THE
Dead Saint Speaking,

to
Saints, and Sinners Living:
In several TREATISES.

VIZ.

Sinfulness and greatest evil that is in Sin, On 2 Sam. 24. 10.

Love of Christ to his Spouse, On Cant. 4. 9.


Slowness of Heart to Believe, On John 1. 50.

Cause, Signs and Cure of Motives to Sincerity, On of Hypocrisy, with Helps, Isaiah 58. 2.

Wonderful Workings of God for his Church and People, On Exod. 15. 11.

Never before Published.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D. D.

Late Mr of Christ Colledge in Cambridge.
Prepared for the Press by himself, during Life.

Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver mee from the body of this Death! Rom. 7. 24.

But God commended his love towards us, in that whilst we were yet Enemies, Christ dyed for us. Rom. 5. 8.

LONDON:
Printed by Robert Ibbitson, for Thomas Parkhurst, and are to be sold at his Shop at the three Crowns, over against the Great Conduit in Cheapside, 1657.
TO THE
Right Honourable, and Right Religious Lord, Robert Earle of Warwick, Baron of Leez, and to the truly Noble, and truly vertuous, the Lady Elia nor, Countess of Warwick, his most pious Confort.

E. B. wisheth to your present prosperities, the addition of many dayes, increase of Grace in this life, and the full fruition of Glory in the life to come;

Right Honourable,

I was the purpose of my dear Husband deceased, to have presented these his Works unto you Both, by an Epistle Dedicatory, wherein hee would have spoken his gratitude for your manifold favours. And when his masting weaknesses had rendred him unfit for that intended service, hee desired, if these manuscripts should bee esteemed worthy of publick view, they might come abroad under your Honours Patronage, to bee living evidences of his high respect and unfeigned thankfulness. This Narrative will, I humbly hope, make a satisfying Apologie for my presumption, in prefixing your noble Names before these his Sermons, which

A 3
The Epistle Dedicatory.

are likely to find the same good acceptance from the Press (as some eminently pious and learned, upon the perusal of them judge) which they received from the Pulpit.

My prayers are, that Your Selves and Your Family, may both here and hereafter reap the fruit of all those encouragements, which many famous Ministers (some dead, and others surviving to do service) have received from Your Honours favour.

I humbly crave your acceptance of this Widows mite of Gratitude, for all the expressions of Your respect, both to my reverend Husband and worthlesse self.

Right Honourable, I am under many Obligations bound to bee

Your Honours

humble Servant,

ELIANOR BOLTON.
An Epistle to the Reader.

THE Books of learned and godly Ministers, published by others after their death's, do for the most part come far short of those Books, which they themselves publish in their lives time. The children of their brains being herein, like unto the children of their bodies, who many times live plentifully while their Fathers live, but meet with much hardship after their death's. It may bee said of the posthumous works of most men in comparison of their first works Printed by themselves, as it is of Abijah and Benaiah, 2 Sam. 23. 19. 23. They were very valiant and honourable men, but they attained not unto the three first Worthies of David.

But it fairs far otherwise with this our Reverend Brother, hee hath attained a double happiness which few arrive unto. These ensuing Sermons were written out in a fair and legible Character, and prepared for the Press in his life time, and wherein they were defective, they have been supplied and made up, by an able, learned, and judicious Friend, so that the Reader may assure himself that they are no whit inferior to those other Books, which he himself sets forth, and that these Father's children, suffer no considerable prejudice by their Authors death.

The Subjects treated on in this Book, are all of them of singular use and benefit. Here you have exactly proved, That Sin is the greatest of Evils, and therefore
To the Reader.

To call for the greatest sorrow, the greatest hatred, the greatest care to avoid it, and to be rid of it. That the heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken with his Church and people, and that therefore his people ought to be exceedingly in love with him. Here you have the Nature, Necessity, and Difficulty of Faith, learnedly and practically handled, and especially the Privileges and Royalties of it. Here also is shewed the Cause and Cure of Hypocrisie; And how far a man may go towards Heaven, and yet fall short of it.

The truth is, as the rude Satyre in Plutarch, who strived to make a dead man stand upright, had so much wit as to say, Deest aliquid intus, there wants a principle within to enable him to stand. So may I truly say of him that shall read this Book, and not be very well pleased with the matter therein contained, Deest aliquid intus, he wants a principle of grace within, to cause him to close with such wholesome, spiritual, and heavenly truths:

There are other very profitable Treatises of this our Reverend, and godly Brother (prepared by himself for the Press) yet behinde, which may happily be brought to light, if God shall please to cause this Book to finde acceptance with his people, for whose spiritual advantage it is intended; And that it may obtain the end for which it is Printed, is the Prayer of

Thy Servant in the Work of the Ministry,

E.D. CALAMY.
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First. That slovnesse of heart to beleive, is a temple of spirit very offensive unto God.
Secondly, It is very pleasing unto God, when we will beleive in him upon small Revelation.
Thirdly, God will reveal great things to them who do so beleive in him.

The first Doctrine cleared. That we are slow of heart to beleive, demonstrated in five particulars.

2. The complaints of sinners when they come first to beleive. p. 192, 193.

Thestorick work God useth to a poor humbled cast down sinner to bring him to beleive. p. 193.
4. Way God takes to confirm the covenant of mercy to beleivers. p. 194.

Grounds of the slovnesse of heart to beleive.

First, From Satan who hath two stratagems. p. 195, 196.
Secondly, From themselves. p. 197.
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1. From ignorance. p.197.
3. Too much tenderness. p.199.
5. Some rest on this side Christ. p.200, 201.
6. Ground why we are slow of heart to believe, is taken from others. p.202.

1. Wee look upon their height. p.203.
2. --- Upon others' depths. p.204, 205, 206.

Three Reasons why this frame of spirit is so offensive to God.
1. It argues and speaks a corrupt heart. p.207.
2. As much as is in it lyes it makes void all the stupendous things of God. p.107, in particular.

1. The great counsel of God; p.209.
3. The purposes of Gods mercy to thee. p.211.
4. Frustrates the expectation of God. p.212.
5. Gods end in sending Christ. p.213.
6. The death of Christ.
7. The promises of God to Christ.


Use. See how Satan doth delude their souls whom hee persuades not to believe, is a vertue, is a thing pleasing unto God. p.216.
Reasonings of poor souls why they must not believe. p.217.

2. Use of Exhortation to three things.
1. To bee convinced of the greatness of the sin.
2. You wrong God.

Quest. How shall I know when God, and when Satan discovers sin?

A sinful looking on sin in seven particulars.

1. To injure your selves in three particulars.
2. Be humbled for it.
3. Be quickned to believe.

Consider. 1. It is Gods command, and that is first, a sufficient warrant.
2. It is sufficient security.
3. Consider you can do God no greater pleasure, than to come in and believe in him.

Faith a weapon to be wielded against seven charges of Satan.
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OF
HYPOCRISY.

ISAIAH 58, 2.

The World divided into four ranks of men. p. 26
Those that are in the pale of the Church ranked in three
sorts.
Those that are pretenders for Heaven, into two sorts; of which are, the
1. Formal Christian.
2. Upright and sincere Christian.

The Text opened.

Doc. That it is possible for a man to do much in the
ways of God, even to abound in all outward per-
formances, and yet bee false at heart, and have an
unfound spirit here, and mis of Heaven here-
after.

The Doctrine proved and cleared by diverse Particulars; as
The first Particular is,
1. He may hear the Word.
2. May abound in hearing.
3. May hear with affection.

Four kinds of affections that a Formalist may hear with,
1. With affection of wonder and astonishment.
2. Affection of fear and trembling.
3. With delight and some kind of love.
4. With affection of joy.

Secondly, A man may not only hope, but pray too, may, make many
Prayers.

And bee may joy fast to prayer.

Thirdly, A man may seem to bee humbled, to mourn, and to weep
for sin, and yet bee unfound.

There are four sorts of tears.
1. Tears of Anger.
2. Tears of despair, such as are the damned in Hell.
3. Tears of compassion.
4. Tears of Godly sorrow.

Fourthly, A man may seem to do much, walk in many ways of duty
in outward show of obedience, to the letter of command.

Fifthly, A man may cast up his vomit, digorge himself of all his
old ways.
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1. Out of fear of evil.
2. Out of a weariness of it.
3. Out of love of some contrary sin.
4. Out of want of fit instruments, and means to compass his sin.

Sixthly. A man may accompany himself with the People of God.

Seventhly. A man may not only do, but suffer too, and yet be unsound.

Reasons are,

1. Real. Because no unsound spirit hath anything in it, which is essential to a Christian, as a Christian.
2. Real. Because a false professor may have a compleat resemblance of a Christian in all those things which are not essential to a Christian.

Thus the first thing is cleared, now we come to the second thing propounded.

Secondly, How it may stand with

1. God’s end.
2. Satan’s end.
3. A man’s own ends, to abound in duty, and yet not be sincere.

First, It may stand with God’s ends, both

1. Towards the good, and they are merciful ends.
2. Towards the bad, and they are partly merciful, and partly judicial.

First, It may stand with God’s ends towards the good, and they are merciful ends.

First, That God may serve his own glory by them, for the bringing in, and building up of the godly.

Secondly, God suffers unsound hearts to abound in duties, to maintain an holy jealousy and watchfulness in the hearts of his own people.

Thirdly, To make us see there is something in duty more than duty, which sets a value upon duty, and makes it of worth.

Fourthly, To tell us that there are other things to be done of a Christian, than merely to pray here.

Fifthly, To make his people more solicitous, after safer, more stable, and proving evidences than these are.

Secondly, As it may stand with God’s ends to the good, so it may stand with God’s ends to the bad.

1. His merciful ends.
2. His judicial ends.

Secondly, It may stand also with Satan’s ends, and that

1. Towards the good.
2. Towards the world.
3. Towards themselves.

1. It may stand with Satan’s ends towards the good.

P. 269

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.

ibid.
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1. Hereby Satan doth labour to cause God's people to throw off the work, to desist in their way. ibid.
2. If he cannot prevail with God's people, to throw off the work, yet he hath a second end, and that is to discourage God's people in the work. ibid.
3. If Satan cannot prevail thus far, yet he labours by these men to scandalize the godly, to bring evil reports on all that walk in the ways of life. p. 275

You know how wicked men argue, viz.

1. Either from particulars to generals. ibid.
2. Or by the falling of the person. ibid.

Secondly, It may stand with Satan's end, in respect of the world, as
1. To keep them off from entering upon the way of life. p. 276
2. To strengthen the prejudice of wicked men against the ways and people of God. ibid.
3. Hereby heh hardens them in a way of sin. ibid.

Thirdly, How it may stand with Satan's ends, towards themselves that thus abound in duty, and yet are unsound.
1. To aggravate their condemnation. ibid.
2. Because such men are surest his of any, and that on two grounds. ibid.
3. If he stands in that condition, he thinks he is sure enough. ibid.
4. If he falls, he thinks him sure enough, because the hazard is great. p. 277
5. It may stand yet further with Satan's ends, because he hopes to have some further good of them another day. p. 278

For the Devil knows,
1. They will be the surest and trustiest servants to him of any. p. 279

None in the world have more of the infernal nature than they. p. 280

Thirdly, How it may stand with their own ends, who having corrupt hearts, yet should notwithstanding abound in duty.
1. To answer the cases of conscience. ibid.
2. To pacify the quarrels, to satisfy the grievances, and growings of conscience. p. 281

Conviction doth arise from some common, not saving light, and that,
1. Because it discovers grosser sins, not secret sins. ibid.
2. It discovers open sins, not spiritual sins. ibid.
3. It discovers no sin, as sin, in the nature of it. ibid.

Other ends there are, which are more low than the former, as
1. For ostentation and gifts of pride. p. 282
2. For affectation, credit, and esteem in the world. ibid.
3. For the advancement of their worldly designs. ibid.
4. That by this means they might procure God's blessings on them in this life. ibid.

Next thing is to show what the grounds are whence it arises, that
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That a corrupt heart may abound in outward performances. p. 283
First ground is natural conscience. ibid.
Second ground is some present distress and trouble on the conscience, or upon the bodies of men, upon the spirit or flesh of men. ibid. & p. 284
1 Some present distress upon the spirit. ibid.
2 Outward pressures on the body. ibid.
The fourth thing remains, which is four, where the fault lies, or how it comes to passe, and that in six particulars. p. 285
1 Hee fails in the latitude or extent of his obedience. He is limited,
   1 Either to some command most suitable,
   2 Or to the flesh, that is, to the outwards of the command. ibid.
2 Hee is faulty in the manner of his obedience. p. 286
3 Hee is faulty in his aims and ends. ibid.
4 Hee is faulty, in that hee refuseth upon what hee doth, and looks no higher. p. 287
4 Hee makes it self his obedience, which should quicken his obedience. ibid.
6 These spiritual performances do not arise from spiritual Principles. ibid.
There is a fourfold change.
1 A Moral change. p. 288
2 A Partial change. ibid.
3 A Formal change. ibid.
4 A Spiritual change; But not new ibid.
   1 For substance of soul and body. p. 289
   2 For faculties of soul and body. ibid.
—It is true in the main, but Nature may bee strengthened from above.
Nature considered in diverse forms and ranks.
1 There is a mere Nature with those relics, (as some say) But I say restored Principles. ibid.
2 Nature civilized, and moralized. ibid.
3 Nature sublimated. p. 290
Thus you see the Doctrin cleared, and the fourth thing answered.
1 Hee is a man, who was never humbled for sin. ibid.
2 Hee is a man, that was never truly cast out of himself. ibid.
3 Hee is a man, that was never fully changed. ibid.
4 Hee is a man, who is carried upon holy works with a flourishing heart. ibid.
There are two great weights that carry him about.
1 Fear of Hell. p. 291
2 Hope of Heaven. ibid.
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Use If a man do thus much, and yet fall short of Heaven, what then shall become of them that do nothing? ibid.
Sincerity lies in labouring, and how. ibid.

These things are necessary.
1 Necessitate Precepti, God hath commanded them. ibid.
2 Necessitate Medii, they are the way to life. ibid.

Object. This discourageth us, If a man may do thus much, and yet fall short of Heaven, then it is no good to sit still and do nothing. Answered. p. 292

We should argue after this manner.

Because I may do all this, and yet not bee sincere, therefore I will labour to bee sincere in the doing of them. ibid.

Second Use.

Discovers the soundnesse and unsoundnesse of those bottoms to rest a mans soul upon. ibid.

To stir up those this fear God to get better evidences. p. 293
1 Because evidences of this kinde are obscure, full of ambiguity. ibid.
2 Because they are unconstant and insensible. p. 294

Fetch your evidences from your Justification, your interest in Christ, in the Covenant. These are ibid. & p. 295
1 The clearest.
2 The purest.
3 The most satisfying.
4 The most constant evidences. p. 296

Third Use.

If it bee possible to do thus much and bee unsound, then what care ought there to bee to clear the soundnesse of our spirits in our performances? p. 298

First, Clear the sincerity of your hearts in your performances in particular, and that in three things.
1 In your hearing. p. 299
2 In your praying. ibid.
3 In your mourning for sin. ibid.

First, A sincere heart desires sincere preaching.
As 1 Hee desires to receive the truth of God p. 301
2 Hee is willing to receive every truth of God. ibid.
3 Hee is willing to receive it as the truth of God. ibid.

But now an unsound spirit,
1 Hee is not willing to receive the truth. ibid. & p. 302
2 Not every truth.
3 Not as truth: As not
   1 For it self. ibid.
   2 Not to bee a King over them.

Thirdly, Now an honest hears in hearing, is such as
1 Hee hears the word as Gods word.
2 Hee sides with the word of God against himself. 3 Hee
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3 Hee desires to profit by the word. ibid.
4 Hee hears the word with reflection. P. 303

Secondly, To clear the sincerity of your hearts in matter of Prayer.

First Character.
First, Where the heart is sincere in prayer, there is a doing of the
duty with all our strength. ibid.

Second Character.
There is no ref nor content to the soul, till the heart be wrought to
the work. P. 304

Third Character.
A heart sincere in Prayer, doth thirst after communion with God
in Prayer.
Object. How shall a man know when hee hath communion with
God in duty? ibid.

Answered. p. 306
1 In general, Thou meetest, and hast communion with God in du-
ty, when God hath enabled thee to act grace in a duty. ibid.
2 When the performance of a duty doth lead the soul into better
freedom. P. 307

Fourth Character.
A heart sincere in prayer, doth rise up praying from prayer, hee
goes away with affection of, and to prayer, after the prayer
is done. ibid. & p.308

Fifth Character.
A heart sincere in prayer, doth see it self in prayer. It is a heart that
diligently observes it self in duty, views all the workings of the soul, and
takes notice of all the imperfections of the soul in duty. p. 308, 309

Sixth Character.
A heart sincere in prayer, is a praying heart. p. 310
Object. But you will say, Then all our hearts are sincere, for
who is it that doth not desire the thing hee prayeth for. An-
swered. p. 310
1 Thou prayerst for grace, but thou dost not desire grace in the
beauty and extent of it. ibid.
2 Thou prayerst for the subduing of thy lust, but dost thou
desire what thou prayerst for? P. 311
3 Thou pray for Heaven, and one would think you did desire
this, but dost thou know what Heaven is, when thou prayerst
for Heaven? P. 312

Heaven not desirable to corrupt hearts, in several particulars. p. 313

Seventh Character.
A sincere heart in prayer, doth not only desire, but truly endeavour
the thing prayed for. p. 314

3 Part clear sincerity in matter of mourning.
Several Characters of true mourning.
First Character.
A sincere mourning, is a deep mourning. ibid.
Second
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Second Character.
A sincere mourning is an universal mourning. ibid,

Third Character.
A sincere mourning is a mourning for sin. P. 317

Fourth Character.
Sincere mourning is proportionable and that in two things.
  1 Of the measure of sin. ibid.
  2 Of the merit of sin. P. 318

Fifth Character.
Sincere mourning is a faithful mourning. And that in three particulars. P. 319

Sixth Character.
Sincere mourning is a filial mourning; ibid.
Which comes 1 From God’s love to the soul ibid.
  2 From the love of the soul to God. P. 321

Seventh Character.
Sincere mourning is a fruitful mourning, and that in four particulars. ibid.
  1 Heart-humbling sorrow. P. 322
  2 Heart-fainting sorrow. ibid.
  3 Grace-strengthening sorrow. ibid.
  4 A divorcing sorrow. ibid.

Hypercrites mourning for sin in seven particulars. P. 333
Clear sincerity in obedience in general illustrated in several Characters.

First Character.
Sincere obedience is univerfier obedience. And that ibid.
  1 In suffering, as doing. P. 324
  2 In Relative commands, as well as Absolute. ibid.
  3 In Affirmative, as well as Negative. P. 325
  4 In the Spirit, as well as in the Letter. P. 326

Second Character.
Sincere obedience is such an obedience which doth; ibid.
  1 Come from a right spring. P. 327
  2 Is wrought by a right rule. ibid.
  3 In a right manner. P. 328
  4 To a right end. ibid.

Object. It is also requisite to aim at God’s glory in every action. Answered. P. 329

Third Character.
Sincere obedience is fruitful obedience. P. 330

Fourth Character.
Sincere obedience is filial obedience. P. 331

In seven cases Children of God may be cold in them. P. 332
Second Life is an Life of Exhortation, and that in four Branches. P. 333

First Branch, Get a sincere heart.
  1 Motives. P. 333
      1 Because it sets a value on them. 03
      2 Distinguishing
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2 Distinguishing our works from others. Ibid.
3 Otherwise all are lost. p.334.
4 Sincerity is the chiefest thing God eyes in men. Ibid.
5 Sincerity affords most comfort. Ibid.
6 Sincerity fences the heart against Aposlacy. P. 335.

