THE
SAINTS SVRE
AND PERPETVALL
GUIDE.
OR,
A Treatise concerning the
WORD.
Which, as the Israelites Cloud, conducts
us from Egypt to Canaan; whereunto wee
must take heed, as unto a Light that shineth in
a darke place, till the Day dawne, and the Day-
starre arise in our hearts.

BY
That Reverend, Learned, and Godly Minister
of Christ Jesus, ROBERT BOLTON, Bache-
lour of Divinitie, and late Preacher of
Gods Word at Broughton in
Northampton-shire.

JOHN 3. 20, 21.
Every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither commeth to the light,
left his deeds should be reproved.
But he that doth the truth, commeth to the light, that his deeds may
be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

LONDON,
Printed by E. Purlow, for Rapha Harford, in
Queenes-head-Alley in Pater-Nofter-Row, at
the Signe of the Gilt Bible. 1634.
TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,

JOHN CRVE, ESQUIRE, one of his Majesties Justice of the Peace and Quorum, &c. for the County of Northampton:

C. C. wisbeth increase of Grace and Peace in Christ, here, and eternall Glory hereafter.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,

Both Law and well approved Custome hath long establish-ed it, That the Heire should succeed in universum jus defuncti, and have interest, title, and just claim to all the possessions and rights of the party deceased: yea, they adde also, that bareditas transit.
transit cum onere, the Inheritance cannot be
severed from the troubles and incumbrances that goe along with it. Upon which
ground, seeing it hath pleased your worthy Father, Sir Thomas Crue, (who is now at
rest with Christ, which is exceedingly
farre more better than all other excellencies
the Lord had here graced him with) with
much favour and willingnesse to undertake
the Patronage of these Posthumous Writ-
tings in his life time; my earnest desire un-
to your Worship is, (who are Patris hares
ex asse, and, I doubt not, but also *secundum
promissionem) that you would administer in
these, as a parcell of his goods and chattels,
(as they call them) and succeed in the pro-
tection of them: That as the memorie of
your natural Father is preserved and ho-
noured in them, so the honour and glory of
your spiritual may be promoted and ad-
vanced by these:

Besides which premisses, I hope that
the very Name of that worthy and faith-
full Minister of Iesus Christ, Master
Robert Bolton (incipite, that late bright-
shining Starre in the Firmament of our
Church;
Church: a man both well knowne and approved of you, as being a neighbour Minister, and so greatly renowned for his Learning and Labours in his former Writings, amongst all them that have read them, that they may acknowledge it to be more truly said of him, that was sometimes spoken of Aristotle, * That his very Pen was dipt in Understanding, and all kind of Learning was the Inke that hee wrote withall, in regard of that profound wisedome and refined knowledge and eloquence that flowed from it: ) I say, I am confident, that his very Name will make an easie way for his Writings unto your Worship; who for the care and endevoir to advance the glory of God, and to further the welfare and edification of his Church, and for the love to godly and painefull Ministers, and the godlinessse professed, preached, and practised by them, and many other gracious endowments wherewith the Lord hath enriched you, have the love and admiration and high estimation of all those that feare God, that know you, or have heard of you.

(a 3 ) This
The Epistle Dedicatory.

This confidence hath emboldened me to present these ensuing Treatises unto your Meditation, and Patronage, beseeching the Lord of his mercie to sanctifie them to your owne and the Churches benefit, and to bless your selfe and all yours with all spirituall Blessings in heauenly things, in Iesus Chrust.

Your Worships humbly devoted,
in all holy endeavours,

C. C.
TO
THE CHRISTIAN READER.

GOOD READER,

I cannot deny, but that the Arguments handled in these three following Treatises, are common, and the ordinarie subject both of many Sermons and printed Books in these dayes: yet we know, that the commonest Meates doe yeeld the most wholesome nourishment, whereas new-found Dishes doe but clogge the stomacke, and fill the body with unwholesome humours. Besides, if the sound and new manner of handling common things may commend them, (as it ever did) then I hope, that this Worke will be welcome unto thee. Thou knowest well, I doubt not, the singular dexteritie of this Reverend and able Minister of Jesus Christ, by his former writings, in handling the Scripture, how hee shewed himselfe (as Paul exkorteth Timothy, 2 Tim. 2. 15. to be) a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. Onely understand not by the right dividing of the Word, the subtle and curious chopping...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To the Reader.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chopping and mincing of the Word by Dichotomies, Divisions, and Sub-divisions, (too ordinarie in these days) but (as the meaning of the Word is, and the Syriacke version confirms it) to handle and preach the Word aright, i.e. as M. Beta expounds it well; For the Doctrine it selfe to omit nothing that makes for the clearing of it; to adde nothing of his owne, to diminish nothing, to mangle nothing, to wrest nothing; lastly, to consider diligently what the capacitie of the hearers is able to beare, and whatsoever may tend to edification; or, as learned Fuller expounds it, to set open or make plaine as it were the right way of the Word of Truth. So this worthy Author hath done; he hath traced out and opened the right way of truth and holiness out of the holy Scriptures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His Writings I may justly commend for three or foure notable excellencies (to name no more.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First, For their cleare discovering of sinne, and their exact searching and setting of a Christians heart, to plucke off the Vizard of all sorts of Hypocrites, and to bring to light, and lay open to the eyes of the World, by the Touchstone of Truth, their counterfeit and unsound Graces, and to find out the endless windings and labyrinths of spiritual guile in self-deceiving hearts. This he doth excellently by the cleare light of Gods word, which hath an admirable vertue this way, Heb. 4. 12. being a discerner of the thoughts &amp; intents of the heart, and putting a cleare difference betwene the precious and the vile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondly, for the Stile, as being full of divine eloquence, his Lips and Pen dropping abundance of the sweetest of that Word, which is sweeter than the Honey or the dropping Honey-combes, Psal. 19. 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirdly,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thirdly, The Author being a man so well versed in ancient Writers of the Primitive times, thou mayest finde in his Bookes (no small taste whereof, you have in this) a much better use made of their Labours, than is made by many Divines; seeing he hath proved abundantly out of them the strict points of sanctification. His Quotations indeed in these last, seeme not so numerous as in his precedent Workes: the reason is, because in these, for the most part, the Authors are only quoted, their words not produced, as not having some of them, and the rest not of the same Edition; so that his References little helped us to his intended Matter.

Fourthly, I may not omit that (which in other Writers is commonly accounted blame-worthy, but in him singular excellencie, and commendable) his long digressions from his maine matter in hand; proceeding, I conceive, out of the abundance of his heart, and long experience in Gods mayes: as those that by long travelling in a way, are well acquainted with it, can finde out all the by-mayes and blinde paths about it; which our Author hath excellent-ly done: So, that by his digressions out of the ordinarie Road, he is more likely to set a wandering Soule into the right may againe.

Now, for the preventing or removing of all prejudicate Opinions which may arise concerning these ensuing Treatises,(as though, Strumpet-like, any Bastardly Brood unlawfully begotten, should be fathered and fastened upon so truly Seraphicall and Divine a Pen-man) this I can more than promise (verbo Miniftri) That there is nothing in them, for matter or manner, either spurious, or surreptitious; nothing but what is genuine, and the Authors owne; the immediate issue of his working Brain. 
To the Reader.

and flowing from his owne solstie Pen. Which may be a
seasonable advertisement unte thee for the future, from
whom and which way thou art to expect, upon the further
perusall of his scattered Manuscripts, what else shall be
deemed worthy to be polished, and so published. If there
be any thing in that which is here presented to thy view,
that liketh not thee, because not like the Author, failing
for depth of learning or varietie of eloquence; blame not
him deceased, (who being dead, yet speaketh) but impute
it to the substituted surviving Midwife, that had not lei-
sure sufficient, it being come to the Birth, to attend its
bringing forth. I meaneth mysely; who for the multitude
of distractions and pressing occasions, since these Writings
were intrusted to me, as also for the imperfectionsse and
defect of the Copppies, could not spend so much time and
paines in the exact perusing, polishing, and perfecting of it,
as I should and would have done: which must be the Apo-
logic to plead for pardon. But yet I have not beene wan-
ting to cull out such spare houres as I could, to bring this
worke to light, and to prepare it for the Presse, as also for
thy view and benefit, which, I hope, thou wilt finde, by
the due and diligent reading and practising of
it. Which I commend unto thy selfe, and
thy selfe, with the worke, unto the
Lords Blessing.

Thine in Christ Iesus,

C. C.
THE SAINTS SURE AND PERPETVALL GUIDE.

Psalm 119:105.
Thy Word is a Lampe unto my feet, and a Light unto my paths.

If all other parts of the holy Bible, this Booke of the Psalms, (penned for the most part by David, the sweet Singer of Israel, and a man after God's owne heart) is full and fill'd with greatest plente and varietie of precious Lessons and instructions unto eternall life. The choice and flower of all things profitable and comfortable for the right course of a Christian.
Of the 119. in particular.

The Division of it.

The Saints sure

Christian life, is therein briefly contained, and very movingly and feelingly express. In them we may be acquainted with the Majestie and Mysteries of God, with the Sufferings of Christ, with un-

fained Repentance, unwearied Patience, spiritu-

tall Wisedome, and wonderfull Courage of the godly man, and true Christian. In them we may behold the terrors of Wrath, and the anguishes of an afflicted Conscience, the comforts of Grace, and great Deliverances, the wonderfull workes of Providence over this World, and the promised Ioyes of that World which is to come. In a word, all good necessarily to be either knowne or done, or had, is plentifully, as out of a rich Treas-

furie, reveal'd and offer'd unto us in these heavenly Songs of David.

Amongst which, this 119. Psalme (a part of which I have now read unto you) is, as it were, a precious Jewell, or cleare Crystall; wherein wee may see the right temper and state of true godli-

ness, and sinceritie, the markes and properties of all true worshippers of God, the zeale and affecti-

ons of all faithfull Christians, the very lively Anat-
imie and laying open of a good and gracious Soule.

This whole Psalme doth consist of 22. Parts or Portions of Staves, or Octaves, even just so many as there be Letters in the Hebrew Alphabet; and every Portion containeth in it eight Verfes; and every Verse of every Portion, or Staffe, begins with the same Hebrew Letter. The which speci-

all and extraordinary penning and disposing of the
and perpetuall Guide.

the Psalme, doth declare and set out unto us these three things:

1. The diligent intention of mind, and careful meditation of the Author, in the framing and composing of it.

2. The preciousnesse and worth of the matter contain'd in it; in that it pleased the Spirit of God to deliver it in choice and speciall order.

3. A desire and purpose, that it might more easily be learn'd by heart, and committed to memorie, and often and earnestly meditated and thought upon, being set downe unto us in so faire and easie order of the Hebrew Letters.

This Part, or Portion, which wee have now in hand, is the fourteenth; and doth containe in it many worthy and gracious Lessons for our instruction and devotion in heavenly things, proposed unto us out of the practice and Christian carriage of this holy Prophet, and Man of God, David, a perfect patterne of all true zeal and piety.

In the thirteenth Portion, immediately going before, David had delivered specially two things.

First, How by his love, reading, study, and meditation in Gods Word, he had attained most excellent knowledge, wisedome, and understanding; so that thereby he was become farre more wise than his enemies; that is, than Saul and all his politike Courtiers and Counsellors of State. Hee had more understanding than his Teachers, than the great Doctors, and Rabbins; for all their deepe Learning being not sanctified unto them. He understood more than the grave and ancient men, for all

(b 2)
The worldly wisedome and great experience they had gathered in many yeeres, and through length of dayes. Where, by the way, take this Lesson.

There is no wit or policie, not all the Learning in the World, or worldly wisedome, can make a man truly wise, (that is, wise unto salvation) but onely a powerfull and working knowledge out of the holy Word of God.

The Reason is: Because all other wisedome doth onely provide for the Body, for a temporall happiness in this life, for a few and evill dayes, and leaves the Soule in a sinfull and wretched estate; shortly, in the day of Visitation, to be overtaken and fearfully confounded with strange astonishments, horrors, and despaire - and hereafter, woefully to be tormented amongst wicked Devils in the Lake that burnes with fire and Brimstone for evermore. But wisedome out of the Word of God doth so furnish a mans Soule with Grace, and all holy Vertues, that in despight of all creatures, hee may live comfortably in this Vale of teares, and in endlessse joyes in the World to come.

Now (I pray you) tell me, whether is truly the wiser man; hee, that for an inch of time makes much of his wretched Body, that must shortly rot in the grave, and be devoured of Wormes, and turned into dust; but in the meane time lets his immortall Soule, that can never die, sinke into the Dungeon of everlasting woe and miserie: or hee, which by taking found and saving counsell and direction out of the Word of God, and howsoever
and perpetuall Guide.

soever he be hated and neglected of this vaine World, yet yeelding chearefull and constant obedience thereunto, provides unspeakeable comfort, rest, and blessedness both for Body and Soule, through all eternitie?

Secondly, In the second part and foure last Verses of the former Portion, David sets downe the fruit, use, and benefit which sprung from his divine knowledge. It sweetened his heart with much comfort, and found contentment, and cheered him with joy unspeakeable, and glorious, amidst all crosses and discomforts; it bridled and restrained him from every evil way; it kept and preserved him in the paths of righteousness; it bred in him a hatred and loathing of the ways of error, falsehood, and hypocrisy. Where, by the way, I would give you this other Lesson.

We must labour and be sure that we draw our knowledge in God's Word into practice, action, and exercise; otherwise, it will not only be unprofitable and unfruitfull unto us, but indeed bring upon us a greater and more searefull condemnation. For, He that knowes his Masters will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luke 12. 47. All our knowledge is in vaine, except by the power of it our inward affections be sanctified, our words seasoned with grace, our actions and conversations guided with spirituall wisedome and unsained sinceritie.

After David had thus, in the former Portion, layd downe unto us, and confessed what excellent knowledge he had got out of the Word of God,
The Saints sure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The fourteenth Part explained.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and the precious fruit and benefit he had reaped and enjoyed by it: Now,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first Verse of this present Portion, hee makes, as it were, a protestation and profession, that he is wholly and onely enlightened and led in all his wayes by this holy Word of God, as by a Light or Lanterne: The brightnesse thereof doth not onely bring him into the wayes of righteousness, and blessed estate of Christianitie, but doth also conduct and guide him in all the paths and particulars of his life and actions, in all the parts and passages of his speciall calling: For he faith, Thy Word is a Lampe unto my feet] that is, whereby I see and discerne the way to Heaven, and the narrow path through the Kingdome of Grace; and a Light unto my paths] that is, a guide to direct me in every particular step, at every turning, that so I may keepe a straight course, and the readie way to the Kingdome of Glory.

That David had thus wholly yeelded and resigned up himselfe to be guided and governed by the glorious Light of Gods holy Word, appeares in the Verses following.

First, in Ver. 106. by a solemn Oath and sacred resolution to keepe Gods righteous judgments, and an unfained and constant purpose to performe the same; I have sworne, and will performe it, that I will keepe thy righteous judgments.

Secondly, in Ver. 107. by his patiencie and sufferance of wrongs, disgraces, and afflictions, which the wicked and prophane World heaped upon him, for his profession of holinesse and sinceritie.
ceritie. For, except he had loved and followed the Light of divine Truth, whensoever the fire of persecution and tribulation, because of the Word, had beene kindled against him, hee had shrunke backe and fallen away; I am afflicted very much, quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word.

Thirdly, in Ver. 108. by the offerings of his mouth, and calves of his lips; that is, the spiritual sacrifices of prayers, thanksgiving, and gracious Vowes for Gods service, which with a free and fervent spirit, and earnest desire of acceptati-on, he continually offered unto the Lord; O Lord I beseech thee, accept the free-will offerings of my mouth, and teach me thy judgments.

Fourthly, in Ver. 109, 110. by his stedsfastnesse and sticking to the Law and Word of God, though hee was beset and strongly incompassed with Inares, with dangers, and with death it selfe: His soule was continually in his hand; that is, hee was ready and resolved every houre rather to part with his life, than with a good Conscience, to shed his bloud, rather than to forsake the Truth and Commandements of God: My soule is continually in my hand, yet doe I not forget thy Law: The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I erred not from thy Precepts.

In the two last Verses, upon the former reasons hee concludes the Point; That his heart and inward affections do dearlyly embrace Gods blessed Word, as a most rich and lasting Inheritance, as his sweetest and greatest joy; and, that hee bends all the powers of his soule, and best endeavours, to be led with, and to follow the Light thereof even unto
The Saints sure

1 Tim. 6. 16.

1 Tim. 6. 16.

The first I gather out of the first Verse: Every sonne and servant of God doth with humilitie, chearefulness, and obedience, yeeld and submit himselfe to be wholly and onely directed and guided by the Light of Gods Word, in all his wayes, both generally, of Christianitie, and particularly, of his speciall calling, as David here did. But the naturall man, that is not yet entred into, or acquainted with the state of Grace, is led and guided in his courses onely by the Light of Reason; and worldly Wisedome; by good Meanings, without ground and warrant out of the Word; by a blind and ignorant Devotion; by the Multitude, Examples, Custome of the Times, and such like blind Guides: But if he take any advice and direction out of the Word of God, it is but in part, by halves, and for a time.

A second
and perpetuall Guide.

A second ariseth out of the second Verse: Every Child of God doth not only promise, vow, and purpose to forsake and abandon all his knowne sinnes, to watch carefully and conscionably over all his wayes; to delight in and to forke himselfe with godly and gracious companie, to have a respect to all his Commandements, and to keepe his righteous Judgements; but hee doth also truly and throughly performe it: hee goes through-stitch with his spiritual affaires, and with constancie and courage walkes in a setled course of Christianitie. But the unregenerate man, not yet soundly seasoned with the power of Grace, howsoever he hath sometimes good motions and purposes arise in his heart, to forsake his former evill wayes; and to fall to godlinesse, howsoever in the time of Sickness, of some great Judgement, or when his Conscience is terrified by the Ministerie of the Word, when he seriously thinkes upon the day of his death, and of that great and last Judgement, or the like; hee makes Vowes with himselfe, perhaps, that hee will be a new man, and change his courses. But when he is once out of danger againe, when he comes to the point, and practice, he is not so good as his word, he doth not pay and performe his former Vowes and purposes; hee is presently choked againe with worldly Cares, and drowned in earthly Pleasures: And so all his goodnesse is as a morning Cloud, and as the morning Dew it goeth away.

The third marke lyeth in the third Verse: Every Child of God doth with contented patience, with
He patiently suffers persecution for the Word.

2 Tim. 3. 12.

The carnall Gospeller spares himself.

AC. 14. 22.

4

Vers. 108.

He is frequent in praying and praying.

The other not.

with strong dependance upon Gods providence, with rejoicing in his sufferings, bear and endure many miseries and pressures layd upon him, for his profession and practice of sinceritie. He well knowes out of the Word of God, and seeles by his owne experience, That all which will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution, 2 Tim. 3. 12. And therefore he makes up his account with the World, and is at a point with all that is under the Sunne; hee is persuaded, that all the afflictions of this life are not neere worthy the glory which shall be revealed, Rom. 8. 18.

But the carnall Gospeller he thinkes it is good sleepeing in a whole skin; he lookes for a Gospel of ease, for a soft and silken service of God; for a Church (as one speakes) all of Velvet. And therefore, rather than he will suffer any loffe, or wounding, any diminution or disparagement in his outward estate, in his reputation, wealth, and worldly happinesse, he will make shipwracke of a good Conscience; he will yeeld to the corruptions of the Times, and with the greater part, rest and repose himselfe peaceably and pleasantly upon his Bed of ease, and carnall securitie: never considering, that the Cross is the Christians triumph; that Christ himselfe was crowned with Thones; and, that wee must through many afflictions enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Act. 14. 22.

A fourth marke may be gathered out of the fourth Verfe: The prayers and prayings of God, in the mouth of Gods Child, are frequent, free, and fervent; but with the carnall Gospeller, they
are very rare, cold, and formal. The Reason is; Gods Child is very sensible of his corruptions, and wants, hee still longs and gasps for more grace, with a spiritual taste he sweetly relisheth Gods great mercy and goodnesse unto him; he hath the love of God and the spirit of prayer shed into his heart by the Spirit of Adoption; and therefore his heart is as full as the Moone, of godly motions and meditations, which like a continual Spring sends out groanes and sighes unutterable, many zealous and faithfull prayers and thanksgivings unto his gracious God with a free and feeling affection. But the carnall Gospeller, because his understanding was never enlightened, his heart never truly humbled, his affections never sanctified; because he hath no sense of his wretched estate, nor present feeling of grace, nor sound hope and assurance of happiness in Heaven, why, therefore he hath no great mind, or heart, or lift to prayer; hee hath no great delight, or exercise, in this holy business: and if he doe pray (which is but seldom, and coldly); it is but lip-labour, and lost labour, because it is without faith, and feeling; for fashion, custome, or company, because he was so taught in his youth; or that he superstitionally thinkes, the very worke wrought, and a number of prayers solemnely said over, will sanctifie him.

A fiftth marke may be gathered out of the sixt and seventh Verses: The Child of God doth not onely passe through with patience, for the profession of Gods truth and sinceritie, lesse and inferior

The Reason, 

He will lose his life for God.
The Saints sure

The Reason.

A temporalie is offended.

Mat. 13:21.

6

Ver. 111, 112.

A Child of God counts the Word his greatest Treasure.

* Ver. 162.

* Ver. 72.

The Reason.

The sixt marke is gathered out of the two last Verses: The Child of God holds his Word farre more deare than any precious Treasure, than the richest Inheritance, than * great Spoyles, than * thousands of Gold and Silver: It is the joy of his heart; and therefore it inclines and inflames his affections with love and zeale to doe Gods will, and fulfill all his Commandements. And no marvell though the true Christian find most found and unconceivable delight in the Word of God, the Doctrine of Heaven: For by it, he is borne anew, and made heire of Heaven: by the Light of it, he sees his Name written in the Booke of Life, never
never to be rased out by man, or Devill; all the
tweet and gracious promises of salvation and
comfort revealed in it, are sure his owne: So that
thence he knowes, and is persuaded undoubtedly,
that after a few and evill dayes spent in this mis-
erable life, he shall remaine and reign in eternally in
the glory of God, of Christ Iesus, the blessed Spiri-
t, and the holy Angels. But it is otherwise with
the carnall Gospeller; for whatsoever shew or
protestation he makes to the contrary, yet indeed
in his heart, affections, and practice, hee preferrr
his pleasures, riches, and profit, before hearing of
Gods Word, sanctifying his Sabbaths, and obe-
dience to his Commandements. And no mar-
vell: for because hee yet never lived the life of
faith; but is a mere stranger to the mysterie of
godlinesse, hee hath no true interest nor sound af-
surance in the joyes of another World, and there-
fore feeds onely and fills himselfe with transitorie
and earthly contentments.

Now I beseech you (beloved in Christ Iesus)
let every one with singlenesse of heart and sincere
ritie examine his owne Soule, and the spiritual
state of his Conscience, by these signes and marks
which I have now delivered to you, out of the ex-
ample and precedencie of the Christian affecti-
ions and holy disposition of David, a sanctified
man, and a principal patterne of pietie and zele
for all faithfull ones. Know you not (faith the A
postle) that Iesus Christ is in you, except you be repro-
bates? So undoubtedly, if Iesus Christ be in
you, if you be of Davids stampe and temper, that
is,
is, alreadie possessed of the state of grace, and marked out by the Spirit of sanctification, for the glory that shall be revealed; you doe find in some good measure these marks and signes of an holy man in your selves.

1. That you are enlightened and guided by the Word of God in all your ways.

2. That you have not only good motions and purposes for a zealous and constant service of God; but doe faithfully, with sinceritie and integrity of heart performe the same.

3. That you suffer joyfully and patiently afflictions and disgrace in the World, for the testimonie of Gods Truth, and profession of sinceritie.

4. That you freely and faithfully, with much feeling and fervencie of spirit, offer dayly prayers and prayses unto the Lord.

5. That you had rather part with the dearest and most precious things in this life, nay, life it selfe, than leave the service of God, and the testimonie of a good Conscience.

6. That you have more comfort and delight in hearing, reading, meditating, conferring of, and applying unto your owne soules the holy Word of God, than in the treasures and glory of the whole Earth.

Such markes as these you must finde in your selves, if you ever meane or hope to finde true contentment in this life, or the comforts of Heaven in the life to come.

Now I come to a more speciall and particular con-
and perpetuall Guide.

consideration of every Verse in order; and thence to gather such Notes and Doctrines, as may best instruct us in the way to Heaven.

First, David tells us in the first Verse; That God's word is a Lanterne to his feet, and a Light unto his paths: Which, that you may better understand, I will tell you the meaning of the words, and explain unto you the several tearmes.

First, the Word may be taken three wise.

1. For the substantial Word of God, the Second Person in the Trinitie, Joh. 1. 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God.

2. It may be taken for the written and sounding Word; as it onely strikes the eare, and informs the understanding, but it is not conveyed, neither sinks it into the heart by the powerfull assistance and sanctified concurrence of God's Spirit, it being not prayed for to the conversion and sanctification of the whole man. And so the Word is heard and understood of many, that shall never be saved, but returns unfruitfull.

3. It may be taken for the working and effectual Word, as it is the power of God unto salvation; as it is rightly understood, applyed unto the heart and Conscience, possesst of the thoughts and affections, and practised in the life and conversation. This Word thus understood, inlived, managed, and powerfully applyed by the Spirit of God, was a Light unto David's steps; and so is a guide unto the paths of all true Christians, to the worlds end.

That you may understand how the Word is a Light, you must consider,
### The Saints Sure

1. That Christ is called **Light**, *John 1:4*. The Ministers are called the **Light of the World**, *Matthew 5:14*. The faithfull are **Lights**, *Philippians 2:15, 16*. The way of the righteous (faith Solomon, *Proverbs 4:18*) shineth as the **Light**, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The **Word of God** is also called a **Light**; as in this place. But first, Christ is **Light of himselfe**, and originally; he is the Fountaine and everlasting **Spring** of all the **Light of Grace and Glory**, both in Heaven and Earth; Hee is called, **The Sunne of Righteousnesse**. The Sunne, you know, hath his Light rooted in his owne faire Body, and receives that from none other; and with that, hee enlightens the Moone, the **Starres**, the Air, the Earth, & all the World: Even so the blessed Sonne of God, **the Sunne of Righteousnesse**, hath in himselfe, and from himselfe, the Light of all Wildome and Knowledge, **Mercie and Comfort**; and from him floweth and springeth whatsoever **Light of Glory** is revealed unto his blessed Saints and Angels in Heaven, or whatsoever **Light of Grace** is shed into the hearts of his sonnes and servants here upon Earth.

2. The **Preachers of the Word** arc Ministers and Messengers of this **Light**; and therefore are but **Light ministerially**. They are as the **Starres**, and so they are called, *Revelation 1:20*; They receive all their **Light** from the **Sonne of Righteousnesse**, **Christ Jesus**, and either doe or should convey and cast their borrowed beams upon the earthly, cold, and darksome hearts of the people of God, that they might **turne from Darkenesse**
The Word instrumentally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The faithfull are the subject of this Light.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The faithfull are the subjects of this Light.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Word instrumentally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>to Light, from the power of Sathan unto God, Act. 26. 18.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Word is Light instrumentally; which being powerfully sanctified unto us for our salvation, and being holden out unto us by a conscientious Ministerie, is as a Candle or Torch, to guide us through the darkness of this World, unto our eternal Rest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Lastly, the faithful are Lights Subjective; because they receive this Light into their understandings, (whereby they see the Wonders of Gods Law, the Secrets of his Kingdom, and the great Mysterie of Godliness, and the way to Heaven;) into their Consciences, (whereby they have their sinfull miserable estate by nature discovered unto them, and the way to Christ for remodie and salvation;) into their affections, (whereby they are enkindled with zeale for Gods truth, honour, and service,) into their actions, and conversation, whereby they shine as Lights in the world, amid a naughtie and crooked generation, Phil. 2. 15. And after the Sunne of Righteousnesse once arise in their hearts, like the Sunne in the Firmament, they shine more and more in all holy Vertues, unto the perfect day, untill they reach the height of Heaven, and the full glory of the Saints of God. |

| Lastly, the faithful are Lights Subjective; because they receive this Light into their understandings, (whereby they see the Wonders of Gods Law, the Secrets of his Kingdom, and the great Mysterie of Godliness, and the way to Heaven;) into their Consciences, (whereby they have their sinfull miserable estate by nature discovered unto them, and the way to Christ for remodie and salvation;) into their affections, (whereby they are enkindled with zeale for Gods truth, honour, and service,) into their actions, and conversation, whereby they shine as Lights in the world, amid a naughtie and crooked generation, Phil. 2. 15. And after the Sunne of Righteousnesse once arise in their hearts, like the Sunne in the Firmament, they shine more and more in all holy Vertues, unto the perfect day, untill they reach the height of Heaven, and the full glory of the Saints of God. |

| In the third place, [by Feet] is meant his minde and understanding, his affections, thoughts, actions, his whole life, all his ways. All these in David, were guided by the Light of Gods Word. |

| Lastly, the faithful are Lights Subjective; because they receive this Light into their understandings, (whereby they see the Wonders of Gods Law, the Secrets of his Kingdom, and the great Mysterie of Godliness, and the way to Heaven;) into their Consciences, (whereby they have their sinfull miserable estate by nature discovered unto them, and the way to Christ for remodie and salvation;) into their affections, (whereby they are enkindled with zeale for Gods truth, honour, and service,) into their actions, and conversation, whereby they shine as Lights in the world, amid a naughtie and crooked generation, Phil. 2. 15. And after the Sunne of Righteousnesse once arise in their hearts, like the Sunne in the Firmament, they shine more and more in all holy Vertues, unto the perfect day, untill they reach the height of Heaven, and the full glory of the Saints of God. |

| Lastly, the faithful are Lights Subjective; because they receive this Light into their understandings, (whereby they see the Wonders of Gods Law, the Secrets of his Kingdom, and the great Mysterie of Godliness, and the way to Heaven;) into their Consciences, (whereby they have their sinfull miserable estate by nature discovered unto them, and the way to Christ for remodie and salvation;) into their affections, (whereby they are enkindled with zeale for Gods truth, honour, and service,) into their actions, and conversation, whereby they shine as Lights in the world, amid a naughtie and crooked generation, Phil. 2. 15. And after the Sunne of Righteousnesse once arise in their hearts, like the Sunne in the Firmament, they shine more and more in all holy Vertues, unto the perfect day, untill they reach the height of Heaven, and the full glory of the Saints of God. |
Lastly, by *paths*, are meant every particular step, every turning and narrow passage in his special calling. For this Light, the Word of God, doth not only guide a man's feet into the way of peace, and put him in the right way to Heaven; but also goes along with him, enlightens and directs every step, that his feet do not slide. It informs him with spiritual wisdom, that he lays hold on every occasion for the glorifying of God, descries every little sin, and appearance of evil, disposeth every circumstance in his actions, with a good conscience, and warrant out of God's Word.

This then is the meaning of this Verse. *David*, the man of God, had the Word of God working powerfully upon his soul, as a Light: that is, as a Lampe is to the life and safety of the body, in dark and dangerous places; so was this Light to the life and salvation of David's soul, in the darkness of this World, and shadow of death: *To guide his feet and paths*; that is, his mind, affections, thoughts, actions, his whole life, all his ways, and every particular step and passage thereof.

This Verse being thus understood, let us now come to gather some Lessons and Doctrines for our instruction.

The first shall be this:

There is no man can hit the way to Heaven, or walk in the paths of Righteousness, through the Kingdom of Grace in this World, unto the Kingdom of Glory in the World to come, except he be enlightened, informed, and instructed in the holy Word of God.

The
and perpetuall Guide.

The second Note wee gather out of this Verse, shall be this:

The Word of God is a Light, not onely to guide us into the way to Heaven, and instruct us in our generall calling of Christianitie; but also to leade us along in a course of godlinesse, and to direct us particularly in our speciall calling.

I will first follow the former Doctrine; which in few words, and plainly, I thus propose unto you.

No man can at first finde the entrance, or after hit the way to Heaven, except he be enlightened and led along by the holy Word of God. For David, as here wee see, a man of great worth, and understanding, otherwise excellently and extraordinarily qualified; could not find out, or follow any other Guide, or direction to Heaven, but onely the Light of Gods Word.

The Reasons of this Doctrine, may be these which follow.

The first may be taken from the insufficiencie and inabilitie of all other meanes, to bring us to Heaven: as,

1. All the greatest Learning and deepest knowledge in the World, will stand us in little stead in this businesse: Otherwise it had gone well with many ancient Heathens and Philosophers of old, who fadomed as deepe, and reached as high in the depths and mysteries of all humane Learning and knowledge, as the light of Reason and strength of Nature could possibly bring them: And yet they were utterly strangers to the life of grace,
The Saints sure grace, and without God in the world. When they professed themselves to be wise, they became fools, faith Paul, Rom. 1. 22. They were puffed up with a little vaine-glorious knowledge here upon Earth, and got them a Name amongst men: But, alas, what was this? When as for the want of the Light of Divine Truth, they lost their Soules in another World, and their Names never came in the Booke of Life. Where is the wise? (faith Paul in another place) Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World? As if hee should have said: All the knowledge of the greatest Doctors and learnedest Rabbins in the World, without Grace, vanisheth into nothing, into vaine-glory, emptinesse, and aire; nay, casts them with greater horror, and confusion, into the Pit of Hell. Every man (faith Ieremie) is a Beast by his owne knowledge, ועש לכל אדם מדע עוה Iere. 10. 14. Except, besides all other knowledge, he be enlightened from above, and have that Divine knowledge sanctified unto him, hee can come no neerer the happinesse of Heaven, than a very Beast.

2. Worldly wisedome and policie is so farre from making men wise unto salvation, that it is not onely starke foolishnesse with God and good men, but it doth strongly set it selfe and is at enmity against God. Therefore, faith God; I will destroy the wisedome of the wise, and will cast away the understanding of the prudent. * 1 Cor. 1. 19. Ahitophel was so wise even in the affaires of Kingdomes, and business of State, that the counsell which he counselled
and perpetuall Guide.

in those days, was like as one had asked counsell at the Oracle of God; and yet all this great wisedome in the end ended in extreme folly: for upon a little discontent and disgrace in the World, he saddled his Asse, and went home unto his Citie, and put his household in order, and hanged himselfe, 2 Sam. 16. 23. & 17. 23. Although the end of all worldly wisedome be not so shamefull in the eye of the World, yet undoubtedly it is most miserable and wofull in the World to come, except their wisedome be sanctified and over-ruled by the Light of Gods Word. Carnall wisedome can neither preserve a man from death, nor prepare him to die blessedly: it cannot stay his Life from going, neither can it stop the Curse from comming; it cannot deliver him from damnation in the World to come, but rather encreaseth the grievousnesse of his punishment: for in this life it hath kept possession against heavenly wisedome, it made him uncapable of all good instructions, it made him impatient of any rebuke, and held him in ignorance and disobedience all his life.

3 No good meanings or intentions, without knowledge and warrant in the Word of God, will ever serve our turne for salvation; nay, indeed they are abominable and hateful in Gods sight. Howsoever, thousands deceive themselves in this point. Vzzah had a good meaning, in 2 Sam. 6. 6. when hee put his hand to the Arke of God, and held it, for the Oxen did shake it: but notwithstanding, the Lord was very wroth with Vzzah, and God smote him in the same place, and there hee died.
The Saints sure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Sam. 15.</th>
<th>Not will-worship. Col. 2. 23.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lk. 9. 54, 55</td>
<td>1 John 13. 8.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

died. James and John had good meanings, when they called for fire from Heaven to consume the Samaritan, that would not entertaine Christ; but Jesus rebuked them, and told them, they knew not of what spirit they were. Saul, in 1 Sam. 15. had a good meaning, when he spared Agag, and the best of the Sheepe, and of the Oxen, to sacrifice them unto the Lord; but notwithstanding Samuel tells him, that he had done wickedly in the sight of the Lord, and that the Lord had rent the Kingdom of Israel from him that day. Peter had a good meaning, when in 1 John 13. 8. he would not suffer Christ to wash his feet; but Jesus answered him, and told him, If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me. Good meanings then are wicked missings of the true service of God, except they be guided by knowledge, warrant, and ground out of the Booke of God. Let no man then tell of his good meaning, if he be ignorant in the Will and Word of God; for certainly it will never serve the turne, it will never hold out in the Day of Christ Jesus.

4. No will-worship, or will-service, or voluntarie Religion, as the Apostle calls it, Col. 2. 23. which is forged and framed out of a mans owne braine, humour, and conceit, without ground or warrant in the Booke of God; though it be performed with never so glorious a shew of zeale and paines, yet it is not any way availeable for our spirituall good, and eternall happinesse: nay indeed, it is most odious in the eyes of God, and everly able to a very high degree of his wrath and vengeance.

Baals
Baals Prophets, 1 Kings 18.28, were so hot and hasty in their will-worship, that they cut themselves with knives, and lancers, till the blood gushed out upon them. The Papists they whip themselves, they vow Continencie, perpetuall Povertie, and Regular Obedience; and yet is the profession and practice of both, bloody and idolatrous. When the Jews worshipped God after the devised fashions of the Gentiles, though their meaning was to worship nothing but God, yet the Text saith, they worshipped nothing but Devils, Deut. 32.17. And God there protests, that therefore a fire was kindled in his wrath, that should burne unto the bottom of Hell, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. So hated of Almightye God is all servise and worship devised by the wit and will of man, without warrant in the Word of God.

5 Lastly, not the Word of God it selfe in the Letter, without the spirituall meaning, and the finger of Gods Spirit to apply it powerfully to our soules and consciences, is any sufficient rule of life, or able to bring us into the Light of Grace. This appeares in Nicodemus, who was a great Doctor in the Law, and the Prophets, a chiefe Master and Teacher in Israell; yet was a very Infant and Idec in the power of Grace, and mysterie of godlinesse. For all his learning in the Letter of the Law, he had not yet made one step towards Heaven; for hee was not onely ignorant of, but had a very absurd and grosse conceit of the new birth, which is the very first entrance into the Kingdom of Grace. For when Christ told him, hee could not
not be saved, except he were new born; hee strangely and foolishly replyes; How can a man be born, which is old? How can he enter into his mothers wombe againe, and be born? Thus you see, there can no other meanes be named, or thought upon; not all humane Knowledge, nor worldly Wisedome, nor good Meanings, nor Will-worship, nor the Word it selfe in the Letter, which can leade us into the wayes of Righteousnesse, or bring us unto Heaven; but onely the Light of Gods holy Word, holden out unto us by a profitable Ministerie, and the power of the Spirit.

A second Reason of my Doctrine may be this: No man can ever see the Kingdome of God, except he be born againe, except he be a new creature, a new man, as is plaine in Christ's words unto Nicodemus. For our new birth, or regeneration, is the necessarie passage from Nature to Grace; from prophanenesse, to sinceritie: It is that whereby wee are wholly sanctified and set apart unto God, from the sinfull corruption of our naturall birth, and the evill fruits thereof, to serve God in our whole man, both body, soule, and spirit. Now you must conceive, that this new birth must necessarily spring from the immortal Seed of the word of God; for so it is called, 1 Pet.1.23. It is the Seed of our new birth, salvation, and immortalitie. And you may as well looke for Corne to grow up in your fields without sowing, without casting any Seed into the furrowes, as to looke for Grace to grow up in
and perpetuall Guide.

in your hearts, or to reap the fruit of holiness, everlasting life; except this immortal Seed, the Word of God, be first cast into the furrows and fallow ground of your hearts, and be there received with reverence and attention, nourished with prayer and meditation, and fructifie in your lives and conversations. Hence it is, that Gods Word is called, The Word of Salvation, Acts 13. 26. The Word of Grace, Acts 14. 3. The Word of Life, Phil. 2. 16. The Power of God unto Salvation, Rom. 1. 16. For there is no power of Grace, or spiritual life, to bee had ordinarily upon Earth, or salvation and eternall life to be hoped for in Heaven; except a man be enlightened with the knowledge, and enlived with the power of the holy Word of God. There is no entering into the Kingdom of God, except a man bee new borne, except hee bee first renewed in his spirit, soule, and body: And there is no new birth, without the immortal Seed, the Word of God. And therefore, without knowledge and direction in the Word of God, no salvation.

The third Reason of my Doctrine, is this: The Word of God hath only the power and properties to search into and to sanctifie the whole man, even to the inmost thoughts and the secret cogitations of the heart. All the devices and imaginations of mans heart lye without the walke of humane justice, and censure: no word or writing of man is able to bridle them, or bring them within compass; no Law of Nature, or Nations, can affright or

* See Dearing, pag. 325.
1 Cor. 4. 15.
1 Tim. 1. 18.

Reason 3.
The Word is able to sanctifie the whole man.
The Word is said to be lively in three respects.

1. Because, whereas we naturally live under the shadow of death, and in the darkness of sin, it quickens us with a new and spiritual life; it cheers and comforts us with heavenly Light.

2. The Word may be called Living, because it selfe is immortal, and lasteth for ever; as doth the living and eternal God, the Author of it.

3. But most especially, and agreeably to the place in the Hebrews, it is called lively, because it enters with great power and secret insinuation into every part and power both of soul and body: so that as our life is scattered and dispersed into every little part, and least vein in us, and we feel it both in paine and pleasure; even so the virtue of the Word of God pierceth into every member, into the most secret and hidden Closet of the heart.
heart, either to breake and bruife with terror and astonishment the very bones, & crush the sinewes of the sinfull soule; or to fill them with marrow and fatnesse, and to refresh the affections of the truly penitent with joy unspeakable, and glorious. God tells us in Jeremiah, that his Word is like fire; and therefore it can easilie insinuate into all the creckes and corners of our corruptions; it can fully and clearly enlighten our Consciences, and discover unto us the sinfullnesse of the most lurking and secret thoughts.

