

ignorance, no muddiness of carnal affections, but the soul pure and transparent, to receive the refreshing and enlightening rays of God's glorious countenance. And this was the very face and beauty of the soul. It is that only that is the beauty and excellency of the creature,—conformity to God. And this was throughout, in understanding and affections, the understanding conformed to his understanding, discerning between good and evil. And conformed it behoved to be, for it was but a ray of that sun, a stream of that fountain of wisdom, and a light derived from that primitive light of God's understanding. And then the will did sympathize as much with his will, approving and choosing what he approved, and refusing that which he hated *Idem velle atque nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est.*¹⁵¹ That was the conjunction, and it was more strict than any tie among men. There were not two wills, they were, as it were, one. The love of God reflecting into the soul, did, as it were, carry the soul back again unto him, and that was the conforming principle which fashioned the whole man without and within, to his likeness and to his obedience. Thus man was formed for communion with God, this likeness behoved to be, or they could not join as friends.

But now this calls us to a sad meditation, to think from whence we have fallen, and so how great our fall is. To fall from such a blessed estate, that must be great misery! Satan hath spoiled us of our rich treasure, that glorious image of holiness, and hath drawn upon our souls the very visage of hell, the lineaments of his hellish countenance. But the most part of men lie stupid, insensible of any thing, as beasts that are felled with their fall, that can neither find pain nor rise. If we could but return and consider what are all those sad and woful consequences of sin in the world,—what a strange distemper it hath put in the creation,—what miseries that one fall hath brought on all mankind,—I am sure by these bruises we might conjecture what

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¹⁵¹ [That is, to have the same desires and aversions, that, in a word is strong friendship—*Sallust in Catil.* c. xx.—*Ed.*]

a strange fall it hath been. Sin did interpose between God and us, and this darkened our souls and killed them. The light of knowledge was put out, and the life of holiness extinguished, and now there remains nothing of all that stately building, but some ruins of common principles of reason and honesty engraven on all men's consciences, which may show unto us what the building hath been. We have fallen from holiness, and so from happiness. Our souls are deformed and defiled. You see what an ill favoured thing it is, to see a child wanting any members. O if sin were visible, how ugly would the shape of the soul be to us, since it lost the very proportion and visage of it, that is, God's image! Let us consider this doctrine, that we may know from whence we have fallen, and into what a gulf of sin and misery we have fallen, that the news of Jesus Christ, a Mediator and Redeemer of fallen man, may be sweet unto us. Thus it pleased the lord to let his image be marred and quite spoiled in us, for he had this design to repair it and renew it better than of old, and for this end he hath created Christ according to his image. He hath stamped that image of holiness upon his flesh to be a pattern,—and not only so, but a pledge also,—of restoring such souls as flee unto him for refuge, unto that primitive glory and excellency. Know then, that he hath made his Son like unto us, that we might again be made like unto him. He said, let one of us be made man, in the counsel of redemption, that so it might again be said, let man be made like unto us, in our image. It is a second creation must do it, and O that you would look upon your hearts to inquire if it be framed in you! Certainly you must again be created into that image if you belong to Christ. To him be praise and glory.

Lecture XX.

God's Works Of Providence

Rom. xi. 36.—“For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.”—Psal. ciii. 19.—“The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens and his kingdom ruleth over all.”—Matt. x. 29.—“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.”

There is nothing more commonly confessed in words, than that the providence of God reaches to all the creatures and their actions, but I believe there is no point of religion so superficially and slightly considered by the most part of men. The most part ponder none of these divine truths. There is nothing above their senses which is the subject of their meditations. And for the children of God, I fear many do give such truths of God too common and coarse entertainment in their minds. I know not what we are taken up with in this age,—with some particular truths more remote from the knowledge of others in former times, or some particular cases concerning ourselves? You will find the most part of Christians stretch not their thoughts beyond their own conditions or interests, or some particular questions about faith and repentance, &c. And in the mean time the most weighty points of religion, which have been the subject of the meditation and admiration of saints in all ages, are wholly laid aside through a misapprehension of their commonness as if a man would despise the sun and the air, and prefer some rare piece of stone or timber to them. Certainly, as in the disposal of the world, the Lord hath in great wisdom and goodness made the most needful and useful things most common—those without which