Cure of Hypocrify is,
1 A difficult cure. P.336.
2 A painful cure. P.337.

Means of cure,
1 Convince thy heart of the evil of an unsound heart. P.338.
2 Consider there is a God. P.339.
3 Thou must be new made. P.340.
4 Use Prayer. Ibid.

Rules for Preservatives.
Uses that may be made of these Rules. Ibid.

Rules for clearing sincerity.
1 Make a thorough search. Ibid.
2 Acquaint thy self with the most clear evidences. P.342.

Objection. But how shall I know what are those heart-clearing evidences? Answered. P.343,344.

Second Rule is, Take not up your evidences from the carriage of your spirits, either when at best, or at worst. Ibid. and P.445.

4 Rule.
Judge not thy sincerity by some particular acts. P. 346.

5 Rule.
Be careful to read your spirits. P.346.
Five several times to read your spirits.
1 In times of Darkness. P.347.
2 In times of Manifestation. P.348.
3 In times of outward Distresse. Ibid.
4 In times of Prosperity. P.349.
5 In times of Danger. Ibid.

4 Branch of Exhortation, To declare the sincerity of the heart on all occasions. P.350,351.

We are called to:
1 By God. P.352.
2 By our distressed brethren. Ibid.
3 Our own Church and Nation. Ibid.
4 Our Consciences. Ibid.
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The wonderful workings of God,
FOR
his Church and People.

EXOD. 15. 11.
Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the Gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

In trouble God changes us with two things.
1 Faith.
2 Prayer.
In deliverance with two things.
1 Thankfulness.
2 Obedience.
The words opened.

Doctrine, The wonderful God, doth do wonderful things for his Church and People.
The Doctrine proved and illustrated.
1 That God doth great wonders.
2 That God hath done great wonders, and that either
   1 With small means.
   2 Without means.
3 By contrary means.
   2 Querie.
Is the Grounds and Reasons.
1 Because he is a wonderful God.
2 To get himself a wonderful name.
3 As to get, so to uphold his great name.
4 Reason.

God doth wonders for his People, that hee might inherit wonderful praises from his People.

5 Reason.
To add torture to the Devil and his Children.

6 Reason.

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Ibid.

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Ibid.

p.357
Ibid, and

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Ibid.

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Ibid.

p.360
Ibid.

p.361
Ibid.

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6 Reason.
That so our selves, and the Generations to come, might be: stirred up to trust in him.
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7 Reason.
Because his love and ingagements move him to it.
4. Ingagements.

1 They are his. 
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2 He hath promised. 
P. 366; 367
3 They trust in him. 
P. 368
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3 Query.
What are those wonders God doth for his Church and People:
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When is the time which God takes to do wonders for his Church:
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P. 375.
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Two times, Gods time, Mans time. 
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5 Query.
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1 Of folly and madness.
2 Of scorn and hissing.
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a wonder for us, first, Spiritual grounds.

1 Universallity of sin. 
P. 380
2 Impedency of sin. 
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3 Obstinacy of sin amongst us.

Second natural grounds of Fear.

1 The opposition of wicked men against endeavors of re-
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2 The schismes and divisions amongst us.
3 The wilful blindness and security amongst us.

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4 Missing of opportunities amongst us. ibid.

Two Grounds of hope, first, From God,
1 From the goodness of his nature. ibid.
2 Because God's glory is much concerned. p. 383

Two Grounds of hope from the Church of God, the good of most of the reformed Churches in the Christian world, doth depend upon the welfare of England. ibid.

Three Arguments taken from our selves.
1 Sins are not natural, nor untempered by Law. p. 383, 384
2 We are now in reforming of them. p. 384
3 From the beginnings of mercy. p. 385
4 The flock of prayers laid up. p. 386
5 God hath drawn out the graces of his people. ibid.

Four Arguments taken from our enemies.
1 Their former wickedness which shall hunt them, and finde them out. p. 387
2 Their present sinfulnesse. ibid.

Object. God hath given up the godly into the hands of wicked men.

Four answers to this Objection. p. 388, 389

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Use of Information. To inform us of the greatness of our God, 1. Of his Power, 2. Wisdom, 3. Mercy, 4. Truth. 394

2 It informs us of the happy condition of the Saints.
3 How precious the Saints are in the esteem of God.
4 That the condition of the Church is many times sad, because a wonder must be expressed for their relief. p. 395

5 They must not thereby despair of help.
6 There is no ground for wicked men to insulting. p. 396
7 What engagements lie upon them, that God hath done wonders for. ibid.

8 Information, What grounds there is for us at this time, 1. To trust in God, 2. To pray to him, 3. To hope in him;
4. To wait upon him.
   1 From the Experience of God. p. 398, 399
   2 From the Power of God. 399

9 This informs us, what is the reason that God lets wicked men bring up their designs to ripen, because he can do wonders. p. 400, 401

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1. A Christian, which is the soldiery of Christ.  
2. Religion, which is the cause of Christ.  
3. There is least cause of discouragement.  

Fourth Use, To teach three lessons,  
1. Thankfulness.  
2. Obedience.  
3. Dependence.  

Two great enemies of Dependence upon God.  
1. Obliterating the motions of God.  
2. Burying the remembrance of his works.  

Fifth Use, Then it is good, being on the Churches side.  

Sixth Use, Let us fall down, and adore this great God, who can do wonders.  

Seventh Use, Let us carry our selves in such deportment, as is suitable for such as are Expectants, that God should do wonders for them.  

Eight Use, Dost God do wonders for his Church? then learn  
1. To trust in God, unbelief imprisons God, faith sets him at liberty.  
2. Be encouraged to prayer, faith and prayer have had a hand in most wonders.  
3. Be encouraged to hope.  
4. Be encouraged to wait.  

Would you ingage God to do wonders? believe.  

The excellency of Faith in four Particulars.  

Let no difficulty undermine your Faith, no, nor discouragement put you off from seeking.  

Supplication is nothing without Reformation.
Such was his Outside: But * That, once within;
Thou may'st not, yet, behold; -- For fear of Sin:
It's * Dazzling Glory (Mortal) would amaze!

And make thee -- Idolize It's * Sun-bright rays:
Thy Sin would Crucify, what Grace hath Crown'd,
And Thou with shame It's Glory quite Confound.
No; -- Stay a while: -- First, Get to Heaven; And than
Caze - on! And view the In-side of the Man:
Then Love, Adore, Admire, Triumph; And Sing
Eternal Hallelujahs to thy King,
That Pious Soul * disclaims thy Worship; -- He
(Thy Fellow-Saint) will worship God with thee.

But is there left no Transcript, here beneath,
Of that Fair-Copy; Rent from us by Death?
Yes: -- Turn these Pages (Reader) -- Thou wilt see,
His every-line Breath's Immortality.

Ferd. Archer.
And now, I beseech thee, Take away the iniquity of thy servant: for I have done very foolishly.

The occasion of these words, was the hand of God upon the Children of Israel, for David's sin of Numbring the people.

You read in Verie 2. That David commanded Joab to go and number the people; and, at the lift, Joab he dissuaded him.

But you will say, Was it not lawful to number the people? Did not Moses the same in the Wilderness, and Joshua, and Nehemiah?

Yea, But Joab saw the pride of David's heart in it; as appears by his answer in Verie 3. — And Joab said unto the King, Now the Lord thine God add unto the people, how many swear they be, an hundred fold. But why doth my Lord the King delight in this thing? notwithstanding the King's word prevailed against Joab's thought indeed to his trouble, and Israel's cost.

Happy had it been for David, and Israel too, if the work had not been done. But Joab goes, and the number is brought in.

There were Eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew sword, and the men of Judah were Five hundred thousand.
Well, But what was the Fruit? what was the Effect of this?

1. You read,--**David's heart smote him.** Verse 10. That is, his Conscience accused him. If Conscience be not a Bidge, it will be a Whip; if it be not a Curb, it will be a Scourge, if you will not hear the Warnings, you shall feel the Lashings of Conscience; if it do not restrain from sin, Mordendo, by Admonition, it will put us to Pain in sin, Mordendo, by Contrition.

2. But there was not all, God would punish him for the sin; And you may read the Sin in the Punishment. He had Gloried in the Number, and therefore God would Lessen the Number.

Yet he puts it to his choice, which of the Three judgements he propounds (whether Seven years Famine, or Three months flight before his Enemies, or Three days Pestilence) he would take.

Every one was Flagellum Mundani, A sweeping Scourge.

But mark David's behaviour, God threatens judgement, and David goes and Mourns for sin: For David's heart smiting, and his Prayer, though set before, yet seem to be afterward, and an Effect of the Prophets discovery of sin, as appears by the Verse following the Text. For—"When David was up in the morning, the word of the Lord came unto God David's Seer—where you see it is rendered as a reason, why his heart smote him, and why he prayed thus—because the Prophet had been with him, and had convinced him of his sin, and denounced God's judgements against him; whereupon David's heart smote him, and he prays—"Take away the iniquity of thy servants; for I have done very foolishly."

But here it may be demanded. Why, when God threatened judgement, David should go and pray for pardon of sin? why did he not desire God rather To forbear his strokes? To avert and turn away his wrath? Than meekly To beg pardon of sin? or, if he had desired this, yet why did he not beg the other, as well as that, and join them together in the same Petition?

Answer. To teach us in all the pressures and evils upon our Outward man, to turn our thoughts toward, and lament sin.

2. Because he saw sin the Cause of judgement; and therefore desires the removing of this, that to the other might be withdrawn also.

3. Because he knew the judgement could never be removed in Mercy, unless the sin were taken away. Every Preservation is but a Resurrection; every Deliverance is injustice, not in mercy, if sin be not taken away.

4. He was more apprehensive of the Dishonor of God, by his sin, than of any judgement that his sin had brought upon him. Or,

5. He sees sin The Greatest Evil, and therefore seeks the redress of that, rather than of any other Evil—Take away the iniquity of thy servant.
In the Text you may observe Two Parts of Prayer:

I. Confession.
II. Petition.

1. Confession, with self-judging—For I have done very foolishly.

2. Petition—Take away the iniquity of thy servant, joined with faith. Or here you have,

1. The Petitioner, David, sett forth from his Relation—Thy Servant.

2. The Petitioner: God.

3. The Petition is self—Take away, or Pardon the iniquity of thy servant; for the phrase seems to have respect to the Scape-Goat, a Type of Christ, which was to Carry away the sins of the people into the wilderness, Lev. 16, 22. thereby signifying Christ's taking away sin.

There is little difficulty in the words, but what we may make a difficulty.

Indeed it would be a making of difficulties, to go about to expound that which is so plain, rather than an unfolding of them. If I should tell you of the several distinctions men make of sin, Three words in the Hebrew, און, יד, יוע By one they will have to be meant Original Sin, by another, Infirmities; by the other your Greater Sins. But upon examination, I finde them used promiscuously; and therefore such distinctions of them hath no bottom.

The letter of the words, and outward face of the Text, speaks Three Doctrines.

1. That God's servants may commit sin, commit iniquity—The iniquity of thy servant.

2. Fresh sinning must have Fresh repentings; If you Renew your sins, you must Renew your Sorrows.

3. There needs fresh pardon, for fresh revolstings: Take away. He doth not say, Assure me the is taken away, but—Take away. But this will not be the subject of my discourse now.

That which I intend to speak to, shall be,

The Time and Occasion of these words, which was, when God’s judgements were threatened against him,

1. Sin truly is, and God's people do apprehend it to be, The Greatest Evil in the world.

He doth not say, Take away the Plague, take away the Judgement threatened, but, Take away this Sin. He lookt upon Sin as the Greatest Evil.

2. When God threatens to punish sin, it is the best way to run away. Or, When God's hand is either Felt or Feared, it should be a Christian's wisdom To Repent of sin. To Be sure sin removed.
We begin with the first,
That sin truly is, and God's people do apprehend it to be, The
Greatest Evil in the world.

We will take it, 1. In its Pieces, 2. We will close them.
1. The Doctrin doth part it self into Two parts:
   1. That sin is the Greatest Evil in the world.
   2. That God's people apprehend it to be the Greatest evil in
      the world.
1. For the first, That sin is the greatest Evil in the world: I may
   shew this,
   1. By Collation and Comparison of this with other evils.
   2. By Demonstration and Proof of it to you.
   1. If you Compare the Evil of sin, with other evils, you shall
      see how short All other kinds of Evils are to this Evil of
      Sin.
1. Most of all, other evils are but outward: They are but such
   as are on the Body, the Estate, the Name: but this is An Inward
   Evil. An evil upon the Soul, which is the Greatest of Evils.
2. All other evils are but of a temporal nature: They have
   An End. Poverty, Sickness, Dignace, all these are great evils; but
   these, and all other, they have An End: Death puts the conclusion
   to them all. But This Evil of sin is of an Eternal nature, that
   shall never have end. Eternity it self shall put no period to
   this.
3. All other evils do not make a man the subject of God's wrath
   and hatred, A man may have all other evils, and yet be in the
   Love of God. Thou maist be Poor, and yet Precious in Gods
   esteem; thou maist be under all Kinds of miseries, and yet Dear
   in Gods thoughts to thee.
   But now this is an evil, that makes the soul the subject of
   God's wrath and hatred.
   As the Absence of all other goods, the Presence of all created
   evils, will not make thee Hateful to God, if Sin be not there:
   So the Presence of all other goods, and Absence of all other
   evils, will not render thee Lovely, if Sin be there.
4. All other Evils do but oppose your well-being, nay, and your
   well-being for present (for they cannot rob you of future happiness)
   But this opposeth your well-being for ever: For you cannot be
   Happy, if you be not Holy; Nay, this opposeth your Being.
   It brought Death; you would sin your selves into Nothing
   again, if God did not hold you up To be, that you might Be
   miserable for Sin.
5. All other evils are but Destructorive to a man's self: But
   against Particulars: But this is contrary to the Universal
   Good, contrary to God; and (as far as it may) Destructorive to
   the very Being of God: As I shall shew hereafter.
6. All other evils are God's creatures, and so far good. He
Sin the Greatest Evil.

Owes all the rest, he is the Author of all the rest—Is there any evil in the city that I have not done? Amos 3:6, meaning, All the Evil of Punishment Penal, not Sinful Evil: But this is the Devil's Creature, yea, and worse than he, being All sin.

7. All other Evils are God's Physick, and used as Medicines, either,

1. For prevention of this. Or,
2. For the cure of this.

1. For prevention of this—That you might not be condemned with the world, he lays afflictions and evils upon you, 1 Cor. xi. 32.

He suffered Satan to tempt Paul, and gave him up to his buffetings, which yet is the Greatest Evil in the world next to sin, the Greatest penal Evil in the world: And all to prevent sin; as the Apostle himself saith, 2 Cor. xi. 27—saw, a messenger of Satan to buffet him.—And what was the reason? why it was to prevent sin—Left he should be exalted above measure: that is, left he should be proud. And as he useth all other Evils for Prevention. So,

2. For the cure of sin. And you know, no Medicine can be so bad, as is this Disease. Now all other Evils God hath laid upon his people for the cure of sin, or for the recovery of them out of the state of sin.

And to speak as much as I can at once, there is not so much evil in the Damnation of a Thousand worlds of men for sin, as there is evil in the least sin; the least sinful thoughts that rise upon your spirits; inasmuch as the good of these, falls short of the good and glory of God.

Thus you see, by Collation and Comparison of this Evil with others (in which I might much more enlarge my self) that, of all Evils, Sin is the greatest Evil. We will now come to

2. The Demonstration of the Point.

1. Demonstration.

1. That which fighteth against, and opposeth the greatest Good, must needs be the greatest Evil. But now Sin opposeth and fighteth against the greatest Good. Hence a Father calls sin, Denudation, God-slaughter, that which strikes against the Being and Essence of God, that which (were it strong enough) were it Infinitely evil, as God is Infinitely good, would labor to Un-Be God. God is Summum Bonum; and indeed, Non-dum Summum Malem, sin cannot be infinite.

If Sin were as evil, as God is good; that is, Adequately, and Proportionally; if Infinitely evil, as God is good, sin would be Too hard for God to Pardon, it would be Too hard for God to subdue, Too hard for God to Conquer; Sin would endeavor to conquer God.
Indeed, there is more evil in the least sin, than there is good in any, nay all the Angels of Heaven; and therefore you fear they conquered them, spoiled all their goodness, made them Devils; which it could not have done, if the good in them had been greater than the Evil in sin.

And, though it be not able to conquer God, to overcome him (there is more goodness in God, than Evil in Ten Thousand Hells of sin, and so it cannot overcome the power of God, the mercy of God, the holiness of God) yet it fights against God, and makes party against him every day. It musters up all its strength against God, and comes into open field to bid defiance against him every day.

Nay, when it is beaten out of the open field, by the power of God, and his Ordinances, then it hath strong Holds, as the Apostle tells us, 2 Cor. 10.4. and from thence fights against him, and opposes him; there itiufts against him, it wills against him, the heart riseth against him.

When sin is beaten out of the field, yet a long time it will be, before it be beaten out of strong Holds.

When sin in Practice is overcome and conquered, yet sin in Affection is hard to be overcome: That Contrariety that is between God and your Heart is hard to be conquered.

It will cost you many a battle, many an assault, before you can conquer sin in its strong Holds, overcome sin in the Heart.

Though sometimes it may seem to be overcome, and to render up all: yet afterwards it gathers together again, and will make new and fresh assaults upon you, to weaken and to wound you.

Nay, and herein lies the Malignity, the poisonous and venomous nature of sin, that though God hath conquered it, though it be never so weakened, yet will it act against God, spit its venom still.

An Emblem of it you have in the Thief upon the Cross; that when he was nailed upon the Cross, his hands and feet made fast, and had but one member loose; yet that one member could spit its venom at Christ, revile Christ; so, though God hath crucified sin, yet so long as there is any life in it, it will act it self, and spit venom against God, which shews that Great Contrariety betwixt God and sin.

And this Contrariety and Opposition of the Chiepest Good, must needs shew sin to be the Greatest Evil.

2. Demonstration.

That which is Universally Evil; all Evil, and no good, must needs be the Greatest Evil in the world: But sin is All evil.
As we say of God. That is no evil in him, He is All Good, Quodcant, in Deo Deus est: So I may say of Sin: There is no good in it, It is All Evil, Quodcant, in Pecato Pecatum est.

There is some good in the worse things in the world; and some thing in the worst things, to make them capable of our choice of them, in some cases, some good in sickness, some good in Death: But now there is no good in sin, nor can any considerations in the world make sin the object of our Choice. Though you might avoid Death by sin, yet, because sin is universally Evil, and No good in it, you may not make use of sin to avoid Death.

And therefore you shall read, That, when the Apostle would speak the worst of sin, he could finde no Name worse than its own to set it out by, Rom. 7. 13. ad finem---*aulas a* *aulias* Sinful-sin. He calls it Sinful-sin, Nothing but Sin.

3. Demonstration.

3. That, which is the sole object of God's hatred, must needs be the Greatest evil: But sin is the sole object. Not only the object, but the sole object of God's hatred: He hates nothing but Sin.

His love runs in divers streams towards all things he hath made; But his hatred runs in One Channel alone, and that is, Towards Sin.

If Man were made the Center of all other Evils in the world, God could Love him under All, if Sin were not there. And, if there be a Consequence of all other Goods, Health, Beauty, Riches, Learning, &c. God hates you, if Sin alone be there, God's love cannot be there, but his wrath abideth there.