Thus you have this first Doctrine plainly proved and confirmed unto you.

No man can at first finde the entrance, or after hit the way to Heaven, except he be enlightened and led along by the saving knowledge of the holy Word of God.

No other means, which the power of Nature, Wisedome, Learning, or the whole World can afford, will serve the turne in this business of Salvation. It is the Seed of our new birth (as I told you;) there can be no growing of grace, or reaping of glory, without it: It hath onely power to shake, ransacke, and search into the inmost secrets of the heart: It onely can sanctifie us both inwardly and outwardly, both in soule and body, both in thoughts and actions; without which, both inward and outward holinessse, no man shall ever see the face of God.

Now I come unto the Uses of this Doctrine. And in the first place, it may serve for confutation of the Papists, those great empowerers and murtherers

Jer.23.19.

Vse 1.
Confutation of Papists, who keepe the Word in an unknowne Tongue.
The Saints sure

theres of infinite soules of men. Is the Word of
God as a Lampe, and a Light, without which we
cannot see the first step, or set one foot aright to-
wards Heaven? Why then, sinfull and pestilent
is their practice, who hide this blessed Light from
the people of God, in an unknowne Tongue; and
by their bloudie Inquisition, damme up the holy
Fountaines of heavenly Truth, which should
spring up in every mans heart unto eternall life:
Whose cruell and erastie Religion (for, bloud of
Princes, and cursed Policie, are the principall
supporters of Poperie) teacheth them to blind-
fold and hood-winke the poore Laitie in forced
ignorance, lest they should know Gods will, or
any way to Heaven, but theirs; which indeed is
the right, direct, and desperate downe-fall into the
Pit of Hell: So that millions of soules live no
lesse without Scriptures, than if there were none;
and wofully walke in this World, through darke-
ness of sinne, shadow of death, and ignorance both
of God and his Word, unto endlessse and utter
darkeenesse in the World to come. The Prophet
David tells us, in Psal. 19. That the Law of the Lord
is perfect, and giveth wisedome unto the simple: The
Commandements of the Lord is pure, and giveth light
to the eyes. In this place hee tells us, That the
Word was a Lampe unto his feet, and a Light un-
to his paths. Christ himeselfe, John 5.39. bids us,
Search the Scriptures: even all, without excepti-
on; so many as looke for eternall life. Not
lightly, and at leisuer to reade them, but with
diligence to dive into them; for so the word sig-
nifies

Psal. 19. 7,8.

John 5. 39.
and perpetuall Guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| nifies in the Originall: To seeke for the right knowledge, and true sense of them, as for Silver, and to search for it as for Treasures. The Noble-men of Berea, *Acts* 17:11. searched the Scriptures dayly, whether those things were so, that were preached unto them. Saint Peter, 2 *Peter* 1. 19. calls the Word of the Prophets, *a Light, which shineth in a darke place, to which wee should take heed*. But the Pope, and his Factors, teach other Lessons. The Catholike Church (faith one of their chief *Champions, out of the Councell of *Trent*) forbids the reading of Scriptures by all, without choice, or the publick reading, or singing of them in vulgar Tongues. The wise will not here regard (say the Rhemists in their Preface to their Testament) what some willfull people doe mutter, that the Scriptures are made for all men. And soone after, they resemble the Scriptures to Fire, Water, Candles, Knives, and Swords; which are indeed needfull, &c. but would marre all, if they were at the guiding of other than wise men: And this is indeed one of their principal reasons:

Many Abuse the Scriptures by ignorance, infirmity, or malice, to Errors, Heresies, Schisms, and their owne destruction: therefore they are not to be read of all, without choice.

I answer; they might as well reason thus: Many men abuse Meat and Drinke, by surfeiting and excess, to the destruction both of their soules and bodies: therefore men are to be deprived of Meat and Drinke. Some men are infected with the Pestilence, by drawing in corrupted and enpoysed.

---

*Objecr:* The Scriptures are ready to be abused by the ignorant, to error, heresie, &c.

*Answe:* So may Meat be abused, and the Aire infected: yet they are not to be taken away.
poysoned aire: therefore the aire is to be taken away, and removed. But as those men which are deprived of Meat and Drinke, presently languish and pine away, and die a temporall death; and those that enjoy not the benefit of the aire, are presently stifled, for want of breath: even so, all those that want the spirituall Food of their soules out of the Word of God, and the holy inspirations of his good Spirit builted thereupon; howsoever they be fat and flourishing in their outward estates, yet they are full leane and lanke in their soules; and if they so continue, must needs die an eternall death, and perish everlastingly. Let us then learne to detest and hate the bloudie Politie of the Synagogue of Rome, which cruelly keepes from many thousand Soules that blessed Light of Gods Word, which should lead them to eternall life. They indeed pretend other Reasons: But the truth is, if the Word of Truth should be permitted and published to all, there would be old running out of Babylon; all their Pompe and Politie would downe; their shamefull Iuglings and Cousenages, their strong De-
lusions and Impostures would be laid open, in the sight of the Sunne. The Princes of the Earth, that have so long beene drunken with the wrath of her empoysoned Wine, would no longer commit Fornication with her. The Merchants would buy no more her Wares; but would stand afarre off from her, for feare of her torment, weeping, and wailing. No marvell then, though the Papiists labour might and maine, and to this end maintain
maintaine a bloudie Inquisition, to suppress this Light of Gods Word, lest it should discover their darkness, and hasten their destruction.

A second Vse, is for terror, fear, and amazement to all them that doe not live and delight in the Light of Gods holy Word, but yet are walking in the darkness of ignorance, and in the shadow of death. The whole world, and every man in particular, lieth in darkness; that is, in ignorance, under sinne; and is subject and lyable to damnation and eternall death. There is no way to come out of this state of Darkness, Damnation, and Death; but by the Knowledge, Light, and Ministerie of the Word. Hence it is, that Acts 26.18. it is Paul's charge, and hee is sent to this purpose, to open the eyes of men, that they might turne from Darkness to Light. And Paul himselfe, Eph. 5.8. speakes thus unto the Ephesians; Yee were once Darkness, but now yee are Light in the Lord; make as Children of the Light. Out of 1 Pet. 2.9. it appeares, that all Gods Children are called out of Darkness into marvellous Light. Why then, fearfull and most wretched is the state of all those, who by the Light and knowledge of Gods Word are not translated and guided out of this Darkness. For, as in Darkness,

1 There is much fear, horror, and discomfort; a man cannot enjoy the light somene where of Heaven, the comfort of the creatures, the companye of men; Even so ignorant men, not enlightened with saving knowledge, are utterly without all hope of Heaven; they have no light
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Saints sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>or taste of the endless joys thereof; they have no company or conference in heavenly matters with true Christians; they have no comfort or interest in the Covenant of Grace, or Promises of Salvation: But Fear, Horror, and Despair are most justly treasured up for them against the Day of Wrath, and of the declaration of the just Judgement of God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 He that walketh in the Darkness (faith John) knoweth not whither he goeth: He cannot discern his way; he seeth not what is behind, or before him; he cannot delcry or discover the dangers which are round about him: But especially, if the wayes through which he passeth, be slippery, steep, and rockie, full of pits and holes, he is in danger at every step, by some grievous fall, to crush his body, bruise his bones, or break his necke. It is just so with every one that lives in ignorance of God's Word, and Truth; he cannot possibly discern the way to Heaven, amongst the many by-paths of iniquity; he cannot judge in spiritual matters betwixt right and wrong, good and evil, Light and Darkness, Christ and Belial, prophaneness and sinceritie; though there be behind him, a Life spent in much wickedness, lewdness, and ignorance; before him, Despair, Hell, and eternal Damnation; about him, the World, with a thousand baies and pleasures, to intice and intangle him in sinne; Sathan, like a roaring Lyon, readie every houre to seize upon his Soul, and to tear it in pieces, while there is none to helpe; all the creatures armed, and in a readiness.
and perpetuall Guide.

readiness, with whole Armies of Plagues, and Vengeance, to be revenged upon him, for dishonouring God, by ignorance in his Word: Yet hee sees none of all this. Hee neither knowes, feeles, or suspects these many dangers, with which hee is incompeassed; but goes on plodding, with ungrounded confidence, and wicked security, in the way of wickednesse and destruction: hee paffeth, with much desperate boldness, through many dangerous and fearefull wayes; wherein, at every step, he wounds his Conscience with one stinne or other in the meane time, and at length falls headlong, and suddenly, body and soule, into the Pit of Hell. This is certainly the miserable and wofull state of all those that live in spiritual Darkenesse, and are ignorant in Gods Word, and the wayes of godlinesse. It may be they may flatter, please, and perswade themselves, that their case is good enough; that, when they heare of Heaven, and those everlasting pleasures at Gods right hand, they thinke notwithstanding that they shall come thither at length; though they know never a foot of the way, take no direction by the Light of Gods Word, nor set one step, by new obedience, towards that place of blessednesse. But indeed and truth they doe very fearefully deceive and over-shoot themselves: And their case is just, as if a man should fall asleepe upon the edge of some high and steepe Rocke; and there dreame, that he is made a King, attended with a glorious Traine of Nobilitie, furnished with sumptuous Pallaces, and stately Buildings, enrich'd
The Saints sure

riched with the Revenues, Sovereignetie, and Pleasures of a whole Kingdome: But upon the sudden, starting up, and leaping for joy, falls irrecoverably into the merciless and devouring Sea; and so loseth that little comfort, which he had in this miserable life. Many wretched men lye and sleepe and short in ignorance and spirituall blindness; thinking, that skill in the Booke of God, and points of Religion, belongs onely to those that are Booke-learned; entertainng much vaine hope of salvation, without all truth or ground: But when upon their Death-bed, their Consciences are awakened by the finger of Gods justice, out of the slumber of sinne, they then too late find and see, that all was but a Dreame; for they suddenly fall and sinke into despaire, horror, and endless desolation. The state then of ignorant men, though perhaps they little thinke upon it, or take it to heart, is most fearefull in this life, and will be most horrible hereafter. In this World; because they are unacquainted, and untaught in Gods Truth, points of Religion, and way to Heaven; they neither know their owne miserie, the great mysterie of godliness, or meanes to salvation; and therefore live as aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the Covenant of Promise, without hope, and without God in the World: Which is a miserie of all miseries; They are condemned alreadie: For as it is, John 3. 18. He that believeth not in him, is alreadie condemned. And Saint Paul saith, Rom. 10. 14. How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard; and how shall they hear.
heare, without a Preacher? So, that without knowledge in Gods Word, there can be no faith; and without faith, there is no salvation. You may further see a notorious Linke of many wretched mischifes, which arise from ignorance, Eph. 4. 17, 18, 19. Vanitie of mind, and darkness of understanding are naturally in all men; for wee are all starke blinde, and utterly dead, in respect of matters of Heaven, and spirituall affairs. From thence comes, grosse Ignorance of God, and all godliness; and this Ignorance, if it be not removed and dispelled by the Light of Gods Word, is the root and cause of strangeness from the Life of God: Hardnesse of Heart; Searednesse of Conscience, and want of Feeling; an itching, wantonnesse, and eagernesse to sinne; a committing of any sinne, without remorse, occasion being offered; an unsatisfiednesse and greedinesse in the pursuit of sinfull pleasures, and in fulfilling the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and pride of life. These are the bitter and poison'd fruits of Ignorance, and want of knowledge in the Word of God, and way to Heaven. And what is to be expected hereafter, appeares 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9. The Lord Iesus will shew himselfe from Heaven, with his mightie Angels, in flaming fire, rendring vengeance unto them that doe not know God, and which obey not the Gospel of our Lord Iesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting perdition from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Seeing then the comming of the Lord will be so terribel and fearfull to the ignorant, so that they shall desire...
The Saints sure

 desires the Mountains to fall upon them, that they might hide themselves from the fierce wrath of the Lord, and not behold his fearfull countenance; and that they shall with full many times, they had never beene borne; how ought every man, which lives without the Light and knowledge of God's holy Word, feare and tremble? And yet, God knoweth, hee cannot conceive the thousand part of those horrible torments which the ignorant and wicked persons endure for ever. For as the heart of man cannot comprehend those blessed and glorious joyes, which God hath prepared for those that love him; so the woe, torments, and endless vexations, which shall be poured with wrath and vengeance upon the head of the wicked, infinitely passe the understanding of man: None can conceive how horrible they are, but onely he that feeles them. It very deepely then concerns you (Beloved in Christ Iesus) as you tender the everlasting good and happiness of your owne soules, to labour by all meanes to be instructed and inlightened by the holy Word of God, which is holden out unto you, as a Lampe and Torch, to leade you through this Vale of Teares, and World of Darkenesse, to the blessed fruition of the most glorious and everlasting Kingdom of Heaven. Otherwise, if you will needes continue in ignorance still, marke what is your wofull state and condition: howsoever you may seeme to shine outwardly, to the eye of the World, or in your owne conceits, in pleasures, in plentie, in civill honestie, in outward mirth, and other
other worldly contentments; yet, in deed and truth, your life is a life of darkeness. The god of this world, the Prince of Darkeness, hath blinded the eyes of your mindes, that your Understandings are not onely darkened, but you are Darkeness it selfe, Eph. 5. 8. Your workes are the workes of Darkeness, your way is the way of Darkeness; you are fettered and enchained in the power of Darkeness, Coloss. 1. 13. In the darkeness of crosses and afflictions of this life, you shall be without any glimpse of true comfort and refreshing from the Lord: upon your Death-beds, you shall meete with nothing but darkeness of despaire and horror: in the Grave, Sathan will guard you with the Barres of the Earth, as in a Bed of hopelesse Darkeness, untill the Iudgement of the great Day. And that Day will be unto you, a Day of wrath, a Day of trouble and heaviness, a Day of destruction and desolation, a Day of Clouds and blacknesse: as it is, Zeph. 1. 15. And at the last, you are to be cast, body and soule, from the presence of God, and joyes of Heaven, into utter Darkeness, there to be tormented amongst wicked Devils, for ever and ever. This is certainly the state of all ignorant men, and those that will not be enlightened with saving knowledge out of his Word: There is nothing to be expected of them, but Darkeness, Sorrow, Despaire, and Horror.

A third Use of this Doctrine, may serve for admonition to all those, who by the Light of Gods Word have alreadie found and are entred into (d 3)  

Vs. 3. Admonition to take the Word for our guide.
The Saints sure

| into the way to Heaven; that they would suffer themselves with humility, obedience, and constancie, to be led along in a course of sanctification, by the holy guidance and direction thereof; that they would shine dayly more and more in all Christian vertues, exercises, and duties. For it is the propertie of all those which are become new creatures, who are washed from their sinnes, sanctified, and new-borne by the immortall Seed of the Word, and the Spirit of Grace; to long after, and earnestly desire the sincere Milke of the Word, that they may grow thereby in knowledge, comfort, and new obedience. A new-borne Babe will be pleased and satisfied with nothing but the Pap; not Gold, Pearles, or any thing else will content it: even so a new-renewed Soule doth ever hunger and thirst after the sacred and sincere Milke of Gods holy Word, as Saint Peter calls it, that it may dayly gather strength in grace; otherwise, as the Child, so it would languish, pine away, and die. He that growes not, and goes not forward in grace, had never true grace. He that faithfully labours not to feed his soule with spiritual food, never passed the new birth. The way of the righteous (faith Salomon) shineth as the Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfeft Day, Prov. 4. 18. For if the Day-starre of saving knowledge once appeare unto a man, and the Sunne of Righteousnesse arise in his heart; they never set, untill they bring him unto that glorious Light above, that no man can attain unto. He proceeds and prospits in the great mysterie of godlinesse, in faith,
repentance, and sinceritie; he growes from vertue to vertue, from knowledge to knowledge, from grace to grace, until hee become a perfect man in Christ Iesus. It may be, as the fairest Sunne may sometimes be over-cast, and darkened with Clouds, and Mists; so the holinesse of a godly man may be over-clouded and disgraced sometimes, by falls into a sinne, upon infirmity, ignorance, heedlesnesse, or the like: But, if he be so overtaken; after his passing through sorrow and griefe of heart for the same, and his rising againe by repentance; hee shines farre more brightly and pleasantly both to God and man, in sinceritie and all holy graces; he afterwards runnes a more swift and settled course in the race of sanctification. So that ordinarily all Gods children shine as Lights in the world, in the midst of a naughtie and crooked generation, being once inlightened with saving knowledge; and they still waxe brighter and brighter, untill at last they come to shine as the brightnesse of the Firmament, and the Starres in Heaven, for ever and ever. Looke to it then, I beseech you: whosoever hath alreadie given his Name unto Christ, tasted of the good Word of God, and received into his soule some glimpses of heavenly Light; let him be sure to follow hard towards the Marke, for the Prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Iesus: Let him set his best desires, affections, and endeavours, to grow and proceed in all holy knowledge, in the Light of Gods Word, and chearfull obedience unto the same. For it is a speciall note and

Eph. 4:13

Phil. 2:15

Dan. 12:3
and mark of a man that is truly religious, to go forward, and encrease in grace and understanding: He must be like the Sunne, which, rising in the East, enlargeth his glorious light and heat, untill he reach the height of Heaven. But, as one well notes; the true Christian must not be like Hezekiah's Sunne, which went backward: If a man backslide, waxe worse, and fall away from good beginnings, he addes weight unto the wrath of God, and doubles his damnation: He must not be like Josuah's Sunne, that stood still. It is so farre to Heaven, and the way so narrow, so rough, and full of dangers and difficulties, that he which stands at a stay, will light short: The Bridegroom will be entred in, and the Gate shut, before he come. Hee that hath so much grace, that hee desires no more, did never truly desire any: And he that endeavours not to be better, will by little and little grow worse, and at length become starke naught. He therefore must be like David's Sunne, that great and glorious Gvant of the Heavens, that like a Bridegroome comes out of his Chamber, and as a Champion rejoiceth to runne his Race. One grace in Gods child, begets another; and one holy action, performed with sinceritie of heart, doth inflame his affections with love and zeale, with courage and resolution, to undertake moe, and to goe through-stirch with all the affaires of God, and good causes. For he alone knowes the invaluable worth, and inestimable price of heavenly Jewels; and therefore he is ravished with their beautie, and growes unsatiable in his desires.
and perpetual Guide.

and longings after them. He is still toying and labouring in the Trade of Christianitie, for more gaine of grace, encreasce of comfort, and further assurance and securitie of the joyes of Heaven. Sith hee hath alreadie tasted and fed upon celestiall and spirituall food, he findes in that such unutterable sweetnesse, and pleasant rellish, that hee for ever after hungers and thirsts after it. If then you would be assured, that you are in the way to happinesse, be sure to be led on by the Light of the Word in all heavenly knowledge, spirituall wisedome, and holy obedience.

A fourth and last Vse of my Doctrine, is for instruction to all; whether they be naturall, or spirituall, ignorant, or instructed in the Word of God: That they make it their chiefe and principall Christian care, zealously, and conscientiously, and constantly to heare, attend, and understand the holy Word of God; and to be guided and conducted by the Light thereof in all the passages of their life, and wayes of their conversation.

1. And in this point, I will, first, lay downe unto you certaine Motives, that may induce and stirre you thereunto.

2. Caution, or Caveats, to fore-arne and forewarne you of Lets, and Temptations, that may with-draw you there-from.

3. Lastly, some needfull instructions for your right carriage therein.

One Motive, to stirre us up to a reverend regard and attention, in hearing the Word of God; to a love and liking of the heavenly knowledge therein.
The Word is a love-letter from God. Let it first be asserted, that the Word of God is, as it were, an Epistle or Letter (as one of the Fathers calls it) written from God Almighty unto us miserable men, published by his own Son, sealed by his Spirit, witnessed by his Angels, conveyed unto us by his Church, the pillar and ground of Truth, confirmed with the blood of millions of Martyrs, which hath already brought thousands of souls to Heaven, and fills every heart that understands it, and is wholly guided by it, with Light and Life, with Grace and Salvation. Now let us imagine a man to have a Letter sent unto him but by an Earthly King, or some great Prince in the World; wherein he should have a Pardon granted him for some capital Crime, and high Offence, whereby he were liable to a terrible kind of death; or wherein he should be forewarned of some great and imminent danger hanging over his head, and readie every houre to fall upon him; or, wherein he should have assured and confirmed unto him, under the Kings Seale, some rich Donation, or great Lordship. Now I say, if a man should receive but a Letter from some high and mighty Potentate upon Earth, wherein any of these favours should be conveyed unto him; how reverently would he receive it? how thankfully would he accept of it? how often would he reade it? how warily would he keepe it? how highly would he esteeme of it? Why, in this royall and sacred Letter sent from the King and great Commander both of Heaven and
and perpetuall Guide.

and Earth, all these favours, and a thousand more joyes and comforts, are conveyed unto every beleever and practiser thereof. In that, we are forewarned, left by our ignorance, impietie, and impernitencie, wee fall into the Pit of Hell, and everlasting horror: In that, we have promised and performed unto us the pardon and remission of all our finnes, whereby wee justly stand guiltie of the second death, and the endless torments of the damned. By the vertue of it, we are not onely comforted with grace in this World, but shall undoubtedly be crowned with peace, glory, and immortality in the World to come. Such a Letter as this, hath the mightie and terrible God, most glorious in all Power and Majestie, who is even a consuming and devouring fire; sent unto us miserable men, by nature wretched and forlorn creatures, Dust and Ashes: why then, with what reverence, chearfulness, and zeale, ought wee to receive, reade, heare, marke, leare, understand, and obey it?

A second Motive, may be the precious, golden, and divine matter which is contained in the Booke of God, and that true and ever-during happinesse, to which it onely can bring us. There is nothing proposed and handled in the Word of God, but things of greatest weight, and highest excellency: As, the infinite majesty, power, and mercy of God; the unspeakable love and strange sufferings of the Sonne of God, for our sakes; the mighty and miraculous working of the holy Spirit upon the soules of men. There is nothing in this Treasury, but Orient Pearles, and rich Jewels; as, promises of
The Saints sure

grace, spirituall comfort, confusion of sinne, the
triumphe of godlines, refreshing of wearyed soules,
the beautie of Angels, the holinesse of Saints, the
state of Heaven, salvation of sinners, & everlasting
life. What Swine are they, that neglecting these
precious Pearles, root only in the Earth, wallow in
worldly pleasures, feede upon vanities, transitorie
trash, and vanishing riches, which in their greatest
need will take them to their wings, like an Eagle, and fly
into the Heavens. Besides, the Word of God is only
able to prepare us for true happinesse in this world,
and to possess us of it, in the world to come. It
only begets in us a true, intire, and universall holiness;
without which, none shall ever see the face of God,
or the glory of Heaven: for it is impossible, hereafter
to live the life of glory & blestnes in Heaven,
if we live not here the life of grace and sincerity, in
all our waies. It is called the immortal Seed, because
it regenerates and renewes us both in our Spirits,
Soules, and Bodies: in our Spirits; that is, in judgement,
memory, & conscience: in our Soules; that is, in
our will and affections: in our Bodies; that is, in every member. If the Prince of this world hath not
blinded the eyes of our minds, and that we be not
reprobats, as concerning salvation, it only is able to
inlighten our understandings, to rectifie our wills, to
sanctifie our hearts, to mortifie our affections, to
set Davids Doore before our lips, that we offend not with
our tongues; to set Iobs Doore before our eyes, that they
behold not vanity; to manacle our hands & feet with
the cords and bands of Gods Law, that they do not
walke or work wickedly: nay, and it is able to
furnish
furnish and supply us with sufficiency of spiritual strength, to continue in all these good things, and in a godly course unto the end. And if we be once thus qualified, we are rightly fitted and prepared for the glory that is to be revealed. As before, this holy Word did translate us from the darkness of sin, into the light of grace; it can now much more easily, with joy and triumph, bring us, from the light of grace, to the light of immortalitie, and everlasting pleasures at God's right hand.

A third Motive may be this: Wee must be judged by the Word of God at the last Day. If any man (faith Christ, Joh. 12. 47, 48.) heare my words, and beleive not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world: He that refuseth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, it shall judge him in the last Day. Whencesoever wee shall come to judgement, and appeare before God's Tribunal, (and wee little know how neere it is) two Bookes shall be layd open unto us; the one, of God's Law; another, of our owne Conscience: The former, will tell us what wee should have done; for the Lord hath revealed it to the World, to be the rule of our faith, and of all our actions: The other, will tell us what wee have done; for Conscience is a Register, Light, and Power in our Understanding, which treasures up all our particular actions against the Day of Triall; discovers unto us the equitie, or iniquitie of them; and determines of them, either with us, or against us.

Now
Now we must not take any exception against the first; that is, the Law of God: For the Law of God (faith David, Psal. 19. 7.) is perfect, converting the soul: The testimonie of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisedome unto the simple. Wee cannot against the second; that is, the Booke of our Conscience: for it was ever in our custodie and keeping; no man could corrupt it; there is nothing writ in it, but with our owne hands. Now, in what a terri-
ble fearefull case will a man be at that Day, when he shall see the Booke of God layd open before him; in the Light whereof hee should have led all his life, and by which he is now to be judged; and yet know himselfe to have had no knowledge, but to have beeene a meere stranger in it? Though the great things of the Law were many times pub-
ished and preached unto him, yet hee counted them but as a strange thing. Every mans Consci-
ence is naturally corrupt, desiled, and uncomfor-
table; and can endure and digest reasonable qui-
etly the rage of disordered affections, many vile corruptions, and sinfull actions: and therefore, at the last Day, when it shall be awakened, opened, examined, it will bring forth nothing, but the Worme that never dies, strange confusion, and condemnation; except it hath beeene formerly in this World enlightened, purged, and sanctified by the Word of Grace, and the Blood of the Lambe. Most accursed then, and forlorne, will be the state of every ignorant man, when he shall ap-
ppeare before the Judge of all the World: When he lookes upon his Conscience, he shall finde no-
thing
thing but guilt, and horror: when upon the Law, and upon the Word of God, after which he should have lived, and by which he must now be judged; it will be to him but as a sealed Book; hee will see nothing but his owne ignorance, blindness, and strangeness in it: And therefore, all the Plagues and Curses denounced in it against ignorant, wicked, and unrepentant sinners, shall be his portion, in the Lake that burns with fire and Brimstone for evermore. This ought then to stirre up every man, with all care and Conscience, to store himselfe, while he hath time, with saving knowledge and holy obedience unto that Word, which must be his Judge in the last Day: Nay, and let him take heed unto his feet, and looke unto his behaviour, when hee enters into the House of God: For in that Day he must answer and be countable for every Sermon that he hath heard, and for every Lesson he hath beene taught out of the Booke of God: If they have not enlightened his understanding, they have hardened his heart; if they doe not now reforme him, they will hereafter confound him; if he doe not profit by them, he shall be sure to be plagued for the neglect of them: For Gods Word is unto every man that heares it, either the favour of life unto life, or the favour of death unto death: It is a two-edged Sword; it either kills the sinne, or the soule; it must and shall prosper in the worke for which it is sent. God will rayse glory, hee will winne honour unto himselfe, from every man. If hee cannot be glorified, by his conversion, and salvation; hee will glorifie his
A fourth Motive may be; That horrible and fearfull punishment and destruction, which at length will certainly befall all negligent and contemptuous hearers, and those that practice not the power thereof in their lives and conversations. Whosoever (saith our blessed Saviour) shall not receive you, or heare your words; when ye depart out of that house, or that Cittie, shake off the dust of your feet: Truly I say unto you, it shall be easier for them of the Land of Sodome and Gomorrah, in the Day of Judgement, than for that Cittie. The infamous abominations, the damnable and crying sinnes of the Sodomites are knowne unto all: Who hath not heard of those floods of fire and Brimstone, which swept them away, as the harshest creatures that ever lived upon the Earth? How rufful then, and how lamentable will be their condition, who are lyable and subject to more horrible plagues than these? Wee should therefore consider, that the negligent, irreverent, and unprofitable hearing of the Word of God, is a sinnne of a farre greater weight, and more fearfull consequence, than we ordinarily imagine. When wee heare the Ministers, and Embassadours of God, delivering his mind, and revealing his Will unto us, out of such places as these, we are to conceive, that in a neeter and more speciall manner, wee stand in the presence of the great God of Heaven and Earth, who is clothed with infinite terour, power, and majestie; and thereafter, we ought to proportion
and perpetual Guide.

Proportion our behaviour and carriage, with reverence, humility, and obedience to so great a presence. Earthly Princes will not endure contempt and disgrace at their subjects hands: They cannot abide to have their Majestie and authority lightly set by, their laws and commands to be neglected and troden under foot: Why then should the Lord of glory, of justice and power, bear such indignities at the hands of sinfull men, which are his most abject vassals, and contemptible creatures? Certaine it is, if wee weigh aright the greatness of that God, before whom we stand, and our owne vilenesse, wee should hold it most just, if he should presently in the place where we stand, punish and plague our sleepinesse, talking, wandring thoughts, and irreverent carriage at hearing his Word, with some sudden and markable vengeance, to be a spectacle & example unto others, for neglecting so great salvation. It is Gods great mercy that such plagues and judgments are respited, suspended, and deferred; for even all the curses in the booke of God doe naturally, deservedly, and in the course of Gods justice, belong unto the negligent hearer, and disobedient unto the Word of God. *All these curses (Faith Moses Deut. 28.49.) shall come upon thee and pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed, because thou obeyest not the voice of the Lord thy God.*

I come now in the second place to the temptations and lets whereby a man maybee hindered from hearing the Word of God, profiting by it, and a conscionable practising of the same.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deut. 28.49.</th>
<th>Hinderances from profiting by the Word.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### The Saints sure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The highest in impiety, and most horrible, is a spice of Atheism, which Satan suggests into worldly men, whereby they wickedly, and very blasphemously think, that the sacred Word of God, is but a politike invention and devise to keepe men in awe and order, in Cities and societie, and to preserve them from wilfulness and outrages. But I would gladly know whose work and invention it is, if it be not Gods Almighty?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A removing of this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is not mans: For it directly and strongly opposeth against the streame of his sensual delights, and earthly pleasures: It curbs his most desired contentments, and crosseth the natural bent of his affections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is not Satan: For he in all ages hath fiercely and furiously set himselfe against it, and it is the engine that batters and beats downe his kingdom of darkness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is not any Angels, or other creatures: For the *Majestie, excellencie, miraculous efficacie, and wonderfull power of Gods Word, is farre above the reach and capacity of any creature; transcendent to all created understandings, and finire comprehension. Besides, the famous miracles, the many visions, the true fore-telling of things to come, the inward, lively and effectuall workings upon the soules of the elect, and many other singular and sacred markes &amp; characters of divinity stamped upon it, doth plainly shew, that it is the alone holy invention of Gods divine, pure and infinite understanding, and revealed to the world for the enlarging of Gods glory, and the salvation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Atheism.

Some think the Word to be but a humane policie.
tion of many a thousand souls; for the confusion of the kingdom of Satan, and just condemnation of the children of hell. Take heed then in the name of God, that you give not entrance or entertainment to any such fearfull blasphemous temptation, whereby the love and zeale to God's Word may be cooled, or you grow lesse careful in purchasing and practising the knowledge and power of it. This let layes hold onely upon men of a reprobate sense, and those that are already marked out for certaine damnation.

A second let and hinderance from hearing the Word of God, is recusancie, the cozenage and imposture of Popery. For such is the wickednesse and cruelty of that superstition and mystery of iniquity, that it labours might and maine to keepe all the world close prisoners in the dungeon of darkness and ignorance, and for ever to deprive them of the light of the Gospell. The prophane professors of this bloody Religion, hold ignorance to be the mother of devotion, and a very dangerous thing for simple people to pry into the Booke of God. And so they doe more safely and securely feed their followers with their owne damnable principles of treason, rebellion, disloyalty, and disobedience to lawfull Kings. So they lead ignorant people which way, and as farre as they will in the kingdom of darkness, even to beleve that blowing up of whole states, and killing of Kings, are very glorious acts, and merit the brightest crowne of immortality, and the highest feat in heaven. I hope in the Lord.
there is none of you, but with all his heart hates and detests this bloudy, murtherous, and Idolatrous generation; and will by no meanes suffer his right eye of knowledge in Gods Word to be put out by these cursed Ammonites.

Add here another let, which is Separatisme, See Ta. pag. 79.

A third let and hinderance, is the height of hardnesse of heart, and most damned desperate-nesse in sinning, when men are become so greedy of fulfilling their sinfull pleasures, that they drinke up sensual delights like water, draw on iniquity like cords of vanity, and sinne as with cart-ropes: For then they beginne to say with themselves, even to God himselfe, with them in Ob 21. 14, 15. Depart from me, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we should pray unto him? And with those to whom Isaiah in his fifth Chapter denounceth a searefull woe; Let him make speed, let him haften his worke, that we may see it, and let the counsell of the Holy one of Israel draw neare and come, that wee may know it. Men that are possessed with such a rebellious and scornfull spirit as this, neither much care for God or his Word, threats or promises, judgements or mercies, heaven or hell. No marvell then though they set light by Gods ministers, and seeke not for instruction in holy knowledge, and heavenly wisdom. That wee may be preserved from this horrible and desperate case, and so fearefully hardning our hearts against the Word of life and salvation,
and perpetuall Guide.

Salvation, we must be very careful and watchful, that we give not way, passage, and entertainment to wicked thoughts, and the first sinful motions: for in this manner, a man proceeds to the height of sin, and a reprobate sense. There first ariseth in his heart an idle and wandering thought of some unlawful thing; as of Lust, Covetousness, Pride, Malice, prophaning the Sabbath, Cozening, and circumventing his brother; and such like. Secondly, it begins to allure, entice, and conferre with the Will. Thirdly, the Will doth, as it were, take it by the hand, and is tickled, pleased, and delighted with it. Then follows Consent: Consent sets the affections on foot, and plots the accomplishment and practice of it; and sinne practised with pleasure, brings Custom. Custom sharpens a man’s wit, and makes him looke about, how to excuse it: From excusing sinne, hee growes to defend it: Defence of sinne, makes him obstinate, and resolved to continue in it: Obstinatenesse begets boasting, and glorying in it. And if a man once become impudent, and take a pride in sinning, there presently follows a brazen Brow, and whorish fore-head, an yron sinew in the necke, a heart as hard as the nether Milstone, a feared Conscience, and a reprobate sense. These are the steps, by which a man riseth into the Seat of the scornefull: And upon the top of these stayres, Sinne sits in the greatest triumph and sovereignty; and banisheth out of a man’s heart, all feare of God, love to his Ministers, and zeale unto his Word.
A fourth Let and hinderance from hearing God's Word, and yeading entire obedience unto it, is a very pestilent and politike conceit, which possesseth the hearts of very many, whereby they are persuaded, That Lawes divine are but like humane or mens constitutions: As these execute none, but chiese Malefactors; so these Decrees of God will at last condemn none, but infamous and notorious sinners. And therefore, if they be but pettie Offenders, or onely maintaine but one sweet sinne in themselves; if they be not of the worst sort, though they be not so forward hearers of Sermons, so Scripture-wise, or hold such a strict course of holinesse in their conversation: yet they thinke with themselves, their case is good enough, and that it will goe well enough with them at last. Hence it is, that they are cold, and careless, in esteeming of hearing, and conforming themselves to the Ministerie of the Word. But let no man deceive himselfe: The destruction of the negligent hearer of the Word of God, and the disobedient to the Gospel of Christ Iesus, shall be as the destruction of *Sodome, and farre more grievous. He that lyes and delights in any one knowne sinne, of which his Conscience is convicted, is in a fearefull case. Without faith, it is impossible to please God: and, without holinesse, no man shall see the face of the Lord. And none hath either faith, or holinesse, without saving knowledge out of Gods Booke. Without the New-birth, and continuance in grace unto the end, no man shall be saved: And, sincere obedience to a constant and
and perpetuall Guide.

and conscionable Ministerie of the Word, is a means both to beget, nourish, and continue saving grace. And, let mens conceits be what they will; as sure it is, as God is in Heaven, not one jot or tittle of all the Plagues and Curses registred in Gods Law, but shall be severely executed upon all ignorant and unrepentant sinners, and poured upon the hairie scalpe of all such as goe on still in their wickedness.

A fifth Let and hinderance of hearing the Word of God, is an excessive and immoderate delight, and an eager and earnest pursuit of the sinfull pleasures of a mans sweet sinne. * By a mans sweet sinne, I meane that, which his corrupt nature hath fingleed out, and made speciall choice of, to follow and feed upon, with greatest delight and sensuall sweetnesse; which, by custome and continuance, hath taken deepest root and surest hold in his heart: upon which, all his affections and desires are carried with sharpest edge, heat, and headlongnesse; and to which, hee makes all occasions and circumstances, friends and acquaintance, Religion and Conscience, all the powers both of soule and body, and outward estate, serviceable and contributorie, as to that which chiefly rules and reignes in him. This sweet sinne, in some, is Worldlinesse, Earthly-mindednesse, and Covetousnesse: In others, it is Voluptuousnesse, Lust, and Uncleannesse; Pride, Pleasures, Drunkennesse, or such like. Now certaine it is, carnall, prophane, and unregenerate men, doe many times preferre the pleasures of their sweet

---

Psal. 83. 21.

Let 5.
An eager pursuite of a mans sweet sinne.
* What is meant by a sweet sinne.

Quemadmodum nemo tam perditus, aut flagitiosus inventur:
quin ab aliquo vito magis quam ceteris abhorret;
sc nemo tanta sanitatis effet,
quin ad unum aliquod pectatum, quam ad cetera propensior sit. Cart. p. 1262.
The Saints sure

and most delightfull sinne, before the comforts of Gods House, the Congregation of the Saints, and the preciousnesse of the Word preached: And therefore, howsoever they may ordinarily come to Sermons, (though it be rather for fashion, and of custome, than with heartie and true devotion) yet if some speciall gaine and profit be to be layd hold upon at that time; if some extraordinary pleasure, feasting, pastime, and company be then to be enjoyed; they make no Conscience to turne their backes upon the House of God, and the Ministerie of the Word, even upon the Sabbath day: so, for a little sinfull pleasure, or worldly contentment, wretchedly abandoning Gods holy Ordinance, and the necessarie meanes of their owne salvation.

That many men are thus wickedly hindered from hearing the Word of God, appeares in Math. 22, and Luke 14. The glorious magnificence, and rich comforts of heavenly Cheare in the House of God, are notably set out unto us there, by divers circumstances, in the Parable of the great Feast. First, it was a Wedding Feast, which usually is full of joy, comfort, and great solemnitie. Secondly, it was made by a King, and therefore, like unto himselfe, Royall, and Princely, in plentie and varietie, answerable to his State and Greatnesse. Thirdly, it was made at the Marriage of a Kings sonne, which would make it yet farre more sumptuous, full of pompe, and noble entertainment, than if it had beene for a servant, friend, or ordinarie person.
By all this, is meant the Ministry of the Word, and Gospel of Christ Jesus; wherewith every faithfull man is feasted, made Gods sonne, and married to Christ himselfe for ever, in righteousness and in judgement, in mercie and in compassion. This Feast being in full readinesse, Servants are sent out, to invite Guests: But for all the glory, comfort, and magnificence prepared for them, in this Wedding, and Royall Feast; many refuse to come, and make excuse: One faith, he hath bought a Farre, and must needs goe to see it: another hath bought five Roke of Oxen, and goes to prove them: another hath married a Wife, and therefore he cannot come: another is busied about his Merchandise, buying and selling, and can hardly spare so much time.

Thus one sinfull delight or other, profit, pleasure, companie; or the like, doe many times stay and hinder prophane and worldly men from hearing the Word of God, and from this spirituall and heavenly Feast in his House, whereby their soules might be satisfied, as it were with marrow and fatnesse, with the comforts of grace, and a taste of the joyes of Heaven. It is very strange, that any man should be so bloudie and cruel to his owne soule; that, whereas by the breaking of the Word of Life unto him in such places as this, he might have it furnished with spirituall strength, towards everlasting life: yet for some earthly pelle, and temporall pleasure, absenting himselfe, he suffereth it to starve in ignorance and prophanenesse; the immediate and certaine passages to eternal death.

What is meant by it.

Hos. 2. 19.


Mathe. 22. 5.

Psal. 63. 5.
Let a man imagine with himself, when he purposes and resolves to absent himself from a Sermon, that he lays, as it were, in the one Scale of the Weights, the glorious Majesty, presence, and honour of God; the comfort, happiness, and salvation of his own Soul: and in the other, a little wretched pleasure, or profit; and so suffers this miserable Vanity to weigh downe so infinit a Majesty.

For, first, God's House, where his Word is faithfully preached, is, as it were, the Presence-Chamber of the everlasting King of Glory. Here he sits in a Chaire of State, with more speciall and eminent Power and Majesty, as anciently he sate betweene the Cherubins.

Secondly, Christ himself is here present: For, wherefoever two or three are gathered together in his Name, he is in the midst of them. And so he is said, to walke in the midst of the seven golden Candlesticks; and with speciall power and providence to direct and guide these holy Exercise.

Thirdly, the holy Spirit of God is present, in our Assemblies; plentifully shedding into the hearts of the faithfull, the rich Treasures of Wisdom and Grace.

