one hour or act may bring. The case of David, and many another, are dreadful warnings. Know what it is that you are most in danger of; whether lust and idleness, or excess in meat, or drink, or play; and there set the strongest watch for your preservation. Make

^r Gal. vi. 14, and i. 4; 1 John ii. 15, 16, and v. 4, 5; Jam. i. 27; iv. 4, 5; j. 11, and v. 1, 2, 4; Rom. xii. 2; Tit. ii. 12; Matt. xix. 24; Luke xii. 16, 21; xvi. 26, and viii. 14; Heb. xi. 26.

^a Rom. viii. 1, 13, and xiii. 14; Gal. v. 17, 24; Jude viii. 23; 2 Pet. ii. 10; Eph. ii. 3; 1 Pet. ii. 11; Matt. vi. 13, and xxvi. 41; Luke viii. 13.

it your daily business to mortify that lust; and scorn that your brutish sense or appetite should conquer reason. Yet trust not purposes alone, but away from the temptation; touch not, yea look not on, the tempting bait; keep far enough off, if you desire to be safe. What miseries come from small beginnings: temptation leads to sin, and small sins to greater, and those to hell. And sin and hell are not to be played with. Open your sin or temptation to some friend, that shame may save you from danger.

IX. Keep up a constant, skilful government over your^t passions and your tongues. To this end, keep a tender conscience, which will smart when in any of these you sin; let holy passions be well ordered, and selfish, carnal passions be restrained; let yourⁿ tongues know their duties to God and man, and labour to be skilful and resolute in performing them; know all the sins of the tongue, that you may avoid them, for your innocency and peace do much depend on the prudent government of your tongues.

X. Govern your^x thoughts with constant, skilful diligence. In this, right habits and affections will do most by inclining them unto good; it is easy to think on that which we love. Be not unfurnished of matter for your thoughts to work upon; and often retire yourselves for serious meditation. Be not so solitary and deep in musings as to overstretch your thoughts, and confound your minds, or take you off from necessary converse with others; but be sure that you be considerate, and dwell much at home, and converse most with your consciences and your God, with whom you have the greatest business. Leave not your thoughts unemployed or ungoverned; scatter them not abroad upon impertinent vanities: O that you knew what daily business you have for them. Most men are wicked, deceived, and undone, because they are inconsiderate, and dare not, or will not, retiredly and soberly use their reason; or use it but as a slave in chains, in the service of their passion, lust, and interests. He was never wise, or good, or happy, who was not soberly and impartially considerate. How to be good, to do good, and finally enjoy good, must be the sum of all your thoughts. Keep them first holy, then charitable, clean, and chaste; and quickly check them when they look towards sin.

^t Jam. i. 19, and iii. 13, 17; 1 Pet. iii. 4; Matt. v. 5; Eph. iv. 2, 3; Col. iii. 12.

ⁿ Jam. i. 26, and iii. 5, 6; Psalm xxxiv. 13; Prov. xviii. 21.

^x Deut. xv. 9, and xxxii. 29; 2 Cor. x. 5; Gen. vi. 5; Psalm x. 4; xciv. 19, and cxix. 59, 113; Prov. xii. 5, and xv. 26, xxx. 32; Jer. iv. 14.

XI. Let ⁷ time be exceeding precious in your eyes, and carefully and diligently redeem it. What haste doth it make, and how quickly will it be gone; and then how highly will it be valued, when a minute of it can never be recalled! O what important business have we for every moment of our time, if we should live a thousand years! Take not that man to be well in his wits, or to know his God, his end, his work, or his danger, who hath time to spare. Redeem it, not only from needless sports, and plays, and idleness, and curiosity, and compliment, and excess of sleep, and chat, and worldliness, but also from the entanglement of lesser good, which would hinder you from greater. Spend time as men that are ready to pass into another world, where every minute must be accounted for; and it must go with us for ever as we lived here. Let not health deceive you into the expectation of living long, and so into a senseless negligence; see your glass running, and keep a reckoning of the expense of time; and spend it just as you would review it when it is gone.

XII. Let the ^{*} love of all, in their several capacities, become, as it were, your very nature, and doing them all the good you can be very much of the business of your lives. God must be loved in all his creatures: his natural image on all men, and his spiritual image on his saints. Our neighbour must be loved as our natural selves; that is, our natural neighbour as our natural self, with a love of benevolence; and our spiritual neighbour as our spiritual self, with a love of complacence. In opposition to complacence, we may hate our sinful neighbour as we must ourselves; (much more;) but, in opposition to benevolence, we must neither hate ourselves, our neighbour, or our enemy. O that men knew how much of Christianity doth consist in love and doing good! With what eyes do they read the Gospel, who see not this in every page. Abhor all that selfishness, pride, and passion, which are the enemies of love; and those opinions, and factions, and censurings, and backbitings, which would destroy it. Take him that speaketh evil of another to you, without a just cause or call, to be Satan's messenger, entreating you to hate your brother, or to abate your love; for to persuade you

⁷ Eph. v. 16; John xiv. 1, 2, and ix. 4; Acts xvii. 21; 1 Cor. vii. 29; 2 Cor. vi. 2; Luke xix. 42, 44; Psalm xxxix. 4; Matt. xxv. 10, 12.

^{*} 1 Tim. i. 5, 6; Matt. xix. 19, and v. 44, 45; Rom. xiii. 10, and xv. 1, 3; 1 John i. 16; Eph. iv. 2, 15, 16; Col. ii. 2, and i. 4; 1 Tim. 6, 11; Jam. iii. 17, and iv. 11; Phil. ii. 1, 2, and ii. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 9; John xiii. 35; 1 Cor. xiii.; Gal. vi. 10; Tit. ii. 14.

that a man is bad, is directly to persuade you so far to hate him. Not that the good and bad must be confounded; but love will call none bad without constraining evidence. Rebuke backbiters; hurt no man, and speak evil of no man, unless it be not only just, but necessary to some greater good. Love is lovely; they that love shall be beloved. Hating and hurting makes men hateful. "Love thy neighbour as thyself," and "Do as thou wouldest be done by," are the golden rules of our duty to men, which must be deeply written on your hearts. For want of this, there is nothing so false, so bad, so cruel, which you may not be drawn to think, or say, or do, against your brethren. Selfishness, and want of love, do as naturally tend to ambition and covetousness, and thence to cruelty, against all that stand in the way of their desires, as the nature of a wolf to kill the lambs. All factions, and contentions, and persecutions, in the world, proceed from selfishness, and want of charity. Devouring malice is the devilish nature. Be as zealous in doing good to all as Satan's servants are in hurting: take it as the use of all your talents, and use them as you would hear of it at last. Let it be your business, and not a matter on the by, especially for public good and men's salvation; and what you cannot do yourselves, persuade others to. Give them good books, and draw them to the means which are most like to profit them.

XIII. Understand the right terms of church communion; especially the unity of the universal church, and the universal communion which you must hold with all the parts; and the difference between the church as visible and invisible. For want of these, how woful are our divisions! Read oft 1 Cor. xii., and Eph. iv. 1—17; John xvii. 21—23; Acts iv. 32, and ii. 42; 1 Cor. i. 10, 11, 13, and iii. 3; Rom. xvi. 17; Phil. ii. 1—4; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13, Acts xx. 30; 1 Cor. xi. 19; Tit. iii. 10; Jam. iii.; Col. i. 4; Heb. x. 25; Acts viii. 37, and xii. 13; 1 Cor. i. 2, 12, 13; iii. 3, 4, and xi. 18, 21. Study these well. You must have union and communion, in faith and love, with all the Christians in the world; and refuse not local communion when you have a just call, so far as they put you not on sinning. Let your usual meeting be with the purest church, if you lawfully may, and still respect the public good; but sometimes occasionally communicate even with defective, faulty churches, so be it they are true Christians, and put you not on sin; that so you may show that you own them as Christians, though you disown their corruptions. Think not your presence maketh all the faults

of ministry, worship, or people, to be yours, for then I would join with no church in the world. Know, that as the mystical church consisteth of heart covenanters, so doth the church, as visible, consist of verbal covenanters, which make a credible profession of consent. And that nature and Scripture teach us to take every man's word as credible, till perfidiousness forfeit his credit; which forfeiture must be proved, before any sober profession can be taken for an insufficient title. ^a Grudge not, then, at the communion of any professed Christian in the church visible; though we must do our part to cast out the obstinately impenitent by discipline, which, if we cannot do, the fault is not ours. The presence of hypocrites is no hurt, but oft a mercy to the sincere: how small else would the church seem in the world. Outward privileges belong to outward covenanters, and inward mercies to the sincere. ^b Division is wounding, and tends to death. Abhor it, as you love the church's welfare, or your own. The wisdom from above is first pure, and then peaceable: never separate what God conjoineth. It is the earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom, which causeth bitter envying, and strife, and confusion, and every evil work. "Blessed are the peace-makers."

XIV. Take heed of ^c pride and self-conceitedness in religion. If once you overvalue your own understandings, your crude conceptions and gross mistakes will delight you as some supernal light; and, instead of having compassion on the weak, you will be unruly, and despisers of your guides, and censorious contemners of all that differ from you; and persecutors of them, if you have power; and will think all intolerable, that take you not as oracles, and your words as law. Forget not, that the church hath always suffered by censorious, unruly professors on the one hand, (and O what divisions and scandals have they caused!) as well as by the profane and persecutors on the other: take heed of both. And when contentions are afoot, be quiet and silent, and not too forward, and keep up a zeal for love and peace.

XV. Be faithful and conscionable in all your ^d relations. Honour and obey your parents, and other superiors. Despise not, and resist not, government. If you suffer unjustly by them, be humbled for those sins which cause God to turn your protectors into afflictors; and, instead of murmuring and rebelling

^a Matt. xiii. 29, 41.

^b John xvi. 2; 1 Cor. i. 10; Rom. xvi. 17; Jam. iii. 14—18.

^c 1 Tim. iii. 6, and vi. 4; Col. ii. 18; 1 Cor. viii. 1, and iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5; Jam. iii. J., 17.

^d Eph. v., and vi.; Col. iii., and iv.; Rom. xiii. 1, 7; 1 Pet. ii. 13, 15

against them, reform yourselves, and then commit yourselves to God. Princes and pastors I will not speak to: subjects, and servants, and children, must obey their superiors as the officers of God.

XVI. Keep up the government of God in your families: holy families must be the chief preservers of the interest of religion in the world. Let not the world turn God's service into a customary, lifeless form. Read the Scripture and edifying books to them; talk with them seriously about the state of their souls and everlasting life; pray with them fervently; watch over them diligently; be angry against sin, and meek in your own cause; be examples of wisdom, holiness, and patience; and see that the Lord's day be spent in holy preparation for eternity.

XVII. Let your ^ccallings be managed in holiness and labouriousness. Live not in idleness: be not slothful in your work. Whether you be bound or free, in the sweat of your brow you must eat your bread, and labour the six days, that you may have to give to him that needeth. Slothfulness is sensuality, as well as filthier sins. The body (that is able) must have fit employments as well as the soul; or else body and soul will fare the worse. But let all be but as the labour of a traveller, and aim at God and heaven in all.

XVIII. Deprive not yourselves of the benefit of an able, faithful ^a pastor, to whom you may open your case in secret; or at least of a holy, ^b faithful friend; and be not ¹ displeased at their free reproofs. Wo to him that is alone! how blind and partial are we in our own cause! and how hard is it to know ourselves without an able, faithful helper! you forfeit this great mercy, when you love a flatterer, and angrily defend your sin.

XIX. ^k Prepare for sickness, sufferings, and death. Overvalue not prosperity, nor the favour of man! if selfish men prove false and cruel to you, even those of whom you have deserved best, marvel not at it, but pray for your enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, that God would turn their hearts, and pardon them. What a mercy is it to be driven from the world to God, when the love of the world is the greatest danger of the soul! Be ready to die, and you are ready for any thing: ask

^c Command. iv.; Jos. xxiv. 15; Dent. vi. 6-8; Dan. vi.

^a Heb. xlii. 5; Command. iv.; 2 Thess. iii. 10, 12; 1 Thess. iv. 7; 1 Tim. v. 13; Prov. xxxi.; 1 Cor. vii. 29.

^e Mat. ii. 7.

^b Eccl. iv. 10, 11.

¹ Prov. xii. 1, and xv. 5, 10, 31; Heb. iii. 18.

^k Luke xii. 40; 2 Pet. i. 10; Phil. i. 21, 23; Jer. ix. 4, 5; Matt. vii. 4, 5; 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 4, 8.

your hearts seriously, what is it that I shall need at a dying hour? and let it speedily be got ready, and not be to seek in the time of your extremity.

Understand the true method of peace of conscience, and judge not of the state of your souls upon deceitful grounds. As presumptuous hopes do keep men from conversion, and embolden them in sin; so causeless fears do hinder our love and praise of God, by obscuring his loveliness: and they destroy our thankfulness, and our delight in God, and make us a burden to ourselves, and a grievous stumbling-block to others. The general grounds of all your comfort, are, 1. The ¹ gracious nature of God. 2. The ^m sufficiency of Christ, and, 3. The truth, and ⁿ universality of the promise, which giveth Christ and life to all, if they will accept him: but this acceptance is the proof of your particular title; without which, these do but aggravate your sin. Consent to God's covenant is the true condition and proof of your title to God as your Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier, and so to the saving blessings of the covenant. Which consent, if you survive, must produce the duties which you consent to. He that heartily consenteth that God be his God, his Saviour, and Sanctifier, is in a state of life. But this includeth the ^o rejection of the world. Much knowledge, and memory, and utterance, and lively affections, are all very desirable: but you must judge your state by none of these; for they are all uncertain. But, 1. If God, and holiness, and heaven, have the highest estimation of your practical judgment, as being esteemed best for you; 2. And be preferred in the choice and resolution of your wills, and that habitually, before all the pleasures of the world; 3. And the first and chiefly sought in your endeavours; this is the infallible proof of your sanctification.

Christian; upon long and serious study and experience, I dare boldly commend these directions to thee, as the way of God, which will end in blessedness. The Lord resolve and strengthen thee to obey them.

This is the true constitution of Christianity: this is true godliness; and this is to be religious indeed; and all this is no more than to be seriously such, as all among us, in general words, profess to be. This is the religion which must differ-

¹ Exod. xxxiv. 6.

^m Heb. vii. 25.

ⁿ John iii. 16, and iv. 42; 1 Tim. iv. 10, and ii. 4; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Rev. xxii. 17; Isa. lv. 1-3, 6, 7.

^o Luke xiv. 26, 33; 1 John ii. 15; Matt. vi. 19-21, 33; Col. iii. 1, 2; Rom. viii. 1, 13.

ence you from hypocrites ; which must settle you in peace, and make you an honour to your profession, and a blessing to those that dwell about you ! Happy is the land, the church, the family, which doth consist of such as these ! These are not they that either persecute or divide the church ; or that make their religion servant to their policy, to their ambitious designs, or fleshly lusts ; nor that make it the bellows of sedition, or rebellion, or of an envious, hurtful zeal ; or a snare for the innocent ; or a pistol to shoot at the upright in heart ; these are not they that have been the shame of their profession, the hardening of ungodly men and infidels, and that have caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. If any man will make a religion of or for his lusts, of papal tyranny, or pharisaical formality, or of his private opinions, or of proud censoriousness, and contempt of others, and of faction, and unwarrantable separations and divisions, and of standing at a more observable distance from common professors of Christianity than God would have them ; or of pulling up the hedge of discipline, and laying Christ's vineyard common to the wilderness. The storm is coming, when this religion, founded on the sand, will fall, and great will be the fall thereof. When the religion, which consisteth in faith and love to God and man, in mortifying the flesh, and crucifying the world, in self-denial, humility, and patience, in sincere obedience and faithfulness in all relations, in watchful self-government, in doing good, and in a divine and heavenly life, though it will be hated by the ungodly world, shall never be a dishonour to your Lord, nor deceive or disappoint your souls.

THE SEVENTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Of a Holy Family ; and how to govern it, and perform the duty of all Family Relations, and others.

Speakers.—Paul, a teacher ; and Saul, a learner.

PAUL. Welcome, Neighbour ; how do you like the new life which you have begun ? You have taken home instructions already which will find you work : but what do you find in the practising of them ?

SAUL. I find that I have foolishly long neglected a necessary, noble, joyful life ; and thereby lost my time, and made myself both unskilful and undisposed to the practice of it : I find that the things which you have prescribed me are high and excellent, and doubtless must be very sweet to them that have a suitable skill and disposition ; and some pleasure I find in my weak beginnings : but the greatness of the work, and the great untowardness and strangeness of my mind, doth much abate the sweetness of it, by many doubts, and fears, and difficulties : and when I fail, I find it hard both to repent aright, and, by faith, to fly to Christ for pardon. And if you had not forewarned me of this temptation, I should have thought by these troubles, that my case is worse in point of ease (though not of safety) than it was before. But I foresee that better things may yet be hoped for : and I hope I am in the way.

P. Where is your great difficulty that requireth counsel ?

S. I find a great deal of work to do in my family, to govern them in the fear of God, to do my duty to them all ; especially to educate my children, and daily to worship God among them. And I am so unable for it, that I am ready to omit all. I pray you help me with your advice.

P. My first advice to you is, that you resolve, by God's help, to perform your duty as well as you can : and that you ^p devote your family to God, and take him for the Lord and Master of it, and use it as a society sanctified to him. And I pray you let these reasons fix your resolution.

1. If God be not master of your family, the devil will ; and if God be not first served in it, the flesh and the world will. And I hope I need not tell you how bad a master, work, and wages, they will then have.

2. If you devote your family to God, God will be the Protector of it. He will take care of it for safety and provision as his own. Do you not need such a Protector ; and can you have a better, or better take care for the welfare and safety of you and your's ? And if your family be not God's, they are his enemies, and under his curse as rebels. Instead of his blessings of health, peace, provision, and success, you may look for sickness, dangers, crosses, distresses, unquietness, and death ; or, which is worse, that your prosperity shall be a curse and snare to you and your's.

^p See the Dispute for Family Worship, in my Christian Directory, part 21.

3. A holy family is a place of comfort, a church of God. What a joy will it be to you to live together daily in this hope, that you shall meet and live together in heaven; to think that wife, children, and servants, shall shortly be fellow citizens with you of the heavenly Jerusalem! How pleasant is it to join with one heart and mind in the service of God, and in his cheerful praises! How lovely will you be to one another, when each one beareth the image of God! What abundance of jars and miseries will be prevented, which sin would daily bring among you; and when any of you die, how comfortably may the rest be about their bed, and attend their corpse unto the grave, when they have good hopes that the soul is received to glory by Christ. But if your family be ungodly, it will be like a nest of wasps, or like a jail, full of discord and vexation: and it will be grievous to you to look your wife or children in the face, and think that they are like to lie in hell; and their sickness and death will be tenfold the more heavy to you to think of their woful and unseen end.

4. Your family hath such constant need of God, as commandeth you constantly to serve him. As every man hath his personal necessities, so families have family necessities, which God must supply, or they are miserable. Therefore family duty must be your work.

5. Holy families¹ are the seminaries of Christ's church on earth, and it is very much that lieth upon them to keep up the interest of religion in the world. Hence come holy magistrates, when great men's children have a holy education. And, oh, what a blessing is one such to the countries where they are! Hence spring holy pastors and teachers to the churches, who, as Timothy, receive holy instructions from their parents, and grace from the Spirit of Christ in their tender age. Many a congregation that is happily fed with the bread of life, may thank God for the endeavours of a poor man or woman, that trained up a child² in the fear of God, to become their holy, faithful teacher. Though learning be found in schools, godliness is oftener received from the education of careful parents. When children and servants come to the church with understanding, godly, prepared minds, the labours of the pastor will do them good; they will receive what they hear with faith, love,

¹ Tim. iii. 12; Deut. vi. 7, and xxx. 2; Psalm cxlvii. 13; Acts ii. 39; Eph. vi. 4—6; Prov. xxii. 6, 15; xxix. 15, and xxiii. 13.

² 2 Tim. iii. 15.

and obedience. It will be a joy to the minister to have such a flock : and it will be joyful to the people that are such, to meet together in the sacred assemblies, to worship God with cheerful hearts : and such worshippers will be acceptable to God. But when families come together in gross ignorance, and with unsanctified hearts, there they sit like images, understanding little of what is said, and go home little the better for all the labours of the minister : and the motions of their tongue and bodies is most of the worship which they give to God ; but their hearts are not offered in faith and love as a sacrifice to him, nor do they feel the power and sweetness of the word, and worship him in spirit and truth.

6. And in times when the churches are corrupted, and good ministers are wanting, and bad ones either deceive the people, or are insufficient for their work, there is no better supply to keep up religion than godly families. If parents and masters will teach their children and servants faithfully, and worship God with them holily and constantly, and govern them carefully and orderly, it will much make up the want of public teaching, worship, and discipline. Oh, that God would stir up the hearts of people thus to make their families as little churches, that it might not be in the power of rulers or pastors that are bad to extinguish religion, or banish godliness from any land !
For,

7. Family teaching, worship, and discipline, hath many advantages which churches have not. 1. You have but a few to teach and rule, and the pastor hath many. 2. They are always with you, and you may speak to them as seasonably and as often as you will, either together, or one by one, and so cannot he. 3. They are tied to you by relation, affection, and covenant, and by their own necessities and interest, otherwise than they are to him. Wife and children are more confident of your love to them than of the minister's ; and love doth open the ear to counsel. Children dare not reject your words, because you can correct them, or make their worldly state less comfortable. But the minister doth all by bare exhortation ; and if he cast them out of the church for their impenitence, they lose nothing by it in the world : and unless it be in a very hot persecution, families or not so restrained from holy doctrine, worship, and discipline, as churches and ministers often are. Who silenceth you or forbiddeth you to catechise and teach your family ? Who forbiddeth you to pray or praise God with them, as well and as

often as you can? It is self-condemning hypocrisy in many rulers of families, who now cry out against them as cruel persecutors, who forbid us ministers to preach the Gospel, while they neglect to teach their own children and servants, when no man forbiddeth them; so hard is it to see our own sins and duty, in comparison of other men's.

8. You have greater and nearer obligations to your family than pastors have to all the people. Your wife is as your own flesh; your children are, as it were, parts of yourself. Nature bindeth you to the dearest affection, and therefore to the greatest duty to them. Who should more care for your children's souls than their own parents? If you will not provide for them, but famish them, who will feed them? Therefore, as ever you have the bowels of parents; as ever you care what becometh of your children's souls for ever, devote them to God, teach them his word, educate them in holiness, restrain them from sin, and prepare them for salvation.

8. I must confess that natural affection telleth me that there is great reason for what you say: and my own experience convinceth me; for if my parents had better instructed and governed me in my childhood, I had not been like to have lived so ignorantly and ungodly as I have done: but, alas! few parents do their duty. Many take more pains about their horses and cattle than they do about their children's souls.

P. O that I could speak what is deeply upon my heart to all the parents of the land; I would be bold to tell them that multitudes are more cruel than bears and lions to their own children. God hath committed their souls as much to their trust and care as he hath done their bodies. It is they that are at first to devote them to God, in the covenant of baptism: it is they that are to teach them,* and to exhort them to keep the covenant which they made, to catechise them, and to mind them of the state of their souls, their need of Christ, the mercy of redemption, the excellency of holiness, and of everlasting life. It is they that are to watch over them with wisdom, love, and diligence, to save them from temptation, Satan, and sin, and to lead them by the example of a holy life.

But, alas! instead of this, they bring their children hypocritically to make that covenant in baptism with God, which they never heartily consented to themselves. They turn all into a mere ceremony, and know no more of it, than to have godfathers

* Deut. vi. 6—8, and xi. 19, 20.

and godmothers as ignorant and ungodly as themselves, to promise and vow that in the name of the child, which they never understood, nor intended to perform their promise for his holy education, the child being none of their own, nor ever instructed by them. And when they think that the water, and the gossips, and the words of the priest, have thus made a Christian of their child, they afterward as formally teach him at age to go to church, and at last to receive the Lord's supper: and this is almost all that they do for his salvation. They never teach him the meaning of the covenant which he was entered into. If they teach him to say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, they never teach him to understand them. They never seriously mind him of his natural corruptions, or of the need and use of a Saviour and a Sanctifier, nor of the danger of sin and hell, nor of the way of a holy life, or of the joyful state of saints in glory. They teach him his trade and business in the world, but never how to serve God, and be saved. They chide him for those faults which are against themselves, or against his prosperity in the world, but those that are against God and his soul only, they regard not. If they do not by their own example teach him to be prayerless, and neglect God's word, to curse, to swear, to speak filthily, and to deride a holy life, (which in baptism he vowed to live,) yet they will bear with him in all this wickedness. The Lord's day they are content that he spend in idleness and sports, instead of learning the word of God, and practising his holy worship, that so he may be the willing to do their work the week following. In a word, they treacherously teach their children to serve the flesh, the world, and the devil, which in their baptism they renounced, and to neglect, if not despise, God, the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of souls, to whom by vow and covenant they were dedicated. So that their education is but a teaching or permitting them to break and contradict their baptismal vow, and, under the name of Christians, to rebel against God and Jesus Christ.

And is not this greater treachery and cruelty than if they famished their bodies, or turned them naked into the world? Yea, or if they murdered them, and eat their flesh? If an enemy did this, it were not so bad as for a parent to do it. Nay, consider whether the devil himself be not less cruel, in seeking to damn them, than these parents are? The devil is not their parent: he hath no relation to them, no charge of them to edu-

cate and save them. He is a known renounced enemy, and what better could be expected from him? But for father and mother, thus to neglect, betray, and undo their children's souls for ever! For them to do it, that should love them as themselves, and have the tenderest care of them! O worse than devilish, perfidious cruelty!

Repent, repent, O you forsworn, unmerciful murderers of your children's souls! Repent for your own sakes! Repent for their sakes! And yet teach them and remember them of the covenant which they made, and tell them what Christianity is. You have conveyed a sinful nature to them: help yet to instruct them in the way of grace. But how can we hope that you should have mercy upon your children's souls, that have no mercy on your own? Or that you should help them to that heaven which you despise yourselves? Or save them from sin, which is your own delight and trade?

S. Your complaint is sad and just: but I find that men think that the teaching of their children belongeth to the school-master and the minister only, and not to them.

P. Parents, schoolmasters, and pastors, have all their several parts to do, and no one's work goeth on well without the rest. But the parents' is the first and greatest of all. As when the lower school is to teach children to read, and the grammar school to teach them grammar, and then the university to teach them the sciences. If now the first and second shall omit their parts, and a boy shall be sent to the university before he can read, yea, or before he hath learned his grammar, what a scholar do you think that he is like to make? If you have a house to build, one must fell and square the timber, and another must saw it, and another frame it, and then rear it, but if the first be undone, how shall the second and third be done? A minister should find all his hearers catechised and holily educated, that the church may be a church indeed, but if a hundred or many hundred parents and masters will all cast their work upon one minister, is it like, think you, to be well done? Or is it any wonder if we have ungodly churches of Christians that are no Christians, who hate the minister, and his doctrine, and a holy life; and the physician that would heal their souls is beholden to them, if they do not deride him, and lay him not in the gaol.

I know that all this will not excuse ministers from doing what they can for such. If you will send your children and servants ignorant and ungodly to him, he must do his best; but O how

much more good might he do, and how comfortable would his calling be, if parents would but do their parts.

We talk much of the badness of the world, and there are no men (except bad rulers and pastors) that do more to make it bad, than bad parents and family governors. The truth is, they are the devil's instruments, (as if he had hired them,) to betray the souls of their families into his power, and to lead them to hell with a greater advantage than a stranger could do, or than the devil in his own name and shape could do.

Many call for church reformation, and state reformation, who yet are the plagues of the times themselves, and will not reform one little family. If men would reform their families, and agree in a holy education of their children, church and state would be soon reformed, when they were made up of such reformed families.

S. I pray you set me down such instructions together, as you think best, concerning all my duty to my children, that I may do my part; and if any of them perish, their damnation may not be along of me.

P. I. Be sure that you do your part in entering them at first into the baptismal covenant. That is, 1. See that you be true to your covenant yourself, for the promise is made to^t true Christians and their seed. No man can sincerely and rightly consent to the covenant for his child, that doth not consent to it for himself. 2. Do not think that his^u bare being the child of godly parents is his full condition of right to the benefits of the covenant. That is but the fundamental part: but you must also actually dedicate him to God in baptism, when it may be had: and when it cannot, yet in the same covenant which baptism solemniseth. As you are a believer, he and all that you have are virtually devoted to God; but besides that, there must be an actual dedication of him. The child of a believer, actually offered or dedicated to God, is a rightful receiver of baptism and its benefits. 3. Understand well the covenant and what you do: and first humble yourself for your own sins against the holy covenant; and then with the greatest seriousness and thankfulness, enter your child into the same covenant.

II. Understand, that as his first condition of right is upon your faith and consent, and not upon his own, so the continu-

^t Rom. vii. 12, 16—18; Eph. ii. 13; Gen. xvii. 4, 13, 14.

^u Deut. xxix. 10—12; Rom. xi. 17, 20; John iii. 3, 5; Matt. xix. 3, 14, and xxviii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. vii. 14.

ance of his right, while he is an infant short of the use of reason, cannot be upon any condition to be performed by him, but by you, which is the continuance of your own^{*} fidelity, with your faithful endeavours for his holy education. And, therefore, if you should send a baptised child to be educated as the janisaries among infidels, he falleth, as I think, from his covenant-right by your perfidiousness. And what forfeiture parents' gross neglect at home may make, I leave to further consideration.

III. ^r Teach them, therefore, to know what covenant they have made, and do by them just as I have done by you. Cease not till you have brought them heartily to consent to it at age themselves; and then bring them to the pastor of the church, that they may seriously and solemnly own the covenant, and so may be admitted into the number of adult communicating members, in a regular way.

IV. Let your teaching of them to this end be jointly of the words, the sense, the due affections, and the practice. That is, 1. Teach them^{*} the words of the covenant, and of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and Commandments, and of a catechism, and also the words of such texts of Scripture as have the same sense. 2. Teach them the meaning of all these words. 3. Join still some familiar, earnest persuasions and motives, to stir up holy affections in them. 4. And show them the way of practising all.

No one or two of these will serve without all the rest. 1. If you teach not the forms of wholesome or sound words, you will deprive them of one of the greatest helps for knowledge and soundness in the faith. 2. If you teach them not the meaning, the words will be of no use. 3. If you excite not their affections, all will be but dead opinion, and tend to a dreaming and prating kind of religion, separated from the love of God. 4. And if you lead them not on to the practice of all, they will make themselves a religion of zealous affections corrupted by a common life, or quickly starved for want of fuel. Therefore be sure you join all four. When you teach them the words of Scripture and catechism, make them plain, and often mix familiar questions and discourse about death, and judgment, and eternity, and their preparations. Many professors teach their

^{*} Mark through all the Scriptures, how God useth the children as related to their faithful or faithless parents.

^r Jos. xxiv. 15—18; Deut. xlix.^c 10, 11.

^{*} 1 Tim. iv. 6, and vi. 3; 2 Tim. i. 13.

children to go in a road of hearing, reading, and repeating sermons, and joining in constant prayer, when all proveth but customary formality, for want of some familiar, serious, wakening speech or conference interposed now and then.

To this end, 1. Labour to possess them with the greatest reverence of God and the holy Scriptures; and then show them the word of God, for all that you would teach them to know or do; for till their consciences come under the fear and government of God, they will be nothing. 2. Never speak of God and holy things to them but with the greatest gravity and reverence, that the manner, as well as the matter, may affect them; for if they are used once to slight, or jest, or play with holy things, they are hardened and undone. 3. Therefore avoid such kind of frequencies and formality in lifeless duties, as tendeth to harden them into a customary deadness and contempt. 4. Often take an account of what they know, and how they are affected and resolved; and what they do, both in their open and their secret practice. Leave them not carelessly to themselves, but narrowly watch over them.

V. Use all your skill and diligence, by word and deed, to make a holy life appear to them as it is, the most honourable, profitable, safe, and pleasant life in the world, that it may be their constant delight. All your work lieth in making good things pleasant to them; and keep them from feeling religion as a burden, or taking it for a disgraceful, needless, or unpleasant thing. To which end, 1. Begin with, and intermix the easiest parts, such as the Scripture history. Nature is pleased sooner with history than with precept, and it sweetly insinuateth a love of goodness into children's minds, which maketh the Roman fathers of the oratorian order make church history one part of their exercise to the people. Let them read the lives of holy men, written by Mr. Clark, and his martyrology; and the particular lives of Mr. Bolton, Mr. Joseph Allein, Dr. Beard's 'Theatre of God's Judgments,' Mr. Janeway's Life, &c.

2. Speak much of the praise of ancient and later holy men, for the due praise of the person allureth to the same cause and way. And speak of the just disgrace that belongs to those sots and beasts, who are the despisers, deriders, and enemies of godliness.

3. Overwhelm them not with that which for quality or quantity they cannot bear.

4. Be much in opening to them the riches of grace, and the joys of glory.

5. Exercise them much in psalms and praise.

VI. Let your conference and carriage tend to the just disgrace of sensuality, voluptuousness, pride, and worldliness. When fools commend fineness to their children, do you tell them how pride is the devil's sin; teach them to desire the lowest room, and to give place to others. When others tell them of riches, and fine houses, and preferments, do you tell them that these are the devil's baits, by which he stealeth men's hearts from God, that they may be damned. When others pamper them, and please their appetites, do you often tell them how base and swinish a thing it is to eat and drink more by appetite than by reason; and labour thus to make pride, sensuality, and worldliness, odious to them. Make them often read Luke xii. xvi. xviii.; and James iv. and v.; and Rom. viii. 1, 2, &c.; and Matt. v. 1—21; and vi.

VII. Wisely break them from their own wills, and let them know that they must obey and like God's will and your's. Men's own wills are the grand idols of the world, and to be given up to them is next to hell. Tell them how odious and dangerous self-willedness is. In their diet let them not have what they have a mind to, nor yet do not force them to what they loathe; but use them to stand to your choice. And let them have that in temperance which is wholesome, and not loathsome, and rather of the coarser, than of the finer, or the sweeter sort. A corrupted appetite, strengthened by custom, is hardly overcome by all the teaching and counsel in the world; especially use them not to strong drink, for it is one of the greatest snares to youth. I know that some wise parents (wise to further the everlasting ruin of the children's souls) do still say, that the more they are restrained, the more greedily they will seek it when they are at liberty. Unhappy children that have such parents! As if the experience of all the world had not told us long ago, that custom increaseth the rage of appetite, and temperance by custom turneth to a habit. And in those years of youth, while they are restrained, we have time to tell them the reason of all, and so settle their minds in a right government of themselves; so that custom and teaching, till they come to age, is the means on our part to save them from sensuality and damnation. When they that will teach them sobriety with the cup at their noses, or temperance at a constant feast or full table of delicious food, and this in their injudicious youth, deserve rather to be numbered with the devil's teachers than with God's.

So if their fancies be eagerly set upon any vanity deny it them, and tell them why. Use them not to have their wills, and let them know that it is the chief thing that the devil himself desireth for them, that they may have all their own carnal will fulfilled. But they must pray to God, "Thy will be done," and deny their own.

VIII. As you love their souls, keep them as far from temptations as you can. Children are unfit persons to struggle against strong temptations. Their salvation or damnation lieth very much on this; therefore my heart melteth to think of the misery of two sorts: 1. The children of heathens, infidels, heretics, and malignants, who are taught the principles of sin and wickedness from their infancy, and hear truth and godliness scorned and reproached. 2. The children of most great men and gentlemen, whose condition maketh it seem necessary to them to live in that continual fulness, or plainly pomp and idleness, which is so strong a temptation daily to their children, to the sins of Sodom, (Ezek. xvi. 49,) pride, fulness of bread, and idleness, as that it is hard for them to be godly, sober persons, as for those that are bred up in playhouses, alehouses, and taverns. Alas, poor children, that must have your salvation made as hard as a camel's passage through a needle's eye! No wonder if the world be no better than it is, when the rich must be the rulers of it, of whom * Christ and James have said what they have done.

Be sure, therefore, 1. To breed your children to a temperate and healthful diet; and keep tempting meats, but specially drinks, from before them.

2. Breed them up to constant labour, which may never leave mind or body idle, but at the hours of necessary recreation which you allow them.

3. Let their recreations be such as tend more to the health of their bodies, than the humouring of a corrupted fancy; keep them from gaining for money, from cards, dice, and stage-plays, play-books and love-books, and foolish wanton tales and ballads. Let their time be stinted by you; and let it be no more than what is needful to their health and labour, as whetting to the mower.

4. Let their apparel be plain, decent, and warm, but not gaudy; neither such as useth to signify pride, or to tempt people to it.

* Luke xii. 19, and xvi.; Jam. v.

5. Be sure when they grow towards ripeness, that you keep them from opportunity, nearness, or familiarity, with tempting persons of another sex.

I am sure this is the way to your children's safety. If presumptuous, self-conceited persons, especially the rich, will despise such counsel, as they use to do, let them take what they get by it: if the gentry be debauched, if their children be everlastingly undone, if the whole country, church, and state, must suffer by it, and if their own hearts at last be broken by such children, it is not along of me; let them thank themselves.

IX. Be sure that you engage your children in good company, and keep them as much as possible out of bad. Wicked children, before you are aware, will infect them with their wicked tongues and practices: they will quickly teach them to drink, to game, to talk filthily, to swear, to mock at godliness and sobriety: and, oh, what tinder is in corrupted nature!

But the company of sober, pious children and servants will use them to a sober, pious language, and will further them in knowledge and the fear of God, or at least will keep them from great temptations.

X. Do all that you do with them in love and wisdom: make them not so familiar with you as shall breed contempt: and be not so strange to them as shall tempt them to have no love to you, or pleasure in your company. But let them perceive the tender bowels of parents, and that, indeed, they are dear to you, and that all your counsel and government is for their good, and not for any ends or passions of your own. And give them familiarly the reason of all which they are apt to be prejudiced against. For love and reason must be the means of most of the good that you do them.

XI. Keep a special watch upon their tongues, especially against ribaldry and lying; for dangerous corruptions do quickly this way obtain dominion.

XII. Teach them highly to value time: tell them the preciousness of it, by reason of the shortness of man's life, the greatness of his work, and how eternity dependeth on these uncertain moments. Labour to make time-wasting odious to them. And set death still before their eyes; and ask them oft, whether they are ready to die.

XIII. Use them much to the reading of the most suitable books: such as Mr. Richard Allen's, Mr. Joseph Allen's, Mr. Whateley's New Birth, and Redemption of Time; Mr. Gurnal,

Mr. Bolton, Dr. Preston, Dr. Sibbes, Mr. Perkins, Dod, Hildersham ; of which more anon.

XIV. Let correction be wisely used, as they need it ; neither so severely as to disaffect them to you, nor so little as to leave them in a course of sin and disobedience. Let it be always in love ; and more for sin against God, than any worldly matters : and show them Scripture against the sin, and for the correction.

XV. Pray earnestly for them, and commit them by faith to Christ, into whose covenant you did engage them.

XVI. Go before them by a holy and sober example, and let your practice tell them what you would have them be, specially in representing godliness delightful, and living in the joyful hopes of heaven.

XVII. Choose such trades and callings for them as have least dangerous temptations, and as tend most to the saving of their souls, and to make them most useful in the world, and not those that tend most to the ease of the flesh, or worldly ends.

XVIII. When they are marriageable, and you find it needful, provide such for them as are truly suitable, and stay not till folly and lust ensnare them.

These are the counsels which I earnestly recommend to you in this important work. But you must know that your children's souls are so precious, and the difference between the good and bad so great, that all this must not seem too much ado to you : but as you would have ministers hold on in the labour of their places, so must you in yours, as knowing that a dumb and idle parent is no more excusable, than an unfaithful, dumb and idle minister. The Lord give you skill, and will, and diligence, to practise all : for I take the due education of children for one of the most needful and most excellent works in the world, especially for mothers.

S. I pray you, next tell me my duty to my wife, and her duty to me.

P. I. The common duty of husband and wife is, 1. Entirely to ^b love each other ; and therefore choose one that is truly lovely, and proceed in your choice with great deliberation ; and avoid all things that tend to quench your love.

2. To dwell together, and ^c enjoy each other, and faithfully join as helpers in the education of their children, the government of the family, and the management of their worldly business.

^b Eph. v. 25, &c. ; Col. iii. 19.

^c 1 Cor. vii. 29.

3. Especially to be helpers of each other's salvation : to stir up each other to faith, love, and obedience, and good works : to warn and help each other against sin, and all temptations : to join in God's worship in the family, and in private : to prepare each other for the approach of death, and comfort each other in the hopes of life eternal.

4. To avoid all dissensions, and to bear with those infirmities in each other which you cannot cure : to assuage, and not provoke, unruly passions ; and, in lawful things, to please each other.

5. To keep conjugal chastity and fidelity, and to avoid all unseemly and immodest carriage with any other, which may stir up jealousy ; and yet to avoid all jealousy which is unjust.

6. To help one another to bear their burdens (and not by impatience to make them greater). In poverty, crosses, sickness, dangers, to comfort and support each other. And to be delightful companions in holy love, and heavenly hopes and duties, when all other outward comforts fail.

S. II. What are the special duties of the husband ?

P. They are, 1. To exercise love and authority together (never separated) to his wife. 2. To be the chief teacher and governor of the family, and provider for its maintenance. 3. To excel the wife in^d knowledge and patience, and to be her teacher and guide in the matters of God, and to be the chief in bearing infirmities and trials. 4. To keep up the wife's authority and honour in the family over inferiors.

S. III. What are the special duties of the wives ?

P. 1. ^eTo excel in love. 2. To be obedient to their husbands, and examples therein to the rest of the family. 3. Submissively to learn of their husbands (that can teach them) and not to be self-conceited, teaching, talkative, or imperious. 4. To subdue their passions, deny their own fancies and wills, and not to tempt their husbands to satisfy their humours and vain desires in pride, excess, revenge, or any evil, nor to rob God and the poor by a proud and wasteful humour (as the^f wives of gentlemen ordinarily do). 5. To govern their tongues, that their words may be few, and grave, and sober ; and to abhor a running and a scolding tongue. 6. To be contented in

^d 1 Pet. iii. 7.

^e 1 Tim. iii. 11, 12 ; Zech. xii. 14 ; 1 Pet. iii. 1 ; Col. iii. 19 ; Eph. v. 22, 24 ; Tit. ii. 4, 5 ; 1 Cor. vii. 16.