4. Demonstration.

4. That which separates the soul from the chief good, that which divides between the souls, and God the chiefest good, must needs be the Greatest Evil: But sin divides between God and the soul, Isa. 59.2:---Your iniquities have separated between you and your God: Between your souls, and my Grace, your souls, and my Comforts, your souls, and my Blessings,

It was said of Naaman, That he was a Great man, an Honorable man, a mighty man of War: But he was a Leper, 2 Kings 5.1. So, whatever Ornaments a man hath, whatever Gifts, Parts, Riches, Beauty, &c. yet, if he be a Leper: though a Learned man, a Rich man, But a Wicked man, that spoils all the rest.

5. Demon-
5. Demonstration.

5. That, which is the ground and cause of all other Evils, must needs be the Greatest Evil: But sin is the cause of all other Evils.

Is the old world drowned with water: it is for sin. Is Sodom destroyed with fire, and turned into an Asphaltite-lake to this day: it is for sin. Is Jerusalem laid on heaps? Sin hath done it. Shoul I enter on this, I should finde no end.

1. Of National evils.

1. Wars, Judg. 5. 8. ---They chose new Gods: Then was War in th Gates. James 4. 1. From whence come wars and fightings among you? Is it not from your lusts?

2. Famine, Psal. 107. 34. ---He turneth a fruitful land into a desert, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. Amos 4. 6. Therefore (for their sins) have I given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and scarcenesse of bread in all your places, &c.

3. Pestilence, as David's sin here of Numbring the people, Deut. 28. 21. ---The Lord shall make the pestilence to cleave to thee, and he hath consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to pos sess it.

And as sin is the cause of National, so also,

2. Of personal Evils; and those are,

1. Temporal.
2. Spiritual.
3. Eternal.

Sin is the Caufe, the Meriting, the Procuring Cause of all. All Evils are but the Births of sin; sin is a Big-hulled Evil, and all other Evils are but the births of sin.

Those upon your Bodies; Sickness, Aches, Pains, Weak nesses.

Those upon your Souls; Fears, Heart-breakings, Terrors, Horrors. If you could rip up sin, you would finde all these lie in the bowels of the least sin.

Shall I tell you? Sin was the first Founder of Hell; that which laid the Corner-stone of that Dark Vault: for, before Sin, ther was no Hell.

Nay, and it is Sin that Built up Hell, and hath fitted Hell with those Treasures and Riches of Wrath, Fire and Brimstone.

Nay, and that which still Addest to it, and increaseth the Jewel Rom. 2. 5. ---It treasurers up wrath against the day of wrath.

And therefore being an Universal Evil, a Catholic Evil, th Womb of Evils, and Cause of all, it must needs be The Greatest Evil.

6. Demon
6. Demonstration.

6. That which is worse than the Utmost Evil, must needs be the Greatest Evil: But sin is worse than the Utmost Evil. That, which is Greater than the Greatest Evil, must needs be Exceeding Great. Hell is the Utmost Evil, but Sin is worse than Hell it self. Hell separate from Sin is but miserable, not sinful: A Penal Evil, not A Sinful Evil.

I say, separate Hell from Sin (though we cannot really separate Hell from Sin, yet an Intellectual Separation we may make: we may in our Understandings abstract Hell from Sin) And then, I say, Sin is worse than Hell; because Hell is but A Penal Evil, Sin is A Sinful Evil. And there is no Penal Evil so bad as A Sinful Evil. There is good in the Punishment, the good of Justice: But no good in Sin: And therefore Sin in it self is the Greatest Evil.

Now we come to the Second, which is the Main. As Sin is in it self, so

2. In the Apprehensions of God's people, Sin is the Greatest Evil.

1. Their Sights for Sin.

2. Their sufferings to avoid Sin do shew, they apprehend Sin the Greatest Evil.

1. Their Sights for Sin, you may look into David's Penitential Psalms, and see what sights and groans for Sin. Look into Psalm 51. Why, what was the reason of them? All the Sufferings, all the Evils in the world, would not so much have affected him, as his Sin. Paul, Rom. 7:24:—Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? The Death of his body was nothing to him, in comparison of This Body of Death.

Paul went through many tribulations, endured a great deal of sufferings (as you may read 2 Cor. 11, 13, 23, 24, 25. at large) yet all those Scourges, those Prisons and Persecutions, did not go so much to his heart, as Sin, even the presence, though not the power of Sin. Though he suffered much, yet we do not read, that ever he cried, OH! for all; And yet he doth for Sin, OH! miserable man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of Sin!—So Peter, Manasseh, Goe.

2. Their sufferings to avoid Sin. Daniel was content to be thrown into the Den of Lyons, the three Children into the Fire, Paul and Silas into the Stocks; and many of God's people have chosen to embrace Prisons, Stakes, Fire; and the hottest Persecutions, rather than Sin.

Which doth plainly evidence to us, They esteemed Sin the Greatest Evil.

1. Greater than Poverty; which yet is a great evil. Melinus of C*
Sin the Greatest Evil.

Panem mendicam, quam Fidem perdere. Better to Beg, faith one, than to sin;—Heb. 11. 24. to the 28.—Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. The like of that Christian—Moses Gallico, Caracciolo, who was a Noble Prince and Marquis, who yet, that he might not sin, left and forsook all he had, and betook himself to live meanly with the people of God, meekly to enjoy the Ordinances. And Musculus, a man of excellent Learning, and a famous Divine, who rather than sin, would close with any condition.

The Story tells us, That being driven out of all he had, he was content, rather than sin, to betake himself to a Poor Trade, to be a Weaver, to get bread to maintain his wife and children. Afterwards, being cast out of that way, the world looking upon it as too good for him, he betook himself to work with a Spade in the Common Ditch of the Town, to get his living. He could down with any condition, rather than sin.

Nay, they have not only apprehended sin a Greater Evil than Poverty: But,

2. Greater than Prisons, greater than Death itself. It was the speech of Ambrose,—Valis in vinculis rapere? Valis in Mortem? Voluptas est mundi:—Will you cast me into Prison? will you take away my life? All this is desirable to me, rather than to sin.

When Eudesia the Empress threatened Chrysosteme, whom she afterward banished. He sends to her, Getell her, faith he.—Nil nisi Peccatum, tenuo—I fear nothing in the world but sin.

3. Nay, they have apprehended sin a Greater evil than Death—Basil speaks of a rich Virgin, who being condemned to the fire, and sentenced to lose her estate, because she would not worship Idols, yet afterward was promised life and restitution of estate, if she would; She replied,—Valent viva, tarent Pecunia.—Farewell life, let money perish. Look through the Ten Bloody Persecutions, and our Late Marian-days, and you shall finde many instances to this purpose.

4. Nay, yee further, They have not only apprehended sin a Greater Evil than Death, but yet more, A Greater Evil than Hell it self.

It was the speech of Chrysostome—Ego sic censo, sic asiduit predictabo, &c.—I thus think, and thus will I ever preach, that it is more bitter to sin against Christ, than to suffer the Torments of Hell.

Anselm faith,—That if on the one side were presented unto him the Evil of sin, and on the other side the Torments of Hell, he would rather choose to fall into Hell, than to fall into sin.—At such a distance were their hearts set against sin. And nothing more ordinary than such expressions as these from the Saints, in temptations, in troubles of spirit, or in clearing their own hearts—Rather
Sin the Greatest Evil.

1. Consequent.

2. Hence conclude then, That it is the Saddest punishment, the Fearsomest judgement in the world. To be given up to Sin. This is the utmost punishment that God inflicts upon men; and therefore the Greatest of all Punishments.

God doth usually proceed by Degrees, in the ways of his judgements: first, he begins with a Light; if lesser will not do, then he proceeds to greater, he will punish yet Seven times more; and still the farther he goes, the greater are his Strokes.
Sin the Greatest Evil.

Now this is the finishing, the concluding stroke; this is the last punishment, and the Greatest of all other. To give a man up to the state of sin; To say to a man, Thou art filthy, be filthy still, and thou art unclean, be unclean still. This he tells them in Ezek. 24:13—Because I would have washed thee, purged thee, and thou wouldest not be purged; therefore thou shalt not be purged. And he tells the Israelites—Because you would have altars to sin; therefore altars shall be to you to sin, Hose. 8:11.

Oh! There is no fudder judgement in the world, than for a man to be given up to his own hearts lust. This sets an Eternal night of Darknests.

A Mepis mo libera, Domine, salut Augustine, Good Lord deliver me from myself. You had better be given up to the lusts of men, to the malice and cruelties of blood-thirsty men; better to be given up to the utmost rage and malice of our bloody Cavaliers and Irish Rebels, than to be delivered up to your selves to the lusts of your own hearts. Nay, you had better to be Given up to Satan; than to be Given up to your selves, your sins.

The Incestuous person was Delivered up to Satan, as you read, 1 Cor. 5:5. And was restored again, and the better for it. But we never read of any, who were Delivered up to themselves, who ever returned: never any, who were Given up to the lusts of their own heart, that ever recovered. Better then To be delivered up to Satan than to sin, inasmuch, as All Penal Evils fall short of Sinful Evils.

It is Judicial, in respect of God, who may punish one sin with another, and curse sin with hardnests of heart. But this is a Sinful evil in respect of us; we bring the writing and the wax, and God puts to the seal, and then we are shut up forever.

And you are in the High-way to this, who Go on in sin, and will not be reformed, when God hath laboured by Sickness, Afflictions, to recover you, you are in the way to this Final Doom, You that are filthy, be filthy still, &c.

3. Consiliary.

3. Consiliary.

If sin be the Greatest Evil in the world. Then, for what fools they are, who seek to rid themselves of other Evils, by the Admission of sin. He who labours to prevent other evils, or remove other evils, by the admission of sin, runs into the greatest evil of all. He kills himself, to save himself; he destroys himself, to preserve himself. He thus thus saves his life, doth lose his life.

There were never any times to bad, but Gods people might have been safe in them, if they would have admitted of sin. But they have seen their safety to lie in Suffering, when they could have no safety, but in the Admission of sin. You see it in the practice of the Three Children, It
It was the speech of the Primitive Christians, when they were threatened with Prisons and Death, if they would not renounce Christ—Parce precor, Imperator, Tu Carcerem, Ille Gethsemanis es, good Emperor, thou threatnest a Prison, but Christ Hell.

When Cyprian was sentenced to dye upon the same ground, the Governor persuadeth with him, that he should pity himself, and rather renounce his error, than lose his life, and consult a little on it—He persuadeth him—Fac quod visti praeceptum est: In re tibi justam nullatis: consultatio: Sir, you are my Judge, you are none of my Counselor: In so clear and just a case there needs no Counsel. I will not dishonor the justness of my cause, to enter into Parle, and Consultation, whether to suffer, or sin. The like of that Virgin whereof Basil speaks, who bade adieu to estate and life, rather than abandon her Profession.

Oh! it were a sad thing to secure our selves by that, which is our ruin; to purchase our liberty by bondage, our safety by sin. You see what it cost E. Spiro, and Cranmer in Queen Mary's days, who knew not how to be avenged on himself for his act, but by burning that hand first, that had subscribed to sin.

It is better to be still in Prison, than for sin to let open the Prison door: Inasmuch as it is better to be God's Prisoner, than the Devil's Freeman. Better to lose all, than to preserve our estates by the admission of sin.

And therefore, whatever your troubles are, whatever your fears, whatever your dangers, beware of preserving your selves, or purchasing liberty, or life itself, at so dear a rate, as by the admission of sin, by dishonoring God, and wounding your own conscience. Beware of getting Man your Friend, by purchasing God to be your Enemy.

We know not yet what our times may come unto, but it is out of the reach of the power or malice of men, To make you miserable, if they do not first make you sinful.


4. If sin separately considered, be so great an Evil: What then is sin circumstantial? Sin against knowledge, against means? If there be so much evil in sin, in the least sin, what then in the greatest? If Atomes be so great, How great then are Mountains? If impertinent thoughts be sinful, as having more sin in them, than all the treasures of heaven (besides God and Christ) can expiate: What then are rebellious thoughts, consirued Murders, speculations Adulteries, contemplative wickedness, covetous Aims and Ends, contempt of God, slightings, and undervaluing of his ways? If there be so much sin and hell in a vain idle word, what a hell of sins, has mountains of wrath in your Carriage-communications, your thinking-discourses, your bloody and horrid oaths and blasphemies? Nay,
Nay, if there be too much evil in one sin, and one sin simply considered: what shall we think of sin compounded, in circumstances, sin made exceeding sinful? sins against knowledge, against means, against mercies? Oh! sit down and consider one sin, and see much in it.

Such a sin I committed against knowledge; such a one against checks of conscience, such a one against the motions of the Spirit, &c. and tell me, if the least sin be not exceeding sinful.

§. Consecrate.

If sin be so great an evil, then see what fools they are, who make a mock at sin. Prov. 14.9—Fools make a mock at sin; they sport at sin. It is a sport to swear, to be drunk, &c. they will sin for sport and recreation. It is their recreation to do evil, to drink, to swear, to lie, to profane God's day—These are Fools. What, Natural Fools? No: he that goes about with a Whistle, and a Bable, and a Coat, is in far better case than he. He is a Spiritual Fool, the greatest Fool.

Will you sport with poxion? will you sport your selves with Hell? Nay worse, Will you recreate your selves, with destroying your selves? will you sport your selves with that, which was so bitter to Christ? and will be to thee, if ever thou be pardoned.

Who would sport at that, which is the misery of lost men and Devils, both here, and in Hell to eternity?

One would think this poor sport and recreation, to tear in pieces the flesh, and wound, and shed the blood of A Stranger, of An Enemy, but how much more of Our Dearest Friend?

Thou, who sportest at sin, dost so with Christ, sportest thy self in killing Christ, crucifying Christ, tearing the flesh of Christ again. Every oath is a dagger to his heart, as the spear to his side again.

It is the highest piece of a Devilish nature in the world, To sport at sin: None but Devils do it. It is the Burden of God, he complains of it; and he accounts it an ease, when he is rid of you—Ab! I will ease me of my adversaries, Is. 1.14.

It is the Wounding of Christ, the Grief of the Spirit, the Trouble of Angels, the destruction of the Creatures. Will you sport at that, which hath brought all evil on man; all on Christ? which hath made Hell, fuelled Hell, and the Torment of souls for ever?

Oh! make not that your joy, which was Christ's sorrow, and will be yours eternally, if now your joy in sin, be not turned to sorrow for sin.

§. Contem.
6. Consecratory.

6. If sin be the Greatest evil, then see the utter impossibility of any thing under heaven, to relieve and help us from under the guilt of sin, save Jesus Christ only.

Hast thou committed but one sin? thou hast done that which all the Treasures of Righteousness in Heaven and Earth are not able to relieve thee, or help thee in, save Jesus Christ.

There is as much required for the answering the guilt of one sin, as the guilt of a thousand.

Infinit Righteousness is required for one, and no more is required for a thousand: And that Righteousness none but Christ alone hath.

Nothing can relieve us, but that which is Adequate in righteousness to the Evil of sin. Now there is no righteousness in the world, that is proportionable to the Evil of sin, but the Righteousness of Christ.

1. Our own, you know is too short; it is called A menestrous rag. A rag, and therefore cannot cover us. Menstruous, and therefore though it should cover us, yet it would but cover filth with filth; as the Prophet speaks, Is. 30.1.——They cover, but not with the raving of my Spirit, that they might add sin to sin, that is, the sin of their righteousness, to the sin of their unrighteousness. They cover a blot, with a blot; add sin to sin, dung to dung.

2. Nor will the righteousness of the Law be large enough, if it were supposed that a man were able to fulfill all that righteousness, and keep the whole Law——Present obedience, though supposed to be Adequate to the Righteousness of the Law, will never answer for former offenses and disobediences.

The Law indeed is strong enough to damn a thousand, but cannot save one; it can pour Hell, and Wrath, and Condemnation upon a World of sinners; but is not able to pour Grace, or to give Justification to one——The Apostle tells us, Rom.8.3, 4.——What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh: God (sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin) condemned sin in the flesh——The same Apostle also tells us, Gal.3.21——If there had been a Law given, which could have given life, righteousness should have been by the Law. The Apostle tells us again, Gal.3.17——The Law was given four hundred and thirty years after the promise, to shew we must not work, that we may be justified; but be justified, that we may be able to work. If God had intended the Law, the instrument of Justification, he would have given the Law Four hundred and thirty years before the promise.

3. Nay yet further, it is not the righteousness of Angels (which yet
yet is a Greater Righteousness than that of the Law; inasmuch as the Angels were above Man in Innocency) because this also is but a created Righteousness, a finite Righteousness, and no way proportionable to the evil of sin. If it had, one sin had not spoiled those glorious Angels of their Goodness at once, and made them Devils: which that sin doing shews, There was more evil in sin, than Good or Righteousness in them.  

Well then, This shews the utter impossibility of any other under heaven, or in heaven, to Free us from the Evil of sin, but JESUS CHRIST. Nothing but Infiniteness can deal with sin. It must be Infinite wisdom—To finde out a way. It must be Infinite mercy—To pardon. Infinite power—To subdue. Infinite merit—To purge and cleanse. And Infinite Grace—To destroy sin.  

However you think of sin, yet this hath been the Great Enemy which God and Grace have been contending withal, ever since the world began.  

And it hath put All God to it, even the Infiniteness of the infinite God to rescue us, and to save us out of the Hands and Power of sin.  

His infinite Wisdom, Power, Mercy, Truth, Holiness, have been all employed to conquer sin; I say, so to conquer sin, as to save you the sinners.  

The Great design of God in sending Christ into the world; his Incarnation, Humiliation, Death, Passion, all were about this, The conquering and destroying of sin.  

How Great an Enemy was this, that God must send out his Son to conquer it? He can arm Flies, Lice, Frogs, the meanest of Creatures, to overthrow the Greatest Power and Puissance of the earth: but no less than his Son was strong enough to conquer sin.  

You may think of sin as meanly as you will; swallow it without fear, live in it without sense; commit it without remorse; yet assure your selves, that this, you make so flight of, required No less than the infinite power of God, to conquer; the infinite mercy of God, to pardon; the infinite merit of Christ, to answer for it. It was that which fetched the Dearest Blood from the Heart of Christ, and will have Thine too, if thou gettest not an interest in him,  

7. Consectary.  

7. If sin be the Greatest Evil, Then see how much we are born to CHRIST, who hath born your sins; who hath born All sin for you; you, who have an Interest in him.  

Oh, the Love of CHRIST! that he should bear sin, which is more than all miseries! a greater evil than Death, th Hell it self is!
If there were one in the world, that were content to be Poor for you, to Bear Pains for you, to be Sick for you, to be Arrested for you, to go to Prison for you, to Dye for you, nay, to Bear the Wrath of God for you, may the pains of Hell for you: How would you think your selves bound to suffer an one for doing it?

Why, This hath CHRIST done for you. He hath Born sin, which is a Greater Evil than all these: An evil, that hath All these evils in the bowels of it. Such, as none but Christ was able to Bear.

If God laid the least sin upon thee, pure sin (which none but CHRIST did ever bear here in this world) it would crush thee to pieces with the weight of it, though all the Pillars of Heaven, all the Glorious Angels, should contribute their strength to thee, to help thee to bear thee up.

The least sin doth deserve and draw down an infinite wrath, which no thou, nor all the Angels in Heaven are able to stand under.

The Damned bear it in Hell. They bear it, and cannot bear it. They are slain with it, but cannot dye. Ever consuming, never consumed.

And therefore how much are you bound to CHRIST! who hath Born sin, a Greater evil than All other Evils, and with sin, All the Torments, and Wrath, and Justice due to sin.

All the world is not able to express that Torment which Christ endured, when he did Bear sin, when he did sweat drops of blood, clods of blood; when he wrestled with the justice, did bear the wrath of God, when he cried out--My God! my God!

Why hast thou forsaken me!--A strange speech from him, who was the Son of God.

Which made the Fathers of the Greek Church say, "As "Apostolog webstow, &c. By virtue of thy unknown labors, and those "sufferings not revealed to man, Have mercy on us."