man cannot live are always obvious to us, so that if any thing be more rare, it is not necessary—so in this universe of religion, he in mercy and wisdom hath so framed all, that those points of truth and belief which are most near the substance of salvation and necessary to it, and most fit to exercise us in true godliness,—these are everywhere to be found, partly engraven on men's hearts, partly set down most clearly and often in scripture, that a believing soul can look nowhere but it must breathe in that air of the gospel, and look upon that common Sun of righteousness, God the Creator, and the healing Sun, Christ the Redeemer, shining everywhere in scripture. The general providence of God and the special administration of Christ the Saviour, these are common, and these are essential to our happiness. Therefore the meditation of Christians should run most upon them, and not always about some particular questions or debates of the time. It is a strange thing how people should be more affected with a discourse on the affairs of the time, or on some inward thoughts of their own hearts, than if one should speak of God's universal kingdom over all men and nations. That is accounted a general and ordinary discourse, even as if men would set at nought the sun's light, because it shines to all, and every day, or would despise the water, because it may be found everywhere. Let the sun be removed for some few days, and O what would the world account of it beyond all your curious devices or rare enjoyments! This is it which would increase to more true godliness, if rightly believed, than many other things ye are busied withal. It is our general view of them makes them but general. I spoke once upon this word, Rom. xi. 36, but only in reference to the end of man, which is God's glory, but the words do extend further, and we must now consider what further they hold forth. The apostle hath been speaking of the Lord's unsearchable ways and judgments towards men in the dispensation of grace and salvation, how free and how absolute he is in that. And this he strengthens by the supreme wisdom of God, who did direct him. Why dost thou, O

man, take upon thee to direct him now? For, where was there any counsellor when he alone contrived all the frame of this world, and then, by sovereign highness and supremacy over the creatures, disposed of them? For he is a debtor to none, therefore none can quarrel him for giving or not giving, for who was it that gave him first, for which he should give a recompense? Was there any could prevent him with a gift? Nay, none could, saith he, “for of him, and through him, and to him are all things” and therefore he must prevent men. For from whence should that gift of the creature, which could oblige him, have its rise? It must be of God, if it be a creature, and therefore he is in no man's common, he must give it ere we have it to give him again.

The words are most comprehensive. They comprehend all things, and that is very large. There is nothing without this compass, and they comprehend all the dependence of things. Things depend upon that which made them, that which preserves them, and that for which they are made. All things depend on him as their producing cause that gives them a being, “for of him are all things.” They also depend on him as their conserving cause, who continues their being by that selfsame influence wherewith he gave it, “for through him are all things.” And then they depend on him as their final cause, for whose glory they are and are continued, for, “to him are all things.” Thus you have the beginning, the continuance, and the end of the whole creation. This word may lead us through all, from God, as the beginning, the alpha and original of their being, through God, as the only supporter, confirmer and upholder of their being, and unto God, as the very end for which they have their being. Now, to travel within this compass,—to walk continually within this circle, and to go along this blessed round—to begin at God, and to go along all our way with him, till we arrive and end at God,—and thus to do continually in the journey of meditation, when it surveys any of his works—this were, indeed, the very proper work, and the special happiness man was created for, and,

I may say, a great part of that which a Christian is created for. Again, there would be nothing more powerful to the conforming of a soul to God, and to his obedience and fear than this, to have that persuasion firmly rooted in the heart—that of God “are all things,” that whatever it be, good or evil that befalls us or others,—whatever we observe in the world, that is the subject of the thoughts and discourses of men, and turns men's eyes after them—that all that is of God, that is, it is in the world, it started out of nothing at his command, it is, because his power gave it a being, and in this consideration to overlook, and in a manner forget, all second causes, to have such affecting and uptaking thoughts of the first principle of all these motions, as to regard the lower wheels, that are next us, no more than the hand or the sword that a man strikes us with as if these second causes had no influence of their own but were merely acted and moved by this supreme power, as if God did nothing by them, but only at their presence. We should so labour to look on those things he doth by creatures, as if he did them alone without the creatures, as if he were this day creating a world. Certainly, the solid faith of God's providence will draw off the covering of the creature, and espy the secret almighty power which acts in every thing to bring forth his good pleasure concerning them. And then to consider, with that same seriousness of meditation that the same everlasting arm which made them, is under them to support them, that the most noble and excellent creatures are but streams, rays, images and shadows of God's majesty, which, as they have their being by derivation, so they have then continuance by that same continued influence, so that if he would interpose between himself and them, or withdraw his countenance, or stop his influence, the most sufficient of them all should vanish, as the sun beams dry up the streams of a fountain, and disappear as the image of the glass, Psal. civ. 29, 30. O that place were a pertinent object of a Christian's meditation, how much of God is to be pressed out of it by a serious pondering of it! “Thou hidest thy face, they