^f Jer. xlv. 9.

every condition, and not to torment their husbands and themselves with impatient murmurings. 7. To avoid the childish vanity of gaudy apparel, and following vain fashions of the prouder sort ; and to abhor their vice that waste precious time in curious and tedious dressings, gossipings, visits, and feasts. 8. To help on the maintenance of the family by frugality, and by their proper care and labour. 9. Not to dispose of their husband's estate without his consent, either explicit or implicit. 10. Above all, to be constant helpers of the holy education of their children. For this is the most eminent service that women can do in the world ; and it is so great that they have no cause to grudge at God for the lowness of their place and gifts, for mean gifts (with wisdom and godliness) may serve to speak to children. The mother is still with them, and they are still under her eye ; her love must chiefly work towards their salvation. She must be daily catechising them, and teaching them to know God, and speaking to them for holiness and against sin, and minding them of the world to come, and teaching them to pray. Godly mothers may educate children for magistracy, ministry, and all public services, by helping them to that honest and holy disposition, which is the chief thing necessary in every relation to the common good ; and so they may become chief instruments of the reformation and welfare of churches and kingdoms, and of the world.

S. I pray you tell me, also, the duty of children ?

P. I. The duty of ^s children to their parents is, 1. To love them dearly, and to be thankful for all their love and care, which they can never requite. 2. To learn of them submissively, especially the doctrine of salvation. 3. To obey them diligently in all lawful things, and that for conscience' sake, in obedience to God. 4. To ^h honour them in thought, and words, and actions ; and avoid all appearance of slighting, dishonour, or contempt. 5. To be contented with their parents' allowance and provisions, and willing and ready to such labour or employment as they command them. 6. To take patiently the reproofs and corrections of their parents, and to confess their faults with humble penitence, and amend. 7. To use such company as their parents command them, and not to run into the company of vain and tempting persons. 8. To be content with such a calling as their

^s Eph. vi. 1—3 ; Col. iii. 20 ; Prov. i. 8, 9 ; xiii. 1, and xxiii. 22.

^h Gen. ix. 22, 25 ; Prov. xxx. 17 ; xlii. 21 ; xlii. 15 ; xxix. 15 ; xlii. 13, 14, and xix. 18.

parents choose for them. 9. To marry by their parents' choice or consent only. 10. To relieve their parents, if they need.

S. What is the duty of children towards God?

P. II. 1. To learn what they are by nature, and what that covenant was which in baptism they were entered into; what are the duties, and what the benefits; and to renew that covenant with¹ God themselves, and understandingly, seriously, and resolvedly to give up themselves absolutely and entirely to God the Father, Son, and Spirit, their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. 2. To remember that the corruption of their nature must be more and more healed, and their sins forgiven; and, therefore, daily, by faith and obedience, to make use of the justifying, teaching, and sanctifying grace of Christ. 3. To remember that they are not here entering upon a life of rest, or sinful pleasure, but upon a short, uncertain life of care, and labour, and sufferings, in which they must do all that ever must be done, for an everlasting life that followeth; and that to make sure of heaven is their work on earth. 4. To love and learn the word of God, and to delight in all that is good and holy, especially on the Lord's days. 5. To see that they love not fleshly pleasures more than God and holiness, and that they fly from² youthful lusts, from excess of eating, drinking, and sports; that they avoid wantonness, and immodesty of speech or action, cards or dice, gaming, pride, love-books, play-books, loss of time by needless recreation. 6. That they use their tongues to sober and godly speech, and abhor lying, railing, ribaldry, and idle, foolish talk. 7. To subdue their wills to the will of God and their superiors, and not to be eagerly set on any thing which is unnecessary, or which God or their superiors forbid them.

S. What is the duty of masters towards their servants?

P. 1. To¹ rule them with such gentleness as becometh fellow Christians; and yet, with such authority as that they be not encouraged to contempt. 2. To restrain them from sinning against God. 3. To instruct them in the doctrine of salvation, and pray with them, and go before them by the example of a sober, holy life. 4. To keep them from evil company, and temptations, and opportunities of sinning. 5. To set them upon meet labours; to keep no idle serving-men, nor yet to over-labour them to the injury of their health, nor command them

¹ Eccl. xii. 1.

² 2 Tim. ii. 22; Prov. vii. 7, 8; Luke xv. 12, &c.

³ Eph. vi. 9, 10; Col. iv. 1—8.

any unlawful thing. 6. To provide them such food and lodging as is wholesome and meet for them; and to pay them what wages is due to them by promise or desert. 7. Patiently to bear with daily infirmities, and such frailties as must be expected in mankind.

S. What is the duty of servants towards their masters?

P. 1. ^a To honour and reverence them, and obey them in all lawful things belonging to their places to command; and to avoid all words and carriage which savour of dishonour, contempt, or disobedience. 2. Willingly to perform all the labour which they undertake and is required of them, and that without grudging; and to be as faithful behind their master's back as before his face. 3. To be trusty in word and deed; to abhor lying and deceit; not to wrong their masters in buying or selling, or by stealing, or taking any thing of theirs, no not meat or drink, against their will; but being as thrifty and careful of their master's profit as if it were their own. 4. Not to murmur at the meanness of food that is wholesome, nor to desire a life of fulness, ease, and idleness. 5. To be more careful to do their duty to their masters than how their masters shall use them; because sin is worse than suffering. 6. Not to reveal the secrets of the family abroad, to strangers or neighbours. 7. Thankfully to receive instruction, and to learn God's word, and observe the Lord's day, and seriously join in public and private worshipping of God. 8. Patiently to bear reproof and due correction, and to confess faults, and amend. 9. To pray daily for a blessing on the family, on their labours, and on themselves. 10. And to do all this in true obedience to God, expecting their reward from him.

S. What is the duty of children and servants to one another?

P. 1. To provoke one another to all their duty to God, and to their parents and masters. 2. To help one another in knowledge, and all the means of salvation, especially by godly, profitable conference, when they are together. 3. To save each other from sin and temptation, by loving advice; and to take heed that they be not tempters to each other, either to lust, and wanton dalliance, and unchaste speech or actions, or to excess of meat or drink, or idleness, or deceiving their master, or, by passionate words, provoking wrath^b; but that they assuage the passions of each other, and keep peace in the family. 4.

^a 1 Pet. ii. 18; Tit. ii. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2; Col. iii. 22—25; Eph. vi. 5—8; Matt. x. 24.

To love each other as themselves, and do as they would be done by; and not to envy one another, nor strive who shall have the most, or who shall be nighest, but humbly to submit to one another, and be helpful to each other in their labour and every way they can. 5. To bear patiently with little injuries to themselves; and open none of the faults of each other, when it tendeth but to stir up strife, and do no good. 6. But conceal not those faults which by concealment will be cherished, and whose concealment hindereth the right government of the family, or tendeth to the master's wrong. But in sins against God, first admonish each other privately; if that prevail not, reprove it before others; if that prevail not, acquaint your master with it.

S. Now, you have gone so far, tell us our duty to our neighbours?

P. Your duty to your neighbours lieth in love and justice.

1. To love them as yourself. 2. To do as you would be done by; for which the six last commandments are your rule. Your love must be exercised, 1. Towards their souls in furthering their salvation, by drawing them to hear God's word, helping them to good books, giving them seasonable, wise, and serious exhortations, and by the example of a holy, blameless life. 2. Towards their bodies, by doing them all the good you can, and doing them no wrong, nor speaking evil of them, nor provoking or scandalizing them, but patiently bearing and forgiving injuries from them.

S. And what is the duty of subjects to magistrates?

P. 1. To reverence and honour them as the officers of God, and speak not dishonourably of them. 2. To pay them in due tribute, and to protect them to your power in your place. 3. To obey them in all lawful things,^a which it belongeth to their several powers, places, and offices to command. 4. To provoke others to the same obedience. 5. To avoid all conspiracies, seditions, treasons and rebellions, and resistance of the higher powers;^o and patiently to suffer where God forbiddeth us to obey. 6. To approve and further the execution of true justice. 7. To detect and resist all treasons, conspiracies, and rebellions in others. 8. To do all this for conscience' sake, in obedience to God, and for the common good.

S. Must I not obey all the laws and commands of rulers?

P. 1. No: you must obey none which command you any thing which God forbiddeth; or which forbid you any thing

Rom. xiii. 1-7.

^o Tit. iii. 1, 2; 1 Tim. ii. 2.

which is at that time and place your duty by God's command ; nor that which certainly and notoriously tendeth to the destruction of the common good, unless, accidentally, any obedience of your's, to a particular command, be like to do more good than hurt, as to that end.

S. Will you next lay me down distinct directions how to spend every day in my family and by myself?

P. I will not set you upon too much, nor upon any unnecessary task, lest I hinder you while I seem to help you. 1. Let the time of your sleep be so much only as health requireth,^p for precious time is not to be wasted in unnecessary sluggishness.

2. Let your heart be so disposed Godward, that your waking thoughts may make out towards him.^q Lift up a thankful heart for your night's rest unto him, and think what a blessed rest you shall have in the presence of his glory, and how great a privilege it is to be in his love, and under his protection ; and, if you have company, speak these thoughts to others.

3. Quickly dress you, and use no vain attire that shall steal your time :^r but if sickness or other necessity make it long, either let one of your children read a chapter till you are ready, or let some suitable meditation or discourse take up the time.

4. If you have leisure, go presently to prayer by yourself, or with your wife. If you have not, at least put in the same requests in your family prayer, especially if you be the family's mouth.

5. Let family worship be kept up twice a-day, unless some extraordinary necessity hinder it, at the most convenient hours of the day.

6. Do all your business as the work of God more than your own, and nothing but what it is his will that you should do, that you may expect from him both protection and reward ; and oft renew your devotion of yourself, and all your business, to him, and your actual intending to please and glorify him.

7. Highly value all your time ; and follow your labours with constant diligence, believing that it is part of your service of God ; six days must you labour and do all that you have to do. Idleness is the ruin of soul, body, and estate.

8. Be well acquainted with your special corruptions, and the special temptations of every day ; and never intermit your watch against them.

9. If you labour alone, take in such seasonable meditations as you need, and your business will permit, but turn it to good conference if you are in company : not so as to think and talk of

^p Prov. vi. 9, 10 ; John i. 6.

^q Psalm cxxxix. 18.

^r 1 Pet. iii. 3.

nothing else, to turn all to weariness or affected formality, but at seasonable times, and in a serious manner; and talk not of small matters, but of heart and heaven affairs.

10. Crave God's blessing upon your food, and return him thanks for it. Receive it, not chiefly to please your appetite, but to strengthen you as a servant of God, for your duty; and for quality and quantity avoid^{*} flesh-pleasing curiosity and excess, and make your health and reason, and not your appetite, the measure of both. Write over your table "Behold, this was the iniquity of Sodom; pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." (Ezek. xvi. 49.) And, "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and silk, and fared sumptuously every day." "Son, remember that thou, in thy life-time, receivedst thy good things," &c. (Luke vi. 12, 25.) "Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts (or desires) thereof." (Rom. xiii. 14.)

11. At evening, return to your food, and to God's worship in your family; and in secret, if you have time, as was directed you in the morning.

12. At night, look back how you have spent the day: not to waste time in writing down all sins and mercies which are ordinary (for the same coming daily to be repeated will turn all to formality): but to have a special thankfulness for special mercies, and a special repentance for great or aggravated sin, yea, for all that you remember. And quickly rise, by free confession, repentance, and faith, where you have fallen: and so betake yourself to rest,[†] with a holy confidence in God's protection, and delightful meditation of him.

S. You tell me of family worship twice a day. I pray you tell me how I must perform it.

P. 1. With a composed, reverent mind, having all your family together that can come, briefly crave God's assistance and acceptance. 2. Then read a chapter, and, if you have leisure, some leaves of some other good book, or else bid them mark such passages as most concern them as they go. 3. Before or after sing a psalm, if you have a family that can sing; if not, read some psalms of praise. 4. Then, in faithful, fervent prayer, call on God through Jesus Christ, in his Spirit: and so at evening.

S. I pray you resolve me these few questions. Quest. 1. How oft in a day must I pray in my family?

P. God hath not punctually determined just how oft: therefore

^{*} Prov. xxxi. 4, 6.

[†] Psalm iv. 7—9.

you must not superstitiously feign more commands than he hath made. But the general commands of praying continually, and in all things, with the final law, 'Do all to edification,' and the nature of families, and their necessities and opportunities, and Scripture examples, do fully prove that, ordinarily, twice a-day is a duty; which, because I must not here stay to prove, read the full proof in the second part of my 'Christian Directions.' Keep up the life of grace within, and sense of your necessity, and of the worth of mercy, and keep up the experience what lively prayer and thanksgiving is, and it will preserve you against the libertines' opinion, who cry down constant worship in families, as superstition.

S. 2. At what hour must I pray?

P. God hath not tied you to an hour by Scripture; but his providence will direct you. Usually, early and late are fittest; but if all families have not the same employments nor leisure, that hour must be chosen which family occasions, and bodily temper, and company, do make most fit.

S. 3. Must I pray in secret with my wife, and in my family too, twice every day?

P. Only the general rule of edification, with your conveniences and opportunities, must here also direct you. Family prayer is of the greatest necessity; because there each person is contained. But secret prayer hath great advantages: the heart is there more free to open its particular sins and wants; and they that can do all, must do them. But if you cannot, you must rather take up with family prayer alone, than secret alone.

S. What do you mean by "cannot?" Must not all business give place to secret prayer?

P. No. There are businesses of greater obligation which must be preferred. Learn what this meaneth: "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." A physician, in case of necessity, may omit all prayer, to go help to save a sick man's life. So may any man, to relieve the poor and miserable when it cannot be put off to another time; so may a magistrate to do justice; and so may a pastor, to preach to the congregation, when he hath not time to do both. And poor men, that cannot spare time from their labour, are not bound to spend as much time in reading and prayer as rich men are, who have fuller opportunities.

2. But the case of those who are the speakers in family prayer, much differeth from the case of them that join; for he that speaketh may put up all the same requests in the family as he may do in secret; and therefore a greater duty may oftener dis-

pense with his secret prayer: for it is not to be used as a formality. But he that joineth with the speaker hath not the choice of his own matter, nor can so easily keep up a praying mind, without distractions, as he can do when he speaketh himself. Therefore, (avoiding superstitious conceits, and making laws to ourselves, as God's, which he hath not made,) secret prayer is so great a duty, that every man must use it as oft as other duties at that time are not to be preferred; but will give leave. And some can find time for it (with meditation) in their labour, and travel, when they are alone.

S. 4. Is long or short prayer to be preferred?

P. The general rule, also, must direct you in this. It varieth the case, as times, and persons, and occasions vary. When no greater duty (at that time) putteth you off, you can scarce be too long, if you continue fit for it in mind and expression; but when other duties call you off, or you cannot be long without unmeet expressions and repetitions before others, or without your own or the family's dullness and unfitness, shorter, at that time, may be the best. But see that formal affectation be not the lengthener of your prayers, nor carnal weariness the shortener of them; at least, do not justify either of these.

S. 5. Is it better to pray by a set form, or book, or without, as I am able to express my desires?

P. God hath not made you a law against either, but left every man the way that is fittest for him.

S. How shall I know which is fittest for me?

P. 1. In secret, usually, it is best to use yourself ofttest to pray freely, from the present sense of your condition, that you may be able to do it; and vary as occasion serveth. For the best man's mind is apt to grow dull in using the same words an hundred times over: as a music lesson, played too oft, doth become less pleasing; and it will not cure us, to say that it should not be so.

2. Therefore, also, you should learn to pray freely, from an habit, before others also, as soon as you can.

3. But till you can do it without disgraceful expressions, repetitions, and disorders, it is better in your family to use a book, or form.

4. If in public, or secret, any one find that a form, having more fit, large, and lively expressions than he can have himself without it, doth quicken and enlarge him, he may best use it; but if it more bind and straiten him, he may forbear it.

I will add these two advices here. 1. Settle not yourself in

such a calling and way as will not stand with family worship.
 2. Take heed of growing in customariness and dead formality, which may too easily befall you, even under extemporate prayers.

S. Have you any more counsel for me, for the good and order of my family?

P. At this time I will add no more but these. 1. Watch, against your worldly business; that it eat not out the life and seriousness of holy duties. Alas! in most families the world is all that they have any sense of: though yet your calling must be followed.

S. Truly, landlords are so hard, and people so very poor, that necessity is a constraint and great temptation to them.

P. I know it is. But if landlords be cruel, shall men be more cruel to themselves? If they keep you poor, will you therefore keep your soul ungodly and miserable? The less comfort you have here, and the harder this world useth you, the more careful should you be, in reason, to make sure of a better world. Poor men have souls to save, and a heaven to win, and a hell to escape, and a Christ to believe in, and a God to love and serve, as well as the rich. And I tell you that your temptations are less than theirs.

2. Do all you can to keep up, in yourself and family, the joy of believing, and a delight in God and all his service; therefore, let your daily duty have much in it of thanksgiving and praise.

3. You, that are a farmer, and sit by your servants in the long winter nights, get a good book, and "read to them while they are with you. I will not discourage your own exhortations; but few husbandmen can discourse so profitably, so closely, soundly, and searchingly, as many such books will do, if you choose aright. But more of this, in the next day's conference.

THE EIGHTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

How to spend the Lord's Day in Christian Families, in the Church, and in secret Duties.

Speakers.—Paul, a Teacher; and Saul, a Learner.

PAUL. Welcome, neighbour. How go matters between you and your family; yea, and your God?

• Deut. xvii. 19; Acts viii. 28, 30.

SAUL. O, sir, you have set me a great deal of work, which my conscience telleth me is good and necessary, and better than any else that I can spend my time in. But my heart is bad and backward; and it is not so soon learned as heard, nor so soon done as learned; and yet I come to you for more. For I am resolved to take God and heaven for my all, and, therefore, to be true to the covenant I have made. I desire you, now, to instruct me about the right observation of the Lord's day; and, first, tell me our obligation to it.

P. I have published a treatise only on that subject, to which I must now refer you, as to the obligation and the disputing part; only giving you this brief intimation: 1. Christ gave his apostles commission to acquaint the world with his will, and to settle the orders of the gospel churches. 2. To this end he promised and gave them the infallible conduct of the Holy Ghost; who is now the Author of what they did in obedience to their commission. 3. As Christ rose from the dead on the ^{*} first day of the week, so he oft on that day appeared to his disciples, and, on that day, (Whitsunday) he sent down the Holy Ghost; so that the new world was begun on that day. And on that day the apostles constantly celebrated the holy assemblies, and appointed the churches to do the like, separating that day to the holy worship of God. 4. All the churches in the world from the apostles' times, till a few years ago, did unanimously keep the Lord's day as holy, or separated to holy worship; no one church, no one person, no, not a heretic, that I remember, who confessed Christ's resurrection, ever once excepting against it, or dissenting: and this is as ordained by the apostles in their times.

S. You need say no more: he that will contradict such proof as this, hath an evil spirit of contradiction. But that which is questioned is, whether it be a Sabbath, and come in the place of the seventh day Sabbath?

P. Trouble not your brains about mere names: it is enough for you that it is a day separated by Christ and the Holy Ghost to holy worship, and called the Lord's day. If by a Sabbath be not meant a day of Jewish ceremonial rest (which is the Scripture sense of that word) then we confess that it is no Sabbath, but that all such Sabbaths are abolished, as types of better things.

^{*} John xx. 1, 19, 26, and xvi. 13—15; Acts ii. 1, and x. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; Rev. i. 10; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; 2 Thess. ii. 15.

S. I am the more easily satisfied by reason and experience for the holy keeping of the day : for, 1. I know that one day in seven is as due a proportion now as when Moses's law was made. 2. I am sure it is a great mercy and benefit to man, to be obliged every seventh day to rejoice in God, and lay by our care and labour, and learn the way to everlasting life. Alas ! what would servants and poor men do without it ! 3. It is a hedge, and great engagement to the holy employments of the soul, when every seventh day is separated to that use alone. 4. And I feel by experience the great benefit of it to myself. 5. And I see that religion most prospereth where the Lord's day is most conscionably kept, and falls where it is neglected. But I pray you set me down directions for the right spending of the day both general and particular.

P. I. The general instructions which you must take are these.

1. That the chiefest use of the day is for the ' public worshipping of God, our Creator and Redeemer ; and therefore the church worship is to be preferred before all that is more private.

2. That the chief work which it is to be spent in, is learning the doctrine of the gospel, and praising, and giving thanks to our Heavenly Father, our Redeemer, and Sanctifier : the rest cometh under this.

3. Therefore the manner of it, and the frame of our hearts, should be holy joy, and gratitude, and love, stirred up by the exercise of faith and hope : and it should be spent as a day of thanksgiving for the greatest mercy.

4. Therefore the positive part of duty is the main, viz. that heart and tongue be thus employed towards God. And the negative part (our abstaining from other thoughts and words, and labours and sports) is so far our duty, as they are any hinderance to this holy work ; and not on a mere ceremonial account.

S. Now set me down all my duty in its order.

P. Make due preparation for the day beforehand. Let your six days' labour be so dispatched, that it may not hinder you : cast off worldly thoughts, and remember the last Lord's day instructions ; and repent of all the sins of the week past : and go in season to your rest.

2. Let your first thoughts be suitable to the day. Remem-

' Acts ii. 4, 5 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

ber with joy the resurrection of your Saviour, which begun the triumphant, glorious state, as you awake in the beginning of this holy day : and let your heart be glad to think that a day of the Lord is come.

3. Rise full as early on that day as on your labouring days ; and think not that swinish sloth is your holy rest.

4. Let your dressing time be short, and spent as aforesaid, in hearing a chapter read, or in good thoughts, or suitable speech in those about you.

5. If you can, go first to secret prayer ; and let servants dispatch their necessary business about cattle, that it stand not after in their way.

6. Then call your servants to family worship, and if you can have time, without coming too late to the assembly, read the Scripture, sing a Psalm of praise, and call on God with joyful thanksgiving, for our redemption and the hopes of glory : or so much of this as you can do. But do all with seriousness and alacrity : and tell your servants and children what it is that they go to do at the church.

7. Go to the beginning of public worship ; and let none be absent that can be spared to go. Your duty there I must show you by itself, anon.

8. After your return, while dinner is preparing, is a seasonable time for secret prayer, or meditation on the great business of the day, and to consider of what you heard in public.

9. If company allow you opportunity, let your time at meat be seasoned with some cheerful mention of the mercies of our Redeemer, or what is suitable to the hearers and the day.

10. After dinner, if there be time, call your family together, and sing a Psalm of praise, and help them to remember what was taught them.

11. Then take them again (in time) to the assembly.

12. When you come home, call them all together, and after craving God's assistance, and acceptance through Christ, sing a Psalm of praise, and repeat the sermon, or cause it to be repeated, not tediously, but so much as the time may bear. Or if there were no sermon, or one unsuitable to your family, read near an hour to them in some suitable and lively book. (Of which anon.) And conclude with prayer and praise to God ; and all with seriousness, alacrity, and joy.

13. Between that and supper, both you, and such children and servants as can possibly be spared, betake yourselves to secret prayer and meditation.

14. At supper do as beforesaid at dinner. (Still remember that though it be a day of thanksgiving, yet not of sensuality, gluttony, or excess.)

15. When they have supped, examine your children and servants what they have learned that day, unless you appoint an hour on the week-day for it : and so for catechising them. Then sing a Psalm of praise, and so conclude with prayer and thanksgiving. Catechising must not be neglected ; but if you can do most of it on week-days or holidays, it will be best, that it take not up the Lord's day, which is for holy praise.

16. When you go to rest, review briefly the special occurrences of the day : repent of failings : give thanks for mercies ; and comfortably compose yourself to rest, as trusting in the protection of your gracious God, and so let your thoughts be such as are meet to shut up such a holy day.

These directions are soon given and heard ; but, O happy you, if you sincerely practise them !

S. You talk of reading to my family at nights, and on holidays, and the Lord's days : what books be they which you would have me read ?

P. Were you not a poor man, I would name many to you : because you are one of my charge, I will bestow some of my own upon you. 1. Here are, 'The Call to the Unconverted,' 'Directions for a Sound Conversion,' 'A Treatise of Conversion,' 'A Sermon against making light of Christ,' 'A Treatise of Judgment,' 'A Saint or a Brute,' and 'Now or Never,' with this present book. Read these to them in the order that I have named, as much at a time as you have leisure. And here is the 'Saints Rest ;' on the Lord's days read oft in that : and when you have done those, here is 'A Treatise of Self-denial,' and one of 'Crucifying the World,' and one of 'Self-ignorance :' I will trouble you with no more. But if you have my 'Christian Directory,' you may choose still what subject you think most seasonable.

For other men's works, I would you had Mr. Joseph Allen's book of Conversion, and his Life, and all Mr. Richard Allen's books ; and Mr. Dod on the Commandments, and Mr. Perkins on the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, that you might read, as an exposition of the catechism, one article, one petition, one commandment, expounded at a time ; which will be a great help to yourself and them. And the 'Practice of Piety,' and Mr. Scudder's 'Daily Walk,' and Mr. Reyner, and Mr. Pinke's sermons, are very good books. But I dare name you no more, lest I overset you.

S. What catechism would you have me use ?

P. There are so many that I know not which to prefer : at present I commend you to Mr. Gouge's, or Mr. Rawlet's ; the lesser of the assemblies first, and the larger after. But because you are one of my charge, I will here write you two in the end, a shorter for beginners, and a longer for proficients.

S. I pray you next instruct me how to worship God in public : you have before told me what church I must join with ; have you more to say of that ?

P. Yes : 1. I advise you to hear the best teacher that you can have : for experience telleth us that the bare office worketh not without meet abilities ; and that there is a very great difference to the hearer, * between man and man : therefore be not indifferent herein.

S. Whom am I to account the best teacher ?

P. Not he that is most * learned, elegant, and rhetorical, nor he that speaketh the loudest and most earnestly ; but he that hath all the three necessary abilities conjunct ; 1. A clear explication of the gospel, to make the judgments of the hearers ^b sound. 2. He that hath the most convincing and persuading reasons to resolve the will. 3. He that doth this in the most serious, affectionate, lively manner, together with practical directions, to quicken up the soul to practice, and direct it therein. But when you cannot have one that is excellent in all these, you must take the best that you can have.

S. But what if the minister of the parish be not such ?

P. If he be intolerable, through ignorance, heresy, disability, or malignity, forsake him utterly : but if he be tolerable, though weak and cold, and if you cannot remove your dwelling, then public order and your soul's edification must both be joined as well as you can. In London, or other cities where it is usual, you may go ordinarily to another parish church : but in the country, and where it would be a great offence, you may one part of the day hear in your own parish, and the other at the next, if there be a man much fitter within your reach : but communicating with the church you dwell with.

2. I advise you, that if there be parish churches orderly settled under the magistrates' countenance, whose teachers are sound, and promote the power of godliness in concord, though an abler minister should gather a separated church in the same

* Matt. vii. 29 ; 2 Cor. iii. 6 ; 2 Tim. i. 12 ; Rom. xv. 14.

^a 1 Cor. i. ; ii. ; iii., and iv.

^b 2 Tim. i. 7.

place, out of that and other neighbour parishes, and should have stricter communicants and discipline, be not too forward to join yourself to that separated church ; till you can prove that the hurt that will follow by discord, offence, division, encouraging schism and pride, is not like to be greater than your benefit can compensate. But where liberty is such as these mischiefs are not like to follow, take your liberty, if your benefit require it.

3. But if this separated church be a^c factious anti-church, set up contentiously against the concordant churches, though on pretence of greater purity ; and if their meetings be employed in contention and reviling others, and making them odious that are not of their mind, and in killing the love of Christians to each other, and in condemning other churches as no churches, or such as may not lawfully be communicated with, and, in puffing up themselves with pride, as if they were the only churches of Christ ; avoid such separated churches, as the enemies of love and peace.

4. If a church, in other respects sound, shall^d require of you any false subscriptions, promises, or oaths, or require you to do any unlawful thing, you must not do it : but hold communion with them in other lawful things, if they will allow you. If not, be content to have spiritual communion with them at a distance, in the same faith and love, and kind of worship, and join with others.

5. Though your ordinary communion should be with the best minister and church that you can have without scandal and public hurt, yet sometimes, if it be expected, communicate with more^e imperfect churches, so far as they force you not to sin, that you may keep up love, and show that you are for universal peace.

S. Will you instruct me how to hear with profit ?

P. You must have distinct helps for four particular uses :

1. To understand what you hear. 2. To be duly affected with it. 3. To remember it. 4. To practise it.

S. 1. What are the helps for^f understanding ?

P. 1. A plain, clear, convincing teacher. 2. Reading the Scripture and good books to prepare you ; especially catechisms. 3. Careful attending. 4. Specially marking the doctrine, de-

Rom. xvi. 17 ; 1 Cor. i. 10 ; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13 ; Tit. liii. 10 ; Acts xx. 30.

^d Gal. ii. 3—5, 14 ; iii., and iv.

^e Luke iv. 16, and v. 14 ; Johu xviii. 20 ; Matt. xxiii. 2.

^f Matt. xiii. 14, 15 ; iv. 3 ; vii. 14, 16, and xv. 10 ; Rev. i. 3 ; ii. 7, 11, 17, 29, and lii. 6.

sign, and drift of the preacher: 5. Laying the severa parts together. 6. Meditating after, and asking the meaning of what you doubt of. 7. Prayer, and conscionable practice of what you know.

S. II. What are the helps for the will and affections ?

P. A lively preacher. 2. Remember with whom you ^c have to do, and of how great importance the business is which you are upon. Go to church as one that is going to hear a message from the God of heaven, concerning your everlasting salvation. 3. Remember that you have but a little time to hear, and then you must be laid in the dark: with those that are under your feet, who lately sat where you now sit; and your soul must speed as sermons did speed with you in hearing. 4. Observe how nearly the matter doth concern you; and stir up your minds from sloth and wandering. 5. Remember that God, who sends the message, doth wait for your resolution and your answer; whether you will yield to him or reject him; whether you will have his grace or not? And remember how you will shortly cry to him for mercy in your extremity, and wait for his answer to your cries. Resolve now as you would speed then; and answer God as you would be answered by him. If you would have mercy then, receive it and obey it now. If you deny God but this once, you know not but he may leave you to yourself, and never make you such an offer more. 6. Bethink you how the ^b miserable souls in hell were like to hear such offers of mercy, if they might be tried here again, and sit in your places. 7. Lift up a secret request to Christ for his quickening Spirit. 8. When you come home, preach over the doctrine again to your own heart, and urge it on yourself. 9. And pray it all over to God, by begging his grace to make it powerful. 10. And pressing it on your family will quicken yourself.

S. III. What are the helps for memory?

P. 1. A thorough understanding. 2. And a deep affection: we easily remember that which we well understand, and are much affected with. 3. Method is a great help to memory; therefore observe the preacher's method, at least the doctrine, or subject, and somewhat of the explication, proof, and use. 4. Number much helpeth memory. Mark how many the several heads are. 5. Fasten upon some one significant word of every head, which will bring in all the rest. 6. Grasp not at more than you can hold, lest you lose all; but choose out so

^c Heb. iv. 13.

^b Luke xvi. 24, 26, 27.

much of the chief matter, which concerneth you, as you find your memory can bear. 7. In the time of hearing, you may oft run over that one significant word of each head which you heard first, to settle it in your memory, without turning your attention from that which followeth, which is a singular help. 8. Writing is the easiest help for memory. 9. If you forget the words, yet remember the main drift and matter. 10. Review it, or hear it repeated by others, when you come home.

S. 4. What are the helps for practice ?

P. 1. If you speed well in the three first, especially if the word take hold upon your heart, the practice will the more easily follow. 2. Be acquainted with the corruptions of your heart, which need a cure, and the wants that need supply, and go with a desire to get that cure and that supply ; as you go to the market to buy what you want, or to the physician to be healed. An intent of practice prepareth for practice. 3. Mark the uses and the practical directions, and let conscience urge them on yourself as you are hearing them ; resolve to obey whatever God maketh known to be his will. 4. When you come home consider what you heard which doth concern your practice, and there let conscience drive it home, and revive your resolutions. 5. Especially labour to get your radical graces strengthened, the belief of the life to come, the hope of glory, and the love of God ; and these will carry you on to practice. 6. Take heed of those preachers that stifle practice. I mean, 1. Libertines, called antinomians, who, under pretence of extolling Christ and free grace, destroy the principles of practice. 2. ¹ Factionous disputers, who fill men's heads with little but controversy. 3. Wordy orators, who, like sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, make but a lifeless noise of words. 4. Malignants, who jeer at holy practice as hypocrisy. 5. Pharisees, that set up the practice of their own ceremonies, ^k traditions, and superstitious, instead of the practice of the commands of God. 6. Live, if you can, with practising Christians. 7. Lastly, keep a daily account how you practise what you know.

S. How must I hear and read the Scriptures themselves ?

P. 1. Be sure you come to them with a ¹ believing ; reverent,

¹ Phil. i. 15, and ii. 3 ; 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4 ; 2 Tim. ii. 14, 24 ; Tit. iii. 9.

^k Matt. xv. ; Col. ii. 22, 23.

¹ Heb. iv. 2 ; Matt. xii. 3, 5 ; xxi. 16, and xxiv. 15 ; 1 Tim. iv. 13 ; Neh. viii. 8 ; Eph. iii. 4.

spiritual mind, as to the word of the living God, by which you must be ruled and judged, and which you must fully resolve to obey; as a humble learner of heavenly mysteries from the Son and Spirit of God, and not as a proud and arrogant ^m caviller, or judge; nor as expecting philosophy, or curious words, instead of the laws of God for our salvation. 2. Read most the New Testament, and the most suitable parts of Scripture. 3. Expound the dark and rarer passages by the plain and frequent ones. 4. Read some commentary, or annotations, as you go, if you can. 5. ⁿ Ask your pastor of that which you understand not.

S. What must I do in public prayer, praises, and thanksgiving?

P. 1. ^o Join in them earnestly with the desires and praises of your heart; and be not a bare hearer, for that is to be an hypocrite, and to seem to pray when indeed you do not.

2. Do not peevishly pick quarrels with the prayers of the church, nor come to them with humoursome prejudice. Think not that you must ^p stay away, or go out of the church, for every passage that is disorderly, unmeet, yea, or unsound, or untrue; for the words of prayer are the work of man; and while all men are fallible, imperfect, and sinful, their prayers, and praises, and preaching will be like themselves. And he that is the highest pretender, and the most peevish quarreller, hath his own failings. If I heard him pray, it is ten to one I could tell you of much immethodicalness, at least, and sometimes falsehoods, in his words. We must join with no church in the world if we will join with nothing that is faulty. Nor is every fault made mine by my presence: I profess to come thither to worship God according to the gospel, and to own all that the pastor saith which is agreeable thereto; but not to own all that he saith, whether in preaching or in prayer, in God's name, or his own, or ours.

Yet I would not have you indifferent with what words you join: for if the words, or actions, be such as so corrupt the worship of God as that he himself will not accept it, you must not offer it.

3. In all the lawful orders, gestures, and manner of behaviour in God's worship, affect not to differ from the rest, but

^m Matt. xviii. 3.

ⁿ Acts viii. 28—31.

^o 1 Chron. xvi. 36; Neh. v. 13, and viii. 6; Psalm cvi. 48.

^p Luke iv. 16; John xviii. 29; 1 Cor. xiv.; xi. 16, 25, &c., and xiv. 23, &c.; Rev. ii. and iii.

conform yourself to the use of the church which you join with; for in a church singularity is a discord.

S. How must I receive the sacrament of Christ's body and blood?

P. You must, 1. Have a due preparation; 2. A due performance.

S. I. What is the due preparation?

P. 1. To understand what you do: and, 2. To be what you must be, viz. a true Christian; and 3. To do what you must do, in particular preparation.

S. I. What is it that I must understand?

P. What the ends of the sacrament are, and what are the parts and nature of it.

S. What are the ends of it?

P. Not really to ^a sacrifice Christ again; nor to turn ^r bread into no bread, and wine into no wine; which, if every priest can do, he might consecrate all the bread and wine in the baker's shop, and vintner's, or any other cellar, and so furnish men. But the Papists themselves say, without his intention it is not done; but no man knoweth the priest's intention, therefore no man knoweth whether he take bread or the body of Christ. And if all the sound men's senses in the world be not to be trusted whether bread be bread, and wine be wine, then we can know nothing; no, not that there is a Bible, or that ever God revealed his will to man, or that there is a man in the world, and therefore cannot possibly be believers. Nor is the use of the sacrament to confirm men's wicked confederacies, nor to flatter wicked men in their presumption, nor to save them by the outward act alone.

But the end of the Sacrament is, 1. To be a solemn ^r commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ by his death, until he come. That the church may, as it were, see his body broken and his blood shed, and behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.

2. To be a solemn renewing of the covenant of grace, on Christ's part and on ours; even the same which you made in baptism, and at conversion, but with some addition: the one being the sacrament of our new birth and entrance; the other of feeding, nourishment, continuance, and growth. Here Christ for life is delivered to us, and we accept him; and man delivereth up himself to Christ, and Christ accepteth him.

^a Heb. x. 12; ix. 16, and vii. 27.

^r 1 Cor. xi. 26—29.

^r 1 Cor. xi. 24—26, 28—30, and x. 16, 24; Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24; Luke xxii. 20; Heb. ix. 15—18; John vi. 32, 35, 51, 58.

3. To be a lively means for Christ's Spirit and our souls to work by, to stir up faith, desire, love, thankfulness, hope, joy, and new obedience, besides repentance. By showing us the doleful fruits of sin, the wonderful love of God in Christ, the firmness of the promise or covenant, the greatness of the gift, and our grateful obligations. Thus we must here have communion with God and Jesus Christ, in the exercise of all these graces; and receive more grace through our sacrificed Redeemer.

4. It is a symbol or badge of the church, and a public profession of our continued faith, hope, thankfulness, and obedience.

5. It is a sign and means of the union, love, and communion of the saints, and their readiness to communicate to one another.

S. What are the parts of the sacrament, and their nature?

P. I. It hath three general parts: I. The parties covenanting; which are, 1. Christ, or God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as the principal Giver; 2. His minister as his agent; 3. The receivers.

II. The signs; that is, I. The signifying matter: 1. Bread, 2. Wine. II. The manner: 1. Broken bread; 2. Wine poured out; 3. Both delivered, or given. III. The signifying actions: 1. Taking and breaking the bread; 2. Pouring out the wine; 3. Giving both; 4. Receiving both; 5. Eating and drinking both.

III. The things signified. I. As the means: 1. The sacrificing of Christ's body and blood on the cross for our sins; 2. The giving of them to believers; 3. The receiving of them by the believers, and improving them unto life.

II. As the ends. 1. The contracted union, and mutual relation between God and Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, and the Receiver. 2. The souls receiving from Christ: 1. Pardon, reconciliation, and adoption of right to the heavenly inheritance; 2. More of the Holy Ghost to sanctify, seal, and comfort us; 3. The soul's dedication of itself to God in Christ, for future love and obedience; 4. And God's acceptance of him.

S. What are the special parts of the whole sacrament?

P. II. They are three: I. The consecration. II. The commemoration. III. The communion, or communication and participation.

S. I. What is the consecration?

P. Not the bare pronouncing of the words, as the papists

think : nor the turning of the bread into Christ's natural body ; but it is the ' separation of the bread and wine to the sacramental use, and making it to be no longer mere or common bread and wine, but the very body and blood of Christ representative. This is done by the dedicating or offering this bread and wine to God, and by God's acceptance and benediction, of which the minister is his agent ; which is most fitly consummate, and declared by Christ's words, " This is my body, and this is my blood ; " though it is so by the separation and benediction, before it is so called and pronounced.

As Christ was the true Messiah, incarnate before he was sacrificed to God, and was sacrificed to God before that sacrifice was given to man for life and nourishment, so here consecration first maketh the bread and wine to be the body and blood of Christ representative ; and then the sacrificing of Christ to God must be represented and commemorated ; and lastly, a sacrificed Christ communicated to the receivers, and accepted by them.

S. II. What is the commemoration ?

P. It is the " visible representation of the sacrificing of Christ upon the cross to the Father, for the sins of man ; to keep up the remembrance of it, and lively affect the church thereby, and to profess our confidence in a crucified Christ, for the acceptance of our persons and all our performances with God, as well as for the pardon of our sins.

S. III. What is the communication and participation ?

P. It is the * giving of Christ himself really for life, or with his covenant benefits, to the believing receiver, by the investing sacrament of the bread and wine ministerially delivered by the pastor in Christ's name, together with the acceptance of the receiver.

S. You hint to me that which seemeth to reconcile the controversy, about the real presence ; but I would entreat you to make it plainer to me : What is the gift and the donation ?

P. Suppose that a king should, under his hand and seal, make a grant of his son, and the son of himself, to a poor woman beyond sea, to be her husband, and send an ambassador with this instrument, and with the espousing signals, his effigies, the ring, or the like, as his proxy or agent, to marry her

¹ Luke xxii. 16—19 ; 1 Cor. xi. 23—26.

² John i. 29, 36 ; 1 Pet. i. 19 ; 1 Cor. v. 7, and xi. 23—25 ; Heb. ix. 26, and x. 8, 12.

³ 1 John v. 9—12, and vi. 33, 35, 41, 50, 51 ; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

to the prince in his name; the words of the instrument run thus: "I do give thee my son, to be thy husband, and he thereby giveth himself to thee, with thy due interest in his estate, if thou consent and give thyself to him as a wife, and have sent this my ambassador with the signals of matrimony to espouse thee in my son's name." Hereupon she consenteth, and the agent in the celebration delivereth to her the effigies or image of the prince as the signal, and saith, "This is the prince, who thereby giveth himself to thee as a husband." And he delivereth her a key, and saith, "This is such a house, which he endoweth thee with."

Now you can easily ⁷ expound all this: 1. It is the very prince himself in person, and not only the effigies, that is now given her, but how? Not into present, sensible, physical possession, or contact; but in the true right of relation as a husband. 2. The image is the prince representative, not real, physically considered; and is physically an image of him still. 3. The image, which is the prince representative, or signal, is a means or instrument of conveying right and relation to the prince real. But it is only the secondary instrument, viz. of investiture. 4. Another instrument, and in part a representer, is the agent or ambassador. 5. The chief instrument is the written donation, which he is to read at the marriage.

Just so, 1. It is very Christ himself, and not only the signs, that is given to the believer by means of the signs; that is, he is given, not to contract, but in right and relation as a Head and Saviour, by contract. But, 2. The signs are physically but signs still, though representatively they are the very body and blood of Christ; that is, it is the very body and blood which is represented and given by him. 3. And the Gospel covenant on God's part is his chief instrument of this right and relation as conveyed. 4. And the minister and the Sacrament are the two subservient instruments. All this is not only plain in itself, but that doctrine which Christ's church hath ever held. And Paul (1 Cor. xi.) calleth it bread three times after the consecration.