It is no dishonor to Christ, to say, That whatever the sufferings of the Damned were in Ponder, Christ endured, though not in Specie, for the kind.

And therefore let me say again, How much are you bound to Christ, who hath born your sins for you! And the more bound, because it was a Voluntary act of Christ: none could enforce or constrain him to it. Now the more willingly a Courtesie is done, the better it is. This doth enhance and heighten a courtesie, when it is done Willingly.

We use to say of such good turnes, which come willingly, that we do account them double courtesies. The will doth make all Great. As the more will there is in sin, the Greater is the sin: And this makes *The Sin against the Holy Ghost. It is done--Dein mia Malitie--with devilishness and desperateness of will.
The more Will there is in Service, the more acceptable that Service is: Whatever you do for God, the more Will there is in it; the more God esteems it, whereon, on the contrary—Si quid hostis Tuisti sacraris, Fit de te magis, quam a te. So here, The more Will there was in this Great act of Christ, the more are we bound to Christ for it.

Now if you look upon it, from the Beginning to the End, you shall finde nothing but After Love, meer good will in it.

His first undertaking of it was Voluntary. It was a Voluntary Agreement between God and Christ: A willing Contract made in heaven with God, That he would undertake this great work.

And, he came into the world with as much Willingness, Heb. 10.5, 6, 7—Wherefore, when he comes into the world, he faith—Sacrifice and Offerings thou wouldest not have. In burnt-offerings, and sacrifices for sin thou hast no pleasure.—Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.—Setting forth the Freeness and Willingness of Christ to undertake this work.

And hence the Angels sang at his Incarnation—Good will to Men. It was nothing but meer Good will.

And, when he was in the world, he carried on the work with as much Good will. He tells us—For this end was I born, and for this end came I to the world—Nay, and he faith—He was in pain till the hour came, viz. in pain of love, till the hour came.

And, when the hour came, though it was a Black and Disturbance, called, The hour of Darkness; yet he would not desert us, he would not leave us. If he had, He had left us in Hell, without all recovery. But he would go through with it, though it made him (so far as he was man) to strange at the work of his own mercy. Nay, he would bear sin, and bear wrath, and would lay down the utmost drop of blood in his body.

Oh! Oh! Think with your selves, you, that are The People of God, How much you are bound to Christ.

How may we lay, with Bernard—Tu Vita mea: Ego meus tu; Tu Justitia mea: Ego Peccatum tuum. Tu Salutum meum: Ego Gehennam tuam. Tu Diecim mea: Ego Paupertatis tua—Thou art my Life, and thy Death. Thou my Righteousness, I thy Sin. Thou my Heaven, I thy Hell. Thou my Riches, I thy Poverty. Oh! how are you bound to Christ, who hath born sin!

But yet more, How are you bound to Christ, who hath So Born sin, as we shall not bear it: So paid the Debt, as we are discharged? Col 2.14.—Blotting out the Hand-writing of Ordinances, that was against us, and contrary to us, taking it away, and nailing it to his Cross. As the Death of Christ was our payment, so the Resurrection of Christ is our discharge, Rom. 4.6. Who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification. Are we not justified by his blood? Yea, we are, and therefore he did not rise formally, to justify us; but to declare, that we were justified, that we were acquitted, that our sins were pardoned.
Sin the Greatest Evil.

Had Christ been still in Prison, under the chains of death, we could not have had any Assurance that our debt had been discharged: As the Apostle faith elsewhere:-If Christ be not risen, we are yet in our sins. But now Christ being Arrested, cast into Prison, laid in the Grave, and having Broken the bands of Death, in which it was not possible for him to be held; Having Risen again; By this is declared, That our sins are discharged.

If indeed Christ had So born sin, as that yet we should bear it; What were we the better? But Christ having So born sin, as that we shall not bear it, How infinitely are we bound to Christ for this!

Christ hath left nothing for us to do, but, To receive what he hath Purchased, and laid up in the hands of a Father: Nothing, but, See out an Acquittance; yea, And at the hands of him, who is just, and will not deceive us; at the hands of him who will certainly bestow whatever his Son hath so dearly earned at his hands.

If a man Dye, and leave Legacies in the hands of such who are faithful; may we not go and require them? When Christ Dye, he intrusted All his Merits into the hands of his Father; and he hath left nothing for us to do, but go, and require all.

God entered into Bond and Covenant with Christ, That, if he would bear Sin, we should not bear them. That, if he would Dye for Sin, he would Pardon Sin, for all that is included in Isa. 53: He shall see the Waste of his Soul, and shall be satisfied.

Well, now Christ hath done this, and having done it, he hath given all his Fathers Bills & Bonds into our hands; & withal, a letter of attorney, whereby we are enabled to call for all this, at the hands of God.

It was for us, that Christ undertook the Work, and all that Christ did, it was to Injuge God to us: first to satisfy him, and then to injuge him, to make God our debtor, who were once his debtors. And, as long as there is any of the blood of Christ to give out (which will never be spent, it is an everlasting righteousness), So long is the mercy of God, may the justice of God enged, to bestow it on us, who by faith come over to him.

And there remains nothing for us to do, in point of justification, but, To see out all that Christ hath purchased.

We live in the world, as if we were to purchase a pardon, when we are only to receive a pardon.

God arrested us for the Debt of Sin; But do you think it is, that we should pay it! alas poor creatures! No, it is but to drive us out of our selves, and to bring us over unto Christ, who hath already paid the debt.

And, oh! how should this make us advance Christ, admire Christ, praise Christ! What should indeed our hearts more to Christ, than his, That he hath born our sins, and so born them, as we shall never bear them? if we have an interest in him.

8. Concluding.

8. If Sin be the Greatest Evil, Then it calls out, 1. For the Greatest Sorrow. 2. For the Greatest Hatred. 3. For the Greatest care to avoid it. 4. For the Greatest Care to be rid of it.
Sin is the Greatest Evil.

It is the Greatest Evil. If sin be the Greatest Evil, then it must have the Greatest Sorrow. No affliction, no trouble, no evil, should be so bitter to us, as sin, because sin is the Greatest Evil.

It is a bad thing to see our hearts tender, and sensibly affected with lesser evils and troubles, and yet to be hard and insensible for sin, which is the Greatest of evils.

It would therefore be our wisdom, when any other evils be upon us, to turn all our sighs, tears and sorrows upon sin.

It is an Apothecary in Physick—Ereumpens sanguis, venae secta fistula: If a man bleed vehemently in one place, they let him bleed in another, and so turn the stream of blood another way.

It should be our wisdom, when our souls bleed, and our hearts mourn for other evils, to turn all those mourning affections upon sin: Let them run in the right channel.

Those tears must be wept over again, which are not shed for sin. Sorrow is like Mercenaries Influence: Good, if it be joined with a Good; Bad, if it be joined with a Bad Planet.

It is not so much the Sorrow, as the Ground and Spring of the Sorrow. The object of it is to be taken notice of. Sorrow was naught in Judas, good in Peter; it was naught in Saul, good in David. In the one, it was a Sorrow to death; in the other, a Sorrow to cure the wound of Death. In the one, worldy; in the other, worldy, worldly sorrow causeth death. And such is all sorrow, that hath not sin for the ground, grace for the principle, God for the end.

Wherein apprehended the Greatest evil, it will have the Greatest sorrow: Sorrow to exceed all other sorrows.

1. Though not ever in quantity and bulk, yet in quality and worth: A little Gold is worth a great deal of Earth and Rubbish.

2. Though not in strength, yet in length and continuance: Other sorrows are but like a Land-flood, for a time, occasioned by a Storm; which, when that is over, the flood is down. This Godly sorrow doth arise from a spring, and having a fountain to continue it, it is Permanent, when the other is gone. This is the difference between the Godly, and the other.

Gods people, their sorrows, which are Spiritual, do arise from a spring; their worldly, from a storm, a tempest. The wicked, their spiritual sorrows arise from a storm, some present wringing of Conscience, fear of vengeance, and their worldly sorrows arise from a spring.

Where sin is apprehended the Greatest Evil, there it shall have the Greatest Sorrow.

1. A Sorrow Proportionable to the Measurings and Greatness of Sin.

2. A Sorrow Proportionable to the Merits and Desert of Sin.
As the merit of sin is infinite, so the sorrow for it must be an infinite sorrow. Infinite, I say, Non ext, sed Affliction, not in the act and expression, but in the Desire and Affection of the soul.

He, whose Heart and Eyes dry up together, whose Expression in Tears, and Affection of Sorrow, do end together, though he had wept a sea of Tears, he had not yet truly wept for sin.

Where sorrow is Godly, it hath Affections of mourning, when the expression of mourning ceaseth, because every drop of tears doth arise from a spring of tears within.

As every Act of Faith doth arise from a believing disposition, an habit of faith within; every act of Love, from a Principle of love within: So every expression of sorrow from an affection of sorrow in the spirit.—Hence we read, 1 Sam. 7. 6. their sorrow is express by this Metaphor—They drew water (as out of a well) and poured it out before the Lord. Their eyes did not empty, so fast as their hearts filled. Their eyes could not pour it forth, so fast as their hearts did yield it up. All their Expressions of Mourning did fall short of those Affections of Sorrow which were in the heart.

This is sorrow for sin: A sorrow proportioned to the measure, to the demerit of sin: A sorrow, that doth exceed all other sorrows; though not in quantity, yet in quality; though not in strength, yet in length and continuance.

2. Is sin the Greatest Evil. Then it calls out for the Greatest Hatred. Nothing is properly the Object of Hatred, but Evil: And that not All kind of Evil: but Sinful Evil—Penal Evils are rather the Objects of Fear, than of Hatred, because these are Improperly Evil.

Nothing indeed is evil: but what makes us evil: and these may be a means to make us good: and therefore are not properly evil, and so an Object of hatred.

Sinful evil is properly the Object of hatred, because this is properly evil: and being the Greatest of Evils, should therefore have the greatest of our hatred, Psal. 92. 10.—You that love the Lord, see that you hate evil. It is not enough for you, to be angry with sin, and displeased with sin, for to a man may be with his Friend, one whom he loves, upon some discourtesy: Nor is it enough that you should strike sin; for so many do to day, and imbrace it to morrow: But you must endeavor to kill sin. Hatred labors after the Un-Being of that it hates: Nothing but the destruction and blood of it, will satisfy the soul that truly hates sin.

There is a great deal of mistake in men, concerning this point: I might shew you the secret deceits of the spirit, concerning it in brief, and how far these come short of hatred of sin.
Sin the Greatest Evil.

1. A man may fall out with a sinner, by whom he hath been drawn into sin, and yet not hate the sin; execute the Traytor, and yet like the Treason.

2. A man may fall out with himself for sin, and yet not hate sin; when he hath brought some inconvenience to himself by his sin, which otherwise he liketh well enough.

3. A man may fall out with sin, and yet not hate sin: Cast away the coal, when burnt with the fire that is in it, and yet not offended with the blackness of it, or the defilement which he getteth by it.

4. If sin be the Greatest Evil, then it calls out for the Greatest Care to avoid it. Men are naturally afraid to fall into evil. What study, what care, what endeavors to prevent Evil? Did you apprehend sin to be the Greatest of Evils, there would be no less care to avoid sin. You would endeavor to walk closely and exactly with God; to beware of all the Occasions, Allurements, &c. which might draw you to sin. You would watch in all Times, in all Companies, good and bad, in all Places: None are so secure, but you may fall into sin, if you be negligent of your Christian Watch.

Thus, where sin is apprehended to be the Greatest Evil, there will be the Greatest care and circumspection against sin. Such a man

1. He is acquainted with the falls of others, which are to him, not Land-Marks to Walk by, but Sea-Marks, and Rocks to Shun.

2. He is acquainted with the weakness and wickedness of his own heart and spirit, and therefore watches. He knows he cannot trust any member alone, without a guard upon it.

The eye are full of sin: Adultery, Pride, Envy, lusts of the flesh, &c. And he cannot trust his eyes, without Job's Covenant--I have made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think on a maid? Chap. 31, 1.

The Tongue is full of sin: Of Cursings, Murmurings, Revilings, Vain-Communications: And there is no trusting of it, without David's Bridge, Psal. 39, 7--I will keep my mouth, as with a Bridle, that I offend not with my Tongue. He knows his own weaknesses and wickedness; and therefore dares not trust any member, without his Keeper.

3. Such a man he is acquainted with the power and policy of Satan: who, as Luther calls him, is Non Promotus, sed Expertus Doctor. A subtle enemy, whose Temptations are called--To: Caud. Exod. Rev. 2, 14; to: Notha des cultus, Col. 2, 11; to: metaphysica, Tit. 3, 9, Eph. 4, 14.

He suits his temptations according too.

4. Such an one, he is acquainted with the danger and deceitful rest of sins; and how it is

1. Deceitfu
Sin the Greatest Evil.

1. Deceitful in its Object.
2. Deceitful in its Arguments.
4. Deceitful in its Increasces.
5. Deceitful in its Promises. And therefore will he keep an holy relection, a humble, awful, jealous fear over his own spirit, lest he should fall into sin. He looks on sin, as his Greatest Evil, and is Greatest care and endeavors are to avoid sin.

4. Sin calls for greatest endeavors to be rid of sin. Every man would labor to be rid of Evil, and the Greater the Evil, the greater is our desire to be thereof.

Now sin is the Greatest of Evils: How much more then would we labour and endeavor to be rid of the Greatest of evils?

Alas! Alas! what are all other Evils, to the Evil of Sin? which makes our good, evil. And yet to see the weakness of mens sins, they would fain be rid of all other evils, but not of Sin: Phthis.—Take away this Death, this Plague. They complain of evil caused, but not of the evil causing: of the evil punished not of the evil punish'd. Flagella dolent: Sanctorum, poenitentiae: They howl under the present scourges. afflictions, but never lament the sin; they would fain be rid of the Pain, but yet they would fain keep the Tomb. Whereas if sin be removed, the afflictions will not be removed, they be, yet not in mercy, but in judgement: And your if to Deliverance doth but Reserve you for a severer stroke. Whereon the contrary, If sin be removed, the affliction will be moved. They are like the Body and the Shadow. Remove the Body, and the Shadow must needs be removed. Sin is the Body, afflictions be but the Shadow.

Or, if the Afflictions do continue, yet, if God take away, the Evil of the Evil is taken away. Sin is the sting of every fiction. Sin is that which imbitters every Cross: And suffering taken away, that which is Vindictive is taken away, and which is Medicinal, and for Salvation, doth remain. It is so fruitful, than penal: All for merciful ends, and out of civil respect; when sin is taken away.

1. If sin be the Greatest Evil, Then let us rather choose to fall into the Greatest Evil in the world, than into the least evil of

All other Evils have some Good in them, and are to be the evils of Choice, in case we cannot avoid them, but we must nit of sin. Thus you see Moses did, as you may read, Heb. x. He chose rather to be afflicted with the people God, than to eny the pleasures of sin for a season.

But
Sin the Greatest Evil.

But now Sin, it is All-evil, and No-good; and there is nothing in the world should make us to choose sin.

2. Is sin the Greatest Evil? Let this then put us on to pity and pray for such, who are under a State of Sin. You pity sick Friends, poor Friends, undone Friends. But alas! what are all these evils to the evil of Sin? what is Poverty? what is Sickness? what is anything, to the Evils of Sin? All these are but Outward: this is an Inward Evil. All these are but of a Temporal nature; Death but a Conclusion to them all. But this is of an Eternal nature. All other will never make you the Object of God's wrath and hatred.

And therefore spend some tears, put up some prayers for such, who are under the State of Sin. O (faithful Abraham) that Israel might live in thy sight! So sayst thou. There is such a Friend, and such a Friend, a Brother, a Father, &c., who lies under Sin, is in a State of Sin. Oh! that thou wouldst pity their souls! Oh! that thou wouldst finish them out of the State of Sin!

3. If sin be so Great an Evil, Let us then fall down and Admire,

1. The greatness of God's Patience in bearing with sinners.
2. The greatness of God's mercy in pardoning sin.

1. Here Admire the greatness of God's patience in bearing with sinners. It may be thou hast been an Unbelieving Sinner, a Drunkard, a Swearing-wretch, thefe twenty, thirty, forty, it may be three-score years, and more. And hath God spared thee? Oh! here see the wonder of God's patience!

If it were not, that God is Almighty in the power of his patience, it had been impossible he should have spared thee so long. He tells us so, Deut. 14, 19. I am God, and not man—I will not enter into the city, viz. to destroy it. So Mal. 3, 6. I am Jehovah, and change not. Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Implying, if he had not been God, if he had not been Almighty in the power of his patience, they had certainly been cut off long before.

If men be daily provoked and irritated with injuries, and do not come out to revenge, we attribute it either to their Pudlilani- muty, or to their Impotency, either to their want of courage, or want of Power. But now it is not so with God, His patience is his power. Num. 14, 17, 18. when God had threatened to destroy them, Moses prays to God to forbear them, and he calls that All of his patience, no less than his power. Now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken. The Lord is long-suffering, &c., where you see, he makes his patience his power. And so it is indeed, if you consider what sin is. Shall I say no more of it, than this, which God faith, Levit. 16, 21. It is contrary to God.
1. It is contrary to the works of God. As soon as God set up and perfected the frame of the world, sin gave a threshing shake to all, it unsped this frame, and had like to have pull'd all in pieces again. And had it not been for the promise of Christ, all this frame had fallen in pieces again.

If a man should come into a curious Artificers shop, and should with one blow dash in pieces a piece of art, which cost him many years study and pains the contriving of it. How could he bear with it? Thus sin did, and yet that God should forbear. Oh! omnipotent patience!

2. But yet further, it is contrary to God's nature. God is holy, sin unholiness; God is pure, sin is filthy, and therefore compar'd full to the most filthy things in the world, to the poyson of Asp, to Ucers, Sores, etc. If all the Naysom pollutions in the world met in one common Sirk, it would never equal the Pollution of sin.

God is good, perfect Good: Sin is evil, universally evil. There is good in all other things, plague, sickness, Hell itself, in a kind, hath a good bit: None in sin.

Sin is the practical blasphemy of all the name of God. It is the Dure of his justice, the Rapes of his mercy, the fear of his patience, the slight of his power, the contempt of his love: It is every way contrary to God.

3. It is contrary to the will of God. God bids us—Do this: Sin faith—I will not do it—Sanctifie my Sabbath—I will not sanctifie it.

Here is Contradiction: And who can endure Contradiction?

It is set down as a great piece of Christ's sufferings, Heb. 12.3. That he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself: certainly it was a great suffering. How can a Wifeman endure to be contradicted by a fool? And here, that Christ, whom was The Wisdom of the Father, should bear with such contradiction from fools; here was a great piece of Suffering.

Now sin is a contradiction of God: Setts Will, against Wisdom; and the Hell of a wicked Will, against an Heaven of Infinite Wisdom. And that God should bear with such sinners; here is a Wonder.

You know in all the Creatures, Contrariety makes all the Combustion: It makes all the war in nature, it causeth one Element to fight against another: Fire against Water, Water against Fire: It will make very Stones to sweat, and burst asunder.

Travel through the whole Creation, and you shall not see any Creature, that can bear with its Contrary. And that God and Sin should be Contrary, and yet the Sinner live in the world: Here is a Wonder, a WWonder of Patience.
2. Is sin so Great an Evil? Let us then fall down, and 
Admire the greatness of God's mercy in 
pardoning sin.

You see how the Prophet cries out and 
Admires, Mic. 7.18 — 
Who is a God like unto thee? That pardonneth iniquity, and passeth by 
the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage!

It is one of the Greatest works, that God doth in the world, To 
pardon sin. A work in which he declares, All his glorious Attributes: His Wisdom, his Power, his Justice, his Mercy, his Holiness, 
Etc. in pardoning sin.