Fourthly, the blessed Angels of God are here; as appeareth, 1 Cor. 11. 10. not onely to doe service unto the Lord, unto the Elect, and unto his Ministerie; but also, after a sort, to solace and rejoyce themselves in the beautie of God's House, and in the Mysteries published in the Gospel: as appeares, 1 Pet. 1. 12.

Fifthly,
and perpetuall Guide.

Fifthly, God's holy Saints here present themselves, in whom, all our delight and comfort ought to be: for they only are truly excellent, allied unto Christ, and heirs of Heaven.

Lastly, here alone ordinarily are to be had Blessings, Life, and Salvation: for the Word preached is the ordinary means to beget the unconverted unto God; by enlightening their eyes, opening their ears, softening their hearts, planting faith in their souls, and holiness in their conversations: so that, of the children of wrath, they become the sons of God. Hence it is, that it is called, *a Ministerie of Reconciliation, of Peace; a Word of Grace; of Salvation, and of Life.*

If a man be alreadie converted, and in the state of grace, he may receive these Blessings by it: It is a powerfull means of the Spirit,

To encrease his knowledge in heavenly things, and the affairs of the Soul; by dayly clearing his judgement from ignorance and error, by informing it with spirittual wisedome, and all necessarie truths, and needfull knowledge.

To add strength, and vigour, and encrease unto his faith, that hee may grow and proceed, from the infancie and weakenesse in Christianitie, to tallnesse and perfection in Christ.

To preserve him from luke-warmenesse, worldliness, and securitie; to recall him from his wanderings and strayings out of the way of sincerity; to settle, comfort, and confirme him in a godly course.

To prevent his falls, and relapses; because by it hee is furnished with Christian armour, against tempta-
It recoverers them, being fallen.

It will guide them aright in all their wayes.

temptations: he is resolved in all doubts, and cases of Conscience; he is admonished of all crooked wayes, occasions, and down-falls to iniquity.

To reclaime him from back-slidings; to raise and recover him out of falls, and to restore him to his first love, by discovering unto him the fouleneffe and danger of sinne, the power of his owne infirmities, the bitter root of Original sinne, the pestilent and impoysoned fruits thereof; and by dayly urging the blessings of true repentance, and the practice of a good Conscience.

Most absolutely to guide and conduct him in the way of righteousness, and whole course of Christianitie; to furnish him with zeale and uprightness in all holy duties and services of God; with faithfulnesse and conscience, in the discharge and executions of his calling; with holy meditations, when he is alone; with harmlesse behavior, and Light of good example in company, and amongst others, with wisdome and care, ever intirely to sanctifie the Sabbath, and to teach and pray with his family. Mark now, I beseech you; sith the Ministry of the Word is ever graced with so glorious presence, and such incomparable blessings as I have now reckoned up unto you; he that turns his back upon a Sermon, for the injoying of profit, pleasures, pastime, companie, feasting, or any other worldly and by-respect, he wilfully forsakes the salvation of his owne soule, he casts behind him all these happy blessings and comforts, tendered unto him by the Ministry of the Word; he throws himselfe desperately out of the presence of God Almighty, Christ
Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, his blessed Angels, the congregation of Saints, into the power and clutches of Satan, into the company of wicked and prophane men, upon the just indignation and revenge of all the creatures, upon the wrath and curse of God, and the shipwrecke of a good conscience. Take heed then I beseech you, how you bee drawne by any worldly affaires from the hearing of the Word, especially on the Sabbath day, left thereby you make it plaine, that you preferre your owne particular, before the glory of God; earthly gaine, before a Crowne of immortality; a little vanishing pleasure, before the endless joyes of heaven; and that yee yet lie and delight in one sweet finne or other, which keepes all saving grace out of your soules.

A sixth let and hinderance from hearing the Word of God, are certaine prophane and unwarrantable perswasions and conceits, which are entertained and harboured in the hearts of ignorant and wilfull people.

Some of them thinke with themselves that there is no such great need of following Sermons, and frequenting holy assemblies, especially if at the same time they be not ungodly busied and exercised at home; and therefore they aske; What can we not have our soules, and come to heaven, unless we trudge and trot so often to Church? Have we not the Bible, and other good booke at home to reade upon? Can we not pray and praise God at home?

They might as well aske; Can wee not have a harvest...
harvest unless we have a seed time, and raine, yea, both the former and the latter raine? Or can we not live except we have meat? Certainly no. No more can any man be truly sanctified and saved, nor live either the life of grace here, or expect the life of glory hereafter, unless he follow the ordinary means appointed and sanctified by God for his salvation: Except he submit himself to that policy and order which God with great wisdom hath established in his Church. Would a man be taken for a good subject, who should peevishly oppose himself against a law agreed upon and commanded by the King and State, for the great good of the Common-wealth? God himself hath appointed a publike Ministry in the Church; Pastors and teachers for the gathering of the Saints, and all that belong to life; and is it fit that any private exercise should cross Gods publike ordinances? No; It is both inconvenient and wicked, and Gods blessing is never to be looked for, upon any action and exercise, though never so good in itself, if his will be not obeyed.

I, but some will say; It is good indeed sometimes now and then to heare a Sermon; but what needs so much preaching, and Sermon upon Sermon; Would they have us Saints and Angels upon earth?

Wretched is that man which is weary of the Word of life. And hee hath no true taste of holy things, which loaths this spirituall Manna, though never so often reigned from heaven. There
is no saving and true knowledge of God in that man, who desires not to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Would we not think him mad and distracted, that should thus reason against his owne life? I hope I have eaten meat enough heretofore, and furnished myselfe with sufficient strength, so that I now need no more, and therefore I will neither eat nor drink more while I live. Even just so doth he reason and plead against the life of his soule, who complaines of too much preaching, and too many Sermons. David, that blessed King, and holy Prophet, who was advanced both in knowledge and holinesse, above the ordinary reach and perfection of men, and lived as an Angell upon earth; yet he acknowledgeth himselfe greatly to stand in need of stirring up, by meanes ordained of God for that end. As we may gather out of Psal. 84. and in many other places. In that Psalme he makes a most grievous and mournfull complaint, that he is debarred and banished from all access unto the publike worship and service of God; holding himselfe in this respect more miserable than some of the brutt creatures, which had libertie to build their nests, and lay their young neare the Altars of the Lord; which benefit he could not now enjoy. Now if this man of God so longed and laboured after the meanes of grace and comfort; what ought those to doe, who are of little or no faith; who are but Novices and petties in the Schoole of Christ; who are but babes in Christianity, or utterly without grace?
I, but our fore-fathers (will others say) were never troubled with so many Sermons, and yet we hope they are well, and in Heaven.

Our fore-fathers wanted the means, and that full glorious Noone-tide of the Gospell of Iesus Christ, which we by the grace and mercy of God enjoy. And therefore whosoever of them perished without them, shall certainly be beaten with fewer stripes, than those that shut their eyes against the faire and blessed Sun-shine of Gods holy truth, which is shed round about us, and if it be hid, it is hid onely to those that perish, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of their minde. Besides, if it so pleased the Lord in his just and secret judgement to suffer some of our fore-fathers to live and die under the tyranny and darkness of Antichrist; how much are we bound to bleffe God, that we are borne and brought up in the light of the Gospell; and what heevie plagues and great damnation doe wee bring uppon our selves, if wee neglect or despise so great salvation.

I, but yet further, (will some say) wee have lived some of us fortie, some thirtie, some twenty yeares, without so much preaching, and yet have holden good credit and reputation in the world, and prospered in our wayes, would you now have us so forward in running to Sermons?

Strange it is to see how wise the simplest are in matters of the world, about their temporall state, but how simple and blinde the wisest worldlings are in the affaires of Heaven, and about their greatest
greatest, spirituall, and eternall good. Let us suppose a man to have lived long in a poore Cottage, and now at length to have some great and rich Lordship befallen him; doe you thinke hee would reason thus: Why, I have lived some thirtie or fortie yeeres now alreadie in this low estate with good contentment, and credit, amongst my neighbours; and therefore here I will rest, the rest of my dayes; I am too old now, to change my former estate? Would such a foole as this, be found in a whole Countrey? And yet many Countries are full of such fooles, in respect of spirituall advancement, and the salvation of their soules. Me thinkes, those that have long lived in ignorance, and blindness, should rather conclude thus: Have I thus long and so fearfully lived without God in the World, without knowledge of his Truth, faith in Christ, and Conscience of my wayes? Oh, then it is more than high time now at length to awake out of sleepe, and to open mine eyes, and to embrace this glorious Sun-shine of the Gospel, which the Lord of his great mercy hath brought unto me, that so I may be enlightened to eternall life.

As for prospering in the World, that is no marke of a good soule; nay, it is commonly the Let of the wicked, not to be plagued like other men, but to bring their enterprises to passe, Psalme 73. Nay, yet further: There is no greater Curse can befall any man, than to prosper in the World, and be out of the way to Heaven.

I, but (will others say) to the attaining of eternall life,
What needs so much ado? The whole duty of man is soone learned.

---

**Answ.**
It is soone said, not so soone done.
*Eccles. 12. 13.*
*Math. 22. 40.*

---

*Simile.*

---

*Simile.*

---

*Simile.*

---

The whole duty of man is soone learned.

---

Life, what needs so much ado? So much preaching, catechising, expounding, conferring, meditating, teaching and praying with our families, which are so much and so often urged upon us? When all comes to all, this is the summe and end of all; To feare God, and keepe his Commandements; That we love God above all, and our neighbour as our selves: And we hope we can doe this, without all this ado.

To feare God, and keepe his Commandements; (which is the whole duty of man, as the Preacher speakes in his last chapter) and to love God above all, and our neighbours as our selves; (upon which hangeth the whole Law and the Prophets, as Christ tells us, *Math. 22.*) are indeed soone spoken, but not so easilly, truly learned; and most hardly, sincerely practised. Is it enough, thinke you, to make a man a good Carpenter, or Mason, to say; That, that is soone learned; and, I know as much as the best workman can teach or tell me: To build an House, is nothing but to lay the foundation, to rearre the walls, and cover it with a Rooffe? Is it enough to make a good Husbandman, to say, I know as much as the best Husbandman can teach me; for Husbandry is nothing else, but to sowe and reape? Is it enough to make a good Preacher, to say; It is no such great matter, to make a Sermon; I know as much in that point, as the best Scholler amongst them can tell me: To preach, is nothing else but to expound the Text, gather Doctrines, and make use and application to the hearts & consciences of the hearers? But it would be long before these idle and emptie vaunts would build Houses, fill Barnes, or save
There is farre more required to these businesses, than so: There is to be undergone much toyle and labour, much care & trouble, expence and exercise, before any of these workes can be rightly accomplished. It is even so in the great worke of salvation, and the attainment of Heaven. The state of grace, and trade of Christianitie, is not so easily purchased & practised. There goes more to saving of a soule, than bold & ignorant brags: than to say; If that be all, I hope I can quickly and easily learne to love God above all, & my neighbor as my selfe: For before these, there goes many things, as, knowledge of Gods will, and Word; a thorow view of our owne misery & corruptions, in the glasse of the Law; strange agonies, and sore pangs in the new-birth, and sorrow for sinne, refreshings and coolings by the mercies of God, and merits of Christ; faith, repentance, sanctification, a blessed & holy change in the whole man, both body, soule, and spirit. And then follows new obedience; which consists in the uprightness and sinceritie of our owne hearts; a conscienceable and charitable carriage towards our neighbors, and a zealous constancy in all religious duties and right service of God; which must be universal, in respect of the object; that is, we must walk in all his Commandements: total, in respect of the subject; that is, we must serve him in all the powers of our soule, and parts of our body; in our thoughts, words, and actions: In all which things, and holy courses, if a man be not particularly instructed, experienced, & practised, his love of God and his neighbour is but in word and tongue, not
A triall of our love to God.

indeed and truth. A man, if he be disposed, may quickly perceive and discern the truth or hollownesse of his heart in this point. God hath straitly commanded an entire sanctification and keeping holy of the Sabbath. Let a man then consider, if he suffer himselfe to be drawne away from holy Exercise on that day, by pleasures, profit, pastime, companie, ease, idlenesse, or other worldly occasions; why, then he preferres meere vanities, and the desires of his owne heart, before the glory and honour of God; and so doth not love God above all. The true love of a mans selfe, doth chiefly & principally consist in furnishing himselfe with saving knowledge, sinceritie of heart, godlinesse of life, a good Conscience, and spirituall comfort, against hee come to Iudgement. Now, if hee love his neighbour as himselfe, he is not still talking with him of worldly matters; but especially labours with him for his conversion, entertainment of grace, and increase in godlinesse. If these be not his cares, both for himselfe and his neighbour, he truly loves neither. Thus may a man examine himselfe through all the Commandements in particular; and see, whether it be so eafe to love his neighbour as himselfe, and God above all.

I but where there is so much preaching, there is much disquietnesse and discontentment: for men are abridged of their former ancient pastimes, and pleasures, and urged unto more strictnesse of life. When as all was well before, in much quietnesse and peace, the preaching of the Word breeds new stirs and contrary affections in men.

A triall of our love to our neighbour.

Object. 6. Tumults and divisions, disquietnesse and discontentment accompanies your preaching.
No marvell, though there be much struggling and striving, great noyse and stirre, before the strong man in the Gospel can be disarmed and dispossessed of his Holds; that is, before Satan, having long reigned in the hearts, and sat in the Consciences of ignorant and prophane men, will be cast out, by the Preaching and Power of the Word. This conquest costs full deare; it will not be had, without the losse of our dearest delights; without shedding the very hearts-bloud of our beloved and bosome-sinne; which flesh and blood will not yeeld unto, without blowes and bloudshed. You may assure your selfe, where the Light of Gods Truth begins once to peeppe out, and the power of grace to worke, for the driving away darkness, and subduing prophane nesse; you shall be sure ever there to have three fierce and implacable enemies, and opposites, to start up; Satan, wicked men, and a mans owne corruptions. While men lye in sinne, ignorance, and under the shadow of death, Satan lets them alone, meddles not much with them, never troubles or disquiets them, but procures them all temporall happinesse, and carnall contentments, that can be; (for he knowes full well, if they so continue, they are sure his owne, and children of endlesse perdition:) But if once, by the power of the Word, they be enlarged out of the flaverie of sinne and death, and lay hold upon salvation, and the glorious libertie of the Saints; why then he begins to bestirre himselfe like a madded & enraged Lion, and labors with all his malice and policie to hinder and dash such proceedings.
And in this Conspiracie, hee joynes unto himselfe wicked and reprobate men, to rayle, revile, and rage against sinceritie: I, and besides, a mans owne corruption, and sinfull flesh, doth fret and fume, when it feeleth it selfe curbed and snaffled by the Law of the Spirit.

The Gospel indeed is a Gospel of peace: But of what Peace? Of Peace with God, with good men, and a mans owne Conscience; of the Peace that passeth all understanding: But it ever proclaimes open warre against wickednesse, prophaneness, and corruptions; it will have no peace with impietie, carnall securitie, and rebellion unto the Lawes of God. Hence it is, that our Saviour tells us in the Gospel, that he came not to send Peace into the Earth; but rather, Fire, Debate, and the Sword: that is, Wheresoever his Word is published powerfully, and conscientially, with fruit and effect upon the soules of his elect; there, by accident (as they say) it stirres up much rage and bitter opposition against Gods children. For, as there is no true inward peace unto the wicked; so, in this World, there is no outward peace unto the righteous: but commonly they are still exercised with one crosse and temptation, or other; either the Devill, or wicked men, are still plotting or practising mischief and miserie against them.

But you must conceive, that the disquietnesses and troubles that arise at the preaching of the Word, are not caused by it, but by mens corruptions. Would any man thinke, that Saint Paul, or...
or his Preaching, were in fault, because there was much ado, and an hurly-burly almost wherever he came; and not rather the wicked Infidels, which could not endure to have their sinnes reproved? Neither the Sower, nor the Seed, Math. 13. are to be blamed, that it doth not prosper and frustrifie; it is the ground that is onely in fault: which is either stonie, or thornie, or barren; or else, it is the envious man, that soweth Tares: The Sower doth onely his dutie, and the Seed is pure and precious; it is mens corruptions, and prophane hearts, that causeth all the stirre. Amongst foure kinds of Grounds, there is but one at the most (as appeares in the Parable of the Sower, Math. 13.) in which the immortall Seed of the Word takes root, prospers, and frustrifies: Onely the good and honest heart profits by Preaching; to all others, it is the favour of death unto death: And whom it doth not humble, it hardneth; whom it makes not so meeke as a Lambe, and like a little Child in humilitie, it makes as fierce and furious as a Lion, against the power of grace wrought in others, and against the profession and practice of sinceritie. No marvell then, though where the Word of Truth begins to beare sway, there be many times much ado, and resistance by carnall and prophane men.

I, but (will some say) this Word is brought unto us by weake and fraile men; sometimes by those, who are of notorious and infamous life, and conversation: and therefore wee have leffe heart to beleive and obey them. If wee had the Word
published by an Angel, or an Apostle, or some more excellent and powerfull means, and Embassadours, wee should more easily and willingly heare, beleue, and obey them.

It is Gods great mercie unto us, that it plea-seth him so farre to condiscend to our infirmity, as to open unto us the rich Treasures of his hea-venly Word, by men of the same condition and frailtie, and subject to the same passions with our selves. Hee might by terrible and astonishing Voices, out of Lightnings, Thunders, and Earth- quakes, able to breake the hardest Rocks, and stony Mountaines, (as he did in the giving of the Law) force us to obedience: Or he might send his An- gels, armed with power and puiflance, to execute present vengeance upon all those which doe not presently submit themselves to the Scepter of his Christ, and Soveraigntie of his Word. But in great mercie and compassion unto us, hee chufeth rather to teach us by a still and fofit Voice; by a more faire, familiar, and fit Instruction for us; even by such as our selves, of our owne nature, frailtie, and condition.

Herein he shewes his great love unto us, in that he vouchsaflfeth to put his fearefull and glorious Word into the mouth of a mortall and finfull man. What an honour and advancement is it unto mans nature, unto mankind; that the high and mightie God of Heaven and Earth should fingle them out for so glorious a service; SANCTIFI their Tongues, to deliver his good pleazure, and newes of salvation unto the fonnes of men?

That
That hee should acquaint and put them in trust with such high mysteries, and heavenly matters, of so soveraigne and saving use, both to themselves and others?

But it may be, besides common frailtie and infirmitie, the Minister and Messenger of the Word is of lewd and profane life, and condition.

If he be, more is the pitty; the scandal of the Ministerie is the greater, and his owne damnation more smarting and terrible. See Psal. 50. 16, 17; &c. But notwithstanding, the profanenesse of the Preacher is no priviledge to the hearer, either of negligence or disobedience. He that turns his eare from hearing of the Law truly preached (though by a Pharife) even his prayer is abominable, Prov. 28. 9. Hee that despiseth the word, shall be destroyed, Prov. 13. 13. Hee that obeyeth not the Sonne, in his Ministers lawfully sent, though not sanctified themselves, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Christ himselfe, in the Gospel, bids his followers to observe and doe whatsoever they were bid by the Scribes and Pharifes, which sate in Moses Chaire; but not to doe after their works; for they said, and did not. Every Minister is to be heard, received, and followed, so farre as he followes and delivers to the Church the Truth of God, and Doctrine of the Apostles. For therein he is an Angel of the Lord of Hosts, and Embassadors in the stead of Christ. And all the parts of the Ministerie in his hand (he following the Word) shall as certainly be accomplished, as if an Angel, or Christ
Christ from Heaven should presently and potently execute them. If hee denounce Judgements against sinne, it is as if the voice of God himselfe should be heard from Heaven; as if the Lion of the Tribe of Iudah should roare. If he poure the Oyle of comfort into a wounded and distressed Conscience, it is as sure and certaine, as soft and sweet to the believing soule, as if the Angels should comfort him, as they did Christ in his Agonie; or, as if Christ himselfe should mercifully reach out his glorious hand, through the Clouds, and binde up his broken heart and bruised Conscience with a Plaister of his owne precious Bloud. If hee instruct, admonish, reproove, exhort, perfwade, from ground and warrant out of the Word; it is all one, as if Christ himselfe should doe it: who hath said; He that heareth you, heareth me.

Let men therefore pretend what they will; if they will not heare, beleive, and obey the Lord, speaking in the Ministerie of the Word, though the meanes and Messengers be never so base and vile, fraile, weake, and sinfull. Let an Angel come from Heaven, a Devill from Hell, or a man from the dead; yet would they not beleive. For, if a man were truly humbled, hee would tremble at Gods Word, of whomsoever hee heard it. If hee had a spirituall taste, hee would relishe the heavenly food, whosoever ministred it. If hee had Gods holy Spirit, hee would know and acknowledge his Sword, which is the Word of God, in whose hand soever he saw it. And untill he have this
and perpetuall Guide.

this spirit, a spirituall taste, and an humble heart, hee will not beleve, especially with effect, fruit, and practice, let him pretend whatsoever he will; neither Angels, nor men; dead, nor living; Moses, nor the Prophets; Peter, nor Paul; not Christ, nor God himselfe; if the one were living againe up-on Earth, or the other would be pleased, or it were possible, to speake immediately to him.

For conclusion of this Point, let us know, That the Ministerie of the Word is Gods Ordinance; which dependeth not upon the worthinesse of him who delivereth it; neither is it made void and uneffectuall, by his weakenesse and wickednesse: but it hath it vertue, force, and power from the blessing of God, and from the inward operation of his Spirit, who applyeth it to the hearts and consciences of men, and thereby illuminates their understandings, begetteth faith in them, and all sanctifying and saving graces.

I, but (will some say) it is a very wearisome, tyring, and tedious thing, to be tyed to the hearking of so many Sermons, to meditate of them, conferre of them with our neighbours, teach them our families, and practise them; which are urged upon us, as necessarie Christian duties.

It is a strange thing, and for ease, that some men will not be persuaded to take halfe so much paines to goe to Heaven, and eternall Rest, as many thousands to goe to Hell, and everlasting torment. How many tyre and torture themselves with careke and care, with much toyle and travell, to heape up these riches, which in the meane time are

See Darrnams C. H. pag. 362.

Object. 8. This course is wearisome.

Answ. Many will not take such paines to goe to Heaven, as others doe to goe to Hell.
are matter of much vexation unto them; and hereafter will be witnesses against them, and eate their flesh as it were fire, as James speaks. How many spend their wits, their spirits, their time, that they may become some-body in the World, and climbe by indirect and unlawful means, and steps unto those high places, from whence hereafter they must be hurled with greater confusion, and a more fearful downe-fall, into the Pit of Hell? How many waste their wealth, weaken their strength, consume their marrow, fill their bones with rottenness, and their bodies with diseases, with lust and uncleanness, with following the whorish woman, whose paths lead unto the dead; with tarrying long at the Wine, and pouring in of strong Drinke: for which, at length, they shall be sure to be filled with drunkenness, and with sorrow, even with the Cup of destruction, and trembling; they shall drinke of it deepe and large, and wring it out to the dregges? How unwearied have Idolaters ever beene in the wicked worship of their false gods? And many Heretikes, in the false worship of the true God? In thrusting towards Hell, they neither spared cost, nor charge, losse, nor labour: They have beene prodigall both of lives, and living, and of bloud, and children. You know, amongst the Iewes, some mingled the rufull cries of their dearest children with Musick and melodie, lest they should be moved to compassion, while they were cast into the fire, to be burned up in sacrifice unto the Idoll Moloch. Scribes and Pharises compass Sea and Land,
Land, to make a Proselyte.  

Baals Priests lanced and cut their flesh before their Idoll, until the blood gushed out. The blinded Papists at this day whip themselves, waste their goods, and consume their bodies with wearisome Pilgrimages, to see some counterfeit Reliques, and rotten Bones, or to visit accursed Idols, and Popish Saints: Nay, some of them transported with a more bloudie rage, and furious spirit of Antichrist, suffer as if were with senselesnesse, with desperate and damned boldnesse, most horrible and exquisite torments, for butchering of Kings, for which they hope to merit Heaven, and to saile through a Sea of Royall bloud to the Haven of endless rest; though indeed and truth, they justly light short, and sinke, before they are aware, into the deepest Lake of the hottest fire, and most consuming flame of Hell. Now, I pray you, shall these services of Sathan be followed and pursued with such heat and eagerness, with such paines and patiencie of all miseries and vexations; and shall not the Lords owne Ordinances, and the true worship of the true God have power to make us step out of our doores with patience, and pleasure, to heare the Lords will revealed unto us, to receive salvation to our soules, and a Crowne of immortalitie to our heads? Can some be content to toyle day after day, fare hard, breake their sleepe, eate the Bread of carefulnesse, and all to heape up a little wealth, perhaps, with the losse of their owne soules, and sometimes they scarce know for whom; and shall not wee with joy and cheare-
chearfulness passe through holy Exercises, for the enriching of our soules, wherein true and lasting comfort is onely to be found, and whereby we may lay up for our selves Treasures in Heaven, durable Riches,a Bag that cannot wax old,a Treasure that can never failo, Prov. 8. 18. Luk. 12. 33. unmixed joyes,endlesse peace,and blessed immortalitie, presently to be entred upon after death, and then to be enjoyed for ever and ever? Shall rebellious Superstition, and the Doctrine of Devils, and killing Kings,harden the Papists against any crosses, and tortures; and shall we be tyred with the peaceable Exercises of sound & saving Religion? God forbid. In whomsoever the true love of God and Christ hath taken up the heart, there their Gospel, and Word, and services are sweeter and more tastfull than all outward delights. Little touch of Religion, or sense of Salvation hath hee, that comes unto with unchearfulness, and stayes with wearinesse at the Minifterie of the Word.

I, but (will some say) it was never good World since so much preaching came amongst us; when therewas lesse preaching, there was more plentie: and therefore, it seemes, there is little good in it. Since this new Religion was on foot, (for so some ignorantly and maliciously call it, though it be as old as God himself, whose eternall Truth it is; as old as the Patriarks and Prophets, as Christ and his Apostles) there hath beene (say they) more scarcitie of all things, more Plagues, Famines, strange apparitions, extremitie of seasons, and other Judgements, than ever our fore-fathers saw.
and perpetuall Guide.

law, or heard of. Hospitalitie, Charitie, Pastimes, and Plentie were banished with the old Religion; for so they call the bloudie and idolatrous Heresie of Poperie.

This hath ever beene the complaint of Idolaters, and the wicked, against the Truth of God; as it is now of the Papists & prophane men amongst us, against the glorious Light of the Gospel, that shines round about us. When Jerem. chap. 44. had reproved the Iewes, and denounced Gods judgements against them for their Idolatry, they answer him thus, in vers. 16. * The word that thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not heare it of thee; but we will doe whatsoever thing goeth out of our mouth: as to burne incense to the Queene of Heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, both we and our fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of Iudah, and in the streets of Ierusalem; for then had we plenty of virtuals, and were well, and felt no evil. But since we left off to burne incense to the Queene of Heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, we have had scarcenesse of all things, and have bin consumed by the sword, and by the famine. The very same complaint was made of the wicked Heathens and Infidels, at the first plantation of Christian Religion among the Gentiles. * Tertullian, an ancient Father, tells us in his time; If there were any inundation and overflowing of Tibris, a great River in Rome; if there were any extraordinary and uncouth Hayle, or Frost, or any other miserie or calamitie, all the fault was presently laid on Christ, and the Christian Religion.

* Mark that, I beseech you; for it is the very language of the Papists at this day.

Jer. 44. 16.

It appears also by Austin, another ancient Father, in his 122. Epistle, that there were wicked complaints and murmurings against the Christian Faith, in his time; the Infidels were still crying, that before the Doctrine of Christ was published to the World, mankind was not vexed and distressed with so many troubles and garboyles.

To which, the good Father doth there excellently answer; Out of Luke 12. 47, 48. easily, faith he, may they thence take their answer: The servant that knew not his Master's will, and yet did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; but he that knew his Master's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

Hence then may wee clearly see the reason why our Times, in all reason, should be more visited with Judgements, than former dayes of ignorance.

1 Because that the Light of the Gospel is come amongst us; and many love Darkness rather than that Light, because their deeds are evil: for every man that doth evil, hateth the Light, neither commeth to the Light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

2 Because the Gospel is not so thankfully received and entertained, as so excellent a Blessing and precious a Treasure ought to be.

3 Many that heare it, live not after it: Perhaps, onely make a shew of godlinesse; but deny the power thereof, in their lives and conversations. So, that negligence and disobedience to the Word of God, is the true cause of those Judgements.
ments and miseries, which are wickedly & wrongfully pretended to bee a cause why they have so little care to attend and obey it.

As for Hospitallity in the time of Popery, it did not so much spring from the truth of Religion, as

1. From a superstitious opinion of redeeming their sinnes, and purchasing Heaven by almes-deeds.
2. From an excessive cheapnesse of all things, by reason of the scarcity of money.
3. From the superfluitie of the wealth, riches, lands and impropriations, the price of the blood of soules, which Monasteries, and other religious, or rather superstitious houses, had immeasurably and unconscionably ingrossed and got into their hands. And when they had ingrossed the world to themselves, (as one sayes) they seemed liberall in giving something; like unto some vaine-glorious theves, which having robbed wealthy Merchants, bestow some pence upon beggers.

As for works of Charity: Certaine it is, and a reverend and learned man of our Church hath proved it, and it will more clearly appear hereafter; That the charitable benevolence, bountifull liberality, large expences in building and enlarging Colleges, and erecting Hospitals, Libraries, Free-schooles, and many other works of charity, and fruits of faith, since the light of the Gospell began to shine amongst us, may compare with, if not farre excell any time of the like or longer continuance in any age.

As for greater dearth & higher price of all things now,
now, than in former times, it is a clear and plaine case, that the reason is; that the great store and plentie of treasure which is walking in these parts of the world, farre more in these our dayes, than ever our forefathers have seene in times past. Who doth not understand of the infinite summes of Gold and Silver which are gathered from the Indies, and other Countries, and so yearly transported into these coasts? And this is confest to be the true cause of the same unancient deareness of all things, even in other Kingdomes also, where Popery is professed. One Bodin, a great Polititian of France, tells us, that the common people are much deceived, who thinke that the price of Corne, Cattell, and other necessaries, should hold the same rate it did of old. They doe not understand and consider, that the price of things is more by ten parts (faith he) than it was ancienly, by reason of the plenty and abundance of Gold and Silver, which is brought out of the West Indies into Europe, whereby it comes to passe that money is lesse esteemed, for plenty of any thing lessens the estimation of it.

Besides, for our owne Countrey, wise men have observed another particular reason. For (say they) immediately after our coine, in the time of King Henry the eighth, the prices of all things generally among all sorts of people rose; for that they thinke, that the alteration of the Coine was the chiefe and principall cause of an universall deareness of things. And why our English Coine being restored by our late Queene, that blessed Saint of glorious memory, to its former purity and
and perfection, the prices of all things fall not backe to their old rate, they give sufficient reasons.

As for pastimes, Playes, and other fearefull prophanation of the Sabbath, it is a good signe the power of grace is there planted by the Word, from whence they are banished and abandoned. They are fit pleasures for Papists, which have no comfort in the joyes above; and well agreeing to the darknesse of superstition. But the light of the Gospell dispels such vanities, and Gods children have all their pleasures in holy exercises up-on the Sabbath day.

This last objection then of Papists and prophanemem ; That the world is worse since there was so much preaching, is idle, vaine, and frivolous.

Many such like conceits, perswasions and objections as these, which I have now reckoned up unto you, there are abroad in the world, and in the hearts of prophane men, by which they are hindred from hearing the Word of God, with that heart, zeale and diligence as they ought.

Now I come to acquaint you with some slights and temptations of Satan, whereby he labours to bereave us of the blessings and benefits of profitable hearers, and to hinder the effectuall working of the Word in our consciences and conversations.

A first plot and practice of Satan, is to keepe men from diligent hearing the Word; If he cannot that way prevale, in a second place he labours
The Saints sure

Or else hinder the power of it
Hee keeps them from attending.

In this depth, he uses to fill our minds with barren melancholy, or to make men post off reproves, and apply them Pharisaically all the while to others. He fills our minds either with worldly, or else with impertinent unreasonable thoughts.

to make the Word in vaine, fruitlesse, and unprofitable unto them. And that hee doth, by such means as these:

1 If by the grace of God we breake thorow all lets and snares which might withold us from holy assemblies, and hearing of the Word; then Satan, that he might make it uneffectuall for our conversion and salvation, first, labours to worke in us a negligent carelessnesse and heedlesnesse, in listening to those things which are delivered, and that by a kinde of heartlesnesse in holy things, by dulnesse of spirit, drowsinesse, sleepinesse, gazine about, talking, or such like. And such hearers as these, are never a whit moved or affected with the Word preached, but remaine in the same state as they were before. There is neither passion or impression wrought upon them for the present, nor any thought of it, profit or practice afterward.

2 But if he cannot speed this way, but that we rouze up and addresse our selves to heare the Word of God, as desiring with care and good conscience to profit thereby: Why then, in a second place, hee seekes by all means to fill our heads and hearts with idle musings, and wandring thoughts, which may distract and steale away our minds from attending to the Word. And that he doth, either by offering and suggesting to our consideration and memory, the world, and the vanities thereof, as our affaires and businesse, our profits and preferments; those pleasures and delights wherein our corrupt affections finde most
most sensual sweetnesse: Or, if this will not pre-
vaile; by casting into our mindes very craftily
and cunningly, things which in their owne nature
may be good, honest, and religious: But because
they are thought upon out of due and convenient
time, they deprive us of the profit of the present
holy Exercise; which ought for the time, onely
and wholly to take up our mindes.

If this yet will doe no good; but that wee
marke diligently and attentively, all the while,
what the Minister delivers unto us from God, for
our good: why then, in a third place;

1 In some, he makes it uneffectuall, by nou-
rishing in them a neglect of reading the Scrip-
tures, and ignorance in the Principles of Religion:
so that though they attend never so well, and stare
the Minister in the face; yet they understand not
the Sermons they heare. Let the younger for
therefore, to prevent this mischiefe, acquain
t themselves with the Scriptures from their youth;
by the example of Timothy, 2 Tim. 3. 15. Salomon,
Prov. 31. 1, &c. Samuel, 1 Sam. 1. 24. See also
Psal. 119. Prov. 2. 1. And let the miserie upon
Elies House, terrifie negligent and indulgent Pa-
rents; see 1 Sam. 2. 1, 2. &c. In this depth, the
Word is either buried as it is brought forth, or
dies at the Church doore.

2 In others, he earnestly endeavours utterly to
extinguish and abolish all thought of it; quite
to drive and banish it out of their heads, so soone
as they have heard it. And that thus: If mens
hearts be hardned through unbeliefe, or custome
(g 3) in
in sinning, and like the High-way in the Parable of the Sower; then the Evill one comes immediately, and catcheth the Seed of the Word so soone as it is sown, and stealeth it out of the heart. As we may see many times Birds hovering greedily after the Sower, to snatch away the Corne, before it be covered with Earth, or take root in the ground: even so Sathan, the ravenous Crow of Hell, waites all opportunities to pecke up the Seed of the Word out of the hearts of men, before it sinke into their affections, or fructifie in their conversations. Or otherwise, if the World hath stolen mens hearts out of their bodies, so that they have no hearts left within them, for matters of Holinesse, and Heaven; but are wholly set upon Gaine, and exercised in Covetousnesse: then needes not Sathan much to be stirre him selfe; he knowes full well, that worldly Cares will presently choake the Seed of the Word. As soone as the Sermon is heard, and ended, and they turned their backes upon the Church, there comes immediately into their heads whole swarmes of earthly thoughts, and they are presently plunged over head and eares into the cares and plottings of earthly businessses. So that these men, whom Sathan conquers by this temptation, never meddle with meditation, conference, or talke about the points handled by the Preacher, by which the Word of God should be better, as it were, digested, and prepared for practice. Nay, they have no delight at all to heare others repeat the Sermon; but are very wearie of the
and perpetuall Guide.

the place and companie, and never pleased, untill they bring them back againe unto talke of worldly matters and prophane discourses.

If this yet will not serve the turne, but that the Word gets within a man, and workes upon his understanding: so that by his diligent hearing of it, meditation, and conference, he furnishes himselfe with competant knowledge in the Booke of God, and Divine Truth: why then, Sathe casts about another way; which is, to make him to content himselfe with a bare fruitlesse knowledge, without practising the power of it in his life and actions; to rest contented with an abilitie to talke and discourse onely upon points of Religion, and places of Scripture, without inward sanctification, and subduing the will and affections to new obedience, and sincere exercise of Christianitie. So that, for all his knowledge, he neither meddles with Conversion, nor mends in his Conversation.

He labours here, first, to hinder his Conversation, by planting in his heart a prejudice and disconceit against,

1 Preaching the Law.
2 Distinguisihing severall estates of unregenerate men, Math. 13. the three Reprobate Grounds.
3 The differencing the Children of God, and the Children of the Devill, by speciall markes and notes, Math. 5. Psal. 15. &c.
4 Pressing the Doctrine of Christ, of pressing in at the strait Gate, Luke 13. 24. & 4. 28. And (g 4) gathe-
gathering from Scripture those which shall be saved, into a short summe.

5 And by making him make God all of Mercie.

And mending in his Conversation, by motives unto presumption.

If this will not prevale, but that a man endeavours to draw his knowledge into practice, and settels himself with care and conscience to reforme his former wayes and courses of iniquitie: why then Sathan plots and practiseth, with all the cunning and policie he hath, to make him rest in a slight, superficial, and partiall reformation; to content himselfe with an unsound, or unsaving conversion. For, by the way, I must tell you, there may be many conversions, changes, and alterations in a man, from worse to better; and yet he not truly sanctified, not become a new creature, nor possessed of the state of grace, and glorious comforts of true Christians.

1 He may be changed, from a notorious sinner, to a civil honest man: whereas he hath beene before furious, and desperate in lewd courses, hee may grow more sober and moderate in his carriage: And yet, for all this, continue in his ignorance, and a meere stranger to the wayes of godlineffe.

2 From civil honestie, he may passe on to a formall Christianitie, and become an outward Professor; and outwardly doe, and performe religious services: and yet lye in his sinnes, and want the power of inward sanctification.

3 Yet
3 Yet further, by a general power of the Word, and inferior working of the Spirit, he may in some sort be outwardly reformed, and in some measure inwardly enlightened; hee may have understanding and joy by the Ministerie of the Word, and may doe many things after it, and forsake many sinnes. *Herod is said, Mark. 6. to have reverenced John,* to have heard him gladly, and to have done many things: And yet for all this, hee may come short of a sound conversion; if hee suffer some maine corruption, some one sweet sinne, or other, to reign in him, which hee still feedes upon with delight, and sensuall sweetnessse; if hee doe not wholly and entirely resigne and give up himselfe, his spirit, soule and body to the Lords service, and to please him in all things; and with repentance, and resolution, forsake all his knowne sinnes. For this is a certaine Rule and Principle with *Divines*: *That true turning unto God, and the advised and willing remaining in the practice of any one evill, which is discovered to a mans Conscience, by the Light of Gods Word, to be a sinne, cannot stand together.*

These changes a man may have, and thus many passages, from worse to better; and yet the great and glorious worke of regeneration not wrought upon him. For where there is a sound conversion, and through-reformation, there a man is wholly sanctified, and set apart unto God, from the sinfull corruption of his naturall birth, and the evill fruits thereof, to serve God in his whole man, both body, soule, and spirit: He shaketh hands with all sinnes, he sells all for the precious Jewell of the Gospel, he


Fruits of a true conversion.
he regards not sinne in his heart, but hath a regard to all Gods Commandements.

Now fith Sathan, that old Serpent, knowes full well, that it will never serve the turne for a man to part but with part of his sinnes; that his case is fearefull enough, whatsoever good, or good deeds seem to be in him, if he yeeld not to the worke of the Holy-Ghost, for the leaving but of any one knowne sinne, which fighteth against the peace of his Conscience; he knowes, that he hath haunt and hold enough in a mans Conscience, and affections; that hee hath sufficient interest and claime to his damnation, if he can but keepe his sweet sinne in heart, and alive in him. And therefore, when any by the Ministerie of the Word is moved to settle and addresse himselfe to a reformation of his ways, and to redresse his former wicked life; he puts in, might and maine, to preserve in his vigour, and soveraigntie, one secret delightfull sinne, or other, at leaft, in the heart and affection of him, that goes about to reforme himselfe: He singles out one corruption, or other, to which hee findes a man most addicted; and this he conceales, and fenceth with all the policie that he hath, that if by any means it may escape unrepented of, unmortified, and unmedled with.