So that the minister is the ministerial instrument; the promise, or covenant, is the donative or entitling instrument; the sacramental signs and actions are the investing instruments, by

⁷ That this is the true sense, see these texts: 1 Cor. xi. 23—28, and x. 4, 15, 16; Matt. xxvi. 29, and v. 13, 14; Mark xiv. 25; Luke xxii. 20; Compared with Exod. xii. 11, 27; John vi. 53, 63, and xv. 1; Isa. xl. 17; Psalm xxii. 6; Acts xx. 7, 11, and ii. 42, 46.

which Christ himself, with all his covenant benefits, are given and delivered to the believing receiver, in relation and true right; and by which Christ's Spirit confirmeth the soul. This is the true and plain doctrine of that sacrament, study it till you understand it.

S. II. You have told me what I must understand: now tell me what I must be, that I may be prepared to receive.

P. You must be a true Christian; that is, a penitent believer already in covenant with God, by consent.

S. May every Christian come, how weak soever?

P. Yes; if there be nothing to hinder him but weakness, and not some particular let, or unpreparedness, which I am next to speak to you of.

S. But what if he be in doubt whether he be sincere?

P. He must do his best to be satisfied, and, when he hath done, must do according to the best judgment that he is able to make of himself. As now I tell you that your consent to the covenant is your Christianity, I ask you whether you consent unfeignedly? If you do, you may somewhat perceive that you do; and if you say, 'I am not sure that I consent sincerely, but as far as I can know my heart I think I do,' you must then communicate; for it is the being of sincerity, and not the assurance of it, which is necessary. And we are all so unacquainted with our own hearts, that if we must not speak according to our best discerning of them without assurance, we must lay by our thanksgiving, and a great part of our other duty.

S. But what if I prove mistaken, and be not sincere?

P. If you are not ^r sincere, and yet think you are, it is your great sin that you are not so, and will not consent to the covenant and mercy offered you; and it is your sin to think that you consent when you do not. And there is a greater weight lieth upon this than your respect to the sacrament; for you are an heir of hell till you truly consent, whether you receive the sacrament or not.

S. But what if I find it a work too hard for me, to try myself?

P. Go to your pastor, or to some other able divine, or friend, and ^a open your case fully to them, and take their help.

S. Can any one else tell what is in me, if I cannot tell myself?

P. You can best tell what you feel; but another may better tell you what that signifieth, and also by what rules and signs you

^a Josh. ii. 4, 15; Matt. xvi. 15, 16; 1 John v. 10—12; Rev. xxii. 17.

^a Acts ii. 37, 38; John iii. 20, 21.

must proceed in judging. The patient knoweth better than the physician what he feeleth, and must first tell that to the physician ; but the physician, then, can better tell him what cause it cometh from, and what is the nature of the disease, and what is like to come of it, and how it must be cured. Many know not that covenant consent is that Christianity and faith which they are to try, but think that godliness is some other thing than indeed it is : what wonder, then, if they lie in doubtings ?

S. But may not an unregenerate man come, that thinketh he is sincere, and doth mistake ?

P. He may not lawfully come ; for, 1. He is a refuser of Christ and his benefits ; and the work there to be done is to profess that he accepteth him, and truly consenteth to his covenant ; and should he falsely come and profess acceptance and consent, who doth it not indeed, nor will not be persuaded to it ? The question is, whether it be lawful solemnly to lie ? He that is truly willing to have God for his God, and Christ for his Saviour, Teacher, and Lord, and the Spirit for his Sanctifier, is a true Christian, and may come ; and he that ^b will not, must not lie, by taking Christ in representation, when he refuseth him in heart and deed ; nor may he outwardly take the signs of those benefits, pardon and life, which, indeed, he is incapable of.

S. Then, it seems, the pastor must not receive such.

P. The pastor must receive ^c hypocrites that are unknown to him to be such ; for it is only God and conscience that know the heart. It may be my duty to receive an hypocrite when it is his sin to come and claim it.

S. But what if the open profane shall come ?

P. The ^d pastors have the church keys, and are its guides ; and they are to keep out all that are not baptised and professed covenanters with Christ, and to cast out all who are obstinate and impenitent in a wicked life, which is contrary to the essence of the covenant ; but they must do this in a regular course of church justice, upon due proof and trial, after due admonition, and exhortation, and patience with the impenitent ; and not upon common report, without this proceeding.

S. But what if either by bad men's intrusion, or the pastor's negligence, many such come in, may I join with such ?

P. If you do not your part, by wise advice, to bring them to repentance, and after, by accusation and proof, to cast out the

^b 1 Cor. xi. 28—30.

^c Acts viii. 13.

^d 1 Cor. v. ; Matt. xviii. 15—18 ; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13 ; Heb. xiii. 7, 17.

impenitent, this will be your sin ; but the fault of the sinner or of the pastor shall not be imputed to you if you be innocent. It is the church's duty to cast out the incapable ; but it is a sin to go from the church and God's ordinance because they are there, if they be not cast out. You must do your best to promote true church discipline ; but must not separate from the church because it is neglected. But yet, for your own edification and comfort, you may remove to a better church and pastor, if some greater reason, as public hurt, &c., hinder it not.

S. III. What is the particular preparation which is necessary ?

P. 1. To renew our meditations of the nature and use of the sacrament, and how holy a work it is to transact so great a business with God and our Redeemer, before the congregation, that so we may come with holy and reverent, and not with common and regardless, minds.

2. To^d examine ourselves, both whether we continue our unfeigned consent to the covenant of God, and also whether we live according to our covenant, in a godly, sober, righteous, and charitable life, and live not in any wilful sin ; and what falls we have been guilty of ; and, accordingly, to humble ourselves to God, and to man where the case requireth it, by true repentance ; and to ask them forgiveness whom we have wronged, and to forgive them that have wronged us, that we may be fit to receive forgiveness from God, and for loving communion with him and his church.

3. To consider beforehand what we are to do when we come to the sacrament, and what we are to receive.

S. II. You have told me what the preparation must be ; will you now tell me what I must do at the sacrament ?

P. In general, you must renew your covenant with God in Christ, and receive renewed mercies from him.

In particular, I. You must stir up and exercise, 1. A firm belief of the doctrine of the Gospel, the truth of Christ, and the world to come. 2. A lively sense of your sin and misery, your need of Christ, his blood, and Spirit ; a loathing of yourself and sins, and a high esteem of him and of his Grace. 3. A hungering and thirsting after him and his grace, and communion with God. 4. A thankful sense of the wonderful love of God in our redemption. 5. The exercise of love to him that hath thus loved us, and of joy in the sense of so great salvation, Love and joy are the life of our sacramental communion. 6.

^d 1 Cor. v. ; Matt. xviii. 15—18 ; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13 ; Heb. xlii. 7, 17.

A quieting confidence in Christ and his covenant now sealed to us. 7. A renunciation of all other love and hopes, and carnal, worldly pleasures and felicity; forsaking all in heart for Christ, and ready to suffer for him whose^{*} sufferings save us. 8. A hearty love to one another, and great desire of the unity or believers, and readiness to communicate to their wants. 9. You must renew the devoting and giving up yourself to God, your Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, with a firm resolution, sincerely to cleave unto him and obey him to the death. 10. You must do all in hope of Christ's second coming, and of everlasting life. All these graces must be exercised in the sacrament.

S. What have I there to move me to all this?

P. 1. You bring with you a sinful soul to humble you. 2. You have God's truth there sealed, and Christ crucified, represented, and freely offered you, to exercise your faith; and all his benefits and salvation given you, to exercise your desires, thankfulness, love, and joy. 3. You have the Bread of Life there broken to you, and the Spirit of Christ there given you, with his body and blood, to stir up your appetite after holiness. 4. You have the odiousness of sin, and the justice of God, presented to you in the commemoration of the sacrificed Lamb of God. 5. You have a sealed pardon of sin given you, to teach you thankfulness and resolution of new obedience. 6. You have a commemoration of Christ, till he come in glory, to keep up your hope and desire of that glory which he purchased, and prepareth for you. 7. You have the most wonderful demonstration of the love of God; giving his Son, and all his mercy, to his enemies; and promising you life eternal by him, to win your heart to the love of God. 8. You have a sight of him that despised all the riches, and honours, and pleasures of the world, and willingly hung upon the cross, as if he had been a malefactor. And all this to please God, condemn sin, and save souls; to show you how the flesh, and world, and life itself, is to be forsaken and contemned; and at what rates God must be pleased, and how highly souls must be valued. 9. You have the church before you, as one body partaking of one bread, one cup, one Christ, to show you how love and unity must be valued. 10. And you there are a receiver of the signs, and give up yourself to him that giveth them to you, to show that you receive Christ and his sal-

* 1 Cor. xi. 26—30.

vation, and are obliged, and absolutely devoted to him, to serve him in thankful, obedient love.

S. Direct me when and how to do all this.

P. 1. When you are ^f called, and going up to the table, remember, with humble thankfulness, to what a feast God's mercy freely inviteth such an unworthy sinner.

2. When the minister is confessing sin, cast down your soul in penitent confession of your own sins.

3. When you see the bread and wine provided for this use, remember that it is the Creator of all, by whom we live, whom we have offended.

4. When you hear the words of the institution read, remember that ^g love which prepared and gave us a Redeemer.

5. When you look on the consecrated bread and wine, ^h discern and reverence the representative body and blood of Christ, and take it not profanely now for common bread and wine.

6. When you see the bread broken, and the wine poured out, remember the sacrificed Lamb of God, ⁱ that loved us to the death, and taketh away the sins of the world.

7. When the minister prayeth to God for the efficacy of the sacrament, join heartily with him, and beg for that pardon, peace, and Spirit, which is here offered.

8. When the minister delivereth you the bread and wine, look on him as the ^k messenger of Christ, appointed to deliver to you Christ himself, his sacrificed ^l body and blood, to be your Saviour; and with him the sealed covenant of grace, pardoning all your sins, and giving you right to justification, sanctification, and glory; and, accordingly, with thankful faith receive him.

9. When you see the communicants receiving the same Christ with you, let your heart be ^m united in love to all believers, and long for their union, and think how perfectly we shall be one in Christ, in the heavenly glory.

10. When the minister returneth ⁿ thanks and praise to God, stir up your soul to love and joy; and suppose you saw the heavenly society, who are saved by Christ, how vigorously they thank and praise him, that you may endeavour to intimate them in your degree.

^f Matt. xxii.; Luke xiv.; Cant. v. 1; Isa. lv. 1—3; Rev. xxii. 17.

^g John iii. 16; 1 John ii. 1.

^h 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29.

ⁱ Rev. i. 5; 1 John iv. 19.

^k 2 Cor. v. 19—21.

^l 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

^m John xvii. 23, 24; 1 Cor. i. 10; 1 John iv. 11.

ⁿ Luke ii. 13, 14; Heb. viii. 5, and xii. 22, 23; Rev. v. 5—7, 11, 14.

11. When the minister telleth you what you have done, and received, and what you must ^o do for the time to come, consent, and resign yourself to Christ, and resolve to live in thankful, obedient love.

12. When you are going away, remember; thus we are ready to go out of the world, and church on earth, where our mercies are much in signs and means, and are hastening to the place where we shall ^p see and enjoy the things now signified, and know, face to face, as we are known, and have higher joys than faith can raise.

S. What must I do when I come home?

P. 1. Continue to love and praise him that hath feasted you with ^a such salvation; and keep up a life of thanks and joy. 2. Continue in the ^r use of all other means, to keep up the life and resolution which you here obtained. 3. See that you live as you have covenanted.

S. How oft should I communicate?

P. As oft as the church doth in which you live. In old time, it was done at least ^a every Lord's day.

S. I pray you, next, teach me how to meditate profitably in private on all occasions.

P. 1. Choose such matters to ^t meditate on as you have greatest use for on your heart: which is above all. 1. The truth of the Gospel, and of the meditation of life to come, to confirm your faith and hope. 2. The infinite goodness and love of God in Christ, and the joyful state of the blessed in heaven, to inflame your love, and heavenly desires and joys. 3. The sufficiency of Christ, in all cases, to exercise your communion with him by faith. 4. The operations of the Spirit, that you may know how to receive and improve them. 5. The nature of all duties, that you may know how to do them. 6. The evil and nature of every sin, and the ways of all temptations, that you may know how to avoid or overcome them. 7. The nature of all mercies, that you may thankfully improve them. 8. The use of afflictions, and the nearness of death, and what will be then necessary, that you may be prepared with faith and patience, and all may be your gain.

II. For the time and length of meditation, let it be, whether

^o John v. 14.

^p 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

^a Rom. v. 1—8.

^r Phil. ii. 12.

^t Acts xx. 7, 11.

^a Gen. xxiv. 63; Josh. i. 8; Psalm i. 2; lxiii. 6; clv. 34; cxix. 15, 97, 99; xxiii. 48, 78, 149; cxliv. 5, and lxxvii. 12; 1 Tim. iv. 15.

at your work, or when you do nothing else, at your best opportunity and leisure. And let it be as long as your time will allow you, without neglecting any other duty, and as your head can well bear it. For solid, sober men can carry on long and regular meditations; but ignorant, weak men must take up with short and broken thoughts, like short prayers; and melancholy people are unfit for any musings or meditation at all. For to do that which they cannot do, will but make them worse.

III. As for the work itself; observe how profitable ministers preach; and even so in meditation do youⁿ preach to your own heart. 1. Consider of the meaning of the matter, and understand it. 2. Consider of the truth of it, and believe it. 3. Consider how it is most useful to you. And there convince your conscience by evident reasons: disgrace your sins by odious aggravations: invite your soul to God, and Christ, and goodness, by spreading the amiableness of all before it. Chide yourself sharply for the sins you find: stir up yourself earnestly by all the powerful motives that are before you. Comfort your soul, by spreading before it the present and the everlasting joys: support it by thinking on the grounds of faith: and direct it into the right way of duty, and drive it to resolve and promise obedience for the time to come.

And in all this, let clearness and liveliness concur: for as it is those that make a good preacher; so it is those that make a profitable meditation. Preach not coldly and drowsily to your hearts, but even as you would have a minister preach.

I tell you, the benefits of such meditation is very great: few men grow very wise, or very good, that use it not. We are full of ourselves, and near ourselves, and know our hearts better than others do; and many will hear and learn of themselves that will hardly hear and learn of others. And secret duties have usually most sincerity.

S. I would next entreat you to teach me how to pray in secret.

P. I told you in part before. I now only add, 1. Understand well what it is that you must desire in your heart, and in what order; and then you will have a habit of prayer in you when you have got a habit of those desires. For desire is the life of prayer. To this end, study well the true meaning of the

ⁿ Psalm xvi. 2, 3; xlii. 1, 4, 5, 11; xliii. 5; lxii. 1, 5; lxiii. 8; lxxxvi. 4; ciii. 1, 2, 22; civ. 1, 35; cxvi. 7, &c., and cxlvi. 1; Gen. xlix. 6.

* Lord's Prayer; for that is the platform, and the very seal that should imprint the same matter and order of desires on your soul. I have elsewhere opened that prayer at large. †

II. When you have got this impression of holy desires on your heart you are then a Christian indeed; let the expressing or wording of them be according to occasions: you are not always to speak them just in the order as they are in your heart and in the Lord's Prayer: for † particular occasions may call you oft to mention some particular sins, wants, or mercies, without then mentioning the rest; or to mention them more largely than the rest; as there is cause.

III. Think not that you have prayed, when your tongue hath gone † without your heart: therefore, get the deepest sense of your sins, wants, and mercies, and labour more with your hearts than with your tongues: and, out of the abundance and treasure of a feeling, fervent heart, the tongue will be able so to speak as that God will accept it.

IV. Go to God only in the † name of Christ, in trust upon his merits and intercession: put all your prayers as into his hands, to offer them to God: and expect every mercy from God as by his hands. For since sin defiled us, man can have no happy communion with God in himself, but by a mediator.

V. † Live as you pray, and think not that confessing sin to God will excuse you for continuing in it. And labour for what you pray for: and think not that praying is all that you have to do, to get God's grace, any more than to get your food and raiment: but you must labour, and beg, for God's blessing thereon.

About forms and family prayer I spoke before.

S. I pray you briefly direct me for good conference.

P. 1. Be † furnished for it, by a good understanding and a zealous soul: for as a man is, so will he speak: the inward disposition is all in all.

2. When you are with those that can teach you, be much forwarder to hear than to speak. Pride maketh men of a teaching, talkative disposition.

* Matt. vi. 6, 9; Rom. viii. 26.

† In my 'Christian Directory.'

* So did the Apostles oft. Acts i. 24; iv. 31; vi. 6, 8, 15; ix. 40, and xxviii. 8.

* Psalm cxlii. 2; xlii. 4, lxii. 8; Lam. ii. 19; Matt. xv. 8.

† 1 John ii. 12; John xiv. 13, 14; xv. 16, and xvi. 23, 24, 26; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. vii. 25; Rom. viii. 34; 2 Tim. iv. 16.

† Luke xxii. 40, 46, and xxi. 36.

† Matt. xli. 34—36, xlii. 52; Psalm cxix. 46, and cxlv. 5, 6.

3. Yet if such be silent as can teach you, set them on work by some seasonable question. For the best are too dull and backward to good. And many are silent for want of occasion, opportunity, or invitation.

4. When you speak to the ignorant and sinful, do it not in a contemptuous, proud, magisterial way; but with clear convincing reason, and with great love and gentleness. Let instruction and sweet exhortation be instead of reproof, for the most part. And when you must reprove them, do it usually in secret, and not before others; for disgrace will provoke them, and hinder from repentance.

4. Drive home all your holy conference to some practical issue, for your own affection and resolution when you learn of others, and to affect the hearers at the very heart, and bring them to resolve on that which is their duty, when it is your lot to be as a teacher to others.

5. Avoid two pernicious destroyers of good discourse: 1. Choosing * little things, though good, to talk of. As some small † controversy, word, or text, less pertinent to men's present necessities. 2. An ignorant, unskilful manner of talking of weighty matters. Abundance of good people breed scorn and contempt in the wittier sort of hearers, by their imprudent manner of speech.

6. Because the ignorant and unlearned cannot well avoid this, when they talk with those that are more witty and learned than themselves, I advise them to say little to such, unless to name some plain text of Scripture which may convince them: and, instead of the rest, 1. To get them to read some fit books: 2. And to get them to discourse with some ministers or others that can overwit them, and silence all their cavils.

S. I have but one thing more to desire now: that you will teach me how to keep days of humiliation and thanksgiving in private and in public.

P. I would not overwhelm you with precepts: a little may serve for both these, besides what is said on other subjects. 1. In public, the pastors must choose the time of humiliations and fasts, with the order, and words, and circumstances of performance. But in private, your discretion must be chooser. And it must be, 1. After some great sin. 2. Or in some great danger or judgment, private or public. 3. Or when some great mercy is desired, or work to be done. And so thanksgiving are for great mercies and deliverances.

* John iv. 20, 22.

† Tit. iii. 9.

2. The manner of humiliation is, by due ^a fasting, and confession, and prayer, to humble the soul penitently for sin, and beg the mercy which we want : and the manner of thanksgiving, to ^b rejoice soberly and spiritually, with moderate feasting, when that is convenient, and give God thanks for his mercy, and beg the grace to improve it, and renew our devotion and resolutions of obedience.

3. The outward parts (fasting and feasting) must not be made a form or ceremony of, nor judged to be pleasing to God merely in and for themselves : but must be chosen only as means which help us to their proper ends, humiliation and thanksgiving ; and may be varied as men's cases and bodies differ. The weak may be humbled ^c without fasting, or with less : and the poor and the sickly may give thanks without feasting, or with little. And all must take heed of offering God a sacrifice of the sin of sensuality and excess.

4. ^k True repentance in humiliation, and increased love to God in thanksgiving, and true reformation of life by both, is the great end to be aimed at ; and all that attaineth not, or truly intendeth not that end, is vain. But so much for this present conference.

THE EIGHTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Directions for a safe and comfortable Death.

Speakers.—Paul, a teacher ; and Saul, a learner.

SAUL. Sir, I have been, since I saw you, with divers of my neighbours at their death ; and I see that weakness and pain of body, and the terrors of death, and the stir of friends and physicians, are so great impediments to men's preparation then, that I earnestly entreat you to help me to make ready while I am in health. For I am loth to leave so great work to so weak a state, and to so sad, and short, and uncertain a time.

PAUL. It is God's great mercy to make you so wise. There is nothing in which the folly of ungodly men doth more appear than in delaying their serious preparations for death. Is there

^a Est. iv. 16 ; Joel i. 14—16 ; Ezr. viii. 21, &c.

^b Est. ix. 17, 18 ; Psalm lxxxi. 3.

^c Matt. ix. 13, and xii. 7.

^k Rom. xiv. 17 ; 1 Cor. viii. 8 ; Isa. lviii. 2, &c. ; Psalm i. 14, 15, 23, and xvi. ; 1 Cor. v. 8.

any man so brutish as not to know that he must die ? And he is scarce a man, much less a Christian, who believeth not that death will pass him into another state of life. There is no man can doubt but this change is sure, and very near ; and no man knoweth how near, or when ; and O how great a change will it be ! The body, which was spruced up and pampered, which must now be honoured, and pleased, and preferred, must then become a loathsome corpse : the pleasant cups, the delicious food, the adorned rooms, the gay attire, the soft beds, the delightful gardens, walks, and fields, the honour and precedence, power and command, are all at an end, and turned into a dark and silent grave. The flesh that must be daily pleased, and nothing is too good for it, must be an ugly, black, and stinking carcass, many years rotting out of sight and smell, lest it should annoy the living, and mar their mirth, before it can come to be dry and less abominable dust, and equal with the common earth. ¹ House and lands, wealth and honour, greatness and vain-glory, sports and worldly pleasures, are wholly at an end, and will follow them no further, but be to them as if they had never been. And the soul must appear in another society, among the spirits that have finished their course on earth, and are gone before to receive their doom : there it must see what before we heard of ; either the hellish misery of undone souls, which have cast away all their hopes for ever, and the wicked devils which deceived them ; or the perfected spirits of the just, the glorious angels, our glorified Redeemer, and the most glorious God. There they will soon see the truth of that word and that world which they doubted of ; and quickly feel what they must trust to for evermore. O what a change is it suddenly to pass from our company, our dwellings, our business, our pleasures, and from all this world, and to see a world which we never saw before, and to enter presently upon the joys or sorrows which must never, never end or change ! O what a stone is a hardened heart ! What a senseless thing is an ungodly man ! that can either forget such a day, and such a change as this, or can think of it without awakened resolutions, presently, and with their utmost diligence, to prepare ! If they believe not God's word, and the life to come, why do they not come and debate the case with us, and hear what we can say, till they are resolved, upon the best inquiry, whether it be so indeed or not ? Do they think that we can give them no bet-

¹ Luke xvi.

ter proof of it, than what their unstudied brains lay hold on; or no better than the devil giveth them against it? But if they do believe it, O what self-condemning wretches are they! What! believe such a change as sure and near, and not prepare for it? Believe that they must be in heaven or hell for ever, and yet live as if they cared not which of them it be?

S. I confess it is an evident truth and duty which you urge, and an undeniable madness in men to forget so great, and sure, and near a change; for death is a thing past all dispute. It is no controversy whether we must die. And a man that loveth himself should think, then, whither we must go next.

P. If we tell men, in preaching, of things which they never knew before, they understand us not; and, instead of learning, they cavil and question whether they are true; and when we tell them of such things as they know already, and all the world knoweth, they despise it, and say, 'Who knoweth not this?' But, by this, you may see that we have need to preach nothing more than that which all men's tongues confess. It is a shame, either for the preachers or hearers, that so many sermons are preached of death. If there be no need of it, the shame is ours; but if there be, the shame is theirs. O man! what a dark, and dead, and sottish thing art thou become, that hast need to be told that thou must die; and need to be told it at every funeral; yea, every day; and all too little: as if the place which we meet in did not tell it us, where we tread on the dust of so many generations, and, within a yard or two of our feet, some carcasses lie in black and loathsome rottenness, and the skulls and bones of others forget what once they were pleased with on earth. Our diseases and pains of body forewarn us; our weariness in our labours tells us that we have a body that must break at last; our grey hairs will tell us, as the golden leaves on the trees in autumn, that our fall is at hand; our children tell us that others are rising up in our steads, while we are going off the stage. Every bit that we eat, and cup that we drink, doth tell us what bodies we have, that can be no longer upheld than new reparations are daily made of their decays; our every night's sleep warneth us to prepare for that sleep from which the resurrection only will awake us; all the poor beasts, and birds, and fishes, whose lives must go to keep up ours, do tell us that our own will not be long, and that we must die as well as they, and that a life maintained by so many lives, at so dear a rate, should be well spent for his service that giveth us these, and all. When we

plough up and dig the earth for our seed, and cast it in, where it must corrupt before it spring up again, we do but represent the digging of our graves, and the burial of this body till the rising day. Every time that the sun setteth at night and riseth again the next morning, it warneth us how our lives must set and rise again ; and so doth every fall and spring. Every bell that tolleth or ringeth for the dead, is our call to prepare to follow them ; yea, every bell that calleth to the church doth tell us that the same bells must shortly be tolled for our burial. Every clock that striketh, every watch that moveth, every hour-glass that runneth, hath a voice to call senseless sinners. See and hear, O man or woman, how thy time passeth away ; how quickly will thy last^m hour come ; yea, every breath that we fetch ourselves, and every stroke that our pulse both beat, doth call to sinners, 'Your days are numbered ; it is determined how many more breaths you must breathe, and how many times more your pulse must beat ; your last pulse and your last breath is near at hand !' O what abundance of preachers have we to tell us that we must die ! and yet men live as if they did not believe it, or never had been warned to prepare.

S. But sure, sir, it is a thing that men know so well, that they need not be told that they must die ; but only be told better how to prepare for it.

P. I tell you, to the shame of corrupted nature, that men have need to be told, and told again, a thousand times, with the loudest voice, that they must die. It was not a vain lesson which the philosopher told the great emperor, 'Remember that thou art mortal.' O had I a voice that could be heard all over the land, to cry to all men, 'Remember that you must die ;' and could I speak it to their hearts, it would awaken the secure, it would unfool the dreaming world, who are playing away their lives for nothing. I tell you, the preacher that doth but thunder this in the ears of a sleepy, worldly congregation, 'O sinners, you must die, you must die, as sure as you are alive you must die,' doth not preach an unprofitable sermon. If you believe me not, answer me these few questions :

Quest. 1. Why else are men so surprised with the fears of death when it is just coming ? They knew, all their lives before, that it would come, and yet they live merrily and carelessly till it is just upon them ; and then when the physician tells them there is no hope, O what heart-sinking terror are they in, as if

^m Matt. xxiv. 44, and xxv. 10 ; Luke xii. 40.

they had never known that they must die till now. Sure there is a way to make death less terrible ; and why is not this way used in time ?

Quest. 2. And what maketh such a difference between their healthy and their dying thoughts ? Now nothing doth relish with them but the world and the flesh ; and then they cry out, the world is vanity. Now nothing is so unwelcome to them as the motions of a holy life ; but then they cry out, with Balaam, "O that I might die the death of the righteous, and my last end might be as his." (Num. xxiii. 10.) Now praying wearieth them ; but then they cry for mercy, mercy, and learn to pray without book, and without a teacher. Now they cannot bear him that telleth them of their sins ; but then they can cry out, as Judas, "I have sinned." Now they must not be stopped nor troubled in their sins ; but then they trouble themselves more, and cry out, 'O that I had the time again which I have lost ! O that God would try me once again ! I would be a new man ; I would lead a new life ; I would never do as I have done.' Then they can be serious in thinking of their change, and the dread of it amazeth them ; and O that they could make sure of heaven ! But now they regard it as little almost as if it did not much concern them, while they have time, and helps, and warning to make sure. Either this change is wise, or not. If not, why will they do it then ? if it be, why not now ? That which is the best then is best now. Death should be the comfortable ending of a well-spent life ; and they make it either the terrible or the senseless conclusion of a loser's game, or a doleful tragedy ; and all because they be not awakened to learn to die in the time of health.

Quest. 3. Why is it that their teachers never hear them once seriously inquire, 'How shall I make ready ; and how shall I know where I must dwell for ever ?' If we can afford them no help herein at all, why do they desire us to counsel them on their death-bed ? if we can, why do we not hear this sooner from them ? Do you understand Christ's parable of the unjust steward ? (Luke xvi. 4, 5.) His wit is commended, that when he was to be turned away, he seriously bethought him whither to go next, and provided himself of another habitation. Nature taught him to make some provision for his change. But we cannot get men that know, past doubt, that shortly they must leave this world for ever, to bethink them carefully, whither they must go next ; and how their poor souls may find a comfortable entertainment with God.

S. I pray you name some of the benefits that would come to men, by the serious warnings and thoughts of death ; otherwise we shall think that it is but troubling us before the time, with the fears of that which cannot be prevented, and so the increasing of our sorrows.

P. O friend ! I tell you death is a powerful preacher ; it teacheth many men that to the quick which we have preached twenty years in vain. We preach them asleep ; but the sentence of death doth awaken them to purpose. I will begin with myself, and the rest of my profession :

1. The serious thoughts of death do teach ministers how to preach, and the people how to hear. I am sure, through God's mercy, it hath been the expectation of death these thirty-four years which hath been a great means to help me to that little, too little, seriousness in preaching which I have had. Who is so dull that, if he thought that this were the last day that he should preach and live, would not importunately beg of his hearers to receive the Gospel, and repent of sin, and turn to God, and save their souls ? But when men think that they have forty years more to live yet, and preferments to get, and prosperity to enjoy, they make the public assembly a stage, to set out themselves, and act the part of a servant of Christ, to win the prize and reward of a worldling ; they play with Scripture, and talk of heaven and hell in jest, and jingle out a few canting words, contrived by hypocrites to beget hypocrisy, and, from a senseless heart, to make men more senseless, and teach them to take Christianity for a stage play, and the service of God for a common thing. For all things would generate their like ; the spirit of slumber as well as the Spirit of sanctification.

But death awakeneth the preacher to awaken the hearers. We are dying while we are speaking, and you while you are hearing. The breath which we speak by, is measuring out our time. We have but so many breaths to breathe, and we have done. We shall all be shortly silenced in the grave. It is your mercy and our mercy that yet we have tongues to speak, and you have ears to hear. But we preach and you hear as men in a boat, which is all the while swiftly carried down the stream, and will be quickly in the ocean of eternity. No wonder if Paul adjure Timothy to most constant and importunate preaching ; (2 Tim. iv. 1, 2 ;) and if Christ so often call out to sinners, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." All that we have to say must be quickly said, and all that you will learn

must be quickly learned; even now, or never. O how many a hundred times have I risen off my knees with shame and consternation, to think that a dying man, in so great necessity, could pray no harder at the door of eternity! and how many a time have I come down from the pulpit with shame and grief, to think that I could speak with no more affection to men that are so near another world; that my heart did not melt over miserable sinners, and that I did not, with tears and importunity, entreat them; that I could so easily and quietly go away without a grant of that which I came for, when I knew not that ever I should speak to them more. Methinks death should make us all better preachers, and you better hearers, were it well foreseen. It stirred up Peter to stir up his flock, knowing that speedily he must put off his tabernacle. (2 Pet. i. 13, 14.) It stirred up Paul to rouse up Timothy, to think that the time of his departure was at hand. (2. Tim. iv. 1, 2, 6.) It moved him, and melted his hearers, when he told them that they must see his face no more. (Act. xx. 38.)

S. What other benefit doth foreseen death bring?

P. 2. It teacheth us the wisest estimate of all the wealth, and honour, and greatness of this world; for it showeth them all to us in their final state, and what they will prove to us in our greatest needs. If all the congregation were sure that they were to die to-morrow, or the next week or month, how easily could we preach them into a contempt of the world. Though it changed not their love to it, (for they would still keep it if they could,) it would make them confess that all is vanity. Then, what is riches worth? what are lands and sumptuous houses worth? what are honours and places of command worth? Now, are these, think you, better than a Christ; or worthy the purchasing with the loss of heaven? Would not assurance of salvation now be better? Suppose the preacher that cometh to comfort a dying man, should come to him only with worldly comforts; suppose he say, 'Sir, be of good comfort; you have had many a merry cup, many a sumptuous feast, many a gallant entertainment; you have lived in honour, and wealth, and ease:' would he not say, 'O but it is all past and gone, and I must never more enjoy it!' If the priest shall say, 'You have fair houses, and a great estate, to comfort you,' will he not say, 'O that is my sorrow, for I must leave them all for ever!' If it be told him, 'Your children shall enjoy it all when you are gone,' will he not say, 'But they must leave it as I do; and whither shall my soul

go ; and what comfort will their pleasure be to me ; when the " rich worldling in hell would have had one to warn his brethren on earth, lest they should follow him to the place of torment ?" The church-yard is that market-place where the things of this world are duly rated. If they will purchase you a pardon from God, or open heaven to you, or make your bones and dust more happy, value them, and spare not ; seek them, and keep them, and use them as far as furthereth the service of God and your salvation, and will give true comfort to a dying man. But if all your plenty prepare but for this farewell,* "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and then whose shall all these things be which thou hast provided ?" such a parting is not worth so dear a price, (Read Psalm xlix. 6, 7, 13, 14.)

S. What other benefit can you get by the thoughts of death ?

P. Death is the great disgracer of pride. It will tell you whether it be seemly for him to look big, and boast, and domineer to day, who must shortly be buried in the society of bones and dust, in darkness. Oh ! can that man be proud that is going to answer for all his sins before that God that hateth pride, and must leave his beloved body in the earth, swelling with haughtiness to-day, and in the grave, and perhaps in hell, to-morrow ? Is it congruous to dress that body with needless cost and curiosity, and spend precious time in adorning that flesh which must so quickly rot and stink ? The grave is the looking-glass which will teach proud gallants how to dress them. If they saw but what is now within them, they would think that such dung and guts did scarce well suit with such curious coverings. If you did but now see and smell one of your neighbour's carcasses, which was buried a year or two ago, would you think it suitable for him to be proud that must come to this ? That skull and those bones retain no signs of the proud man's glory. O, foolish mortals ! if you know not, and remember not, that you must come, and quickly come, to this.

S. What else learn you by the foresight of death ?

P. 4. It teacheth men how to value their mirth and sensual delight. All the pleasure of meat, drink, plays, of lust, and all your fleshly accommodations, are now past and gone, and never shall return. There you may see the skull and hole where the meat and drink did once go in, but the delight is ended. And must all come to this ? And yet will not men seek more durable delights ? Your swine and ox is fed for your own table, and there.

* Luke xvi. 26, 27.

• Luke xlii. 20.

fore it is worth the cost. But is it worth the wasting of your estate, and the loss of your soul too, to feed and pamper a corpse for the worms or grave? Is it more comfortable to a dying man to hear, 'You have lived a merry life in the world,' or to know that he shall live in the heavenly joys with his Redeemer?

S. What other lesson will death teach us?

P. 5. It will teach us how to spend our time. O precious time! how basely art thou esteemed by idle, voluptuous, and ungodly men! Now they can play it away, and prate it away, and idle it away in a hundred vanities, as if God had made their lives too long, and they knew not what to do with it. But when they hear, 'You are past recovery,' 'O then for more time! O that we might live one year longer! O that we had now all that time to repent in, and make sure of heaven, which we spent in sports, and idleness, and worldliness! O that we had lived as obediently to God, and as holy lives, as the strictest saints, so we had but their safety and hopes of heaven! O time, time, how art thou past away and gone, and all the world cannot call back one day or moment! O what a hateful word is pastime! O happy men that have hearts to use it for the ends that God created and redeemed them, before it be too late, and time, and soul, and heaven be lost!' It is death that teacheth men the worth of time.

S. Have you any more to say of this?

P. 6. Death teacheth men how to behave themselves to each other. How peaceably do those bones and that dust lie together. There is no striving, no cruelty, no domineering or abusing others. On a death-bed you will say that you forgive all the world. You dare not desire revenge then, lest God be revenged on you. And will you be worse living than dead? Doth oppression, and persecution, and treading down the poor and low, beseeem them that must so soon be levelled with the lowest, and be unable to stir away a worm that feedeth on their heart or face?

7. I will add but one more; death teacheth us whether we should rather fly from sufferings or from sin. Die we must, whether we will or no, and is it not better to die for Christ, if he require it, than die without any such advantage? Will it comfort us at death to think what sufferings we escaped by sin?

S. I have oft marvelled why God would not save us from dying, seeing Christ died for us, but now you have partly satisfied my doubt.

P. Though God's great day of judgment be to come, yet he will have some justice done upon sinners in this world: and though Christ have suffered for us, there is a necessity both to our own and the common good, that even sinning Christians suffer something themselves. But God doth so moderate it, by his wisdom and mercy, that even this punishment becometh a cure to the sin that causeth it, and a great means to our good. Were it but an uncertain thing whether we should die or not; did but some die, and some not die; yea, did but men live as many hundred years as before the deluge, O what a wicked world would this be!

1. Covetousness then would have no restraint. How dearly would men love this world. O what a striving then would be for it! They that would live in sin, and sell heaven for a few years uncertain commodity here, what would they do for a thousand years' riches, or for the hopes of living here for ever? But when this is written on all the worldling's doors, on his houses, on his wealth, on his flesh, 'Thou must die. Thou must certainly and shortly die,' this is it that mars the markets of the world. A sober look on a skull and coffin, or a grave, doth blast all the beauty of this world, and telleth reason itself it is but a dream. It writeth vanity upon all. Who would say, "Soul take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," how rich soever he were, if he looked not to possess it many years, but expected to hear, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee, and then whose shall all these things be which thou hast provided?" Now take thy houses, and lands, and money with thee if thou canst. At least take so much as will buy thee a drop of water to cool thy tongue. If death did not preach to worldlings, no other preachers could be heard. It crieth out to them, 'What mean you, sinners, to bestow all this labour for a few days' vanity? Is it worth all this stir to make your salvation more doubtful, and more difficult, as a camel's passage through a needle's eye? To increase your load, and double your temptations, and all for the pleasures of so short a life?' If death did not preach with us, we should preach to little purpose.

2. And were it not for death, ambition would have no bounds. If Alexanders and Cæsars are such plagues to mankind while they are posting to the grave, what would they be if they had any hope of an earthly immortality? Then the great ones of

† Luke xii. 19, 20.

the world would be great indeed. How big would they look; how insolently would they lord it over the poor; and how cruelly would they oppress and persecute the innocent! No wonder, then, if their flatterers were so many and so base as to make them think they were gods, and to require a divine obedience and honour. But foreseen death doth curb this arrogance, and standeth like Haman's gallows before their own doors. As he was highest, he had the honour to be hanged highest. When Satan hath brought them to the pinnacle of the temple, they see how low they have to fall. When he hath brought them to the exceeding high mountain, and showed them the kingdoms and glory of the world, if they accept them as his gift, and on his dreadful terms, it is a wonder that without terror they are able to look down so low, as death assures them they must be cast. If you had the greatest entertainments on the battlements of the steeple, and were sure that shortly you must be cast down, it would spoil the pleasure of them all. It is a brave thing for Absalom to be a king, and for Ahithophel to be his chief counsellor, but had they both foreseen their hanging, it would have made them sooner hang down the head. Poor men and preachers may thank God that the ungodly great ones of the world must die, and that they are constrained to foreknow it; or else earth would be like hell, and oppression and persecution would be the state of mankind. For man, being in honour, would have no understanding; if now both they and their posterity go on in the folly of their way, when they abide not, but are as the beast that perish, (Psalm xlix. 12, 13, 20,) what would they do, if death were not their instructor?

3. Were it not for death, sensuality would have no restraint. Voluptuous swaggerers would scorn reproof. The fornicator would not be ashamed by the light, nor the drunkard fear what is in the bottom of the cup. Who would not be clothed with purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously and deliciously every day, that could? O but this death! this death is it that marreth all the mirth. When Belshazzar seeth the hand-writing on the wall, in all his jollity, his joints do tremble. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee. Walk in the way of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment." (Eccl. xi. 9.) This is it that spoileth all the sport. Remember that thou dancest about the grave, and death must end

† Luke xvi.

the game at last. I tell you, except the promise of the life to come, there is nothing that so much marreth the devil's markets, and spits so much shame in the face of sin, as certain, foreseen, approaching death; and therefore the devil is wiser than to come with the ordinary bait to a dying man. Should he then offer him cards and dice, and tempt him to fornication or to drunkenness, yea, or offer him lands and dignities, he knows they would do nothing. What is this to a man that must die to-morrow? I conclude, therefore, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth." (Eccl. vii. 2—6.)

S. It is a wonder of stupidity, that reasonable men can so much forget so great, and near, and sure a change; and that so few do bethink them whither their souls must go, and where they must dwell next.

P. Some would have no funeral sermons, and I would have almost no other. All our religion is but a continual preparation for death; to learn to die well, by learning, and practising to believe, and love, and live well. Every sermon must teach men this. Men would have a funeral sermon when they are dead, that will not hear the same doctrine while they live; as if they had more care of the souls of those that survive them than of their own. Look on their tombs, and you shall see them almost all in a praying posture, with hands lifted up, who prayed but seldom and coldly while they lived; which sheweth what conscience telleth men will be best at last. On their death-beds they desire us to pray for them to God. And now God sendeth us to pray to them for themselves, and they will not hear us, and yet think God must hear us for them then. God denieth us nothing which he hath promised; but if we beg never so hard of themselves, but to care for the salvation of their own souls, we cannot prevail with them; no, not soberly to remember that they must die, and to live as men that do believe it.

S. It is terrible to them, and they are loth to be troubled.

P. 1. If you were to be turned out of your house at the quarter's end, and I should advise you to provide another, would you say, 'I would not think of going out, because it is troublesome?' We must go whether we will or not; and shall we not care whither? 2. Is it troublesome to think of living for

ever with Christ in glory? What then is pleasant? or what more comfortable thoughts will they choose? Is it better to die like a beast, and to live no more? If this miserable world seem better than heaven to them, yet, methinks, seeing they must leave it, whether they will or not, they should be glad to hear how they may be next provided for, and should never be at rest till they had made sure of the everlasting holy, heavenly rest.