Men that have cheap and slight thoughts of God's Pardoning-Mercy, 
have thereby an evident sign, They never had a pardon: never 
knew what it was indeed, To have a pardon.

If ever any work in the world did put God to it, then this 
of the Pardon of sin. And, if ever God do intend thee any 
good, he will instruct thee, and rectifie thy judgement in this, 
Touching the Pardon of sin.

Therefore doth God humble men, at their Bringing-in, To 
raise up their esteem of a pardon, To advance the greatness of his own 
Mercy, in Pardoning sin.

And indeed we should not need such great Preparations and 
Humiliations in coming to Christ, if we had but Greater thoughts 
of the Pardon of sin.

Men make no more of a Pardon, than to Cry God Mercy. Swear 
an oath, and then say, — God forgive me. Or say, — Lord have mercy 
on me, when I dye.

It was said of Lewis the 11. King of France, that He wore a 
Crucifix in his hat, and when he had sinned, he would kiss his 
Crucifix, and then all was done. And so the Papists make it no 
more but a Crucifix, and a Confession. Ah! my Brethren, if ever 
God mean good to you, he will make you Know what a Pardon 
is, Isa. 55.7, when God would draw men up, to Show them a 
Pardon; he calls them Above all the World.—My thoughts are 
not as your thoughts, nor your ways, saith the Lord. If 
they were, then I could not multiply Pardons: But as the Hea-
vens are higher than earth, so are my thoughts above your thoughts, 
and my ways above your ways. I am infinite.

If Gods Creating-mercy were so great, as David with 
doubled Admiration sets it out, Psal.8.1, and the last verses,— 
O Lord, our Lord! how wonderful is thy Name in all the world: 
who hast set thy Glory above the Heavens. What is then his Par-
doning Mercy?

3. Lastly, Is sin so Great an Evil? Then see What cause we 
have to humble our souls before God this day. That we have had 
such flight thoughts of sin, who hath thus judged sin to be 
the Greatest of all Evils: What flight thoughts have wee of sin 
we can fvwallowv it, without fear; wee can live in it, without 
feare; we can commit it, vwithout remorse. All which the wee

vwe
Sin the Greatest Evil.

... have but flight thoughts of sin, we do not apprehend sin to be such an evil as indeed it is.

Nay, how faulty are God's people themselves here? What mean thoughts have they of sin?

They are not so watchful against it, not so burdened with it, not so troubled for it, as they ought to be. All which sheevs, though sin do appear to them, to be a great evil, and, the greatest of all other evils, yet they do not apprehend it to be so great an evil as it is.

Now, that you may be able to have some suitable conceptions of sin to the greatness of it, that you may be able to see sin exceeding sinful, I will briefly present it to you in these six classes:

1. Look upon it, in the glass of nature; which, though it be but a demi-glass, a blown-glass: Sin hath dimmed it; yet this able to discover a great deal of the evil of sin. The every Heathen themselves have seen and judged many sins to be the greatest of evils.

Though spiritual sins were hid from them, their light was at able to discover infidelity, and Gospel-sins; yet moral-sins they have discovered, and have avoided them, and would avoid themselves; nay, and suffer too, rather than they would commit such sins. The examples of Plato, Scipio, Cato, and many others, will clear this.

And all this was discovered by the glass of nature, done by nature; but not by mere nature fallen, but by nature well-endowed, by nature improved, by the implantation of moral principles, together with restraining grace, and other common gifts of the Spirit.

The greatness of their hatred against sin, the greatness of their are to avoid sin, the greatness of their sufferings, rather than they would commit sin, might be enough to discover to us, the greatness of the evil of sin. But pass by this.

2. The second glass, wherein you may see the greatness of sin.

The Glass of the Law.

A glass which discovers sin in all its dimensions, the guilt, emerit, filthiness, and sinfulness of sin. Hence the Apostle,...
Sin the Greatest Evil.

Treasures of created righteousness in heaven and earth are able to supply, more obliquity and injustice in one sin, in a very wandering thought, than all the Deaths of Men, and Annihilations of Angels are able to Expiate.

Search into the Law, and thou shalt discover: Thousands of sins which fall under Any One Law of God. Oh! Here is A Glass!

3. Look upon sin in The Glass of the Griefs, Woundings, Piercings, and Sorrows, which the Saints have found.

1. In their Admissions, and first Entrance into the state of Grace.

2. In their Relapsings and Turnings again to folly.

1. For the first: See what Groans, Humiliations, they have indured in their first admissions into an estate of Grace, in Manasseh, 2 Chron. 33. 12. in Paul, Acts 9. in the Converted Jews, Acts 2. 37. when the nails which pierced Christ, now stuck in their hearts, as the arrow in the stag's side.

How many of the Saints have there been, who have been cast into a bed of miserable sorrow, lain bed-rid under the stroke of Justice perhaps for many years: And all this for sin. No age is without a thousand examples of it.

2. Look upon the sorrows and breakings, which the Saints have indured upon their Relapsing into sin. See in Peter, in David: Read what sad expressions he hath in Psalm 6. from ver. 1. to ver. 7. and in Psalm 32. 3. 4. 5 verses. So Psalm 51.

How doth he complain how his Soul is troubled—that his bones are broken—his eyes are consumed with sorrow—his bed swells with tears? And all this for sin—Here is A Glass, wherein you may see the Evil of sin to be the Greatest Evil.

Yea, and the least sin, when God sets it on, will do all this.

4. Look upon sin in Adam; and there see the greatness of it.

That one sin of Adam, hath brought All the Miseries, Sickness, Death, &c. upon All his Posterity since that time.

It hath been the Damnation of thousands of millions of men; and still it runs on. God's justice is still unsatisfied; if it were, there would be a stop: We should Die no more, Be sick no more, &c.

Oh! Here you may see sin; sin in its Extensiveness.

5. Look upon sin in Christ: See there what Humblings, what Breakings, what Woundings, what Piercings, what Wrath it brought upon Christ himself. It was that, which mingled that bitter Cup, with such foul ingredients, which, had we but sip of it, when it was so tempered, would have laid our souls under more wrath, than All the damned in Hell do suffer. Christ did Bear Pure Justice for sin.

Nay,
Nay, it made him, who was God as well as man, sanctified by the Spirit to that work, strengthened by the Deity, to sweat drops of blood, and even to struggle, and seem to draw back, and pray against the work of his own Mercy, and to decline the business of his own coming into the world.

Ah! none can know but Christ, nor is a finite understanding able to conceive, what Christ underwent, when he was to Bear sin, and with that To wrestle with the infinite wrath and justice of the infinite God; the Terrors of death, and the Pestils of the world to come. Here is a Glass, wherein you may see the greatness of sin, the wideness of sin, the guilt of sin, the demerit of sin: All which are set out to the life, in the Death, Sufferings, Breakings and Woundings of the Son of God.

You, that make light of sin, go to Christ, and ask him, How heavy it was, even that, which you make so light of, which pressed him down to the ground. And the least sin would have pressed thee, and all the pillars of heaven, to the bottom of Hell for ever.

6. A sixth Glass. Look upon sin in the Damnation of the soul for ever, that nothing would satisfy the justice of God; but the destruction of the creature. No Sickness, no Prison, no Blood, no sufferings, but the Sufferings of Hell: And those not for a time, but for ever. Ah! here is the greatness of sin, which might be further amplified by the consideration of the preciousness of the soul, which yet sin ruineth to all eternity. And therefore would you know sin? Quare Damnatorum, Ask the damned what is. Lay thy ear to Hell, and hear those Skriekings, those Yowings, those Roarings of the Damned. And all this is for sin. Oh, they are dear-bought pleasures, which must be thus payed or with everlasting pains.

Thus you see what sin is by all these Glasses: And therefore, Oh! how ought we to be humbled for our light thoughts of it, which is so great an Evil?

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Now if it be so, Then see what need we have to aggravate to the utmost in our confession of sin, because all the misery of it, will fall infinitely short of the Righteousness of sin.

You can aggravate no sin so high, as to raise it about itself, as to make sin greater than it is. You can have No aggravating Glass, to greater sin above the greatness of it. You may have such Glasses, to make greater other things above their own greatness, which are able to present small things, great; mean things, of vast ones: But you have no Glass to multiply sin, and make sin appear bigger than it is.

The sufferings of the Saints, the sorrows of the Saints; the
Sin the Greatest Evil.

Sufferings of the Damned are too short; The Glafs of the Law, the Glafs of Christ's Sufferings (which is the greatest) this doth not shew sin greater than it is: It doth but discover fin in its just Proportions and Dimensions.

It had not been justice in God, to have required more blood, and to put his own Son to more suffering, than sin deserves. Nor would this have stood with God's Love, his Pity and Mercy to his Son, to have put him to more than sin deserves.

Though now there be mercy more than enough for the greatest sinners; as the Apostle faith, 1 Tim. 1. 14, yet there was not Justice more than enough exercised upon Christ for the demerits and guilt of sin.

The Death of Christ was--'Antithesis--An Adequate Ransome for our souls and sins: And yet there is a Redundancy of merit, an overflowing of merit in the Satisfaction of Christ, a Ransome a thousand worlds more to that, if need were. As sin is infinite, in regard of the Object, so Satisfaction is infinite, in respect of the Merit.

Hence Christ's death is not only said to be a Satisfaction, but A Purchase, not only A Payment, but A Purchase.

A Satisfaction it was to the Justice of God for sin, Full. And A Purchase of all good things from the Mercy of God, to which his Justice, in respect of the Validity and Worth of Christ's Satisfaction, is Bound to us. But this by way of Digression.

See then, what need there is, To Aggravate sin to the utmost; because we cannot multiply sin to the greatness of it. There will be many singular fruits of so doing.

1. This will breed shame and confusion of spirit for sin.
2. This will make you advance, and relish mercy better.

When the debt seems little, we are ready and apt to undervalue a pardon. But, when sin appears exceeding sinful, this doth make us value mercy, prize a pardon.

When sin is seen the greatest Evil, Mercy and Pardon will be apprehended the greatest Good.

3. This puts us into the merciful disposition, to forsake sin. As he, who exterminates sin, is resolved to continue in sin; so he, who truly aggravates sin, desires to be rid of it.
4. Besides, it breeds a Displeasure with our selves, when we consider, How ill we have dealt with God.
5. It produces self-judging, and self-condemnation: as we see in David, Psa. 51: 1
6. It will produce spiritual softness, and tenderness of heart for sin. But this I must pass over.
If sin be the Greatest Evil, Then it is the Greatest Mercy in the world to be rid of sin. The greater the evil is, the greater is the mercy to be rid of it. But now sin is the Greatest Evil.

And therefore you shall see it set down as the only mercy that comes in by Christ, Mat. 1.25—He shall be called JESUS, because he shall save his people from their sins.

As if all other things coming in by Christ, were included in his one, He shall save his people from their sins. He doth not say—tee shall save his people from Hell, &c., but, From sin: From no other evil in the world. And this is the Greatest Mercy.

When God would speak the utmost, even the greatest thought of Mercy, that ever came upon his heart; when he would set own the greatest work of Mercy, that ever the God of Mercy rought: he saith no more; but, He shall save his people from their sins.

Sin was the utmost Evil; and therefore the saving from sin was the greatest good. And hence David, Psa. 1.1.2. saith—Blessed is he whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered: Blessed is a man, to whom the Lord imputeth not sin.

Indeed, we have mean thoughts, cheap thoughts of pardon of sin; and the reason is, because we have slight thoughts of sin: But, if God once open our understanding, and make us see the vastness, wideness of the evil of sin; and, if that he should joyn a diligent search to that sight, and make us feel what sin is; if he would let the least sparkle of his wrath fall upon our spirits: if sin, it would make our faces gather blackness; we should thickly change our note, and say—Oh! Blessed, and for ever blessed: they, whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.

But, lest I should seem to beat the air, we will therefore Circumstandise this Mercy a little; and you shall see the Greatness of it.

Though indeed, this were enough, to tell you, that sin is the greatest Evil: Thence would necessarily follow, That it is the greatest Mercy in the world, To be rid of sin; which will more fully appear, if we consider the following particulars:

1. First then, The pardon of sin is the dearest-bought Mercy; and that is something to shew the Greatness of the Mercy.

You know, the Greater the sum is, that is to be paid for the purchase of a thing (provided there be no want of wisdom in the Buyer, nor want of Honesty in the Seller) the Greater will, for more worth is the Thing bought or Purchased.

But now This Mercy, Pardon of sin, was a Mercy dear-bought: cost Blood, Mat. 26.28. and that—Not the blood of Bulls and Goats;
Sin the Greatest Evil.

Gods, for that it was impossible it should take away sins, as the Apostle hath it, Heb. 10. 4. What then was it? Why it was The Precious blood of Christ, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. -- You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation; but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without Blemish and Spot. And this, The Blood of God, Acts 20. 28. -- Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Now sit down, and think what a Mercy that must needs be, which is the Price of blood, and that of the Son of God.

There was no Want of Wisdom in the Buyer; he could not be over-reach'd, he knew the worth of the Commodity: Nor was there want of justice or goodness in the Seller. He was just, and would not take one drop of blood more than the thing was worth: And he was A Father too, and therefore would not put his Son to more sufferings, and require more than the thing was worth.

2. This is the purest Mercy of all other, The Pardon of sin, A mercy that comes from the Heart and Good-will of God to you.

God may give you all other things, and hate you. You may be Rich, and yet Reprobates; Great in the world here, and be Damned hereafter. Or you may have wealth, Herod Eloquence, Saul Command, Agrippa Glorious Apparel: a man may do wickedly, and yet prosper. These things are not Truly good, nor Truly evil. If good, the wicked should not have them. If evil, the Saints should not have them. These are such things as God reacheth from his Hand, not from his Heart: they are general favors, not special Love.

But this is a Peculiar Favor, the Saints Peculiar, Pure-Mercy, a mercy that came from the Bowels of mercy, the Heart of Mercy.

3. This is the Freest Mercy of all other, Pardon of sin.

1. There was nothing to ingage God to do it.

2. Nor was there any thing, we could do, to purchase it.

All our Prayers, our Tears, our Services, could not purchase the Pardon of one sin. If for the Active Part we could do as much, and for the Passive part we could suffer as much as all the Saints, put together, have done from the beginning of the world to this day.

If we should weep as many Tears, as the Sea holds drops; if we should humble our selves as many days, as the world hath flood minutes from the creation, &c. All this were Too short to purchase us the Pardon of one sin, though vve did all without sin.

But Alas! All that ever vve can do, is so far from striking off
off any Former score, that we do but set our selves further in debt thereby: So far are we from purchasing a Pardon, that we do but increase our Treason--Operamus, non in justificacionem: sed in justificacione: we must not work, that we may be justified: but we are justified, that we may work.--So that it is the Freeest-Mercy.

And therefore in Scripture you read it all attributed to Grace, Tit. 3.7.--We are justified freely by his Grace.--Rom. 3.24.--Being justified freely by his Grace.--Rom. 4.5.--God justifies the ungodly--There is no motive in us, All is from God. And you shall see it plain, one place for two: In Isa. 43. Verse 23, 24, 25. --Then haft bought no sweet cane with money, nor haft thou made me drink with the fat of thy Sacrifices: But thou haft made me serve with thy fins, thou haft wearied me with thy iniquities.--1. I, am he, that punisheth away thy iniquities, for my own names sake, and will not remember thy sins. Would a man have expected this: this theweth treachery, when not only no defervings, as it is v. 23. and former part of v. 24. Thou haft not, &c. but contrary defervings: Thou haft wearied mee with thine iniquities. Oh infinite, oh freest mercy. God is mercifull only because hee will but mercifull.

4. It is an Ininiting Mercy: A Mercy that Ininitles you to more Good than I am able to exprest, or you able to conceive. It is a Mercy, that doth interest you in all other Mercies. It Ininitles you to all the Good on Earth, to All the glory of Heaven. Nay, it is a Mercy-making-Mercy. A mercy, that makes all other things Mercies to you.

1. Good things are mercies. Your Riches, your Greatnes, your Possessions, your Husbands, your Wives, Children, &c. all these things are no Blessings, till they be joined with a Pardon, and that makes them all Blessings. Nay, not onely Good things: But,

2. Evil things are Mercies to you. Pardon of sin makes Poverty, Afflictions, Sicknes, Death it self a Mercy: Like the Unicorns horn, it takes away the venom, and payson of every Water: Like the Philosophers-flone, it turns All into Gold. So faith the Apostle:--All things work together for good unto them that love God. A Sanctified-Croft, is better than an UnSanctified Comfort. A los in Mercy, is better than an enjoyment in Wrath.

You are never able to make it good, that God doth bestow any thing in mercy, till sin be forgiven. Guilt of sin upon you doth turn the nature of things, and makes those things which are good in themselves, evil to you.

5. It is an irrevocable-mercy--God may give in other mercies, and call for them again. Indeed other things are rather less, than given: Lent Husband, Lent Wife, &c. Hence they are said to be but Talents in our hands, and we Stewards of them.
Sin the Greatest Evil.

for a time. God may call for them when he pleaseth; or we may forfeit them, and lose them.

How often do we forfeit and lose good things, because of our un- worthy walking in the enjoyment thereof? Hof. 2. 8, 9.--I will take away my corn in the time thereof, my wine, and my oil, in their season. [Miser.] It was God's. And would you know the reason? see in the former verse, because they did not acknowledge him as the giver of them, but bestowed them on Baal, as though he had given them.

But now this Mercy is an irrevocable Mercy: A mercy that God never recalls; A Mercy, God never repents of--The gifts and graces of God are without repentance--And it is a Mercy never forfeited.

We may forfeit the sense of a pardon, we may forfeit the comfort of a pardon; nay, we may forfeit the knowledge of a pardon. I say, you may sin away the sense, the comfort, the knowledge of a pardon: as it was with David.

But we shall never forfeit a pardon--Quod Scripsi, Scripsi. If all this foreseen could not hinder God from giving out a pardon, neither can it make God repent of a pardon, when he hath given it.

Now the Stability of the Mercy is that, which adds a great deal of worth to the Mercy. As things that are evil, so much more things that are good, are heightened from the consideration of the continuance of them, the Stability and Lastingness of them.

Now this is a Stable Mercy. Take but one Place, Isa. 54. 8, 9, 10--For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: For, as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth: So have I sworn, that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee;--Yet further--For the mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed: but my kindness shall never depart from thee, nor shall the Covenant of my peace be removed.

This is the difference betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. The one, is Temporary; the other, is Eternal. It is a Temporary Covenant, though an Eternal Rule: The other is Eternal, and Immutable.

6. Pardon of sin is an universal Mercy, the Womb of Mercy, a Productive Mercy, all other mercies grow upon this Tree of Forgiveness of sin. It is a Tree, the Root whereof is in Christ, and the Fruit thereof are All good things on earth, and Glory in Heaven. There are seven glorious Fruits of Pardon of sin, which I will but name, and so come to the Last Use.

1. Reconciliation with God, 2 Cor. 5. 19. Admission into his favour. He, who before was an Enemy, is now become thy Friend; for nothing makes God an Enemy, but sin. And such a Friend he is, who will be a Friend in life, a friend in death, when all other Friends forsake; and a Friend after death.

2. Adoption
2. **Adoption of Children** : which followeth upon our pardon in justification.

3. **Access to God, as to a Father, with child-like boldness.** Sin was that **my amida** — that great Gulf betwixt God and us. Sin the Partition-wall betwixt God and us: now sin being pardoned, this Partition-wall is taken down, and there is Access to God, and Access with boldness.

4. **Acceptation of our Services** : Till sin be pardoned, there is no Acceptation of any service: Till our persons be accepted and reconciled, our performances are abominable: But now sin being pardoned, here is acceptance for all our services. He drinks the milk as well as the wine, Cant. 5, 1. And eats the honey-comb with the honey, &c.