Thus he dealt with Herod: Herod, by the preaching of John, reformed himselfe in many things; but Sathan made sure to keepe him his owne, by that one sinne of Incest. Naaman the Syrian, no doubt, beleeved, and followed the Prophet in many things; but he desired onely, that the Lord would be
and perpetuall Guide.

be mercifull unto him, when he went into the house of Kimmon. The young man in the Gospel, in his outward carriage was unreprovable; but that one secret sinne of worldliness, banished him out of the presence and Kingdome of Christ. In this point, Sathan labours to persuade men to deal with God in the forsaking of their sinnes, as Ananias dealt with the Apostle, in parting with his Money. It was a custome, you know, in the Primitive Church, because of the necessitie of the Times; that many, out of a zealous and extraordinarie love unto the Gospel, sold their Lands, and brought the price, and laid it downe at the Apostles feet. Ananias amongst the rest, would needes seeme as forward & zealous in this glorious worke of Charitie, as any other: He sold his Lands indeed, and brought in the Money, and tender’d it at the Apostles feet; but yet secretly, suspecting Gods providence, and doubting left himselfe, perhaps, at length should be brought into want, he kept backe one part of the price of his Possession; making shew notwithstanding, to have brought in all. So it is in many, by the malice of Sathan, and bewitching enticements of naturall corruption, in the forsaking of their sinnes. In a true Conversion indeed, when a man is about to buy the Pearle of great price & unvaluablc worth in the Gospel, the Doctrine of Salvation, the Way to Life, and Graces of Gods Spirit; he makes an univerfal sale of all his sinnes; he sellethe (as the Text saith) all that he hath: not some piece of his sinfull Possession, but even the very whole Lordship, the entire Inheritance.
Inheritance. But it is otherwise with those whom Sathan inveagleth, and enshareth in this point. Hee is well enough pleased, that they shall seeme to be as forward in the reformation and amendment of their lives, as any other; and indeed, that they shall be reformed in good part, and carry some love and affection toward the Word, and Ministers; so that he may keepe hold and possession but in one corner of the heart: For he knowes, that that is enough to keepe the whole man, body and soule, his owne. If he can stay but one sinne unsold, he knowes the man continues still, by the course of divine Law, a bondslave of Hell. By one little hole a ship will sinke into the bototme of the Sea. The stab of a Pen-kife to the heart, will as well speed a man, as all the Daggers that killed Cæsar in the Senat-house. The soule will be strangled with one Cord of vanitie, as well as with all the Cart-ropes of iniquitie: only, the more sins, the more plagues, and fiercer flame in Hell: but he that lives and dies impenitent in one, it will be his destruction. One dramme of poyson will dispatch a man; and one reigning sinne will bring him to endless woe and miserie. Let us take heed therefore, when we goe about reformation of our selves, lest we be surprized & overtaken by this malicious craft of Sathan. Let us resolve upon a through-reformation, which is only and ever undertaken, with a purpose not to hold on in the willing practice of any one knowne iniquitie, or sinfull course. Which, when we shall carefully & earnestly go about, Sathan will be sure to set upon us, as Pharoah did upon Moses and Aaron: When
When the Lord had commanded them to goe three dayes journey in the Desart, to doe service and sacrifice unto him, that by all means hee might hinder them in this holy businesse.

1. He would have them to stay in the land, and to doe sacrifice there. Nay (faith Moses) it is not meet to doe so; for then wee should offer unto the Lord our God that which is abomination unto the Egyptians.

2. Sith this would not then serve, but that they would needs out of the Land; I will let you goe (faith Pharaoh) that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the Wildernesse; but goe not farre away. But Moses would yet none of this, he would not abate a foot of the journey the Lord had appointed.

3. Why then (faith Pharaoh) if you will needs goe so farre, I am content your men shall goe; but, as it is fitteth, your children shall stay at home: Nay (faith Moses) we will goe with our young and with our old, with our sonnes and with our daughters, with our Sheepe and with our Cattell will we goe.

4. Well (faith Pharaoh) I will yeeld so farre unto you, your children shall goe with you to serve the Lord, onely your Sheepe and your Cattell shall abide at home.

Nay (faith Moses) our Cattell also shall goe with us. There shall not an hoofe be left.

Now when all this would not doe, when Moses would not accept of any capitulations, conditions, restrictions, or limitations in holy businesse, and the service of God, (for he was at a point, resolute, he would not leave so much as an hoofe be-
hinde.) Now, I say, when all the enticements and policies of Pharaoh would not prevail to keep Moses from serving and sacrificing unto God, and that precisely and strictly, according to his owne appointment and commandement, but that to this end, at length he wrung himselfe and all the Israelites, out of the bloody teeth of this persecuting Wolfe; why then Pharaoh armes himselfe with rage and fury, with six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Aegypt, with fifty thousand horsemen, and two hundred thousand footmen, as a Jewish Historian writes, purposing with bloody thirst to devour at once, and swallow up quicke, even all the Israel of God: But you know the conclusion was; the Lord of Heaven gave a most glorious deliverance to his owne people, wherein his bottomlesse goodnesse, and infinite mercy shall shine cleare and bright for ever, in all generations of the Church upon earth, and through al eternity in Heaven: But upon their enemies he brought such a strange and terrible confusion in the Red Sea; which may strike astonishment and trembling into the heart and loynes of all prophane persecutors of godli-nesse to the worlds end, and amaze the very maliciousest fiend in hell, while that Kingdome of darkness stands.

Even just thus doth Satan deale with all those who desire to bee conducted by the light of the Word, out of the Aegypt and slavery of ignorance, sinne, prophananennesse; and who are resol-ved frankly and freely to give themselves, soules and
and perpetuall Guide.

and bodies, to Gods service, and to enter a setled course of holiness and sanctification; hee useth all meanes and policies to keepe and detaine them in his Kingdome of darkness. If he cannot hold them in his chiefe palace and Court as it were, where innes especially raignes and revels it, yet he will so farre hamper them, that at least they still hover upon the confines and borders of the Regions of death. If they will needs bee medling with reformation of their sinfull lives, and that he cannot helpe it, but something must be done, he is content to yeeld unto them upon some termes or conditions, that they cast him not quite out of their consciences, but suffer him to sware and raigne in their hearts, by some one gainfull or delightfull sinne or other.

1. If they will needs feare God, he stands not much upon it, but that they may doe it outwardly, and in profession, so that they will continue in Egypt, within the Kingdome of darkness, and lie still in their sinnes, and under the shadow of death.

2. If this will not content them, if they will not rest here, but will needs out of the Kingdome of darkness, and dominion of death, why he is not much against it, but that they may goe the halfe way; that is, he will suffer them to forgoe and forbear the outward practice and perpetration of many sinnes, so that inwardly their heart and affections harbour, nourish & embrace them still, and feed upon with a sensuall and delightfull remembrance, the sinfull pleasures of iniquities formerly committed.
3. If they desire and endeavour to become new men, both inwardly and outwardly, to be sanctified in actions and affections, to serve God both in soul and body, he will yet yield so farre, that they may be rid of some sinnes both in heart and practice, as perhaps of sinnes of custome; but then he will be a suitor and solicitor unto them, to retain other sinnes, as perhaps sinnes of nature. For example: It may be they may both forbear the outward practice, and also inwardly loath swearing, drunkennesse, and other such like sinnes of custome; but they will nuzzle in the bosome of their affections, pride, lust, anger, and such other sinnes, the natural birth as it were of original corruption.

4. But if they also conquer these, why then he tempts them mainly to continue at the least in worldliness. * For this in many mens hearts hath greater power, and beares more sway than nature, or natural affection. He will secretly suggest unto them, that upon an eager and excessive pursuit of gaine and riches, depends their life and livelihood, their credit and reputation, their contentment and happiness in the world; so that perhaps at last of all, after all this, they rest and settle themselves upon sinnes of advantage, as usuury, oppression, unlawfull and excessive gaining, earthly-mindednesse, serving the Times, and such like.

5. But if by the grace of God any be so blessed from God above, as resolutely to passe through all these traines and temptations, and like strong
Strong Samsons, break through all these Cords and Cart-ropes of iniquitie and vanitie; so that they will not yeeld an ynhc to that cruell Pharaoh of Hell, nor leave so much as an Hoofe behinde them, in his Kingdome of Darkness: why then, this spirituall Pharaoh presently armes himselfe with all the crafts and policies of Hell, with Legions of Fiends, and Princes of the Darkness of this World; with all his malice, against the salvation of the soules of men; with the fire and furious rage of prophane wretches; with the sharpe swords and impoysoned arrowes of lying and flanderous tongues; and with all other advantages, which either the lowest Hell, or the wicked World can afford. And thus appointed, hee pursues and persecutes, with bloodie and implacable furie, all those who have escaped out of this captivitie, farre more eagerly and enviously than ever Pharaoh did the Israelites: That either hee may bring them backe againe into his bondage, or else take them quite away, and destroy them; that they may not attaine the full Light of the Saints, nor doe long service unto the Lord. And certainly, if all the power of Hell, the strongest temptations, the scourge of tongues, the Worlds malice, the spightfull spirit of prophanenesse, the frownings of friends, the scornfull insolencies of enemies, the cursed and enticing cries of our old companions; if wicked men or damned Devils be able to prevale, he will be sure to stay them, before they enter into the state of grace, and true blessednesse. But yet, if a man put on (h) Pauls
Paul's armour, in Eph. 6. David's royall courage; Psal. 3. 6. Moses pryncely zeale, and truly Christian valour, that he will not leave a hoofe behinde; that is, that he will not leave one corruption unmortified, one affection unsanctified, one rebellious action unreformed, one knowne sinne unrepented of, and unforfaken; one holy dutie unperformed, one Commandement unobeyed: Why then, hee may looke for a more glorious spirituall deliverance, than Moses had a temporall: Hell, and confusion, shall swallow up all his enemies; but into his heart, in the mean time, shall be shed and plentifully powered comfort, joy, and peace; and upon his head shall a Crowne of immortalitie flourish for ever hereafter.

I have stayed very long upon the fifth plot and practice of Sathan, whereby he labours to make the Word heard, unpowrfull and uneficaciuall for the salvation of our soules: For, I know, it is much and often exercised, and with great success; and by it, he prevails with very many. When by diligent hearing of Gods Word, faithfully urged upon them, they are driven, and doe address themselves to a reformation and amendment of their sinfull lives; he mightily endeavours to hinder, disquiet, and interrupt them in it; to make it a reformation unto them but in part, and by halves; unsound, and unsaving: So that, it may be, they may for sake sinnes of Custome, as Lying; Swearing, Drunkennesse, and such like; but keepe sinnes of
of Nature, as Pride, Lust, Anger, and the like: Or, it may be, they may forsake both these two kinds of sins, and yet keep sinnes of Advantage; as Oppression, unlawful Gaining, grinding the faces of the Poore, serving the Time, and such like: Or, they may leave all these, and yet keep sinnes of Companie; as, idle and vaine Talking, filthie Leasting, rayling against and slandering their Neighbours, uncharitable judging and cenfuring their Brethren, and the like. It may be, they may be carefull in their generall calling of Christianitie; but careless and unfaithfull in those particular places and callings, wherein God in his providence hath set them: Or contrarily; they may be of Christian behaviour abroad, and in publike; as at Sermons, and in the Church: but unconscionable at home, and in their private families; never teaching, or praying with them: They may seeme zealous in the Commandements of the first Table, and about the service of God; but in the second, and towards their Neighbour, unmercifull, unconscionable, and uncharitable: Or, they may deale justly and honestly with others, but be utterly voide and destitute of the knowledge and feare of God: They may bee outwardly reformed, but inwardly full of hollow-heartednesse, and hypocrisie: They may leave all other sinnes, onely keepe one behinde; which is called a mans sweet, delightfull, and bosome-sinne.

If Sathan can prevaile with a man any of these wayes,
wayes, hee keepes him his owne: for hee that is soundly converted, justified, and sanctified indeed, must needs be out of love with every sinne, with the whole course of iniquity; and with sincerity and chearfulness he embrace the entire body of Christianitie, and have a regard to all Gods Commandements.

6 Now I come to a fixt Height and of Sathan, whereby hee labours to make the Word fruitfullesse and unprofitable unto us. If he cannot stay us in our reformation, but that we will needs through, and cast away all sinnes: why then, hee seekes by all meanes to hinder our continuance, and constancie. If the Seed of the Word be received with joy, and spring up for a time: that is, be practised for a while; he rayseth up some perfection, tribulation, or crosses, whereby it is presently blasted, withers, and comes to nothing.

The uncleane spirit may for a time goe out of a man, and walke throughout drie places; but if it be possible, he will returne with seven other spirits worse than himselfe: and the end of that man, is worse than the beginning. A man may flye from the pollution and filthinesse of the World, as it is, 2 Pet. 2. 20. but by the policie of Sathan, hee may be tangled againe therein: He may be washed (as it is in the same place) for a while, and yet after wallow againe in the myre of sinne: He may be endued with an inferior sanctification of the Spirit, Heb. 10. 29. and yet after, by the malice of Sathan, tread under foot the Sonne of God: Hee may have a general participation of the Holy-
Ghoft, Heb. 6.4. and yet after a time fall away, to the very despiting of the Spirit of Grace. I speake not this, as though that any once effectually called, truly sanctified, possessed of the state of grace, and enrolled among the Saints, can possibly become a cast-away; it cannot bee: for if once by the power of speciall grace, a man be built upon the Rocke; not the Gates of Hell, not all the powers of Darkness, nor strongest assaults of Satan, shall ever prevale against him. Heaven and Earth shall sooner be removed, than any of Gods servants. For if Gods eternall Decree of Election be unchangeable; if his Covenant be everlasting, and inviolable; if his Truth cannot change, nor his Mercie faile, nor his Power be weakened; if the sacred Seale of the blessed Spirit shall stand; if the precious blood and fervent prayers of Christ Jesus can prevale; if his Scriptures doe not lye, and deceive; if his sanctifying Grace cannot die, and perish; if Himselfe cannot cease to be: then undoubtedly, if a man be once his, he is his for ever; if he be once truely his servant upon Earth, he shall for ever hereafter be a glorious Saint in Heaven. My meaning therefore in this point, is onely this: There is a glimmering Light of the Spirit, some manner of taste of the sweetnesse of Christ, a kind of change, which may be wrought in a man by the preaching of the Word, and yet he not truely and constantly converted, but may by the malice and policie of Satan be repolluted by unclean spirits, and repolluted with the filthinesse of the World.
The Saints sure

Thus we may discern this changeable change (that I may so speake) and the saving change of Gods servants: If, after we have given our Names to Christ, and begun to profess and practice sincerity, we passe on, and continually grow in grace, and stand for Gods honour and service, against all commers, friends or foes, losse or disgrace, oppression or flanders, men or devils; why then, undoubtedly, we have the sanctifying Spirit of God, and saving grace; which makes his Children like Trees betwixt the Rivers of Waters, fruitfull in goodnesse, and as bold as Lyons, in good causes. But, if after we have begun well, we looke backe with Lots Wife; if wee fall in love againe with those sinnes which wee have forsaken; if Rubbes and Crosses in the World, will turne us out of the way to Heaven; and our righteousnesse be but as the Morning Deaw, which a little heat of Persecution will drie up: why then, our change was changeable, and not that of Gods children. The Seed of the Word, which wee received with joy, was never deeply rooted in good and honest hearts; wee were onely temporarie Converts, not new creatures; temporizing Professors, not true Christians; and our End is like to be worse than our Beginning; and our Plagues more, than if we had never begun.

Let every man take heed then, in the Name of God, left by the traines and temptations of Satan he be turn'd backe againe from any good course; left after he be washed, he wallow againe in the myre of worldlynesse, and worldly vanities;
and after hee hath escaped the filthinesse of the World, left he be againe entangled therein. Let us beware of longing after those sinnes, which we begun in some measure to reforme; let us not lust againe after the flesh-pots of Ægypt, like the Israelites, after we be in some good fort enlarged from the bondage of sinne, and tyrannie of the hellish Pharaoh. Lot's Wife being delivered out of Sodome, was surprized with a sensuall remembrance of the pleasures and vanities of the place which shee had left, of the ease and prosperitie which shee there enjoyed; and so look'd backe upon it: But shee was therefore presently turned into a Pillar of Salt, Gen. 19.26. there for ever to be a monument and fearefull spectacle of Gods terrible judgements against all back-sliders. If the uncleane spirit be cast out of a man by some degrees of reformation, and good beginnings of amendment of life, and have after leave and libertie to returne; he brings with him seven Devils worse than himselfe, and makes a man farre worse than he was before. Much better were it for any man never to have knowne or stept into the way of righteousnesse, than afterward to turne from the holy Commandement of God, and out of a course of Christianitie. It is a fearefull Curse, to continue in hardnesse of heart, prophanenesse of life, and sinfull courses: But to leave them for a little, and to sinke backe againe, is to have God's Curse bitter against them, if they repent not, and the fire of Hell made more hot for them. First, sicknesses are curable; but relapses are very dan-
gerous, if not irrecoverable. If a man (as it is
Heb. 6.) hath once been enlightened, and then fall
away, it is impossible to be renewed by repentance: I
know that place principally to be understood of
the highest degree of Apostacie, and falling away;
but hee that falls away from any good course, and
good beginnings, falls towards that irrecovera-
ble fall, and makes himself more uncapable of
repentance, than if he never had been enlightened;
or stepped into the way of Truth: And it is just
with God, to punish such with a reprobate sense,
and hearts that cannot repent.

It then deeply and meerly concerns us; for
once wee have felt the sweetness of Grace, and
tasted of the Powers of the World to come, to drinke
deeper of the Waters of Life, and to follow hard
towards the marke, for the price of the high calling of
God in Christ Jesus. When we feel any good
motions and purposes arise in our hearts, let us
labour to follow them, to nourish them, to blow
them up, to make a fire of them; lest they onely
but make a flash, and passe away as the Ligh-
ning. Let us put them in practice with zeale;
and constancie, that we be not as the unfaithfull
Waters, which in the Summer are dried up; or
as the dead Trees, which perish in Winter: but
that we remaine whole and sound, pure and per-
fect, as the living Waters and Olives of the Lord,
that ever shed forth their sweetness and fatnesse.
Let us make a Covenant, even a Covenant (as
the Scripture speaketh) of Salt, durable, and per-
petuall, with the Lord, to live before him in holiness
and perpetuall Guide.

holinesse and righteousnesse all the dayes of our life: For to him that goes through with his holy businesse, that fights the good fight of Faith, finisheth his course, and overcomes; to him, and to him alone, shall all those glorious Blessings be performed, which are promised in the first Chapter of the Revelation: To eate of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God; Not to be hurt of the second Death; To eate of the Manna which is hid, and to have the white Stone of Victory given him; To have power given him to rule over Nations, and to be lightened with heavenly brightnesse, like the Morning Starre; To be clothed with white array, (that is, with heavenly Glory.) and to have his Name continued in the Booke of Life; To have a Pillar made in the Temple of God, (that is, a firme and unmoveable place of eternall Glory;) To sup with Christ, and to sit with him upon his Throne for evermore. Thus shall hee bee honoured and crowned with the excellencie, fulnesse, and varietye of all glory, joy, and happinesse, who enters with sinceritie, and courageously ends his Race of Holinesse, and conquers in his spirituall Fight. But all fearfull men, (as it is, Rev. 21.8.) who flinke backe for feare of Men, or love of the World, or to serve the Times; all faint-hearted men in the Lords Battailes, and that fall away from good beginnings; they shall be punished with unbelievers, with the abominable, with Murthe- rers and Whore-mongers, with Idolaters and Lyars, in the Lake which burnes with fire and Brimstone; which is the second Death.

Rev. 21.8.
7 But, if by the grace and mercie of God, we quit our selves like men, and hold on comfortably and constantly in a setled course of godliness; yet, for all this, Sathan hath not done: though he can doe us no deadly hurt, yet he will still doe his worst; for his craft and ipight is endless. If he see there is no hope of bringing us backe againe into his bondage, or making us any more vassals and slaves to sinne; yet he will labour to lay tumbling-blockes in our way, to bring us upon our knees: now and then, to turne us out of the right path; sometimes, even to over-turne us with some greater and more dangerous fall; hee will lay his traines to intrap and intangle us, if it be possible, in some old sweet sinne: Which, that hee may bring about, hee will use the benefit and advantage of custome, because before our calling, wee have much practisid it; of the frailtie of our owne corruptions, because they have most delighted in it; of our old companie, because wee have formerly oftenest committed it with them. He will leave no opportunitie, advantage, or circumstance omitted, and unassayed, to hale us back into one or other speciall sinne, of our unregeneration. If this will not stop, hee will follow all occasions, enticements, and temptations, the side of our owne affections, the streame of the times, if by any meanes hee can cast us into some grosse and scandalous sinne. These are Sathan's plots and practises against those, who hold on in a constant course of godlinesse: if they will not bee brought to tumble themselves againe in the myre of
of sinne, and sinfull pleasures, yet he will doe what hee can, now and then, to spot and staine their Christian lives with some grieuous fall, or other; that so, to his utmost, hee may bring upon them Gods disfavour, and angry countenance, disgrace and disconceit amongst their brethren, discom-forts and feares of heart within themselves. But if a man, first, by keeping fresh in his minde the uncertainties and vanities of this vaine World: secondly, by carefull and continuall watching over his deceitfull heart: thirdly, by exercis-ing and practisifg with diligence and delight, all ho-ly meanes of preserving grace, and starving sinne; as reading, hearing, conference, meditation of the Word of God; Prayer, publike and private; with himselfe, and with his family: fourthly, by declining prophane, unprofitable, and unchristian companie, and acquaintance; and frequenting, with joy and fruit, the fellowship of the Saints: fifthly, by an humble entertainment, nourish-ment, and practice of the good motions of the Spirit: fixtly, by a dayly examination of the state of his Conscience, and reparation of the de-cayes of Grace: seventhly, by his godly jealousie over little sinnes, and present renewing repentance after every slip. I say, if by such meanes as these (which are notable preservatives against the poi-son of sinne) a man fence himselfe from grosse and scandalous falls; or else, if by the politike malice of Sathan, and weakenesse of his owne flesh, he be overtaken with some fouler sinne, and yet notwithstanding, besides pangs of griefe, and anguish
The good that they get by their falls.

The Saints sure

anguish of spirit, for grieving his gracious God, hee looke better to his feet, and run faster in the Race of sanctification after his fall; if his falling into sinne teach him these good lessons, which in such cases are ordinarily learned of all true Christians; for all things, even sinne it selfe, makes to the best in Gods Children.

1. Hee learnes by his fall, to distaste his pride, and selfe-conceit, to let fall his Peacockes traine, and despaire of his owne strength.

2. To depend only upon God, the Word of his Grace, and the power and perpetuall influence of his Spirit, for his standing upright in the wayes of Righteousnesse, and preservation from most fearfull and dangerous downe-falls.

3. To cling closer about him; to claspe faster hold with the hand of faith upon the glorious Passion and meritorious justice of Christ; with much heartinessse and zeale to seeke and sue unto him for his speciall aide and assistance against Satans temptations, his owne corruptions, and outward occasions of sinne.

4. To blush and be ashamed of himselfe; for that he having had his soule washed with the precious blood of Christ, and having received so great favour, mercy, and pardon at the hands of God, yet hath wretchedly and unthankfully defiled it againe; and so wofully and wickedly abused his extraordiury love and kindnesse.

5. With more resolute vow, protestation, and practice, to renounce and abandon Satan; with more perfec hatred, and detestation, to loath and abhorre
and perpetuall Guide.

abhorre all manner of sinne; the Garment spotted of the flesh, and all appearance of evil.

6. To become watchfull, and wise; by taking speciall notice of all the motives, temptations, meanes, occasions, baites, allurements to that sinne, into which hee fell; for the avoiding and declining of it afterwards.

7. To thinke charitably of other men, that fall, and are suddenly overtaken in any offence; not to be too eager, hot, and censorious against them; but out of his owne experience, to give them comfort, instructions, and directions, and to labour to restore them with the spirit of meekenesse. Now, I say, if a man be either fore-armed and fenced, (as I said) from falls; or else, after his fall, weepe bitterly, repent sincerely, watch afterward more carefully, walke more zealously; and out of his spirituall wisdome, make that use and benefit of his fall, as I have told you: then hee may have comfort, that Sathan gets no great advantage this way.

8. Like a fierce cruell Dragon, fith he cannot devour the Womans Child so soone as ever it is brought forth; that is, he cannot reposse and regaine in a true Christian and regenerate man, brought forth by the power of the Word, in the Wombe of the Church; he therefore casteth out of his mouth, after him, flouds of outward crosses and vexations. If he cannot wound him in his soule, yet he will vexe him in his body, goods, and good name: if he cannot hinder him of Heaven, he will give him little rest or quiet upon.
Comfortable considerations against afflictions.

1 From Gods Decree, the example of the Saints, and the Sonne of God himselfe. 

Rom.8. 18.

2 From the gracious effects of afflictions, for our good.

The Saints sure

upon Earth: if hee cannot bring him into disgrace and disfavour with God, he will be sure to rayse him hatred enough, malice, and discountenance amongst men: He will doe his worst, to fill and loade him with all outward discomforts and discouragements; as povertie, ficknesse, flanders, scoffings, raylings, reproaches, contempts, and a thousand other persecutions.

But in such cases as these, let every child of God comfort, refresh, and hold himselfe in heart, cheare, and courage, by such considerations as these.

First, it is a Decree of Heaven, resolved upon and ratified by the Lord our God, confirmed by the experience of all the Patriarkes and Prophets, of the Apostiles and professors of Christ, of all the Saints and servants, nay, and of the Sonne of God himselfe; that, through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. So often therefore as we shall see any miseries or afflictions comming towards us, for our profession of sinceritie, and righteousness sake; let us acknowledge them to be as so many most certaine and infallible markes, that we are in the right way to Heaven: through which, if we but walke a little further with patience, we shall descry a Crowne of Glory, which is our owne for ever; of which, all the afflictions and pressures of a thousand Worlds are not neere worthy.

Secondly, though by this meanes, by these outward crosses and afflictions, Sathan dischargeth upon us the very gall of his bitterness, the poyson of his malice, and arrowes of his spight; yet, by the
and perpetuall Guide.

the mercifull and medicinall hand of God, they are returned upon his owne head, they strike through the heart of sinne, and become as precious restoratives, to repair in us the decayes of spiritual life: for in Gods children, crosses and afflictions have these worthy effects and workings.

1 They start us out of our securitie, carelessness, and coldness, which by little and little may grow upon the best: They breed in us a conceit and sense of our owne wants, and the necessity of Gods providence and protection: They adde Oyle unto the flame of our first love, put life into our religious exercises, and power and spirit into our prayers.

2 They curbe and controule the pride, insolence, and impatience of our nature: They coole and kill the heat, headlongnesse, and intemperancy of our affections: They weaken indeed the whole old Adam in us, with all his lusts, concupiscence, and venome; but give strength to the new man, with all his godly and gracious motions, holy and heavenly actions.

3 They make us with indignation to spit in the very face of this vaine, deceitfull, and flattering World; the temporall love of which, is the eternall losse both of bodies & soules in the other World: They happily weane us from the love of it, and make us willing to part with her paps; to bid all her enticements adiew, and to trample under feet the fading pleasures & vanities thereof: they make us to teare our groveling hearts, and rent our dull affections from the Earth, to which they cleeve; and
and are glued so fast, and to lift up both our heads and hearts to Heaven, and to the glory which is to be revealed, longingly to desire the coming of Christ, the Life that lasteth, and to be clothed with our House, which is from above.

4. Lastly, they are as sharpe and precious eye-salves, to cleare and enlarge the spirituall light of our soules, too much dimmed and darkened with earthly dust, and with gazing too long on the painted glory of the World; that so we may see further into the great mysterie of godliness, deeper into the maffe and dunghill of our owne corruptions and frailties, wider upon the vanities of the World, and higher into the happiness of Heaven, and that great Beautie, Glory, and Majestie above. They serve unto us as sourre Sawces, and bitter Wormewood, to bring us out of love with our sweet sinnes, and to breed a distaste in our mouth against transitorie delights: They are as sharpe pruning-knives, to lop and cut away the excesses, vanities, and unnecesarie cares that grow upon us; and so to trimme us, that we may bring forth more profitable, plentifull, and fairer fruits in godliness and Christianitie.

Thus Sathan is disappointed in his plots, and policie; his malice makes a medicine for our soules: hee purposeth and hopes, by crosses and afflictions to turne us backe, or make us wearie in our course of holinesse; but by the mercy of God, they become as spurre, to pricke us forward in our Christian Race; and as hedges to keepe us in, from wandering out of the way.

Now,
Now, in a third place; That God's child may not too much be cast downe, or put out of heart, for crosses and persecutions raised against him for a profession, and the practice of sinceritie; let him consider, that howsoever Satam and wicked men be the instruments, and executioners, which maliciously procure, and immediately inflict miseries and vexations upon the children of God; though they be the means to lay tortures and torments upon their bodies, crosses and losses upon their goods and outward estates, spots and impression and crueltie upon the face of their harmelesse innocencie, flanders and disgraces, imputations and staining aspersions upon their reputations and good names; sometimes terrors, temptations, and amazements upon their minds: Yet in all these, our gracious God hath the chiefest stroke, a principal hand, and the greatest sway; he directs, limits, and moderates the rage and furie of all our enemies, whether they be Devils or men, as it pleaseth him; and ever certainly to the singular good of his children, if they be patient and faithfull. 

Miserie (faith Job, chap. 5. 6.) commeth not forth of the Dust, neither doth afflictions spring out of the Earth. Neither indeed, principally and originally from Man, the Lord of the Earth; nor from the Prince that rules in the Aire; nor from the Host of Heaven: God himselfe is the chiefest commander, guider, and director of all vexations, and ill of punishment that befalls any man; and inflicts it, for our sinnes and corruptions, upon the reprobates, as appears.
appears in Pharaoh, for their further hardening and confusion, upon his elect, for their conversion and correction.

Let us then, in all our sufferings and afflictions, stirred up against us for sticking to sinceritie, and keeping a good Conscience; lift up our eyes to the mighty Lord of Heaven and Earth: who, by the strong Arme of his Omnipotencie, holds fast in a Chaine, Sathan, that raging Lion, and great Goliath, that hee cannot stirre one Linke further than hee will give him leave; hee cannot goe a haires breadth beyond his Commission: Nay, and that which hee is suffered to doe, makes one way or other for our farre greater good. Let us consider, what a loving and tender-hearted Father hath us under his correction, and holds in his hand the furie of Sathan, the malice of men, the power and particular stings of all creatures, as Rods and Scourges, to reforme and amend us; to keepe us in a course of holinesse, and in the right way to Heaven. His fatherly love and tender-heartednesse unto his, and such as feare him, doth in dearenessse and unchangeablenesse as farre sur-passe the most compassionate bowels of any earth-ly father, as God surpasseth man; and, an infinite nature, a finite creature. The kindnesse of a mother to her child, is nothing to that love which God beareth to a true Christian: A mother may forget her child, and not have compassion upon the sonne of her wombe. But God neither can, nor will forget him. The stonic Rockes and Mountaines sticke fast and sure unto their foundations; but Gods
Gods love to his child, is farre luter and founder. The Mountaines shall remove, and the Hills shall fall downe (faith God by Isaiah) but my Mercie shall not depart from thee ; neither shall the Covenant of my Peace fall away, faith the Lord, that hath compassion on thee. Can any man stoppe the course of the Sunne, the Moone, and the Starres? Can hee change the Seasons of the Day and the Night? No more can any creature, or a world of creatures, stoppe and turne aside the streames of Gods endless mercies and favours to his faithfull servants. 
If you can change (faith God by Jeremie) if you can change the courses of the Sunne, and of the Moone, and of the Starres ; if you can breake my Covenant of the Day, and my Covenant of the Night, that there should not be Day and Night in their season ; then may my Covenant be broke unto David, my servant; then will I cast off all the Seed of Israel : Jer. 31. 33. You may therefore make sure of it; every sanctified and sincere man is ever in Gods sight, for his good and preservation; hee is graven upon the palme of his hand, hee is set as a Signet upon his arme, and as a Seale upon his heart. God is ever farre more sensible, tender, and compassionate of the sighes, teares, and miseries of his children, than any man can be of the prickings of the precious ball and apple of his owne eye. Wee have his Promise, sealed with the precious bloud of his owne Sonne, bound with an Oath; That so, by two immutable things, wherein it is impossible that God should ly, wee might have strong consolation; That, hee will never faile and forsake his; That, hee

(12)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Cor. 10. 13.</th>
<th>The Saints sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 10. 13.</td>
<td>will never lay more upon them, than hee will make them able to bear. Hee gives them comfort in all their afflictions, deliverance from them, and benefit by them. In all troubles, hee most certainly either quite frees them, or graciously preserves them, in them; so farre as is best for his glory, and their good; and usefull for the Church, and his other children. Let no child of God then be dismayed or discouraged for any crosles, flanders, or persecutions, which befall him for his profession, and practice of holinesse and sincerity. Though Sathan hath his worke in them, and prophane and wicked men a part; yet our gracious God, so loving and tender-hearted a Father, hath the principall stke and chiefe finger in them: Sathans worke, and end is, to vexe and discourage. It is evermore the worke of the Devill, (saith one of the * ancient Fathers) that hee may with Lyes teare the servants of God, and by false Opinions spread concerning them, may defame their glorious name; that such as are bright in the light of their own Conscience, may be darkened and disgraced by the reports of others. Wicked and prophane men, because they are in Darkenesse, and their workes are evill, they cannot endure the children of Light, and their holiness of life. For this is the root and fountain of all their malice and cruelty; as appeares, 1. John 3. 12. Cain slew his brother; and wherefor slew he him? Because his owne workes were evill, and his broth-ers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Cyprian, Epift. ad Antonius. Lib. 4. 20. Why the wic-ked hate and persecute the godly. 1 1. John 3. 12. Cain slew his brother; and wherefor slew he him? Because his owne workes were evill, and his broth-ers


and perpetuall Guide.

Hence growes and springs all the furie and rage, all the wrongs and flanders, which are wont to be layd on true Christians: They are hated even for their very goodnesse, and because they will not runne with the wicked unto the same excesse of riot: They are filled with contempt and reproach, with the mockings of the wealthy, and despightfulness of the proud, because they will not sweare, swagger, lye, poure in strong drinke, prophane the Sabbaths, follow the fashions and corruptions of the Times. In a word, because they will not be prophane in this World, and damned in the World to come.

And besides, I know not how, wicked men thinke, that by the commonnesse of sinne, their sinfull courses become more commendable; and, that the multitude of offenders makes them more excusable, and their offences pardonable. *It is the comfort* (faith an ancient *Father*) of evill men, to carpe at the good; thinking, that by the great number of offenders, the guilt of their faults is diminished and abated.

But Gods worke and end, in all false reports unjustly rayzed against his children, and in other crosse whatsoever, is to stirre up and revive in them zeale, devotion, and faithfulness, in praying, praying, and serving him; to purge out of them the drosse and reliques of some old sinne; to humble them, and to bring them to a true denying of themselves; to trie their faith, patience, and constancie; or for their greater good, one way or other.

*Jerome.*

Gods aime in his childrens afflictions.
A fourth consideration, whereby the true Christian may be kept in heart and comfort against all crosses and calumniations which he shall meet with, in his course of holiness and sanctification, is this: It is no strange thing that doth befall him, when he is persecuted for sincerity; but the very beaten way to Heaven, trodden by all such feet, as ever walked in faith and obedience. Abel began in this Cup of Persecution, and vexation, for his service to God, to all those who would give their Names to Christ, or fight under his Banner to the Worlds end. The Patriarchs and Prophets, and holy men of old, followed and pledged him: They were tryed by mockings and scourgings, by bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were hewn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword; they wandered up and downe in Sheepes-skins, and Goats-skins, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented; whom the World was not wor-thie of; they wandered in Wildernesses, and Caves of the Earth. Nay, Christ Iesus himselfe, the Sonne of God, and our blessed Saviour, drinke deepe and large of this Cup; it was the Baptisme wherewith he was baptized. His Apostles and Disciples followed; they endured all the bloudie and merciless cruelties; which fierce and furious Wolves are wont to inflict upon silly and harmless Sheepe: for they were sent out into the World, as Sheepe amongst Wolves. There come after, and drinke of the same Cup, millions of blessed men and women, under the primitive Persecutions: Of which, some were scalded.
and perpetuall Guide.

Scalded, some burned, some broyled, some hanged, some beheaded, some throwne downe from rockes upon stakes, some stabbed in with forkes, some racked, and borne in pieces, their tongues cut out, their eyes bored out, their flesh twitched off with Pinsons, womens breasts seared off with hot yrons, pricked under the nayles with Needles, and a thousand more ways tormented, with as great variety and exquisiteless, as politike mallice could devise, and prophane cruelty execute. If wee passe along from thence; even to these Times; yea, and if our eyes were so enlightened, that we could looke upon the state of Gods children, and their way to Heaven, even to the Worlds end; we should ever be able to trace them along by the teares of Brine, and blood, which are powerd out and spilt for the profession of Gods Truth, and practice of holiness. This then is, was, and ever will be, the lot and portion of all those who are sitting and preparing for Heaven. They are ever persecuted, one way, or other. If by reason of the milde and peaceable Times, they fight not unto blood, and passe the fierie Triall; yet they shall have their troubles, oppressions, and disgraces; at least, they shall be ever sure to be payd home with the scourge of tongues: they shall be loaded with flanders, and false reports; they shall be made a gazing-stocke, a by-word, and Table-talke; a scorne, reproach, and derision to them that are round about them: as David was, Psal. 79. 4. Which being so, why should not a common case, in the cause of God, breed a common comfort
comfort in true Christians? Why should any of them think much to drink of the same Cup, that the dearest Saints and soules, now blessed with the Lord, have begun to them in, and of which, all that will be saved, even to the last day, must taste, and follow? Why should any man, that truly loves God, or looks for the joyes of the other World, seek or desire a priviledge above all the children of God, that ever were; and even above the Sonne of God himselfe, Christ Jesus? Most unworthy is hee of the glorious comforts of Grace, of the inward Peace, that passeth all understanding, and of that Glory which is to be revealed; who, for a flanderous tale, a lying tongue, a reproachfull tearme, or the feare and face of any mortall man, flinkes back from a bold profession of sinceritie, and from the true service of the living God.

In sufferings and afflictions for God's cause, there is not only matter of patience, but even occasion of glory. They are like starres in the forehead, honourable maimes, conformities to Jesus Christ, Liveries of a Christian soldiuer.

Fifthly, let him consider, that his momentannie crosse, and afflictions cause an exceeding and everlasting weight of glory. Let his vexation be never so grievous, his persecutors never so great, and mightie; neither they, nor that, can last long. For the life of man, and all the glory thereof, doth passe away, like a Ship in the Water, whose tract cannot be scene againe; like an Arrow through the aire, or a Weavers Shuttle, through his worke; like
and perpetuall Guide.

like a fading Flower, suddenly plucked up and withered; like Grass, like Smoke, like a Dream, like a Bubble of the Water. Though a Christian therefore be never so deeply plunged into miseries, he shall abide but a while under the waters of affliction; the day of redemption cannot be farre off. Though he should passe through the teeth of wilde Beasts, upon the sword of the Tyrant, through the flames of fire; though his braines should be daasht against the walls, his limbs be scattered in the streets, and his blood runne downe every channell: yet shall he, ere it be long, gloriously rise againe, in despight of all the powers of Darkenesse, and bloudinesse of cruell men. Hee shall entirely be restored, by the mightie and immediate hand of God; hee shall be clothed with Light and immortalitie; his blood shall be revenged, and all teares wiped from his eyes; and there shall be set upon his head a Crowne of everlasting joy, peace, and happinesse.

Sixthly, comfort unspeakable, and glorious, may spring up in the heart of Gods child, amidst his sufferings for the cause of God, out of a consideration, That in all afflictions, without exception, Christ suffereth with him. Paul was the mirrour and miracle of all Christians, for the variety and gloriousnesse of his sufferings; you may see a strange and unmatchable Catalogue of them, 2 Cor. 11. 23. &c. He was in stripes above measure, plenteously in prison, in death oft. Of the Jews, five times received hee fortie stripes, save one; he was thrice beaten with Rods, he was once

* As many times they are. See David, Psal. 69. 1, 2.

Rev. 7. 17.


2 Cor. 11. 23, &c.
once stoned, he suffered thrice shipwreck; night and day was he in the deep sea: in journeying, he was often; in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of his own nation, in perils among the gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness, and painfulness; in watching often; in hunger, and thirst; in fasting often; in cold, and in nakedness. Yet all these, and what other crosses and afflictions befell him, he calls and accounts them the sufferings and afflictions of Christ. Now (saith Paul, Col. 1. 24.) now rejoice I in my sufferings for you, and fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his bodies sake, which is the Church. And 2 Cor. 1. 5. As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation aboundeth through Christ. Lazarus, in all his poverty, contempt, sickness, sores, or what other miseries, suffered nothing wherein Christ was not partaker of his grief and sorrow. So sweet and blessed a consent and sympathie is there betwixt Christ, the Head, and all true christians, his members; that so long as the great mysterie of that mystical union stands true and sure, (which is for ever) all holy men, and servants of God, in all their sufferings for the Name of Christ, profession of his Truth, and practice of sincerity, shall have Christ himselfe partner and partaker of their miseries; which is able to refresh the heaviest heart, in the greatest extremities.

I have stayed long upon this point; to wit, how Satan labours might and maine, by crosses and
and flanders, to discourage God's child, and to stop his course in the ways of righteousness; and in laying down some comforts against them: because thousands, at the very first entrance, or after some small continuance, are woefully turned backe from grace, and sincerity, by temptations, reproaches, and troubles raised against them; by their owne rebellious flesh, Satan, and profane men.