S. Well, sir, I pray you lay me down those directions by which I may in health prepare for a safe and comfortable death.

P. It will be needful that I first tell you, I. Wherein your readiness doth consist. II. And how much it is your interest to be ready. III. How much it is your work and duty to make ready. And then, IV. To tell you how you must do it.

S. I like your order well; I pray you open the first.

1. There are two degrees of readiness for death: the first is for a safe death, that you may be saved when you die. The second, for a comfortable death, that you may die also in peace and joy.

P. All those, and only those, die safely and go to heaven, who are pardoned by Christ's blood, and sanctified by his Spirit. The Spirit of Christ is your preparation. If you have that Spirit you are justified, and shall be saved; for it is given you on purpose to fit you for heaven, and to be God's seal upon you, and the pledge, and the earnest, and first-fruits of your celestial happiness. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

2. But that, besides safety, you may have comfort in your death, it is also necessary, 1. That you have some certainty or knowledge that indeed you have the Spirit. 2. That you have faith, hope, and love, the graces of the Spirit, in suitable exercise. 3. And that the great impediments of your comfort be removed.

S. Wherein is this readiness to die our interest?

P. II. Nature itself may tell you much of that, and faith more. 1. He that is not ready for a safe death, is in a state of damnation. If he so die, he is lost for ever. His endless state of joy or misery dependeth on it. Where then can a man's interest be so much concerned; especially considering that our flesh is frail, and liable to many hundred diseases every hour,

* Matt. v. 8.

and no man hath assurance to live another day or night. O, what a madness is it for such a person to live one day in an unprepared state, if he can possibly get out of it (as if he will he may). It is one of the most notorious evidences how much man's nature is enslaved by the devil, that when they are sure to die ere long, and know not but each hour or day may be their last, and hear from God's word, that as they are found at death it must go with them for ever, and that without holiness none shall see the Lord. Yet they can sleep quietly, and rise carelessly, as if all were well with them, while they live in an unregenerate, unsanctified state. If such a person did indeed believe God's word, and were not dead or asleep in sin, surely his heart would meditate terrors; he would think that he even saw hell ready to receive him; he would dream of it in the night; he would find pleasure in nothing in the world till he were converted, and made holy, and prepared for heaven by the Spirit of God; he would, morning and evening, yea, night and day, cry earnestly to God in prayer for that grace which must prepare him for so great a change; he would go to ministers, or godly friends, and ask them how he must make ready for death. 2. And he that is thus unready to die is unready for all duty, for suffering, for every thing; and is but losing the time that he liveth; and till he prepare for death he is preparing for hell. No business, therefore, no other cares, should hinder or delay men; no profit, honours, or pleasure, should quiet them till they have got their souls into a safe condition, and are ready to die.

S. Of what moment is it to die comfortably?

P. 2. The knowledge of your safety is the ground of your comfort. And it must needs be a terror to a man that hath any faith and sensibility, to be utterly uncertain what shall become of his soul for ever: to believe that there is a hell for all the unholy, and not to know but it may prove to be his lot: to believe that none but the holy shall be glorified, and not to know at all whether he be such or not: to know that he must shortly be in heaven or hell, and never more have a change of the place which he first possesseth, and not to know which of these it will be! This must needs be an amazing, dreadful thought. When the body is languishing in pain, and all worldly help and comforts fail, to be then utterly doubtful of everlasting comforts, must needs be a most uncomfortable state. To think, 'I must now go to my long home, and take my un-

changeable possession, either of heaven or hell, but I know not whether it will be,' is a sad thought to a dying man.

Yea, all a man's life must needs be uncomfortable till he be prepared for a comfortable death; for it is not the perishing trifles of this world that can suffice to comfort a wise man that still foreseeth their end. If, therefore, he cannot fetch comfort daily from heaven, he can have none that is worth the having. How can a wise man live comfortably till he can die comfortably, when he knoweth still that death is even at hand?

Yea, till we have some good preparations even for a comfortable death, we live in continual danger of very heinous sin. If we be called to martyrdom for Christ, the terrors of death may sorely tempt us to deny him. How can a man be saved that loveth his life better than Christ and life eternal? And how can a man be willing to go out of this life, that hath not some considerable hopes of a better?

But if a man be ready to die well, he is ready to live well, and ready to suffer, and ready for any thing. When he can fetch comfort from the thoughts of his being for ever with the Lord, what need such a man to fear? What is there that should much trouble him? How quietly may he sleep! how easily may he suffer! how joyfully may he live!

Nothing can be more evident than that to be in a continual readiness to die is the great interest of man; in comparison of which nothing else is worthy to be minded, or to be named.

S. III. What mean you by saying that it is also our chiefest work?

P. He that knoweth that it is his chief interest, must needs know that it is his chief work, as long as self-love is so deep a principle in nature, and interest so much acteth and ruleth all mankind. As a man, when he beginneth his life, doth begin his journey or race towards death and life everlasting, so God doth give him all his time to do this work, and his life is nothing but the time allotted him to prepare for death and a better life; and every hour that is not spent in such preparation is cast away and lost. All the time and work of a Christian's life must be holy and religious; though not all spent in acts of worship, all must be a seeking of God and glory, by the conduct of Christ, his Spirit, and word. And all religion is nothing else but a

* Matt. x. 37—39; Luke xiv. 26, 33.

* 1 Thess. iv. 17, 18; 1 Cor. xv. 58; 2 Pet. iii. 10—12; Phil. i. 17, 21—23; 2 Cor. iv. 16—18; and v. 1—4, 6—8.

preparing ourselves and others for death. Many trouble the world, and cheer themselves with a religiousness which rather unfitteth men for death; even a religion made up of unprofitable opinions, contentions, and disputes. But when they have wearied themselves, and corrupted others, with their opinionative, wrangling zeal, they will find that one day spent in learning to die well would have tended more to solid comfort than such a dreaming kind of life. I know that sound doctrine maketh sound Christians; but it is practical doctrine that must do it. And all Christian practice is but a true preparation for death. Christ is the only way; but heaven, that is, God in the heavenly glory, is the only end. And Christ came from heaven, and is ascended to heaven, and sendeth his Spirit into our hearts from heaven, to call up our hearts, and prepare us for it. Death, therefore, which is our passage into heaven, must be in our eye in all the exercises of our religion, and all the businesses of our lives. Away with those opinions and practices, whatsoever, which no way tend to prepare you for a safe and comfortable death.

S. IV. Now tell me how this preparation must be made.

P. I. The chief part of it must be done in your health. II. And the rest in the time of your sickness.

I. In your health, it must be the main business of your life to prepare for death. Particularly bestow much care and diligence to strengthen your belief of the truth of God's word, of the immortality of the soul, and of the life to come. Nothing more perniciously strengtheneth temptations, killeth all hope, desire, and endeavour, than secret doubtings whether God's word be true, and whether there be another life indeed for man or not. Uncertainties will hardly prevail against sense, and present things; uncertainties will hardly sufficiently comfort a departing soul, when all worldly comforts must be parted with for ever. Every doubt here is as water cast upon the fire; it quencheth all our desires and joys.

Now, the strengthening of our faith about the world to come is a thing that is not done with a wish: there must be due and constant endeavours used. I desire you to read the directions I have given you in the second part of my 'Life of Faith;' and if that seem not enough, read my 'Treatise against Infidelity,' and my 'Reasons of the Christian Religion,' and 'More Reasons.' Now, I only advise you,

1. Never forget the miracles, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.

2. Forget not the miracles wrought by his apostles and evangelists in all the countries where they came.

3. Forget not the spirit of miracles given to all the first-planted churches.

4. But, above all, forget not the Spirit of holiness, which, in its effects, is apparent in all that are serious Christians, in all ages and countries; especially^a since the Spirit is Christ's standing Witness and Advocate in us, and a certain proof that he is the Saviour of souls. Forget not that by this Spirit, the living image of God's vital power, his wisdom and his goodness is printed on the sacred Scriptures; and the same image, by the Spirit and the Scriptures, is printed on all true believers' souls; which makes a notable difference between them and the rest of the world, and is the certain, present, common evidence that Christ is true, and that he is preparing for everlasting life.

5. Remember that God hath not given man, in vain, a soul which is capable of thinking on our Maker and another world; of desiring and seeking an endless home. The wise Creator fitteth all his creatures to their uses.

6. Look up, and think whether all those vast and glorious spaces which are above us are likely to be without inhabitants, when we see every corner of this lower world, both earth and water, are inhabited.

7. And when we find by experience that the invisible spirits are our helpers, and disdain not to regard and serve our interests, it is not like that our souls, being intellectual spirits, as well as they, shall have communion with them hereafter? Nothing is annihilated; much less such noble and spiritual beings as men's souls.

8. And mark but the common experience of the world, which telleth us that certainly there are evil spirits, by the temptations which we feel to evil, the hinderance of good, the strange power they have upon corrupted fantasies, and the common war which is maintained against Christ and Godliness by all the wicked in the world. And you may thus learn, from the devil himself, that all this malice is not against nothing.

9. And the certain histories of witches will serve to confirm this evidence.

10. And so will the certain histories of apparitions; for instance, see one in a little book, called, 'The devil of Mascon.'

^a John xvi.; Rom. viii. 16, 26; 2 Tim. ii. 7; Heb. xii. 22-24.

11. And the common testimony of all men's consciences, the consent of almost all the world.

12. And that God doth actually govern the world, even among heathens and infidels, principally by the hopes and fears of a life to come: and God cannot need a lie to rule us. These and many such reasons help to confirm our faith: but it is the sacred impressions of the Spirit, first, on the Scripture, and next on your own hearts, and all the holy change which it hath made upon you, which is the near, the sure, the constant² witness in yourself and with you, that Christ is true, and that he is preparing us here for a better life.

These things must all be daily thought of, and all suggestions to the contrary first confuted, and then abhorred and cast away, till the soul grow up to such a habit of believing as will serve³ instead of sight itself; and we can say that we are sure that there is an everlasting life for souls.

To all which must be added a cherishing of the Spirit, which is the author of faith, 1. By earnest prayer for his grace; 2. And by obeying and improving it.

II. Be sure that you truly repent of your known sin:⁴ for nothing makes death so frightful to us as our guilt. Nothing else can make us reasonably fear whether God will save or damn our souls, but unpardonable sin. And the mercy of God is so great, and his promise so sure, that nothing can reasonably make us doubt of pardon, but that which maketh us doubt of the sincerity of our repentance, and faith in Christ. Spare not sin, then, but repent presently; repent deeply; confess it plainly; forsake it resolutely; and then it will not leave such fears in the soul as shall make the sentence of death to be dreadful to us as sin but half repented of will do. Sin is the sting of death; and true repentance hath the promise of forgiveness.

III. Put your souls, with all their sins, and dangers, and all their interests, into the hand of Jesus Christ your Saviour; and trust them wholly with them by a resolved faith. It is he that hath purchased them, and therefore loveth them. It is he that is the owner of them, by the right of redemption. It is now become his own interest, even for the success and honour of his redemption, to save them. Be not too thoughtful about things unknown to you, as how separated souls do act, with what manner of intellection and sense, &c., what idea to have of spiritual bodies, of heaven, &c. But implicitly trust Christ with all these

² 1 John v. 10, 11.

³ Heb. xi. 1.

⁴ Luke xiii. 3, 5.

things, remembering that he knoweth what you know not : and as he possesseth heaven for you till he bring you to possess it, so he knoweth all these things unrevealed, for you, till he bring you to see and know them. If your most faithful friend were in the Indies, and invited you thither with the promises of the greatest wealth and pleasure, you would trust him, though you see it not yourselves, nor know the particulars distinctly. It is a great comfort to us that we have a Head and Saviour in heaven, and that heaven and earth are in his power. He that saved you ^a from sin and Satan's power will save you from hell's and Satan's torments. If angels rejoice at our conversion, Christ and angels will joyfully entertain victorious souls into the heavenly society, and welcome them to heaven with dearest love. Read oft, and meditate on, his special promises. "If any man serve me, let him follow me ; and where I am, there shall also my servant be ;" (John xii. 26 ;) and he is at the "right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. i. 3.) "If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there you may be also." (John xiv. 2, 3.) "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me." (John xvii. 24.) "For 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 : for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, that mortality may be swallowed up of life. We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord." (2 Cor. v. 1, &c.) "To depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." (Phil. iii. 33.) "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." (Rev. xiv. 13.) "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." (Luke xxiii. 43.) "To the spirits of the just made perfect." (Heb. xii. 23.) "And so shall we ever be with the Lord : wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. iv. 17.) "We receive a kingdom that cannot be moved." (Heb. xii. 28.) "Receiving the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls." (1 Pet. i. 9.) "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." (Acts vii. 59.) "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." (Rev. iii. 12, 21.)

But, above all, those words of our risen Lord I would have written over my sick bed, and on my heart. "Go to my bre-

^a Acts xxvi. 18 ; Rom. viii. 34—36.

thren and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (John xx. 17.)

Boldly, then, and quietly, deliver up thy soul to the care of Christ. There is all things in him which thou needest. Are you afraid of guilt, and the law, and the wrath of God, and hell? Remember that he is the ^bLamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, in whom the Father is well pleased: that he hath, by once offering of himself, perfected for ever them that are sanctified: that he was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.^c For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.^d Having, therefore, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.^e God willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, interposed himself by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an High Priest for ever.^f Seeing, then, we have a High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession; for we have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.^g O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ; ^hwho, by death, destroyeth him

^b John i. 29; Heb. x. 14; 2 Cor. v. 21, and i. 21; 1 Cor. i. 30; 1 John ii. 1, 2.

^c John. iii. 16.

^d Heb. x. 19, 20.

^e Heb. vi. 17—19.

^f Heb. iv. 14—16.

^g 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

^h Heb. ii. 14, 15.

that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivereth them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Trust boldly your soul into the hand of such a Saviour, and distract not your mind with unbelieving fears.¹ He wanteth neither power, nor wisdom, nor love. You may boldly and quietly trust him with his own. He hath testified his love at so dear a rate that we should not question it. (Gal. ii. 20; Rev. i. 5.) To save us is his proper office and work. (1 John iv. 14; Ephes. v. 23.) It is his covenant to save his body. (Heb. ix. 15; 1 Tim. iv. 8; Heb. x. 36; Jam. i. 12.) He is our Judge himself. (John v. 22.) He hath the keys of hell and death. (Rev. i. 17, 18.) His work in heaven is to prepare a glorious receptacle for us; and there he is interceding for us to that end. (Heb. ii. 10, and vii. 25; John xiv. 1—3. When you were received into the state of grace and reconciliation, you were entered into the outer part of ^k the kingdom of heaven. Here you were made ^l heirs, co-heirs with Christ; and here you had God's pledge and earnest, and the first-fruits: and will he not give us that which he hath already given us so much right to? Our near relation to him assureth us that he will not condemn his friends, his flesh. (John xv. 14, 15; Eph. v. 29, 30; 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.) Is his love, his promise, his oath, his seal as nothing to us? He would never have given us a heavenly mind and desire, nor set us on seeking it, if he would not have given it us. (Matt. vi. 20, 21, 33; John iv. 14, and vi. 27; Matt. vii. 7, 8; 1 Cor. xv. 58; Psalm lxxiii. 24. It is faith in Christ which we must live and die by, if we will live and die in a well-grounded peace.

IV. Devote yourself entirely to God, and make it your trade of life to please him, doing all the good that you can to others for soul and body; that so your conscience may bear you witness at death, that notwithstanding your infirmities, the very business for which you lived in the world, was to serve your Lord, and to do good, and not to pamper the flesh, nor to grow rich, nor to get into honour and applause with men.

Though our good works give nothing unto God, nor can men or angels merit any thing of him, in commutative justice, as to the value of the thing, but only in point of governing, paternal justice, as to the order of free donation, it being impossible

¹ Ezek. xvi. 8, and xviii. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 10; Psalm cxix. 49.

^k Matt. lii. 2; x. 7; xiii. 11, 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47.

^l 1 Pet. i. 3, 4; Rom. viii. 17, 18; v. 8—11, and viii. 16; Gal. iv. 6; Eph. ii. 10; i. 13, 14, and iv. 30; John xvii. 3; 2 Cor. i. 22, and v. 5.

that any creature should have any thing from God, but by his gift, under what covenant soever ; yet God, who is holy, is the lover of holiness, and the^m rewarder of them that diligently seek him. And nothing can reasonably make a dying man question his salvation but the doubtfulness of his own sincerity in his covenant with God, and of his true repentance and sanctification. And no man can well judge his faith or repentance to be sincere, who liveth not as absolutely devoted to God. Therefore, though you must abhor all thoughts of ascribing any thing to your own faith, or repentance, or holiness and sincerity, which is proper to God the Father, or to our Saviour, or to the Holy Ghost,ⁿ yet, without holiness none shall see God ; for he^o hateth all the workers of iniquity. And conscience will be conscience still ; and its office is not to question whether God be God, and Christ be Christ, but whether we be Christians. And he that never so fully believeth in Jesus Christ, must find himself to be indeed a believer, and to be sanctified by his^p Spirit, before he can comfortably die, or have any assurance of his own salvation. If we are over the temptations to infidelity itself, the rest of our fears and troubles will be raised by the doubts of our own sincerity, and by the discerning of that they must be resolved.

And there is no such full and satisfying evidence of that as this^q testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, and not in fleshly wisdom, we have had our conversation in the world. That is, that we really lived not to the flesh, but unto God, and how weakly soever, our main business in the world was to serve and please him, with all the powers and estate he gave us. And that we did not principally live to the world, and put God off with the leavings of the flesh, nor made his service our secondary business, and seek him and heaven but in the second place. O that we knew well how much a life of total resignation, devotedness, and serviceableness to God, doth tend to a quiet and comfortable death, we should live otherwise than most do !

S. But I have oft heard that we must put no confidence in any works or holiness of our own, and that it is legal, and pharisaical, and popish, to fetch any of our comfort from them.

P. 1. We must not dream that any works or holiness of ours

^m Heb. xi. 6.

^o Psalm v. 5.

^q 2 Cor. i. 12.

ⁿ Heb. xii. 14.

^p Rom. viii. 1, 8—11.

can justify us if we are judged by the law of works, or innocency, in whole or in part. Because nothing but perfect, sinless holiness will so justify. But when Christ hath fully satisfied for our violation of that law, and made us a law of grace by which we must be judged, that^r law of grace doth justify or condemn men, as they perform or not perform its conditions, giving free justification against the curse of the former law, through Christ alone, to all true believers.

2. I told you before that nothing must be ascribed to our own holiness or works that is proper to God the Father, or to Christ, or to the Spirit. And can you desire any more? If nothing, under Christ's person or thing, be a means of our salvation, then no person or thing must be loved or trusted, as a means. But who is it that dare say so?

3. When any thing of our own is put in competition with Christ, or opposition to him, and the question is, whether Christ or that is to be trusted, or to be our comfort, it must not only be distrusted, but rejected as dung.

4. Did Paul sin in the rejoicing before cited? (2 Cor. i. 12.)

5. Do you think that no sin of our own should trouble us? Is there no sin which is just cause of doubting of our justification? What! not unbelief, nor impenitence, nor malignity, nor a fleshly or ungodly life? Shall not all perish that continue such? And is it not part of our discomfort to see that we are free from that cause of discomfort? If there be any damning sin in the world, or any difference of the wicked from the righteous, must not our dying comfort lie much in finding that this is not our case?

V. Take heed of quenching the Spirit of grace. He is our life from Christ, our Head. Whatever good we do in health or sickness, it must be by his gracious operations. You may think of Christ, and read over the promises, and think of the joys of heaven, and all will have little power upon you, if the Spirit help you not. You will but strive and come off with discouragement, and say, 'I cannot get assurance with all my examination. I cannot believe, I cannot reach to any powerful apprehensions of God, or heaven. I cannot choose but fear and doubt, even with the most evident arguments before my eyes. There is no effectual light in any knowledge, no holy love and delight in God, no spiritual life in any of our thoughts, but what is wrought by the illuminating, sanctifying, quickening Spirit. O, therefore,

^r John iii. 16, 18—20.

tenderly cherish and preserve this heavenly guest, as ever you would have joy in health or sickness, for it must be the joy of the Holy Ghost !

S. What is the cherishing, and what the quenching, of the Spirit ?

P. It is a great truth, not sufficiently considered by the wiser sort of Christians, that God, in his course of government over the souls, even of the justified, doth exercise great rewards and great punishments here ; and these are much more upon the soul within, than upon the body without ; even the giving of more of the operations of his Spirit, is his great reward, and the withholding, the withdrawing, or denying its operations, is his great punishment. The sin which provoketh him is unthankful neglect of convictions and holy persuasions of the Spirit, and much more wilful resistance of them. When we sin, it is not the bare sin that is all, as to the act itself, but especially the resisting of the Spirit, which in that sin we were guilty of, which we pay dearest for, when the Spirit convinceth us, reproveth us, and striveth with our hearts, and we will not yield, but overcome it. And the punishment of withdrawing the Spirit's operations is the more dangerous by how much the less perceived and lamented. Usually the signs of this judgment are, for men to lose their life and love to goodness by degrees, and to grow indifferent in the matters of God. To grow formal in meditations, exhortations, and prayer, and to keep up only an affected fervency. To grow stranger to God and the life to come, and more bold with sin, and more worldly wise, to prove duty to be no duty, and sin no sin, and to plead for every fleshly interest. Many a true Christian, that loseth not all grace, yet comes to so low a state of faith, that faith doth but live, but acteth not with the conquering and quickening vigour as it ought.

And alas ! I must tell you, that one gross sin, or many wilful lesser sins, may so quench the Spirit as that many a year's time doth not recover it ; nay, with some it is never recovered in the same degree to their death. O if we knew what one hour's sin may lose us this way, we would not commit it for a world !

S. Alas ! but what if I have quenched the Spirit, is there no way to recover it ? What must I do ?

P. You must deal faithfully with yourself, by deep repentance, and free confessions. You must mark what sinful lust or affection hath got possession of your heart, instead of holy, spiritual

affections : and you must set upon the mortifying of those lusts resolvedly ; especially you must get far enough away from the temptations which have prevailed with you. You must note what declining you have made in duty, for matter or fervour, and you must set yourself to all that duty you have omitted, You must be much in meditating on the greatest quickening truths, and plead them oft and earnestly with your soul. You must use, if possible, the converse of lively spiritual Christians, and, in a word, the same means must be used again which God blessed to your quickening at first : especially earnest prayer that God would restore that measure of his Spirit's operations which you have lost : and you must mark by what ways of omission or commission you quenched the Spirit, and by the contrary must it be restored to you. And then in health and sickness you will have in you that heavenly fire which will carry up your heart to God ; and that divine nature which will make heaven and holiness connatural, and suitable, and desirable to you.

S. But how shall I know whether I have the Spirit ? or whether I have more or less of it ?

By the love of God and holiness, and by the love of man, and a desire to do good : for these are its proper works.

S. But how shall I know that I love God truly ?

P. * When God's holy word, and the holy practice of it, and the thoughts of your perfect holiness and heaven, with Christ and his holy angels, in the perfect love, praise, and service of the most holy God, are all most pleasing to your mind ; and more desired by you than the riches, honours, and fleshly pleasures of this world ; and when you long for the holiness of the world, and the prosperity of the church, and the good of the souls and bodies of all men ; and most heartily pray for the hallowing of God's name, and the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will on earth as it is in heaven ; and when doing all the good you can in the world is your daily trade and pleasure ; this is the sure evidence of the love of God, and of his Spirit.

S. I have heard far different signs of it from some, as if it lay in impulses, raptures, and revelation of more than is in the Scripture : and I have heard others mock at all mention of the Spirit, as if there were no such thing, besides the effects of nature, art, industry, and imagination.

* Rom. v. 5, and viii. 39 ; John xiv. 15, 23 ; 1 John ii. 5 ; iii. 14, 16, 17 ; v. 2, and iv. 12, 16 ; Eph. iii. 17 ; iv. 2, 15, 16 ; v. 2, and ii. 10.

P. Between these two malefactors the church of Christ, in all ages, hath been crucified. But do you bless God who hath given you that in^t possession and experience which others that have it not can hardly know. And yet it were easy for them, were they considerate, to discern that the foresaid love of God and man is the true excellence of human nature; and that some have it as I described it, though not in perfection: and that no men are brought to it, but by the Gospel and God's special blessing on it; which is by the operation of his Spirit.

VI. The sixth direction to prepare for death is, that you make it your chief care to dwell continually in the sense of God's love; and be daily employed in studying the greatness of it, in the nature of God, and the mercies of the Gospel, and in all your own particular experiences; and that praise and thanksgiving be your daily work.

Distinctly note the parts of this direction:

1. If you can but keep the sensible apprehension of God's ^u love continually upon your heart, it must needs make heaven desirable to you: and the drawings of God's love will overcome the fears of death.

2. Think much of the infinite perfection of God. Remember that his goodness is equal to his greatness; and what that is, look up to the heavens, and think of all the world, and you may see. Therefore he is called love itself. And shall it be hard for a soul that desireth to please God, to believe that love itself doth love him, and that infinite goodness will be pleased with him in Christ?

3. The Son of God incarnate, in his whole work of redemption, is so wonderful a glass to reveal to man the love of God, that ^x the studying of Christ doth as aptly tend to acquaint the soul with divine love and loveliness, as the greatest beneficence of the greatest friend doth tend to convince us of his friendship.

4. The ^y remembering all the great mercies of your lives, to your souls and bodies, in every place, state, and company, will help to convince you that he that hath done all this for you, loveth you. And you may trust that God of love at death, who hath filled up your lives with the benefits of his love.

^t 1 John v. 10, 11; Rom. viii. 1, 9, 13.

^u 2 Tim. i. 7; Gal. iv. 6; Rom. v. 5, and viii. 17, 39; Psalm xix. 1, 2, and ciii. 3, 8, 11, 17; 1 John iv. 7, 8; John 16, 27.

^x Eph. iii. 17—19; Tit. iii. 3—5; 1 John ii. 1, 2.

^y Psalm ciii. 1—5; lxi., and cxvi.

5. And if you make * praise and thanksgiving to be half your prayers every day, and employ your heart and tongue still in them, this exercise of love to God will keep in your soul a sweet apprehension of his love to you, and make both health and sickness easy, if not full of delight.

To live in the sense of God's love ; and so in the exercise of love to God, by praise and holy desires, and good works, is the very first-fruits and foretaste of heaven and earth, and is a fruit of believing more excellent than belief itself, and comforteth the soul, and draweth it to God by the most powerful way, even by experimental taste of his love and goodness. And he will most easily believe that there is a heaven for him who hath the beginning and foretastes of it already.

VII. And a great part of your preparation lieth in this, that you daily live as in heaven while you are on earth, by faith, hope, and love, exercised in heavenly contemplation.

If you live as a stranger to heaven in health, you will be strange to it, it is like, in sickness ; and the soul will rather have terror than pleasure in thinking of going to a strange place, a strange God, strange company, and strange employment. Therefore Christ calleth us to "lay up our treasure in heaven," (Matt. vi. 20,) that is, to make it the work of our lives, so to use all our present time, and means, and mercies, as may best make sure of the heavenly reward : and where our treasure is our hearts will be. (Matt. vi. 21.) If you believe that you have a far greater happiness reserved for you with God than this world affordeth, nature will teach you to desire your own happiness : and we are commanded, (Col. iii. 1—4,) as being risen with Christ, to seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God : to set our minds or affections on things above, and not on things on earth, because we are dead to the world, and our life, that is, our felicity, is hid, or out of sight, with Christ in God, in the sight and fruition of God in heaven ; and when Christ, who is our life, (causally and radically,) shall appear in his glory to the sight of man, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Our happiness will be visible to all. And (Phil. iii. 20) it is said "our conversation, or burghship, or city converse, is in heaven."

Remember, daily, that there is your Father, your Saviour, your Comforter, your home, your happiness, your glory, your

* Psalm cxlv ; cix. 30 ; lxxi. 8, 15 ; lxiii. 3—6 ; xxxiv. 1—3 ; cxlviii., and cxlix. cl.

friends, your interest, and your great business. You are already^a heirs, and must quickly be possessors.^b "You are come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company, or ten thousands, of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than Abel's.

Therefore, let me advise and entreat you, that you do all that you do in the world, with heaven still in your eye. Hear, and read, and pray, as if heaven were open still before you. Resist temptations; trade, and follow your business in the world, as if heaven were still in sight, as a traveller holdeth on his journey in remembrance of the end.

And especially use often to set yourself purposely at seasonable hours, as you are able, to meditate on the heavenly glory: and though we must form no image in our minds of God himself, but think of him as an infinite Spirit, infinitely powerful, wise, and good, yet we may and must think, by the help of imagination, of the glorified, human nature of Christ, and the glorious state of heaven itself. And as, intuitively, we here know our own souls in act, our vitality, understanding, and wills; so, by knowing ourselves, we may know, in part, what God, and angels, and holy souls are. And as our bodies shall be glorified, so we may have answerable apprehensions of them: and where we may not think of imagined glories, as of the light of the sun, or shining bodies, as if the glory of spirits were just the same, yet we may think of them as resemblances or similitudes:^c as the new Jerusalem is described, Rev. xxi. and xxii.: and, from the sense and thoughts of all the delights of man on earth, we may aggravate the inconceivable joys of heaven.

Set, therefore, oft before your eyes, the certainty, the nearness, the greatness of that glory. Think how many millions of holy souls are there in joy, while we are here in fears and cares; think of the excellent servants of God who have passed thither through a world of trials, and were lately compassed with such infirmities as ours, and passed through death as we must do. Remember that we go not an untrodden path; but are followers of all the spirits of the just. Think how much better it is with

^a Rom. viii. 16, 17, 18.

^b Heb. xii. 22—24.

^c 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12; 2 Cor. iii. 18.

them than with us ; how they are freed from all our sins and sufferings, and doubts and fears. O think what it is for a perfected, holy soul to see the glorified Redeemer, and all the holy company of saints and angels ; yea, to see the glory of God himself, and to have the knowledge of all his glorious works ; to feel his love poured out unto us, and to be wrapt up in loving and praising him for ever, in the most transcendent joy and pleasure of the soul. Think of your holy acquaintance that are gone before you, and frequently fetch, as it were, a walk in the streets of the city of God ; suppose you saw their glory, and heard their concordant praises of their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Let these kind of thoughts be so oft and serious that they may be your daily work and pleasure, and the daily conversation of your minds with God above.

And because your heart will be backward, drive it on ; and, as I told you about meditation, you must use to preach, as it were, to yourself. Let heaven be your subject ; convince your heart with evidence, urge it with heavenly motives, solace it with heavenly comforts ; and when it is dull, turn your thoughts, by petition, to God, and beg his helps. Sometimes speak to yourselves, and sometimes reverently to God ; and thus keep a holy communion and familiarity above ; and this will make heaven desirable to you at a dying hour.

But the fuller directions for the practice of this duty I must refer you to in the fourth part of my ' Saint's Rest.'

VIII. The next direction to prepare you for death is, that you mortify the flesh in time of health, and see that nothing in this world be too dear and pleasing to you ; and let not sense and imagination rule you.

If you be in love with any thing here, you will be the lother to leave it ; and if the flesh be too dear to you, its sufferings will be the more grievous, and you will be the lother to lay it to rot in the earth. And if you use to live too much by sight and sense, you will grow so familiar with things sensible, and so strange to things unseen, that you will scarce be able to see any further with the mind than you can see with your eyes ; and scarce any thing will seem certain to you, or be effectual with you, which you see not.

But if you get your affections loosed from the world, and mortify the^d flesh with its affections and desires, and become

^d Rom. viii. 13, and xiii. 13, 14 ; Gal. v. 24 ; 2 Cor. iv. 16, 18, and v. 7 ; Col. iii. 5, 6.

indifferent to the things of sense, and use to overrule your sense by faith, and live most upon unseen things, there will be little to entangle and hinder the willingness of your departing souls.

IX. Next, I advise you to settle well the state of your soul, by examination and self acquaintance, in a good assurance of your own sincerity; for, as I told you, when you have overcome the doubts of the truth of God's promises and the life to come, it will be the doubts of your own sincerity then which will be your fear, and make you unwilling to die.

How you may do this I have told you oft, and fully, in a book called 'The Method for Peace of Conscience.' At the present I shall add these brief instructions.

1. But what evidence or signs to judge, I have here before oft told you,* even by faith working by love to God and man, or by your true consent to the covenant of grace, expressed in a holy, obedient life; particularly, 1. If God, to be seen and loved in the joys of the heavenly glory, be the chief end of your heart and life. 2. If Christ be taken for your only Saviour. 3. If you are desirous that, by his Spirit, he should perfectly sanctify you. 4. If you have no sin but what you had rather leave than live in. 5. If you love the word and means which should sanctify you, and love a holy life, and had rather have more holiness than have all the wealth and pleasure of the world. 6. If you are willing to use God's means hereto. 7. If the main desire of your heart, and drift of your life, be to please God. 8. If you love God's servants for their holiness, and desire the increase of holiness in the world, and labour to do good to the souls and bodies of others, in your place, as you are able: all these will prove the truth of your consent to the covenant of God, and that you have his Spirit.

2. And having these certain marks before you, examine your state impartially by them, as one that is going to the judgment of God: and what you cannot do at one time do at another; and cease not till you are able to conclude that your soul is sincerely devoted to God, and trusteth in Christ for the pardon of your sins. And if your cannot satisfy your conscience without help, advise with some able, faithful minister.

3. And when you see God's graces evident in you, give him thanks for them, and rejoice in his love, and watchfully study to keep, and exercise, and increase the grace which he hath given

* Matt. xxviii. 19; v. 8—9, and vi. 20, 33; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 16, 18—22; Gal. v. 6, 13, 22—24 Rom. xiii. 10, and viii. 1, 9, 13; 2 Cor. v. 8; 1 John iii. 14.

you ; and let not Satan make you still question all again at his pleasure.

4. Two extremes you must here carefully avoid. 1. Be not presumptuous and partial, and blinded by self-love,*to think, without proof, that all is well with you, merely because you would have it so. 2. Keep not up a timorous, scrupulous disposition, like a childish servant, who, instead of doing his work as well as he can, doth nothing but cry, because he cannot do it to please his master : as if, when you sincerely desire to please God before your flesh, and do your best, or truly endeavour it, you could not believe that in Christ he will accept you ; but are still thinking of God as an enemy, or cruel, that nothing can please but the death of sinners.

When you have thus settled the state of your soul, and can say, I know that I am passed from death to life ; you are fortified then against most of your temptations to sinful fears, and unwillingness to come to God.

X. The last part is more easily done ; that is, settle your worldly estate and affairs so, as one should do that is ready to depart. Make your will, that none may contend about your estate when you are dead. If you have wronged any, make them restitution. If you are fallen out with any, be quickly reconciled, and forgive them.

To these I would have added, that you learn beforehand what temptations are like to assault you in sickness, and get particular defensatives against them. But this I have spoken to before.

S. You have told me how to prepare for death in health. I pray you tell me next how to prepare further in sickness ?

P. I must not here overwhelm you with multitudes of directions, nor set you upon long and hard tasks of meditations, for, usually, nature, through pains and weakness, is unable for much work. It is the time of health which is the working time : yet because something is then to be done, especially by them that have longer sicknesses, which destroy not their reason, I shall briefly advise such.

I. If it be one that is unconverted and unprepared before, alas ! what shall I say ? The time is short, and the body weak, and it is hard to know that their repentance is not the fruit of mere fears, rather than of a changed heart. They are many things that such a man hath to learn and think on, and a great change to be made before he can be saved. And is a little time of sickness fit for all this ? But yet there is some hope,

and while there is life and hope we must do our best. To such, therefore, I say, 'Be it never so late, these three things must be done, or you are lost for ever.'

1. You must be convinced not only that you are sinners, but that you are ungodly, unconverted sinners, and that God's^f displeasure and damnation is your due, till your humbled souls do feel the need of a Saviour and Sanctifier.

2. When you feel that you are lost in misery by sin, you must believe that Christ is a sufficient Saviour, who hath died for our sins, and is risen and glorified, and is our Intercessor with the Father, and hath made a covenant, that 'whoever truly believeth in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,^g and repenteth of his sinful life, and turneth to God by his Son and Spirit, shall be pardoned and saved : and this covenant is offered to you as well as others ; and nothing but your obstinate refusal of Christ, and his sanctifying Spirit, word, and grace, can deprive you of pardon and salvation. Therefore you must presently and absolutely consent, and give up yourself, soul, and body, to God the Father, to your Saviour and Sanctifier, to justify, adopt, sanctify and save you, resolving, if you recover, to live to God in a holy life, and not to the world, the flesh, and the devil, even as if you were newly to be baptised and vowed unto God.

3. You must think next of the infinite goodness of God, the love which he hath showed us in Christ for soul and body, the mercifulness of his nature, the riches and certainty of his promises, and the unspeakable glory which you shall have in heaven with God and your Redeemer, and his holy angels and saints, if you refuse it not. O think what a blessed life it is to be for ever full of joy in the sight, and love, and praises of God, in comparison of this life of sin and misery. Think of this goodness and kingdom of God till your heart, your love itself be changed, and till you had rather have God in heaven than to have all the pleasures of this world ; for, till then you are not sanctified, nor in a state of salvation. All that is done by fear alone (till the heart and love be turned from sin to God and holiness) will not save you.

And seeing these three things must needs be had, or you are utterly undone, pray hard for such a renewed heart yourselves, and get others to pray for you ; and know that if your late repentance have truly converted your hearts from the love of the world and sin, to the love of God, and heaven and holiness, and

^f John iii. 18, 36 ; Mark xvi.

^g John iii. 15, 16 ; Acts xx. 18.

you be such as would hold out if you should recover, you shall be saved, how late soever it be. But if it be only the resolution of a frightened conscience, which would not bring forth a holy life if you did recover, it will not save you.

II. But if it be the converted that I must direct for their further preparations, their duty is as followeth.

1. Mistake not sickness and death, as if there were more harm in it than there is indeed. Believe not flesh and sense in this, which cannot see into the^b love and wisdom of God, which ordereth it; nor unto that quiet fruit of righteousness, which is the end. Sickness is (though in its pains a fruit of sin, yet) now an ordinance of God, on which you may as confidently expect his blessing, as on his word and sacraments. Labour, therefore, to get the benefit of it, to find out your sin, and repent of it, and abhor it, and see more effectually the vanity and vexation of the world; and remember what a mercy it is that man, who is so loth to die, should end his days in such pain and weakness, as make him weary of himself, and make him the more willing to be dissolved. For though this alone, without faith and love, will draw no man's heart to heaven, or save him, yet such a help against the sinful love of life, and fear of death, is no small mercy. Get but the benefit of sickness, and experience will reconcile you to the providence of God, and prevent repining.

2. ¹Beg of God, for the sake of your Redeemer, such assistance and operations of his Spirit, as your low and weak condition needeth, and as are suitable to a dying man. He hath great help and grace for great necessities.

3. Renew your repentance and confessions of sin, and warn all about you to learn by your experience, and to set their hopes and hearts on heaven, and to make it the work of all their lives to prepare for such a change. O tell them what deceit and mischief you have found in sin; what vanity and vexation you have found in the world; what goodness you have found in God and holiness; what comfort you have found in Christ and his promises, and the hopes of endless glory; and what a miserable case you had now been in if you had had no better a portion than this world, and nothing to comfort you but the pleasures of sin, which now are all your shame and discomfort. Advise them to live as they would die, and tell them how little all the world doth signify to a dying man; call on

^b Heb. xii. 8—12; 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32.

¹ Psalm xli. 3; 2 Kings xx. 1, &c.; Isa. xxxviii. 1, &c.

them not to be deceived by such baits, as all dying men, since Adam, have confessed to be but vanity; call on them to turn without delay, and not to pamper a body for the worms, but to set themselves presently, with all their hearts, to receive their Saviour, and to obey his Spirit and word, and to live to God, and to make much of their short, uncertain time, and to make sure of everlasting joys, whatever become of the flesh and world.

4. Renew your believing thoughts of God's love, and of all the mercies of your life, which he hath given you. Instead of sorrowing that they are at an end, rejoice with thankfulness for what you have had: O think what a mercy it is to be brought forth in a land and age of light; to have had all the teaching, and means, and warnings, and deliverances, which you have had; and to have had that effectual assistance of God's Spirit which opened your eyes, and turned you from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that all your sins are pardoned through Christ, and that you are reconciled to God, and adopted through him, and led by the Spirit to the heavenly inheritance. O triumph in that love that hath thus delivered you, and brought you so near your journey's^k end, and saved you from so many temptations of Satan, and from the flesh, and this deceitful world. Think of God's goodness and love, as exceeding the goodness and love of the best of creatures, infinitely more than the sun exceedeth a candle in light and heat. And shall a poor servant of his, who hath endeavoured, in sincerity, though in sinful weakness, to do his will, and hath a High Priest interceding for him in heaven, be afraid to go to such a God! What can encourage and draw up a soul, if infinite goodness cannot do it? If God were but as loving as my dearest friend: if he were but as good and amiable as the sun is light and glorious, as the heavens are spacious, as the earth is firm, as the sea is deep; should I not joyfully give up my soul into his hands; and confidently yield to his disposal; and fearlessly come to him at his call? O that we knew the goodness of God! What a full content and satisfaction would it be to us; and turn our fears into fervent love, and earnest longings for his glory.

5. Now steep your souls in the believing thoughts of the heavenly glory, to which you are going. O now remember that the time is but short, till you shall sin no more, and fear no more, and suffer no more; till you shall know God and his

^k 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; 2 Cor. v. 1—8.

works, not only as much as you can now desire, but as much as then your heart can wish, and your enlarged capacity receive; till you shall love him more than now you can desire to love him; and your joy shall be greater than now you can conceive and wish: when God shall be more to your soul for ever than the sun is to your eyes, or your soul is to your body! O what an hour will it be, when you shall be newly entered into the city of God, the heavenly society, and sing your first song of joyful praise, in the blessed choir, to God and the Lamb! O what an enemy, what an unreasonable thing, is unbelief, that can make us stand trembling without the doors, and afraid to enter, while millions of our brethren are rapt up in triumphant joys within, while our Lord prepareth us our place, and, with all his holy angels, is desirous of our presence, and the heavenly host will welcome us with joy.

6. Now confidently deliver up your souls into the hand of your Father and your Redeemer, and give over distrustful caring for yourselves.