5. **Sanctification of every condition to us** : When sin is removed which was the curse in all.

6. **Supportation under Crosses** : Upon removal of sin, which was in all, the heaviest burden.

7. **Participation of all the priviledges of the Covenant** : These are the inseparable fruits of pardon.

There are other, as Peace, Joy, Comfort, Rom. 5, 1. which indeed are not so much Fruits of pardon, as Fruits of Assurance of pardon, not the next, but the remotest fruits of pardon.

**us e.**

Lastly, Is sin the Greatest Evil in the world? Oh then! let us, Above all things in the world, labour to get our selves rid of sin: Get a pardon of sin. Say with David—Oh! Take away the iniquity of thy servant.

What will the enjoyment of all other goods profit thee, if thy sins be not pardoned? what profit had Dives of his wealth? Saul of his Kingdom? &c.

It is a thing greatly to be lamented to see, how active and serious men are, about removing of other evils on them, and the purchasing and procuring of other goods, but yet how slight, how superficial they are about getting Pardon of sin.

Thy Person is under the Guilt of Sin. Thou standest a condemned man and woman—Damnatus unsequam Natus. And God hath given thee time, and that time is not a time of repentance only, but is a time, that God hath afforded thee to get a pardon in.

And it cost no less than the Blood of Christ, to procure thee his time; it was that that made a stop of the present proceedings of God's justice against thee; else thou hadst been in Hell long ago.

And wilt thou squander away This Time? wilt thou Neglect This Business? wilt thou cast away, sleep away, nay, drink away, in away a Pardon?
Sin the Greatest Evil.

If there were a man condemned to dye, and yet were, out of Mercy, Reprived, That he might procure his Pardon, and the King were willing to grant him a pardon; would you not think that man deserves to dye, who shall now spend this time in drinking, in reveling, etc? why this is your Fate.

But yet there is another sort that will seek for a pardon: but they seek it coldly, they seek it formally, they seek it superfluously and superfluously, they seek it as if they had no need of it, as if they could do well enough, though they wanted a Pardon.

There is a great deal of dallying with God, about this Great busines. Most men in the World do but Trifle with God about it.

I will name you five or six sorts of men, who are Triflers with God, in this main, and concerning matters, and these none of the meanest neither. I shall not now deal with your Debauched People, but such as will seem to do somewhat for a pardon.

1. Such, who will seek, and perhaps cry earnestly, but yet still continue in the practice of these sins, which they beg a pardon of.

I speak not now of Sins of Course. -- Pecata quotidiana incursio: Sins of daily incursion: Sins of infirmity, weakness and Imperfections in Duty. These the best, notwithstanding their daily praying for pardon of, do yet too often fall into.

But I speak of greater sins. -- Pecata Vastitatis Conscientiae: Sins wounding and gashin the Conscience. And this is a fearfull thing, a fearfull dallying with God.

What would you think of such a man, who should come to beg a Pardon; and yet, before the Pardon were given out, should run to commit new acts of Treason? This is thy Fate.

I see many of you living in a Course of Sin; lurking, shuffling, swearing. I am ashamed to name them.

Do you pray for a Pardon? Or do you not pray? If you do not pray, you are no better than Atheists. And do you pray for a Pardon, and yet live in the practice of these sins, you beg pardon of? Oh! what fearfull dallying with God is here!

Oh! you little think what a strong tye this is against sin. To pray for the pardon of sin. What? Have you been confessing sin, humbling your souls for sin, begging of Pardon of Sin? And, no sooner turn your backs upon God, but return to Sin? Ah! This is fearfull dallying indeed.

And this is a Fearfull aggravation of Sin; you think to have something come in for your days of Humiliation, for your prayers for pardon of Sin; you think there is some good in it. Why, you have begged a Pardon, though you have Sin'd, yet you have prayed, and therefore hope, that notwithstanding your sins, God will hear your prayers.
But dost thou love in sin, and confess sin? Dost thou practice sin, and yet pray for pardon of sin? Dost thou commit sin, and yet humble thyself for sin.

Oh! There are Great Aggravations of sin: these do add more weight to sin.

Do you think it would be an Excommunication, or an Aggravation, for a Malefactor to beg a pardon, and yet run to the same Rebellious again? would he think this To lessen his sin, because he hath formerly beg'd a Pardon? No certainly, he would look upon this as a Greater Aggravation. Why this is thy case.

And this you shall see, was Israel's spirit, which was so much displeasing to God, Jer. 3. 4. Thou art my Father, and the Guide of my youth: They gave God good words, compait him about with good expressions. But, faith the Lord—This hast thou done, and yet done as much evil as thou couldst, v. 5.

2. A second sort, who daily with God, are such, who seek the pardon of some sins, but yet keep up the love and liking of others. Thou art, it may be, Pinched and Troubled for some great sins, and thou beg'st a pardon for them; when it may be, there is some running issue of corruption within, which thou overlook'st, some secret hands of Villany, that thy heart runs out after; which thou cannot leave, which thou hast no mind to part withal.

Oh! Thou wretched man! Thou shalt cry all thy life, and shalt never get good. Thou shalt pray as long as thou wilt: That one sin, kept with love and liking, will turn all thy prayers into sin. God will never regard the Prayers of a sin-regarding-sinner. Psa. 66. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: though I should never act it in my life.

Didst thou know the Tenor of the Covenant of Grace and Mercy, the Sinfulness of the Gospel, and Severity of Mercy it self against sin; thou wouldst see, there were an impossibility of having one sin forgiven, as long as one sin is unforsaken.

Justification and Sanctification: God forgiving, and our forgoing, are equally as large one at the other. As God justifies from the guilt of all sin, so he sanctifies from the Corruption of all Sin.

Grace in God forgives all Sin. And, Grace in us makes us forgo all Sin: where sin is forgiven, there sin is forsaken.

3. A Third sort, are they, Who seek a pardon of Sin, without sense of Sin; who seek forgiveness of Sin, without remorse for Sin: Men, who are never troubled with any sense, with any compunction of heart for Sin.

Would you not take it for a dallying with you; if one had greatly offended you, and should come to desire you your forgiveness, without any sense or remorse of it? What do you think God will do?

This is certain—Without blood there is no Remission of Sin, as the
Sin the Greatest Evil.

Apostle speaks—Christ was wounded, and thou must be wounded too, before thou hast a pardon—Christ did bleed, and conscience must bleed, before ever he gave a pardon.

It was a speech of Bradford—He never left a duty, till, &c.

Will a man in good earnest beg a pardon, who was never attached for Treason, or so much as throughly sensible, that he is guilty of it?

4. A Fourth sort are such, as cry for Forgiveness, but yet never look after their Prayers. Would you not think it a slighting, if a man, who had offended you, should come and beg a pardon, and as soon as he had said a few words to you, should turn his back, and go away, and never expect, nor wait for an answer from you?

Why thus do you deal with God: You put up prayers, but look not after them. He, who begs in earnest, Oh! he will diligently observe, what Answer, what Return God makes: He will observe what word of Comfort God lets fall, what intimations God will afford to his spirit, and will be exceeding chary of them. As you see Benhadad's servants did, 1 Kings 20.31, 32, 33. After they had put up their requests, the Text faith—The men did diligently observe, whether any thing would come from Ahah, and did hastily catch at it. So should we do: Come with freshness, put up our prayers with remorse, and, when that is done, when we have prayed our prayers, let us wait our prayers, to see what intimations we shall receive from heaven. Thus David, Psal. 85. 8—1 will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak Peace to his people, and to his Saints, &c. Psal. 5. 3—In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and I will look up.

5. A Fifth sort, who daily with God, are they, who follow not their prayers with endeavors to get assurance, that their Sins are pardoned. Who search not into the Covenant of Grace, acquaint not themselves with the Promises of Grace, search not into the Word of Grace, frequent not the Means of Grace: These men daily, who frequent not the Word, Sacraments, &c. and such like Means for the Assurance of Pardon.
A TREATISE
OF THE
Loves of Christ
to his
SPouse.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D.D.
And Master of C.C.C.

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A TREATISE
OF THE
LOVES OF CHRIST
TO HIS
SPOUSE.

Cant. 4. 9.

Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse: Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain about thy neck.

A Text, which after wee have been some while in Heaven, wee shall bee able to understand. Certainly none can speak fully to this Text, but they who have the full injoynings of this Love.

But things that are not possible to bee expressed, are not totally to be omitted, and therefore wee will launch into the main Ocean. And when wee are not able to apprehend this love, let us cast our selves in, and it comprehend us.

Some things in the General wee premise.

1. For the Author, or Penman; it was Solomon inspired by the spirit of God.

2. For the Title of the Book; it is called The Song of Songs; or, most excellent Song. So it is called for the excellency, and sublimity. The doubling of the words declare the excellency. As then the Scripture speaks of safe things; by doubling the words they are more debated; as it was said of Sham, Gen. 9. 25. A servant of servants shall bee bee: that is, a vile slave. So when it speaks
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of good things by doubling the words, it declares the excellency of the thing, Deut. 10, 17. The Lord your God, is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords. Thus much for the Title.

3. As concerning the Matter, there is difference among Interpreters.

1. Aben-Ezra a Jewish Rabbi thinks it to bee an History of the Church of God from Abraham to Christ.

2. Another thinks it to bee an History of the Church from Christ, to the freedom of the Church by Constantine, a Roman Emperor, who lived in the beginning of the fourth Century.

3. Another makes it contain a prophetical History of the condition of the Church from David to the end of the World. And divides the book into these two parts. The Church

1. Under the Law.

2. Under the Gospel.

1. The Church under the Law, from David to the death of Christ, which is continued from the beginning of the Book, to the sixth verse of the fourth Chapter.

2. As it was from David to the Captivity, which faith hee, is contained in the first Chapter, and the two first verses of the second Chapter.

3. As it was in the Captivity, from the second verse of the second Chapter, to the fifteenth verse of the second Chapter.

2. And from that, to the end of the Book is contained an History of the Church Evangelical, till Christ's second comming. Of this mind is Brightman.

But to leave this, wee think (and with us goes the stream of Orthodox Interpreters) that the subject matter of this Book is a Parabolical History of the mutual loves betwixt Christ, and his Church, set down under the persones of the Bridegroom, and his Bride. And thus much of the Book in general. Wee will now draw nearer to our Text.

In the former Chapter we read, how the Church the Spouse of Christ doth declare her exceeding love to Christ, and her high appretiation of him, with her earnest desire to enjoy him, whom her soul saw so precious, and that Christ might discover to her, how kindly she took her affection.

In this Chapter hie doth again enter into a singular commendation of the excellency of the Church, declaring also his upbeigned love to her.

The whole Chapter contains these parts.

1. A singular commendation of the Church by Christ, which is set down allegorically from the first verse to the fifth, and from the tenth to the fourteenth verse.

2. A
to his Spouse.

2. A gracious profession of Christ's love to his Church, from the fifth verse to the tenth.

3. The Churches reply, with Christ's answer again to her, vers. 15, 16, 17.

In the Churches reply, 1. A commendation of her head and Husband, vers. 15. 2. An earnest desire, of further communication of his Spirit, and communion with himself, vers. 16.

In Christ's answer there is contained a promise of his gracious acceptance of such fruits as the Church shall yield him, vers. 17.

This verse which I have read to you is a branch of the second part. (fo. 77.) The gracious profession of Christ his love to his Church; of which, if I read no more than this verse, we see enough set down to astonish and amaze us all.

Thou hast ravished my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse. Quid minus, si regnum caelorum viam patiar, &c! What wonder if the Kingdom of Heaven suffer violence, when the King of Heaven himself suffers violence!

Christ doth here speak in the manner of a Lover, whose heart is exceedingly ravished, and taken with the beauties, virtues, and graces of his Spouse.

Give me leave to explain the words, and we come to Doctrine.

1. Thou hast ravished.] What is meant by that? The expression is great, that the God of Heaven should be so taken, even to ravishment with his Church and people. And yet let me tell you, the word speaks more than any expression can utter.

The word is in the Hebrew, יֹסֵיד, of which these interpretations.

1. Aben-Ezra translates, rapuisti animam meam: Thou hast taken away, thou hast stolen away my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse.

2. Rab. Sol. Traxisti animam meam ad te: Thou hast drawn my heart to thee.

3. Talmudici prisci. Copulis cor meum cum tuo: Thou hast coupled my heart to thee; thou hast One-ed my heart: as if hee should say, thou hast so joined mee, as thou and I have but One heart.

4. Another, Vulgaris cor meum: Thou hast wounded my heart, my Sister, my Spouse.

5. The Seventy, They exaghiias, Excordias, Erupisti cor meum: Thou hast unhearted me, thou hast taken my heart from me. And here our Translatours, Thou hast ravished my Heart. All which laid together, they are mighty expressions, setting down, to wonder and amazement, the exceeding love of Christ to the Church.

Thou hast ravished, wounded, stolen away, drawn my heart to thee.
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2. My Sister, my Spouse:] Wee will joyn them both together: both are spoken of the same person, the Church of God, which Christ calls, ἡ θεία: 

1. Sister, Because thee is the Daughter of his Father in Heaven, and fellow-heir of Glory with Christ.
2. Spouse, Because Christ had married himself unto her.
3. With one of thine eyes: with one chain of thy neck.] Not to postill on them.

1. With one of thine eyes; with one chain, i.e. with thy Graces, thy Wisdom, and Knowledge, thy Faith, and other Graces: As if hee had said, I need not to behold both thine eyes: the beauty of one of them is so great, it takes my heart. And I need not to behold all thine ornaments: even one chain alone hath taken my heart, and drawn my heart to thee. Christ hath an high account of the least of his peoples Graces.

Thus having explained the words, wee come to the conclusions, Thou hast raviished my heart.

Dott. 1.

1. That the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken with his Church and people. Thou hast raviished.

Dott. 2.

2. That which doth so indure the Heart of Christ to them, that which takes the Heart of Christ, is the beauties and graces of his people.

Dott. 3.

3. The least Grace of his Church, doth greatly take the Heart of Christ. One Eye, one Chain.

Woe think hee cannot love us, wee are so weak in Grace: but it is his own, though never so weak, and hee can love, wee will fall upon the first of these.

Dott. 1.

That the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken with his Church and People. In the protection of this wee will shew,

1. What is meant by his Heart being taken.
2. Wee will shew that Christ's Heart is thus taken.
3. Wee will shew upon what grounds his Heart is so much taken with his Church, and so come to apply.

For the first, What is meant by his Heart being taken?

And here I must tell you in the entrance, that wee cannot sufficiently express it. It is one of the highest expressions in the Book of God towards his Church, that the Heart of Jesus Christ should be taken with his Church.

An expression, which if wee but let lye upon our spirit, the weight thereof would sink us; shall I say, hee doth dearly and entirely love us: nothing is too much to do, nothing is too great to suffer, nothing too much to give to us, hee doth exceedingly love us.

Shall I say, his heart doth exceedingly delight in us, his soul doth exceedingly rejoice over us, above all the World.

Shall I say, wee are exceeding precious in his eyes, wee are choice
choice in his esteem, 4:3, 4:4, such as he will give the World for, such as he will give himself for, if he can but gain us, he esteems hee hath riches enough, and reward enough for it.

Shall I say, his desires are towards us, hee in a manner desires no more than us: Shall I say hee thinks himself happy in the enjoyment of us, we are reward enough for all his pains, and all his labour.

Why all this and more, the Scripture saith, and all this is yet short of this expression, his Heart is taken with us.

This, the next particular will give us further insight into,

2. That the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken, I may demonstrate to you by diverse arguments.

That which the thoughts are taken up withall, that the heart must needs bee taken withall.

This is plain, you know a man will busie his thoughts about that which he cares for: wouldst thou know what thou lovest, see what thy thoughts are upon. As if hee had said, there can bee no better character to discover what your hearts are taken withall, than to examine what your thoughts are most taken up withall; for what the thoughts are taken up withall, the heart is taken withall. Now the thoughts of Christ are exceedingly taken up with his Church and people. Wee are ever upon his thoughts.

There hath not been a moment from all eternity wherein we have been out of the thoughts of Christ.

Before the World was, wee were on his thoughts, hee thought on us to everlasting life, loved us with everlasting love.

After wee had lost our selves, wee were then on his thoughts, when hee interposed himself between God and us, to stay his wrath from us.

Before wee came into the World wee were on his thoughts, witness all the Scripture, in which are such expressions of his heart to us. After hee came into the World, you see wee were the whole of his thoughts, wee lay ever upon his heart; you see by his doings, sufferings, prayer for us. Read the 14, 15, 16, 17. of John. See how his thoughts were taken up with us, when he was to leave us, what love hee shewed, what care hee expressed to us, what earnest prayers hee put up to God for us; read Joh. 17, 9. to the end of the chapter. Yea and what provision hee made for us, hee would not leave us comfortlesse, but send his Spirit to comfort us, to guide us.

And now hee is in Heaven, are not his thoughts on us? did hee not tell us hee went to prepare a place for us, hee went to do our work, to intercede for us, to plead for us.

The Church of Christ is never a moment off from the thoughts of Christ, 14. 15, 16. And therefore his Heart is exceedingly taken with his Church.

That which a man doth affectionately and indearedly love, that the
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heart is much taken withal; bee it Husband, bee it Wife, Child, the World, whatever.

Now Christ doth exceedingly love his Church, wee are said to bee the dearly beloved of his soul, Jer. 12. 7. and read here, hee loves us beyond all expressions, so God loved the World, Joh. 3. 16. so Christ hee loves us beyond all conceptions, Ephes. 3. 19. it is a love which passeth knowledge.

In the former verse the Apostle went about to measure this love, height, depth, breadth, length. But hee found his line too short, his measure would not reach, therefore hee concludes it a love beyond all knowledge.

A man may express much love, but hee may conceive of more than hee can express. Why this love of Christ is above all wee can conceive, above knowledge. It is an infinite love. It is, I say, an infinite love, which is more than if I should lay all the bowels in the Creature together, &c.

A greater love than all. Witness what is done, suffered, and yet love above all. And therefore Chrisles Heart is exceedingly taken with his Church and People.

That which a man doth glad his heart with, and which hee rejoices over, hee must needs bee taken with. A man will not rejoice over the injoyment of that hee loves not. The rich Fool rejoiced over his full Barns, but it was because his heart was taken with his possession.

Joy is a fruit of the hearts being taken with any things you rejoice in your riches, Husbands, &c. in the possession of what ever your heart loves. Now the Heart of Jesus Christ doth exceedingly rejoice over his Church and People; they are his by donation, God gave them to him; they are his by purchase, hee laid down his life for them, if wee lay down our life to compass a thing sure wee rejoice in it.

Wee are his Riches, wee his Treasure, his Ammies, Rahama's, and Hephzibah's, his precious ones, his People, his Spouse, and therefore hee must needs rejoice over us, Isa. 62. 4, 5. Thou shalt bee called Hephzibah for the Lord delighteth in thee: yea as the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee, Zeph. 3. 17. The Lord will rejoice over thee with Joy, hee will rest in his love, hee will joy over thee with singing. And therefore seeing Christ doth rejoice, Ergo is the Heart of Jesus Christ exceedingly taken, &c.

That which a man doth delight to converse withal, that his heart is taken withal.

Now Christ doth delight exceedingly to converse with his Saints, hee loves to speak to them, and hee loves to hear them speak to him, Cant. 2. 14. Oh my Dove, let mee see thy countenance, let mee hear thy voice, for thy countenance is comely, and thy voice is sweet. When the Disciples are talking of him, Christ joyns himself
to his Spouse.

for to them. *I ergo is the Heart of Christ much taken.*

When the two were going to Emmaus, Luk. 24. 15. Christ comes and joynes with them, delights in their talk, Mal. 3. 16. when Gods people were gathered together, the Lord hearkened and heard.