Now, in a ninth place, if all this will doe no good; if the heat of persecution inflame the zeale of the true Christian; if reproaches and afflictions be so farre from daunting and dulling his forwardnesse, that they set an edge upon his affections, and adde strength to his resolution, in proceeding in the glorious state of Christianitie: Why then, the last sleight and temptation of Satan, to hinder the sanctifying power and success of the Word, and to make it fruitlesse and unprofitable, is spiritual Pride; which, by his malicious cunning, and hellish Alchymie, hee extracts even out of his graces and vertues; out of such sweet flowers, he rayles poyson: and sith he cannot keepe goodnesse utterly out of the soule, he uses it selfe as an instrument, to weaken & wound it selfe. For when a man is most endued and enriched with extraordinarie gifts, holy graces, and spiritual strength; Satan seekes most busily to make him proud of them, and to puffe him up with an over-weening conceit of his owne worth; that so himselfe may lose the comfort of them, his brethren the fruit of them, and God the glory of
of them. This spiritual Pride is the same in our corruptions and unfillest affections, that the Shirt is in our Clothing; that is to say, it fits the closest unto us, and is last put off: it is the white Devil (as a worthy Divine calls it.) That sinne doth lye, and insensibly insinuate it selfe; and lurkes amid our graces, and good actions, as a dead Fly in the Apothecaries Ointment. It is, as it were, Sathans last intrenchment, which hee holds the longest, and with most resolute and desperate pertinacie, and is hardlyest driven out; much spiritual wisdom, a great measure of humilitie, and the whole Armour of God is required to this combate. For he is so endless, and exercised in the point; that, if we be so humble, that he cannot make us proud of any thing else, he will labour to make us proud even of our humilitie, and proud, that we are not proud of our gifts.

Except a Christian continually and carefully watch over his heart, and guard it with humilitie, and a lowly conceit of himselfe; this privie Pride may steale upon him, before he be aware.

And first, it may spring out of a consideration of the excellencie of his estate, and the varietie of his peculiar blessings, and special priviledges, which the ungodly men neither can, nor doe enjoy. For when he is once translated from Darkness to Light, from prophaneness to sincerity, from Nature to Grace; out of the Dominion of Sathan, into the Kingdom of Christ, by the great worke of regeneration: hee is presently made partaker of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. hee is
and perpetuall Guide.

is entitled, by the right of the Sonne of God, to an inheritance immortall, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the Heavens for him. While hee is thus looking upon himselfe, possessed of this happinesse, and planted in this glorious Paradise, Satan is secretly blowing the coales of his hidden corruption, to enkindle and rayse there-out an over-weening conceit of his owne worth, and to puffe him up with pride of his owne gifts and graces; whence may ensue two foule and hatefull inconveniences: For so hee may grow by little and little to justifie himselfe too much, whereby Gods glory may be leffened and darkened; and to despise his Brethren, whereby his exercise of charitie may be hindered.

This spiritual Pride may occasionally, and by accident, spring out of a godly and gracious care, to keepe and preserve himselfe unspotted and undefiled in his happy and glorious state of grace, and regeneration. For while he is casting with himselfe, and concluding upon some sound and substantiall course of holinesse and obedience in the ways of godlinesse; Satan labours might and maine, to draw him to a singularity of unwarrantable conceits and opinions; that by a tedious and unnecessary pursuit and possession thereof, he may keepe him cold and uncomfortable in the practice of the chiefe and most materiall duties of Christianitie; and to make him place the height of Religion, and heat of zeale, in continuall conference and most peremptorie defence from their care, to keepe themselves undefiled.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Against separation from our Church.</th>
<th>The Saints sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>defence of some groundlesse fancies; from whence Sathan busily strives to toll him out, to separation. Which course of separating from, and condemning our Church, in the judgement of our sincerest Divines, is full of pride, contention, and confusion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For first, certaine it is, our Church, in that most exquisite and worthy confession of Faith contained in the Articles of Religion, doth hold and profess all substantiall points of Divinitie as soundly, as any Church in the World, none excepted, neither in this Age, nor in the primitive times of the Church.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondly, it hath communion with, and testimonie of all other true Churches.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirdly, in it are to be had the means of salvation, in a powerfull and plentifull manner: and in the bowels thereof, even they that goe out of our Church, if they be truly converted, received that precious and blessed vigour, which is able to quicken them to eternall life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourthly, a Church may be a true Church, though it should have spots, and blemishes; though there be some Swine and Dogges in it. In S. Pauls time, the Corinthians were called the Church of God, 1 Cor. 1. 1, 2. And yet, at that very time, were some in an Heresie, some in Incest, some that had not repented of their filthinesse, 2 Cor. 12. 20, 21. The like may be said of the Churches of Asia, Rev. 2. 3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Fifthly, though outward prosperitie, worldly honour, and plentie, be rather the lot of false, hereticall,
heretical, and Apostatitical Churches, than an individual and necessary mark of the true Church; yet, if unto our unparalleled Peace, both for duration and entireness, we add our many and miraculous deliverances, strange defeatments, and preventions of Popish Plots; of their Bulls, Conspiracies, and hostile Invasions; of their Powder, Poysons, Daggers, Dags, and all manner of execrable attempts, machinations, and underminings, which either Hell could devise, or that desperate and bloody Faction adventure upon, and manage: I say, if all these be put together, and well weighed; it is impossible, but that we should therein see, acknowledge, and adore the speciall finger of God's holy providence, upholding his owne Arke amongst his owne people; and pointing out to all the World, the truth of that Church, upon whose side, and for whose safetie and glory hee so mightily stands. This most extraordinary grace and favour of Divine assistance, having not in one thing, or two, shewed it selfe, nor for some few dayes or yeeres appeared; but in such fort, so long continued, our manifold sinnes and transgressions striving to the contrary: What doth it else import, or what can wee leffe thereupon conclude, than that God would thereby tell and teach the World, That the thing which hee blesseth, defendeth, and keepeth so strangely, cannot but be of him, and his saving and sacred Truth?

Ill doe they then, who transported with a pang of spirituall Pride, abandon, forsake, and separate from
from our Church, as though Gods true worship and salvation were not there to be found. You see how Sathan by spirituall Pride may carry and cast a man, from a settled and sound course of holiness and sinceritie, upon the dangerous Rockes of singularitie and separation. But understand me aright, what I meane by singularitie. I meane that onely which ariseth out of privie Pride, is uphelden by selfe-will, and obstinatenesse, and many times ends in separation; and hath neither ground nor defence from sound judgement, spirituall wisedome, or true tendernesse of Conscience, joyned with humilitie, and willingness to be rightly informed. I meane not singularitie, in respect of holiness and unspottednesse of life, in respect of difference and distance from the sinfull fashions of the times: For in this sense, every man that will save his soule, must be singular. Hence it is, that our Saviour asketh his followers, in Math. 5: what singular thing they doe, if they doe but as the Publicans doe? As if hee should have said: You that will be Christians, must be of a more heavenly temper, and higher straine, than the most men, and the greater part of the World: You must be singular, and shine as Lights amid a naughtie and crooked generation. Hence is it, that Gods children ever were, and ever will be, Signes and Wonders, Miracles and Monsters, in the opinion and censure of most, amongst whom they live; gaping stockes, both by reproaches and afflictions, Heb.10.33. Behold (saith Isaiah, Chap.8.18.) I and the children whom the Lord hath given
given me, are as signes and as wonders in Israel, by the Lord of Hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Sion. I am become (faith David) as it were a monster unto many, (or, to the great men of the World, as some render it) Psal. 71. 7. And in another Psalme, Psal. 79. 4. Wee are a reproach to our neighbours, even a scorne and a derision unto them that are round about us. But especially you may see in Wisd. 2. (though the Booke be Apocryphall) what is the counfell and conceit of the wicked about the oddenesse and singularitie of the Saints: Let us defraud the righteous (lay the wicked) for hee is not for our profit, and hee is contrarie to our doings; hee checketh us for offending against the Law, and blameth us as transgressors of Discipline; hee maketh his boast to have the knowledge of God, and hee calleth himselfe the sonne of the Lord. Hee is made to reprove our thoughts. It grieveth us also to looke upon him: for his life is not like other mens, his wayes are of another fashion; hee counteth us as bastards, and hee withdraweth himselfe from our wayes, as from filthinesse; hee commendeth greatly the latter end of the just, and boasteth that God is his father.

Thus, as Gods children and godly men are indeed more excellent than their neighbours; and singular, in respect of their sanctification and sincerity: so they are scorned and reviled by the World, and the greater part of men, as odde fellows, and such as must have wayes by themselves, and a tricke above others. They are pointed at, as matter of scorne and contempt; they are set up, as markes of slander and oppression;
and gazed upon, as strange creatures. Wee are made (sayth Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 9. meaning himselfe, and other of Gods faithfull servants) a gazing-sclocke unto the world, and to the Angels, and to men. And no marvell though it be so: For, besides that all prophane and unregenerate men are naturally inagered, and infraged with implacable malice and hatred against Gods Children; they are, in all places, but few in number; which makes them more noted, and pointed at.

That they are but few; besides many certaine demonstrative Reasons out of Scripture; it may thus plainely appeare: as a good Divine tells us.

First, let there be taken from amongst us, all Papists, Atheists, and scorners of godlinesse, and Religion.

Secondly, let there be removed all notorious and infamous evill livers; as Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, Vurers, Worldlings, Deceivers, proud persons, prophaners of the Sabath, Gamesters, and all the prophane and igno- rant multitude.

Thirdly, let all those be passed over, that are but onely civill honest men, and meddle not with any profession, or practise of holinesse; without which, no man must see God.

Fourthly, set aside all grosse Hypocrites; who for advantage, or by-respects, are outwardly religious, but inwardly corrupt, hollow-hearted, and abominable.

Fifthly,
Fifthly, let there be sorted out and rejected all carnall Protestants, formall Professors, backsliders, cold and unzealous Christians: who falsely thinke, that they may both enjoy the World, and a good Conscience too; live pleasantly on Earth, and yet save their soules at last; and, that it is not necessarie to hold any such strict course of holinesse, to come to Heaven. Let all these kinde of men, I say, (all which in one measure, or other, are in the state of death, and under the power of Sathan) be separeted and shoaled out; and how many doe you thinke will remaine amongst us, sound, sincere, faithfull, and zealous professors, and practisers of sauing Truth, the power of Grace, and holy Obedience to all Gods Commandements? For such onely are Gods servants, and in the state of Grace. Let a man come into any Towne, Village, Citie, or Corporation, and let all such men as are before mentioned, be removed; and how many shoud he finde of these last? They would certainly be thinne scattered, and like the Grapes after the gathering of the Vintage, two or three in the top of the upmost boughes, and foure or five in the high branches. Singularitie then of sanctification, is no fruit of Pride, but an inseparable marke and necessarie state of true Christianitie.

I come now to a third ground, whence Sathan may rayse a temptation to privie Pride: When a man is faithfull, and diligent, in the discharge and executions of his civill calling;
hee may cast a conceit into his head, that such base, earthly, and worldly employment, and spending his time, is disgracefull and derogatorie to the providence of God, and his Christian libertie; and, that it hinders him in his calling of Christianitie, and duties of Religion. Whence may follow dangerous effects of spiritual Pride; quite leaving, or neglect, discontent or distaste of his civil calling. And so his heart and affections may bee put quite out of order, and deceive themselves, in the very maine point of making towards Heaven.

Sathan, by his subtill malice, may worke out matter and occasion of spiritual Pride, from the speciall providence of God, condueting the Christian the best and the nearest way to Heaven. To give example, in some particulars.

1. When God, out of his great wisedome and mercie, humbles him with afflictions and prickes, the swelling of his Pride; when hee cuts and loppes away his vanities, excesses, and superfluities, with some visitation, or other; and fills him with bitterness in this life, to the end hee might long for the life to come: Why then, Sathan labours mightily to kindle in his corrupt nature a flash of spiritual Pride, that hee may drive him to grumbling and impatience, and so make Gods fatherly corrections and chastisements fruitlesse and unprofitable to him; which in Gods children should ever worke amendment and comfort.

2 When
2 When the true Christian looks about him in the World, and sees the wicked spreading themselves like green Bay-trees, in worldly plentie, and pleasures; Satan here thrusts in, and labours to cast into his minde a consideration of his owne worth; and that, how in respect of the wicked, he farre more, and rather, deserves the fruition and enjoyment of the creatures, and benefits and comforts of this life: because all wicked men are but usurpers, and intruders; himselfe being a true owner, by the right of Christ Iesu, Lord of the whole Earth: And that, whereas he stands for the glory, service, causes, and children of God; the wicked labour for nothing more, than the disgrace and ruine of goodnesse, and the upholding and enlargement of the Kingdome of Sathan. From such conceits as these, mixed with spirituall, hee easily drawes him on to fretting and repining at the prosperitie of the wicked men, and puts him into one of Davids fits, and pangs, Psal. 73. 12. Loc (sayth hee) these are the wicked, yet prosper they alway, and encrease in riches: Certainly, I have cleansed my heart in vaine, and washed my hands in innocencie. Or, at least, brings him to question with God; as it is, Jer. 12. O Lord, if I dispute with thee, thou art righteous; yet let me talke with thee, of thy Judgements: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Why are all they in wealth, that rebelliously transgresse? Thou hast planted them, and they have taken root; they grow, and bring forth fruit.

(k 3) 3 When
3 When the Christian doth presently feel, or after call to minde Gods great mercies, gracious preventions, strange protection, wonderfull deliverances, against expectation, and beyond hope, vouchsafed unto him in his direction and conduction towards the glory that is to be revealed; then doth Sathan busily blow the Bellowes of his corrupt nature with the poysnous breath of his hellish malice, that so hee may pffe him up with spirituall Pride, and exalt him out of measure.

4 When he beholds and observes some sudden destruction, or searefull judgement, to overtake and seize upon his enemies; Sathan may secretly sollicithe him, out of a spice of spirituall Pride, to applaud and please himselfe in the ruine and miferie of his adversarie: which, besides the tainture of impietie, tastes deeply also of inhumanitie, and is quite crosse and contrarie to the pradice and protestation of holy Job, Chap. 31. In that Chapter, hee imprecates and invocates upon himselfe many searefull Curses, if hee hath done so, or so. Let mine arme (saith he) fall from my shoulder-blade, and let mine arme be broken from the bones, if I have done such and such things. And after follows: If I rejoiced at his destruction that hated me; or was moved to joy, when evill came upon him; or if I have suffered my mouth to speake evill of him, or to utter Curses against him.

5 When the Christian is sadly and heavily musing upon his many troubles and distrefles, which many times come thicke and three-fold upon
upon him, as fast and boisterously, as one wave overtakes another; so that he finds one vexation to be still a step unto another: Sathan then hee puts in, and seeing the season advantageous for his seats, and insinuations, workes what he can to make him take on; and out of a proud conceit of better deservings, to be weary of waiting the Lords leisire; and out of the anguishes and agonies of his heart, to wish and desire death; especially to be rid and freed from those crosses and calamities, which unworthily haunt and persecute his innocencie. Holy Job was strongly assayled with this temptation, Chap. 3. when hee cryed and said: Let the day perish wherein I was borne; and the night, when it was said, there is a man-child conceived, &c. And so was the Prophet Jonah, Chap. 4. Therefore now (faith he) O Lord, take I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die, than to live.

6 Sometimes, when the Christian is crossed and disappointed in his expectation, God wisely and sweetly diverting, moderating, and disposing all things to his owne glory, and to the true good of his children (though they doe not presently see, and acknowledge it;) Sathan steps in, and by the secret and insensible poison of privie Pride, labours to suggest unto him, that he is prejudiced and disgraced; that so by his inward fretting, hee may make it plainly appeare, that hee preferres his owne particular credit, before the glory of God. Thus was Jonas tempted, in Chap. 4. Fearfull destruction was denounced by him from God.
God, against the Ninivites: They put on sack-cloth, humbled themselves, and repented; God stayes his hand, forbeares his Judgements, which were proclaimed by *Jonah*: Therefore (sayth the Text) that displeased *Jonah exceedingly,* and hee was angrie; and hee prayed unto the Lord, and said, &c.

When hee begins to observe, and admire himselfe for some speciall acceptance in Christian companie, for his abilities to pray, conferre, discover temptations, and the Devils depths; to press an holy precisenesse, and mortifying points, &c. Oh then, too often a wide gap is opened in his deceitfull heart, for the Devils wild-fire of spiritual Pride. So that many times, an humble silent soule doth quickly out-trip such an one, dotting dangerously upon his present perfections, in the substantials of Christianitie.

Thus, and many more ways, doth Sathan labour by privie Pride, to weaken the power of Grace, and efficacie of the Word; to staine and disgrace the best Graces and godliest actions; to grieve the good Spirit, and coole their first Love, even in Gods children; after that, by the helpe of God, they have struggled through other temptations, and obtained much spirittuall peace and Christian perfection in the doctrine of salvation, and wayes of godlinesse.

Before I passe from this point, I would propose some remedies against this swelling spirittuall maladie of privie Pride, and some soveraigne considerations, to keepe downe the Christian heart,
and perpetuall Guide.

and to preserve it in the sweet and peacefull state of a gracious humilitie.

First then, let every Christian, when hee first feecles any over-weening conceit, or proud perswasion of his owne worth, and spirituall graces, stealing into his heart; lift up the eyes of his minde, in a divine meditation, unto those brightest and purest eyes of God Almighty; which are ten thousand times brighter than the Sunne, and purer than purtie it selfe: so that they see the least and secretest infirmity in its true and native soulenesse, and before them, our best righteousnesse is as a menstruous clout. If he soundly and sincerely entertaine this consideration, it will so humble him, and keepe him under, that he will rather be affrighted and surprized with feare and terror, for his many frailties and infirmities, than be lifted up with a conceit of his graces, and spirituall endowments.

When hee begins once proudly and selfe-conceitedly to gaze upon that little sparke of holiness hee findes in himselfe; let him presently turne backe the edge and eye of this dangerous speculation, upon the infinite purtie and endless perfection of God Almighty; before whom, the Cherubins and Seraphins, the Crowne of Gods workemanship, and the glory of creatures, doe hide and cover their faces, as not able to behold and endure the perfect brightnesse of his most pure and undefiled Majestie. In whose fight, the unstained splendour of the Heavens, and the glorious beautie of the Starres are uncleane, and foule.
The Saints sure

1ob 25. 5. 6. | foule; darkenesse, and deformitie. The Sunne, the fairest Body in the World, made all of beautie and brightness; if it were put neere unto that unaccessible and incomprehensible Light, which encompasseth the Lord of Heaven, it would vanish away as a darksome Moat, and Lumps of Vanitie. Nay, in respect of God, those divine and heavenly creatures, the blessed Angels, pure and immateriall spirits, are chargeable with folly and vanitie. Behold, he found no steadfastnesse in his Saints; yea, the Heavens are not cleare in his sight. How much more is man abominable and filthy, which drinketh iniquitie like water? 1ob 15. 15, 16. What art thou then, wretched man, that carriest about thee a Body of death? Shall not his excellencie make thee afraid, and his seare fall upon thee? Behold (faith 1ob) he will give no light unto the Moone, and the Starres are uncleane in his sight: How much more man, a Worme; even the Sonne of a man, which is but a Worme? Behold, he found no steadfastnesse in his servants, and laid folly upon his Angels: How much more in them that dwell in Houses of Clay, whose foundation is in the Dust, which shall be destroyed before the Moth? These considerations are able to confound and cast downe below the Earth, and Dust, the greatest admirer and applauder of himselfe, for his graces, good actions, and spirituall perfections.

1ob 4. 18. | When the Christian is tempted to a proud conceit of his spirituall sufficiencies; let him compare himselfe with other Saints of God: which (perhaps) having beene lesse sinners than himselfe,
himselfe, in the time of their unregeneration; and having lesse meanes, parts, occasions, and encouragements to glorifie God: yet excell him in zeale, sanctification, and the service of God. Paul, that great Doctor of the Gentiles, and glorious Angell upon Earth, for all his spirituall blessings, and incomparable graces, cryes out, Rom. 7. 24. Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? David, a man after Gods owne heart, and a speciall royall Mirror for varietie of spirituall excellencies, is so farre from being proud of his graces; that hee is everywhere complaining of the burthen of his sinnes, spirituall povertie and want, and the miseries of his soule: There is no health in my flesh, (saith he) because of thy displeasure; neither is there any rest in my bones, by reason of my sinne: for my wickednesse are gone over my head, and are like a sore burthen, too heavie for me to beare. For his reputation in the World, he tells us; that he was a worme, and no man; a very scorne of men, and out-cast of the people. In all times, the best Christians have ever beene most sensiblie of the weight of their sinnes, and corruption of their nature; and from thence, entertained a lowly conceit of themselves. Where there is the greatest measure of sanctification, there is ever the greatest humilitie. If those then that be indeed in the highest favour with God, lesser sinners than ourselves, and most sanctified, be of an humble and lowly minde, of a meeke and quiet spirit, which is before God a thing much set by, 1 Pet. 3. 4. let us take heed how we be proud of

| 139 | Rom. 7. 24. |
| 38. 3. | Psal. 3. 4. |
| 22. 6. | 1 Pet. 3. 4. |
of those graces, which, if we looke for Gods blessing upon them, and comfort from them, must bring forth in us humilitie and thankfulnessse.

Let him compare, and examine, and measure himselfe, his wayes, and workes, by the Law of God; and hee shall there finde much matter of humiliation, repentance, feare, and trembling, with continuall supply in abundance ministred unto him: so that there shall be no roome left for any proud and over-weening conceit of any good thing in him. That elect Vestell, and great Apostle, after he was regenerate, (for the unregenerate feele no such strife) found such a vast and wide distance betweene the Law, and his owne affections, and best workes; that for horror thereof, he cryed out; Oh miserable man, that I am! What spirituall good then is there in any of us, miserable wretches, wherein we should glory? Let our best workes be as glorious as we can imagine, let them be performed with never so great integritie and resolution, cover them with grace, derive them from the Holy-Ghost, dippe and dye them deepe in the bloud of Christ, put upon them all the rich attire, and Papall magnificence, with which the Church of Rome hath invested them; yet to the purest eyes of God, and in the cleare Crystall of his undefiled Law, they appeare to be foule, and spotted; impure, and like a menstrous clout. The measuring then of our selves by the Law and Word of God, is a notable means to keepe us in humilitie, and to make us worke out our salvation with feare and trembling.

Let
Let him consider, what a foul and wretched, what a damned and an accursed creature hee had bee ne; had not his gracious God, out of the unsearchable depth of his infinite goodness and mercie, singled him out to be his servant upon Earth, and a Saint in Heaven. It was onely Gods free mercie, that before all eternitie, by the great Decree of his eternal election, marked him out for Heaven and endless joyes, from amidst the huge masse of all mankind. It was the same, that after caused him to send his owne and onely Sonne, out of his owne Bosome, and height of Majesty; that with his dearest and precious bloud, hee might redeeme his Soule from the snares of Hell, into which hee was fallen, by Adams fall: which in due time, by the inward, speciall, and effectuall power of his unspotted Spirit, called him into his Kingdom of Grace, washed him, justified, and sanctified him, in the Name of the Lord Iesus. Else, otherwise, had not these everlasting and unconceivable Blessings bee ne cast upon him, by Gods free meere mercie, without all cause or motive from man, or any other created thing, out of his infinite Selfe; his case had bee ne unspeakably wofull: For he should have lived in this Vale of Teares, without God, without Grace, without Comfort, without Conscience; in Sinne, in Darkenesse, in Prophanenesse, in all Spirituall Miseries: And after the cloeure and period of these few and evill dayes, hee should have bee ne endlessely divided and abandoned from the joyes and comforts of Gods presence, inchained
in chained without all redemption, to despair and horror, and the hatefull fellowship of the Devill and his Angels: and (that which is the extremity and upshot of all hellish miserie) hee should have had the fierce and horrible wrath and vengeance of God poured in full measure upon his body and soule; which would have fed upon them, as fire doth upon Pitch and Brimstone, for ever and ever. Out of these considerations, mee thinkes a man should rather with humilitie and thankfulness admire and magnifie the mercies of God, that hee is not alreadie a Fire-brand in Hell; than any wayes be puffed up with any worthinesse in himselfe, or dote upon his owne nothingnesse.

When a Christian is tempted to spirituall Pride; let him deeply and thorowly weigh with himselfe, what fearefull inconveniences and discomforts will ensue, if hee give way to such temptations: For so, many follow, in the course of Gods just judgement, upon spirituall Vanitie, and Pride; dullnesse, and deadnesse of heart; a restraint of the influence of the Spirit; a diminution and lessening, or a slumber and cessation of the operations of grace, a cooling of zeale, and falling from the first Love. Or, when hee sees us so presumptuously to trust to our strength, and stay our selves with our owne staffe; he may quite give us over, in some great temptation, to some grosse sinne; so that we may take the foile in the Conflict. And then, if wee once be over-taken with the old sweet sinne of our unregeneration,
and perpetuall Guide.

or be ensnared with some new notorious transgression; wee must of necessitie, to our great discomfort, enter againe the agonies of Soule, anguish of Conscience, and horror of Hell; wee must enter combate againe with all the powers of Darkness; wee must have our regeneration, regenerated; our new-birth, new-born; and the precious blood of the Sonne of God, as it were, shed for us againe. Wee turne thereby Gods favourable countenance from us, and the hearts and affections of true Christians: wee put againe a sting into our owne Consciences, and weapons into the hands of Sathan, to vexe, wound, and torment us: wee barre and bereave our selves of Gods gracious protection, of the guard of Angels, of peace of Conscience, of joy in the Holy-Ghost, of boldnesse in our wayes, of reconciliation in the creatures, and of all the comforts of godlinesse. As a man tenders the preservation of his Soule, from all these spirituall miseries; let him take heed of entertaining a proud and over-weening conceit of his owne graces, gifts, or good actions.

Let him consider, that the more spirituall gifts and graces he hath received from the free mercie of God, the more will be required at his hands. Methinkes, this should coole and allay any swelling conceit, or proud persuasion, that may arise in the heart; and not suffer a man to play with them, and dote upon them, or give him any leisure, with an over-weening and selfe-conceited flatterie, to gaze upon them, or to applaud and admire them.

The more a man hath, the more he is accountable for.
them in himself, as though they were his own; but rather, with all vigilancie and solicitousnesse, with all care and good Conscience, to occupie and impoy them for his Masters greatest advantage.

There is no gift or good thing in any man, either of Nature or Grace, of body or minde, of wealth or honour, of reputation or authoritie in the World; but he must give shortly a strict and exact account of the usage and imployment of it, before the impartiall and uncorrupted Tribunall of Heaven: And the more excellent his gifts and endowments have beeue in any kind, he shall in proportion be answerable, and countable for the more. If the Lord hath enlightened, heated, and inspired any one with much saving knowledge, with a great measure of zeale, with a high Christian courage, and resolution; he lookes and expects for great gaine of glory unto himselfe, many spoyles and conquests over his enemies, a blazing and exemplarie brightnesse, in holinesse of life; much beautie and luster to the Church, much good and comfort unto Christians: For much is required of them, to whom much is committed.

Let a man then not labour to make himselfe glorious, by those graces which are none of his owne; but how, by glorifying God with them, in humilitie, faithfulness, and sinceritie, and by improving and making the best of them, for the Owners advantage, hee may make a comfortable account at that great Day.
Thus farre I have proposed unto you some Motives, to quicken and stirre you up to a conscionable and constant hearing and understanding of the holy Word of God; and acquainted you with many sleights, lets, and temptations, which Satan usually casts in our way, to hinder us therein.

Now, in a third place, I will lay downe unto you certaine rules, directions, and instructions, for your right, holy, and conscionable carriage, behaviour, and importment, in and about the hearing of Gods Word.

That the holy Word of God may be unto you the Word of Grace, the favour of Life unto Life, of power unto sanctification and salvation; you must looke carefully and conscionably unto your preparation, before you come; unto your carriage, while you are there; and unto your behaviour, afterward.

First, for Preparation.

I am perswaded, the want and neglect of a due and profitable preparation, is the cause that thousands receive no benefit or blessing by the Word of Life; but that the Sermons they heare, are regiftred, as in a Table of Remembrance, before God, as so many witnesses against them, for their more fearingfull confusion and greater condemnation at the Day of Accounts.

For hence it is, that to many it is the favour of death unto death; because, before they come, they doe not addressse and prepare themselves for so glorious a Presence, and royall Embassage from
from the King of Heaven: though they hear it with their outward ears, yet it hardens their hearts, makes them inwardly more peevish, grumbling, stubborn, rebellious, and refractory to the power thereof, and prepares and ripens them for more heavy vengeance. It is of it selfe the Word of Grace, Salvation, and Life; a blessed preservative against Sinne and Death, Damnation and Hell: but by accident, if men doe not reverence it, tremble at it, and submit themselves to the power of it, it is a strong Hammer, and Iron Scepter, to harden their hearts more and more, like an Anvil, or Adamant; and at length, to break them in pieces like a Potter's Vessel. Though in it selfe, it be a saving and wholesome Medicine; yet men of a rebellious and stubborn humour and temper, turne it into Poison.

2. To some, this holy Word, by reason of unpreparedness, is but as the water spilt upon the ground, and the breath of the Minister scattered in the Aire: If you call them to an account, after Sermon, how they have profited; they are as wordlesse, and witlesse, and indeed as gracelesse in repetition, as if they had beene dead, asleep, in a trance, or starke dead all the while.

3. Others, by their rash and prophane rushing into the House of God, without all premeditation, reverence, or regard of that holy business they goe about; become hearers onely, of forme and custome, for fashion and companie. It may be, they may heare, attend, and understand what is delivered; but it breeds no more reverence,
impression, or spirituall reformation, than an ordinarie Tale, or humane discourse: As though that holy toyle, and sacred breath, were spent onely to entertaine the Time, and busie mens eares for an Houre; and, not as Christ tells Paul, To open their eyes, that they might turne from Darkenesse unto Light, and from the power of Sathan unto God.

4 Upon some, the Judgement and Curse of comming without Conscience, and due preparation, doth so farre prevale, and hath such power, that they become scorers and raylers against the Minister, or his Doctrine, or both; at every Sermon they catch something, that they may cavill at, deprave, and calumniate: And so wickedly and wretchedly oppose their discourse, wit, and spirit of contradiction against the face of Heaven, and heart of Divine Truth. They wrangle and repine (in deed and truth, whatsoever their pretences or protestations may be to the contrarie) against that Great Majestie, whose Message it is; against that Holy Spirit, which should sanctifie them; and the Word of Grace, which should save them.

5 Others there be, even of good hearts and affections, Professors, and in some good measure practisers of the power of godlinessse; yet because they are carelessse and negligent of this needfull Christian dutie of preparation, are possessed with much deadnesse of heart, and dullnesse of spirit, at those holy Exercises. Their zeal, and fervencie, which should be quickened and
and inflamed at every Sermon, is dulled and benumbed with senselessness and satiety. They do not so tremble, or are cast downe with Divine Comminations and denouncements of Gods Judgements against sinne, or so refreshed with the gracious promises of Life, and Salvation, as they ought to be: They do not enjoy and reap the thousandth part of that delight, comfort, and benefit as they well might, by the Ministrie of the Word, because their hearts are not purged and prepared: They do not with that chearfulness receive, with that sweetness taste and relish, with that life and vigour digest the Food of Life: The eye of their minde, for want of premeditation, doth not so clearly see and discern the infinite beautie of that sacred Majestie represented unto them, or that glorious grace shining unto them, in the face of Christ Jesus: Their hand of Faith doth not with that feeling, and fastness, lay hold upon and claspe about, the rich Treasures revealed in the Gospell. In a word, they bereave themselves of much good, blessing, comfort, and growth in grace, which they might and ought to have, by hearing of the Word, for want of due preparing, and disposing the heart thereto.

This dutie of Preparation then, though that it be not much thought upon, or ordinarily practised; yet it is of great necessitie and speciall use for all thole, which looke for benefit or blessing by the preaching of the Word.

There
There is no great Affaire, or of weight and consequence, eyther in Nature or Art, in necessarie businesse and civill Negotiations, or in matters of Complement, Ceremonie, and Enterview; but there is required some bethinking preparation and præ-dispositions, for the more happie and successfull accomplishment, execution, and performance: how much more in the affaires of God, matters of Heaven, businesse of eternitie, and salvation of mens soules?

The Ground must be manured and prepared for the Seed, if wee looke it should fructifie and prosper: how much more should our dull and dead hearts bee stirred up, and furrowed, as it were, with humiliation, reverence, and repentance; that by the grace of God, and the sanitifying power of the Spirit, it may lodge and take deepe root in them, and spring up to eternall life?

The Body must be fitted with a Preparative, and the humours, as it were, gathered unto a head, if wee desire the Physicke should worke forcibly and kindly, and rid us of their noxiousnesse, and superfluities: how much more ought our Soules, with an impartial and narrow inquisition, to be searched and layd open, before they receive the Water of Life, and spirituall Manna; that so they may more seasonably and soundly be washed and purged from corruptions and imperfections, preserved in spirituall health, and prepared for eternall life?

The Ground must be layd, and some imperfect Draughts,
Draughts, Shadowes, and resemblances premised, before a Picture can be done to the Life, or a full proportion and lively representation pourtrayed or presented to the eye; how much more ought the ground of our hearts to be fitted and prepared, that by the preaching of the Word, the Image of Christ Iesus may with a lively and fresh impression be stamped upon them?

Were a man the next day to goe about a business that mainly concerned eyther his life, or livelyhood; the state of his Lands, or danger of his life: Would not his minde be troubled beforehand? Would it not breake his sleepe the night before? Would he not be musing, and plotting, by what means he might worke out his deliverance, and safetie? what behaviour and carriage might be fittest, to winne favour and grace in so weightie an affaire? How much more ought wee, before wee intrude into the House of God, where matters of our greatest and highest interest, are proposed, handled, and debated by the Minister of the Word; even life eternall, and everlasting estate in another World? I say, how ought wee to think with our selves, how wee may make our soules fittest to understand and accept the Covenant of Grace, to receive the Seale of the Spirit, and to get assurance of that glorious and royall Inheritance in the Heavens?

Nay, yet further, even in matters of complement and enterview, there is wont to be preparation, especially if the presence and persons were the greater.
Joseph, when he was sent for to go before King Pharaoh, he shavèd his head, and changed his rayment, because he was to appeare before so high and royall a presence.

Queen Hester durst not presse into the presence of King Ahassueros, before she had prepared her selfe.

How much more ought wee to fit and prepare our selves, base and miserable wretches, Wormes and no men, as wee are, with feare and trembling, when wee come into the House and presence of the mightie Lord of Heaven and Earth; before whom, the Seraphins hide their faces, the Nations are as a drop of a Bucket, and the inhabitants of the Earth as Grass—hoppers: especially, sith there hee offers and tenders unto us enlargement from the slaverie of sinne, purgation from our pollutions, and a Crowne of life, upon that condition, that wee repent, forlacke all our sinnes, and resigne up our selves in sincere and humble obedience unto all his Commandements?

Inducements we have, and Motives many, both from Precept, and Practice, in the Booke of God, for the performance of this Christian dutie of Preparation.

Take heed to thy foot (sayth the Preacher) when thou entrest into the House of God, and be more neere to heare, than to give the sacrifice of fooles; for they know not that they doe evil.

Before thou set foot into the Church, to heare the Word of God, be sure to settle thy affections, that they be sober, moderate, and sanctified.
**The Saints' Sure**

| 152 | fit to entertain the Word of life, and salvation; let thy heart be seasoned with, first, Softness; secondly, Humilitie; thirdly, Honestie; fourthly, Faith; fifthly, Teachableness. |
| 2 | Before wee heare, our hearts must be qualified with,  
| 1 | Softness. |
| 2 | Humilitie.  
| 1 | Jer. 4. 6.  
| 2 | Psal. 25. 9. |

First, if thou do not preserve thy heart tender, soft, and flexible, the power of the Word will not make any such print or deep impression upon it; all holy admonitions, reproves, and instructions, will be unto thee as Arrows shot against a Stone wall.

Secondly, wee must bring with us an humble heart, to the hearing of the Word; for, the Lord resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. Them that be meek, will he guide in judgement, and teach the humble his way. The proud heart is so swelled with the winde of vanitie and vaine-glory, of selfe-love, and over-weening conceit, that there is left no roome in it for the precious Treasure of saving grace. If it eyther be puffed up with a conceit of knowledge, or a perswasion of holinesse enough, or a boisterous peremptoriness against the power of the Word; the Water of Life will be unto it, but as Water poured upon a drowned man; or as a Seale thrust upon Water, which will receive no impression. A lowly heart, broken and bruised with Conscience of sinne, is a fit Seat for the mightie Lord and his saving graces, Ps. 57. 15.

Thirdly, wee must come with a good and honest heart; which hateth all corruptions, both in it selfe, and others; which hath no delight in any sinfull pleasures, or wicked vanities; which hath
no manner of purpose to live and continue in any one sinne whatsoever; but is readie and resolved, though it be much cumbred with it owne corruptions, the Worlds enticements, and Sathans craf-
tinesse; yet to serve and please God, in all the ways of his Commandements, and that sincerely and continually. All profitable and fruitfull hearers have such good and honest hearts, and are resembled by the good ground, Luke 8. 15. But that is a wicked and sinfull heart, and not fit to be wrought upon by the Ministerie of the Word, which purposeth and resolveth to cherish and maintain but any one sinne whatsoever.

Fourthly, our hearts must be seasoned with Faith; otherwise, it will not sink and soake into them with power and profit. The old Iewes heard the Word, but it profited them not, because it was not mingled with faith in those that heard it, Heb.4.2. The seareful threatens and thunderbolts of the Law, by Faith receive an edge to wound, and pierce and strike through our soules, with amazements and trembling. And Faith it is, that animates and inspires the promises of the Gospel with such a soveraigne sweetnesse, and powerfull comfort, that they are able, not onely to rayse and revive us from the depth and extremitie of remorse, and feare; but also to put us into a Paradise of spirituall pleasures, and possession of Heaven, as it were alreadie. But if the Word light upon a faithlesse heart; it dyes, it does no good.

Fifthly, wee must bring with us into the Lords Sanctuary,
Sanctuarie, teachable and hearing hearts, that will willingly and readily open themselves, to receive the Lord of glory, with whatsoever hee shall reveal unto us out of his holy Word. Sacrifice and burnt offerings (sayth David) thou wouldest not, but mine ears hast thou prepared. As if hee should have said: Thou hast bored new eares in my heart, that I can now reverently attend unto, rightly conceive, and with an holy greedinesse devour the mysterie of grace.

With such hearts as these, must wee come to the hearing of the Word, if wee looke that it should be unto us a Word of power, salvation, and life; and not to be of the number of those, that ofer the sacrifice of fooles, and yet know not that they doe evill.

Many there are certainly, which offer these foolish sacrifices; I mean, hearers, without care and conscience: Who, if they come into the House of God, and vouchsafe their presence in the place, and lend their eares to the Preacher for the time; they thinke themselves presently jolly fellowes, for matters of Religion; and that they are sanctified, as it were, by the Worke wrought, and their onely presence in that holy place: when as yet the Word hath had no more power, nor wrought more alteration upon them, than upon the Seats where they sit.

And that which makes these fooles much more miserable, and foolish, is this: They know not that they doe evill: as it is in the Text. They thinke their case good enough, that they are in the right
of Christianitie; and that no more is required, for matters of Heaven: when as, in respect of saving grace, they are wretched, miserable, and poore; and blinde, and naked.

Besides this place of the Preacher, the Evangelist S. Luke, Chap. S. 18. bids us, take heed how we hear. And good reason, in a matter of such great weight and consequence. For there is not a Sermon we hear, but we must be countable for it at the Day of our Visitation. God is countable unto us for every hair of our head; is it not reason, we should be countable to him for those precious Lessons he reacheth unto us by the Ministerie of the Word? Assuredly, there is not a Sermon, which we have heard fruitlessly, and without profit, but it will be a shrewd and sore witness against us at that Day.

Besides these Precepts, we finde much practice in the Booke of God, of this holy dutie of Preparation, when any sacred businesse was to be undertaken.

Moses could not approach so glorious and sacred a Presence, or tread upon the ground, made holy by so great a Majestie as the Lord of Heaven and Earth, before he had put off his shoes. Neither ought we to presume or press into his Sanctuary, where he hath promised his Presence in a solemn, speciall, and powerfull manner, and is ready to shower downe his blessings of salvation into all truly humble and prepared hearts; before we have shaken off and cast from us all earthly incumbrances, and secret corruptions, all dulnesse and
and deadness of heart, which makes us unworthy and undisposed to stand upon so holy ground, and utterly incapable of all that heavenly Wisdom, and holy instructions unto eternal life, that are there taught, and tended unto us; nay, turn the blessings of the Ministry into curses and condemnation unto us.

When Josua, Jesh. 3. 5. was to make a strong and lasting impression in the hearts of the Israelites (whom after the death of Moses, he conducted to the promised Land) of the power and providence of God for his people, by that miraculous parting of the Waters of Jordan, for the transportation of the Ark; he commanded the people to sanctifie themselves, to prepare, and compose their hearts; to admire and reverence with greater intention and amazement, that omnipotent Majesty that wrought such wonders for his chosen: For hearts emptied of worldly thoughts, and sanctified by heavenly meditation, are fit subjects for works of Heaven, and divine impressions. How much more ought we to prepare our soules, before we come into the Sanctuary of the Lord; sith there, they are either to be hardned for the Scepter of destruction, and made ready for the flames of Hell, if wee doe not prepare ourselves, hearken, and obey: or else, to be softened and sanctified with saving grace, and fitted for a Crowne of Glory; if with reverence, humility, and obedience, wee submit our selves to the power of the Word? There, if we be unconverted, the great and miraculous worke of the new-birth is to bee wrought
and perpetuall Guide.

wrought upon them; if wee be new-borne, they are to be fed with the spirituall Manna, unto everlasting life.