1. Will you not trust the God and Father of your spirits, who is love itself? Will you not trust your Saviour, that hath saved you so far already; and hath saved so many millions before you? Trust him with his own; believe it, he loveth you better than you love yourself. He is as loth that you should be damned as you are to be damned, and more willing to save you than you are to be saved! O, wo to you, if through all your life, he had not showed himself more willing than you! Trust him against all the accusations of the law; trust him as the Satisfier of God's legal justice, trust him as the Meriter of life eternal; as the Justifier of those that could not be justified by the law of innocency, and their righteous works. As the Mediator of the new covenant, sealed by his blood, by which free forgiveness and life is given to all true believers. Trust him as the King and Judge of all; and as the Advocate of the faithful, and our great High Priest who intercedeth for us, and hath himself possession of the glory to which he hath promised to bring us!

And, 2. Trust him implicitly and absolutely, and give over Eve's desire to know good and evil for yourself. We little consider how much that desire did let in at once of corruption and calamity upon the nature of mankind! When Adam and Eve should have only desired to know God's perfection of power, wisdom, and goodness, as the first and last, the fountain and end of all our good, and to know their own relation to him and their

duty, expecting his love, which is better than life, upon their love and obedience; they were tempted to selfishness and independency, and to leave their trust and rest in God, and to desire to be their own carvers, and as gods to themselves: like a child that, instead of trusting his father for his food and raiment, must become judge what is best for himself; or like a patient who, instead of trusting his physician, and obediently taking what he giveth him, must needs know the ingredients of his medicines, and the reasons of them all; thus foolish man fell from God to himself, and, not putting all his trust in God, would fain be his own guide, and judge, and carver, and take that care of his own affairs which belonged not to himself, but unto God. And as this misguideth all our lives, so this tormenteth us with cares and fears in life at death.

But Christ came to recover us from ourselves to God. Care, then, how to know your Creator and Redeemer; his power, wisdom, and love; care how to trust him with soul and body, and to do your duty; and then¹ care for no more; but leave soul and body more quietly and comfortably to his love and will, than if they were absolutely at your own will, to be, and do, and have, what you would wish. For God is fitter to choose for you, and dispose of you than you.

Take not, then, one careful thought of the corruption of your flesh, or of any of the amazing unsearchable difficulties of the nature of spirits, and the things unseen, which overwhelm and bewilder those that must know good and evil themselves. But rest your soul in the will of God through your Redeemer; in that will which is infinitely good, and which is the beginning, guide, and end of all things, and the only felicitating rest of souls.

7. Let all these holy affections be exercised in your expressions, if your disease allow you an expressing strength. Magnify God's goodness, and speak good of his name, and word, and ways; not by a dissembled affectation, but from your heart; make others to see that there is a reality in the comforts of faith and hope; and that the death of the righteous is so desirable, as maketh their lives desirable also. Your tongues are given you to praise the Lord; they have but a little while more to speak; let their last work be done to his glory, as strength will bear. Tell men what you have found him, and speak of the glory of

¹ Matt vi. 25—27, 31, 34; Luke xii. 22; Pet. xii. 22, and v. 7; Phil. iv. 6.

his kingdom which you expect, that the hopes and desires of others may be excited.

And turn your last words to God in prayers and praises, beginning the work which you must do in heaven. Imitate your dying Lord, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit;" (Luke xxiii. 46;) and his first martyr, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." (Acts vii. 59.)

The Prayer of a Dying Believer.

THY mercy brought me into the world; thy mercy chose my parentage, education, and habitation; it brought me up; it kept me from a thousand dangers; it attempered my body, and furnished my mind; it gave me teachers, books, and helps; yea, it gave me a Redeemer, and a promise of life, and the word of salvation! It gave me all the operations of thy Spirit, which touched and turned my sinful heart. All my repenting and resolving thoughts; all the forgiveness of my manifold sins; all the sweet meditations of thy love, and the experience of thy good and pleasant service; the comfortable hours which I have had in secret thoughts, in public worship, on thy holy days, at thy holy table, among thy people; all these have been the dealings of thy love. All my deliverances from temptation and sin; from enemies, death, and danger; all my preservations from the deceits of the world, and from its troubles; from errors against thy sacred truth, and from backsliding; all my recoveries from my too frequent falls, and pardon of my daily sins; the quietness thou hast given my troubled conscience; and the tranquillity of my life, notwithstanding my sins: all the use which it hath freely pleased thee to make of me, an unworthy wretch, for the good of any, for soul or body: all these are the pledges of thy wondrous love; and shall I be afraid to come to such a God? Hath mercy filled up all my life, and brought me now so near the end, and shall I not trust it after so much trial? It is heaven that thou madest me for; and heaven that Christ did purchase for me; it is heaven that thou didst promise if I would be thine; and it is heaven which I consented to take for my portion,^m and for which I did covenant to forsake the world: and O that I had more entirely done it; for I now find how little reason I have to repent of my covenant. It is heaven which thy Spirit of Grace, and merciful providences have all

^m Luke xviii. 22, 23; Matt. vi. 20, 21, 33; Col. iii. 2, 4.

this while been preparing me for ; and shall I now be fearful and unwilling to possess it ?

O thou that knowest how deadly an enemy unbelief is to thy honour and my soul, I beseech thee, show that thou takest not me but it for thy foe. O send that heavenly light to my mind, which may banish and confound it ; let it not blaspheme thy truth, and imprison, blind, and torment my soul. O thou that givest the world, the Saviour, the heaven, which I must believe, deny me not that faith by which I must believe them : earth and flesh are dungeons of darkness and despair : there is with us no sun to show us thy face. It must be thy glory whose reflections must reveal thy glory to us ; and a light from heaven which must show us heaven ! O send one beam, one beam, Lord, of that heavenly light into this darkened, sinful soul ; that, with Stephen, I may see in my passage the glory of my blessed Lord, to whom I go ! and, with Simeon, may gladly say, " Lord now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation ! " One beam of thine will drive away the powers of darkness, and banish all these doubts and fears, and let in somewhat of heaven into my soul, before it is let into heaven. O blessed Spirit, the illuminator of dark, imprisoned souls, remember not all my resistance of thy grace, and forsake me not in this last necessity of my life, and leave me not to the power of darkness and unbelief ! Though glory be not openly seen till it is enjoyed, let me now, when I am so near it, have such a sight of it by faith, as is suitable to this low and darker state. O thou that art the Spirit of life, so quicken and actuate this sluggish soul, that the last part of my race may be run with vigour, and the last act of my life may be done in evidence of the heavenly influence, and may be liker to the heavenly employment than all the rest hath been ! O thou that art the Sanctifier and Comforter of souls, now kindle the fire of heavenly love in me, and give me some taste of the celestial joys, which may feelingly tell me that there is a heaven indeed ; and may be the witness within me, and the pledge and earnest that I shall live with Christ ! My flesh and my own heart now fail : the world and all therein is nothing to me ; I am taking my everlasting farewell of them all : but one beam of his face, and one taste of his love, who is my portion for ever, will be strength and joy to my departing soul, and ^a better than this life and all its pleasures. Come, Lord, with these seasonable comforts into my soul, that

^a Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26.

my soul may comfortably come to thee ! My life had been but death, and darkness, and disaffection to God, if thou hadst not been in me, a spirit of life, and light, and love ; the tempter had else been still too strong and subtle for me ; and how then shall I deal with him myself, when the languishing of my body disableth my soul ? Thou despisest not art and reason : I thank thee for the use I had of them in their season. But one beam of thy light, and spark of thy love, one motion of thy heavenly life, will better confute the enemy of faith than my disputes can do : the divine nature, incited by divine inspiration, must do much more than human art. Teach me, effectually, but to love and praise thee, and it shall powerfully prove to me that there is a heaven, where I shall joyfully love and praise thee for ever.

Alas, dear Lord, I am ashamed that to love and praise thee, should be to my soul a work of difficulty ! That it is not more natural and easy to me, than to love and praise any created thing or person whatsoever ! What shall I love, if not goodness and love itself, which made me purposely to love him ? who redeemed me, that by love he might win my love ; and sanctified me, to dispose my soul to love him ? What shall I praise, if not infinite perfection ; the glory of whose power, wisdom, and goodness, doth shine forth in the whole creation ? Heaven and earth praise thee ; and am I no part of heaven or earth ? The whole creation doth proclaim thy glory ; and am I none of thy creation ? Thy very enemies when redeemed reconciled, and forgiven, do praise the love and grace of their Redeemer ; and am I not one of these ? The great teacher of the church, is the schoolmaster of love and praise ; and have I not learned them yet, who have so long had so excellent a teacher ? Thy saints all love thee ; for it is the essence of a saint : they praise thee ; for it is the work of saints : and am I none of these ? I am less than the least of all thy mercies. But it is not the least of thy mercies which I have received : and if a life full of mercies have not brought forth a life full of love and praise ; O yet let it end in a loving and a praising death !

Glory be to God in the highest ; on earth, peace ; and goodwill towards men ! Holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come : of thee, and through thee, and to thee are all things ; thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory :

• Psalm cxlvi. 3.

For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever; even to our Redeemer who washeth us in his blood, and maketh us kings and priests to God. Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints! Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name; for thou art holy. Amen; Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Praise our God all ye his servants; and ye that fear him, both small and great. Praise ye the great Redeemer of the world, who is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: the beloved Son, in whom we are reconciled and adopted, and in whom the Father is well pleased: who will smite the nations with the sword of his mouth, and rule them with a rod of iron, and treadeth the wine-press of the wrath of God: who hath the keys of death and hell, and is King of kings, and Lord of lords. My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour; who hath redeemed me from my low and lost estate; for his mercy endureth for ever. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name: bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and hath often healed thy diseases. Who redeemed thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with love and tender mercies. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And what is there on earth desirable besides thee? The Lord taketh pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation. In thy light we shall see light; thou shalt make us drink of the rivers of thy pleasure. In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. Goodness and mercy have followed me all my days, and thou hast showed me the path of life. Let my heart, therefore, be glad, and my glory rejoice; and let me leave this flesh to rest in hope. Let the heavens rejoice; and O that the earth were taught to imitate them in thy praise! Thy angels and the triumphant church do glorify thee: O train up this militant church on earth, in love and concord, to this joyful work! And let all flesh bless thy holy name, for ever and ever! Let every thing that hath breath, praise the Lord! And so let me breathe out my departing soul! And thou wilt not cast away the soul that cometh unto thee in love and praise. Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; who art the Father of spirits, and my Father in Christ!

Lord Jesus, receive my spirit ; and present it justified and spotless to the Father ! And O, our Forerunner, take me to thyself ! who, being risen, sentest this message even to sinners : " Say to my brethren, I ascend to my father and your father ; to my God and your God." Amen.

Short Instructions for the Sick, to be read by the Master of the Family to them, or by themselves ; the unprepared.

THOSE happy persons who have made it the chief care and business of their lives to be always ready for a dying hour, have least need of my present counsel. It is, therefore, those unhappy souls who are yet unprepared whom I shall now instruct. And O that the Lord would bless these words, and persuade them yet, ere time be gone.

If sin had not bewitched men, and made them monsters of senselessness and unbelief, it could not be that an endless life, so sure, so near, could be so sottishly made light of all their lives, as is by most, till they perceive that death is ready to surprise them. But, poor sinner, if this have been thy case, supposing that thou art unwilling to be damned, I earnestly entreat thee, in the name of Christ, for the sake of thy immortal soul, that thou wilt presently lay to heart these instructions, before time and hope are gone for ever.

I. At last, bethink thee what thou art ; and for what end and work thou camest into the world. Thou art a man of reason, and not a brute ; and hast a soul which was made to know, and love, and serve the Maker ; and that not in the second place, with the leavings of the flesh, but in the first place, and with all thy heart and might. If this had been, indeed, thy life, God would have been thy Portion, thy Father, and thy Defence, and thou mightest have lived in peace and comfort with God, and then have lived with God for ever. And, should not a creature live to the ends and uses which it was made for ? Must God give thee all thy powers for himself, and wilt thou turn them from him, to the service of the flesh, and that when thou hadst vowed the contrary in thy baptism ? How wilt thou answer for such treacherous ungodliness ?

II. It is time for thee now to have serious thoughts of the life thou art going to. If thou couldest sleepily forget it all the

^p Deut. vi. 5 ; x. 12, and xi. 1, 13.

way, it is time to awaken when thou comest almost there. When thy friends are burying that flesh in the earth which thou didst more regard than God and thy salvation, thy soul must appear in an^a endless world, and see those things which God foretold thee of, and thou wouldest not believe, or set thy heart upon. As soon as death hath opened the curtains, O what a sight must thou presently behold ! A world of angels, and of holy souls, adoring, and praising, and admiring that God whom thou didst refuse to mind, and love, and serve ; a world of devils and damned souls, in torment and despair, bewailing their contempt of Christ and grace, their neglect of God and their salvation, their serving the flesh and loving the world, and wilfully losing the time of mercy, and all the means which God vouchsafed them. Believe it, sinner, there is an endless joy and glory for the saints, and an^r endless misery for all the ungodly ; and one of these must quickly be thy case. Thy state is changeable while thou art in the flesh ; if thy soul be miserable, there is yet a remedy ; it is possible Christ may renew and pardon it ; but as soon as thou goest hence, thou enterest into a state of joy or torment, which must never change ; no, not when millions of years are past. And dost thou not think now, in thy conscience, that such an endless misery should have been prevented with greater care and diligence than all the sufferings of this life ; and that the attaining of such an endless glory had been worthy thy greatest care and labour ; and that it is far better to see the glory of God, and be filled with his love, and joyfully praise him with his saints and angels for evermore, and, by a holy life, to have prepared for this, than to please the flesh, and follow the world a little while, and be undone for ever ? Hast thou got more by the world and sin than heaven is worth ? Thou art almost at the end of worldly pleasures, and hast all that ever they will do for thee ; but if God had had thy heart and service, he would not thus have cast thee off ; and his rewards and joys would have had no end. O how much happier are the blessed souls in heaven than we !

III. And seeing you are so near to the judgment of God, where your soul must receive its final sentence, it is high time now to^s judge yourself, and know what^t estate your soul is in ;

^a Deut. xxxii. 2 ; Matt. vi. 19, 20, 33, and xxv. ; Rom. ii. ; 2 Cor. iv. 18, and v. 1, 7—9 ; Phil. iii. 18, 20.

^r 2 Thess. i. 9, 10 ; 1 Pet. iv. 1, 8.

^s 1 Cor. xi. 31 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

^t 2 Pet. i. 10.

whether in a state of justification or of damnation; for this may be certainly known if you are willing. And, first, you must know who they be whom Christ will justify, and whom he will condemn; and this the word of God will tell you, for he will judge them by that word. In a word, "all those whom Christ will justify and save, are made new ^a creatures, by the renewing work of the Holy Ghost; their ^a eyes are opened to see the vanity of this world, and the certainty and excellency of the glory of heaven, and to see the odiousness of sin, and the goodness of a holy life, and to believe that Christ is the ^v only Saviour to cleanse them from their sins, and bring them to that glory. And therefore they forsake the sinful ^a pleasures of the flesh, and set their ^a hearts on the everlasting blessedness, and seek it before all things; and lamenting and hating their former sins, they give themselves sincerely to their God and Father, their Saviour and their Sanctifier, to be ^b taught and ruled, justified, ^c sanctified, and saved by him; resolving, whatever it ^d cost the flesh, to stand to this choice and covenant to the death." This is the case of all that Christ will justify and save: the rest who never were thus renewed and sanctified will be ^e condemned, as sure as the Gospel is true. Therefore, let it be speedily your work to try whether this be your case or not. Have you been thus enlightened, convinced, and renewed to believe in Christ, and the life to come, and to give up yourself in a faithful covenant to God your Father, your Saviour, and Sanctifier, to hate your sin, and to live and love a holy life, in mortifying the flesh, and seeking heaven before the world? If this be not your case, I should but flatter and deceive you to tell you of any hope of being saved, till you are thus renewed and justified. Never imaginé a lie to quiet you till help is past. No one that is unregenerate, or unholy, shall ever dwell with God. Yet you may be saved, if yet you will be truly converted and sanctified; but without this, assuredly there is no hope.

IV. Therefore I counsel you, in the name of Christ, to look back upon your ^f sinful life with sorrow; not only because of the danger to yourself, but also because you have offended God. What think you now of a sinful, and of a holy life? Had it

^a John iii. 3, 5; 2 Cor. v. 17.

^v John iii. 16, 19.

^c Matt. vi. 21, 23.

^e Heb. xii. 14.

^f Prov. xi. 7; Job viii. 13, 14.

^f Luke xlii. 3, 5, and xv.; Matt. xviii. 3.

^a Eph. i. 18.

^a Gal. v. 24; Rom. viii. 9.

^b Matt. xxviii. 20.

^d Rev. ii. 7, 10.

not been better that you had valued Christ and grace, and lived in the love of God, and in the joyful hopes of the life to come, and denied the sinful desires of the flesh, and been ruled by the law of God, and spent your time in preparing for eternity? Do you not heartily wish that this had been your course? Would you take this course if it were to do again, and God recover you? Repent, repent, from the bottom of your heart, of the time you have lost, the mercy you have abused, the grace you have resisted; of all your fleshly, worldly desires, words, and deeds; and that you gave not up your soul and life to the love of God, and life eternal.

V. And now resolvedly ^a give up yourself in a hearty covenant to God: though it be late, he will yet accept and pardon you, if you do it in sincerity. Take God for your God, your portion, and felicity, to live in his love and praise for ever; take Christ for your Saviour, to teach, and rule, and justify you, and bring you unto God; and the Holy Spirit for your Sanctifier; and certainly he will take you for his child. But see that you be truly willing of his grace, and resolved never to forsake him more. O happy soul! if at last the Lord will make this ^b change upon thee: and I will tell you certainly how to know whether this late repentance will serve for your salvation or not. If it be but fear only that causeth your repentance, and the heart and will be not renewed, but you will turn again to a fleshly, worldly, and ungodly life, if you be recovered, then it will never save your soul; but if your heart, your will, your love be changed, and this change would hold if God recovered you to health again, then doubt not of pardon and salvation.

VI. And if God have thus changed your heart, and drawn it to himself, be thankful for so great a mercy. Oh! bless him for giving you a Redeemer and a Sanctifier, and the pardoning covenant of grace. And now be not afraid or loth to ^c leave a sinful world, and come to God. Pray harder for grace and pardon than for life. Commit and trust your souls to Christ: he had never done so much for souls, if he had not loved them and been willing to receive them. How wonderfully came he down to man, to bring up man to the sight of God! He is gone before, to ^d prepare us a mansion in the city of God; and hath promised to take us to himself, that we may dwell with him

^a 2 Cor. viii. 5; Acts xi. 23.

^b Psalm lxxviii. 24—27; Heb. viii. 10, and x. 16; Jer. xxvii. 40.

^c Phil. i. 21, 23; 2 Cor. v. 8; Rev. xiv. 13; Acts vii. 9.

^d John xvii. 24, and xii. 26.

and see his glory. The world which you are going to is ¹ unlike to this : there is no pride, or lust, or cruelty, oppression, deceit, or any sin ; no wicked men to scorn or persecute us ; no vanity to allure us ; no devil to tempt us ; no corruption of our own to burden or endanger us ; no fears, or cares, or griefs, or discontents ; no poverty, sickness, pain, or death ; no doubtings of the love of God, or our salvation ; but the sight of God, and the feelings of his love, and the fervent flames of our love to him, will be the everlasting pleasure of the saints. These will break forth into triumphant and harmonious thanks and praise in the presence of our glorified Redeemer, and in concord with all the heavenly host, the blessed angels, and the spirits of the just. This is the end of faith and holiness, patience and perseverance ; when hell is the end of unbelief, ungodliness, sensuality, and hypocrisy. How justly are they condemned who sell their part of endless joys for a shadow, and a dream of transitory pleasures ; and can delight more in the filth of sin, and in a fading vanity, than in the love of God, and the forethoughts of glory ! What love can be too great ; what desires too fervent ; what prayer and labour can be too much ; what sufferings too dear, for such a blessedness ?

VII. Lastly, because there are many cases of the sick which require the presence of a ^m judicious divine ; if it be possible, get the help of such ; if not, remember that God is just in denying of men that mercy in their distress which in time of their health and prosperity they rejected with scorn and contempt : and ⁿ cleave to him whom you may enjoy for ever.

The Shortest Catechism.

Q. 1. WHAT is the Christian religion ?

A. The Christian religion is the baptismal covenant made and kept : wherein God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, doth give himself to be our reconciled God and Father, our Saviour and our Sanctifier ; and we believing, give up ourselves accordingly to him, renouncing the flesh, the world, and the devil, which covenant is to be oft renewed, specially in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Q. 2. Where is our covenant part and duty more fully opened ?

A. 1. In the Creed, as the sum of our belief. 2. In the Lord's Prayer, as the sum of our desires. 3. And in the Ten

¹ Rev. xxi. and xlii.

^m Mal. ii. 7 ; Jam. v. 14.

ⁿ Psalm lxxiii. 26.

Commandments, as given us by Christ, with the Gospel explanations, as the sum of our practice. Which are as followeth :

The Creed.

I BELIEVE in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord ; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell : the third day he rose again from the dead ; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty : from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer.

OUR Father, who art in heaven ; hallowed be thy name : thy kingdom come : thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The Ten Commandments.

I. I AM the Lord, thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is

the Sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work ; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates : for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt not kill.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house ; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Quest. 3. Where is the Christian religion most fully opened, and entirely contained ?

Ans. In the holy Scriptures, especially of the New Testament ; where, by Christ, and his Apostles, and Evangelists, inspired by his Spirit, the history of Christ and his Apostles is sufficiently delivered, the promises and doctrine of faith are perfected, the covenant of grace most clearly opened, and church offices, worship, and discipline established. In the understanding whereof the strongest Christians may increase whilst they live on earth.

The Explained Profession of the Christian Religion.

I. I BELIEVE that there is one God, an infinite Spirit of life, understanding, and will, perfectly powerful, wise, and good ; the Father, the Word, and the Spirit ; the Creator, Governor, and End of all things ; our absolute Owner, our most just Ruler, and our most gracious Benefactor, and most amiable Good.

II. I believe that man, being made in the image of God, an embodied spirit of life, understanding, and will, with holy vivacity, wisdom, and love, to know, and love, and serve his Creator, here and for ever, did, by wilful sinning, fall from his God, his holiness, and innocency, under the wrath of God, the condemnation of his law, and the slavery of the flesh, the world, and the devil : and that God so loved the world that he gave his only Son to be their Redeemer, who, being God, and one with the Father, took our nature, and became man ; being con-

ceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, called Jesus Christ, who as perfectly holy, sinless, fulfilling all righteousness, overcame the devil and the world, and gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, by suffering a cursed death on the cross, to ransom us, and reconcile us unto God, and was buried and went among the dead: the third day he rose again, having conquered death. And he fully established the covenant of grace, that all that truly repent and believe, shall have the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit; and if they love God, and obey him sincerely to the death, they shall be glorified with him in heaven for ever; and the unbelievers, impenitent, and ungodly, shall go to everlasting punishment. And having commanded his apostles to preach the Gospel to all the world, and promised his Spirit, he ascended into heaven; where he is the glorified Head over all things to the church, and our prevailing Intercessor with the Father; who will there receive the departed souls of the justified, and at the end of this world will come again, and raise all the dead, and will judge all according to their works, and justly execute his judgment.

III. I believe that God, the Holy Spirit, was given by the Father and the Son to the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists, to be their infallible guide in preaching and recording the doctrine of salvation, and the witness of its certain truth, by his manifold divine operations; and to quicken, illuminate, and sanctify all true believers, that they may overcome the flesh, the world, and the devil. And all that are thus sanctified are one holy Catholic church of Christ, and must live in holy communion, and have the pardon of their sins, and shall have everlasting life.

Believing in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I do presently, absolutely, and resolvedly, give up myself to him, my Creator and reconciled God and Father, my Saviour and Sanctifier; and, repenting of my sins, I renounce the devil, the world, and the sinful desires of the flesh; and, denying myself, and taking up my cross, I consent to follow Christ, the Captain of my salvation, in hope of his promised grace and glory.

A Short Catechism for those that have learned the First.

Q. 1. WHAT do you believe concerning God?

1. Assent. Ans. There is one only God, an infinite Spirit of life, understanding, and will, most perfectly powerful, wise, and good; the Father, the Word, and the Spirit: the Creator,

Governor, and End of all things ; our absolute Owner, our most just Ruler, and our most gracious and most amiable Father.

1. The word 'God,' signifieth both the nature and the relations.

I. God's nature or essence is not known to us in itself immediately, but in the glass of the creatures, as the cause in the effects, and especially by God's image on our own souls. Therefore we have no name, or words of God, but such as are borrowed from creatures, as the first things signified in our use of them. Though God only be signified by them in this our application. Therefore we are fain to describe God in terms. 1. Of general notion. 2. Of formal or specific notion. 3. Of accidental notion. Though God is not properly matter or form, genus or species, nor accident.

1. The general notion is that he is a Spirit, which includeth the more general notions of a substance and a being, as distinct from accidents and nothing. A spirit chiefly signifieth, not only negatively that which is no body, but also positively a pure substance, transcending our sensitive conception or apprehension, which some call metaphysical matter : for before we think what form or virtue a spirit is possessed of, we think it of a something substantial, though not corporeal. But of the substance of a spirit, as different from a body, before we come to the formal virtues, we can have no satisfying conception but its purity, and transcending the most perfect sense. Whatsoever some say of penetrability and indivisibility, which are also considerable, if any say that the true nature of fire is a spirit, and so that a spirit is sensible, as far as motion, light, and heat are, I only say, if that were true, yet motion, light, and heat are not sensed by us in pure fire, but only as from fire incorporate in air at least. But the word 'spirit' also includeth the formal special notion of it, by which we most clearly discern it from a body, called matter ; which is, that it is formally a life, or an active nature ; in which is included the three notions of power, force (*vis*), and inclination, and, altogether, may be called a virtue ; so that to be a pure substance, transcending sense, not accidentally having, but naturally being, an active, vital virtue, is to be a spirit.

2. But though this formal notion be included in the word 'spirit,' yet it is of distinct conception from essence and substance : and this one formal virtue in God is wonderfully, yet certainly, therein one, that is, 1. Vital, active virtue.

tue. 2. Intellectual virtue. 3. Volitive or willing virtue. This spiritual virtue is not an accident in God, but his essence; not his essence as essence, but his essence in its formal or specific notion as distinct from other essences. It is one substantially and formally. It is three, as active on a three-fold object, or by connotation of the object, at the least. All this we certainly gather from our souls, which are God's image, of which anon; and yet the word 'spirit,' understanding, will, and life of man, signify that which is not at all of the same kind or sort with that which the same words signify of God: but yet there is in us an image of what is in God.

And when I speak of active virtue, it must be remembered that it is another property of spirit, that it is not passion from a body, or any inferior nature; for all action proceedeth orderly from the first active cause, and so down. God worketh upon all things. An intellectual spirit can operate on a sensitive, and that on a vegetative, and that, as the rest, on passive matter or bodies, but not contrarily.

3. Though we are fain to use names of God, which signify but modes or qualities in men, and so mention powerful, wise, and good; yet these, in God, are his very essence, under the notion of modal perfection.

4. As we think of creatures, in respect of quantity and degrees, as well as kind, so we are fain to mention God's attributes: and I comprehend a multitude in one, which is infiniteness, or perfection, which have the same signification, saving that one soundeth better as applied to essence, and the other as to quality. When I say that God is infinite, it respecteth, 1. Duration, or time, and so it is his eternity. 2. Or space and extension, by analogy to which, it is his immensity; and perfection of power, wisdom, and goodness, excludeth all imperfection, and includeth that which to man is incomprehensible, though certainly known. This one God is three persons, the Father, the Word (or Son), and the Spirit (or Holy Ghost), whose properties are to beget, to be begotten, and to proceed. The mystery is fullest opened in Athanasius's Creed; and we have no reason to think it contradictory or incredible, when the aforesaid Trinity of principles, life, understanding, and will, in one spiritual virtue and essence, is so clear and sure in our own souls, and so in God.

2. The relations of God respect his creatures: 1. In their being, and so he is, 1. Fundamentally their Creator. 2. And

thence their Owner. 2. Or in their well-being, and so he is their Benefactor, or the first cause of all their good. 3. Or their Action, and so he is, 1. The Mover, 2. The Ruler, and, 3. The End of every thing in its kind ; but of man, in a special manner, agreeable to his intellectual nature. But the moral relation which we have here reason practically to note, are all comprehended in the word 'Father,' which signifieth that he is fundamentally our Creator ; and thence, 1. Our Owner. 2. Our Ruler. 3. Our most amiable Good. For a father giveth being to his child ; and thence, by nature, the child is his own, and being incapable of self-government, it is the father who hath 1. That authority, 2. wisdom, 3. And love which make him meet to be the ruler ; and nature teacheth the child to love his father, as the cause of his very being. But in this last consideration God is more than a father, and is to be loved more than ourselves, and more for his own goodness, which is his amiableness, than for ourselves. I had put the word 'Friend' for the third relation, as being most short and full to the sense intended, but that it will be thought to sound too familiarly ; though Abraham and Christ's disciples have that title.

The attribute of God, as our Owner, is absolute, and as our Ruler, he is just, in which his truth, which is the justness of his sayings, is included ; and as our Father or Friend, he is doubly considered : 1. As good to us, and so he is gracious, or loving and merciful. 2. As good in himself ; and so he is our ultimate end, and the ultimate object of our love, where the soul resteth in the perpetual act of loving him, and in feeling his love. And this is the highest notion of God's relation to us, and of all relation.

Note, that the attributes of God must not be cast together on a heap, but distinctly laid down. First, the attributes of his essence, that he is One, eternal, immense, necessary, independent, immutable, &c. Then the attributes proper to each person, and those proper to each active principle, which, summarily, are perfection ; and then the attributes of God's relations, which are so many that I may not here stay to name any more.

The proof that there is a God, is so evident in nature, that he is well called a fool in Scripture (Psalm xiv. 1) who denieth it. All things which we see in the world preach God to us, telling us that they have a cause above them and in them which must needs be able to make and uphold the world, because we see that it is made and upheld, while every part is insufficient for itself ;

and he must have as much wisdom as is visible in the effects, in the order of the universe ; and more goodness than all the world hath, because it hath none but from its first cause. So that one most powerful, wise, and good first-cause, that is, God, is so notorious to reason, that he is mad that questioneth it.

And this God can be but one, because two Infinites, two Almightyes, most wise, most good, and first causes, &c., it is a contradiction. For if there be two, one is but half, and so not infinite or perfect ; and that one is not the cause of the other, nor his end, &c.

That God is immense, is evident, because all the world must be contained in him, else he had made that which is greater than himself, and operateth where he is not : and he can have no bounds who hath nothing to bound him, and hath no proper locality. And he that is infinite in duration, must be so in degree or essence.

That God is eternal, is most evident, because, else, there was a time imaginable before there was a God, and so before any thing ; and then there never would have been any thing ; for nothing can make nothing. The rest I pass by.

I must tell the reader here, that though this first lesson, what God is, be the hardest and highest in divinity, yet order commandeth us to set it first ; and till God be known, nothing is well known. Therefore I advise you to read this over, and understand as much of it as you can, and then pass on to the rest ; and when you have gone through all, come back again and learn this better ; for God is as the sun, most certainly known, but least comprehended, and still most unknown. He is the first and last : you must begin and end with him. You must know something from him, that you may know Christ and Scripture ; and then you must know Christ and the Scriptures, that you may know more of God ; for all other knowledge is but a means to help you to know, love, and serve him, in which you must still grow to the last, till you come to the world of true perfection.

Quest. 2. What believe you of the creation, and the nature of man, and the law which was given to him ?

Ans. God created all the world ; and made man in his own image, an embodied spirit of life, understanding, and will, with holy liveliness, wisdom, and love, to know, and love, and serve his Maker, here and for ever ; and gave him the inferior creatures for his use ; but forbade him to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, upon pain of death.

1. To create, is to make of nothing, in the first notion ; and so God created only spirits, and the elements, fire, air, water, and earth ; but all the rest of his works he made of these, as the sun, and moon, and stars, &c., which is creating in the second notion, because they never were before.

2. The whole world which God made is to us incomprehensible. It is like that it is but a small part of it which we see ; we know not how much more is unseen ; and no part is perfectly known by mortals. But we have so much knowledge of all, as is needful to the ends of our own creation in this imperfect state. And to spend our days in searching after more, is but to lose and neglect things possible and profitable, while we seek things impossible and unprofitable, and to trouble ourselves and the world with pretensions and contentions, mere names. But all the true knowledge of God's works which we can really attain is useful to us, though in great diversity of degrees.

3. When I call man 'an embodied spirit,' I determine not that this body is not a part of him ; but only that the soul or spirit is so noble a part, as that the body is but a habitation and servant to it, though a part of the man, being made of the common, passive elements.

4. The image of God on man is threefold, or hath three parts : 1. Natural ; the image of God's being and nature. 2. Moral ; which is the image of God's perfection or holiness. 3. Dominion ; which is the image of God's dominion over all.

I. In God's natural image, man's soul hath a notable trinity in unity : 1. In one soul there are the vegetative, sensitive, and intellective powers. 2. In one superior, intellectual soul, as such, there is the virtue of superior life, or vital activity, and the virtue of understanding, and of free-will. The will is not the understanding, nor the understanding the will, nor the vital power either understanding or will ; nor is any one of these a part of the soul : but the whole soul is life, the whole is understanding, and the whole is will ; yet not wholly ; that is, no one of these words express all that is essential to the soul.

II. The moral image of God on the soul is nothing but the rectitude or health of these three faculties, which is their holiness : that is, 1. The holy liveliness of the vital faculty, when it is lively towards God. 2. The holy wisdom of the understanding to know God. 3. The love of God and goodness, which is the holiness of the will.

III. Our dominion over other creatures is the image of God's dominion, by which we are, 1. Their owners, under God ; and they are our own. 2. Their governors, under God, according to their capacities ; and they are ordered by us. 3. Their benefactors under God ; we provide for them, feed them, manure the ground ; and their end, under God ; they are given us for our use.

5. The end of man's nature, evident in the faculties' aptitude thereto, is, as (1. In general, God, who is the end of all things, so, 2. specially,) holiness, living to God ; that is, 1. To know God practically. 2. To love him. 3. To serve him. God maketh nothing in vain ; much less the nobler natures. When he made man's nature capable and apt to know, love, and serve him, it plainly telleth us that he made him for that use. Those, therefore, who deny this to be natural to Adam, deny humanity, and make man a brute by nature, and suppose a supernatural grace to come after, and make Adam as of another species ; as if grace only made him a man. And they that deny man to have such faculties know not what a man is.

6. Man's soul being made apt for perpetual duration, is truly said to be immortal ; for God having made it a simple spirit, it is not liable to dissolution of parts and corruption of substance. Therefore if it perish, it must be by annihilation, or by turning it into another species of being ; both which being operations or effects, which must be contrary to the established course of nature, it is not to be supposed that God will-do them, though he can.

6. But man, consisting of soul and body, was not so immortal as his soul is, yet God could have perpetuated his life ; yea, and would have done it, so far as that he should not have died, had he not sinned. But it is most probable that he should, at a certain period of time, have been changed, as Enoch and Elias were, and Christ, at his ascension ; and the saints shall be, who are found alive at Christ's coming ; and, it is like, the bodies that rose and appeared at Christ's death were so in their ascension.

7. Seeing the soul, yea, Adam, was to be thus far immortal, his felicity must be so too : which is no other than the perfecting of his knowledge, love, and service of God, in his perfected state. And, therefore, briefly I sum up all in ' Here, and for ever.'

8. It pleaseth God to try and exercise Adam's obedience, by

forbidding him the fruit of one tree, on pain of death. But this positive law presupposed the law of nature, which is not mentioned as spoken to man, because it was in the very nature of him and the creatures compared together, which objectively signified to him what was God's will as to his duty; from which signification his duty did result.

9. Why it is called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, is very hard to know. It is said by most, because by it he was to have the sad experimental knowledge of good by the loss of it, and of evil by the feeling of it. Others hold, that Adam had before all holy necessary knowledge of God and his own duty, with which, had he been content, he had been happy, but that God had really made this fruit apt to breed in man a subtle, inquisitive wit, and that kind of needless troublesome knowledge which multiplieth sin and sorrow still in the world. Such as is a great deal of the present philosophy, and vain formalities of sciences, and wordy, wrangling craft, and the presumptuous, distrustful search into God's secrets, and into that which is not our part but his; as if the patient must needs know all that the physician giveth him, and why; and it seemeth that some addition of knowledge sin brought them; and doubtless it was not of the good of duty, nor a holy knowledge, but an inflicting unnecessary apprehension of natural good and evil.

10. Death threatened is all that penal evil that man's nature was capable of; which is, 1. The desertion of the sinful soul. 2. The pain and dissolution of the body. 3. The perpetuity of the soul's sufferings, at least, it being a capable subject, without a resurrection.

Q. 3. What believe you of man's fall into sin and misery?

A. Man, being tempted by Satan, did by wilfully sinning fall from his holiness, his innocency, and his happiness, under the justice of God, the condemnation of his law, and the slavery of the flesh, the world, and the devil. When sinful, guilty, and miserable natures are propagated to all mankind, and no mere creature is able to deliver us.

1. It was Satan in the serpent that tempted Eve: and Satan, by Eve, having, by her sin, got power to use her as his instrument, that tempted Adam. 2. Man sinned not till he was tempted. But he was but tempted, and not forced to sin, much less was he forced or necessitated to it by God himself. 3. God could have made man indefectible, or prevented his fall; but he is no more bound to tell us why he did not, than to tell us why he made

not all men angels, or all beasts men. But we know that he will be no loser by it, but equally be glorified, and pleased in the way of recovering grace. 4. God gave man free will, which was mutable, and not unchangeable in holiness, for he would have such a free will to be the subject of his earthly government, which is but preparatory to a perfect and unchangeable state. Not that an undetermined, mutable will is our perfection, but fitted on this life and work which God would have to be a lower degree and way to perfection. And free will was the first cause of sin, by an omission of its duty, and then by an ill determination of itself, though objects and temptation, and the understandings and senses' apprehensions, were antecedents and occasions.

5. The very act of sin was departing from holiness, from innocency, and from happiness. Sin itself, becoming man's unholiness, his guilt and misery.

6. Hereupon without any change, yea, or act of God, 1. The justice of God stood related to the sinner, as to one to whom death by right was due. 2. And the law, without any change in it, did virtually condemn him. 3. And by God's bare permission and desertion, the flesh, world, and devil, which had tempted him and overcome him, obtained a greater power to tempt and overcome him more, till the Spirit of God should recover and deliver him.

7. The three forementioned evils, which Adam contracted to himself, are all propagated by him to his posterity. By natural propagation infants are, 1. Polluted with a sinful pravity. 2. Guilty both of that, and, in their kind, of Adam's sin. 3. And miserable by this sin and guilt, and the forementioned penal consequents. To all which it is wonderful to consider well how much is done by the sinner himself, and how little by God, either as to the sin or punishment.

8. They that deny original sin go against plain Scripture, reason, and the experience of mankind: and do make infants saved without a Saviour, either pardoning or purifying them.

9. It is an error to lay our guilt of Adam's sin upon any such supposed covenant, will, or arbitrary imputation of God, which chargeth more on us than we were naturally guilty of. God doth neither make men sinners by imputation, who are not so in themselves, nor judge them falsely that men did what they did not. Adam was a public person, first naturally, and then reputationally. We were not then in him as persons, and therefore

sinned not in him as distinct persons, nor are reputed by God so to have done, but we were in him virtually and seminally ; not as a house is in the workman, as its cause by art, but as those whose essence is generated by his essence. And as all of us, that were then in him were guilty then, so when we become persons, those persons are then guilty, as becoming now personal subjects of it ; and all our personality is derived from a defiled, guilty, and miserable sinner, who can generate no essence or person better than he was himself. But yet the due difference between the principal agent and his offspring must be still acknowledged.

10. The guilt which, from our nearest parents, we contract also, with such additional pravity and penalty as our natural capacity, and the tenour of the New Covenant allow, is too sadly overlooked by most divines, contrary to the whole scope of Scripture, from the days of Cain to the rejection of the Jews, and contrary to the second commandment : which matter deserveth a larger explication.

11. If we dream of any other deliverer or saviour, we fall from Christ.

Quest. 4. What believe you of man's redemption by Jesus Christ ?

Ans. God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son to be their Saviour : who being God, and one with the Father, took our nature, and became man ; being conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, and called Jesus Christ : who was perfectly holy, without sin, fulfilling all righteousness ; and overcame the devil and the world ; and gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, by suffering a cursed death on the cross to ransom us, and reconcile us unto God ; and was buried, and went among the dead : the third day he rose again, having conquered death. And having sealed the new covenant with his blood, he commanded his apostles and other ministers to preach the Gospel to all the world ; and promised the Holy Ghost ; and then ascended into heaven, where he is God and man, the glorified head over all things to his church, and our prevailing Intercessor with God the Father.

1. God's free-love, without either merit, suit, or condition on man's part, gave Christ for a Saviour to the world. It is not possible for any good to befall a creature, which cometh not from the free gift of God.

2. God is said to love men, either when he willeth some good to them, or when he is pleased or delighted in them : with the

first (called a love of benevolence) he loveth man, not because he is good, but to make him good : but this is less properly called one when it goeth alone. With the other more proper love (of complacence) he loveth every thing so far only as it is good and lovely. Both these concurred to lost mankind ; but the first most eminently : the good which remained in fallen man, as lovely, was his nature, which was God's work, and partly his image ; and therein his capacity of that grace, and all that holy duty, and that heavenly perfection, in which he would be fully amiable.

3. Christ is called the Saviour of the world, with different respects to the several parts of the world, not as if he were equally the Saviour of all. So far as he saveth any, he is their Saviour : he hath so far saved all men, as to make so sufficient a satisfaction to the justice of God for their sins, that none of them shall perish for want of such a satisfaction made ; and so far as to make an universal gift of free pardon, justification, adoption, and the Spirit to all mankind, on condition of acceptance ; so that nothing but their ungrateful refusing it, can deprive them of it ; and hath commanded his ministers to publish and offer this to all the world. And he giveth men various degrees of help, towards the winning of their own consent. But the consent of some he effectually and insuperably procureth : and actually justifieth, sanctifieth, and glorifieth them. So that " he is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe : " when yet those that had a Saviour as to the antecedent satisfaction, the covenant-offer and common helps only, will perish for ever, for unthankfully refusing the salvation offered them, together with their other sins : for none are forgiven, where the Forgiver and his grace are not accepted.