5. That which a man thinks nothing to dear for, nothing too much to give for, to do for, or suffer for, that the heart must needs bee taken withall.

But thus it was with Christ to his Church.

1. Hee suffered in his Body, those spittings, buffettings, scourings, &c. that was dear to him, which hee gave his heart bloud for.

2. Hee suffered in his soule even the wrath of God for her.

3. Hee emptied himself of his own glory, took upon him the form of a servant, with all our infirmities, penal, not culpable, as it is said of Jacob, hee counted all his labours but little for Rachel, because hee loved her, Gen. 29. 20.

6. That which a mans soule is satisfied and contented withall in the joyning of it, that a mans heart is taken withall.

If a mans heart were not taken with the love of a thing, hee would never think himself happy, never bee contented and satisfied with the joyning of it. Whereas on the contrary, where the soule is filled with satisfaction in the joyning of it (what ever it bee) the heart is taken with it.

Now you shall see that the Heart of Jesus Christ is fully satisfied and contented with the joyning of his Church, though it have cost him so much pains, so much sweat and bloud, yet the joyning of it is reward enough to him. It is the reward which God promised him for his work, Psal. 2. 8. Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen, &c. here, merit of mee, lay down thy life, and I will then give thee a Church, a People. And that which doth satisfy, Isa. 53. 11. Hee shall see of the travail of his soule and bee satisfied, hee shall see the fruit of his sufferings in the saving of soules, and shall bee satisfied with it. It shall bee reward enough to him for all pains that soules are saved, Isa. 62. 11. his reward is with him, and his work before him, hee is the salvation of his people.

And thus it is that which some think is meant by the joy set before him, in Heb. 12. 2. *Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despised the shame.*

Which Joy (with an holy and learned Interpreter) is nothing else but the fruit of his sufferings, the redemption and salvation of his Church and People, according to that in Isa. 53. 12. Therefore will the Lord divide him a portion with the great, and hee shall divide the spoile with the strong, because he hath poured out his soule unto death.

And it is an Interpretation may bee backed.

Well then, seeing whatever the heart of man resis satisfis in the (H)
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enjoyment of, the heart is taken withal.

And that Christ doth rest satisfied in the joynement of his
Church and People, though it cost so much to obtain it. Ergo
needs must it follow that the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly
taken.

That which a man is exceeding chary of, dear of, his heart
must needs bee taken with, those things which take out hearts, we
are exceeding dear and chary of them.

If it bee the World, Husband, Wife, Child, a man is exceed-
ing chary of them. Deod gently with the young man Absolem, 2
Sam. 18. 5, his heart was taken with him, and hee was chary of him.

Now Christ is exceeding chary over his Church: Oh! it is
dear to him, therefore hee gives charge to the World, reach not
one of these, you touch the apple of mine eye, offend not one
of these little ones, they are dear to mee, hee is chary over them.

Yet hee doth not only charge, but menace too, and threatens
men if they shall hurt any of his little ones.

It had been better for you, that a Millstone were tied about your
necks, and cast into the middle of the Sea, than to offend any of these little ones.

Christ is exceeding chary over his Church and People, they
are dear to him.

Take a taste of it, Job. 18. 8, when hee himself was in that Agy-
ony, and when hee suffred himself to bee hauled before the Judg-
es, and to dye, yet you see how chary hee was over his Disciples;
why faith Christ, I am hee you seek for, if therefore you seek mee, let
these go their way: As if hee had said, I am hee whom you seek,
and against whom your malice goes forth, do what you will with
mee, but spare these, let these go (what have these done?) with
Jonas, cast mee into the Sea, that the Storm may cease, cast mee on
the Cross, fling mee into the grave, do with mee what you will,
that these may escape.

Oh! Christ must needs bee chary of them, when hee would
put his back between his Church and the stripes, interpose his
soul between the wrath of God and them.

Drink of that bitter cup that they might not taste of it, bee
wounded that they might bee healed, bear the curse, that they
might carry away the blessing, as there was no sorrow to his sor-
row, so no love to his love, all loves are lost, may, seem hatred in
comparison of his.

Another place, John 7. 9, to the 16. see there when he was to go
from them, how chary hee was over them, he commends them to
his Father, and defers him to keep them whom hee had given him.
As if hee had said, Father they are mine, and I love them dearly,
I have done much for them, but I will do more, therefore pre-
serve them, therefore keep them.

I am no more in the World, but these are in the World, holy Fa-
ther, through thine own name keep those whom thou hast given me, thus
you
you see how chary Christ was of them; and therefore his heart is exceedingly taken with his Church.

He will keep them from trouble; he will buy out their trouble with the troubles of the whole World; and their lives with the lives of thousands; you have a place for this, Isa. 43:3,4. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, I gave Ethiopia and Seba for thee: God will give whole Kingdoms for his Church to preserve them from trouble. This he loved thee, therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. As if he had said, I stand not at it to give the heads of a thousand men, the lives of ten thousands to save thy life, to preserve thee. The Ramme to save Issac, he is chary of them; if not to keep them from trouble, yet to support them in trouble.

He is chary of them, he will deliver them out of trouble, he will not suffer the rod of the wicked to rest.

Though for a time, yet, &c., many are the troubles of the Righteous, but he will know how to deliver his, and preserve the wicked. If Christ do not deliver thee from trouble, yet he will deliver thee in trouble; and at last he will deliver thee out; who knows how to deliver his, when thou not, &c.

That which a man thinks all too little, nothing too much, too dear to bestow upon, that the heart of a man is exceedingly taken with.

Where all the expressions that a man can lay out, do still fall short of his affections to it, it is a sign the heart is much taken with such a thing.

When a man thinks not riches, nor labour, nor his blood, his life too dear, this shows the heart is much taken with it.

Now the Church is so dear to Christ, that he thinks nothing too dear, nothing too much for it.

It was not his blood within his veins, nor his life within his breast, which he counted too dear for her.

He can bestow to bestow anything on her.

He will bestow temporals on her, at least so much as is necessary for her. All things necessary for life, godliness, if he give himself, how much more all things! Rom. 8:32. He will give the greater, and deny the less: no. That love which gave the greater, will not deny thee the lesser; if it were good for thee, so much he hath engag'd himself by Covenant to give thee as to bear thy charge to Heaven, and then there is no want.

The Lions shall hunger and suffer want, &c. He bequests Grace on thee, and Faith is more precious than Gold; He might bestow our words on thee, and yet his heart never taken with these. Diues had more wealth; uttered more eloquence, Saul more command, Agrippa more glorious apparel, than those his heart is taken withal.

He may give Wealth to a Diues, Command to a Saul; Eloquence to a Herod. (H 2)
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But he never betrays grace upon any, but it is an evidence his heart is taken with a man.

As Abraham gave portions to the sons of the concubines, but Isaac had the inheritance.

He will bestow his Spirit on thee, to enlighten, renew, &c. He will bestow himself on thee, the collectioner of all other blessings; God cannot extend his love further in giving, nor we ourselves in desiring. And that which a man bestows himself upon must needs be precious in his eyes. Christ doth bestow himself on thee.

Who is the summum genus of gifts, the gift of gifts. The gift which doth instruct us to all other gifts, all is yours, if you have Christ's.

The gift which sweetens and sanctifies all other: Like the Unicorn's horn takes away the venom and poison of all other. There is a curse with all other gifts if Christ be not given.

A curse to your Gold, your Silver, your Prosperity, your Meat, Drink, Health, and Strength.

But where Christ is given, he takes off the curse, sanctifies all; he doth not only turn comforts into blessings, but crosses into blessings.

A blessing in sickness, in poverty, in death, &c. Christ bestows himself upon his Church, he doth pass over himself, and all his by, deed of gift, he and all his is yours: As you and all yours are his, your sins, and forswears all his.

And all his are yours; his merits, his Spirit. As Christ said to the Father, so may ye to Christ; all thine is mine, his merit, clotthing, his blood, drink, flesh meat. He is meat, drink, cloaths. Christ doth not stay here, but he bestows Heaven upon his Church. It is the Manna house which he hath reserved for his Spouse. Therefore I will that those whom thou hast given me, may be where I am, &c. John 17. 24.

They are married together, and co-habitation is a marriage duty, &c.

As Absalorn had two houses for his Spouses.

And therefore seeing Christ thinks nothing too dear to bestow upon his Church, hence must needs follow. That the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken with his Church.

1. Those which Christ hath made all things for, to serve for the good of them.

2. Those whom he hath prepared glory for, Heaven for.

3. Those which he hath clad his blood for, must needs be dear to him, his Heart much taken with them.

If a King should build a stately house, for one with whom he would solace himself all his life, and should at last give life too, you would think sure he loved him.

1. God made all for thee, the Sun, Moon, Stars, Creatures; all
all this frame of the World; sure you are dear to him.

2. God prepared Heaven for thee, a place of Glory, Happiness, where thou shouldst for ever enjoy him, and solace thy self with his love.

3. Christ shed his blood for thee, which was more dear to him than ten thousand Worlds. What is all the World, and ten thousand Worlds in comparison of one drop of his blood: and therefore they whom he shed his blood for, must needs bee more dear to him than all the World; his Heart is taken with them.

Thus far now wee have gone in the breaking up the rich Cabinet of Christ's Love, the sent whereof hath cheered and revived us. Wee will now proceed to the further discoveries of it, and that is, to the third thing wee propounded, Why the Heart of Christ is so much taken with his Church and People.

Wee will but give you these three grounds, all which are taken not from us, but from himself, his own mercy. In brief, Either

- From his own Grace to us.
- From his own Grace in us.

The first Ground or Reason, why the Heart of Christ is so taken, is,

1. Because wee are his. Propriety you know is the great ground of love. Wee love our own; our own Husbands, Wives, Children: They are ours, wee have propriety in them. So here, wee are His; Hee hath propriety in us, and therefore loves us, Cant. 7. 10. The Spouse makes the same argument. I am my Beloved, and hee is mine; therefore his desire is towards mee; therefore his heart is taken with mee, therefore his soul loves mee. And wee are his, in the dearest and sweetest relations.

1. Wee are his People, his Subjects. Christ is the King of Saints, whose throne is in our hearts, and will brook no Rival; whose Scepter is his Word, and whose Word is our Law. Nay, least this bee too little.

2. Wee are his Friends. Henceforth I call you not Servants; but Friends. Wee are his Friends and Favourites. Nay,

3. Wee are his Children, begotten again, and born again to everlasting life, 1 Pet. 1, 3, 4. Being born again, &c.

4. Wee are his Spouse, such as hee hath married to himself in faithfulness and truth, and such as hee delights in.

5. Wee are his Members. The Church is his Body, his fulness, and every one Members in particular, as the Apostle speaks.

6. Wee are his Jewels, his Treasure, Mal. 3. 7. In the day that I make up my Jewels, they shall bee mine. And therefore his heart must needs bee taken with us. Christ hath the same argument. Where the Treasure is, there will the heart bee also. The Heart, and a mans Treasure lye together. Now wee are his Jewels, his Treasure, his Inheritance, that which his Father left him; and hee, must
must dearly cunning it too. And therefore the Heart of Christ is exceedingly taken with his Church and People. So you see this is the full ground, why, because we are his, and his in the dearest, nearest, closest of Relations.

To be brief, we are his these four ways. We are his

1. By Choice.
2. By Purchase.
3. By Donation.
4. By Covenant.

1. First, We are his By Choice. He set his heart on us from everlasting, which was his first love, and that which hath carried God through all the expressions of his mercy towards us, to this day, even to admiration of Angels, and astonishment of men. These were his primitive, his bosom-thoughts to us, his first love, which is most dear and precious. As the first love of the Creature to the Creator is most precious in God's esteem: the Virgin-love of the soul to God, those affections the soul hath, when first enamoured with God. Therefore he tells the Children of Israel: 

Hee remembered the time of her Eisonsals, the kindnes of her youth. That will not out of his mind, Jer. 2. 2.

So the first love of the Creature to the Creature, his bosom-thoughts, they are most precious. Oh! these take the heart; these are the fullest, these are his freeest thoughts towards us,

2 Cor. 1. 9.

All the World stood before him, from the first man to the last. And why should chuse us, and pass by others; others finer pieces of Clay than we are: others of greater parts, greater abilities: which if it had pleased God to have conquer'd himself, might have brought him far more glory, done him more service. Here was only his free mercy. There was no ground to make him chuse us, before hee loved us: but there is some ground to cause him to love us, now hee hath chosen us. Wee are his, and his by free choice, chosen and singled out of a world of men. And therefore will hee love us.

2. Wee are his By Purchase. Hee hath bought us, and that at a dear rate, with the price of his own blood, Gal. 4. 5. Christ was made under the Law, that hee might buy out those, who were under the Law. Hence, 1 Cor. 6. 20. You are bought with a price. And what was the price? It could not bee too little for the meaneest of the commodity, not worth owning when hee had it. But it cost him his dearest hearts-blood, as 1 Pet. 1. 18. Wee were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without Blemish, without Spot. So then wee are his by Purchase, wee are the fruits of all his pains, of all his doings and sufferings, wee are the comming in which Christ had for his Blood, wee are his Purchase.

God did covenant and bargain with Christ, that if hee would
By down his life and blood for a people, hee should have them; which you see in Psal. 2. 8. Ask of mee, and I will give thee the Heauen for thy; inheritance, that is, faith one, merit of mee, lay down thy life and blood, and thou shalt have a people; as you see in Isa. 53. 11, 12. Hee shall see of the travail of his soul.

That if hee would dye, wee should live: if hee would bear the curse, wee should have the blessing. If hee would bear that wrath our sins deserved, and interpose himself between the Justice of God and us, the quarrel should be taken up; God would be at peace. If hee would purchase us, hee should enjoy us. And Christ hee undertook this. Hee loved us; and seeing hee could not have us, except hee did buy us, and could not buy us, except hee gave his blood for us, and as it were fell himself to the justice of God, that hee might buy us out: Hee was content to do it. Hee redeemed us, not with siluer or gold, &c. And now being purchased by him, his by Purchase, and so dear a Purchafe; his heart must needs bee taken with us. Indeed hee bought us, because hee loved us: and now hee loves us, because hee hath bought us. If wee did lay down our blood, our life for the purchase of a thing, and could after live to enjoy it, how exceedingly would our hearts delight in it! Christ hath given his blood, and laid down his life for the purchase of his Church and People; and hee lives to enjoy his purchase; and therefore the Heart of Christ must needs bee taken with it.

Shall I tell you? You are all the delight which Christ hath in the World: Hee delights to see you, hee delights to bee with you, hee delights to converse with you; and all the delights of Christ are taken up with you: hee hath nothing worth beholding but you, in the World.

3. Wee are his By Donation. God hath given us to him, Joh. 6. 37. All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me, Joh. 17. 9. 11. 12. I pray not for the World, but for them whom thou hast given me. -- Holy Father, keep through thy own name those whom thou hast given me.

Wee were so bought, as yet wee were given: else where is God's Mercy? and so given, as yet wee were bought: else where is his Justice? Gods armes are equal; in the length of the one, you have the measure of the other: and therefore hee did so express his Mercy to man, as withall hee did preserve his Justice. They were so given, as yet bought; and so bought as yet given.

And being his by Donation, God having made them over to Christ by Deed of Gift, being the full desire of Christ, hence the Heart of Christ is taken with them.

4. Wee are his By Covenant, Ezek. 16. 8. Then I entered into Covenant with thee, and thou becam'st mine. Christ became ours, wee his: Hee is our King, and wee his People: hee is our Husband, and wee his Spoule: hee hath given himself to us, and wee have
have re-given our selves to him: wee his delight, hee ours. And being his in Covenant, in mutual stipulation, and bargain, the Heart of Christ is taken with us.

2. Because thee is adorned with his beauties. Shee is beautifull,

Cant. 4. 1. Cant. 6. 4, 10.

There is a twofold beauty which Christ doth communicate to his Church, which makes the Church lovely in his eyes.

1. The beauties of his Righteousnes.
2. The beauties of his Holiness and Graces.

But these are not communicated the same way.
The one is communicated to us

By Imputation,
The other

By Emanation, or Infusion.
The one a Beauty,

Imputed.
The other

Imputed.

1. Christ doth communicate to his Church his Imputed Beauty, then 2. His Righteousnes, wherewith hee cloaths our souls. Hence hee is called Dei-oum-our-Righteousnes. And is said to bee made Wisdom, Righteousnes, Sanctification and Redemption. And wee to put on Christ.

Now this Righteousnesse Christ doth communicate to us by Imputation making it ours, as if we in our own persons had wrought it. And it is as truly ours to have, to justify us, as it is his to glorifie him. And God looking upon us through Christ, and Christ looking upon us in himself, as cloathed with his Righteousnes, hee beholds us beautifull. Hee sees nos iniquity in Jacob, nor transgression in Israel. Not but that there was iniquity in Jacob, but God did not see it; God looked on him as cloathed with the Righteousnesse of Christ, and so is said, not to see it.

As the Sun shining through a red glasse upon a wall, the wall looks red: not that this colour is inherent in it, but reluctant upon it: So God looking on us through Christ, doth behold us Righteous in his Righteousnesse, not that this is inherent in us, or beheld in us, as the Papists charge us, but quoad gratias Dei conestavan, wee are rather beheld in it.

I am not ignorant, there are some, besides Papists, that deny the imputation of Christ's Righteousnesse, and say too much with them: | Justitiam Christi impnari commentum esse, and call this imputative Righteousnesse, an imaginary and fancied Righteousnesse.

I wish they would consider, that wee say,

Wee say there is a twofold Righteousnesse in Christ.

1. His external and personal Righteousnesse, as God.
2. His Mediator Righteousnesse, wrought as Mediator.
The first of these cannot bee imputed to us; it is essential, but the latter of these (justitia Mediatoria) his Mediator Righteousness, or that Righteousness hee wrought for us as Mediator, whereby hee did subject himself to the Precepts, to the Penalties, Commands, and Curles, answerine both Gods vindictive and rewarding Justice; This is communicated to us, and made ours, by virtue of which wee stand recte in curia, justified in Gods sight, which is the first beauty Christ adorns his Church withall.

2. A second beauty wherewith Christ adorns his Church, and makes her lovely, is, The Beauties of his Grace, which may bee called the Beauties of Holinesse, and set forth to us by those Bracelets, and chains, Ezek. 16. 9. and here by one Chain, &c. which is communicated to us, by way of Infusion, or Emanation, whereby Christ by his Spirit, doth derive from himselfe the universal Principle, and common stock of Grace; Grace for Grace, according to that, Job. 1. 16. Of his fulness wee have all received Grace for Grace.

I know there are many interpretations of this, Christospheme, The Gospel for the Law, because it follows, The Law came by Moses. Others, Gratiam, super Gratiam, or Gratiam gratia accumulatum, one grace to another, or abundance of Grace.

But this I conceive the meaning. For every Grace that is in Christ, there is some Grace communicated to us answerable to it, in some proportion. As the Child in Generation receives from the Parents member for member, or as the Paper from the Press, letter for letter, or the Glasse from the face, image for image, or the Wax from the Seal, stamp for stamp: so wee from Christ, Grace for Grace.

There is no Grace in Christ appertaining to our sanctification in general, which is not in some weak degree fashioned in us. And hence the work of Grace and Regeneration is called a forming of Christ in the soule. And whilst we behold him, wee are said to bee changed into his likeness, 2 Cor. 3. 18. And wee are said to have the same Spirit in us, that is in Christ, Rom. 8. 9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, hee is none of his. And the same mind is in us, that is in Christ, Phil. 2. 6.