The same Josua, when the excommunicate and execrable thing was to be found out, and put from amongst them; which was the cause, they could not stand against their enemies: he commanded them to sanctifie themselves, that the Lord might prosper and pour his blessings upon that necessarie and weightie search and inquisition. How much more ought wee to prepare our selves, before wee step into the House of God; fith there is to be discovered and cast out those hatefull sinnes that fearfully incense Gods wrath against us, and make us weake in the Lords batailes, and not able to stand against our spirituall enemies, the corruptions of our owne flesh, the enticements of the World, and temptations of Satan?

Before the sacrifice, and anointing of David King of Israel, Ishai and his sonnes were sanctified: How much more ought wee to be prepared, before wee come before the Lords Prophets, and Embassadors; that there wee may be anointed Kings and Priests unto our God?

Josiah, before the eating of the Paschall Lambe, did bid the people, not onely sanctifie themselves, but also prepare their brethren: How much more ought wee, when wee come to the Ministerie of the Word, to seede by faith upon that true Bread from Heaven, which giveth life unto the world; which if wee once soundly taste with beleev-
The people, before the giving of the Law. Exod.19.10.

The profit of it.

beleeving hearts, wee shall not hunger, wee shall never thirst.

But the most famous and fittest place for my purpose, and preparation in that particular holy business of hearing the Word, is that in Exod. 19.10. The people were sanctified, and washed their clothes, and prepared themselves for two dayes, and the third day they were ready to attend what the Lord would say unto them. As in that extraordinary promulgation of the Law, the people were to be prepared extraordinarily; so, from proportion of that practice, and precedent, ordinary preparation is necessarie for the ordinary preaching of the Word, if wee looke that it should powerfully and profitably worke upon our Consciences and affections. Their washing of their bodies, and clothes, their abstinence from their wives, and such solemn and ceremonious purifications, were typicall significations and representations unto us, that wee should weane our hearts from earthly thoughts, purge them from secret corruptions, and bring them faire and free, from sinfull spot and worldly entanglement, when wee come to heare the Lord speake unto us by his Ministers.

Holy men of God were wont, addressing themselves to prayer, to have their ejaculations, lifting up of their hearts, certaine short prayers, before they entred into that sacred and solemn action.

Besides Precept and Practice in the Booke of God, for Preparation; the profit is great, the benefits and blessings that redound unto us, and
and perpetuall Guide.
and fall upon us by it, are excellent and precious. Looke in the latter end of the eleventh Chapter of Job.

If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.

If iniquitie be in thine hand, put it farre away, and let no wickednesse dwell in thy Tabernacle.

Then truly shalt thou lift up thy face without spot, and shalt be stable, and shalt not feare, &c.

Preparation of the heart, is here the foundation and first step unto many glorious blessings. The heart must be first prepared, before other holy duties can be fitly performed, or Gods blessings expected.

In the first place; first, prepare thine heart; secondly, then pour out it in prayer, before the Throne of Grace; thirdly, then purge it from corruption; banish farre, and barre out all iniquitie; fourthly, next, be sure to reforme, instruct, and pray with thy family, or those that are about thee: Let no wickednesse, ignorance, prophaneness, swearing, swaggering, drunkennesse, or the like, dwell in thy Tabernacle, harbour in thine house, or rowst neere thee.

And then open thy heart, and hands; for the Windowes of Heaven shall be set wide open, that all manner of spirituall comforts, all the blessings of peace and happinesse, may in abundance be showred downe upon thee; the rich Treasurie of everlasting Glory and Immortalitie shall be unlockt unto thee, and thou shalt row and tumble thy selfe for ever after, amid mountaines of hea-venly
venly pearles, and golden pleasures; through Rivers, nay Seas of endless joyes, that no heart can comprehend, but that which is weaned from all worldly pleasures, and set apart and sanctified for holy services and businesses of Heaven.

Then truly shalt thou lift up thy face without spot.] Though thou hast lien among the Pots, yet thou shalt be now as the wings of a Dove, that is covered with Silver, and whose feathers are like yellow Gold. Though thou be like the Kedarims, which dwell in Tents, the black-Moore; that is, by reason of thy sinne, subject to the condemnation of God, and deprived of his glory: yet shalt thou be in Christ, goodly and glorious, as those that dwell in exceeding glory, under the Curtaines of Salomon. Though thou be black with the remnants of originall corruption, and present infirmities; though the Sunne have looked upon thee, and parched thee with the scorching heat of sore affliction, and chastisements: yet shalt thou now shine like the Sunne in his strength, with the royall Robe of Christs righteousness, with fresh comfort, and lasting chearfulnesse.

Thou shalt be stable, and shalt not fear.] Though the wicked tremble many times at their owne shadowes, and the sound of a Lease shaken doth chase them, and strike a faintnesse into their hearts, and a trembling into their loynes; yet thou shalt never be afraid of any evill tidings, whether they be forged by the spightfull and impoysoned tongues of prophane men, to defame and disgrace thee, or fetched out of the botomme of
of Hell, by Sathans malice, to terrifie thee; though the messengers of miseries and mischieves come thicke and three-fold upon thee, as they did upon Job; though the Earth be moved, and the mountaines fall into the midst of the Sea; nay, though the whole World be on flames about thine eares, and the Heavens be rouled together like a Scrowle: yet shalt thou be stable, and shalt not feare, because thy heart is fixed, and beleeveth in the Lord.

Thou shalt forget thy miserie, and remember it as waters that are past.] Thy happinesse and comfort shall be so entire and unmixed, so absolute and overflowing, that the very remembrance of former miseries and terrors shall be drowned and devoured in the excesse and excellencie of that; even as the travels of a woman, in her joyes for a new-borne sonne: Or, if it be, that thy former discomforts sometimes steale into thy minde, they shall not be able to rest or remaine there, by reason of the predominancie of spirituall pleasures; but glide away as swiftly, as the head-long streame of the most hastie Torrent.

Thine age also shalt appeare more cleare than the Noone-day: thou shalt shine, and be as the Morning.] The Morning is the very Crowne of Time, and the beautie of the Day; the Poets call it, the * Rosie-finger'd Morning. When they labour to describe corporall Beautie to the life, and set it out in the best perfection and freshest colours that the utmost power and highest straine of wit and art can possibly devise; they take their Meta-
phors and amplifications from the ruddinesse and brightness of the Morning: And yet thou shalt be as faire as the Morning, with all Divine Graces, spirituall brightness, and beautie of thy Soule; nay, a Soule set thicke with spirituall Graces, is farre more faire than the Firmament, with all those Eyes of Gold, and fairest Lampes, that shine from it. Neither shalt thou be onely as the Morning, but as the Morning Sunne; thou shalt rise higher and higher in degrees of holiness, and strength of Grace, until thou commest to the highest point of perfection in this Heaven upon Earth, the Kingdom of Grace. And after thou hast finished thy course, and left behind thee the comfortable heat of thy gracious zeale, much Light from thy good example, and the sweet influence of thy holy life; upon thy death-bed, thou shalt sett with the sweetest and brightest beams of all heavenly comfort, into the immeasurable Ocean of endless joyes.

Thou shalt be bold, because there is hope; and thou shalt digge Pits, and shalt lye downe safely.] Thou shalt be assured of Heaven, and a Crowne of Glory hereafter, that thou shalt walke through this Valley of Miserie like a Lyon; nor Devill, nor man, nor beast, nor any creature, shall affright or amaze thee. Cast thine eyes, supernaturally enabled, and enlarged with the Light of Faith, from East to West, into the bottome of Hell, and glory of Heaven; and thou shalt clearely see, that all is thine, by the purchase, right, and conquest of the Sonne of God: The stones in the street shall be
and perpetuall Guide.

be at league with thee, the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee: The creatures shall be all sworne to thy safetie; the purest spirits, the ministers of God, shall be thy Guardians; Saints and Angels are alreadie in thy sight; Immortalitie hath lengthened thy dayes, and the glory of God is before thee in a Glasse.

When thou doest take thy rest, none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee.] When the darkness of the Night encompasseth thee, thou shalt not be affrighted with terrors and apparitions; when blackness and silence, the habitation of feares and astonishment, shall pitch round about thee, thou shalt be lightsome with inward comfort; when all thy Sences, the scouts and watch-men for discovering dangers, and preserving thy safetie, shall be locked up; his providence, that neither slumbers nor sleepe, shall tenderly and carefully watch over thee; whether thou die or live, whether thou sleepe or wake, thou art the Lords: And therefore, when thou sleepest, thou shalt not be afraid; and when thou sleepest, thy sleepe shall be sweet: Thou shalt not fear for any sudden feare, neither for the destruction of the wicked, when it commeth; for the Lord shall be for thy assurance, and shall keepe thy foot from being caught.

Yea, many shall make suit unto thee.] Thou shalt be so encompassed with the blessings of God, so protected from above, so high in Gods favour, that many will come for shadow and shelter unto thee; they will looke for relieve and comfort under the shadow of thy wings, thy power and (m 2) authori
authoritie shall be a refuge and repose for oppressed and disgraced innocencie.

All these blessings, and a thousand more, are built upon a through preparation of the heart, as upon the first foundation stone: Preparation is the very first step to all these degrees, and height of happiness.

But on the contrarie part, if a man neglect preparing his heart, praying unto God, forsaking his sinnes, reforming his family; let him looke for nothing but Curses and Plagues.

*But the eyes of the wicked (faith Job) shall fail, and their refuge shall perish: and their hope shall be sorrow of minde.] They thinke, their formall and customary service of God will serve the turne: and thereupon, with great greedinesse and confidence, expect and looke for the salvation of their soules after this life: but they shall waile, and gaze, untill their eyes sinke into their holes, and yet shall never be able to taste of true comfort: They may cry untill their tongues cleave to the roofe of their mouth, with the foolish Virgins; Lord, Lord, open unto us, Math. 25. but the Gate of everlasting happiness shall forever be shut against them: They may struggle and strive, by the strength of their good meanings, and formall Christianitie, to enter in at the strait Gate, but shall never be able.

*Their refuge shall perish.] They have stayed themselves upon broken staves of Reed, and now they will runne into their hands and hearts too, unto their vexation and horror.

And
And perpetuall Guide.

Their hope shall be sorrow of minde. Their end shall be despair, and horrible confusion.

I have stayed long upon the motives and inducements to preparation, before we come to the hearing of the Word, or undergo any sacred business; and upon the necessity, blessings, and benefits of so holy a duty. The reason is, I would gladly stirre you up, and myself too, to a thorough and constant practice and performance of it: and, because the neglect and omission of it, is the cause that the Ministerie of the Word is not onely fruitlesse, and in vaine, unto thousands; but (which is a fearefull thing) the favour of death unto death unto them.

I come now to the speciall points considerable in preparation, before we present ourselves in this place to the hearing of the Word.

This preparation is an holy action, or exercise, which by examination of our Consciences, purgation of our hearts, prayer unto God, and private reading the Scriptures, maketh our soules fit Vessels to receive and entertaine the spirituall Treasures of Grace, and food of eternall Life, offered and tendered unto us by the Ministerie of the Word; that so they may be the more effectually and fruitfully wrought upon, and happily subdued to the power and practice thereof.

In this preparation, I consider and require especially these foure things: first, Examination of the Conscience; secondly, Purgation of the heart; thirdly, Prayer unto God; fourthly, Readinesse of heart, to receive every truth.

First, 

(m 3)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Saints Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>166</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Extraordinarie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In time of publick calamities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 When our families are visited with some speciall judgement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 When wee our selves are afflicted in particular.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First, for Examination of the Conscience.

Examination is a duty practisiable by all true Christians, at many times, and upon sundry occasions.

It is either more extraordinarie; and that is, either in the time of solemne Fast, and generall humiliation, for some publick Plague and calamity that lyes upon the State or Church. Wee are then seriously to search and ransacke throughly our Consciences, that wee may throw that or those finnes out of our affections, practice, and allowance, which have their part in pulling downe those publick Plagues upon us.

Or, secondly, when our family is singled out, and visited with some speciall and extraordinarie scourge, and judgement: and then must we make an impartiall inquisition into our hearts: lest we be the Achans, which by our secret finnes provoke Gods causefull wrath.

Or, when our selves in a more private and particular manner, are afflicted with some speciall vexation; as, by some maladie and miserie in our bodies, with some terrors and feares in our minds; or with some flanders, disgraces, and imputations upon our good names: when Gods hand is upon us any of these wayes, wee are presently to conceive, that the finnes of our soules are the true cau- ses of all the miseries and crosses which befall us any manner of wayes; and therefore wee are narrowly and exactly to enquire into our selves, and to cast out our secret beloved finnes, those lurking rebels, the breeders of all our woe.

Besides,
Besides, examination of our hearts in these or the like cases; there is also a more ordinarie and usuall examination necessarie, and required of us, and that especially every day; that we may make the Score of our sinnes lesse, and our account shorter, against the Day of our Visitation; that wee may more entirely and comfortably preserve and enjoy Gods favour and protection, inward peace of Conscience, spirituall joy, and Christian cheerfulnesse in all our affaires and passages.

2 Before wee come to receive, and be partakers of the holy Sacrament of the sacred body and bloud of Christ, left by neglect and omission of this dutie, we become unworthy receivers, and so eate and drinke our owne judgement, and damnation; nay, be guiltie of the innocent and precious bloud of Christ Iesus; which one day will be an heavie and unsupportable burthen to our Consciences. To be guiltie of the sinfull bloud of prophane men, is able to make the proudest heart and highest stomacke to tremble and quake like an Aspen leafe, and to strike through his soule; with restlesse horror, and gaslty lights. Who is able then to beare the guilt of guiltlesse bloud? Abels innocent bloud cryed for and pulled downe strange and desperate vengeance upon cruel Cains. How loud then will be the crie of the bloud of the innocent Lambe of God? How will it ring in the eares of God the Father? How fearefully will it fill Heaven and Earth, untill it hath brought downe Plagues and Curfes upon those wofull Soules, who irreverently and
Before we hear the Word preached.

3

The second duty besides hearing, is purging of our hearts.

The Saints sure

unpreparedly prophane so high and holy a mysterie?

A third ordinarie examination, is before wee press into the House of God, and present our selves before his Ministers and Messengers, to be instructed in his will from Heaven, out of his holy Word; lest this blessed Ordinance should be accurséd unto us. You may see in the Prophet Ezek. 14. 7, 8. how the Lord threatens that person that comes to his Ministers to enquire of them, or to be informed by them, and yet separates himselfe from the Lord, and sets up any Idoll in his heart, and stumbling-blocke of his iniquitie, before his face; that the Lord will set his face against him, and make him a signe and a Proverbe, and cut him off from the midst of his people. Whence wee may well inferre, that it will be very dangerous for any to come to the hearing of the Word, without examination of his heart, whether there be any such stumbling-blocke of iniquitie in it, or no.

2 Because that examination of the heart, to finde out our corruptions, tends especially to the cleansing of it; therefore the second dutie before the hearing of the Word, is the purgation or cleansing of the heart, first, from sinne; which the Scripture beats much upon, Jam. 1. 21. Lay apart all filthinesse and superfluitie of naughtinesse, and receave with meekenesse the ingrafted Word, &c. It is not meereuly lay apart, but put away quite and cleane all filthinesse: and this is a fit preparative for the hearing of the Word, as appeares also by that parallel
Therefore putting away all malice, all guile and hypocrisy, and envy, and evil speakings, as new-born babes desire the sincere Milke of the Word. And there is the same reason for any other sinne to be put away, that there is for these mentioned. As it is with the body, when the stomack is foule, and clogged with bad humours, we should first purge it, before wee feede it; for otherwise, whatsoever we eat, doth but nourish and encrease the corrupt humours of the body: So it is with the soule, when it is stuffed or clogged with sinne; whatsoever is heard in the Ministry of the Word, shall be perverted and abused by it, and wrested to the destruction of it.

It is no wonder therefore, that those that live in dissolute or scandalous courses, those that are drunk on the evening before the Lords day, or spend it in gaming, or company keeping, or have bin acting of some foule sinne, and then repair unto the Word; it is no wonder, I say, that such goe away never a whit the better, but rather worse than they came. Did you ever know any Salve so soveraigne, that would cure a wound that had a splint or an arrow-head remaining in it? Surely, every knowne sinne unrepentent of, hinders the saving operation of the Word in any mans heart; yea, it will make the Word the favour of death unto a man. See to this purpose, Jer. 7. 9, 10.

Secondly, the heart must also be purged from all worldly cares and thoughts, which may divide or draw away the heart: Math. 13. 22. The cares of the World doe choake the Seed of the Word: Luke
Luke 21.34. The cares of this life do set the heart. Now, as it is with a man in a surfeit, hee is not fit to eat, neither can he digest any wholesome food: so, when as the heart is surfeited with worldly cares, it is unfit for any spiritual food. You know how it was with Martha, Luke 10.41. Jesus said unto Martha; Thou art troubled about many things, but one thing is necessarie: Martha had a clutter of many worldly matters, that made a great noise in her head, and hindered better matters, that she cared not for hearing.

How then shall they profit by the Word, that doe jumpe out of their worldly businesse, and from burying their heads about their callings, into the House of God, to heare and to performe the Exercises of Religion? Truly, though they be never so diligent in hearing, yet their hearts will goe after their covetousnesse, Ezech. 33.31.

3 A third dutie before the hearing of the Word, is Prayer; no good thing can be expected from God, as a blessing, if it be not sought by prayer, Deut. 4.7. and wee finde it layd downe as a condition required, Prov. 2.1,2,3, &c. My sonne, if thou wilt receive my words, and encline thine ear to wisdome, and apply thy heart to understanding; yea, if thou cryest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, then shalt thou understand the feare of the Lord, and finde out the knowledge of God. The reason is, Vers. 6. For the Lord giveth wisdome, and out of his mouth commeth knowledge and understanding. Because the Lord gives knowledge, therefore you must cries for it unto him. What is
is the reason that you do pray for your daily Bread, and a blessing upon it? Why, Deut. 8. 3. Man lives not by Bread only, &c? If this be so, much more ought you to pray for a blessing upon your spiritual food.

Now for the particulars: First, you ought to pray for the Teachers, that they may so speak as they ought to speak, Col. 4. 3, 4. so they are to pray for the power and peace of the Ministrie, 2 Thess. 3. 1, 2. Secondly, you must pray for yourselves, that through God’s assistance you may hear profitably, and be blessed in the hearing: John 3. 27. No man can receive any thing, except that it be given him from above. Therefore David prayed, Psal. 119. 18. Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wonderful things contained in thy Word. Isaiah 48. 17. God saith, ‘I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit.’ Therefore no profiting by the Word, without seeking unto the Lord for it.

Now the prophaneness of people in this case, is the general cause that our Ministrie doth no more good: Few pray at all before they come to Church, either for the Minister, or for themselves; nay, few, even when they are in the Church, have any heart to joynewith the Preacher in the prayer that he makes before the Sermon: But the complaint of the Prophet may be taken up in this case, Isaiah 64. 7. There is none that calleth on thy Name, that stirreth up himselfe to take hold of thee.

4. You must be sure to go with an open heart, readie to receive every truth that God shall teach you.
you in this Ordinance. Acts 17. 11. it is said of those noble Bereans, that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, i. readiness to receive every truth. And Cornelius said, Acts 10. 33. We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. It is well added (that are commanded thee of God;) not what any Minister shall teach, be he never so good, or so learned; nay, were he an Angell from Heaven, yet his Doctrine must be examined, Gal. 1. 8. But when there is such a disposition in us, as to receive both in judgement and practice whatsoever God shall reveal unto us out of his Word; this is a precious disposition.

But, alas, the most come to hear with prejudicate and fore-stalled hearts, they beare a secret grudge, and quarrell, against some strict Truth, or other; as, against the sanctification of the Lords Day, or Family-duties, or secret communion with the Lord, by prayer dayly, &c. And these imaginations seeme as strong Holds, to keepe Christ and his Truth out of their hearts, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. And thus men, that in their hearing doe limit the Spirit of God, would (if it lay in their power) say as those wicked men, Isay 30. 10. to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesse not right things unto us; speake unto us smooth things: And those that said so, the Lord calls them despisers of his Word.

These are the maine and principall duties before the hearing of the Word.

Secondly,
Secondly, let me proceed briefly to those duties that are required in the hearing of the Word: Which we must rather stirre up our selves unto, because we have naturally uncircumcised hearts, _Ier. 6. 10._ and are dull of hearing, _Heb. 5. 11._

Now the principal duties in hearing, are five; which I will briefly set downe, as may be.

1. You must set yourselves in God's presence, whilst you are hearing of his Word: and consider with your selves, that it is God that you have to deale withall in this business, and not man; and that it is God's Word, and not mans. It is the great commendation of the Theffalonians, _1 Thess. 2. 13._ that they received the Word as the Word of God. This was that whereby the Lord would prepare his people to receive the Law, _Exod. 20._ God spake all these words. And hee not onely gave the Law, but the whole summe of the Gospel with his owne voice, _Mat. 3. 17._ Loe a voice from Heaven, saying, _This is my beloved Sonne, in whom I am well-pleased._ Yea, it is the Lord himselfe that speaks unto you in our Ministry, _Luke 10. 16._ So the Lord is present in a special manner, where his Word is preached, to obserue and marke how it is received, or delivered; and either to bleffe or curse the hearers, or speakers, accordingly. So that of this and such like places, it may be said as _Jacob said of Bethel,_ _Gen. 28. 16, 17._ Surely, the Lord is in this place: and, _How dreadfull is this place? This is no other than the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven._

And
And truly, this apprehension of God's presence in the Assemblies of his people, will work three things in us.

First, keep us in that awful and reverent disposition of body and mind that is meet.

Secondly, it will preserve our hearts from roving and wandering thoughts, which are great impediments of hearing; Psal. 119. 113. I hate vain thoughts, but thy Law do I love.

Thirdly, it will make us to receive and obey that which shall be taught us; for so God hath been wont to prepare his people, to receive his Word: yea, he said of his people, when they were thus affected, Deut. 15. 29. Oh that there were such an heart in them, to fear me and keep my Commandments always.

Now the want of this, is that which hinders abundance of benefit that the Ministerie of the Word would otherwise doe us: This is the root of all the mischief the Devil doth to poor souls, in the hearing of the Word; the practice thereof, is the fountain of all our good. Many graceless wretches there are in our Assemblies, like him, Luke 18. 2. that neither feared God, nor regarded man; that despise the Church of God, yea, contemne the presence of the holy Angels, (1 Cor. 11. 10.) and of God himselfe in the Assemblies, who hath layd such a speciall charge upon us, Lev. 26. 2. to kepe his Sabbaths, and to reverence his Sanctuary; and he addes this reason, I am Jehovah.

2 The second dutie in hearing, is diligent attention.
and perpetuall Guide.

attention to that we heare: as it is said of our Sa-
vior Christ, Luke 19. 48. The people were very
attentive to heare him; or, as it is in the Originall,
they hanged on him: as if their cares and mindes
had beene tyed to his tongue; there was such a
dependencie upon him. And that is a remark-
able place, Ezech. 40. 4. Sonne of man, behold with
thine eyes, and heare with thine cares, and set thine
heart upon all that I shall shew thee. See what at-
tention is required: Hee bids him set his eyes
and his cares, and his heart and all, upon that hee
speakes; and not upon some things onely, but
upon all that hee should declare unto him. So
Prov. 4. 20, 21, 22. My sonne attend unto my words,
incline thine care unto my sayings, keepe them in the
midst of thine heart, for they are life to those that finde
them: i. looke as a condemned man will hearken
to the Sentence of the Prince; every word hee
speakes, being life or death: As the servants of
Benhadad, when they were in their enemies power;
1 King. 20. 33. they observed diligently whether
any word of comfort would come from him, and
they did hastily catch it. Thus, with such di-
ligence and attention, such poore condemned
creatures (as wee are) are to heare the Word of
God.

Now to quicken attention, these meanes are
profitable.

First, it is good to doe as they did, Luke
4. 20. They fastened their eyes upon Christ;
so doe ye upon the Minifter, and suffer them
not to wander up and downe: A wandering
eye
eye is always a sure evidence of a wandering heart.

Secondly, if ye doe not thus, it will be a good helpe for those that can write, to note the Word, as Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah; Jer. 36. 4. This holds the minde close to all that is said. Some object indeed, that it hinders affection in hearing: but though it may doe so in some, for the present; yet afterwards it will worke more lasting affections upon the Word. Onely they that use this helpe-means, must be careful that they doe not presume upon their Notes so, as to neglect the recalling of what they have heard, (as many use to doe) and so lose all holy affections, and that impression that the Word would make upon their hearts.

Thirdly, entreat the Lord to open thy heart, as he opened Lydia's heart, Acts 16. 14. Our hearts are shut up quite, and cannot attend unto anything that is good, except that the Lord opens them.

Observe then another cause, why the Word is so unfruitfull unto many. Some are like the deafe Adders, that stop their eares against the voice of the Charmer, Psal. 58. 4, 5. And some sleepers there are, that faile in their attention, that the Devill usually rocks asleepe, when they come to heare; but they that are such, should know, that their damnation sleepes not, the Devill sleepes not: he comes to the Assemblies, to picke up the good Seed that is sowne; nay, he comes to picke up their soules indeed: for he cares not so much for
for the Seed, but he will take your selves napping and your soules especially, and carry them to Hell. Besides, let them remember what befell Eutychus, Acts 20. 9, 10. he slept at a long Sermon, that lasted till midnight; but he was taken up dead, falling from the third Loff to the ground: What shall become of such then, that sleepe in the day time, at a Sermon of an houre long? And let them also take heed of that spirit of slumber, that the Lord hath threatened to pourse upon the despi-fers of the Word, Isai 29. 9, 10. The like might be said of our gazers and gapers about, and those that by their talking disturbance others, and hinder themselves: they shut their eares, and turne them away from God; and may justly expect, that he shall turne away his eares from them: as it is threatened, Prov. 2. 8, 9. Zach. 7. 13.

3 You must heare the Word with understanding and judgement; i. labour to understand what wee heare: And to this end, the Minister must have a speciall care to teach plainly, so as he may be understood, Neh. 8. 8. And Christ calls upon his hearers for this; Math. 15. 10. Heare, and understand: How should we else profit by that we heare? Acts 8. 36. Understandest thou what thou readest (faith Philip to the Eunuch:) so say thou to thine owne heart; Understandest thou what thou hearest?

Now the meanes to understand the Word, are these. First, come to the Word, with a willing minde to learne: you know the Eunuch, Acts 8. though

Heare with understanding.
he understood not what he read, yet because he had a minde to learne, how the Lord provided for him, and what a comfortable success Philip Ser-
mon had with him: Men love to teach willing schollers; so doth God, when we come with willing and readie mindes to be taught.

Secondly, exercise your selves in the truth of God, Heb. 5. last; you must by continuall use, get your senses exercised to discerne both good and evil; but especially, be well acquainted with the principles and grounds of Catechisme; it is the want of this, that makes men that they understand not what is preached: They that are not first well nourished with Milke, will not be fit to receive and digest stronger meat: if the foundation be not well layd, it is in vaine to build.

Thirdly, walke according to Light; Psal. 111. 10. A good understanding have all they, that doe his Com-
mandements: Then, if thou wouldest get a good understanding, and know the mysterie of godli-
nesse, walke according to knowledge, impoy that little knowledge thou hast well, and then there is a promise to give thee more.

Fourthly, be diligent in instructing and teaching thy family: If thou art set over others, a little knowledge will encrease greatly, by this means. Gen. 18: 17, 19. the Lord said; Shall I hide anything from Abraham? No: And hee gives this reason; I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keepe the way of the Lord. If you teach your families, God will teach you.

Well;
Well; there are a sort of doltish hearers, that will heare, and seeme to be very attentive, from yeeres end to yeeres end, and be never a whit the wiser, 2 Tim. 3. 7. The heavie judgement of God is upon many of them, that is mentioned, Math. 13. 14. And in them is fulfilled the Prophesie of Isay, By hearing ye shall heare, and shall not understand; and that, Isay 27. 11. It is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them, shall not save them; and he that formed them, shall shew them no favour.

4. You must heare the Word with affection, and delight. It is said of Gods people in the Primitive Church, that they heard the Word gladly; and of Christis hearers; Mark. 12. 37. they heard him gladly: And it is noted for a great signe of grace, to heare the Word gladly, Psal. 119. 162. I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoyle. David had beene a souldier; and ye know, that they that have lyen at the siege of a Citie a long time, and at the last take it, will rejoice exceedingly in the spoyle of it: therefore he rejoices in the Word, as they that doe divide the spoyles. And truly, whereas common people complains of the badnesse of their memories, this would be a marvellous helpe to their memories, if they would heare with delight: therefore David sayth, Psal. 119. 16. I will delight my selfe in thy Statutes, I will not forget thy Word. This delight he meanes will strengthen our memories.

Now contrarie to this, are a great number, (n 2)
that hear without all delight, and account it a great weariness, *Mal. 1. 13.* and those the dullest hours, that they spend in hearing. Well, the Lord hath threatened, that the Word shall never doe us good, unlesse that wee attend to it with love and delight, 2 *Theff. 2. 10, 11.* Because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved; therefore God shall send them strong delusions, to believe Lyes. A fearefull threatening, much to be considered in these dayes: For this is the reason, that Popish trumperies and hellish delusions have such entertainment, because God in his just judgement, gives up those to such strong delusions, that love not the strict Truth of the Word of God.

5 You must hear the Word, with application of it to your owne hearts, and lives; apply every truth to yourselfes, for your owne use and comfort, and terror and instruction: as it is Job 5. last. **Heare this, and know it for thy selfe,** carry this truth home to thine owne heart: And,

First, there is no truth of God taught out of his Word, but it concerns every one of Gods people, and was intended for our use; *Rom. 15. 4.* **Whatsoever is written, is written for our learning.**

Secondly, there is no truth can be taught, to doe us good, unlesse that wee apply it: as no Plaister can doe the Patient good, unlesse it be applyed; no meat is able to doe us any good, be it dressed never so curiously, unlesse it be eaten and digested. This comparison is applyed by the Prophet
and perpetuall Guide.

Prophet to this purpose, Isa. 55. 2. Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good: unless we eate it, it will doe us no good.

Thirdly, the faithfull have been wont to apply all to themselves; as every member of the body drawes nourishment from the stomacke, to make it his owne: to which the Apostle alludes, Eph. 4. 16. So the Disciples of our Saviour did, Math. 26. 21, 22. When our Saviour had said, that one of them should betray him, they were exceeding sorrowfull, and began every one of them to say unto him; Lord, is it I?

And surely, the want of this application, is one great cause that the Word profits not, because they beleve it not, nor apply the Word unto themselves: Heb. 4. 2. The word preached did not profit them, because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Now one principall worke of faith, is to apply those things that are delivered in the Word: But this, the most hearers doe exceedingly faile in; either not applying, or mis-applying of the truth; shifting off all upon others, and taking little or nothing to themselves. As wee have a notable example of this, Rom. 1. ult. compared with Rom. 2.1. In the former place, the Apostle speakes of some, that knowing the judgement of God, That those that doe such things, are worthy of death; yet not onely doe such things, but take pleasure in those that doe them: yet in the beginning of the next Chapter, you find the same men judging and condemning of others; yet thinking and
perswading themselves, that they (being guiltie of the same sinnes) shall escape the judgement of God. Why? but because they apply not to themselves, but mis-apply to others the things they heare.

Many such hearers there are in these dayes, which are very cunning in shifting off the threatenings of God against their owne Drunkennesse, and Whore-dome, and Swearing, &c. yet very apt to pinne the same Word upon others. Well, these are not wise for themselves, and all their hearing shall doe them no good. Thus much of the duties required in hearing.

Now follow those duties that are required after hearing. And these are chiefely thus.

1. Wee must be very carefull to remember and keepe that which wee have heard, Prov. 4. 4. My sone, let thine heart retaine my words: and, Vers. 21. Kepe them in the midst of thine heart. As a man that hath a Jewell, will be carefull to locke it up in the safest Cheft hee hath, lest it should be stolne away: Which is the very comparison of the Wise-man, Prov. 6. 20, 21. So Mary, Luke 2. 51. kept all the sayings in her heart: and David, Psal. 119. 11. hid the Commandements in his heart: and hee gives the reason; That hee might not sinne against the Lord. And the truth is, that as meat that is eaten, if it remains not in the stomacke, it will never doe us good: so the best spirituall food that can be, except it be retained by us, will not profit us: Luke 8. 15. The good Ground are they, which
and perpetuall Guide.

with an honest and good heart having heard the word, keepe it, &c.

Many there are, that are very careless of this dutie: They thinke they have discharged themselves abundantly, if they heare the whole Sermon attentively; as though there were nothing more required at their hands: Like our Saviours hearers, Math.22.22. when they heard him, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way: but wee never heare more of them. So many heare desirously, and with open and greedie eares: but, as wee say, it goes in at one eare, and out at another; it stays not for any after-use, but a little present admiration. Others heare, and the Word smites them a little on their Consciencs, and wounds; and one would thinke, some good thing would be wrought upon them: but they goe away, and the motion dyes. They are as men that are Sce- ficke, whilest the Word humbles them, and makes their Consciencs to wamble within them; but they are as whole as a Fish, when as they are once landed at the Church doore: Or like unto Mettals, which are soft and plyable, whilest they are in the fire; so these are in the hearing: but shortly they loose all the efficacie of the Word, and become harder than before.

Well, let us in the seare of God, hearken diligently to the words of the Holy-Ghoft, Heb.2.1. That mee ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that mee have heard, lest at any time wee should let them slip, or runne out (like riven Vessels:)

(n 4) Why,
Why; what is the danger? How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?

2. Wee must meditate and seriously think of that that we have heard; that is more than remembering. There is a great deale of difference betwixt the possessing of goods, and the using and employing of them for our benefit; betwixt the laying up of garments in our Wardrobes, and the wearing of them upon our backs, to keep us warme: this latter is done by meditation, Prov. 6. 22, 23. My sonne, binde the Commandements continually upon thy heart, and tie them about thy necke: It is a phrase of speech borrowed from garments that are bound about the body; for meditation bindes the Word close to the heart. It is said of Mary, Luke 2. 19. that shew pondered the words of the Angel in her heart: and David was frequent in this dutie, Psal. 119. 15. I will meditate in thy Precepts (faith he:) And it was Pauls advice to Timothy, 1 Tim. 4. 15. Meditate upon these things, give thy selfe wholly to them, that thy profiting may appeare to all.

First, this is the way to make men profit by the Word of God; and that so evidently, that all may take notice of it, this is one great benefit of the Word meditated upon, 10sh. 1. 8. Thou shalt meditate in the Booke of the Law day and night: To what end? That thou mayest observe to doe according to all that is written therein.

Secondly, this course will argue unfained love unto the Word, Psal. 119. 97. Oh how I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day.

Thirdly,
Thirdly, this will greatly encrease our comfort in the Word, and cause us to feele much more sweetnesse in it, even as the chewing of our meat makes us to taste much more sweetnesse in it. *Psal. 119. 15, 16.* he faith; I will meditate on thy Precepts, and have respect unto thy wayes, I will delight my selfe in thy Statutes: Meditation ever brings with it delight.

Fourthly, this will greatly encrease our knowledge: *Psal. 119. 99.* I have more understanding than my teachers: Why? because thy testimonies are my meditation.

Now, if this be required after hearing; how is it possible that they should profit by the Word, that never scarcely think of it afterwards? It is noted of the Disciples, that though they had seene Christs mightie power in the miracle of the Loaves; yet because they considered not the miracle, their hearts were hardened: i. because they did not meditate upon it, they were never the better for it. And thus it usually speedes with those that are careless in the performing of this dutie.

3 Wee must conferre of that wee have heard, and repeat it amongst our selves, and examine the Scriptures about the truth of that that is deliv-ered. I joyne them all together; for so they may well be, in the practice of them. For conference, *David faith,* *Psal. 119. 172.* My tongue shall speake of thy word, for all thy Commandements are righteousnesse. This was ordinarily practised by the Disciples of our Saviour Christ, when he had taught how
how hardly rich men shall be saved, Mark. 10. 26. They were astonished out of measure, and said amongst themselves, who then can be saved? So they conferred about another Sermon of our Saviour, Joh. 16. 17, 18.

Now repetition of Sermons is especially required of them that have families, to repeat the Word unto them: Deut. 11. 18, 19. You shall lay up these my words in your hearts, and you shall teach them your children; speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house: yea, it is said to be the chiefest thing that the Lord had respect unto, in giving us his Word, and the knowledge thereof, that we might instruct our families in it. Deut. 4. 10. Gather ye my people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me, and may teach their children. And this, if it were practised carefully, would both make children and servants more careful to heare and to attend unto the publike Ministry; and better our memories, that we may be much better able to retaine that which we heare: and it will also worke an inward sensing in us and our children, of that which we have heard. Therefore, Deut. 6. 6, 7. it is called the whetting of them upon our children; repetition doth set an edge upon their dulnesse.

Yea further, for the searching and examining of the Scriptures, we are commanded, 1 Thef. 5. 21. to try all things, and to hold fast that which is good. And the example of those noble Bereans is commended unto us, Acts 17. 11, 12. that searched the Scriptures dayly, concerning those things that
that were delivered by Paul: Therefore many of them believe.

Therefore it is a grievous neglect, that people in these days are guilty of; that neither conferre concerning the Word, they are ashamed of it, and (which is a fearsfull reproach unto them) the Word of God is a reproach unto them, 1er. 6. 10. nor yet repeat Sermons in their families; they are like Martha, Luke 10. 41. troubled about so many worldly occasions: nor yet examine and search the Scriptures: And therefore are easily carried about with every winde of Doctrine, and never established and settled in the Truth.

4. Wee are to put in practise whatsoever we hear, till that our hearts and lives are quite changed by it: 1am. 1. 22. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers onely, deceiving your owne soules: i. they cozen themselves by false reasonings and arguments, or by sophistickall Syllogismes, reasoning after this or the like manner.

He that heares the word, is a good Christian.
But I heare the word, &c.
Or thus:
He that heares not, shall be damned.
But I heare the Word:
Therefore I shall be saved.

But how doth this follow? For though the neglect or contempt of the Word is sufficient to condemn a man, yet the hearing of the Word is not sufficient to save a man.

Well, obedience is the end of hearing, Deut. 5. 1. Heare, O Israel, the Statutes which I speake in
Your cares this day, that ye may learn them, and keep them, and doe them. The like ye finde, 1am.1.25. Yea, obedience to the Word must be speedie, without any delays, or procrastinations; as it is said of the Colossians, Col.1.6. that the Gospel brought forth fruit in them, from the very day they heard it, and knew the grace of God in truth.

And the Prophet David resolved, Psal.119.60. I made haste, and prolonged not the time to keepe thy Commandments. And this is a singular frame of heart; because the putting of the Word in practice immediately, is a great advantage to the hearer: seeing then, the affections of the heart are quicke, and lively, which with delays dye, and decay very suddenly.

Now, alas, for the wonderfull paucitie of such obedient hearers; for very few doe practice any thing they heare, leave any sinne, or doe any dutie: and therefore they must needs prove like the House built on the Sand; when the time of tryall shall come, they must needs fall, Math.7.27. Againe, there are many that in hearing have good motions and purposes, but they are like the sluggard, that said, Rest a little slumber, yet a little sleepe; so, because they delay, they vanish and come to nothing: of whom, in respect of their spirituall povertie, it may be said which Salomon speakes;

His povertie shall come as one that travelles, and his want as an armed man.

AN
AN APPENDIX
OR ADDITION
to this Treatise of the
WORD.

PROV. 13. 13.
He that despieth the Word, shall be destroyed.

By the occasion of which words, let our Christian meditations be a little fastened upon the greatness of the sinne of contempting and despising of the Word. My meaning is, not to handle it as a Text, but only to take a hint, to begin to lay downe the danger of this epidemicall and ordinarie disease, that so exceedingly spreads in these dayes; and then to adde some meanes and directions, to make us to be preparedly and profitably converfant about so great an Ordinance as the hearing of the Word.

WE of this Land (let us now open our eyes to see it) have certainly most fearefully and cursedly sinned against God, and provoked his fierce wrath against us, by contempt
contempt of his holy Word; by shutting our eyes against the heavenly Light of the Gospel, which hath beene brought amongst us; by not prizing the Ministerie which we have now enjoyed a long time, nor profiting by it: nay, by wicked opposing it, with secret persecution at the least, and cruel mockings.

In the first place, consider the crie of this sinne, and the curses it brings, from such places as these.

First, Isa. 29. 11. and both before, and after: And the vision of all (saith the Prophet) is become unto you as the words of a Booke that is sealed, &c. So may I justly say: All the visions, revelations, discoveries of the mysterie of Christ, opening of all Gods counsels; all the expositions, interpretations, applications of the Ministry of most places, have beene unto the most of us; a fearefull thing I speake, but most true, and to be lamented with teares of bloud; as the words of a Booke that is sealed, which they deliver to one that can reade, saying, Reade this, I pray thee: Then shall he say, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the Booke is given to him that cannot reade, saying, Reade this, I pray thee: and he shall say, I cannot reade. That is, all the Sermons they shall heare, and all the heavenly Messages are brought them from God, shall be as a sealed Booke to a learned man, or an open Booke unto an Ideot. They shall stare in the face of the Minister, when he is clearly unfolding the great mysterie of godlinesse, and shall not be able to understand him; they shall have their owne Conscience unript to the quicke, by
by the power of the Word, and shall not perceive it; they shall have their sweet sinne discovered, and damned unto the pit of Hell, by evident and unanswerable demonstration out of the Booke of God, and yet have no power to leave it: For the vision of the Prophets (faith the Prophet in the forecited Chapter) is become unto them as the words of a Booke sealed up. And therefore, all the Doctrine of salvation, though it drop upon them as the raine, and still as the deaw, shall be but unto their hearts as unto the hardest rockes; all holy admonitions and reproves, as arrowes shot against a stone-wall; all sacred Lessons offered and urged upon their Consciences, be as a Scale stampt upon water, which receives no impression. O most woufull and fearefull estate!