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are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created.” It is even with the very being and faculties of the creature as with the image in the glass, which, when the face removes, it is seen no more. The Lord, as it were, breathes into them a being, and when he takes in his breath they perish, and when he sends it out again they are renewed. We do not wonder at the standing of the world, but think, if we had been witnesses of the making of it, we would have been filled with admiration. But certainly it is only our stupidity that doth not behold that same wonder continued, for what is the upholding of this by his power but a very continued and repeated creation,—which influence were able to bring a world out of nothing? If this had not been before the virtue and power he employs now in making them subsist, that same alone, without any addition of power, would have in the beginning made all thus to be of nothing, so that the continuance of the world is nothing else but an uninterrupted and constant flux and emanation of these things from God, as of light from the body of the sun. And then to meditate how all these things are for him and his glory, though we know no use nor end of them, yet that his majesty hath appointed them to show forth, one way or other, the glory of his name in them, and those things which to our first and foolish apprehensions seem most contrary to him, and, as it were, to spread a cloud of darkness over his glorious name—the sins and perverse doings of men and angels, the many disorders and confusions in the world, which seem to reflect some way upon him, that yet he hath holy and glorious ends in them all, yea, that himself is the end of all, I say, to meditate on these things till our soul received the stamp of reverence, and fear, and faith in God,—this would certainly be the most becoming exercise of a Christian, to bring all things down from God, that we might return and ascend with all things again unto God.

This is the most suitable employment of a man, as reasonable,

much more as a Christian, that very duty he was created for. "This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise," Isa. xliii. 21. And this is the showing forth of his praise, to follow forth the footsteps of God in the word and in the world, and to ponder these paths of divine power and goodness and wisdom, and to acknowledge him with our heart in all these. He made many creatures on which his glory and praise is showed forth, and he made this creature man to show forth that praise and that glory which is showed forth in other creatures. O but this is a divine office! It is strange how our hearts are carried forth towards base things, and busied in many vain, impertinent, and base employments and scarce ever mind this great one we were created for.

Certainly, this is the employment we were made for, to deduce all things from God till we can again reduce all to him with glory, to bring all down from his everlasting counsels, until we send all up to his eternal glory, together with the sacrifice of our hearts, to behold all things to be of him, that is, of his eternal counsel and decree.—to have their rise in the bosom of that, and then, through him, to proceed out of the bosom of his decree and purpose, by his power, *quasi obstetricante potentia*, and then to return with all the promise and glory to his ever glorious name, "for whom are all things." There is none but they will allow God some government in the world. Some would have him as a king, commanding and doing all by deputies and substitutes. Some would have his influence general, like the sun's upon sublunary things, but how shallow are all men's thoughts in regard of that which is? God has prepared, indeed, his throne in the heavens. That is true, that his glory doth manifest itself in some strange and majestic manner above, but the whole tenor of Scripture shows that he is not shut up in heaven, but that he immediately cares for, governs, and disposes all things in the world, for his kingdom is over all. It is the weakness of kings, not their glory, that they have need of deputies, it is his glory, not baseness, to

look to the meanest of his creatures. It is a poor resemblance and empty shadow that kings have of him, he rules in the kingdoms of men, and to him belongs the dominion and the glory. He deserves the name of a king, whose beck heaven and earth obey. Can a king command that the sea flow not? Can a parliament act and ordain that the sun rise not? Or will these obey them? Yet at his decree and command the sun is dark, the sea stands still, the mountains tremble; “at thy rebuke the sea fled.” Alas! what do we mean that we look upon creatures, and act ourselves as if we were independent in our being and moving? How many things fall out and you call them casual and attribute them to fortune? How many things do the world gaze upon, think upon, and discourse upon, and yet not one thought, one word of God all the time? What more contingent than the falling of a sparrow on the ground? And yet even that is not unexpected to him, but it flows from his will and counsel. What less taken notice of or known than the hairs of your head? Yet these are particularly numbered by him, and so that no power in the world can add to them or diminish from them without his counsel. O what would the belief of this do to raise our hearts to suitable thoughts of God above the creatures, to increase the fear, faith, and love of God, and to abate from our fear of men, and our vain and unprofitable cares and perplexities? How would you look upon the affairs of men,—the counsels, contrivances, endeavours, and successes of men,—when they are turning things upside down, and plotting the ruin of his people, and establishing themselves alone in the earth? What would you think of all these revolutions at this time? Many souls are astonished at them, and stand gazing at what is done and to be done. And this is the very language of your spirits and ways. The Lord hath forsaken the earth, the Lord seeth not. This is the language of our parliaments and people. They do imagine that they are doing their own business and making all sure for themselves. But, O what would a soul think that could escape above them all, and arise up to the first wheel of present