4. That Christ is both God and man is evident in Scripture : God, and therefore one substance with the Father, from eternity ; but man in the fulness of time, about four thousand years after the creation of the world ; because he is God, he is of perfect sufficiency for all the work of our redemption, and his sacrifice, merit, and intercession of full force ; because he is man, he was fit to be the Head of the church, and to be a messenger from God, familiarly to teach men, and to show them a perfect example of holiness, and to suffer for us in our stead, and to possess heaven in our nature, and to intercede for us as the Mediator between God and man. So that there is nothing wanting in Christ's person, as to sufficiency, or compassionate condescension and nearness, to the consolation of penitent believers.

5. That God, the eternal Word of the Father, should take to him the nature of man, is the most astonishing wonder of all God's works: but having given us full proof of it by his Spirit, in his doctrine, miracles, and the sanctifying of believers, it is the grand article of our certain faith, yea, he giveth us to believe it, as well as commandeth it. That God is most intimately near to all men, and specially all saints, is no wonder; for he is more than the soul of the world; but his union with the manhood of Christ is an extraordinary conjunction for an extraordinary work; though the manner of it is above our reach. It was not by turning the Godhead into man, nor the manhood into the Godhead, nor doth the divine nature lose by it any of his perfection, or honour. And he that seeth how the same sun doth insinuate itself into some creatures as their very life, and yet leave others lifeless, will not think it incredible that God should more nearly unite himself to Christ's humanity than to others. We can hardly keep some philosophers from believing that all men's souls are parts of God; and yet as hardly get others to believe that God is so united to one man as to make one person.

6. Yet we must, in this mystery, take heed what notions we use; we must not say that the Godhead is a part of the person of Christ, for God cannot be part of any thing, for he is infinite; and a part is less than the whole, and therefore not infinite. Nor yet must we say that the Godhead is the whole person; part and whole are not words to be here used; but God and man are one Christ; as God and creatures are one universe of being; and yet God is not to be called the whole or part of that universe.

7. Nor must we think that the Godhead is instead of a human soul to Christ's flesh, and that he had no other soul; for he was perfect man, having human soul and body, which the Godhead assumed into personal union, and was as a soul to his soul. Much less was the Godhead turned into humanity, or any way altered.

8. Christ was not generated as other men are, but, without man, was conceived by the Holy Ghost; that is, by the Godhead operating outwardly by the divine effectual will or love, and eminently by the third person in the Trinity. Yet is Christ rather called the Son of the Father than of the Holy Ghost, because the Father is the first in order of operation.

Adam's soul was created, and not generated. Our souls are generated, and not merely created of nothing; that is, God, as the fountain of natural being, giveth multiplied essences wholly from himself, yet not as he first created things of nothing, but

by an incomprehensible influence on, and use of, the generating souls, which, under God, have a causality in the multiplication; but Christ's soul was neither merely generated nor merely created, but was principally created so far as it was conceived by the Holy Ghost; and yet there was a participation of generation, so far as there was a concourse of the Virgin's soul. And by this wonderful conception Christ was free, both from the guilt and corruption of original sin; for though he be called the Son of David and of man, totally as a man, and not as to his flesh alone, yet was he not so by a proper and full generation, as others are; but the Spirit's creative conception made him, even as to his humanity, more eminently the Son of God than the Son of man.

9. The name 'Jesus' signifieth his office, even 'A Saviour'; and the name 'Christ,' signifieth the appointment of God, his mission and authority, and qualification for this office, 'The Anointed of God.'

10. Christ's perfect holiness and righteousness was both habitual in his perfect nature, and active in his perfect actions; that is, in perfect resignation, obedience, and love to God. The perfection of his divine nature advanced the merit of his human perfection two ways, 1. Causally, as it had the chief causality in producing it. 2. Relatively, as it was the perfection of the same person. The active righteousness of Christ consisted in his conformity to the divine will, as signified in that law which was given to himself by God; which was, 1. That he should fulfil the law of nature as a man, 2. And the Mosaical law as a Jew, 3. And a proper law of mediation by his proper mediatory works, doctrine, miracles, sufferings, justifications, &c. So that the perfection or righteousness of Christ, by which we were justified and saved, as the meritorious cause, is all this in one, even his perfect, habitual, and actual holiness, caused and relatively dignified by his divine perfection. Not as if one part merited one benefit for us, and another part another; but all entirely merited all for us; for altogether was, that one condition required of Christ by the law or covenant of mediation; upon which condition performed, he had right to all the promised fruits of that mediation, as to give us the pardoning and saving covenant, &c.

11. Christ's conquering the devil and the world, as tempters, and the flesh, so far as without sin its natural desires were to be denied, as in the love of life, &c., was a great and needful

part of his work, that he might deliver us from the tempters that had overcome us, and might confound God's enemies, and break the serpent's head, and vindicate the truth and holiness of God's law, by demonstration.

12. The reason of Christ's sufferings were, as a sacrifice to expiate our sins by his suffering in our stead, to demonstrate the holiness of God, his justice and truth, and the authority and equity of his law, that God and his laws may not be despised, nor the world encouraged by impunity to unbelief and sin. By suffering, he fulfilled that law which required him to suffer, but he did not fulfil that law which made suffering due to us; for it was not the punishment of another for him, but of every sinner himself, which was due by that law. But it was satisfaction to the lawgiver, which he made by his sufferings, by giving him that which was equivalent to all our sufferings; not that same thing by which the threatening of the law is properly and fully performed, for that is nothing but our destruction; but it is something in its stead. Not altogether of the same kind neither; for our great punishment is to be left in our sin itself, which is the misery of the soul, and to be denied the Spirit of life, and to be hated of God as unholy creatures, and deprived of that love of his which all holy souls are the proper objects of, and to be tormented of our guilty consciences for each sin, and to be tormented by devils in hell, and to despair of deliverance: all which Christ was never capable of, nor did undergo; but he suffered the cursed death of the cross, after a life of humiliation; and sensible sorrows, also, in his soul; and not a little in his intellectual nature, so far as was consistent with perfect holiness, and its necessary consequences.

And Christ's sufferings are satisfactory to divine justice, not because they are the very same, in subject, matter, or duration, with what was due to us; but because they better attain the ends of the Governor and Lawgiver aforesaid, than the damnation of all the world would have done. Their aptitude to that end, was their satisfactory and meritorious dignity.

13. Christ suffered for our sins, and in our stead, because it was to free us from sufferings; and it freeth us as certainly (supposing us believers) as if we had made satisfaction ourselves; but yet he suffered in the person of the Mediator, who, indeed, is one that undertook to suffer in the sinner's stead; but never was, nor consented to be, esteemed the very sinner himself. If a man pay a debt by his servant, it is imputed to him as his own act

and payment: because the law alloweth him to do it by a servant ; and the servant is but his instrument. But this is not our case. Christ suffered in our stead ; but not as our delegate, nor in our name and person properly, but as a voluntary Mediator, who may use us after as he pleaseth, and give us the benefits as he will. We did not pay our own debt by him : his sufferings were not ours in deed, nor in law : we were not crucified in him ; we did not satisfy God's justice by him ; and, therefore, the effects are not ours till he after give them us : and that in the degree that pleaseth him. It is not the suffering in itself which he giveth us, (that were a sad gift,) nor the first effect in itself, (satisfaction,) for that is made to God for us, and not to us ; but it is the fruits hereby procured of God.

14. Much less can it be truly and properly said, that Christ in our person, and we, in and by Christ, did fulfil the law of works, by perfect habitual holiness, and outward obedience and love, and this dignified by a divine perfection. The same habits, and acts, or righteousness, being accidents, cannot be in divers subjects. We are not justified by the precept and promise of the law of works, as if we had fulfilled it all by Christ, but by the law of grace. Had we fulfilled all the law of innocency by Christ, we could have no need of his death, or any pardon ; because we should have no sin to pardon, either of omission or commission from birth to death. To forgive all our sins, and to repute us to have neither sinned, but perfectly obeyed by another, are contradictory ; and God judgeth not falsely ; nor supposeth us to do what we never did ; therefore, we have not present right to all the benefits of Christ's merits or righteousness. Our punishments are no wrong to us, while he correcteth us. He giveth us pardon and life, on condition that we be penitent believers, and doth not tell us, that we repented, believed, and persevered in and by him, which shall be imputed to us ; nor that we need it not because we are innocent in him. Nor did Christ by his death only save us from punishment, and by his perfection only merit our justification and salvation. For to be acquit from all punishment of sense and loss, is to have right to life ; and to be innocent from all sin of omission and commission, is to be just. But we are not justified by Christ against this charge, 'Thou art a sinner,' simply ; but against this charge, 'Thou art to be condemned for thy sin ;' not by imputation of innocency in itself to us, and reputing us innocent ; but by pardoning our sins, and giving us right to life, and so accepting us. And so

Christ is the Lord our righteousness ; and as he was made sin for us, not in deed, nor did God so repute him, but as one that was to suffer for sinners ; so are we made the righteousness of God in him. Being righteous by God's gift of pardon and life, purchased by his righteousness, demonstrating God's righteousness.

15. God is said to be reconciled to the world in general upon Christ's death, in that he is no more obliged in justice to punish them as mere sinners by the law of works ; but hath granted a conditional pardon to all mankind, and that free, upon condition of meet acceptance of Christ and life.

God is said to be reconciled actually to believers, in that he is not at all obliged by justice to condemn them, but hath, as it were, obliged himself by a covenant of grace to forgive and save them. So that it importeth no real change in God, but in us, and in God's covenant, and a change in God's relation to us. Yea, 2. Though also he judge us now just, and love us as just, who before judged us unjust, and loathed us as such, this change is in us, and not any other in God than in relation and denomination.

16. Christ was buried, that he might be at the lowest before he was exalted ; death seemed to have conquered him before he showed his conquest of it. So is it with us. The word translated ' hell ' in English, in the Greek and Latin ancient creeds is *ad* and *inferi*, and signifieth not necessarily the place of the damned. But it is more than his burial that is here meant, and respecteth his soul ; and signifieth that ' his soul went among the souls of the dead,' without determining it to heaven or hell : the very separating it from the body being part of Christ's humiliation. To paradise it went, but whither else, or what it did, we are necessarily ignorant. But hence it is plain that the soul liveth itself when it is separated from the body. And believers may joyfully follow Christ to the grave, and the state of separation.

17. Christ's resurrection was the great victory over death, the beginning of his triumph, and of the eminent church-state under the Messiah, and the great proof of his truth as the Son of God, and is the great comfort of believers, assuring them that they have a victorious and a living Saviour, and that his word is true, and that they shall rise again.

18. The making of the new covenant sealed with Christ's blood, and commissioning a ministry to publish it to the world,

was the great ordained means, by which Christ would give out the fruits of his merits and sacrifice with himself, for men's justification and salvation ; of which more anon.

19. Christ's ascension was the second step of his exaltation. His bodily presence was more necessary in heaven than on earth ; there he is still God and man, his body and soul being glorified, and natural flesh and blood changed into an incorruptible, spiritual body ; for so it will be with believers, for flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God. So absurdly do they err who say that bread is no bread, but Christ's flesh, and wine is no wine, but his blood, when his glorified body hath no flesh and blood at all. It is unspeakable joy to believers, that we have a head in heaven that is over all. 20. The Apostle distinguishes Christ's headship as it is "over all," and as it is to "the church." For to this end he died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of the dead and living. He hath dominion over the uncalled to call them, and over believers to defend and glorify them, and over rebels to destroy them.

21. The intercession of Christ is a great article of the christian faith, and signifieth not only that he prayeth for us, but that he is the heavenly High Priest and Mediator with God. And that when once sin hath defiled us there is no coming to God, but by a Mediator ; no, not in our thoughts, or hopes, or affections. We must expect no acceptance of our persons, or prayers, or duties, but through Christ. We must put all into his hands, that he may present them to God : we cannot so much as love God but by him, as the glass and revealer of God's love and goodness. And also we must look for nothing from God now but through him, and by his hands ; that is, by his merits and his administration. The Spirit and special grace are given by him even as Mediator ; ministers and ordinances are by him ; magistrates, and the rule of the natural world, for the ends of redemption, are by him ; for all power is given him, and he judgeth all.

Q. 5. What is the new testament, or covenant, or law of grace ?

A. God, through Jesus Christ, doth freely give to all mankind himself to be their reconciled God and Father, his Son to be their Saviour, and his Holy Spirit to be their Sanctifier, if they will believe and accept the gift, and will give up themselves to him accordingly ; repenting of their sins, and consenting to forsake the devil, the world, and the flesh, and sincerely, though

not perfectly, to obey Christ and his Spirit to the end, according to the law of nature, and his gospel institutions, that they may be glorified in heaven for ever.

1. It is the same thing which in several respects is called Christ's new testament, law, and covenant. It is his testament, because it established it by and at his death; and it contained a free gift, or legacy to man. It is his covenant, because God on his part bindeth himself by promise to do all that is there offered; and requireth men to consent and covenant accordingly with him, if they will have the benefit. It is his law, in that he containeth his established terms on which men shall obtain remission and salvation, or miss of it and be condemned, if they refuse; and by which men shall be judged to heaven or hell.

2. This law hath two parts: 1. The first is a presupposed part, which is the law of nature, as to its obligation to duty; which Christ doth not new make, but find made, and taking nature itself and man as his own, upon the title of redemption, that law also falleth into his hand. And as he doth not destroy, but perfect our nature; so he doth not destroy the law of nature, but superadd his remedying law. 2. Which is the second part, newly made by the Redeemer, and called the law of grace: the first being now as a part or appurtenance to this, as used to our sanctification, and yet the obedience of it part of the end of this. This special law and covenant of grace containeth, 1. A free deed of gift, though conditional, of God himself, the Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier, as aforesaid, with pardon of all sin, and right to the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, and to the heavenly glory. 2. The imposed condition of this free gift, which is sincere belief and consent by covenanting accordingly with God as is expressed. 3. The preceptive part, which is to be the rule of sincere obedience, as it is in gospel institutions, (the law of nature supposed.) 4. The penal part, as it leaveth men unsaved, and threateneth a sorer punishment to all impenitent and unbelieving refusers of the offered grace. And this is now the law and covenant by which we must live and be judged. And which is God's instrument, like an act of oblation, and a deed of gift, by which the benefits of Christ are, with himself, to be regularly conferred on mankind, and on which we must trust as our title to Christ and life.

Q. 6. What believe you of the Holy Ghost?

A. God the Holy Spirit was given by the Father and the Son to the prophets, apostles, and evangelists, to be their infallible guide in preaching and recording the doctrine of salvation; and the witness of its certain truth by his manifold divine operations; and he is given to quicken, illuminate, and sanctify all true believers, and to save them from the devil, the world, and the flesh.

1. The Holy Spirit is God, the third person in the Trinity. To him, in Scripture, is oft ascribed eminently, 1. The love of God, and the gift of love to man, as to the Son is ascribed the wisdom of God, and the word of wisdom. 2. The exterior operations of God on the creature, as the sun operateth on the earth by its motive, enlightening, and healing beams, which are indeed itself. 3. The perfecting of God's operations especially; and so, though the three persons are undivided, and all work together on the creature; yet eminently the Father is called the Creator and the Original of Nature; the Son is called the Redeemer and the Giver of Grace; the Holy Spirit is called the Sanctifier and the Beginner of Glory; or, the nature of man is of the Father, his medicine of the Son, and his health of the Holy Ghost given by the Father and the Son.

2. The Holy Ghost is given in several measures to men, and for several uses, for the church's edification. When any new law or doctrine was revealed to the world, God gave the Spirit of miracles to prove it to be of him. So it was when Moses gave the law, and sometimes to the prophets, when they brought any new message; and as they prophesied of Christ, so they had the Spirit of Christ to inspire them. But the great and wonderful measure of the Spirit was given to the apostles, and other Christians in the first age of the gospel church, to enable them infallibly to preach and record the history, and doctrine, and commands of Christ, and to seal it with miracles, by healing the sick, raising the dead, speaking various languages, &c. Therefore, the Scripture written by the Spirit in them is left as the rule of our faith and life; and all the motions or revelations that seem to come from the Spirit now, are to be tried by the Scripture, because we have not the same gifts or measure of the Spirit as the apostles had; so that to try the Spirit by the Scripture, is but to try our doubtful and smaller gifts of the Spirit by the apostles' certain and greater gifts of the Spirit. The belief of the Scriptures, indited by the Spirit, belongeth to this article of our belief in the Holy Ghost.

3. The ordinary renewing work of the Holy Spirit is the accessory beginning of our salvation ; and without holiness none can see God. So great a work is this on man, that Christ's own death and resurrection, and mediation in heaven, is the means to procure and give us this Spirit ; and its work is God's image on us, and called 'the divine nature.' There are three parts of this operation on us. 1. Its quickening work to make us alive to God, who were dead and dull to all holy acts. 2. Its illumination to open the eye of our darkened understanding, by knowledge and faith, curing our ignorance and unbelief. 3. Its converting or sanctifying work on the will, turning us from the love of sensual and worldly pleasures to the love of God and holiness, which, because it is the perfective act, love is taken in Scripture for the sum of all sanctification ; and to give the spirit of adoption, and to give us the love of God, is the same thing ; to which faith in Christ is the means : and yet the Spirit worketh also that faith in us. But when he worketh faith in us, he is but opening the door and entering, that, by love, he may dwell and work within us. As one compareth it to a bird that first maketh her nest, and then layeth her eggs and hatcheth them. Faith in Christ is as the bellows by which the Spirit kindleth in us the love of God ; and faith kindling love, and love kindled by faith, and working by holy, fruitful obedience is all the Spirit's work and all our religion : for mortification, and conquest of the flesh, the world, and the devil, is here comprised.

This work of the Spirit is a certain proof that Christ is the true Saviour of the world, and his Gospel true ; for none but God can thus renew souls, and God would not do it by false doctrine.

This article, therefore, of our belief in the Holy Ghost is of grand importance to be understood and well considered ; for while Christ is in heaven, his Spirit is his advocate and agent in the souls of men on earth, and his witness in all true believers, to plead Christ's cause, and prove his truth, and finish his saving works, and fit men for the love of God, and for glory : and this Spirit is to our souls as our souls to our bodies, in some sort ; without which we can do nothing holily : it is our life, light, and love ; it is our earnest, pledge, and first-fruits of heavenly glory, giving us the foretastes of it by love, and so our witness or evidence, that we are the children of God.

But it is a dangerous error to think that this Spirit is given us to do all at once, or to do all absolutely, however we use it. It

worketh the love of God in us by degrees, and is to be working it in us while we live. It worketh it by means, even by the Gospel understood, believed, and considered; and we may no more look for the Spirit without the word and means used by us, than for health without food and physic. Though he worketh insuperably when and where he please, yet men may, by resistance, forfeit and quench his operations. And, mark it well, the greatest rewards for obedience and punishments for sin, which God, as judge, doth execute in this life, are by giving men more of the Spirit, or by denying or withholding its operations on men's abuse, which is more to be feared than all other judgments in this world.

Q. 7. What believe you of the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, and the forgiveness of sins?

All that truly consent to the baptismal covenant are one sanctified church or body of Christ, and have communion in the same spirit of faith and love, and have the forgiveness of all their sins; and all that by baptism visibly covenant, and that continue to profess Christianity and holiness, are the universal visible church on earth; and must keep holy communion with love and peace in the particular churches, in the doctrine, worship, and order instituted by Christ.

1. The world is Christ's kingdom by right, and governed by his wisdom and power. The church is Christ's consenting kingdom, ruled by wisdom and special love. He is head over all things to the church: it is his body political, relatively, yet really quickened by his Spirit: it is his office to be both the constitutive, governing, and quickening head. The form of the church is its relation to him as its head. He giveth it laws, and judgeth and executeth them; and appointeth officers to it by his word and grace. He, as a mediating head, is the conveyer of the Spirit from God to us.

The church hath no universal head but Christ. None else hath right; none else is capable or able, either as principal or viceroy under him. He hath commissioned none to such an office. "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular, and God hath set some in the church: first, apostles; secondarily, prophets, &c. Are all apostles? are all prophets?" &c. (1 Cor. xii. 27—29.) Here Christ only is the head; the church is only his body. Apostles are but chief members, and not the head; and apostles are the first rank of members, who were twelve at least; therefore there is no one as a head over them.

Peter never governed the apostles ; they were never bid obey him. It was one of the Corinthians' schisms for some to make him a head, as others did Paul, and others Apollos ; and to say, we are of Cephas. The schism was not cured by calling them all to take Peter for the head. The pope is no more Peter's successor than the bishop of Antioch is, and others : if he had, he had not been either constitutive or governing head of the church. He that is head, as Christ's vicar, must be an universal prophet, universal priest, and universal king of the church. The church is not the pope's body or kingdom ; he is an usurper of much of Christ's prerogative, by a false pretence of being a vicar-head ; and so will any general council be that shall claim the same office. The church of Rome materially, so far as they are Christians, are a part of the catholic church, though a corrupt part ; but formally, as they are a body headed by the pope, they are a sinful policy, and no church of Christ at all ; for he commandeth not, but condemneth such a policy.

This church of Rome is a sect or schism of the catholic church ; it is but about the fourth part of the Christians in the world, who all make up the universal church. The Abyssines, Coptics, Syrians, Armenians, Indians, the Greeks, and Moscovites, with all the reformed churches, are as many ; calculate four parts of five, but, at the least, two parts in three, of the church. The cutting off of all these as none of Christ's church, and making none in the world to be Christians but the subjects of the pope, and contending for this with fire and sword and false-railing volumes, is the grand schism in the world, and that which still keepeth open the wounds of the church, and the scandalous, pernicious contentions of Christendom.

The pope had the same original with the patriarchs, being but the first of them, which all confess was human. Had not the Greek church (then far bigger than the Latin) thought his primacy to be human, they could never have claimed that right to Constantinople, which they knew had none but human right. The truth is, the pope was at first, and for many hundred years, but the chief bishop in one empire, as the archbishop of Canterbury is in England ; and it was the churches of that empire that made up the councils called general, being called by the emperors, who had no power any where else through the world ; and in time, his usurpation turned the Roman world into the whole world, and his kingdom must be the whole circumference of the earth, which is most unknown, and, but three or four

times, was never so much as compassed by sea. And seeing it is the apostolic office to convert souls as well as rule them, and he undertaketh that universal hardship, which never any apostle did, what a world of people in Tartary, India, the Turkish empire, Africa, at the Antipodes, and the unknown world, hath this desperate undertaker to answer for ! A true catholic must be of a greater church than that of Rome ; even the universal church containeth all Christians. He must be of no sect or schism, and therefore no papist, for they are but a sect.

The true consenters to the baptismal covenant are, the church in the first sense, truly holy ; but the baptised, not apostatised, who are visible consenters and professors of Christianity, are the church, as visible, and are holy by visible separation to God, and dedication to him. The confounding of the church, mystical and visible, tempteth some to separate from the church visible, as if it were not holy ; and the papists have made a church visible, of their own invention, which is a body-politic, headed by a pretended human head : some call it ' The Church Congregate,' to insinuate that it is such a policy. But the grand point in which we renounce popery is this, and we hold, that there is no such political church on earth that hath any universal, constitutive, or governing head besides Christ ; who is visible in heaven, and who was once visible on earth, where his church is still visible.

3. The unity of the spirit of faith and love is the chief part of the communion of saints ; and the second is in the exercise of that faith and love in external communion, which is in doing all the good they can for each other, and communicating for the relief of those that need, as men will do who love others as themselves ; and also in a concordant, holy worshipping of God ; for which end particular churches are appointed by Christ, who are to be guided by their several pastors, who are ministers under Christ, in his teaching, priestly, and ruling office. And that worship is instituted by Christ in which this communion must be exercised, saving that the ordering and circumstances are much left to the church guides : and the Lord's day is separated from this solemn, holy communion. And discipline is to keep clean the church, that it may be a communion of saints.

4. The remission of sins is the other part of the salvation of the church ; the fruit of Christ's blood, and the gift of his covenant, as sanctification is the work of his Spirit. Remission of sin is our justification, including the gift of right to life ;

and it hath three degrees, or is of three sorts : 1 Constitutive, which giveth us right to impunity, and dissolveth our guilt or obligation to punishment : this is God's act as legislator and donor by the new covenant, which is the gift of our right. 2. Sentential, by which God, as Judge, pronounceth us pardoned and just. 3. Executive, by which God actually freeth us from punishment, of sense and loss, and giveth us life.

Remission is 1. Universal, of all sins, past ; and this is given at once : Really, by God at the time of our true believing and consenting to the covenant ; but by solemn ministerial delivery in baptism visibly ; in which Christ with pardon is solemnly delivered by God's appointment to true believers and their seed, that by them are dedicated to God. 2. Particular, of every sin after baptism and conversion : for, upon particular repentance God giveth us the pardon of particular sins from day to day. Sin may be said to be virtually forgiven before it is committed, because the causes of forgiveness are existent : but that is not properly actual forgiveness ; for that which is not yet sin, cannot be forgiven sin.

The condition of pardon and justification is sometimes called faith simply, sometimes also repentance, and indeed is a penitent believer's consent to the covenant of grace, which is the condition of his title to this and the other rights of the covenant at once ; it being a free gift purchased by Christ's sacrifice and meritorious righteousness, and by this covenant made ours : this is the plain and full doctrine of remission and justification ; beyond which, a good Christian need not trouble his head with the invented words and niceties, and controversies of these times. The sentential and executive justification or remission is begun on earth, but perfected at the final judgment ; and both pass according to our constitutive remission and justification by the covenant. Adoption addeth some further dignity to believers, above what is in bare remission and justification, which cometh from the same merits and gift of Christ.

Q. 8. What believe you of the resurrection and everlasting life ?

A. At death the souls of the justified go to happiness with Christ, and the souls of the wicked to misery. And at the end of this world, Christ will come to glory, and will raise the bodies of all men from death, and will judge all according to their works. And the righteous shall go into everlasting life, where, being made perfect themselves, they shall see God, and

perfectly love and praise him with Christ, and all the glorified church ; and the rest into everlasting punishment.

1. The souls of the righteous go presently at death to Christ, in paradise or heaven ; and the wicked to misery, which is hell.

2. Christ's second glorious coming is the day of our great deliverance and joy, which all true believers love and should long for.

3. The doctrine of the resurrection is fully opened by Christ, (John v.,) and by Paul, (1 Cor. xv.,) of which Christ's own resurrection is our pledge.

4. The last judgment is that which endeth all controversies, and finally and perfectly justifieth believers, who were but initially and preparatorily justified before. Christ will be both judge and our advocate. The law of grace and not innocency is it that we must be judged by ; but according to the divers editions of that law which men lived under. And the works that they shall be judged by, are the performance or not performance of the conditions of this law of grace. For by the works of the law of Moses, or of innocency, none can be justified. Nor yet by any commutative merit of his faith, love, or gospel obedience ; but only as they are the terms on which God giveth the life, which is purchased by the death and perfect righteousness of Christ ; which in the thing itself and value is a mere gift, though the order of giving it is by the law of grace, by which we must be judged. So that Christ justifieth by his own merits, satisfaction, and free gift thereon, against the charge of our deserving damnation for sin, as sin against the law of innocency and works, so be it we be otherwise justifiable against the charge of being infidels, impenitent and ungodly. For Christ did not repent and believe for us, nor was holy to excuse us from being holy ; but we must believe, repent, and be holy ourselves by his grace ; and by these themselves be justified against the false accusation that we are unbelievers, impenitent and unholy.

Christ doth not take away the faultiness of our actions, or the guilt of sin, as sin simply in itself, so that we shall be reputed innocent or sinless ; but he taketh away the guilt of punishment, and the guilt of sin, respectively as binding to punishment, and no more.

5. The glory of saints will be, 1. In the full perfection of their own souls and bodies ; 2. In the perfect knowledge, love, and praise and service of God, for his own sake, as the infinite

Good and object of love and praise ; 3. And in the full reception and joyful sense of God's love to us, and to all the church.

4. And in the fruition of Christ in glory ; 5. With the blessed society of all the glorified angels and saints ; and this to all eternity. This faith foreseeth, love fore-tasteth, and we must joyfully expect by hope, and seek in obedience.

6. The wicked shall be miserable with the devil and his servants in their own sin, and the loss of the favour of God and the tormenting sense of both on their consciences, and in bodily misery, and despair of all remedy for ever.

Q. 9. You have told me what you believe : tell me now what is the full resolution and desire of your will, concerning all this which you believe.

A. Believing in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I do presently, absolutely, and resolvedly give up myself to him, my Creator, and reconciled God and Father, my Saviour, and my Sanctifier ; and, repenting of my sins, I renounce the devil, the world, and the sinful desires of the flesh ; and denying myself, and taking up my cross, I consent to follow Christ the Captain of my salvation, in hope of the grace and glory promised ; which I daily desire and beg, as he hath taught me, saying, " Our Father which art in heaven," &c.

1. The will is the man, and, according to the will, we are esteemed of God. Knowledge and belief is but the entrance of grace to the heart and will, where love is the heart of the new creature. The hour when we truly make this heart-covenant and consent we are converted, sanctified, justified, and adopted ; and not till then.

But children are as parts of their parents ; who are bound to enter them into the covenant of God ; and whose will chooseth for them till they have natural reason and will to use themselves.

It is faith in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which is only saving, and not in one alone ; even a consenting practical faith, which is our true Christianity itself ; nor are we justified by any other.

2. The Lord's Prayer, being the sum of our desires, belongeth to this head ; it being but the will's prosecution of that good which it consented to, and hopeth for.

Q. 10. What is this practice which, by this covenant, you are obliged to ?

A. According to the law of nature, and Christ's institu-

tions, I must (desiring perfection) sincerely obey him, in a life of faith, and hope, and love : loving God as God, for himself, above all ; and loving myself as his servant, especially my soul, and seeking its holiness and salvation ; and loving my neighbour as myself : I must avoid all idolatry of mind or body, and must worship God according to his word ; by learning and meditating on his word ; by prayer, thanksgiving, praise, and use of his sacrament : I must not profane, but holily use his holy name : I must keep holy the Lord's day, especially in communion with the church-assemblies : I must honour and obey my parents, magistrates, pastors, and other rulers : I must not wrong my neighbour in thought, word, or deed, in his soul, his body, his chastity, estate, right, or propriety ; but do him all the good I can, and do as I would be done by ; which is summed up in the ten commandments, " God spake all these words, saying," &c.

Because the Ten Commandments are plain themselves, and parents yet must read fuller expositions of them to their families, than I must here lay down, I shall give no other expositions of them but only, 1. That every Commandment both forbiddeth evil, and commandeth the contrary good. 2. That every commandment reacheth to thoughts and affections, words and actions. 3. That the things commanded are not to be done always, but in their proper seasons ; but nothing absolutely forbidden must ever be done ; but things forbidden only in some cases, may be done out of those cases. 4. That the Commandments must be understood by Christ's exposition with the addition of his gospel institutions : and obeyed as Christ's, joined to the new covenant ; and not as given by Moses, as belonging to the covenant of works made with the Jews, or as part of the covenant of innocency made with Adam at the first.

Forms of Prayer, Praise, and Catechism, for the use of Ignorant Families that need them.

READER, I purposely avoid overdoing and preparing thee too much work, lest my intended help should prove a hinderance. But because all have not the same leisure, I have given you both longer and shorter forms that you may use that which is fittest for the time and persons.

I. When you awake, let your hearts thus move towards God :

Thou, Lord, who art the life of all the world, hast mercifully preserved me in life this night, when I could do nothing to keep myself. I thank thee for my health, and rest, and peace. Oh ! now let thy mercies to me be renewed with the day : and let me spend this day in thy protection, by the help of thy Spirit, in love and faithful service to thee, and in watchfulness against my corruptions and temptations ; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

II. Those that have opportunity to pray secretly before family prayer, should speak freely, without book, from the feeling of their own wants, if they are able : if not, they may use the same prayer which is for families, so far as their wants and cases are the same.

III. *A Morning Prayer for a Family.*

O, all-mighty, all-seeing, and most gracious God, who hast created us and all things for thy glory ! we, sinful worms, encouraged by thy own command and promise, and the mediation of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, do humbly cast down ourselves before thee, to acknowledge thy mercies, to confess our sins, to beg thy grace, and to tender thee our praise and service.

We thank thee that thou hast made us reasonable creatures, to know, and love, and serve our Creator, and capable of everlasting happiness in thy glory. We thank thee that we, who were born in sin, and were thy enemies in our fleshly state, were not forsaken by thee in our sins, nor left with the devils to helpless desperation ; but have a sufficient Saviour given us by thy love, who hath redeemed us by his blood, and given a free pardon and title to life, in his covenant of grace, to all that heartily accept him as their Lord and Saviour. We thank thee for his holy Gospel, for his holy example, for his Holy Spirit, given to his apostles, ministers, and all true believers. We thank thee for our birth, our education, our friends, our health, our peace and liberty, and all our comforts of this life. We thank thee for our public teaching and our private helps, the comfort of thy holy worship, and all the means of our salvation ; but especially that thou hast blessed any of it to our good, and didst not forsake our sinful souls, and give us over to the blindness of our own minds, and the hardness of our hearts, and the slavery of our fleshly desires and wills. How great was that mercy, which did not only spare our lives, and keep us out of hell while we were

sinning, but at last convinced any of us of our sin and misery, and awakened our sleepy souls unto repentance, and made us know the vanity of this world, and the certainty and glory of the life to come, that we might know thee and seek thee, our end and happiness! How great was thy mercy, which opened to us the mysteries of thy Gospel, and drew us to thy Son, as the way to thee!

But, alas, we have ill requited thee for thy love; our original sin hath been too fruitful in our sinful lives; our childhood and youth was spent in too much folly, and fleshly sensuality! How long did we forget our God and our souls, our death and our everlasting state, as if we had no life to live but this, and we had been made to live and die like beasts! How long did we live in ignorance and unbelief, and little knew the nature and office, our want, and the worth and riches of Christ! How long did we live before thy love in Christ did melt us; and before we knew the life of faith; and before we were brought to the hatred of sin, and love of holiness, and before that ever we loved thee, our God, and the heavenly kingdom, above this world! Alas! we were deceived by the vanities here below, and followed the sinful desires of the flesh, and resisted thy Spirit which moved us to repent and turn to thee. And since we consented to thy holy covenant, we have too often yielded to temptations, and loved thee so coldly, and served thee so slothfully, and lived so unfruitfully, and made so ill an use of thy mercies, and of our afflictions, that thou mightest justly have taken thy Spirit from us, and suffered us to return to our former misery.

But O do not enter into judgment with us; forgive us for his sake, who is the sacrifice and propitiation for our sins. Charge not upon us the sins of our corrupted nature, or of our lives; of our childhood, youth, or riper age; our sins of omission or commission, of knowledge or of ignorance, of rashness or negligence, of sinful lust, passion, or of sloth. Wash us in the blood, and accept us for the merits of the perfect holiness and sufferings, of our Redeemer. We dare not come to thee, but in his name, nor expect any pardon or mercy from thee, but for his sake, and by his hand. Let our hearts be sincere in consenting to his covenant by a lively faith, that we may be one with him, our blessed Head, and may receive the continual communications of his Spirit. Our souls are by corruption dead to God, and dark through ignorance, error, and unbelief, and disaffected to thee

and to thy holy ways, till that Spirit do quicken, illuminate, and sanctify us. O give us this Spirit, the greatest of thy gifts on earth! Let him dwell by a new and holy nature in us; let him fill our hearts with holy life, that we may live to thee and die to sin; and with holy light, that we may know thee in Christ, and know thy word, and believe thy truth; and with holy love, that our whole desire may be to thee, and our delight be in thee; and being pleased in thee, we may, through Christ, be pleasant to thee for ever. O let not our ignorance and unbelief prevail! Let not our love to thee be still so cold, our desire so dull, nor our endeavours so slothful: nor our hopes of heaven so faint and weak! Let not the pleasures, or riches, or honours of this world ever steal our hearts away from thee: nor our fleshly desires overcome thy Spirit: govern our affections, thoughts, words, and actions, our senses, our appetites, and our passions by thy grace. Deliver us from selfishness, and teach us to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to wrong no man in our thoughts, or words, or deeds; but to do all the good that we can to others, to their souls and bodies. Save us from the devilish sin of pride, and all the fruits of it; and make us humble and low in our own eyes, and to loathe ourselves for all our sins; and to be patient, if we are vile in the eyes of others. Save us from temptations, and confirm our wills, that they may not easily be drawn to sin. Especially save us from those great heart-distempers, which are most powerful in us, and which we least hate and resist. Give us such public and private helps for our souls, as we most need; and bless them to us. Make us faithful in all the duties of our relations, in kingdom, church, and family, as we are superiors, inferiors; or equals; that we may have the comfort of them all. Mercifully dispose of our persons, our friends and affairs. Provide for and protect our bodies, and make us contented with our daily bread, and patient if, for our sins, we want it. Be merciful to the afflicted, and give such seasonable deliverance to the sick, the poor, the oppressed, and the broken-hearted, as is most for their own and others' good, and for thy glory. Continue thy gospel to these and all the rest of the churches; furnish them all with skilful, holy, and diligent pastors; and bless their labours to the increase of holiness, love, and peace. Rebuke the ignorance, pride, and uncharitableness which do still divide us; and give us the knowledge, humility, and love, which must unite and heal us. Bless the King, and all in authority, with

the wisdom, holiness and justice, which are necessary to the welfare of themselves and us. Teach them to govern, and us to obey, as the subjects of thee the King of kings. Revive knowledge and holiness in all the churches through the world, and lead them into the way of peace and concord, and save them from their sins and enemies! Deliver all deceived and oppressed nations, especially Christians, from the tyranny, seduction, and malignity of their deceivers and oppressors. Pity the many kingdoms of the world that are drowned in heathenism, infidelity, and Mahometanism. Subdue the powers that rebel against thee, and let the kingdoms of the world be the kingdoms of Christ. Open a way for the Gospel to them; and send them meet teachers for so great a work; that thy name may be hallowed, and thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. The world and all therein are thine: whatever pleaseth thee thou dost. Thy enemies and ours are in thy power; thou givest life to all the living; and thy mercies are over all thy works. Heaven and earth are continued by thy power and will; and all things in them are ordered by thy wisdom. Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be feared; wise art thou, and absolutely to be obeyed. Good art thou, and unmeasurably to be loved. The image and glory of thy perfection shineth in thy wonderful works. But above all in our glorified Redeemer and his triumphant church, where thy light enlighteneth, thy love inflameth, and thy glory glorifieth the blessed spirits of that glorious world, where angels and saints in beholding, and loving, and praising thy glory, are filled with everlasting joy: for of thee, and through thee, and to thee, are all things. To thee be the glory for ever. Amen.

A shorter Prayer for the Morning, in the method of the Lord's Prayer, being but an exposition of it.

Most glorious God, who art power, and wisdom, and goodness itself, the Creator of all things, the Owner, the Ruler, and the Benefactor of the world, but specially of thy church and chosen ones: though by sin original and actual we were thy enemies, the slaves of Satan and our flesh, and under thy dis-

pleasure and the condemnation of thy law, yet thy children redeemed by Jesus Christ, thy Son, and regenerated by thy Holy Spirit, have leave to call thee their reconciled Father : for by thy covenant of grace thou hast given them thy Son to be their Head, their Teacher, and their Saviour : and in Him thou hast pardoned, adopted, and sanctified them, sealing and preparing them, by thy Holy Spirit, for thy celestial kingdom, and beginning in them that holy life, and light, and love, which shall be perfected with thee in everlasting glory. O with what wondrous love hast thou loved us, that of rebels we should be made the sons of God ! Thou hast advanced us to this dignity, that we might be devoted wholly to thee as thine own, and might delightfully obey thee, and entirely love thee, with all our heart, and so might glorify thee here and for ever.

O cause both us, and all thy churches, and all the world, to hallow thy great and holy name, and to live to thee as our ultimate end ; that thy shining image on holy souls may glorify thy divine perfection.

And cause both us and all the earth to cast off the tyranny of Satan and the flesh, and to acknowledge thy supreme authority, and to become the kingdoms of thee and thy Son, Jesus, by a willing and absolute subjection. O perfect thy kingdom of grace in ourselves and in the world, and hasten the kingdom of glory !

And cause us, and thy churches, and all people of the earth, no more to be ruled by the lusts of the flesh, and their erroneous conceits, and by self will, which is the idol of the wicked ; but by thy perfect wisdom and holy will, revealed in thy laws, make known thy word to all the world, and send them the messengers of grace and peace ; and cause men to understand, believe, and obey the Gospel of salvation, and that with such holiness, unity, and love, that the earth, which is now too like to hell, may be made liker unto heaven, and not only thy scattered, imperfect flock, but those also who in their carnal and ungodly minds do now refuse a holy life, and think thy word and ways too strict, may desire to imitate even the heavenly church where thou art obeyed, and loved, and praised, with high delight, in harmony and perfection.

And because our being is the subject of our well being, maintain us in the life which thou hast here given us, until the work of life be finished. And give us such health of mind and body, and such protection and supply of all our wants, as shall best fit

us for our duty. And make us contented with our daily bread, and patient if we want it. And save us from the love of the riches, and honours, and pleasures of this world, and the pride, and idleness, and sensuality which they cherish. And cause us to serve thy providence by our diligent labours, and to serve thee faithfully with all that thou givest us. And let us not make provision for the flesh, to satisfy its desires and lusts.

And we beseech thee, of thy mercy, through the sacrifice and propitiation of thy beloved Son, forgive us all our sins, original and actual, from our birth to this hour; our omissions of duty, and committing of what thou didst forbid; our sins of heart, and word, and deed; our sinful thoughts and affections; our sinful passions and discontents; our secret and our open sins; our sins of negligence and ignorance, and rashness; but especially our sins against knowledge and conscience, which have made the deepest guilt and wounds. Spare us, O Lord, and let not our sin so find us out as to be our ruin; but let us so find it out as truly to repent and turn to thee. Especially, punish us not with the loss of thy grace! Take not thy Holy Spirit from us, and deny us not his assistance and holy operations. Seal to us by that Spirit the pardon of our sins, and lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and give us the joy of thy favour and salvation; and let thy love and mercy to us fill us, not only with thankfulness to thee, but with love and mercy to our brethren, and our enemies, that we may heartily forgive them that do us wrong, as through thy grace we hope we do.

And, for the time to come, suffer us not to cast ourselves wilfully into temptations, but carefully to avoid them, and resolutely to resist and conquer what we cannot avoid: and oh, mortify those inward sins and lusts, which are our constant and most dangerous temptations; and let us not be tempted by Satan or the world, or tried by thy judgments, above the strength which thy grace shall give us. Save us from a fearless confidence in our own strength; and let us not dally with the snare, nor taste the bait, nor play with the fire of thy wrath, but cause us to fear and depart from evil, lest, before we are aware, we be entangled and overcome, and wounded with our guilt and with thy wrath, and our end should be worse than our beginning: especially, save us from those radical sins of error, and unbelief, pride, hypocrisy, hardheartedness, sensuality, slothfulness, and the love of this present world, and the loss of our love to thee, to thy kingdom, and thy ways.