Secondly, Isa. 28.9. Whom shall he teach knowledge, &c. This is not as many understand it, That people must have a little by little preached unto them, but it is a curse upon them. As if he should say: They are nothing fitter to the discipline of the knowledge of God, than infants newly weaned, to receive any instruction. For Precept must be upon Precept, &c. Vers. 10. As if he should say: They must be taught as little children, a little at once, and have oft repeated over and over; and yet they can learne nothing to doe them good, chiefly concerning their repentance, and escaping Gods Judgements: I would to God it were not too evident, by long and dolefull experience; That our Ministry hath done leffe good amongst the elder sort, and men of much worldly wisedome, for bringing
bringing them to any sound and comfortable knowledge in God's Word, than amongst little children.

Thirdly, *Ezek. 33. 30, 31, 32, 33*. And loe, thou art unto them as a very lovely Song of one that hath a pleasant voice; &c. And is it not so with us? That even to some that seeme to be friends, and to delight in the Ministerie, the Word is become as if it had lost all power to turne them from their sinne, to the holy way; from plausible formalitie, to saving forwardnesse. Heare a Character of them, *Isa. 58. 2*. Yet they seeke me dayly, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteousness, and forsooke not the Ordinance of their God: they aske of me the Ordinances of Justice, they take delight in approaching to God. They may heare the Word gladly, as Herod did, and perhaps observe the Messenger, &c. but they will not stirre an ynit further from sinne, and neerer to God: say what he will, let him preach out his heart, they will still hugge their bosome-sinne, and hold exactly their heartlesse formes and formall fashions in Religion, after five thousand Sermons: They are all unto them, as a lovely Song of one that hath a sweet voice; and leave no more impression upon their Consciences, than a pleasant Lesson upon the Lute, upon the care, when it is ended.

Fourthly, *Ier. 23. 33*. And when this people, or a Prophet, or a Priest shall aske thee, saying, What is the burthen of the Lord? &c. Nay, hath not the cursed sinne of loathing this heavenly Manna, beene found among us? Hath not our much Preaching beene
beene accounted a burthen, a wearesomenesse, and a trouble? yea, as here it was once unto the Jewes; a matter of scorne, and reproach? The Lord complaines grievously, in the quoted place, of this sinne; how they tooke up this custome amongst them, concerning the faithfull preaching of all the true Prophets, to aske scoffingly; what is the burthen of the Lord? Thus making a scorne of all the right discoverie of their sinnes, and the sound denunciation of Gods Judgement, calling it by the name of a Burthen; the Lord chargeth them most severely, that they should not use that disdainefull speech any more. Hee tells them, how that they had perverted and abused the holy Word of the ever-living God, the Lord of Hosts: and withall directs them, what phrase of speech they should use, when they speake of his Word sent unto them by his true Prophets; That thus each should demand, in reverence of his Majestie: what hath the Lord answered; or, what hath the Lord spoken? And to leave off those reproachfull taunting tearmes, what is the burthen of the Lord? Or otherwise, hee would surely be avenged of them for this sinne; as we may see in the denunciation following.

Fifthly, Jer. 7. 4, 8, 9, 10, 11. Trust not in lying words, saying, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, &c. They rested upon the outward formes of Gods worship, without reformation. It is just our case. Many amongst us satisfie themselves, and thinke it will serve the turne for salvation, if they rest upon the Sabbath, heare the

(0) Word,
Word, receive the Sacrament, and conforme to the outward exercises of Religion; though they abide in their sinnes, and have no acquaintance at all with the power of the Word, the Mysterie of Christ, conversion to God, or holy conversation.

Sixthly, Isa. 6. 9, 10. Goe tell this people; Heare yee indeed, but understand not; see yee indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heauie, and shut their eyes, leſt &c. Oh, this is heauie, that a Minister should be sent to a further hardening of a people! And yet it is just with God, and they shall feele it on their Bed of Death. The Theefe on the Cross was converted with a piece of a Sermon, they are not wrought upon after many yeeres: therefore it is just with God, as an act of judgement, because they would not come in, after so long a time, to give them over to such judicial hardnesse.

Consider these things, and tremble all yee that have any wayes strucke at the face of Christ, by contempt of his Ministerie. For the humbling of your soules into the dust, for this horrible sinne; peruse in bleeding hearts, in secret, that blacke and bloudie Catalogue of fearefull provocations, which are ordinarily to be found in, and certainly set upon the Score of such as hate to be reformed under a conscionable Ministerie. Which made Christ say, Joh. 15. 22. If I had not come and spokenc unto them, &c.

1. Despising it; shutting their eyes against that glorious Light, crested in their faces, to leade
and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.

and perpetual Guide.
In testimonie and witness against them: This very dust shall be witness against them. Doe you thinke then, that their Sermons and Catechizing shall not? If the dust that they gathered by their paines, will be witness; what will all their Sermons, and praying, and such paines be? Now this sinne of despising the Word, is a sinne above that of Sodome. Ver. 15. Verily, it shall be more easie for Sodome and Gomorrah, in the Day of Judgement, than for that Citie.

2 Murmuring against it, Joh. 6. 41. Luk. 15. 2.
3 Cavilling against it, Acts. 13. 45.
4 Contemning it, Jer. 44. 16. Acts. 17. 18. What will this Babbler say? They accounted Pauls precious preaching, vaine babbling.
5 Mocking and scorning it, 2 Chron. 36. 16. Acts. 2. 13.
6 Persecuting it, Math. 10. 23. And so they become like mad Dogges throwne into a River, or tyed up in a Chaine, which doe snarl at, bite, and teare those that put out their hands to helpe, and set them free; fearing, they come to torture and to trouble them more. Lust so it is with many prophane wretches, which lye drowned in sinne, and chained in Sathans fetters: If a man put out his hand, by the Ministerie of the Word, to save them from sinking into Damnation, and to free them from the Snares of everlasting death; they rage and rayle, they barke and bite like mad Dogges, holding themselves to be disquieted, disgraced, and tormented before their time.

Thus
Thus you have scene the fixe Curses, and the fixe Sinnes, that the not profiting by the Word doth bring upon a people.

2 Now, in the second place, let me tender to your most serious thoughts some quickening Motives, for the stirring of you up to profit by the Word.

1 Some taken from the Word it selfe, the Minifterie whereof you have flighted.

What then is the blessed thing you have so wickedly abused? It is,


2 The Word of Truth, Eph. 1.13. There is error in all other Truths, whether Naturall, or Morall, or Politicall: and goe to any Art, there is weakness and infirmity in the baine of man, that there can be no certaintie, but here is all Truth, and here is infallibilitie, you need not doubt of any.

3 It is called the Word of Life, Phil. 2.16. All other Learning whatsoever, when it hath furnished you with ornaments and parts, it leaves your soules starke dead in finnes and trespasses. But this is a word of Life, it inspires spirituall Life, and brings eternall Life.

4 It is called a Word of Reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5.19. Let the Sea runne nothing but Gold, and let Heaven and Earth be turned into Gold and Silver, and offered unto God, it could not reconcile us. If all the creatures would lose their being,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Saints sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>be annihilated, and come to nothing; yet this could not save <em>Indus</em>, or any one reprobate: but the Word hath beene a blessed instrument, for reconciling many soules to God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 It is, as it were, an Epistle or Letter (as one of the Fathers calls it) written from God Almighty unto us miserable men; wherein he writes his Will and Word, and sends it to us: the Ministers are the readers of it, and they bring the newes from Heaven. And what is the matter of it? Concerning eternall life, or eternall death, concerning the good of your soules. Now, if you had a private Letter come from the King, concerning your advancement, or your deliverance and forgivenesse for some dangerous Treason, or both; how would you take this Letter, and how often would you reade it, with what willingness of affection? Now, here is an Epistle sent from Heaven, to advise you, that you are all Traitors and Rebels against Heaven; and yet here in this Letter, God offers the bloud of his Sonne, and you may be reconciled: and will you neglect it? This is the matter of this Epistle; it brings matter of deliverance from the greatest Curse that can befall the creature, and the greatest advancement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 It is the bottomelesse Treasurie of all high, sweet, and excellentest things: The Mysterie of the Trinitie, the Majestie of God, the Love of God, and of Christ; his sufferings, the Spirits workings, the happinesse of the Saints, and the glory of Heaven, &amp;c.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and perpetuall Guide.

7 It must be our Judge at the last day, Joh. 13. 48. Every honest Sermon, is but the Word of God unfolded; and a bunch of Arrowes wrapped up, and unfolded, are all one.

8 It onely can cure a wounded Conscience, the greatest calamitie that ever the heart of man was acquainted with; and that which no Arme of flesh, or created Power, no man or Angel, can ease at all.

9 In it onely are to be had Deeds and Evidences, to shew for eternall Life; and Acquittances, for discharge from eternall Death.

10 It hath faved all the soules that are in Heaven, Rom. 10. 13.

11 It onely is the object of divine and infused Faith. Humane testimonies and authorities beget onely humane Faith: Therefore you must reverence this Word.

2 Some Motives taken from the most fearefull and cursed estate of those who neglect and reject the Ministerie of the Word, hating to be reformed by it. Marke and take to heart thine unspeakable miserie, whosoever thou art, that despisest the Ministerie: Take a taste of it, in these passages.

1 They are deprived by this meanes of the love and favour of God, the onely fountain of all comfort, peace, and glory; which is infinitely the dearest and most unvaluable losse, that can be imagined.

2 Of their part and portion in the bloud of Christ; one drop whereof, is incomparably more
worth than Heaven and Earth, men and Angels, or the creatures of a thousand Worlds.

3 Of the fatherly protection, care, and providence of the blessed Trinity, the glorious guard of Angels, the comfortable communion of the blessed Saints, and all the sweet contentments that follow thence.

4 Of the quiet joy and tranquility of a good Conscience; a jewel far more worth than the whole World, were it all turned into one unvaluable Pearl of unvaluable price: and of all the heavenly illuminations, cherishments, and comforts, wherewith the Holy-Ghost is wont to visit and refresh the hearts of holy men.

5 Of the sweet peace and true contentment in this life, and of all comfortable right and religious interest to any of the creatures: For, without a good Conscience, there was never found joy in any man's heart, or sanctified enjoyment of any thing in the World; and never shall any man have a good Conscience, that gives allowance to any Lust, or lives delightfully in any sin.

6 Of a Crown of Life, the unspeakable joyes of Heaven, that immeasurable and endless comfort that there shall be had with all the children of God, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, all our Christian acquaintance; yea, with the Lord himself, and all Angels; with Christ our Saviour and Lambe, slain for us; the Prince of Glory; yea, the Glory of Heaven and Earth, and brightness of the everlasting Light, &c.
and perpetuall Guide.

To these privative consequents, add a serious consideration upon those terrible flaming places; Deut. 29. 19, 20. Prov. 1. 23, 24. Isa. 6. 9, 10. 1 Sam. 2. 25. Acts. 13. 46.

By continuing thy contempt, and rejecting the Light of the Gospel, thou mayest come, thou knowest not how soon, to sinne against the Holy-Ghost, as the Pharifes did, Math. 12. 24, 31.

For sinne against the Holy-Ghost may be committed as well,

1 By those, who although they doe acknowledge and confesse the Truth, which they doe blaspheme; yet they have not yet professed it, or given up their names to it, as were those Scribes and Pharifes: and there are many such in these dayes, who have not as yet given their name to the Truth, which yet notwithstanding being well knowne and acknowledged, they doe blaspheme.

2 As those, who have not only acknowledged in themselves the Truth that they blaspheme, but have professed the same before others, that are the favourers of Truth; as Iulian, Porphyrius, Alexander the Copper-smith, and many others: of which, you may see Heb. 6. & 10. So, many amongst us at this day.

3 Some taken from the survey of those judgements, which contempt of the Ministerie may bring upon the place where it is planted.

1 It may remove the Candlesticke, and be plagued with the utter losse of the Ministerie. Consider, Math. 8. 34. & 10. 13. & 21. 41.

2 They
2 They may have Prophets, but such as are fools; they may have men of the Spirit, but those that be mad, Hos. 9. 7. By a fool, is meant not a naturall, but spirituall fool, Prov. 1. 8. 1er. 4. 22. Isa. 5. 20. By mad, is understood not a man out of his wit, or distracted in minde, but he that like a mad Dogge rageth and rayleth against the Truth of God, and sinceritie of his Saints; which is a great judgement.

3 They may enjoy faithfull Teachers, but to their further hardening, as the Israelites did Isaiah, Isa. 6. 9, 10. Which of all other judgements that God can inflict in this life, is the most fearefull.

4 By this meanes, they may make sad the heart and affections of their Teachers, that they cannot with that chearfulnesse as they desire, perfore the offices of their Ministerie: Which as it discourageth the Teachers, (and will one day light heavie on the causers and procurers thereof) so it is unprofitable for the hearers, and deprives them of much good they might otherwise enjoy; as appeares, Heb. 13. 17.

4 Some from consideration of those confusions and desolations, which it pulls with great violence even upon whole Kingdomes. Looke upon such places as these: 2 Chron. 36. 16, 17, &c. Ier. 25. 3, &c. & Cap. 35. 15. Rev. 6. 4, &c.

The glorious Light of those seven Candlesticke in Asia, mentioned in the Revelations, was long since, for their unfruitfulness, coldnesse, and contempt of the Word, turned into the darke
Midnight of Heresie, Apostasie, and Mahometisme. Rome, that was anciently the glory of the Western Churches, lyes now drowned in Superstition, soaking in damnable Idolatry, and plunged over head and cares in the Doctrine of Devils. Many strong and noble Limbes of the reformed Churches in high Germanie have lyen for some yeeres in their teares of bloud, groaning under the mercileffe tyrannie of the bloudie Antichristians, and have woefully received the mark of the Beast againe. Now assuredly, it was the loathing the heavenly Manna, which made the Lord to utter his Voice before the Armie of the enemies at Prague, and other places. It was their spirituall coldnesse, which sharpended the Papists swords against them: It was their not entertaining the Truth, with the love and power of it, which gave the Imperiallits power over them.

3 In a third place, take some helps and remedies, to become profitable hearers and saving proficientes by the Ministerie you enjoy; which hath thus long beene (it is a reproachfull and rufull thing I speake) the savour of death unto death unto the most.

Be persuaded to beleev and obey the blessed Commandement of our Saviour himselfe, Math. 6. 32. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousnesse thereof, in the first place; and all other things shall be added to you. To which bee quickened, by considering,

To what end wee came into this World.
What a wofull and bewitched people are they, who being reasonable creatures, having an understanding Light, like the Angels of God; having eyes in their heads, to fore-see the wrath that is to come; hearts in their bodies, that can tremble as the leaves of the Forest, which are shaken with the winde; Consciences, that are capable of unspeakable horror; bodies and soules, which can burne in Hell for ever; and yet some have lived twentie, some thirtie, some fortie, some fixtie yeeres; and yet to this day, have not learnt one sound spirituall Lesson, for the true good of their soules, either out of the Booke of God, the Booke of Nature, the Workes of God, or any other way? Why, to what end doe you thinke were you created, and put into this World? To eate, and drinke, and sleepe; to lye, and sweare, and root in the Earth; to Dice and Card, and goe in the Fashion; to conteemne the Ministerie; shamefully to belye, slander, and rayle upon Gods people, as too precise; to die, and then not to be damned? Assuredly, thou wast not borne, and placed upon the Earth, for to serve thine owne turne, to please thine owne heart, to follow thine owne wayes, to live for a while like a Beast in sensual contentments, and then to goe to Hell. Certainly, thou wast sent into this World for some other end, for some greater businesse and important affaire; even for that One necessarie thing, Luke 10.42. to know, serve, and obey thy God, and to save that precious Soule of thine in the Day of Christ; to seeke first the Kingdome of Heaven, to know and feele the ver-
and perpetuall Guide.

tue of Chrifts death and resurrection. This, I say, is that One necessarie thing: All other things are but respectively necessarie, so farre as they further this end; ought onely to be subordinate, and contributorie; nay, to be accounted but drosse and dung, to this, Phil. 3. 10.

2 Consider, that upon this moment depends eternitie.

3 What is a man profited, if he shall gaine the whole world, and lose his owne soule? Math. 16. 26.

4 The difference of the life and death of the Christian and Carnallift.

2 Take the counsell of the holy Apostle, Col. 3. 16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, &c.

1 By hearing it in season, and out of season, 2 Tim. 4. 2. Preachers and hearers, are relatives. Christian hearers in ancient times heard their Pastours day after day.

(1) a Because yesterday wee made mention of the Theefe, &c. faith Ambrose. Which impyles his preaching the day before.

(2) b You that were here yesterday, &c. Which impyles his preaching the day before. In another place: o I suppose, you remember how farre we discoursed yesterday: from that very place, let us to day begin. Elsewhere he faith: a From whence we spake much yesterday. Againe; e Yesterday we came even to that Verse, &c. f Yesterdayes Sermon was protraffed, &c.
The Saints sure

The latter part of the Psalme, of which wee spake yesterday, &c.  

(3) First therefore let us persuade you, that you would amend and abandon your Oathes: For although I spake of the same matter yesterday, and the day before that; yet notwithstanding, I will not cease to day, nor to morrow, nor the day after that, to persuade the same things. Whence it appears, that hee preached the day before, and the day before that; and would preach the day following, and the day after that.

(4) Yesterdayes sight (Brethren) provoked me to this Sermon, &c. This Sermon was made upon Easter Monday; and no doubt, he had preached on Easter day.

(5) To day wee will discourse briefly of Baptisme, and the benefits that flow from thence to us: Although yesterday our speech did flow more hastily from us, both because the time did urge, as also least length of speech should beget disdain and satietie: for the satietie of speech is no lesse an enemie to the eares, than too much meate is to the body. These Orations were divine, and as Sermons; and this was made on the day immediately after an holy-day. The Greccke Church at that time celebrated the day of Christs Baptisme.
If you remember, in yesterdays Sermon, &c. Chrysostome in his tenth Homily upon Genesis, expostulating with his people, because they were so few, tells them, That every houre of the day is reasonable to heare a Sermon; nay, the very night is not unreasonale, for such a purpose: urging for prooфе thereof, the place I preft before, 2 Tim. 4. 2. and Pauls practice, Acts 20. preaching untill midnight. These are his words: What means it, that there is a liue assembly of you to day, and not so frequent a multitude of those, who flocke to us? For it is not so with spirituall things as with humane, which are divided to determined times: Every time of the day is fit for a spirituall Sermon. And what doe I say, the day time? yea, if the night should come upon us, it doth not prejudice or hinder spirituall teaching. For both Paul writing to Timothy, said: Be instant in season and out of season, &c. And againe, heare blessed S. Luke, saying: Paul being about to depart on the morrow, prolonged his Sermon to the middle of the night. Tell mee, I pray thee, did the time hinder? Was therefore his word of Doctrine hindered?

Austin sometimes preached thrice upon the same day. Doe not wonder, deare Brethren, if I have preached thrice to day, God assisting me: There hath happened to day a fearesfull chance, &c.


Chrysostome
Chrysostome in the Evening, as we may see in his eleventh Homily upon 1 Thess. 5, faith hee: Even as, if any one should cast water on the wicke of this Candle, or should onely take away the Oyle, hee would put out the Light; so is it with the gift of the Spirit. He tooke his example from the Lampe that burnt by him when he was preaching, and fayes: You may quench this Lampe, by putting in water; and you may quench it, by taking out the Oyle.

And great Basil also the like. The Evening and the Morning (faith he) is made one Day. But these our Sermons concerning that Evening, now begun from this Evening, doe here put an end to our words.


Austin preached twice a day.

Object. Except perhaps they preached every day onely in Lent, &c. or besides the Lords day, but onely upon holy-dayes, and their Eves.

Ans. Heare Chrysostome speaking generally. * It is necessarie, that a Bishop should some his Seed every day, as I may so say; that at the least, by that dayly custome of Teaching, the mindes of his hearers may retaine his words.

Austin
and perpetuall Guide.

Austin hath the like. The Word of God, which is
daily opened unto us, and after a sort broken to us, is our
daily Bread: And as our bellies hunger for that Bread,
so doe our mindes for this.

Objec. If former and Primitive Times were so
full of Preaching, how commeth it to passe, that
our dayes will scarce downe with twice a Sab-
bath? Sith the ancient Fathers preached daily,
how happeneth it, that many reputed great Schol-
lers in these Times, preach so seldom? &c.

Ans. First, one Reason may be an affected hu-
mour of man-pleasing, or selfe-preaching; which
is ambitiously pursued, and mightily prevails
abroad in the World.

This, King James out of his deepe and Princely
wisedome, conceived to be the cause of so many
daily defections from our Religion, both to Po-
erie and Anabaptisme. He calls it a light, affected,
and an unprofitable kind of Teaching, which hath beene of
late yeeres too much taken up in Universitie, Citie, and
Country: In which (faith he) there is a mustering up
of much reading, and a displaying of their owne wits, &c.
These are his owne words, in the Reasons of his
direction for Preaching.

Now you must know, that to the scraping and
patching together of the garish and gawdie pain-
tings and unprofitable Pompe of a selfe-Sermon,
there is required and ordinarily expected such a
deale of curiositie, varietie of extraordinarie con-
ceits, and trickes of wit; that it puts the Pen-man
to a great deale of paines, and tortures his wit ex-
tremely. He dives with much ado into the dung-

(p)
hull of many a Popish Postiller, and phantastical Frier, &c. For such, as Tully said of Anthony, do magnus conatu magnas nugas agere; they sweat at it, with much vexing anxiety: And what then? Parturient montes, &c. they detain & delude the itching ears of unjudicious hearers with a little airy nourishment, as the King speaks in the fore-cited place.

The painfulness then of this unprofitable way of Preaching; the irksome tediousness of committing of it so punctually and precisely to memory; the fearfulness of deliverie, and danger of being out, vaine-glorious doubting, that they shall not be applauded as they were wont; fear, left the next time they should lessen their former reputation of wit and reading, &c.

Secondly, another Reason may be, because Ministers do not so much meditate and study divine and heavenly things, but trouble themselves too much in the affairs of the World. Therefore the ancient Fathers, spending their time, wits, and understanding wholly upon heavenly things, diving continually into the mysteries of God's Booke, and preaching daily, were able to preach often, and excellently: by their Ministerial diligence and faithfulnesse, they attained such a happie readiness and habit, and so enriched themselves with heavenly store, that they were able, as occasion was offered, to bring forth out of their Treasure things new and old; whereupon they were enabled to preach sometimes upon short warning: So Basil preached his two Sermons upon the sixe dayes worke, when he had but that morning for meditation. Sometimes,
times, without any premeditation; so it seems he preached his second Sermon. And so did As-

atin his Sermon, upon Psal. 95. It seems there, his Brother Severus failing to come, he preached him-
selvse. And I have told you heretofore of a Sermon which he made upon a sudden, occasioned by an heavie accident. And these Sermons were such, that they have bin thought worthy by the Church from time to time, to be conveyed and communicated to posterity. For in all my discourse, I am so farre from giving any allowance to idle, imperti-
nent, or any way unsubstantiall Preaching; that I hold it a very irksome, and loathsome, and wicked thing, lyable to that heavie Curse; Cursed is he that doth the worke of the Lord negligently. But let a man be well grounded before he begin, be godly him-
selvse,ply faithfully and painefullly his Ministeriall charge, in season and out of season; and it is incredible to what he may attaine in the Point I pursuie, by his much exercise, and Gods blessing upon it.

But yet some say;

First, That a man cannot preach well, under a quarter of a yeeres provision. See the truth hereof, in the foregoing Reasons.

Secondly, That often Preaching will make it too cheape, and contemptible; which to affirme, is a base and carnall wrangling, and confuted by the practice of the Fathers.

Thirdly, That Reading is to be preferred before Preaching.

Wee doe not denie, but that the Word read, is the rule of holinesse, may convert, the Spirit ac-

(p 2) companying
companying his Ordinance; and therefore is to have place, and due respect in the Congregation; but wee will not equal it to Preaching. If Reading were more excellent, and of greater force to convert, than Preaching; why are not the people converted, that have a Reader? To what end then serve Schooles of the Prophets? Wherefore should men studie the knowledge of Tongues, and Arts, to divide the Word aright, and to distribute to every mans present necessities? And why should Sathan rage more against Preachers, than Readers, except the Word powerfully delivered did not the more batter and beat downe his Kingdom? Besides, why did not Christ send out his Apostles with this charge, Goe, read; but, Goe, preach to all Nations? Wherefore doth Paul pronounce a Woe to them that preach not the Gospel? And why did hee not charge his sonne Timothy before God, to read in season, and out of season?

Yea, but may some say, The ancient Fathers were extraordinarie men, and therefore no Patterns for our Preaching, &c. They were glorious Lights, and wee but Glow-wormes; they were Cedars, wee but Shrubs, &c.

Let them be what they were, I as much reverence and respect them, as any man alive, if wee take truth and discretion with us. And therefore at this time, I will suppose (I say so, because I doubt not, but our Age hath brought forth as worthy Divines, if not worthier, as any of the ancient Fathers;) I say, I will suppose them to be as it were Gyants, and wee Dwarfs: Yet set a Dwarfe
Dwarfe upon a Gyants shoulders, and hee will see further, and so might certainly wee, but for Slouth, Idlenesse, Worldliness, Ambition, and other such base and vile degenerations of these later Times.

It may be further objected, That there was more necessity of the Fathers frequent Preaching, especially in those Primitive Times, for more plentifull publishing and propagation of the Gospel, &c. and suppressing Heresies, &c.

Passingly weake, and untrue. There is farre more need of much Preaching now, than in former times. For wee live in the laft dayes, wherein those perilous times are come upon us, which Paul fore-tells 2 Tim. 3. 1. &c. and wherein iniquitie abounds, and the love of many waxeth cold, &c. Math. 24. 12. And at this day wee oppose the Hydra of all Heresies, Poperie, which opposeth even the whole Body of Christianitie. Againe, their Homilies are against Drunkennesse, Pride, Swearing, Luxury, Covetousnesse, love of the World, Vifury, painted Faces, false Haire, Anger, Envie, Ambition, &c. All which sinnes, and many more, reigne and rage at this day with more hainousnesse, and an higher hand, than heretofore.

2 A second means whereby the Word may dwell plentifully in us, is, by a constant and conscientable reading the Booke of God. This Excercife is commanded to Kings and Captaines, Deut. 17. 17, 18, 19. Ioff. 1. 8. who may seeme most priviledged, by their intanglement in many and weightie affaires.
Christ bids the Jews, \textit{Joh.} 5. 39. Search the Scriptures, as the well-spring of eternal life. The Holy-Ghost commends the Jews of Barea, as more noble than they of Thessalonica, because they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so, \textit{Acts} 17. 11. See \textit{Deut.} 6, 7; 8, 9. See many Motives to this duty, before: It is the Word of Salvation, of Truth, of Life, of Reconciliation; a Letter from Heaven, a Treasure of all excellent things: it shall judge us, it only can heal a wounded Soul; it contains all our evidence for Heaven, and it is the object of divine Faith, &c.

Nay, and because the Papists have wickedly dammed up this Fountain of Life, from the common people, hear the judgement and zeal of Antiquity, in pressing this duty.

First, hear \textit{Chrysostome}.

\textit{Heare, I pray you, all ye Lay-men, (faith Chrysostome) get ye Bibles, a Medicine for your Souls, &c. You cast all upon our shoulders. You ought only to be instructed of us, but your Wives and Children should be by you, &c. But now adayes, your Children preferre devellish Songs and Dancings, even as Cookes, and Caters, and leaders of Dances, but none knowes any Psalmes.}

The same \textit{Chrysostome}, to stirre up men to diligent reading the Scriptures, maketh good this assertion: There is no affliction or miserie of body or soule, but may receive a Medicine out of Gods Booke.

A man heavie-hearted, and of a sad spirit, (faith hee) takes the Bible in his hand; after hee bath
hath met with that place, *Psalm 42:11.* (Why art thou cast downe, O my soule, and why art thou so disquieted within me? hope thou in God, &c.) he is refreshed.

2. Another (faith he) is oppressed with extreme poverty, beholds the wicked wallow in worldly wealth, and flourish like a green Bay-tree: But after hee hath cast his eye upon that, *Psalm 55:22.* (Cast thy burthen upon the Lord, and hee shall sustaine thee, &c.) he is comforted.

3. Another is hunted with calumnies and insidations, &c. and no humane helpe will be had; the Prophet (faith hee) doth teach him what to doe, in these words: *They did speake against me, but I prayed.*

4. Another is forsaken even of his friends and kinsmen, and contemned of those who were most beholding to him: Heare how the Prophet behaved himselfe in such a case, *Psalm 38:11.*

13. &c.

He concludes thus: *Thou hast scene, whensoever any calamitie doth oppresse a man, how convenient an Antidote he may take from the Scriptures, and all care of this life may be driven backe, neither should we be grieved for any thing that falls out. Therefore, I beseech you, that you would come hither, and diligently attend to the reading of the holy Scriptures; not onely when you come hither, but even at home take the holy Bible into your hands, and goe reape the profit that is in them with great earnestnesse. Moreover, what that sensible Bread doth to encrease bodily strength, that Reading doth to the soule; for it is spirittuall nourishment, and makes the soule vigorous, &c.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(p 4)</th>
<th>But</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

* Ipse detrahente bant mibi, ego autem orabam. * Vidiis quod modo quacunque calamitate humanam naturam premente, convenientes ex Scripturis antidotum accepte licet, & omnis humi vita repellatur cura, nec ab ullo quod accidit grave, muris Propertiae obiecto, ut subinde bac veniatis, & divinae Scripturae lectiones diligenter audeatis; non solum cum bac veniatis sed et domi divinae Bibliæ in manus suæ, & utilitatem in illis potissimum magna studio scrutете. Invenite, quod ad augendam vitæ corporis sensibilis illa ibat facta, id animaque lepido facta, Spirituæ enim animæ alimentum est, & fortuna reddit animam. Chrysost. Hom. 29. in Gen. p. 150.*
But wee may add to Chryfothome Antidotes, these 16. more.

1 Art thou wearie of the wayes of vanitie, and comming on with a grieved and sorrowfull heart for thy sinne, to meet thy deare Redeemer; and doth the conceit of the number and hainousnesse of thy transgressions, cross and confound thy hopes of being received to mercy? Why then looke upon Paul; he shed the blood of the Saints with extraordinarie rage and furie, Act. 9.1. upon Manaseh, a man of prodigious impietie, 2 Chron. 33.6. upon some of Peters hearers, who crucified the Lord of Life, Act. 2.23. If these will not serve the turne, looke upon Adam; who cast away himselfe, and undid all, and was the cause that all that issued out of his loines, unto the Worlds end, fell into the damnation of Hell: and yet all these, upon repentance, were received unto mercie. And therefore, if thou canst now heartily repent, feare no former sinnes.

2 Haft thou by the violence of Sathans tempations, the flie enticements of thine owne sinfull nature, and the cunning insinuations of thy former bosome-sinne, beene fearfully overtaken with some scandalous fall, since thou wast converted, and gave thy Name unto Grace; and upon illumination of thy conscience, remorse, and meditation of returne, thou art ashamed to look Christ Jesus in the face, because thou haft so shamed thy profession; and thou art so troubled with horror and conceit, that thy case is singular, that thou canst find no case to thine humbled and sorrowfull heart?
Why then looke upon David, Peter, &c. transcendent instances, that thou may not sinke into despaire.


4 It may be, upon thy Bed of Death, * when Sathan will make thy finnes appeare farre more ugly and horrible to the eye of thy Conscience, than ever hee did before; and will perswade thee all he can, that all thy holy services unto God, and new obedience, was quite marred with Pride, Hypocrisie, and by-respects; I say, it may be then thy heart will quite faile thee, and thy conceit of Gods wrathfull and angry countenance for thy finne, may so oppresse and confound thy soule, that thou mayest fear be left thou be forsaken: Why then thinke upon thy Saviours mournfull cry upon the Croffe; My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

5 It may be thou art a true-hearted Nathanael, in whose spirit there is no guile; hates all sinne heartily, both in thy selfe and others; desirest and laboresh to please God in all things, and to keepe a good conscience before all things in the World; and yet thou findest and feelest in thy brest many times a heavy, sad, and unchearefull heart: why then, heare David, a man after Gods owne heart; of a more excellent spirit, and eminent graces, than thou art, complaining Psal. 43. 5. Why art thou so heavie, O my soule, and why art thou so disquieted within me?

* See Sathans depth in this point, Help to Devotion p. 155.
6 Art thou grievously troubled with the haunt and horror of some speciall sinne, of which thou canst not be so easily rid, and doest thou therefore goe mourning all the day? Why then looke also upon David, Psal. 32. In such a case, he roared all the day, his bones were consumed, and his native moisture was turned into the drought of Summer.

7 Art thou vexed to the heart, and fearfully haunted with some horrible and hatefull injedions of Sathan; thoughts framed by himselfe immediately, and put into thee; perhaps tending to Atheifme, or to the dishonour of God in some high degree, or to the disgrace of his Word, or selfe-destruction, &c. or the like: thoughts which thou canst not remember, without horror; and darest not reveale, or name, for their strange and prodigious hatefulnesse? Why then consider, how this malicious Fiend dealt with the Sonne of God: He suggested unto his most holy and unspotted imagination, these propositions: first, Murther; Make away thy selfe, Math. 4. 6. Secondly, Fall downe and worship the Devill, Vers. 9. What more fearefull and horrible apprehensions? And yet these were suggested to our blessed Saviour; to him perhaps more sensibly, to thee more secretly. * His pure and holy heart, uncapable of sinne, did reject them with infinite contempt; and himselfe did utterly conquer, and confound the Tempter, and that for thee, and thy sake too. And if thine heart rise against, abominate, abandon, grieve, and be humbled for them; they shall never be layd to thy charge, but set on Sathans

* See Dik, of Christ's temptations, p. 119.
Sathan's Score. For all them, thou mayest goe on cheerfully and comfortably in the course of Christianitie: And so doe. And let not Sathan attaine his divellish end by them; which is, to worke astonishment in thy minde, horror in thy conscience, heavinesse in thy heart, distractions in thy thoughts, &c. that thereby thou mayest be disheartened and disabled for the cheerfull discharge and performance both of thy particular and generall calling. Or else, art thou long after thy conversion, assaulted with perhaps sorer spirituall pangs, and more horror, than at thy change? Consider David, Job, Hezekiah.

8. Haft thou lost thy goods, or children? Doth the Wife that lyes in thy bostone, set her selfe against thee? Doe thy neerest friends charge thee falsely? Art thou diseased from top to toe? Doe the Arrowes of the Almighty stick fast in thy soule? Thy affliction is grievous enough, if thou haft any of these. But doe they all, in the greatest extremeties, concurre upon thee at once? Haft thou lost all thy children, and all thy goods? Doth thy Wife afflict thy afflictions? &c. If this be not thy case, thou commest short of Job, a most just man, and high in God's favour.

9. Haft thou given thy Name to Religion, and art a Professor of Grace; and art thou therefore villanously traduced with many slanderous nicknames, and odious imputations? Art thou called Puritan, Precifian, Hypocrite, Humorist, Dissimehler, &c? Why, gracelesse wretches, when hee was upon
upon Earth, called Christ Jesus, Devill. See Math. 10. 25. Ioh. 7. 20. Contemne thou therefore for ever, the utmost malice of the most scurrill tongue.

10 Art thou a loving and tender-hearted Mother unto thy Children, and hast thou lost thy dearest? Why, the blessed Mother of Christ stood by, and saw her owne onely deare innocent Sonne, the Lord of Life, most cruelly and villanously murthered upon the Cross, and die a shamefull death before her eyes, Ioh. 19. 25.

11 Art thou a woman, who in the time of thy travaile art pressed with many wants; with want of comfortable companie, desired helps, a fairer roome, and other worldly comforts and conveniences? Why yet comfort thy selfe with this; That holy Virgin, which brought into the World the Worlds Saviour, brought forth that blessed Babe in a Stable, and laid him in a Cratch, Luke 2. 7. It is very like, farre more poorely, in respect of worldly comforts, than the poorest sort of women amongst us; with lesse comfortable helpers, and in a lesse seemely and commodious place, for such a purpose.

12 Hath thy Faith lost its feeling; and besides, doth God looke upon thee with an angry countenance, and is thy heart filled with heaviness and horror? Yet for all this, let the hand of Faith by no means loose it hold-fast upon the precious sufferings and saving blood-shed of thy deare Redeemer. Thou hast before thee, a matchlesse and transcendent precedent in this point.

Thus
Thus cries holy Job, having, besides his unparalleled varietie and extremitie of outward afflictions, the Arrows of the Almighty sticking fast in him, and drinking up his spirits; Though hee kill me, yet will I trust in him, Cap. 13. 15. So Abraham, Rom. 4. 18.

13. Doest thou, day after day, pour out thy soule in prayer before the Throne of Grace, with all the earnestnesse and instancie thou canst possibly; and doest thou still rise up dull and heavie, and uncomfortered, without answer from God, or comfortable fence of his favour and love shed into thine heart? Why, yet pray still; assuredly, at length thou shalt be gloriously refreshed, and registred in the remembrance of God, for a Christian of excellent faith. See a patterne of rare and extraordinary patience this way, Math. 15. 23. &c.

14. Doth the World, Sathan, carnall men, thine owne friends, formal Teachers, suppose and cenasure thee to be a dissembler in thy profession, and will needes concurrently and confidently fasten upon thee the imputation of Hypocrifie? Why, yet for all this, let thy sincere heart, conscious to it selfe of its owne truth in holy services, like a strong Pillar of Braffe, beat backe and reject with noble contempt and glorious disdain, all their impoysoned Arrows of malice and flander this way. Thou haft a right worthy patterne in the Booke of God, for this purpose. Job had against him not onely the Devill, his enemie, pushing at him with his poysoned weapons; but even his owne friends, scourging him with their tongues.
tongues; yea, his owne Wife a Thorne, pricking him in the eye; yea, his owne God miserably lath-
ing his naked foule with Scorpions; powerfull motives, to make him suspect himselfe of former halting and hollow-heartednesse in the ways of God: yet notwithstanding all this, his good and honest heart having beene long before acquainted with and knit unto his God with sinceritie and truth, makes him boldly and resolutely to protest;

That until he die, he will never take away his innocencie from himselfe; that he would keepe his righteousnesse, and not forsake it, and that his heart should not reprove him for his dayes.

15 Hast thou an untoward Wife, that is a con-
tinuall dropping and a perpetuall Goade in thy side? Heare Job's complaint, Cap. 19. 17. My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated for the childrens sake of mine owne body.

16 Art thou vexed with a prophane dogged Husband? Abigail, a Wife, and precious woman, had a Nabal to her yoke-fellow.

Thus these patterns and precedents in the Booke of God, purposely registred for the re-
freshing and recoverie of his chosen; in spirituall or temporall straits, are ordinarily proposed in a transcendent and matchlesse degree; that in their greatest extremities, by reflecting their eyes upon such examples, they may be preserved from de-
spaire, have the stronger consolation, and not thinke their cases to be comfortlesse and singular.

Let these considerations move us to be well read in these holy mysteries, and day and night exercised in
in reading and meditating on them. But to our purpose, heare further what others say in this Point.

Secondly, heare Gregorie the great.

What is the sacred Scripture, but a certaine Epistle of the omnipotent God to his creature? And surely, if a man should receive writings from his Emperor, he could not rest, he would not be quiet, he would give no sleepe to his eyes, unless he had first known what that earthly Emperor had written to him. The Emperor of Heaven, the Lord of men and Angels, hath sent his Letters to thee, concerning thy life; and yet (my vaine-glorious soul) thou dost neglect earnestly to reade those Letters. Studie them therefore, I pray thee, and dayly meditate upon the words of thy Creator: Learne the minde of God in the Word of God, that thou mayest aspire more earnestly to eternall things, and that your minde may with greater desire be inflamed to the heavenly Kingdome.

Thirdly, Origen teacheth, That the people should learne the Scriptures without booke.

Fourthly, Ierome counselleth, That by dayly reading the Scriptures, wee should get wisedome: His words import so much.

Fifthly, Read the Scriptures (faith Austin) for that they were written to the end we should be comforted.

Sixtly, Ierome writing to Gaudentius about the education of a yong maid, would have her at seven yeeres old, and when she begins to blush, to learne without book the Psalter, and until she come to be marriageable, to make the treasure of her heart the Books of Salomon, the Gospels, Apostles, and Prophets.
Object. 1. But the Scriptures are hard to be understood, &c.

Ans. Heare,

(1) Chrysostome. All things are cleare and plaine out of the holy Scriptures. Whatsoever things are necessarie, are manifest:

(2) Jerome. The Lord hath spoken by his Gospel, not that a few, but that all should understand it. Plato wrote his writings, but not to the people, but to a few; scarce three understand him.

(3) Cyrill. The Scriptures are profitably recommended unto us in an easie speech, that they should not goe beyond the capacitie of any.

(4) Againe, Chrysostome, who having said much for often reading, and plainenesse of the Scriptures, concludes: Who is there, to whom whatsoever is written in the Scriptures, is not manifest? Who is there, who hearing, that the meeke are blessed, the mercifull blessed, the pure in heart blessed, and the like, shall want a Master, that he should learne any of those things which are spoken?