motions! A soul that did stand upon the exalted tower of the word of God, and looked off it by the prospect of faith, would presently discover the circle in which all these wanderings and changes are confined, and see men, states, armies, nations, and all of them doing nothing but turning about in a round, as a horse in a mill, from God's eternal purpose, by his almighty power, to his unspeakable glory. You might behold all these extravagant motions of the creatures, inclosed within those limits, that they must begin here, and end here, though themselves are so beastly that they neither know of whom nor for whom their counsels and actions are. Certainly, Satan cannot break without this compass, to serve his own humour. Principalities and powers cannot do it. If they will not glorify him, he shall glorify himself by them, and upon them.

Lecture XXI.

Of The First Covenant Made With Man

Gen. ii. 17.—“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.”—Gen. i. 26.—“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

The state wherein man was created at first, you heard was exceeding good,—all things very good, and he best of all, the choicest external and visible piece of God's workmanship, made according to the most excellent pattern,—“after our image.” Though it be a double misery to be once happy, yet seeing the knowledge of our misery is, by the grace of God, made the entry to a new happiness, it is most necessary to take a view of what man once was, that we may be more sensible of what he now is. You may take up this image and likeness in three branches.

First, there was a sweet conformity of the soul in its understanding, will, and affections unto God's holiness and light,—a beautiful light in the mind, derived from that fountain-light, by which Adam did exactly know both divine and natural things. What a great difference doth yet appear between a learned man and an ignorant rude person, though it be but in relation to natural things! The one is but like a beast in comparison of the other. O how much more was there between Adam's knowledge and that of the most learned! The highest advancement of art and industry in this life reaches no further than to a learned ignorance of the mysteries in the works of God, and yet there is

a wonderful satisfaction to the mind in it. But how much sweet complacency hath Adam had, whose heart was so enlarged as to know both things higher and lower, their natures, properties, and virtues, and several operations! No doubt could trouble him, no difficulty vex him, no controversy or question perplex him, but above all, the knowledge of that glorious and eternal Being, that gave him a being, and infused such a spirit into him,—the beholding of such infinite treasures of wisdom, and goodness, and power in him, what an amiable and refreshful sight would it be, when there was no cloud of sin and ignorance to interpose and eclipse the full enjoyment of that uncreated light! When the aspect of the sun makes the moon so glorious and beautiful, what may you conceive of Adam's soul framed with a capacity to receive light immediately from God's countenance! How fair and beautiful would that soul be, until the dark cloud of sin did interpose itself! Then consider, what a beautiful rectitude and uprightness, what a comely order and subordination would ensue upon this light, and make his will and affections wonderfully good “God made man upright,” Eccles. vii. 29. There was no thraw¹⁵² or crack in all,—all the powers of the soul bending upright towards that Fountain of all goodness. Now the soul is crooked and bends downward towards those base earthly things that are the abasement of the soul, then it looked upright towards God,—had no appetite, no delight but in him and his fulness, and had the moon or changeable world under its feet. There was a beauty of holiness and righteousness which were the colours that did perfect and adorn those lineaments of the image of God which knowledge did draw in the soul. “He was a burning and a shining light,” may be truly said of Adam, who had as much life as light, as much delight in God as knowledge of him. This was the right constitution and disposition of man,—his head lifted up in holiness and love towards God, his arms stretched out in

¹⁵² [That is, twist.—*Ed.*]