And save us from the malice of Satan and of wicked men, and from the evils which our sins would bring upon us.

And as we crave all this from thee, we humbly tender our praises with our future service to thee. Thou art the King of all the world, and more than the life of all the living. Thy kingdom is everlasting: wise, and just, and merciful is thy government. Blessed are they that are thy faithful subjects; but who hath hardened himself against thee, and hath prospered? The whole creation proclaimeth thy perfection; but it is heaven where the blessed see thy glory, and the glory of our Redeemer; where the angels and saints behold thee, admire thee, adore thee, love thee, and praise thee with triumphant, joyful songs, the Holy, Holy, Holy God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who was, and is, and is to come; of thee, and through thee, and to thee, are all things: to thee be glory for ever. Amen.

IV. *A Prayer for Morning or Evening in Families.*

O GOD, the Infinite Eternal, Spirit, most perfect in power, wisdom, and goodness; though mortal eyes cannot behold thee, nor any created understanding comprehend thee; thou art present with us, and seest all the secrets of our hearts; our sins and wants are known to thee: but thou requirest our confessions as the exercise of our repentance, and our petitions as the exercise of our desires and filial dependence upon thee. And O that our souls were more fit for thy holy presence, and for this great and holy work! O thou whose mercy inviteth miserable sinners to come unto thee by the new and living way, meet us not in thy justice as a consuming fire, but accept us in thy righteous and beloved Son, in whose mediation is our trust.

Thou, who art the great Creator of all things, didst make us in thine image, to know thee, to love thee, and to serve thee. But sin hath corrupted all our powers, and turned them from thee, and against those holy ends and uses for which thou didst create us. In sin we were conceived, and in sin we have lived, increasing our original guilt and misery. Though we know that thou art our Owner, we have lived as if we were at our own disposal. We have called thee our King and Ruler, but we have rebelled against thee, and obeyed our carnal wills and appetites. Thou art goodness and love itself, and the Author of all that is good and amiable in all the world, and our souls should have loved thee with fervency and delight; but our

hearts have been estranged from thee, and have sought delight in worldly vanities, and in the pleasing of our fleshly minds and lusts. This deceitful world hath had our love, our care, our thoughts, our words, our time, our labour, as if it had been our home and portion, and we had been to continue here for ever, whilst our God and our immortal souls have been neglected. Thou hast made us capable of endless glory, and called us to seek it, and to set our hearts above on thee; but we have lived as if we believed not thy word, and have despised the joys of heaven, which thou hast offered us, and preferred our short and sensual pleasures. We have trifled in thy worship, and served thee hypocritically with our lips alone. We have taken thy dreadful name in vain. We have misspent thy holy day, we have dishonoured our superiors, and neglected our inferiors. Our family, which should have been ordered in holiness, as a church of God, hath been a house of vanity, worldliness, and discontent. Our thoughts have been guilty, not only of vanity, folly, and confusion, but of malice, and of unclean and filthy lusts. Our tongues have been guilty, not only of idle and foolish talk, but also wrathful words and railings, of filthy and immodest speech, and of evil speaking and backbiting others, and of many a lie. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves, nor done by all others as we would have had them done by us; but we have been all for our carnal selves, proudly desiring our own exaltation and commodity, and sensually desiring pleasure to ourselves, whilst we have too little cared for the corporal or spiritual good of others. We have been very backward to love our enemies, and heartily to forgive a wrong. We have been unprofitable abusers of thy talents, and have wasted our precious time in vanity, and done but little good in the world.

And though thy wonderful mercy hath given us a Redeemer, and in him a sufficient remedy for our sins; and thou hast posed the understandings of men and angels in this strange expression of thy wisdom and thy love; yet have we staggered at thy word in unbelief, and stupidly neglected this great salvation. How carelessly have we heard and read thy gospel! How little have we been affected with all the love and sufferings of our Saviour! We could have been thankful to one that had saved our lives, or enriched us in the world; but how unthankful have we been to him, who hath done so much to save our souls from endless misery? Alas, our hard unhumbléd hearts do

make light of our sins and of thy just displeasure, and therefore make light of Christ and grace. And it is just with thee to deny us for ever the mercy which we set so light by.

But deal with us, O Lord, according to thy goodness, and according to our great necessity, and not according to our deserts. We have sinned as men, but be thou merciful as God. Where our sin aboundeth, oh, let thy grace abound much more. Thou gavest mankind a Saviour when we were thine enemies, and thou wast in Christ reconciling the world unto thyself: and it is thy great design to glorify thy wonderful love and mercy, by the advantage of our great unworthiness and misery, and to forgive much, that we may love thee much; and if, after all this, we should doubt of thy willingness to forgive believing, penitent souls, we should greatly wrong the riches of thy grace. Thou soughtest us, when we sought not after thee; and it is by thine own command that we seek thee, and beg thy mercy; and thou givest us the very desires which we pour out before thee: thou beseechest us to be reconciled, and to receive thy grace; and shall we question then whether thou art willing to give it. There is enough in the sacrifice and merits of thy Son to expiate our sins, and justify penitent believers in thy sight. Thou hast made him the infallible teacher of thy church: he is a King most fit to rule us, to defend and justify us: thy Spirit is the Sanctifier of souls; and thy love is sufficient to be our everlasting felicity and rest. We therefore humbly give up ourselves to thee our God; to thee our Father, our Saviour, and our Sanctifier; beseeching thee to receive us upon the terms of thy covenant of grace. Remember not against us our youthful folly, ignorance, and lusts: forgive our secret and open sins: our sins of negligence, rashness, and presumption: especially those sins which we have deliberately and wilfully committed, against our knowledge and the strivings of thy grace. Renew and sanctify us thoroughly by thy Spirit: take from us the old and stony hearts, and give us hearts more tender and tractable; and give us the divine and heavenly nature; and make us holy in the image of thy holiness. Cause us to resign and devote ourselves, and all that thou givest us, entirely to thee as being thine own. Bring all the powers of our souls and bodies into a full subjection to thy government. O show us thine infinite goodness and perfections, and the wonderful mercy which thou hast given us in Christ; and shed abroad thy love upon our hearts, by the

Holy Ghost, that we may be constrained by thy love to love thee above all things, with all our heart, and soul, and might. Let the beams of thy love so fire our hearts, that we may love thee fervently, and delight to love thee, and taste the beginning of the heavenly felicity and pleasures in thy love, and may perceive that we can never love thee enough ; but may still be longing to love thee more. We dare not say ' O that we could love thee as thou art worthy ! ' for that is above both men and angels : but O that we could love thee as much as we would love thee ; till we come to that most blessed state, where we shall love thee more than now we can desire ! If we had never sinned in word or deed, the want and weakness of our love to thee is a sin which we can never sufficiently lament ; and the very shame of our corrupted natures, and a burden that we cannot bear. We crave no other felicity in this life, than to know thee better and to love thee more. Give us the spirit of adoption, which may possess us with all child-like affections to thee, as our reconciled God and Father in Christ. Cause us to make thee our ultimate end, and to seek thy glory in all that we do. Let it be our chiefest study in all things to please thee, to promote thy kingdom, and to do thy will. Set up thy glory above the heavens, and let thy name be sanctified in all the earth. Convert the heathen and infidel world, and let their kingdoms become the kingdoms of thy Son. Give wise and holy rulers to the nations ; and let the Gospel of Jesus go forth as the sun, to the enlightening of all the quarters of the earth. O that the world which is ruled by the malicious prince of darkness might receive and obey thy holy laws ; and in the beauty and harmony of holiness be made more like the saints in heaven. Reform the churches which are darkened and defiled, and cast down that tyranny, ungodliness, heresy, and schism, which keep out knowledge, holiness, and peace. Preserve and bless the reformed churches ; especially in these kingdoms where we live. Bless the king, and all in authority ; teach our teachers, and give both able and faithful pastors to all the congregations of these lands. And give the people obedient, pious, and peaceable minds. Cause us to seek first thy kingdom and righteousness ; and let all other things be added to us. Give us all necessities for the sustaining of our natures ; and make us contented with our daily bread ; and patient, if for our sins we want it. Teach us to improve our precious time, and not to spend it in idleness, or sin ; but despatch the work upon which our endless life de-

pendeth ; and to live as we shall wish at last that we had lived. Let our daily sins be daily and unfeignedly repented of ; and be daily pardoned through Jesus Christ : and let us live in the belief of his mediation, according to our continual necessities. Let thy exceeding love and pardoning mercy teach us to love our neighbours as ourselves : and to love our enemies, and to pardon wrongs, and to do good to all according to our power. Strengthen us in our warfare, against the flesh, the world, and the devil, that we may not only resist, but overcome. Keep us from the baits and snares of sin ; and let us not thrust ourselves into temptations. Save us from ignorance and unbelief, from ungodliness and hypocrisy, from pride, and worldliness, and slothfulness, and all sinful pleasing of the flesh. Cause us to worship thee in holiness, and reverently to use thy dreadful name, and to remember the keeping holy of thy day. Keep us from sinful disobeying our superiors ; and all unfaithful neglecting our inferiors ; and from injuring any in thought, word, or deed. Keep us from sinful wrath and passions : from all unchastity in thoughts, desires, words, or actions. Keep us from stealing and defrauding others, from lying, slandering, and backbiting ; and mortify that selfishness, which would set us against our neighbour's welfare : keep us from the judgments which we deserve : and let all afflictions work together for our good. O help us to spend this transitory life in a faithful preparation for our death, and let our hearts and conversation be in heaven ; and forsake us not in the time of our extremity ; and take our departing souls to Christ.

Add in the Morning.

Protect, direct, and bless us this day, in all our lawful ways and labours, that in the evening we may return thee joyful thanks, through Jesus Christ, our only Saviour : in whose words we sum up all our prayers : Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Add in the Evening.

Preserve us this night, and give us such rest of body and mind, as may fit us for the labours of the following day, for the

sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour : in whose words we sum up our requests : Our Father which art in heaven, &c.

Another Prayer for Families : For Evening, or Morning.

O ETERNAL God, infinitely great, and wise, and good, our reconciled, merciful Father in Christ ; reject not us vile and miserable sinners, who, constrained by our necessities, and invited by thy goodness, cast down ourselves in the humble confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of thy manifold mercies, and earnestly beg thy further grace.

We were born with corrupted, sinful natures, which from our childhood we increased by actual sin. And though thy great mercy had given us a sufficient Saviour and a covenant of grace, and betime engaged us to thee in that covenant by our baptismal vow, and gave us the great mercy of the Gospel, and christian education, yet did we sinfully forget our Creator, unthankfully neglect our Redeemer, and rebelliously resist the Holy Ghost. How blindly, how wilfully, and how long did we follow our fleshly minds and lusts, and loved pleasure more than God, and lived brutishly by sense and appetite, and minded little but the vanities of this world ! Yet all this while didst thou preserve our lives, and supply our wants, and save us from many a danger and calamity, when thy justice might have cut us off in our sins, and sent us to hell as we deserved. But we abused thy patience, and all thy mercies, and wasted our precious time in sin, and refused or delayed to repent, and hearkened not to the voice of thy Spirit and word, thy ministers or our consciences, but hardened our hearts against them all. We knew that we must die, but we prepared not for it, nor seriously thought of the life that followeth. We did not, by a changed heart and life, prepare for the great change which death will make, nor consider, that except we are born again of the Spirit, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. We were never sure one day, or night, or hour, to see one another, and we knew our time could not be long, and we were oft told, that as we lived here, we must speed in heaven or hell for ever : and yet, alas ! how senselessly have we heard and known all this ! And how little care have we taken for our souls, that they might be saved from sin and hell, and live with Christ in the heavenly glory, in comparison of the care that we have taken for our bodies, which we know must turn shortly to dust. Alas ! pride and folly, and the vanities of this world, and examples of sinners, and the

sloth, and appetite, and lusts of our own flesh, have deceived us, and turned away our hearts from thee. And while we quieted our conscience with the name of Christianity, and a dead and outside show of worship, we were strangers to a holy and heavenly heart and life, and drew near thee with our lips, while our hearts were far from thee. And those of us, whom thy grace hath turned from this sin and vanity to thyself, did too long stand out and delay our conversion, and resist thy Spirit. And since we have served thee, alas ! how poorly, how coldly, how unconstantly, with what wavering and divided hearts, as if we were loth to leave the world and sin. And by how many failings have we quenched thy Spirit, and wronged thy glory, and our brethren's souls, and hindered our own comfort and increase of grace ! We have too little differed in heart and life from the ungodly, and from our former state of sin, and no wonder if our faith, hope, and love be weak, and if we have little of the joys of thy love and our salvation.

But, O thou, the merciful Father of Spirits, have mercy upon us ; forgive our great and manifold sins ! Wo to us that ever we were born, if thou deal with us as we deserve. How quickly then shall we be in hell, past all remedy, in endless pain and desperation ? Where we shall have time to lament that sin in vain, which we would not forsake in the day of our visitation. But we appeal from the justice of thy law of innocency, to the blood and merits of Jesus our Redeemer, and to thy law and covenant of grace, which for his propitiation freely pardoneth all penitent, true believers. We are sinners, but he is righteous, and hath satisfied for our sins : we are worthy of misery ; but he is worthy for whom thy mercy should forgive our sin ! Oh ! wash us in his blood ; justify, adopt, and accept us in him. O take possession of our souls by that Spirit which is the advocate and witness of Christ, and which may dwell in us as a principle of spiritual life, and may form us fully to thy will and image, and overcome in us the flesh, the world, and the devil, and be our seal, and pledge, and earnest, and first fruits of everlasting life. Let his quickening virtue heal our deadness, and make us lively and strong for thee. Let his illuminating virtue heal our ignorance, error, and unbelief, and fill our minds with faith and wisdom. Let his converting, sanctifying virtue kill in us the love of the pleasures, honours, and riches of this world, and give us a settled hatred of all sin, and fill our hearts with a fervent love to thee, thy word, thy ways, and servants, and to all men in

their several capacities ; and cause us to delight our souls in thee. Leave us not to serve thee outwardly and unwillingly from fear alone : but make thy love and service to be our food and our feast, our business and our recreation. O make thy ways so pleasant to us, that we may have no need to beg pleasure at the devil's door, nor to steal the forbidden pleasures of sin. Let the thoughts of thy precious love in Christ, of our pardon and peace with thee, and of the heavenly endless joys with Christ which thou hast promised us, be the readiest and sweetest thoughts of our minds ; and a daily cordial at our hearts, to rejoice them under all the crosses and vexations of this world, and the pains of our flesh, and the fore-sight of death, and to comfort us at a dying hour. O cause us all the days of our lives to comfort ourselves and one another with these words, 'That we shall for ever be with our glorified Lord, more than with the possession or hopes of life, or health, or wealth, or any thing which earth affordeth. Teach us to redeem our short and precious time, and to cast away no part of it on vanity ; but to lay up our treasure in heaven, and first to seek thy kingdom and its righteousness, and to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, remembering that we must be adjudged according to our works. Teach us to worship thee spiritually and acceptably through Christ : to reverence thy name, and word, and ordinances, and to sanctify thy holy day : to honour our superiors, and behave ourselves aright to our equals and inferiors : to wrong none in their bodies, chastity, estates, or names ; but to do as we would be done by : to love our neighbours as ourselves ; to love and forgive our enemies, and those that do us wrong. Cause us to hate and overcome our selfishness, pride, sensuality, worldliness, hypocrisy, and all our fleshly lusts, which fight against the spirit, and are odious in thy sight. Help us to govern our thoughts, affections, senses, appetites, words, and actions, by thy word and Spirit ; to labour faithfully in our callings, to fly from idleness, and yet to be contented with our daily bread. Prepare us for all sufferings, with faith, hope, and patience. Cause us to overcome in all temptations, and to persevere unto the end ; that having lived soberly, righteously, and godly in this world, we may joyfully receive the sentence of death ; and that that may be the day of our entrance into the heavenly joys, which is the terror of the wicked, and the beginning of their endless misery.

O send the word of life to the dark and miserable nations of the earth; call the kingdoms of heathens and infidels to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; let every knee bow to him, and every tongue confess him to thy glory. Subdue the proud and rebellious tyrants of the earth, who keep out the Gospel, and keep up wickedness; and set up their interest against the kingdom and interest of Christ. Deliver the churches from all their oppressors and deceivers; and reform them to such wisdom, holiness, and concord, that their light may shine to Mahometans and other infidels, and do more to win them to Christ, than the scandal of their ignorance, wickedness, and divisions, hath done to hinder the world's conversion and salvation. O show to partial, blind, uncharitable, and contentious Christians, the true way of peace, in returning to the ancient simplicity and purity of doctrine, worship, discipline, and conversation. Save all the churches from their sins and enemies. Bless these kingdoms, and never take thy Gospel from us! Bless the King, with all his nobles, judges, and magistrates; that they may rule as being ruled by thy laws and Spirit, promoting knowledge, holiness, and peace; and suppressing deceivers, ungodliness, and injustice, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Be merciful to all christian congregations, and give them able, holy, and laborious pastors, who will guide the flocks in the way of life with the wisdom from above, which is first pure, and then peaceable and gentle; even by sound doctrine, and holy living, and by love and concord among themselves, according to the blessed example of our Lord. Be merciful to the afflicted, by sickness, pains, wants, dangers, or distress of soul: bless their sufferings to their sanctification and salvation, and relieve them in the time and way as is most for thy glory and their good. Save the prosperous from the temptations of prosperity. Be merciful to this family, and let there be no ignorant, ungodly, fleshly, worldly persons in it; that shall serve the flesh and the devil, instead of serving thee, and sell their souls for the pleasures of sin. Keep us all in holiness, love, and peace, and in our duties to one another; and let thy blessing be on all our souls and bodies, and on our labours and affairs; and let not thy judgments seize upon us.

Add this at Night.

We thank thee for all the mercies of our lives to soul and body, and particularly for preserving us this day. We have had

another day's time of repentance, to prepare for our last day: but, alas, how little good have we got or done! Forgive all our sins of omission and commission; and protect us this night from the evils that we deserve. Refresh us with safety, rest, and sleep; and let our meditations of thee be sweet, and thy comforts still delight our souls. Prepare us for the mercies and duties of the day following; and teach us to live in thy service and praise, that we may live with thee for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour; in whose name and words we sum up our prayers, as he hath taught us to say—

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Add this in the Morning.

We thank thee for all thy mercies to our souls and bodies this night, and all our days and nights: for our rest and safety, and this morning's light. Cause us to spend this day in thy fear and faithful service. Preserve our souls from sin, and our bodies from all dangers or hurt which would hinder us from thy service. Cause us to live as in thy presence, and let us do all to please thee, and to thy glory, and to the good of our own souls and one another: and let thy love, and praise, and service, be our continual delight; for Jesus Christ's sake, our Saviour and Intercessor, at thy right hand; in whose name and words we sum up our imperfect prayers, as he hath taught us to say—

Our Father, &c.

V. A Prayer before Meat.

MOST bountiful God, who maintainest us and all the world; we thank thee for our life, health, peace, and food, and all thy mercies given to us in Christ. Bless these thy creatures, to nourish our bodies, and fit them for thy service. Cause us to receive them soberly, and to serve thee holily, cheerfully, and diligently: devoting ourselves and all our receivings to thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

A Thanksgiving after Meat.

MERCIFUL Father, we thank thee for Christ, and all the bles-

sings which thou hast given with him : for pardon, and grace, and peace, and the hopes of life eternal, and all the means which tend thereto. We thank thee for feeding our bodies at this time. O ! let us not turn thy mercies into our sin, nor use them against ourselves and thee, by gratifying any sinful desire ; but cause us to use them to the increase of our love, and thankfulness, and obedience ; and to relish and labour for the food that perisheth not, but endureth to everlasting life ; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

VI. A Prayer for converting Grace, to be used by the unconverted which are convinced of their sinful, miserable state.

O most holy, just, and dreadful God, yet gracious and ready to receive poor sinners, who penitently return unto thee by faith in Christ. Pitifully behold this miserable sinner, who is prostrate at thy feet, and fleeth with fear from thy terrible justice, in hope of thy pardoning and saving mercy. I hear from thy word that thou hast redeemed the world by Jesus Christ, and he hath satisfied thy justice as a propitiation for our sins, and hath merited thy pardoning, saving grace for all that truly believe and repent, and heartily accept of Christ for the saving work and benefits of his mediation. But I hear that except we repent we shall all perish, and that he that believeth not shall be damned ; and that except we be born again of the Spirit, and be converted, and become as little children, we cannot enter into the kingdom of God ; and that without holiness none shall see thee ; and that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his ; and that all that are in Christ are new creatures, old things are passed away, and all things are become new ; and that the carnal mind is enmity, and neither is nor can be subject to thy law ; and that if we live after the flesh we shall die ; and that Christ is the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.

I am convinced, O Lord, that thou art my Creator, and therefore my Owner, and that I, and all that I have, and can do, should be used to thy glory as thine own. As also that thou art the rightful Governor of the world ; that thy laws are holy, and just, and good ; that my baseness, and folly, and corrupted will, do make me unfit to rule myself. I am convinced that thou art best, and best to me, and that I should love thee with all my heart, and vilify all the pleasures, and riches, and honours of this world, in comparison of thee. I am convinced

that this world is vanity, and that heaven alone, where thou art seen, and perfectly loved and praised, is the only felicity of souls; and should be sought before all transitory things. I am convinced that thou art the first and last, of whom, and through whom, and to whom, both I and all things are. And I am convinced that my forsaking thee and turning to my carnal self, and this deceitful world, and all my sins, deserve thy wrath and my destruction; and that I have no hope but in penitent sincere conversion to thee, by faith in Christ the only Reconciler.

But alas, the hardness of my heart, the power of unbelief and fleshly lusts, prevaileth against all this conviction! I fear lest all my knowledge will but condemn me to be beaten with many stripes! When I know that I should do good, evil is present with me; and the will of the flesh prevaileth against thy holy will. The custom of sinning hath increased my sinful inclination; and I have not a will which hateth my pleasant and grateful sins; I forbear them often through fear, while I love them, and wish that thou didst not forbid them. Long have I been wishing and purposing to repent, and come to thee; but alas, how many purposes have I changed, and how many promises have I broken, and how many wishes have come to nothing? My corrupted will, enslaved by my sense, will not change itself, nor forsake the pleasant vanities which it loveth.

O that I had a heart, a will, to love thee as much above all the world, as I know I should love thee! And to delight in thee, and in thy holy ways, in thy grace, and in the hopes of glory, as much as I know thou art more delectable than all the pleasures of the world and sin! O that I had a heart that would enlargedly run the way of thy commandments, and did delight to do thy will, O God; and did still obey thee from the power of love! O that the new nature did more strongly incline me to thee, and to thy service, than my corrupted nature inclineth me to the interest of carnal self and sense! O that I had a heart to believe in Christ, as strongly as I know I should believe in him, and to hate sin as much as I am convinced that I should hate it; and to live by faith, and not by sight!

And though these desires may be but from the power of self-love, and the fears of hell, O that I had more spiritual and sincere desires!

I have corrupted this heart, O Lord, but I cannot renew it. I have defiled it, but I cannot cleanse it. I have kindled in it

the fire of sinful lusts, but I cannot quench it. I have undone myself, and rejected that Saviour, and resisted that Holy Spirit, which should have sanctified and saved me. And I have not a thought, nor a desire, a will, nor an endeavour for my own recovery, but of thy gift. Nor shall I so much as forbear my own sin and destruction, unless thy mercy turn me or restrain me. I have none to fly to now, or in the hour of my last extremity, but that God whom I have so heinously offended ! I have none to trust in but the Saviour whom I have so unthankfully neglected ! I have none to regenerate and make clean my soul but the same Spirit whom I have so long resisted !

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to the greatness of thy mercy. I have sinned like a frail and foolish man ; but do thou have mercy on me, as a gracious God. As my sin hath abounded, let thy grace much more abound. When I hear of the wonderful design of thy love in saving lost sinners by Jesus Christ, and at what a rate he hath redeemed souls, it reviveth my hope, and fainting heart ! When I think, that it is not the way of thy providence to bring men by innocency to heaven, but by healing and recovering grace ; and that all men's souls, save Christ's, that are now in heaven, were once sinners on earth, as I now am ; and that thou hast glorified none, but such as were first condemned by thy law, and had deserved everlasting death ; it emboldeneth me to hope for mercy and salvation. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. I am dead in sin, and almost past feeling ! O when wilt thou quicken me, and cure my stupidity ! I have a heart as hard as stone itself ; it feeleth not sin : it feareth not thy judgments as it ought : it relisheth not aright thy mercy : it trembleth not to think of death, and hell, though I have no assurance to be thence one day. O when wilt thou turn this stone into a new and tender heart ! I have a presumptuous and self-flattering heart, that will hardly fear what it would not feel. I have a careless, sottish heart, which little regardeth the things of everlasting consequence ; as if it cared not where I dwell for ever. O when wilt thou give me a necessary care of my own salvation ! The spirit of slumber hath seized on me ! I see my sins, and cannot forbear them ! I see my duty, and have not a heart to do it ! I see my danger, and yet run upon it ! I foresee the dreadful awakening day of death and judgment, when the most senseless sinners shall feel and fear : and yet I have not a heart to stir, and cry for grace, and strive

as for the life of a miserable soul, nor fly to Christ, and improve the day of my visitation. I know that this is the accepted time, and this is the day of salvation ! And that all that ever must be done for heaven, must be quickly done ! I know that I must now be saved from sin, or else I shall never be saved from hell ! And yet, alas, my slumbering, senseless soul awaketh not ! I see time is swiftly posting away, my glass is almost run out : the frailties of my decaying, corruptible flesh are daily warning me to prepare ! But I cannot ; I cannot, alas ! Lord, I cannot ! There is not a heart in me to believe and feel, and to set on duty, and to do my part. My time is going ! O precious time ! It is going, Lord, and almost gone ! Many that have gone to the grave before me have been my warnings ! I have but a few breaths more to breathe, and I am gone from hence for ever ; and yet, alas ! my work is undone ! my soul is unready ! If I die this night, O where shall I awake, and where must I take up my endless dwelling ! It is thy wonderful mercy which hath kept me alive, and from hell so long ! The time that is past will never return ! It is in vain to call it back. When I am once gone hence, there is no returning to live better or die better, and make a better preparation for eternity. It must be now or never : and yet my senseless, sluggish soul scarce feebleth or stirreth at all this. O thou that art the living God, and raisedst Jesus Christ from the dead, revive and raise this stupid soul. Lord Jesus, raise me by thy quickening Spirit, which hath raised millions that were dead in sin. O speak effectually that word of life, Awake thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. Awake me by thy grace, lest the thunder of thy wrath and the fire of hell too late awake me !

And, Lord, I have a dark, an ignorant, a prejudiced, and an unbelieving heart. It staggereth at thy word ; it questioneth the Scriptures : it looketh strangely upon Christ himself : it looketh doubtingly and amazedly towards the world to come. I am so captivated in flesh, and used to live by sight and sense, that I can scarce believe or apprehend the things unseen, though thou hast revealed them with certain evidence. O for one beam of thy heavenly illumination ! Pity a dark and unbelieving soul ! Alas, if unbelief prevail, Christ will be as no Christ to me, and the promise as no promise, and heaven as no heaven. O, heal this evil heart of unbelief, which hath neglected Christ, his sacrifice, merits, doctrine, example, his covenant, and his in-

tercession, and hath departed from the living God. A promise is left us of entering into rest ; O let me not fall short by unbelief ! Let me be taught, by the inward light of thy Spirit, to understand the light of thy holy word, and leave me not in the power of the prince of darkness.

And, Lord, my will is as sinful as my mind. It is biased by sense, and followeth the rage of lust and appetite. O how little is it inclined to thee, and to heaven, and to any holy work ; I can love my flesh, I can love my food, and ease, and wealth, I can love my friend ; yea, wretch that I am, I can love my sin, my brutish God-provoking sin. But O that I could say, I love my Saviour, and love my God, and love the place of glorious perfection above all these ! O touch this heart with the loadstone of thy love ! O kindle in it this heavenly fire ! Nothing will do it but the holy Spirit of love, working with the revelation of thy wonderful love in Jesus Christ. Hold the eye of my soul upon my Saviour ; upon my humbled, crucified Saviour ; upon my ascended, glorified, interceding Saviour ! And let me never cease gazing on this glass of love, and hearing this heavenly messenger of thy love, till thy blessed co-operating Spirit of love have turned my heart into love itself ; even into that love which is the living image of thy love. And then, in Christ, I shall be lovely to thee.

As ever thou hadst mercy on a miserable sinner, have mercy on me, and renew this soul ! Of all mercies in the world, O give me thy Holy Spirit, through the mediation of my dear Redeemer ! even the Spirit of life, and light, and love. And let this be Christ's advocate and witness in me, and the witness, earnest, and pledge of my salvation. Of all plagues, O save me from the plague of a heart forsaken by thy Spirit, and left in death, and darkness, and disaffection ! Is it not thy will that I should pray for grace ? Hast thou not said, that thou wilt give thy Holy Spirit to them that ask it ? I hope it is not without thy Spirit that I beg thy Spirit, though I know not whether it be his common or special grace. Had I asked for riches, and honours, and the pleasures of sin, no wonder if my prayer had been denied, or granted with a curse. But wilt thou deny me the grace which thou hast bid me ask ? the holiness which thou lovest ? without which I cannot love or serve thee, but shall serve thine enemy to my own destruction ? O thou that hast sworn that thou hast not pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn and live, have mercy upon me ; sanctify

this sinful, miserable soul, that I may live in the fruitful and delightful exercise of thy grace unto thy glory here, and may live in the delights of thy glorious love for evermore, through the merits and intercession of my blessed Saviour, who hath encouraged me with the publican to hang down this ashamed face, and smite upon this guilty breast, and in hope through his name to cry unto thee, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Amen, Amen.

VII. *A Confession and Prayer for a penitent Sinner.*

O MOST great, most wise, and gracious God, though thou hatest all the workers in iniquity, and canst not be reconciled unto sin; yet, through the mediation of thy blessed Son, with pity behold this miserable sinner, who casteth himself down at the footstool of thy grace. Had I lived to those high and holy ends for which I was created and redeemed, I might now have come to thee with the boldness and confidence of a child, in assurance of thy love and favour. But I have played the fool and the rebel against thee. I have wilfully forgotten the God that made me, and the Saviour that redeemed me, and the endless glory which thou didst set before me. I forgot the business which I was sent for into the world, and have lived as if I had been made for nothing but to pass a few days in fleshly pleasure and pamper a carcass for the worms. I wilfully forgot what it is to be a man, who hath reason given him to rule his flesh, and to know his God, and to foresee his death, and the state of immortality. And I made my reason a servant to my senses, and lived too like the beasts that perish. O the precious time which I have lost, which all the world cannot call back! O the calls of grace which I have neglected; and the teachings of God which I have resisted; the wonderful love which I unthankfully rejected, and the manifold mercies which I have abused, and turned into wantonness and sin! How deep is the guilt which I have contracted, and how great are the comforts which I have lost: I might have lived all this while in the love of thee, my gracious God, and in the delights of thy holy word and ways; in the daily sweet foresight of heaven, and in the joy of the Holy Ghost, if I would have been ruled by thy righteous laws. But I have hearkened to the flesh and to this wicked and deceitful world; and have preferred a short and sinful life before thy love and endless glory.

Alas! what have I been doing since I came into the world?

Folly and sin have taken up my time. I am ashamed to look back upon the years which I have spent, and to think of the temptations which I have yielded to. Alas ! what trifles have enticed me from God ! How little have I had for the holy pleasures which I have lost ! Like Esau, I have profanely sold my birthright for one morsel. To please my fancy, my appetite, and my lust, I have set light by all the joys of heaven : I have unkindly despised the goodness of my Maker ; I have slighted the love and grace of my Redeemer : I have resisted thy Holy Spirit, silenced my own conscience, and grieved thy ministers and my most faithful friends, and have brought myself into this woful case, wherein I am a shame and burden to myself, and God is my terror, who should be my only hope and joy.

Thou knowest my secret sins, which are unknown to men : thou knowest all their aggravations. My sins, O Lord, have found me out ; my fears and sorrows overwhelm me. If I look behind me, I see my wickedness pursue my soul, as an army ready to overtake me and devour me : if I look before me, I see thy just and dreadful judgment, and I know that thou wilt not acquit the guilty : if I look within me, I see a dark defiled heart : if I look without me, I see a world still offering fresh temptations to deceive me : if I look above me, I see thine offended, dreadful Majesty. And if I look beneath me, I see the place of endless torment, and the company with which I deserve to suffer. I am afraid to live, and more afraid to die.

But yet when I look to thine abundant mercy, and to thy Son, and to thy covenant, I have hope. Thy goodness is equal to thy greatness. Thou art love itself, and thy mercy is over all thy works. So wonderfully hath thy Son condescended unto sinners, and done and suffered so much for their salvation, that if yet I should question thy willingness to forgive, I should but add to all my sins, by dishonouring that matchless mercy which thou dost design to glorify. Yea, more : I find upon record in thy word, that through Christ thou hast made a covenant of grace, an act of oblivion, in which thou hast already conditionally, but freely, pardoned all, granting them the forgiveness of all their sins, without any exception, whenever, by unfeigned faith and repentance, they turn to thee by Jesus Christ. And thy present mercy doth increase my hope, in that thou hast not cut me off, nor utterly left me to the hardness of my heart, but sheweth me my sin and danger before I am past remedy.

O, therefore, behold this prostrate sinner, which, with the publican, smiteth on his breast, and is ashamed to look up towards heaven. O God, be merciful to me a sinner ! I confess not only my original sin, but the follies and fury of my youth, my manifold sins of ignorance and knowledge, of negligence and wilfulness, of omission and commission, against the law of nature, and against the grace and Gospel of thy Son. Forgive and save me, O my God, for thy abundant mercy, and for the sacrifice and merit of thy Son, and for the promise of forgiveness which thou hast made through him ; for in these alone is all my trust. Condemn me not, who condemn myself. O Thou that hast opened so precious a fountain for sin and uncleanness, wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. Though thy justice might send me presently to hell, let thy mercy triumph in my salvation. Thou hast no pleasure in the death of sinners, but rather that they repent and live. If my repentance be not such as thou requirest, O soften this hardened, flinty heart, and give me repentance unto life. Turn me to thyself, O God of my salvation, and cause thy face to shine upon me. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Meet not this poor returning prodigal in thy wrath, but with the embracements of thy tender mercies. Cast me not away from thy presence, and sentence me not to depart from thee with the workers of iniquity : thou who didst patiently endure me when I despised thee, refuse me not now I seek unto thee, and here in the dust implore thy mercy. Thou didst convert and pardon a wicked Manasseh, and a persecuting Saul, and there are multitudes in heaven who were once thine enemies. Glorify also thy superabounding grace in the forgiveness of my abounding sins.

I ask not for liberty to sin again, but for deliverance from this sinning nature. O give me the renewing Spirit of thy Son, which may sanctify all the powers of my soul. Let me have the new and heavenly birth and nature, and the spirit of adoption to reform me to thine image, that I may be holy as thou art holy. Illuminate me with the saving knowledge of thyself, and thy Son, Jesus Christ. O fill me with thy love, that my heart may be wholly set upon thee, and the remembrance of thee may be my chief delight. Let the freest and sweetest of my thoughts run after thee, and the freest and sweetest of my discourse be of thee, and of thy glory and kingdom, and of thy word and ways. O let my treasure be laid up in heaven, and there let me daily and

delightfully converse. Make it the great and daily business of my devoted soul to please thee and to honour thee, to promote thy kingdom, and to do thy will. Put thy fear into my heart, that I may never depart from thee: this world hath had too much of my heart already. Let it now be crucified to me, and I to it, by the cross of Christ. Let me not love it, nor the things which are therein, but, having food and raiment, cause me therewith to be content. Destroy in me all fleshly lusts, that I may not walk after the flesh, but the Spirit. Keep me from the snares of wicked company, and from the counsel and ways of the ungodly. Bless me with the helpful communion of the saints, and with all the means which thou hast appointed to further our sanctification and salvation. O that my ways were so directed that I might keep thy statutes! Let me never return again to folly, nor forget the covenant of my God. Help me to quench the first motions of sin, and to abhor all sinful desires and thoughts; and let thy Spirit strengthen me against all temptations, that I may conquer and endure to the end. Prepare me for sufferings, and for death, and judgment, that when I must leave this sinful world, I may yield up my departing soul with joy into the faithful hands of my dear Redeemer; that I be not numbered with the ungodly who die in their unpardoned sin, and pass into everlasting misery, but may be found in Christ, having the righteousness which is of God by faith, and may attain to the resurrection of the just. That so the remembrance of the sin and miseries from which thou hast delivered me, may further my perpetual thanks and praise to thee, my Creator, my Redeemer, and my Sanctifier.

And O that thou wouldest call and convert the miserable nations of idolaters and infidels, and the multitudes of ungodly hypocrites who have the name of Christians, and not the truth, and power, and life. O send forth labourers into thy harvest, and let not Satan hinder them! Prosper thy Gospel, and the kingdom of thy Son; then sinners may more abundantly be converted to thee, and this earth may be made liker unto heaven; that when thou hast gathered us all into unity in Christ, we may all with perfect love and joy ascribe to thee the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

VIII. *Prayer and Praise for the Lord's Day.*

GLORIOUS Jehovah, thou art infinitely above the praise of angels; much more of such sinful worms as we are: far be it

from us to think that thou needest any thing that we can do, or that all our praise can add unto thy blessedness ! But thy love and mercy hath advanced us to this honour, and made our own felicity our duty : for all that are far from thee shall perish ; but it is good for us to draw near to thee. And lest the vanities and business of this world should hinder us, thou hast appointed us this thy special day, that our composed minds might be taken up with thy love and praise, and might attend upon thee without distraction, and might foretaste our everlasting rest. O be thou now to thy servants' souls the Spirit of life, the Spirit of light, and love, and power, that the heavenly life may quicken us to this holy and heavenly work ; that by faith we may see thee in thy own communicated light ; and that our love may rise with fervour and delight through the sweet communication of thy love ; and that all within us which doth resist, may be overpowered by thy strength, which is manifested in our weakness ; that so the sacrifice of our persons and of our praises, which we humbly offer at thy command, may be such as are fit for thine acceptance, through Jesus Christ.

Thou, and thou alone, art God, the immortal and invisible Spirit ; eternal and infinite in being and perfections ! Before the forming of the world, from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thy understanding is infinite. Thou perfectly knowest thyself and all things ; but art comprehended by none. Thy will is good, yea, goodness itself, and perfect love ; loving thyself and all thy works. Thou art the Almighty, and nothing is too hard for thee. Thou art the Creator of all the world : thou broughtest all things out of nothing ! Thou spakest the word, and they were made. Thou gavest their being to the glorious angels, and all the intellectual spirits ! All the heavens were made by thee. Thou saidst let there be light, and there was light. Thou madest the sun and all the stars : thou gavest them their wonderful powers, and their offices ; that by their light, and heat, and motion, they might be for life and action, and for times and seasons here below. How glorious art thou, O God, in these thy wondrous works ! the greatness, the glory, and the virtues whereof are so far beyond our dark apprehensions. The higher spirits who better know them, and possess the high and glorious mansions, do better praise thee, the great Creator, whose word did form that noble frame, when the morning stars did sing together, and all the sons of God did shout for joy. Thou madest the earth, the land and sea, and

all the creatures that dwell therein. All fowls, and fishes, beasts and plants; in wonderful variety, beauty, and virtue hast thou made them all. The air and clouds, the thunder and lightning, rain and snow, the winds and earthquakes, the marvellous motions of the sea, are all thy great unsearchable works. The smallest worm or flower doth far surpass our knowledge. How, then, should mortals comprehend the greatness and harmonious order of the world? how thou hast founded the earth upon nothing; and what is in the depths thereof: how thou movest, and maintainest, and preservest the order of the universal frame, and causest the sweet and powerful influences of the fiery and celestial parts, upon the things below: how thou shuttest up the sea with sandy doors, and makest the clouds to be its garments, and the darkness as its swaddling-bands, and sayest, hitherto, and no further shalt thou come. How great, O Lord, and manifold are thy works! In perfect wisdom, goodness, and power thou hast made them all.

But it is man whom thou hast made the noblest inhabitant of this lower world. Thou breathest into his body the breath of life, and he became a living soul. Thou madest him little lower than the angels, that thou mightest crown him with glory and honour. Thou gavest him dominion over the works of thy hands; and hast put all things below us under his feet. Thou madest him in thine image, with an understanding mind, and an unforced will, and executive power, to know, and love, and serve thee, his most wise, and good, and great Creator. Thou placest him in this lower world, that he might pass through it to the blessed presence of thy glory. Thou becamest a Father to him, being his Owner, his Ruler, and his chiefest Good; even his great Benefactor, and his ultimate End; that he might live in absolute resignation, subjection, and love to thee. Thou gavest him in nature, and in thy precept, a law which was holy, just and good, that, by following thy conduct, he might please thee, and attain to full felicity. Thou didst furnish him with all things necessary to his obedience, and oblige him thereto by the abundance of thy blessings. But he quickly fell from his innocence and honour, by turning from his God. He believed the false and envious tempter, even when he accused thee of falsehood and envy, as if all thy wondrous works and mercies, had not proved thee to be true and good. Thus did man foolishly requite the Lord, and forsook the rock of his salvation. And by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. But

mercy rejoiced against judgment, and thou didst not let out all thy wrath ; but with the sentence of death thou didst join the promise of a Redeemer. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works for the children of men !

As thou gavest the mercies of the promise to the fathers ; so in the fulness of time thou didst send thy Son. He came and took our nature to his Godhead ; being conceived by the Holy Ghost ; made of a woman, under the law ; born of a virgin. He made himself of no reputation ; but took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man. O wonderful, condescending love ! Angels proclaimed it ; and angels admire it, and search into it, and in the church's glass they still behold the manifold wisdom of God : how low, then, should redeemed sinners fall, in the humble admirations of his grace ! how high should they rise in the thankful praise of their Redeemer !