Object. 2. But I am intangled with varietie of businesses, I have no leisure to spend time in reading Scripture, as you advise: I am still busied in my Trade, Husbandry, Merchandise, in some high roome, &c. I have a great charge, Wife, children, and family to care for: Let Schollers, Ministers, Gentle-folkes, &c. that have more time and leisure, ply such businesses, for I cannot.
and perpetuall Guide.

Answ. Who are more busied than Kings and Captaines? and yet they are commanded to be diligent readers of Gods Booke. See Deut.17.13, 19. 10sh.1.8.

But Chrysostome makes this Objection, and answers it himselfe excellently: * What sayest thou, Oh man? Is it not thy dutie to reade the Scriptures, because thou art distracted with innumerable cares? Yea, it is thy dutie rather than others, &c. In which Sermon also, he lets fall this confident assertion: * Neither now can it be, it cannot be, I say, that any man should attaine unto salvation, unlefe he be continually conversant in spirituall reading.

Objett. 3. But, alas, I cannot reade.

Answ. Heare then Austin: 1 Neither let this be sufficient for you, that in the Church you doe heare divine reading; but also in your houses, either doe you your selves reade, or get others that can reade, and doe you willingly hearken.

And he stirres them up to it, with these considerations:

(1) * Remember, Brethren, (saith he) the saying of our Lord, in which hee saith: If a man shall gaine the whole World, and lose his owne soule, what will it profit him?

(2) n What remaineth and abideth in a man, but that which every one, either by reading, or praying, or doing good workes for the salvation of his soule, hath layd up in the treasure of his Conscience?
**Object. 4. But will not publick reading in the House of God serve the turne?**

_Answe._ By no meanes. **Heare Chrysostome:**

Therefore often doe I tell you before-hand, many days before the argument of which I shall speake, that in the days in the meanes while, taking a Booke, and weighing the whole summe of the matter, after yee have understood what hath beeene said, and what remaines to be said, you may make your minde more fit to heare those things which afterward shall be declared; and that I alwayes exhorte to, and will not ceaze to doe it, That you doe not onely attend here to those things which are spoken, but also when you shall be at home, you may dayly attend to the reading of holy Scriptures, which thing I have not ceased to presse upon those who privately have talked with me.

**Object. 5. But from this libertie of reading Scriptures, spring many Herefies.**

_Answe._ The sacred Scripture is not the cause of Herefies, but the ignorance of the holy Scripture. **Heare Chrysostome:**

_Hence arose so many thousand evils, from the ignorance of holy Writ: Hence sprung up so great a plague of Herefies._

Godly Bookes also, with which this Age is abundantly and plentifully enriched, must be diligently and profitably read.

---

See this purpose in the Answer to the third _Objection_ , a little before. See Pol. Synph. _p. 60_ , where he proves this Assertion. Of which, see Rogers _Seven Treatises_ , _p. 289_. The Epistle Dedicatory to the Practice of Christianitie.

4 A fourth means, is Meditation. Of which, see Rogers seven Treatises, pag. 235. &c.

Matter of Meditation.

Wee may meditate upon any part of Gods Word, on God himselfe, his Wisedome, Power, his Mercie; or on the infinite varietie of good things, which wee receive of his free bountie; upon his workes, and judgements; upon our sinnes, and the vilenesse of our corruption, that wee yet carry about us; upon our mortalitie, and changes in this World; upon our manifold afflictions of this life, and how wee may in best manner beare and goe through them, and the benefit thereof; upon the manifold and great privileges which wee enjoy dayly, through the inestimable kindnesse of God towards us; upon the foure last things, but especially of those things that wee have most speciall need of.

Of the thing meditated upon, consider,

First, The definition, or description.
Secondly, The distribution, sorts, kinds, or parts.
Thirdly, Causes especially efficient, and finall.

(q 2) Fourthly,
Fourthly, The fruits and effects which it bringeth forth.

Fifthly, The subject wherein it is, or about which it is occupied.

Sixthly, The qualities or properties adjoyned. And know, that oftentimes, in common practice, these three, the final cause, the fruit or the effect, the use or property of a thing, are often confounded.

Seventhly, The contrarie.

Eighthly, The comparison.

Exemplifie in the joyes of Heaven; of which, see Hall: In sinne; of which, see Practice of Christianitie, pag. 293. Upon this occasion, let us peruse, in this manner, Fasting, and the Plague.

A fifth means to profit by the Word, is Teaching, Praying with, and Catechizing your children and servants.

To which Dutie, be stirred up and strengthened, by


Secondly, By the pattern, and practice of holy Parents, from time to time. Consider for this purpose, the carriage of Abraham, Gen. 18. 19. David, Prov. 4. 4. Bathsheba, Prov. 31. 1. Lois and Eunice, 2 Tim. 1. 5.

Thirdly, By the authoritie of the ancient Fathers.

(1) Heare
(1) Heare Austin.

Notwithstanding, my deare friends, in so great a difference of manners, and such abominable corruption, governe your Houses, governe your Children, governe your Families: As it behoves us to speake to you in the Church, so it pertaines to you to doe in your Houses, that yee may be able to give a good account of those who are under you. Againe; I pray thee, my Brother, I pray thee, shew to all under thee, of meere good will, from the least to the greatest in thy House, the love and sweetnesse of Heaven, the bitterness and fear of Hell, and be thou solicitous and watchfull, because thou shalt render an account to the Lord for all those under thee, that are in thy House. Declare, charge, command, persuade them, that they would take heed of Pride, of Slander, of Drunkennesse, of Fornication, of Luxurie, Anger, Perjurie, Covetousnesse, which is the root of all evil.

(2) Nazianzen. Hast thou a Child? Let not wickedness take advantage and occasion: Let it be endued with sanctitie, and consecrated to thy Spirit from the very Cradle.

I know he meanes it immediately of Baptisme: but by Analogie, that bindes also to have a care of religious education.

annuncies, & de eorum salute sollicitus & pervigil exilias: quia pro omnibus tibi subjiciens qui in domo tua sunt, rationem Domino reddes. Annuncia, precipe, impra, suade ipsis ut cævant se à Superbia, à Detractione, ab Ebrietate, à Fornicatione, à Luxuriae, ab Ira, à Periuria, à Cupiditate, quae est radix omnium malorum. Lib. de Salutar. Documentis, pag. 541. 

Infans tibi est? Ne animam & occasionem arripiat improbitas: ab infantia sanctitate imbua, ab ipsis unguiculis Spirituii confeceretur. Orat. 40, in S. Bapt.
Fourthly, by Reasons.

First, Thy Children sprung from thy Loines, and came into the World, to encrease the number of Gods people, to learne the way to Heaven, and walke in it; not onely to uphold thy House, inherite thy Possessions, and convey thy Name to future Generations. The glorifying of our God, serving our Brethren in love, salvation of our owne Soules, are the chiefе ends why we live a little while in this World. Now Parents should be most sollicitous to further their Children, for the attainement of the maine end, and most soveraigne good.

Secondly, Neglect of this Dutie, makes Parents worse to their Children, than to their Beasts: For,

1 They provide for their Beasts all things necessarie for them; but in their owne deare Children, they neglect that One necessarie thing.

2 They procure for, and put their Beasts to all things of which they are capable. Their Children are capable of Grace, and Immortalitie; and they never meddle, nor move them to looke that way, or lay hold upon eternall Life.

Thirdly, Let the remarkable and rufull example of Eli, be for ever a keene spurre in the sides of slouthfull Parents, to quicken them to this Dutie.

Fourthly, Thou art farre more cruell than the Ostrich and the Dragon, and mayest be said to have suckt the breasts of Tygres, and to be hewed out of the hardest Rocke; if having brought thy Children
and perpetuall Guide.

Children forth into this World, limbes for the Devill, and fewell for Hell-fire, thou labour not might and maine, to get them new-borne the members of Christ, and freed from everlasting flames.

Fifthly, Grace onely is able to make thy Children truly obedient, serviceable, and everlastingly thankfulfull; having now a double tye; first, birth; secondly, new-birth. Then onely, and never before, doe they begin to pray for their Parents, to deale faithfully in their businesse, not to long for their death.

Sixthly, A conscionable and constant performance of this Dutie in their life time, will fill Parents hearts full of sweetest joy and heavenly comfort upon their Beds of Death; when they see, by their care and zeale for their spirittuall good, that holy knowledge and wisedome planted in their Childrens hearts, which will bring them after them to eternall bliss: or howsoever, consciousness of a conscionable discharge of their Dutie in this respect, will infinitely refresh them.

Seventhly, It is the way to make thy posteritie truly honourable, and to meet thee in Heaven. Those Children which are taught by thee, may teach the same things unto theirs, and those to others, &c.

Eighthly, Thy Children neglected in this point, and so dying impenitently, will curse thee everlastingly in Hell, for thy bloodie inexpiable crueltie towards them in this kind.

(q 4) Ninthly,
Ninthly, Besides innumerable finnes of thine owne, (the least of which, merits eternitie of Hellish torments) thou hast justly * set upon thy Score, by this unconscionable murthering negligence, the finnes and finnefull courses of thine owne Children; which will lye full heavi-vie upon thy Conscience, when it shall be ragingly enlightened by the long provoked wrath of God.

6 The next means, is Prayer, Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5.
7 The seventh means, is Pradise. See John 7. 17.
8 The eight, is Experience. See Dike of the heart, pag. 69.

3 Be none of the reprobate grounds, Math. 13. of which, see Dike, Taylor.
4 Be none of those, who invited to the Marriage of the Kings Sonne, Math. 22. either, first, wilfully contemne, Vers. 3. secondly, or carelesly dis-esteeme, Vers. 5. thirdly, or cruelly persecute, Vers. 6.

5 Reject all those Hellish temptations, which doe mightily keepe off the dint and power of the

---

Reaf. 9.

Sed plurique dominum bec non reminiscitur, qui filios suos ab infantia exterminat; qui filios suos & filias suas ab incuraibili non crudelit, non corripit a inuenture; non prohibent mala, non adiunt pessima, non corrent illicita, non admovent timorem Dei, non comminuantur judicium Gehenne, non vitae eterna introitum docent; non enim educunt eos in disciplina, atque erudire Domini; quia non aegrent eam pro animabus eorum, neque solici sunt pro salute, vel perditione filiorum. Huiusmodi cum non cruciant neque corripiant filios suos, & in eorum animam igni inextinguibili in introitum tradunt, & secente ipsos in suorem judicii demergunt; omnia enim, quae deliquerint fili, de parentibus requiruntur, qui non crudelit, neque corripuerint filios suos. Huius evidens exemplo in Heli osten- ditur, & in filiis euis, atque in alios alibi. Origen. in lib. Job. 1.
and perpetuall Guide.

the most piercing Word; and being entertained, will cause the Word preached to be but as the breath of the Minister scattered in the Ayre, and as Water spilt upon the Ground, which cannot bee gathered up againe. They are like those strong Holds of Sathan, mentioned 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. which being set up in any heart, will blunt the edge of this spirituall weapon, that it will doe no good. They be these that follow.

1 In the first place, and highest straine of impiety, the depth of our corrupt nature desireth, That there were no God: The foole hath said in his heart, there is no God, Psal. 14. 1. That is, hee labours for a resolution, and perswasion in his owne heart, That there is no Tribunall in Heaven, before which hee shall hereafter be arraigned; no Treasurie of Plagues, and Woes in Hell, with which he shall hereafter be everlastingly fettered and enchained.

2 But if it so be, this spirituall foole cannot so abolish and extinguish those secret notions and apprehensions of a sacred and infinite Deitie, which are naturally implanted in the bowels of the most desperate and damned miscreant; but that the terrors of the last Judgement, and plagues of Hell, doe eftfoones vexe and bite his Conscience with restless remorse and stingings: Why then; in a second place, that hee may procure some eafe and quiet to his wallowing in sensuall pleasures, hee labours might and maine to harden his for-head against Heaven, to
to make his heart like the nether-Milstone, with his owne Soule-murthering hand to put a hot Iron to his Conscience; that so, if hee cannot blunder and blot out of his minde those naturall impressions of a God-head, yet at the least hee may extinguish and banish out of his heart all feare of that God, of his Judgement-Seat, and vengeance against sinne: That so hee may rush like a wilde Horse into the Battaille, furiously and desperately upon all villanies and vanities, without all checke of Conscience, and controlemont, from the terrors of the Judgement to come. In this desperate and furious mood, he joynes himselfe with these Gyants of Babel, Isa. 5, who outragiously reare up Towers of Treason and defiance against Heaven, and throw mountaines of pride and contempt one upon another, that they may climbe up to the Seat of God, and pull him out of his Thorne, crying aloud towards Heaven; Let him make speed, let him hasten his worke, that wee may see it; and let the counsell of the holy One of Israel draw neere, and come, that wee may know it.

3 If this will not be, and that he finde no success in setting himselfe against Heaven, (who ever opposed himselfe against God, and prospered?) but that hee is cruished and confounded with the majestie and terror thereof: Why then, in a third place, hee fastens the fangs of his malicious and wrangling wit, and the furie of his prophan Atheisme, upon his true and holy Word: And that,
First, Either by entertaining or harbouring a reprobate and blasphemous conceit, that the sacred Word of God is but a politike invention, and device of State, to keepe men in order, and moderation: to maintain Order and peaceableness in Cities and Societies; and to preserve the World, and mankinde, from wildnesse and Barbarisme.

Secondly, Or by proportioning his carnall conceit of Gods pure and undefiled Law, to that which hee holds of the Decrees and Constitutions of men.

And if it be either so, or so, it is well enough; hee can, in the meane time, therewith still the cryes of his Conscience, and stop the mouth of that Worne that never dies, that it gnaw not too eagerly, and fiercely, to the dis-sweetning of his carnall contentments, and the making of his sensual pleasures more unpleasant.

Now, would it not vexe a man, to have the meat pulled out of his mouth, his chayne from his necke, his clothes from his backe, his limbes from his body, his right arme from his shoulder, his eyes out of his head? So it is with every unregenerate man, and such is his torture, when that two-edged Sword, the Word of God, strikes at his sweet sinne, and sensual pleasures: And therefore no marvell, though hee strive and struggle, thirst and shield himselfe, by any means. Nay, the Lusts of the unregenerate man, are his very life. For, as every godly man liveth a double life; one of Grace, by the sanctifying power of the
the Spirit; another, of Nature: So every wicked man hath a double life; one, of Nature; and another, of corruption, by the cursed influence of Hell.

Nay, the sensual delights of the sinful full man are dearer unto him than his life. Hence it is, (as we may observe by experience) that sometimes a covetous man losing the Life of his life, the Wedge of Gold, and Hoards of Wealth, makes an end of himselfe. That the Wanton, because he is rejected, and discarded from the object of his lustfull pleasures, findes no pleasure in life; but cuts off himselfe, by a violent and untimely death. That Abigail being disgraced, and over-topt in a point of Policie, (the crowne and pride of his worldly happinesse) put his household in order, and hanged himselfe.

Nay, and yet further, the prophane man preferres the sensual pleasures of his heart, before the losse of his immortall Soule. For, how oft may wee see the honour of God, and everlasting blessednesse, put as it were in the one Scale of the Ballance, and a little transtorie Pleasure in the other? And in this case, the unsanctified man suffering one sweet sinne or other to weigh downe the exceeding weight of heavenly blissse, the unvaluable treasure of a good Conscience, the infinite glory of God, and the salvation of his owne deare Soule, in that great Day.

This groweth out of our corrupt nature: For we have all, even in the best of us, the source and seeds of all sinne. If the Lord should leave and abandon
abandon us, to the full swing and sway of our own corruption, and not either bridle us by his restraining Spirit, or blesse us with his sanctifying Spirit: wee might every one of us become as bad as Julian the Apostata, who did maliciously abjure Christ; and as Judas, who did perfidiously betray him. Naturally wee would wallow in sinne, without checke of Conscience, or controlment by the terror of the Judgement to come.

4. But if hee cannot arme himselsfe against the terrors of God, and truth of his Word; but that he must needs acknowledge the one, and believe the other: Why then, in a fourth place, with much spight and malice, he flyes in the face of Gods Ministers, Embassadours, which are his tormentors before his time: And that,

First, Either against his Preaching, or against his Person: as, too obscure, or too plaine; too cold, or too boisterous; too particular, too personal, too precife, too imperious; too tart, and terrible; too full of Judgement; tending to Sedition, against the State, or the like. And therefore he labours, not only with his owne heart, to breed within himselsfe a distaste and disconceit of it; but also puts to his helping hand, to stay and stop the free course and current of it from others. He cannot abide to have his sweet sinne strucke at still, and still to have his Conscience grated upon, by the Ministerie of the Word; and therefore he does what he can, to abandon and abolish it. When Jeremies Sermon, denoun-
The Saints sure

cing Gods Judgement against Judah and Israel, were brought unto the King, Ier.36.23. Iehudi had not read past three or fouresides before him, but the King stamped and raged, hee presently tooke the Roule, and cut it with a Pen-knife, and cast it into the fire that was on the Hearth, untill all the Roule was consumed in the fire, that was on the Hearth. In the 38. of Jeremie, when the Princes and Courtiers were nettled and stung with the downe-right dealing and holy severitie of Jeremies Preaching; they presently ranne unto the King, and traduced the blessed Prophet, to be a transgressor of Policie, and an enemie to the State. Therefore the Princes said unto the King: Wee beseech you, let this man be put to death; for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of Warre that remaine in this Citie, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: For this man seeketh not the wealth of this people, but the hurt. And there you see what was the issue.

Thus Prophanenesse and Policie doth ever interprete the Doctrine of Life, and powerfull application of the Word, to be the Source and Seeds of Faction and Sedition; to be incompatible with the civill State, and the very cutthroat of Kingdomes and States imperiall. Paul, as wee may see in the 24. of the Acts, for his upright dealing, was nick-named a Seditioner, and a troubler of the State. Certainly (faith Tertullus) we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of Sedition among all the Jews throughout the World, and a chiefe maintainer of the Set of the Nazarites.

Thus
Thus the Word of Life, and newes of salvation from Heaven, is many times charged with Noveltie, Sedition, and Heresie. But that which by the construction of carnall conceits, may be termed Heresie, Factious, and Precife, is the very right way to Heaven. I confess (saith Paul) that after the way (which they call Heresie) so worship I the God of my Fathers, &c. So may many good Christians, and godly Ministers, say in these Times to the men of this World; After the way, which you call Precisenesse, Singularitie, and Faction, doe we truly serve the living God, and save our soules.

Secondly, Or if the authoritie and power of his Preaching doth so astonish and confound him, that hee hath no heart to meddle that way, or oppose against it; yet at least, rather than not be malicious, hee will discharge his furie against his person.

Hence it is, that a faithfull and conscionable Minister commonly, wheresoever hee lives, is an eminent marke whereat Prophaneness and Policie, Malice and Crueltie, Hell and the World, discharge the utmost of their rage and poysion. Hee above all others, is sure to be wrongfully loaden with flanders, disgraces, lying imputations, and all manner of soule indignities; and many times by the bafer sort, which is more intolerable. If hee be but halfe so honestly careful, in providing for his family, as the carnall worldling is cursedly carking, hee is covetous: If powerfull in his Preaching, hee is imperious.
If hee oppose against the sinnes of the Time, hee is factious: If hee be faithfull in his Ministerie, hee is too precife, and plaine: If hee comes home to mens Consciences, hee is too particular, and undiscreeet. In a word, if hee were Paul, hee should be a pestilent fellow; if Christ Iesus, blessed for ever (a horrible thing!) hee should be Belzebub: For so that glorious Lord, and blessed Servant, was nick-named and branded by the prophane World.

Hence it is, that the generation of the prophane and wicked Crue doe ever furiously band themselves together, to transplant and root out a conscionable Minister, whensoever God brings him amongst them. Like an unquiet and raging Sea, they continually foame out spightfull speeches, filthie and shamefull flanders, and lay things unto his charge, hee never knew: That so, by discouraging him in his Ministerie, weakening his hands, and breaking his heart, they may any ways be rid of him: Or else, by picking unneceflarie Quarrels against him, they labour by Authoritie, and strong hand, to throw him out of his place. For their malice against a powerfull Minister, is endlessse, and implacable.

It is ever the propertie of un-ingenuous prophaneesse, to hate and feare a faithfull and conscionable Preacher as ill as the Plague, and so to esteeme of him. This appeares, by Ter-tullus cenfure of Paul; Certainly (faith hee) wee have found this man a pestilent fellow: When indeed
and perpetuall Guide.

deed himselfe was a pernicious Orator, and abused his cursed Eloquence, to the confusion of Goodness. In the Originall, the word signifies, the Plague. The Plague, that great affrighter, and terror of the sonses of men, is not halfe so terrible and vexing, as is that man to a carnall heart, which preaches with power and authoritie, and not as the Scribes and formall Doctors; and no marvell. The Plague threatens but onely the feares and pangs of a temporall death, and takes but away the naturall Life; but the powerfull Word, from the mouth of a conscionable Minister, doth strike to the very heart of a carnall man, the terrors of Hell-fire and everlasting Vengeance, and doth labour to bereave him of his Life of Corruption, and Pleasures; which, as I told you before, is more sweet and deare unto him, than his Life of Nature.

And hereupon it is, that as you see Townes and Cities busily bestirre themselves, watch and ward, diligently enquire, and examine passengers, to keepe out the Plague; so it is the policie and practice of those places, where Drunkards, Swaggerers, Worldlings, and prophane men swarme, joyntly to conspire and band together, for the banishing of godly Ministers, and driving them out of their Coast. Christ Jesus himselfe, who spake as never any man spake, was so used by the Swinifh Gadarens; as you may reade in the fift of Luke. Paul and Barnabas, that glorious paire of worthy Pastors, were so used by the rebellious and stiffe-necked Iewes, Acts 13. whereupon they
they told them to their faces, That thereby they judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life. Then Paul and Barnabas (faith the Text) spake boldly, and said; It was necessarie, that the Word of God should have first beene spoken unto you: But seeing you put it from you, and judge your selves unworthy of everlasting life, loe wee turne unto the Gentiles. The Booke of God, Ecclesiasticall Stories, experience of our Times, doe plentifully verifie and confirm this Point.

5 But if so be, this Spirituall Foole, whom wee have carried along through so many steps of impietie, cannot have his will against the Preaching and the Person of the Minister; but that he sees the Power of the Word, which he cannot decline, is like continually to vexe him, to strike through his loynes, with feare and trembling still to grate upon his Conscience for his sweet sinne, to discerne and discover the very thoughts and imaginations of his heart; or that hee is more ingenuous and faire-conditioned than other unregenerate men (for sometimes sweetnesse and lovingnesse of naturall disposition doth bridle men from raging against the power of holy Doctrine, and sinceritie of an honest man:) Why then, in a fifth place, hee

First, Either resolves (as many doe) to give the Preacher hearing indeed, and perhaps reverent attention too; but with this secret reservation, That hee shall not stirre and move him with all his Preaching; That say what hee will, hee shall never persuade him, that this or that sinne
is so hainous as hee makes it; hee shall never drive him from the Fashions of the Times, and Customes of his Fore-fathers; hee shall never bring him out of conceit with good-fellowship. So, that as the deafe Adder stoppeth his eares against the Enchanter, charmee hee never so wisely, to shuts hee the eares of his heart against the Word of Life: and though it sounds dayly lowd and strongly in his eares, yet will he by no meanes suffer it to finke feelingly and powerfully into his soule. Those men which rest upon this step of impietie, and in this degree of prophaneenesse, though they heare Sermon upon Sermon, yet are they still the same men: They are Lyers still, they are Drunkards still, they are Vfurers still, they are Swearer still, They are luke-warme Pro- fessors still, &c. they are still as they were. Though these sinnes have againe and againe been cryed against, and many times reproved, and their Consciences convinced; yet the Word which is preached amongst them, hath no more power, nor wrought more alteration upon them, than upon the Seats where they sit: Though the glorious Light of the Gospel shine faire and bright upon them, yet they lye still hard frozen in their dregs, and starke blinde in matters of Heaven: Though the Hammer of the Word beat often upon their hearts, yet it doth not breake and bruise them, but more and more harden and emmarble them, like an Anvill and Adamant: Though they be washed with many plentifull Showers from Heaven, yet they still continue blacke

(12)
blacke Moores, and Leopards; still full of the blackness of Hell, and spots and pollution of Sathan.

Let those that are such among you, in the Name of God beware in time: for assuredly, the Damnation sleepeth not, the Day of Reckoning and every man's particular Judgement is very near; and then we must be answerable and countable for every Sermon we have heard: Every Sermon will then stand up, either to witness for us, or against us; for every one we hear, either advanceth us a step nearer towards Heaven, or throwes us a stayre lower downe towards Hell.

Secondly, Or if hee cannot so fence himselfe against the keene edge of the Word; that two-edged Sword, which day after day is laid to the root of his corruption; nor so hide his head from the heat of that glorious and sacred Sunne of Truth, which every Sabbath shines on his face; but that the sharpe Arrowes of the Word of Truth and Righteousnesse doe pierce his heart, and Sword of Spirit gets so farre within him, that it strikes and astonisheth his Conscience: Why then hee,

First, Either strives and strugles against it, by shifting and shielding himselfe with Distinctions, Exceptions, Excuses, carnall Reasons, Restrictions, Limitations, false Glosses, private and partiall Interpretations, and opposing one place of Scripture, in his owne false and enforced Sense, against the true meaning and naturall power of the
and perpetuall Guide.

the Word in another place, as I have told you largely before. So wretchedly and unhappily is hee wedded to the sinfull pleasures of this vaine World, that hee will wrest his wit, the Word of God, or any thing, to wrest out of his heart those piercing Arrowes of the Word of Truth, shot by the hand of a skilfull Archer; which if he would suffer to search and sink, would fetch out the poysn of his naturall corruption, mortifie his lust, and save his soule.

Secondly, Or if hee have not wit and understanding to furnish himselfe fitly with probable Interpretations, formall Distinctions, and plausible Exceptions, (for this abilitie onely befall prophan men of better parts, and more understanding:) Why then, being resolved not to submit to the power of the Word, nor to forfake his carnall contentments, hee takes this course; hee surfets so immoderately, and drinkes so deepe of sensuall pleasures of that bosom-sinne to which hee is so much wedded, that hee calls his Conscience asleep, drownes his heart in earthly delights, and so goes on at all adventures, and throwes himselfe upon Gods mercies, without all ground or warrant, with such conceits as these: That hee hopes hee shall doe as well as others, who are farre worse and more wicked than himselfe: That God, no doubt, will be mercifull to one sinne: That all his other good parts and good deeds will countervaile and make amends for one infirmitie, (for so heewill call it, and conceive of it, though it be a grosse and grievous (r 3) sinne:)
That one sin will not require so great repentance, but that it may be well enough done on his death-bed, and such like.

Thus I have acquainted you by the way, with the steps of impiety, and degrees of profaneness, wherein unregenerate men, which hate to be reformed, and refuse to yield up themselves to be mastered and guided by the Power and Light of the holy and heavenly Word of the true and ever-living God, doe unhappily rest and repose themselves, to the eternal confusion both of their souls and of their bodies: Which you must take heed of, if you would profit by the Word.

6 Discover and defeat all those Snares of Satan, that we have formerly mentioned to you in this Discourse, pag. 83, under the fourth Vse.

7 Dejeat and demolish those two strong Holds of Satan: first, Carnall Reason; secondly, Corrupt Affection; which I, thus define: It is the actuated strength and rage of original pollution, which furiously executes the sensual and unreasonable determinations of corrupted Carnall Reason: stands at open defiance, and professes open hostilitie against Grace, goodness, and good men, and courses of sanctification, feeds upon so long, and fills it selfe so full with worldly vanities and pleasures, that growing by little and little incorrigible and untameable, it breeds and brings forth, as it natural issue, Despaire, Horror, and the Wormes, which never dies.
By Carnall Reason, I understand the whole speculative power of the higher and nobler part of the Soul, which we call the Understanding, as it is naturally and originally corrupted, and utterly destitute of all Divine Light; and doth afterward, through it owne sinfull working and sensuall discourse, grow wise in the World and earthie affaires, but disconceitfull and opposite to the ways of God, and heavenly wisedome, by concluding and commending to it selwe false Principles, from deluded fence, and deducing false conclusions from true Principles, and by a continued exercise and experience in contemplation of Earth, and passages of worldly Policie.

By Corrupt Affection, I meane and comprise all the active inferior powers of the Soul, Will, Affections, Sense, as they are polluted and empoisoned in the puddle of original corruption; and afterward being fleshed in sensuall pleasures, and enforced by Sathans suggestions, become the furious executioners of all the sinfull decrees and unsanctified determinations of the mis-guided understanding and wisedome of the flesh.

8 In hearing the Word, be sure,

First,  a To give earneft heed, Heb. 2. 1.
Secondly,  b To consider seriously, 2 Tim. 2. 7.
Thirdly,  c That wee be not in this respect like leaking Vessels, and have Sieve-like memories, Heb. 2. 1.
Fourthly,  d To keepe the Word with much ado, with great contention and collusion, Luke 8. 15.
9 Suffer the Spirit of Bondage to have its worke upon thee. Conclude horror upon thy heart, by the working of the Law, from such places as these; Deut. 29. 19, 20, 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 21. 8.

10 When thy Conscience is once throughly wounded by the preparative worke of the Spirit of Bondage, and all thy finnes, even those in which thou hast taken greatest delight, become heavie and a grievous burthen upon thy heart; then let that heavie heart of thine receive spiritual warmth, refreshing, and life,

First, By perusing the Lord Jesus in all the passages of his Love, Sufferings, and Satisfactions, from his comming from the Bosome of his Father, untill his returning unto his right hand againe; especially hanging upon him, bleeding and dying, and crying under the burthen of our finnes, My God, my God, &c. and so conquering and concluding, It is finished.

Secondly, By a feeling survey and sure setting upon all the Promisses of Life, scaled with his righteous blood.

Thirdly, By cleaving to Gods sweetest Name, which is to forgive iniquitie, transgression, and sinne, Exod. 34. 6, 7:

Fourthly, By resting with all thankefull and joyfull acknowledgeing, and rejecting resolutely all scrupulous and fearefull injectiuns, upon that blessed Mysterie of Gods free grace, which reacheth from everlasting to everlasting.

Then
Then ever after walke watchfully and fruitfully in the path which is called holy.

Now for continuall growing and profiting by the Ministerie, in that new and blessed course, and for thriving by the food of the Word which thou enjoyest, take these directions, looke unto these things.

First, Looke to the dressing of it; that thy spirituall Cooke be cunning, and conscionable. Otherwise, it may sometimes turne into ranke poyson unto thy Soule, fill thee with winde, and pufse thee up with a causelesse good conceit of thy selfe; impaire thy spirituall health, keepe thee flinted, as it were, and at a stay, &c. Nay, an ill spirituall Cooke, by his jugling Trickes, may make thee beleive all thy life long, that thou growest in Grace, and shalt goe to Heaven; and thou art starked dead in finnes and trespasses, and shalt be damned.

Secondly, The emptying and disburthening of the Stomacke of thy Soule, of all Humours, Passions, Prejudice, Crosses, Troubles, Temptations, &c. or any thing that will hinder the puritie and power of the Word from taking possession of thy Soule: even the Honey-combe, the sweetest thing in the World, is loathsome, as the Wife-man sayth, to a full stomacke. Thou must bring an Heart and Head, like two emptie Buckets, to draw with greedinesse and joy the Water of Life out of the Wells of Salvation.

Thirdly, To procure and rayse an Appetite before
before thou come: from consideration; first, of its Necessitie: Where the Word of God is not preached, the people perish; as you had it in the former Treatise. Secondly, Excellencie: It is farre more precious than purest Gold, dearer than thousands of Gold and Silver. Thirdly, Sweetnesse: It passeth the Honey, and Honey-combe. David, in his absence from the meanes, holds the Swallow and Sparrow happy Birds. Fourthly, Profit: It buildeth up the inner man, &c.

Fourthly, The Reception of it; That it ever be entertained with farre more attention and reverence, than if wee were hearing the mightielest Monarch in the World speaking immediately unto us, by personall compellation, about the weightielest affaire, and neereliekest concerning us: That it be ever heard as the Word of the mightie and ever-living God.

Fifthly, Retention. The most wholesome and sovereign meat, if presently voided, nourisheth not at all; many fall into a Consumption of Grace, by reason of weakenesse this way. They are hot and fierce to get unto a good Sermon, and they doe well, to be carefull thereabout; but their forwardnesse and fervencie cooles and expires, when the Sermon is done. They after, have little more to doe with it, save onely to say it was a good Sermon: As, many have an unsatiable appetite in devouring meat, who cannot keepe it for any space of time. The retentive power of the Soule then must be strengthened, and
and perpetuall Guide.

and exercised, or else the attentive and attractive addes but more deadnesse to a spirituall Atro-

phie.

Sixtly, Concoction. By repetition; either
in way of conference, with our neighbours, and
Christian friends; or in way of examination,
with our Wives, Children, Servants, Schollers,
or other inferiours. But principally, by that,
first, excellent Exercise of Meditation, which
is the very life of profitable Hearing; and the
want of it, the death of all good Lessons: It
inflames the heart with a kindly heat, to prafife;
as in brooding, the Hen inspires heat, and begets
life: secondly, and by the heat of Prayer; that
both warmes the heart, fits the food, and brings a
blessing upon both.

Seventhly, Digestion. By application of the
points unto our owne particular; by sorting the
particulars of the Sermon, unto our owne ne-
cessities; for the conquering of this Lust, ruling
of that Passion, leaving this Sinne, performing
that Dutie, &c.

Eightly, Practice. Walking in the strength
of it afterward; which makes it our owne, and
keepes the Soule in health, and growth, and com-
fortable temper.

And thus wee may constantly grow by the Mi-
ningerie of the Word; which is the principall
publike Banquet, which the Lord hath provided
for feeding his Childrens Soules.

The Sacraments are a second Service.

Even by the first, that is, Baptisme, wee may
grow,
grow, not only when we feel it in our own bodies; but also, when we see it administered unto others. And therefore, the custom which hath prevailed in most places, of neglecting and contemning this part of the Food of our Soules, is to be severely censured, and sharply reproved.

By the second, that is, the Lords Supper, we may thrive excellently, if we follow those Directions in my Preparative to it: To which I referre you, in the succeeding Treatise.

** * * *

FINIS.
# A Brief Table of the Chief Heads Contained in this Treatise of the Saints Guide

## A.

| Affection to be joined with hearing. | 179, 180 |
| Afflictions no strange thing. | 179, 180 |
| Afflictions raised by the Devil against Christians. | 109 |
| Antidotes against afflictions. | 110, 111 |
| Application required in hearing the Word, and why. | 186, 187 |
| Apostates & their danger. | 103 |

## B.

| Attention in hearing required. | 174, 175 |
| Benefits of the Word. | 59, 60 |

## C.

| Caveats. | 246, 247 |
| Carnall Reason and corrupt affection defined. | 246, 247 |
| Catechising our families, press'd in nine Reasons. | 228, 229 |
| Atheism. | 50 |
|  |  |
| Caveats, that wee may profe in hearing the word. | 247, &c. |
| Carnall Objections against the word. | 61, to 83 |
| Charitie among Christians, as much as among Papists. | 81 |
| Christ suffers with his affli{ed, | 121 |
| Considerations sixteen for the usefulness of the word. | 216, &c. |
| Conversion tried. | 89 |
| Covetousnesse, and the signes of it. | 96 |
| Curses sixe of unprofitable hearing. | 190, &c. |
| Cursed is their condition, that are not reformed by the word in sixe particulars. | 199 |

| Danger in absenting from the word. | 58 |
| Degrees in sinning. | 53 |
| Devill steals away the word, 85, 86. He hinders conversion, 87. And a through reformation, 88, &c. He deales with men as Pharaoh with Moses. | 93, &c. |
| Dearenesse of things, why greate- | ter now than formerly. 82 |
| Delight in the word helps memorie. | 179 |
| Duties required before hearing, 145, &c. In hearing, 173, &c. After hearing. 182 |

| E. |
| Effects of Pride. | 142 |
| The End of our Creation. | 204 |
| Examination, when required. | 166, 167 |
| Examples for the practice of preparation. | 155, &c. |

<p>| F. |
| False changes, 88, 89. How tried. | 102 |
| Frequent preaching proved out of antiquitie, 205, &amp;c. |
| Feet, what is meant by them. | 17 |
| Finall falling from grace, not granted, 101. But partially and frequently, 106. The good we get by falls, 108 |
| Fretting at afflictions, 132. At the prosperitie of the wicked, 133. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE TABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>G.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace is of a growing nature. 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godly men distinguished from Hypocrites, by sixe markes. 8,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Godly shine brighter after their falls. 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gods Children but few. 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gods Law not like mans. 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God is the cause of all affliction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His aime in afflicting his. 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gods love to his, exceeds the creatures. 114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **H.** |
| Hardnesse of heart, and a helpe against it. 52,53 |
| Helps to heare the word understandingly. 177 |

| **I.** |
| Ignorance like darkenesse. 31 |
| The danger of it, p. 32. to 37. & 46,47 |
| Judgements of Non-proficients by the word. 48 |

| **Judigements for the contempt of it. 201, &c.** |
| Judgements why rather to be expelled in our time. 80 |

| **K.** |
| Knowledge must be practicall, 5 |
| Fruits of divine Knowledge. ibid. |

| **L.** |
| Learning humane only will not save. 19,20 |
| Lets of not profiting by the word. p. 50. to 123 |
| Life to be lost for God. 12 |
| Light, what meant by it. 16 |
| Love to God and our neighbours tried. 68 |

| **M.** |
| Many take more paines for Hell, than some for Heaven. p. 75. to 78 |
| The Matter of the word. 43 |
| Math. 10. 4. expounded. 195 |
| Good Meanings will not save. 21 |
| Meanes to quicken attention to the word. 175 |

<p>| <strong>Medi-</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>THE TABLE.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meditation requisite after hearing,</strong> 184. <em>The Benefits of it,</em> 185. <em>Directions for it,</em> 227, 228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ministers Embassadours: why,</strong> 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ministers, why they preach so seldom,</strong> 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ministerie of the word like the wedding feast,</strong> 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Miserie of the natural estate,</strong> 141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The More wee have, the greater our account,</strong> 143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motives, To walke by the rule of the word,</strong> p. 41. to 49. To prepare for hearing it, 151. To profit by it, 197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>O.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obadience to the word required,</strong> 187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Openness of heart to receive the word,</strong> 172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathes, what meant by them,</strong> 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Papists keepe the word from the Laitie,</strong> 28. Their Objections answered, 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peace that the Gospel brings with it,</strong> 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persecution to be endured for the word,</strong> 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perseverance, how hindered by Satan,</strong> 100. <em>How crowned by God,</em> 105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Papists Hospitalitie, with its causes,</strong> 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prayers and praises must be fervent, and free,</strong> 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prayer before the Word, and for what,</strong> 170, 171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preaching prefer'd before reading,</strong> 211. <em>More needfull now, than formerly,</em> 213. <em>It cannot be too much,</em> 62, &amp;c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preservatives against sinne,</strong> 107. <em>Against spiritual Pride,</em> 136, &amp;c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation requisite before hearing,</strong> 145. <em>Without it, the word hurts,</em> 145, &amp;c. The profit of it, 158, &amp;c. What it is, and what required in it, 165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pride may spring from Gods providence,</strong> 132, &amp;c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priviledges of the godly,</strong> 124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prophaneness of Ministers no excuse for disobedience to the word,</strong> 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psalmes,</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## The Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalms, their contents and benefits.</th>
<th>Sixe Sinnes follow unprofitable bearers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purging of the heart before hearing, from sinne and worldly cares.</td>
<td>Sinne against the Holy-Ghost, how committed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications of the heart, before hearing.</td>
<td>Singularitie, what required, and what not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recusancie.</td>
<td>Sleeping in the Church condemned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration, what.</td>
<td>Sathans Sleights to hinder the words worke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading the word pressed.</td>
<td>Spirituall Pride, How it ariseth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objections against it answered.</td>
<td>Sweet sinne, what it is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recollecting the word, a Dutie.</td>
<td>Things required to the love of God and men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition and Conference, another.</td>
<td>Understanding of the Word required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vowes to be payd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sathans Policie.</td>
<td>Wicked men hate the godly: why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separatists condemned.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service of God how to be qualified.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Notes:**
- The table lists various topics and their corresponding page numbers.
- The entries cover a range of subjects from religious teachings to moral reflections and practical guidance.\n- The table is laid out in a structured manner, with columns for different categories and rows for specific topics.
- The page numbers indicate where each topic is discussed in more detail within the text.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>THE TABLE.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wicked men band together against a powerfull Minister. 239, &amp;c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisedome indeed, how to be had: 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits of worldly Wisedome, 4. who is a wise man. ibid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldly Wisedome will not save us. 20, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORD:</strong> The meaning of the Word. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Word our chiefest treasure, 12, 13. Our Light to Heaven. 19, 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The literal Word, without the spiritual meaning, will not profit us. 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How men labour to blunt the edge of the Word. 233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strugglings of a wicked heart, to get the Word out, being once got in. 244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Word workes Regeneration and Sanctification, 24, 25.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is lively and sharpe in three respects, 26. It is a Love-letter from God, 42. It shall judge us, 45. It is not mans, but Gods invention, 50. It profits converted and unconverted, 59. It must dwell in us plentifully, and how, 105, 213, &amp;c. It fits every man in all occasions. 215, &amp;c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will-Worship hated by God. 22, 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**FINIS.**