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righteousness and equity towards man and all the affections of the man under their command, they could not trouble this sea with any tempest, because they were under a powerful commander, who kept them under such awe and obedience as the centurion his servants—saying to one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, sending out love one way, holy hatred another way. These were as wings to the bird to flee upon, as wheels to the chariot to run upon, though now it be turned just contrary, that the chariot draws the coachman, because the motion is downward. There could be no motion in an upright man's soul till the holy and righteous will gave out a sentence upon it. That was the *primum mobile* which was turned about itself by such an *intelligentia* as the understanding. And so it was in Christ,—affection could not move him, but he did move his own affections, he troubled himself. In us the servant rides on horses, and the prince walks on foot, even as in a distempered society, the laws and ordinances proceed by an unnatural way from the violence of unruly subjects usurping over their masters. Holy and righteous man could both raise up his affections, and compose them again, they were under such nurture and discipline. He could have said, Hitherto, and no further, in which there was some resemblance of God ruling the raging and unruly sea. But now, if once they get entry into our city, they are more powerful than the governor, and will not take laws from him, but give him rather. When we have given way to our passions, they do next what they please, not what we permit.

Next his excellency consisted in such an immunity and freedom from all fear of misery and danger, from all touch of sorrow or pain, and did enjoy such a holy complacency and delight in his own estate, as made him completely happy. In this he was like God. This is his blessedness, that he is absolutely well pleased in himself, that he is without the reach of fear and danger, that none can impair it, none can match it. “I am God and none else,” that is sufficiency of delight to know himself, and his own sufficiency.

Indeed, man was made changeable, mutably good, that in this he might know God was above him, and so might have ground of watchfulness and dependence upon him for continuance of his happiness who made him happy. But being made so upright, no disquieting fear nor perplexing care could trouble him. Then lastly, if you add unto this, holy satisfaction with his own state and freedom, the dominion and sovereignty he had over the creatures as a consequent flowing from that image, you may imagine what a happy creature he was. Whatsoever contentment or satisfaction the creatures could afford, all of them willingly and pleasantly would concur to bestow it upon man, without his care or toil, as if they had accounted it then happiness to serve him. What more excellent than this order? Man counting it his happiness and delight to serve God and creatures esteeming it their happiness to serve man, all things running towards him with all their goodness, as to a common centre, and he returning all to God, from whence they did immediately flow. Thus, besides the fulness and riches of God's goodness immediately conferred upon man, he was enriched with all the store and goodness that the earth was full of.

God having made man thus and furnished him after this manner, he gave him a law, and then he made a covenant with him. There was a law first imprinted into Adam, and then a law prescribed unto him. There was a law written in his heart, the remainder of which Paul saith makes the Gentiles "inexcusable," but it was perfectly drawn in him. All the principles and notions of good and evil were exactly drawn in it. He had a natural discerning of them, and a natural inclination to all good, and aversion from all evil, as there is a kind of law imposed by God upon other creatures, which they constantly keep and do not swerve from, even his decree and commandment, to the obedience of which they are composed and framed. The sea hath a law and command to flow and ebb, and it is that command that breaks its proud waves on the sand, when they threaten to

overflow mountains. The beasts obey a law, written in their natures, of eating and drinking, of satisfying their senses, and every one hath its several instinct and propension to several operations, so God gave a more noble instinct unto man, suitable to his reasonable soul,—an instinct and impulse to please God, in such duties of holiness and righteousness, a sympathy with such ways of integrity and godliness, and an innate antipathy against such ways as were displeasing to him or dishonourable to the creature. There is a kind of comeliness and sweet harmony and proportion between such works, as the love of God and man, the use of all for his glory, of whom all things are, and man's reasonable being. Such a thing doth suit and become it. Again, other things, as the hatred of God and men, neglect and forgetfulness of him, drunkenness and abasing lusts of that kind, do disagree, and are indecent to it. O how happy was Adam, when holiness and righteousness were not written on tables of stone, but on his heart, and when there was no need of external persuasion, but there was an inward impulse, inclining him strongly, and laying a kind of sweet necessity upon him to that which was both his duty to God and men and his own dignity and privilege! This was, no question, the very beauty of his soul—to be not only under a law proper and peculiar to himself, but to be inwardly framed and moulded to it—to be a living law unto himself.