He came on earth and conversed with men, to make known to men the invisible God, and the unseen things of the world above. He came as the Light and Saviour of the world, to bring to light immortality and life. He was holy, harmless, and undefiled, separated from sinners, and fulfilling all righteousness, that he might be a meet High Priest and effectual Saviour of sinners. He taught us, by his perfect doctrine and example, to be humble and obedient, and to contemn this world ; to deny ourselves, and bear the cross, that we may attain the everlasting crown of glory. He humbled himself to the false accusations and reproach of sinners, and to the shameful and bitter death of the cross, to make himself a sacrifice and propitiation for our sins, and a ransom for our guilty souls, that we might be healed by his stripes. O matchless love, which even for enemies, did thus lay down his precious life ! He hath conquered and sanctified death and the grave to all believers. He, therefore, took part of flesh and blood, that he might by death destroy the devil that had the power of death, and deliver them who, through the fear of death, were all their lifetime subject unto bondage. He hath procured for mankind a covenant of grace, and sealed it as his testament with his blood. And now there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mightest be cheerfully feared and obeyed in hope. It was thine own love to the world, O Father, which gave thine only begotten Son, that whosoever truly believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Thou wast in

Christ reconciling the world unto thyself, and not imputing their sins unto them. Thou hast committed the word of reconciliation to thy ministers, to beseech sinners, even in thy name, and in the stead of Christ, to be reconciled to thee. Thou commandest them to offer thy mercy unto all, and, by importunity, to compel them to come in, that thy house may be filled, and thy blessed feast may be furnished with guests.

Thou refusest none that come to thee by Christ. Thou deniest thy mercy to none but the obstinate and final rejectors of it. Thou givest eternal life to them who were the sons of death; and this life is in thy Son; for he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to thee by him. To as many as receive him thou givest power to become the sons of God. Thou givest them also the Spirit of thy Son; even the Spirit of adoption, to renew them to thy holy image, that they may be like their heavenly Father; to sanctify them to thyself, and by shedding abroad thy love upon their hearts, to draw up their hearts in love to thee. Thou makest them a peculiar people to thyself, and zealous of good works, for which thou dost regenerate them. Thou givest them all repentance unto life; and crucifiest their flesh, and all its lusts; thou teachest them to live soberly, righteously, and godly, and savest them from this present evil world, and mortifiest their sinful love thereof, that thou mayest have their love, and be their felicity. O, with what love hast thou loved poor rebellious sinners, that they should be converted and made the sons of God, yea, heirs of heaven, and co-heirs with Christ; that when we have suffered with him, we may also be glorified with him.

Thou dost build thy church upon a rock, the blessed Mediator; that the power of hell may not prevail against it. Thou hast made him its Teacher, Priest, and King: of him we learn to know thee and thy will. By him we have our peace, our acceptance, and access to thee. He is the Lord, both of the dead and living. Thou hast delivered all things into his hands, and made him head over all things to the church. When he ascended up on high he appointed his ministers to gather, and order, and edify this universal church, which is his body. He gave his Apostles the infallible Spirit, to lead them into all truth; and the Spirit of power, to be his witness, by miracles, to the world. They have taught us all things whatsoever he commanded them, and committed that doctrine in the sacred Scriptures to those pastors and teachers whom thou hast appointed to

preserve and preach it, and to feed thy flock to the end of the world : and though sin, alas, hath wofully defiled, and schism divided, these thy churches, yet art thou still amongst them, and bearest with their infirmities, and givest them thine oracles, and callest them to holiness, love, and peace, and knowest thy wheat among the chaff.

O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wondrous works for the children of men ! How glorious art thou, O Lord, in holiness, to be revered in the assemblies of the saints, and honoured of all that are about thee ! Holiness becometh thy house for ever : in thy temple shall every man speak of thy glory. We bless thy name, O our great Creator ; we bless thy name, our gracious Redeemer ; we bless thy name, most Holy Spirit. O that our souls could, with greater thankfulness, magnify the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God our Saviour ! who hath pitied us in our lost estate ; for thy mercy endureth for ever. We thank thee for our being ; we thank thee that thou hast redeemed us from sin and hell ; we thank thee that thou hast brought us, by baptism, into thy covenant and church. We thank thee for these high and sacred privileges, that we are not foreigners or strangers among the heathen and infidel world, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, that we may stand in the presence of thy holiness, and praise thee in the assemblies of believers, and are not banished from these sacred societies and works. A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. We had rather be door-keepers in the house of God, than to dwell in the palaces of wickedness. Blessed are they that know the joyful sound, and fruitfully live under the dews of heaven. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance ; in thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted ; for thou art their glory and their strength ; and in thy favour they shall be safe, and glad, and great.

But especially those whom thou hast brought into the invisible church of the regenerate can never sufficiently magnify thy grace. When we lived as without thee in the world, and never sincerely loved or desired thee, but followed our fleshly lusts, and the deceitful vanities of the world ; when God was not in all our thoughts, and we had no pleasure in thy holy ways ; when we despised grace, and resisted thy Spirit, and went on adding sin to sin ; then didst thou pity us in our blood. Thou sentest us thy word ; thou madest it powerful on our hardened hearts ;

thou broughtest us to consider of our state and ways, and gavest us some relenting and contrition. It is comfortable to us to review the stirrings and victories of thy grace, the meltings of thy mercy, and the comforts of thy love. When we feared lest our sins would have been our damnation, and that thou wouldest never receive such wretched rebels, how freely didst thou pardon all ; how graciously didst thou embrace us ; delighting to show mercy, and overcoming our hearts with the greatness of thy love ! O how many sins didst thou forgive ; what work had thy Spirit to do upon these ignorant, proud, and selfish minds ; upon these carnal, worldly, disobedient hearts ; how many mercies, preservations, comforts, hast thou since that time vouchsafed to us ; how many desires hast thou at given us, and then accepted from us ; how many afflictions hast thou shortened or sanctified ; how many joyful or profitable hours have we had with thee alone in secret, and with thee and thy people in the communion of saints ! Many, O Lord, are thy wondrous works, and thy thoughts of mercy towards thy servants ; if we would reckon them in order, and declare them before thee, they are more than can be numbered. And after all these, as priests to God, we are here to offer thee the sacrifice of praise ; rejoicing in thee, our portion and salvation.

And when this short and troublesome life is ended, we have thy promise that we shall rest with thee for ever. If in this life only we had hope, we should be of all men most miserable. But thou wilt conduct us through this wilderness, and guide us by thy counsel, and bring us in season to thy glory. For thou hast not given us these faculties to see thee, and know thee, and love thee, and delight in thee in vain : thou wilt surely perfect nature and grace ; and cause them to attain their end. The great undertaking, work, and sufferings of our Redeemer, shall not be in vain. Thy sealed promise shall not be broken. Thy Spirit hath not in vain renewed us, and sealed us to that blessed day : nor shall thy pledge, and earnest, and witness within us, prove deceits. These desires and groans shall not be lost ; and these weak beginnings of light and love, do foreshow our full fruition and perfection. This seed of grace portendeth glory : and the foretastes of love do tell us that we shall be happy in thy love for ever. Our hope in thy goodness, thy Son, and thy covenant, will never leave us frustrate and ashamed.

We therefore bless thy name, O Lord, as those that are redeemed from death and hell ; as those who are advanced to the

dignity of sons ; as those whom thou savest from all their enemies, but especially from ourselves, and from our sins ! We bless thy name, as those who are entering into glory ; and hope to be with Christ for ever ; where sin and sorrow, enemies and fears, shall be shut out, and shall molest our souls no more for ever.

We foresee, by faith, that happy day. We see, by faith, the New Jerusalem ; the innumerable angels ; the perfect spirits of the just ; their glorious light ; their flaming love ; their perfect harmony. We hear, by faith, their joyful songs of thanks and praise. Lately they were as low and sad as we ; in sins and sorrows, in manifold weaknesses, sufferings, and fears ; but by faith and patience they have overcome ; and in faith and patience we desire to follow our Lord and them. The time is near ; this flesh will quickly turn to dust, and our delivered souls shall come to thee ; our life is short, and our sins and sorrows will be short ; then we shall have light : we shall no more groan, and cry out in darkness, ' O that we could know the Lord ! ' then shall we love thee with pure, unmixed, perfect love ; and need no more to groan and cry : O that our souls were inflamed with thy love ! then shall we praise thee with thankful alacrity and joy, which will exceed our present apprehensions and desires.

O blessed streams of light and love, which will flow from thy opened, glorious face, upon our souls for ever ! How far will that everlasting sabbath, and those perfect praises, excel these poor and dull endeavours, as far as that triumphant city of God excelleth this imperfect, childish, discomposed church.

Quicken, Lord, our longing for that blessed state and day ! O, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and fulfil thy word, that we may be with thee where thou art, and may behold thy glory ! Stay not till faith shall fail from the earth. Stay not till the powers of darkness conquer all the remnant of thine inheritance, and make this world yet like unto hell ; nor till the godly cease, and the faithful fail, from among the children of men ! O when shall the world acknowledge their great Creator and Redeemer, and abhor their idols, and cease from their unbelief ! When shall the rest of the heathens and infidels be thy son's inheritance, and the kingdoms of the world become his kingdom ? O when shall heaven be made the pattern of this earth, and men delight to do thy will ? When shall the proud, the

worldly, and the sensual, renounce their deceits, and walk humbly and holily with their God ; and the fool, whose heart denieth the Lord, and calleth not upon thee, but eateth up thy people as bread, return unto thee, and fear thy name, and fight no more against his Maker ! Hasten, O Lord, the salvation of thy people, and keep them in uprightness and patience to the end. Have mercy upon all the ignorant and unreformed churches in the world : deliver them from the eastern and western tyranny, which keepeth out the means of knowledge and reformation, and restore them to the primitive purity, simplicity, and unity, that their light may shine forth, to the winning of the heathen and infidel world whom now their pollutions drive from Christ. Preserve and repair the churches which are reformed, and revive among them knowledge, holiness, and peace. Bless these kingdoms with the light and power of the gospel, and with peace. O bless the king, and all in authority, with the wisdom, holiness, and prosperity, which are needful to their own and the common good ; and keep the subjects in their duty to thee and their superiors, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. Let all the congregations be blessed with burning, shining lights ; and let the buyers and sellers be cast out of thy temple ; and let not the malice of Satan, or the sacrilege of men, be able to hinder the Gospel of thy kingdom, nor alienate thy devoted, faithful labourers, from thy harvest work.

Give us the necessities of this present life, and a contented mind with what thou givest us ; and kill in us our worldly love, and fleshly lusts.

Teach us to live daily by faith on our Redeemer : and by him let us have continual access to thee ; and the daily pardon of our daily sins ; and a heart to love and pardon others.

O save us from all the suggestions of Satan, and from the snares of this world, and the allurements of sinners, and from all the corrupt inclinations of the flesh ; and give us not up to sin, nor to our own concupiscence, nor to the malice of Satan or ungodly men, nor to any destructive punishment which our sin deserves.

O teach us to know the work of life, and the preciousness of our short and hasty time, and to use it as will most comfort us at our last review. Teach us so to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom, and not, like fools, to waste in

vain those precious hours on which eternity dependeth, and which all the world cannot call back. Let us do thy work with all our might, especially in our particular callings and relations. Let us make our calling and election sure, and spend our days in the delightful exercise of faith, hope, and love. Keep us still watchful, and in a continual readiness for death and judgment, and longing for the coming of our Lord. Let our hearts and conversations be in heaven, from whence we look for our glorious Redeemer; in whose words we sum up all our prayers.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth, as it is done in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us: and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

A shorter Form of Praise and Prayer for the Lord's Day.

GLORIOUS Jehovah! While angels and perfected spirits are praising thee in the presence of thy glory, thou hast allowed and commanded us to take our part in the presence of thy grace. We have the same most holy God to praise; and though we see thee not, our head and Saviour seeth thee, and our faith discerneth thee in the glass of thy holy works and word. Though we are sinners, and unworthy, and cannot touch these holy things, without the marks of our pollution, yet have we a great High Priest with thee, who was separate from sinners, holy, harmless, and undefiled, who appeareth for us in the merits of his spotless life and sacrifice, and by whose hands only we dare presume to present a sacrifice to the most holy God. And thou hast ordained this day of holy rest as a type and means of that heavenly rest with thy triumphant church, to which we aspire, and for which we hope. Thou didst accept their lower praise on earth, before they celebrated thy praise in glory. Accept ours also by the same Mediator.

Glory be to thee, O God, in the highest; on earth peace; good-will towards men. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who wast and art to come; eternal, without beginning or end; immense, without all bounds or measure; the infinite Spirit, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost. The infinite Life, Understanding, and Will, infinitely powerful, wise, and good. Of thee, and

through thee, and to thee, are all things. To thee be glory for evermore. All thy works declare thy glory, for thy glorious perfections appear on all ; and for thy glory, and the pleasure of thy holy will, didst thou create them. The heavens, and all the hosts thereof ; the sun, and all the glorious stars ; the fire, with its motion, light, and heat ; the earth, and all that dwell thereon, with all its sweet and beauteous ornaments ; the air, and all the meteors ; the great deeps, and all that swim therein : all are the preachers of thy praise, and show forth the great Creator's glory. How great is that power which made so great a world of nothing ; which, with wonderful swiftness, moveth those great and glorious luminaries which in a moment send forth the influences of their motion, light and heat, through all the air, to sea and earth. Thy powerful life giveth life to all ; and preserveth this frame of nature, which thou hast made. How glorious is that wisdom which ordereth all things, and assigneth to all their place and office, and by its perfect laws maintaineth the beauty and harmony of all ! How glorious is that goodness and love which made all good, and very good !

We praise and glorify thee, our Lord and Owner ; for we, and all things, are thine own. We praise and glorify thee, our King and Ruler ; for we are thy subjects, and our perfect obedience is thy due. Just are all thy laws and judgments ; true and sure is all thy word. We praise and glorify thee, our great Benefactor ; in thee we live, and move, and are ; all that we are, or have, or can do, is wholly from thee, the cause of all ; and all is for thee, for thou art our End. Delightfully to love thee is our greatest duty, and our only felicity ; for thou art love itself, and infinitely amiable.

When man, by sin, did turn away his heart from thee, believed the tempter against thy truth, obeyed his sense against thy authority and wisdom, and forsaking thy fatherly love and goodness, became an idol to himself ; thou didst not use him according to his desert. When we forsook thee, thou didst not utterly forsake us. When we had lost ourselves, and, by sin, became thine enemies, condemned by thy law, thy mercy pitied us, and gave us the promise of a Redeemer, who in the fulness of time did assume our nature, fulfilled thy law, and suffered for our sins, and, conquering death, did rise again, ascended to heaven, and is our glorified Head and Intercessor. Him hast thou exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, to give us

repentance and remission of sins. In him thou hast given pardon and justification, reconciliation and adoption, by a covenant of grace, to every penitent believer. Of enemies and the heirs of death, thou hast made us sons and heirs of life.

We are the brands whom thou hast plucked out of the fire ; we are the captives of Satan, whom thou hast pardoned ! We praise thee, we glorify thee, our merciful God and gracious Redeemer ! Our souls have now refuge from thy revenging wrath. Thy promise is sure ; Satan, and the world, and death, are overcome ; our Lord is risen ; he is risen, and we shall rise through him. O death ! where is thy sting ? O grave ! where is thy victory ? Our Saviour is ascended to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God, and we shall ascend ! To his hands we may commit our departing souls ! Our head is glorified, and it is his will and promise that we shall be with him where he is, to see his glory. He hath sealed us thereunto by his Holy Spirit. We were dead in sins, and he hath quickened us. We were dark in ignorance and unbelief, and he hath enlightened us. We were unholy and carnal, sold under sin, and he hath sanctified our wills, and killed our concupiscence. We praise and glorify this Spirit of life, with the Father and the Son, from whom he is sent, to be life, and light, and love to our dead, and dark, and disaffected souls. We are created, redeemed, and sanctified, for thy holy love, and praise, and service : O let these be the very nature of our souls, and the employment and pleasure of all our lives ! O perfect thy weak and languid graces in us, that our love and praise may be more perfect ! We thank thee for thy word and sacred ordinances ; for the comfort of the holy assemblies, and communion of the saints, and for the mercy of these thy holy days. But let not thy praise be here confined, but be our daily life, and breath, and work.

Fain we would praise thee with more holy and more joyful souls ! But how can we do it with so weak a faith, and so great darkness and strangeness to thee ; with so little assurance of thy favour and our salvation ? Can we rightly thank thee for the grace which we are still in doubt of ? Fain we would be liker to those blessed souls who praise thee without our fears and dullness. But how can it be, while we love thee so little, and have so little taste and feeling of thy love ; and whilst this load of sin doth press us down, and we are imprisoned in the remnant of our carnal affections ? O kill this pride and selfishness, these

lusts and passions ! Destroy this unbelief and darkness, and all our sins, which are the enemies of us, and of thy praise. Make us more holy and more heavenly ; and O bring us nearer thee in faith and love, that we may be more suitable to the heavenly employment of thy praise !

Vouchsafe more of thy Spirit to all thy churches and servants in the world ; that as their darkness, and selfishness, and imperfections, have defiled, and divided, and weakened them, and made them a scandal and hardening to individuals, so their knowledge, self-denial, and impartial love, may truly reform, unite, and strengthen them ; that the glory of their holiness may win the unbelieving world to Christ. O let not Satan keep up still so large a kingdom of tyranny, ignorance, and wickedness in the earth, and make this world as the suburbs of hell. But let the earth be more conformable to heaven in the glorifying of thy holy name, the advancing of thy kingdom, and the doing of thy just and holy will. Let thy way be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee ! Yea, give thy Son the heathen for his inheritance, and let his Gospel enlighten the dark, forsaken nations of the earth. Let every knee bow to him, and every tongue confess that he is Christ, to their salvation and thy glory. Provide and send forth the messengers of thy grace through all the earth. Deliver all the churches from sin, division, and oppression. Let thy holy word and worship continue in these kingdoms, whilst this world endureth. Bless the king, and all in authority, with all that wisdom, justice, and holiness, which are needful to his own and his subjects' safety, peace, and welfare. Let every congregation among us have burning and shining lights, that the ignorant and ungodly perish not for want of teaching and exhortation. And open men's hearts to receive thy word, and cause them to know the day of their visitation. Be merciful to the afflicted in sickness, dangers, wants, or sorrows, according to thy goodness and their necessities. Let all the prayers and praises of the faithful throughout the world, sent up this day in the name of our common Mediator, by him be presented acceptable unto thee, notwithstanding the imperfections and blemishes that are on them, and the censures, divisions, and injuries, which in their frowardness they are guilty of against each other ! Let them centre as one in Christ, our Head, who are too sadly and stiffly distant among themselves. Prepare us

all for that world of peace where the harmony of universal love and praise shall never be interrupted by sins, or griefs, or fears, or discord, but shall be everlastingly perfect, to our joy and to thy glory, through our glorified Mediator, who taught us when we pray to say, Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

IX. *A form of Prayer for the Sick, who are unready to die.*

MERCIFUL God, reject not this sad, unworthy sinner, who in pain and sorrow fleeth to thyself in Jesus Christ! Though I have trifled away too much of the day of my salvation, and sinfully neglected thy Son and his saving grace, O say not that it is now too late, for thy promise through Christ is large and free, forgiving all without exception, who in the time of this life are penitent believers. O that I had better found out my sin, before it found me out; and that it had been more my grief before it was so much my pain; and that I had better known the evil of it by thy word and grace, before my flesh and bones had felt it! But pity my misery, and forgive my sin, through the propitiation which thy mercy hath provided and accepted. Remember not the iniquities of my youth, nor the sins which I have since committed against thy great and manifold mercies, the motions of thy Spirit, and the reproofs of my own conscience. I have sinned foolishly as a man, but do thou forgive me mercifully as a gracious God. If the sufferings of my flesh do seem so grievous, how should I bear thy burning wrath for ever on my soul. O give me true repentance unto life! Let not pain and fear only make me purpose to amend, but let thy Spirit of grace renew my soul, by the powerful sense of thy love in Christ. Let this be the fruit of my affliction, through his grace, to purge and take away my sin, and to make me partaker of thy holiness. And have mercy on this weak and pained flesh. O spare a little, and give me space to make a better preparation for my change, before I go hence, and am seen no more! O let not my fearful soul appear before thee, the holy, dreadful God, in an unpardoned or unrenewed state! Renew

my time, and renew my soul, that I may live to thee, before I die. I have abused thy long-suffering : I have forfeited both health, and life, and hope : I have foolishly and sinfully lost many an hour of precious time, which never can be called back ! I foresaw this day, and was oft forewarned of it by thy servants and by my conscience, but I took not warning, and now, alas ! how unready is my soul to appear before thee ! My sins affright me ; thy justice and holiness affright me ; eternity, eternity, doth amaze my soul. I have no assurance to escape thy wrath and everlasting misery ! I have not so set my heart on heaven, nor lived in a heavenly conversation, as to desire to depart that I may be with Christ, and to come with boldness and comfortable hope before the Judge of all the world ; forgive my sin through the sacrifice and intercession of my Redeemer. O try me once more with opportunities and means of grace ! Return, O Lord, deliver my soul ! O save me for thy mercies' sake. Kill me not till my sin be killed. End not this life till thou hast prepared me for a better. Though it be a life of vanity and vexation, it is all the space that ever I shall have to prepare for the endless life which followeth. Cut not off my time till I am ready for eternity. Let me not die in my sins, nor fall into the hands of thy revenging justice. I condemn myself ; do not thou condemn me. If thou wilt renew my days, it is the resolution of my soul to hearken to thy Spirit, to obey my Saviour, to study thy wondrous love in Christ, to seek the things that are above with him, and to forsake my sin, and live to thee : but because I know that without thy grace I cannot do it, O give me yet both time and grace ! Or, if thou wilt try me no longer here on earth, now, Lord, before my soul departeth, sanctify it by thy Spirit, and wash it in the blood of Jesus Christ, and shed abroad thy love upon it, and give me such a sight of the heavenly glory, that in the lively exercise of faith, hope, and love, my soul may willingly forsake this world, and come to thee. Though I have departed from thee, and delighted not to know thee, refuse not to know me, and bid me not depart with workers of iniquity. And if this be all the time that ever I shall have, to beg thy saving grace and mercy, though it be short, let it be an accepted time. Have mercy, mercy, mercy Lord, upon a sinful, undone soul, and let me not be the firebrand of thy hot displeasure. Now glorify thy grace in Jesus Christ, who is an all-sufficient Saviour, to whom I fly, and on whom I cast my miserable soul. Merciful Saviour, receive it as thine own !

Refuse it not as unworthy, but for thy worthiness justify it, and let thy Spirit now renew it, and let thy grace abound where my sin aboundeth. It is thy promise, that him that cometh unto thee thou wilt in no wise cast out. Let this enemy by thee be reconciled to the Father, and adopted as a son and heir of life, and present me spotless and acceptable to God. Whether I live or die, I desire to be thine : and though I have broken my covenant with thee, I here again renew it. I give up myself to thee, my reconciled God and Father, my Saviour and my Sanctifier. Accept me, and assure me of the blessings of thy covenant. And then, though I deserve to dwell with devils, I shall see thy glory, and be filled with thy love, and with saints and angels shall joyfully praise my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier for ever. Amen, Amen.

X. A Prayer for the Faithful before Death, is the end of the ninth day's Conference.

A short Prayer for Children and Servants.

EVER-LIVING and most glorious God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Infinite is thy power, thy wisdom, and thy goodness. Thou art the Maker of all the world, the Redeemer of lost and sinful man, and the Sanctifier of the elect. Thou hast made me a living reasonable soul, placed a while in this flesh and world to know, and love, and serve thee my Creator, with all my heart, and mind, and strength ; that I might obtain the reward of the heavenly glory. This should have been the greatest care, and business, and pleasure of all my life. I was bound to it by thy law : I was invited by thy mercy : and, in my baptism, I was devoted to this holy life, by a solemn covenant and vow. But, alas ! I have proved too unfaithful to that covenant ; I have forgotten and neglected the God, the Saviour, and the Sanctifier, to whom I was engaged, and have too much served the devil, the world, and the flesh, which I renounced : I was born in sin, and sinfully I have lived : I have been too careless of my immortal soul, and of the great work for which I was created and redeemed : I have spent much of my precious time in vanity, in minding and pleasing this corruptible flesh. And I have hardened my heart against those instructions, by which thy Spirit, and my teachers, and my own conscience, did call upon me to repent and turn to thee.

And now, O Lord, my convinced soul doth confess that I have deserved to be forsaken by thee, and given over to my lust and folly, and to be cast out of thy glorious presence into damnation. But seeing thou hast given a Saviour to the world, and made a pardoning and gracious law, promising forgiveness and salvation through his merits, to every true penitent believer, I thankfully accept the mercy of thy covenant in Christ : I humbly confess my sin and guiltiness : I cast my miserable soul upon thy grace, and the merits, and sacrifice, and intercession of my Saviour. O, pardon all the sins of my corrupted heart and life ; and, as a reconciled father, take me to be thy child : and give me thy renewing Spirit, to be in me a principle of holy life, and light, and love, and thy seal and witness that I am thine. Let him quicken my dead and hardened heart. Let him enlighten my dark, unbelieving mind, by clearer knowledge and firm belief : let him turn my will to the ready obedience of thy holy will : let him reveal to my soul the wonders of thy love in Christ, and fill it with love to thee and my Redeemer, and to all thy holy word and works ; till all my sinful, carnal love be quenched in me, and my sinful pleasures turned into a sweet delight in God. Give me self-denial, humility, and lowliness, and save me from the great and hateful sins of selfishness, worldliness, and pride. O set my heart upon the heavenly glory, where I hope, ere long, to live with Christ, and all his holy ones, in the joyful sight, and love, and praise of thee the God of love for ever. Deny me not any of those helps and mercies which are needful to my sanctification and salvation. And cause me to live in a continual readiness, and for a safe and comfortable death : for what would it profit me to win all the world, and lose my soul, my Saviour, and my God ?

Additions for Children.

LET thy blessings be upon my parents and governors : cause them to instruct and educate me in thy fear, and cause me with thankfulness to receive their instructions ; and to love, honour, and obey them, in obedience to thee. Keep me from the snares of evil company, temptations, and youthful pleasures and let me be a companion of them that fear thee. Let my daily delight be to meditate on thy law ; and let me never have the mark of the ungodly, to be a lover of pleasures more than of God. Furnish my youth with those treasures of wisdom and holiness, which may be daily increased and used to thy glory.

Additions for Servants.

AND as thou hast made me a servant, make me conscionable and faithful in my place and trust, and careful of my master's goods and business, as I would be if it were my own. Make me submissive and obedient to my governors; keep me from self-will and pride, from murmuring and irreverent speeches, from falsehood, slothfulness, and all deceit; that I may not be an eye-servant, pleasing my lust and fleshly appetite; but may cheerfully and willingly do my duty, as believing that thou art the revenger of all unfaithfulness; and may do my service not only as unto man, but as to the Lord; expecting from thee my chief reward.

All this I beg and hope for, on the account of the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ, concluding in the words which he hath taught us; Our father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

A plain and short Prayer for Families for Morning and Evening.

ALMIGHTY, all-seeing, and most gracious God! The world and all therein is made, maintained, and ordered by thee. Thou art every where present, being more than the soul of all the world. Though thou art revealed in thy glory to those only that are in heaven, thy grace is still at work on earth to prepare men for thy glory. Thou madest us not as the beasts that perish, but with reasonable, immortal souls, to know, and seek, and serve thee here, and then to live, with all the blessed, in the everlasting sight of thy heavenly glory, and the pleasures of thy perfect love and praise. But we are ashamed to think how foolishly and sinfully we have forgotten and neglected our God and our souls, and our hopes of blessed immortality; and have overmuch minded the things of this visible, transitory world, and the prosperity and pleasure of this corruptible flesh, which we know must turn to rottenness and dust. Thou gavest us a law which was just and good, to guide us in the only way to life;

and when by sin we had undone ourselves, thou gavest us a Saviour, even thy eternal Word made man, who by his holy life and bitter sufferings reconciled us to thee, and both purchased salvation for us, and revealed it to us, better than an angel from heaven could have done, if thou hadst sent him to us sinners on such a message. But, alas ! how light have we set by our Redeemer, and by all that love which thou hast manifested by him, and how little have we studied, and understood, and less obeyed that covenant of grace which thou hast made by him to lost mankind.

But, O God, be merciful to us, vile and miserable sinners ; Forgive the sins of our natural pravity, and the follies of our youth, and all the ignorance, negligence, omissions, and commissions of our lives ; and give us true repentance for them, or else we know that thou wilt not forgive them. Our life is but as a shadow that passeth away ; and it is but as a moment till we must leave this world, and appear before thee to give up our account, and to speed for ever as here we have prepared. Should we die before thou hast turned our hearts from this sinful flesh and world to thee by true faith and repentance, we shall be lost for evermore. O, wo to us, that ever we were born, if thou forgive not our sins, and make us not holy before this short, uncertain life be at an end ! Had we all the riches and pleasures of this world, they would shortly leave us in the greater sorrows. We know that all our life is but the time which thy mercy alloteth us to prepare for death ; therefore we should not put off our repentance and preparation to a sick bed. But now, Lord, as if it were our last and dying words, we earnestly beg thy pardoning and sanctifying grace, through the merits and intercession of our Redeemer. O thou that hast pitied and saved so many millions of miserable sinners, pity and save us also, that we may glorify thy grace for ever ; surely thou delightest not in the death of sinners, but rather that they return and live : hadst thou been unwilling to show mercy, thou wouldest not have ransomed us by so precious a price, and still entreat us to be reconciled unto thee. We have no cause to distrust thy truth or goodness ; but we are afraid lest unbelief, and pride, and hypocrisy, and a worldly, fleshly mind, should be our ruin. O save us from Satan and this tempting world, but especially from ourselves ! Teach us to deny all ungodliness and fleshly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world. Let it be our chiefest daily work to please thee, and to lay up a trea-

sure in heaven, and to make sure of a blessed life with Christ, and quietly to trust thee with soul and body. Make us faithful in our callings, and our duties to one another, and to all men; to our superiors, equals, and inferiors; bless the king, and all in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Give wise, holy, and peaceable pastors to all the churches of Christ, and holy and peaceable minds to the people. Convert the heathen and infidel nations of the world; and cause us and all thy people to seek, first, the hallowing of thy name, the coming of thy kingdom, and the doing of thy will on earth as it is done in heaven. Give us our daily bread, even all things necessary to life and godliness, and let us be therewith content. Forgive us our daily sins, and let thy love and mercy constrain us to love thee above all; and for thy sake to love our neighbours as ourselves, and in all our dealings to do justly and mercifully, as we would have others do by us. Keep us from hurtful temptations, from sin, and from thy judgments, and from the malice of our spiritual and corporeal enemies; and let all our thoughts, affections, passions, words, and actions, be governed by thy word and Spirit, to thy glory. Make all our religion and obedience pleasant to us, and let our souls be so delighted in the praises of thy kingdom, thy power, and thy glory, that it may secure and sweeten our labour by day, and our rest by night, and keep us in a longing and joyful hope of the heavenly glory: and let the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God our Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us now and for ever. Amen.

SACRED HYMNS.

The Prayer of a Penitent Sinner, collected out of the Psalms.

- LORD, from the horrid deep my cries Psalm cxxx. 1.
 Ascend unto thine ear ;
 Do not my mournful voice despise,
 But my petition hear.
 I do confess that I receiv'd li. 5.
 My very shape in sin :
 In it my mother me conceiv'd,
 And brought me forth therein.
- Numberless evils compass me, xl. 12.
 My sins do me assail :
 More than my very hairs they be,
 So that my heart doth fail.
 But there is mercy to be had cxxx. iv.
 With thee, and pardoning grace,
 That men may be encouraged
 With fear to seek thy face.
- Have mercy, Lord, and pity take li. 1.
 On me in this distress ;
 For thy abundant mercies' sake
 Blot out my wickedness.
 My youthful sins do thou deface, xxv. 7.
 Keep them not on record ;
 But after thine abundant grace
 Remember me, O Lord.
- If thou the failings should'st observe cxxx. iii.
 Ev'n of the most upright,
 And give to them as they deserve,
 Who should stand in thy sight ?
 O blessed is the man to whom xxxii. 1.
 Are freely pardoned
 All the transgressions he hath done ;
 Whose sin is covered.

Blessed is he to whom the Lord Psalm xxxii. 2.
 Imputeth not his sin;
 Whose heart hath all deceit abhorr'd,
 And guile's not found therein.
 Lord, hide thy face from all my sins, li. 9, 10.
 And my misdeeds deface,
 O God, make clean my heart within,
 Renew it by thy grace.
 O then let joy and gladness speak, li. 8.
 And let me hear their voice;
 That so the bones which thou didst break
 May feelingly rejoice!
 O that my ways thou wouldst direct, cxix. 5, 6.
 And to thy statutes frame!
 Which when entirely I respect
 Then shall I know no shame.
 What mortal man can fully see xix. 12.
 The errors of his thoughts?
 Then cleanse me, and deliver me
 From all my secret faults.
 From every presumptuous crime
 Thy servant Lord restrain;
 And let them not at any time
 Dominion obtain.
 Thou art my God; thy spirit is good; cxl. 10.
 Thy servant's soul instruct
 In thy commands, and to the land
 Of uprightness conduct;
 With upright heart I'll speak thy praise, cxix. 7, 8.
 When I have learn'd thy word.
 Fain would I keep thy laws always;
 Forsake me not, O Lord.

A Psalm of Praise to our Redeemer: especially for the Lord's Day.

THE FIRST PART.

Bless thou the living Lord, my soul; ciii. 1.
 His glorious praise proclaim:
 Let all my inward powers extol 2.
 And bless his holy name.

Forget not all his benefits ;
 But bless the Lord, my soul : Psalm ciii. 3.
 Who all thy trespasses remits,
 And makes thee sound and whole. 4.

Who did redeem and set thee free
 From death's infernal place ;
 With loving-kindness crowneth thee,
 And with his tender grace. 12.
 As far as is the sun's uprise
 In distance from its fall ;
 So far our great iniquities
 He sep'rates from us all. John i.

Behold what wondrous love on us
 The Father hath bestowed !
 That we should be advanced thus, Psalm lxiii. 3.
 And called the sons of God.
 Because thy loving-kindness is
 Better than length of days,
 And preciouser than life itself,
 My lips shall speak thy praise.

Thus will I bless thee all my days,
 And celebrate thy fame :
 My hands I will devoutly raise
 In thy most holy name.
 With marrow and sweet fatness filled,
 My thankful soul shall be ;
 My mouth shall join with joyful lips
 In giving praise to thee.

For whom have I in heaven but thee ? xiii. 25.
 Nor is there any one
 In all the world desired of me
 Besides thyself alone.
 My flesh consumed, my heart as broke, 26.
 I feel do fail me sore :
 But God's my heart's unshaken rock,
 And portion evermore.

For they shall all destroyed be 27.
 That far from Thee are gone :
 They that a whoring go from thee
 Shall all be overthrown.

Nevertheless I do remain
Continually with Thee :
By my right hand thou dost sustain
And firmly holdest me.

And in the crowd and multitude
Of troubling thoughts that roll
Within my breast, thy comforts rest,
And do delight my soul.
With the just counsels of thy word
Safely thou wilt me guide ;
And wilt receive me afterwards,
In glory to abide.

Psalm xciv. 19.

Psalm lxxiii. 24.

THE SECOND PART.

O GOD how doth thy love and grace
Excel all earthly things !
Therefore the sons of men do place
Their trust under thy wings.
With fatness of thy house on high
Thou wilt thy saints suffice,
And make them drink abundantly
The rivers of thy joys.

xxxvi. 7.

Because the spring of life most pure
Doth ever flow from thee :
And in thy light we shall be sure
Eternal light to see.
Therefore the gladness of my heart
Is by my tongue express'd ;
And when I must lie down in dust,
My flesh in hope shall rest.

9.

xvi. 9.

The path of life thou wilt show me ;
With thee are all the treasures
Of joy, and at thy right hand be
The everlasting pleasures.
Goodness and mercy all my days
Shall surely follow me ;
And in the house of God always
My dwelling-place shall be.

11.

xxiii. 6.

O still draw out thy love and grace
To them that have thee known !

xxxvi. 10.

And with thy righteousness embrace
 The upright-hearted one.
 That so my tongue may sing thy praise, Psalm xxx. 12.
 And never silent be.
 O Lord my God, ev'n all my days
 Will I give thanks to thee !

THE THIRD PART,

GLORY to the eternal God, Luke ii. 14.
 In his transcendent place !
 Let peace on earth make her abode :
 Let men receive his grace.
 Praise ye, the Lord ! sing unto him Psalm cxlix. 1.
 A song not sung before :
 In the assemblies of his saints,
 With praises Him adore.
 The holy God his great delight 4.
 Doth in his people place :
 And the most high will beautify
 The meek with saving grace.
 Therefore let God's redeemed saints 5.
 In glory joyful be ;
 And let them raise in his high praise 6.
 Their voice continually.
 Lord, all thy works do speak thy praise, cxlv. 10.
 And Thee thy saints shall bless ;
 They shall proclaim thy kingdom's fame, 11.
 And thy great power express !
 To make known to the sons of men 12.
 His acts done mightily :
 And of his kingdom powerful,
 The glorious majesty.
 Thy kingdom everlasting is, 13.
 It's glory hath no end :
 And thine alone dominion
 Through ages doth extend.
 The elders and the blessed saints, Rev. iv. 8.
 Who do thy throne surround,
 Do never cease by night or day
 These praises to resound.

O holy, holy, holy Lord,
 Almighty God alone!
 Who ever hath been, and still is,
 And ever is to come.
 Worthy art thou, Lord, to receive
 Glory and honour still.
 For all the world was made by Thee,
 To please thy blessed will.

The song of Moses and the Lamb, Rev. xv. 3.
 They sing with one accord ;
 Great are thy works and marvellous,
 Almighty God our Lord :
 Just are thy ways, thou King of saints,
 And true is all thy word.
 Who would not fear and glorify 4.
 Thy holy name, O Lord ?
 The Lamb is worthy, that was slain, xii.
 Of power and renown,
 Of wisdom, honour, and to wear
 The royal, glorious crown.
 For thou our souls redeemed hast, 9.
 By thy most precious blood,
 And made us kings, and sacred priests, 10.
 To the eternal God.

THE FOURTH PART.

O THAT mankind would praise the Lord, Psalm cvii. 8.
 For his great goodness then ;
 And for his works most wonderful
 Unto the sons of men !
 And let them offer sacrifice 22.
 Of praise unto the Lord,
 And with the shouts of holy joys
 His wondrous works record.
 Sing to the Lord, and bless his name ; xcvi. 2.
 His boundless love display :
 His saving mercies to proclaim
 Cease not from day to day.
 O worship ye the world's great Lord : xxix. 2, and xcvi. 9.
 In beauteous holiness !

Let all the earth with one accord
With fear his name confess.

Let the exalted heavens rejoice, Psalm xcvi. 11.

And let the earth be glad ;

The sea, with its applauding noise,

Triumphant joys shall add

Before the Lord ; for he doth come, 13.

He comes the earth to try ;

The world and all therein to doom,

With truth and equity.

O, all his angels, bless the Lord ! ciii. 20.

Ye that in strength excel !

That hearken to his holy word,

And all his laws fulfil.

O bless the Lord, all ye his hosts, 21.

And ministers of his ;

And all his works through all the coasts 22.

Where his dominion is.

Bless thou, the Lord, my soul, my mouth 23.

His praises shall proclaim. cxlv.

Bless him all flesh ; all that hath breath cv. cvi.

Praise ye the Lord's great name.

A Psalm of Praise to the Tune of Psalm cxlviii.

THE FIRST PART.

YE holy angels bright, Angels.

Which stand before God's throne,

And dwell in glorious light,

Praise ye the Lord each one !

You there so nigh,

Fitter than we

Dark sinners be,

For things so high.

2. You blessed souls at rest, The glorified saints.

Who see your Saviour's face,

Whose glory, ev'n the least,

Is far above our grace,

God's praises sound

As in his sight

With sweet delight,

You do abound.

3. All nations of the earth
Extol the world's great King :
With melody and mirth
His glorious praises sing ;
For he still reigns,
And will bring low
The proudest foe
That him disdains.
- The world.
4. Sing forth Jehovah's praise,
Ye saints that on him call !
Him magnify always
His holy churches all !
In him rejoice,
And there proclaim
His holy name
With sounding voice.
- The church.
5. My soul, bear thou thy part,
Triumph in God above ;
And with a well-tuned heart,
Sing thou the songs of love.
Thou art his own,
Whose precious blood
Shed for thy good
His love made known.
- My soul.
6. He did in love begin,
Renewing thee by grace ;
Forgiving all thy sin,
Showed thee his pleased face.
He did thee heal
By his own merit ;
And by his Spirit
He did thee seal.
7. In saddest thoughts and grief,
In sickness, fears, and pain,
I cried for his relief,
And did not cry in vain.
He heard with speed,
And still I found
Mercy abound
In time of need.

8. Let not his praises grow,
 On prosp'rous heights alone ;
 But in the vales below
 Let his great love be known !
 Let no distress
 Curb and control
 My winged soul,
 And praise suppress.

THE SECOND PART.

9. LET not the fear or smart
 Of his chastising rod,
 Take off my fervent heart
 From praising my dear God.
 Still let me kneel,
 And to him bring
 This offering,
 Whate'er I feel.
10. Though I lose friends and wealth,
 And bear reproach and shame ;
 Though I lose ease and health,
 Still let me praise God's name :
 That fear and pain,
 Which would destroy
 My thanks and joy,
 Do thou restrain.
11. Though human health depart
 And flesh draw near to dust,
 Let faith keep up my heart
 To love God, true and just ;
 And all my days
 Let no disease
 Cause me to cease
 His joyful praise.
12. Though sin would make me doubt,
 And fill my soul with fears ;
 Though God seem to shut out
 My daily cries and tears :
 By no such frost
 Of sad delays
 Let thy sweet praise
 Be nipp'd and lost.

13. Away distrustful care !
I have thy promise, Lord :
To banish all despair,
I have thy oath and word :
And therefore I
Shall see thy face,
And there thy grace
Shall magnify.
14. Though sin and death conspire
To rob thee of thy praise,
Still tow'rds thee I'll aspire ;
And thou dull hearts canst raise.
Open thy door ;
And when grim death
Shall stop this breath
I'll praise thee more.
15. With thy triumphant flock,
Then I shall numb'red be ;
Built on th' eternal rock,
His glory we shall see.
The heavens so high
With praise shall ring,
And all shall sing
In harmony.
16. The sun is but a spark
From the eternal light ;
Its brightest beams are dark
To that most glorious sight.
There the whole choir,
With one accord,
Shall praise the Lord
For evermore.

END OF THE NINETEENTH VOLUME.