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But besides this inward imprinted law of holiness and righteousness, which did without more rules direct and determine him to that which is in itself good, it pleased the Lord to prescribe and impose a positive law unto him, to command him abstinence from a thing neither good nor evil, but indifferent, and such a thing as of itself he might have done as well as made use of any other creature. There was no difference between the fruit which was discharged him, and the fruit of the rest of the garden, there was nothing in it did require abstinence, and nothing in him either. Yet for most wise and holy ends, the Lord enjoins him to abstain from that fruit, and puts an act of restraint upon him, to

abridge his liberty in that which might prove his obedience, and not hinder his happiness, or diminish it, because he furnished him abundantly beside. You may perceive two reasons of it. One is, that the sovereign power and dominion of God over all men, may be more eminently held forth, and that visibly in such a symbol and sign. He who put man in such a well furnished house, and placed him in a plentiful and fruitful garden, reserves one tree, "thou shalt not eat thereof," to let Adam see and know, that he is the sovereign owner of all things, and that his dominion over the creatures and their service unto him, was not so much for any natural prerogative of man above them, as out of divine bounty and indulgence, because he had chosen a creature to himself to beautify and make happy. This was a standing visible testimony, to bring man continually to remembrance of his sovereignty, that being thus far exalted above other creatures, he might know himself to be under his Creator, and that he was infinitely above him, that he might remember his own homage and subjection to God, whenever he looked upon his dominion over the creatures. And truly in other natural duties which an inward principle and instinct drives unto, the suitableness and conveniency or beauty of the thing doth often preponderate, and might make man to observe them without so much regard of the will and pleasure of the Most High. But in this the Lord would have *no other reason of obedience to appear but his own absolute will and pleasure*, to teach all men to consider in their actings rather the will of the commander than the goodness or use of the thing commanded. And then, for this reason, it was enjoined to make a more exact trial, and to take a more ample proof of Adam's obedience. Oftentimes we do things commanded of God, but upon what ground or motive? Because our own interest lies in them,—because there is an inward weight and *pondus* of affection pressing us to them. The Lord commands the mutual duties between parents and children, between man and wife, between friends, duties of self-preservation and defence, and such like,

and many are very exact and diligent in performing these, but from what principle? It is easy to discern. Not because they are commanded of God,—not so much as a thought of that for the most part,—but because of an inward and natural inclination of affection towards ourselves and our relations, which is like an instinct and an impulse driving us to those duties. And truly we may say, it is the goodness and bounty of the Lord that hath conjoined in most parts of commanded duties our own interest and advantage, our own inclination and propension with his authority, or else the toil and pain of them would overbalance the weight of his authority. Now then, in such duties as are already imprinted on man's heart, and consonant to his own reason, there cannot be a clear proof of obedience to God's will. The pure and naked nature of obedience doth not so clearly shine forth in the observation of these. It is no great trial of the creature's subjection of its will to his supreme will, when there are so many reasons besides his will, which may incline man's will unto it. But here, in a matter in itself pleasant to the senses, unto which he had a natural inclination, the Lord interposes himself by a command of restraint, to take full probation whether man would submit to his good pleasure merely for itself, or whether he would obey merely because God commands. And indeed in such like duties as have no commendation but from the will and authority of the lawgiver, it will appear whether man's obedience be pure and simple obedience, and whether men love obedience for itself alone, or for other reasons. Therefore the Lord saith, Obedience is better than sacrifice, and disobedience is rebellion. Suppose, in such things as can neither hurt us nor help us, God put a restraint upon us—though obedience may be of less worth than in other more substantial things, yet disobedience in such easy matters is most heinous, because it proclaims open rebellion against God. If it be light and easy, it is more easily obeyed, and the more sin and wickedness in disobeying; and therefore is Adam's sin called “disobedience” in a signal manner, (Rom.

v. 19,) because, by refusing such a small point of homage and subjection, he did cast off God's power and authority over him, and would not acknowledge him for his superior. This should teach us, who believe the repairing of that image by Jesus Christ, to study such a respect and reverence to God's holy will as to do all things without more asking why it is so. If we once know what it is, there is no more question to be asked. Of creatures we must inquire a *quare* after a *quid*,—a why, after we know what their will is. But Christians should have their wills so subdued unto God's, that though no profit nor advantage were to redound by obedience, though it were in things repugnant and cross to our inclination and humour, yet we should serve and obey him as a testimony of our homage and subjection to him. And till we learn this, and be more abstracted from our own interests in the ways of obedience, even from the interests of peace, and comfort, and liberty, we do not obey him because he commands, but for our own sakes. It is the practice of Antinomians, and contrary to true godliness, to look upon the law of God as the creature's bondage, as most of us do in our walking. A Christian, in whom the image of God is renewed according to righteousness and holiness, should esteem subjection and conformity to a law, and to the will of God, his only true liberty, yea, the very beauty of the soul; and never is a soul advanced in conformity to God, till this be its delight, not a burden or task.