There is a bawdily holinesse, a painted false beauty, which is spun out of our felves, wrought out of our own Principles, with which wee shall lye down with sorrow at left. Sparkles of our own kindling.

But the true holinesse flows from Christ, and is imparted from Christ to his Church, whereby hee is beautifull with his beauties, adorned with his Grace. And being thus, the Heart of Jesus Christ must needs bee taken with her.

Thus you see the seconde Reasone, why the Heart of Christ is so much taken. Because hee is adorned with his Beauties, clothed with his Righteousness, adorned and beautified with is Grace, which ingath the Heart of Jesus Christ.

Hee that loved us in our owne blood, cannot chuse but love us, as (1)
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wee have his beauty put upon us, hee cannot but love himselfe, and delight in himselfe, where ever hee doth behold himselfe: why these beauties are piecees of himselfe, part of his beauty, his rayes wherewith hee himselfe is adorned. And hee cannot look upon any soole clothed with his Righteousnes, and beautified with his Grace, but his heart is exceedingly taken with them, Can. 6. 4. 5. Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome mee. Christ feeleth as not able to bear the view of such a beauty. Turn away thine eyes, &e.

2. Because they are the persons, upon whom God intended to advance the great design of glorifying the Riches and Freeness of his Grace and Mercy.

Now these whom God hath intended for so great purposes, as these are, which are the greatest Purposes that ever came upon his heart, his heart must needs bee taken withall. You know the more glorious and excellent the End to which any thing serves, the more precious is that thing in our eyes. Now wee serve for no other End, but the expression of his Mercy, the advancement of the Glory of his Free-Grace, which are Ends as high as himselfe; Purposes as great as himselfe.

And therefore God is not only taken with the expression of it, but with the persons upon whom hee doth expresse it. Therefore I say is the Heart of God exceedingly taken with his Church.

Indeed God may single out some men for the purposes of expressing the glory of his Power and Justice, the advancement of them; and yet God hate the men, as you see it plain in Pharaoh, who for this cause was set up to advance his Power. But God never singled out any to bee the subjects on whom hee doth intend to advance the Riches of his Grace and Mercy, but his Heart is exceedingly taken with them.

These, who serve to such high purposes as these, and are designed to such high ends as these; The advancement of the Glory of his Grace and Free-Mercie (which is the most precious attribute of God, and which some think is called his Glory, Exod. 33. 18. Let me see thy Glory,) and if the 19. verie may interpret it, that Glory was his Mercy, and his Mercy his Glory, and therefore such must needs bee precious in his esteem.

Now his People are they, whom God hath singled out for these great purposes, for the Expression of more Mercy, than wee can express, nay, than wee can conceive, nay, than wee can believe at all times, but weakly at best.

And therefore the Heart of Jesus Christ must needs bee taken with them.

My Brethren, If God had not singled out some to express himself thus upon, God had not been known in the World, for there is nothing so much reveals God to bee God, as his Mercy and Grace.

And therefore God singled out a few upon whom hee would ad-
advance the riches of his Grace, that his Mercy, and in that himself might be made known in the World.

As Paul faith of himself, 1 Tim. 1. 16, that hee obtained Mercy, that hee might stand up a Pattern of all long-suffering. As if hee had said. Wee should not have known how patient God is, wee should not have apprehended how long-suffering God is to sinners, if hee had not such an example of patience, such a pattern of all long-suffering, as I was. So wee should not have known how mercifully, how good God is, if the choicest attribute of God had been lost to us, like as if a great Rive had run under ground not discerned, if God had not fringled out some, upon whom hee might have expressed the Riches of his Mercy.

And those whom God doth intend to bee the subjects upon whom hee may advance so high desigs, so great purposes, must needs bee exceeding precious to him.

My Brethren, you that are the People of God, are such as hee hath intended to advance his Mercy, and Glory of Free-Grace upon; You are they hee sent Christ to dye for, the greatest work that ever was wrought in the World. You are they whom hee reared the fabric of Heaven for. You are they in whom hee intends to delight, and with whom hee will solace himself for ever.

And God looks upon us now, not as wee are, but what he intends to make us. Hee sees to the utmost of his design on you, to eternity, and loves you now with that love.

If God should look upon us, as wee are, hee might see enough in us, to withdraw his heart from us: or if not, yet enough to cool and quench his affectionstowards us: being there is so much blackness with our beauty, so much deformity with our comeliness, so much corruption with our Graces: Nay, so much blackness, and so little beauty, and so much corruption, and so little Grace.

But hee looks upon us, not as wee are in our selves, but as wee are in Christ, and not what wee are for present, but what hee intends to make us in Christ. Hee looks to the end of his design, even to that which hee hath designed us to. -- When wee shall bee presented without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: holy, and without blemish, Ephes. 5. 27. -- When wee shall bee satisfied with his likeness, Psal. 17. 15. -- When wee shall bee ioyed, like to the Angels, nay, like unto God, Glorious with his Glory, as now Glorious with his Grace.

And therefore God having intended us to such high purposes, and looking upon us for present, what hee purposeth to make us, and what hee hath designed us to; needs must the Heart of Christ bee taken with us.

Thus having shewed you, what it is to have the Heart of Christ taken with the Church; and proved unto you that the Heart of Christ is thus taken with it, and given you the grounds and reasons
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Tons of it, I will now descend to application;

It to bee, that the Heart of Jesus Christ be taken with his Church and People: Then from hence we may deduce these Consequences.

1. Consequence.

1. This then may bee a ground for us to expect, and hence our Faith may bee strengthened in the expectation, that Christ will yet do more for his Church and People, than yet hee hath done.

Indeed hee hath done much for our Nation, for our English Zion.

Hee might have ruined us, for a Generation of such as provoked him. Wee have been a Provocation of his Anger to this day. Hee might have suffered our carriages to have fallen in the Wilderness, and kept our posterity to have entered into Canaan. Wee have looked toward Egypt, toward Babylon. Hee might have laid the foundation of purer times in our blood, railed up a purer Church upon the ruines of us.

But God hath seemed to over-look our great unworthinesse: And to the terror of our enemies, and even to the astonishment and wonder of us all, hath begun, set forth, and gone forward in a way of mercy, such wayes as have been untrodden in former times.

And that which God hath given us in hand, is an earnest of what wee have in hope: that wee have in possession bids us but look to what wee have in promise.

And expect the performance of it, because God loves the Church: the Heart of Christ is taken with the Church.

Hee loves his Church, and therefore hee will purifie his Church, and take away her dross and tine.

Hee loves his Church, and therefore will hee reform his Church.

Hee loves his Church, and therefore will hee take away whatsoever doth offend, all soul-burthens, all conscience-burthens, which oppress the spirits of his own People.

1. The Church is his Fold, and hee will destroy the Wolves, which have gotten in to devour the Sheep.

2. The Church is his Field, and hee will weed out the Tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.

3. The Church is his House, and hee will sweep it.

4. It is his Flos, and hee will fanne, and blow away the chaff.

That love which made him ingage himself to his Church, in precious promises, will not suffer him to rest, till hee hath made good those promises to it.

That love which moved him to begin, will not suffer him to rest, till hee hath made an end.
You see in Ezek. 37. 27. the whole Chapter is but an addition of Mercy to Mercy.

When God begins to go forth towards a people, in a way of mercy, hee knows no stop, hee can make no end. I will do this, and also this, as you see in that Chapter. God adds Mercy to Mercy.

And the reason is, because Free-love begins, and that knows no end.

The proceedings of Gods Mercy, towards his Church and People, do arise from himself, his own Free-Grace.

His Justice is from us, but his Mercy is from himself.

If, when hee threatened to punish Israel, hee faith, hee will add Judgement to Judgement. Thus, and this also will I do, Amos 4. 12. How much more then when hee promiseth to shew Mercy to Israel, will hee add Mercy to Mercy.

God hath also's of Mercy, as well as of Judgement. See in Ezek. 37. 27. My Tabernacle also shall bee, &c.

Well then: Is the Heart of Christ taken with his Church and People? Then will wee with confidence believe, and with patience wait and expect, that Christ will yet do more for his Church and People, than ever he hath done, because hee loves them?

Let us but joyn Supplication with Expectation, Praying, with Waiting, and wee shall see it, to the joy of our hearts.

I never read, that ever God bestowed any great Mercy and deliverance upon his Church and People, but he first stirred up the hearts of his People mightly to pray unto him.

And never did God mightily stir up the hearts of his People to seek him, but hee wrought some great Mercy and deliverance for them.

God loves to make his People as thankful as they were prayerful: As happy Injoyers, as they were Humble Seekers. When Trouble sends us to Prayer, then Deliverance shall send us to Praises.

Let us then joyn our Supplications to our Expectations. Times of great Expectations, should bee times of Great Supplications: whether they bee

1. Expectations of Hope, the Object whereof is Good.
2. Or, Expectations of Fear, the Object whereof is Evil.
3. Or, Mixed Expectations between Hope and Fear, as our times are, they are times of Expectation, and therefore they ought to bee times of Supplication. Wee are now big with Expectation; let us now bee mighty in Supplication. Great Stones are not to bee turned over without great strength. Great Mercies are not to bee gotten without great Strivings. The Man-child of Deliverance is not to bee brought forth without pangs.

Let us then bee mighty in Prayer. That will make all our present throws and pangs subservient to deliverance: And then let us stand still and wait.
1. **Wait for the performance of Promises.**

2. **Wait for the performance of Prayers.**

   There are many thousand prayers registred in God's book, and many thousand tears put up in God's bottle. Let us wait when all these shall come down upon our heads in a warm shower of mercy.

   Wait when the great revencen of prayers will come in. The longer the stay, the greater will be the harvest. Wee say, great engines move slowly. Small things they are quickly wheeled about; but great mercies they are long in conception, long in the womb, and long in the birth.

   This is all our comfort: God will not bring to the birth, and afterward not bring forth: nor will he bring forth, and afterward put the womb again, as hee faith, Isa. 66. 9.

   Hee is Alpha and Omega, the Beginner, and the Finisher; where hee lays the foundation, there hee will lay the roof upon it.

2. **Consettary.**

   If the Heart of Christ bee once taken with his Church and People: Then hee will never take his heart off from them. His heart once taken, shall never bee taken off. Men may love to day, and hate to morrow: but God cannot: whom hee loves once, hee loves to the end, even to all eternity.

   As there was nothing in us, that was the ground of his planting his love upon us: so there is nothing that shall bee able to overturn the thoughts of his love, when once they are fixed on us.

   Indeed our behaviour may bee such, as may cause God to bee angry with us, and correct us sharply; yea, and make us to know, wee had better never to have tryed conclusions with him: But there is nothing shall cause him to hate us, and cast us off. Hee may correct his Spouse, but hee will not dissolve her. The Israelites were so hard-hearted, that for every trivial fact they would put away their Wives: But the Lord hates putting away, Mal. 2. 16.

   If in fore-seen were not able to hinder him from planting his heart on us: but though hee saw what wee would bee, yet hee loved us: How then shall it bee able to overturn the thoughts of his heart, when once they are fixed on us?

   Men indeed are not able to see to the utmost of things; they are not able to discover and fore-see all the inconveniences and evils that may arise: and therefore that being discovered after, which was not fore-seen before, may bee a ground to alter their affections, and change their thoughts, when fixed. The leafs of judgements and fore-fight in men, the more stickleness, and change-ableness in men.

   But now God hee fore-saw all. Hee fore-saw all that, which thou now thinkest is a ground for him to alter his mind to thee.

   And, if all that fore-seen could not hinder him from fixing his love
love on thee, neither shall it bee able to move him to take off his heart, when once his heart is taken with thee.

Hence he is said to make an everlasting Covenant with us, and hee will never depart from us. Nay, hee will put his fear into our hearts, that wee shall never depart from him, Jer. 32. 40.

And Isa. 54. 9, 10. faith the Lord (speaking of the Covenant of Grace, which hee will make with his people.) It shall bee as the Waters of Noah unto mee: for as I have sworn that the Waters of Noah should no more goe over the Earth: so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor reprove thee. As if hee had said, this is as sure as the other: the one as firm as the other. You have experience of the one, believe the other. I give you the same pawn, the sure seal of Heaven to confirm it.

If Men were as bad as Devils, they should never bring a second load upon the World, because God hath sworn never to destroy: And as hee hath sworn to that, and is therefore steadfast and immutable: So hee hath sworn to the other, that hee will never cease you, nor forsake you, and therefore God will not.

Object. But alas! Do we not see that God doth sometimes forsake his Church and People?

Agn. Now for the answer of this, wee will premise these three Distinctions.

1. There is a seeming, and there is a real forsaking.
2. There is a Temporary, and an eternal forsaking.
3. There is a partial, and a total forsaking.

From these wee will lay down three Conclusions, in answer to the Objection.

1. Conclusion.

God doth sometimes seemingly, when hee doth not really forsake his people. God doth not really neglect his People, when it seems to neglect them.

Hec seemed to neglect and forsake Job, Heman, David, Christ himself, when hee cries, My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?

It was Distingulitus, non indignatio, as one speaks. Hec feigned himself to bee gone, but was not gone.

The Cloud may take the Sun from our sight, but not rent it from the Skie. God may seemingly bee gone, when hee is really there.

Hec seemed to bee gone from Job, but hee was really there, otherwize Job could not have travailed in him, in that great difficulty.

The same I may say of Heman, of David. Though God seemed to bee gone, yet hee was really there. Otherwize they could not have prayed, exercised their Faith, and fought after God, as they did.
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So also was it with the Church in the Canticles, cap. 3, v. 5, beg. And that is the first Conclusion, God may seemingly, when not really forsake his People.

2. Conclusion.

God may partially forsake his People; but hee doth never totally forsake them.

I say, God may in part forsake his People, which may bee occasioned on their part, by some fresh and new-added sin. As you see it was with David, Psal. 51, v. David had sinned: God had withdrawn himself. God was gone, comfort was gone, light was gone for a time. Works of darkness, and walking in darkness went together. Hee did not follow the direction, and therefore wanted the consolation of the Spirit.

But though hee doth partially sometimes, yet hee doth never totally forsake his people.

For the clearer understanding of this Conclusion, you must know there is a threefold Presence of God:

1. Quickening.
2. Comforting.

1. God may forsake a man in part, in respect of his quickening presence, and leave a man to the barrenness, flatness, deadness of his own spirit for a time, that the soul cannot pray, hear, meditate, do any thing, as formerly it hath done. As it was with Sampson when his locks were cut, his strength was gone; and therefore though hee thought to go out, and do as hee did in former times, yet hee found there was no such matter; hee was become even as another man: so it is here, our strength lies, not in our hair, but in our head. When God is gone, our Locks are cut, our strength is gone. And though wee may think to go upon duties, as at other times, and meet with those lively and vigorous workings of spirit in duty: yet wee shall finde no such matter, wee are even become as other men.

Indeed so much of his quickening Spirit God leaves in the worst of times, as usually, to keep up the heart to duty. The soul will pray, will read, &c. but hee gives not so much, as to carry the soul through the duty, with that life and vigour of affection, which formerly it had.

Time was, that the soul never came to prayer without an inflamed heart, never upon the duty, without a quick and enlarged soul. But now the spirit is dead in duty, cold in duty, heartless in the performance of those things, wherein the heart was so much taken.

2. God may forsake a man in respect of his comforting presence. Though
Though man is not able to rob us of our comforts, and take away our joyes, they are such as the armes of men are not long enough to reach; yet God he can. Hee may eclipse our joyes, and damp our comforts, and withdraw the beams of his Countenance from us, and leave us in darkness and trouble. I say, hee may turn our Day into Night, our Light into Darkness, our Comforts into Discomorts.

Thus you see it was with Job, with David, with Heman, Psal. 88. who, although they had the Quickening-presence of God, yet they wanted his Comforting-presence.

And indeed of the two, it is better to want the Comforting, than the Quickening-presence. Better to want Comfort than Life; Favours than Grace; or the lively exercisse of them. The one is the Esse, the other the Esses of a Christian. A man may live, and serve God, and obey him; and yet want his Comforting-presence, as you see, Isa. 50. 10. But hee cannot live without his Quickening-presence.

3. God may forake a man in part, in respect of his Quickening-presence, and hee may more forake a man in respect of his Comforting-presence: But God doth never forake us in respect of his Supporting-presence.

In the saddest condition, in the darkest night, in the stormiest day, the soul hath still support from him.

David, Job, Heman, they wanted the Comforting-presence of God for a time, but yet they had his Quickening, and they had his Supporting presence.

As hee told Paul, so hee did for all. His strength was seen in their weakness, and his Grace was sufficient for them. Sufficient to bear them up in the trial, and sufficient to bring them out of the trial. So much for the second Conclusion.

3. Conclusion.

God may forake his People for a time, not for ever.

It is but a Temporary, not a Final, not an Eternal forsking, Isa. 54. 7, 8, 9, 10. For a moment have I forsaken thee; but with everlasting kindness will I gather thee, have mercy on thee. For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills shall be removed: but my Kindness shall not depart from thee.

And thus much shall serve for the answer of the Objection. And notwithstanding that, the Conclusion is firm. That if the Heart of Christ bee once taken with his Church and People, hee will never take it off, hee will never cleans forake them.

And, as God will not forake his Church, as Forsaking hath relation to Spiritual cases, Soul-distresses: So I might shew you at large, to prevent another Objection.

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That he will not forsake his Church, as forsaking hath relation to temporal and outward distresses.

You may take his word for it, Josh. i. 5. I will not leave, nor for-
sake thee.

It is true, it was a promise made to Joshua in particular, but
belongs to the whole Church of God in general.

General promises may have particular applications, and parti-
cular general.

As general promises belong to every particular Member: so
particular promises may belong to the whole body. And there-
fore though it was a promise to Joshua, yet the Apostle (who
knew the mind of God makes it ours, as well as his. He brings it
into the Common stock, and shews it part of our riches, Heb. 13. 5.

Let your conversation be without Covetousnes; for he hath said, Hee
will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. In brief, Hee will not for-
sake his Church;

1. Either hee will protect them from dangers
2. Or hee will deliver them out,
3. Or hee will support them in,
4. Or hee will satisfie all to them.

Which is the third Conclusion which flows from this Doctrine.

3. Consequecy.

If the Heart of Jesus Christ be taken with his Church: then all the
passages of Gods providence in the World, are for the good of:
his Church and People.

All the dealings of God in the world, not a step God takes in
the World, but hee walks towards his people in it.

1. All the passages of Gods Providence to the Church in general.
2. All the passages of Gods Providence to any member of the
Church in particular, they are all for good.

1. For the first, All the passages of Gods providence to his
Church in general, they are for good. Bee they had, or bee they
joyfull, they are all for good. Are they had? it is to humble them,
to quicken them, to purge them, to pursiue them, to blow away
their chaff.

This is certain. Whatever is done in the World, is done either
by Gods Permission, or by Gods Approbation. God must either per-
mit, or allow of what ever is done in the World.

And assure your selves, God would never permit, much less
would hee ever allow, and approve of any thing to bee done in the
World, which should not bee for the good of those bee loves so
dearly.

Whatever wind blows, bee it North, or South, good or evil;
all is for the Churches benefit. As the Physitian ordereth poiso-

nous and destructive ingredients unto us as full services, the health
of the Patient: So God turneth those things which in themselves are evil, and destructive, to the good and comfort of his Church
and People.

Hence is it, that Christ turneth the fadast and forrest perplexi-
ties that ever the World shall see, into an use of Comfort to his
Church, Luk. 21. 25, 26, 27, 28. There shall be signs in the Sun,
and Moon, and Stars, distresses of Nations, with perplexity, etc.
Men hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are comming on the World; for the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken;
and then shall they see the Son of Man comming in a Cloud, with Power
and great Glory. When these things begin to come to pass, then look
p, and lift up your heads: for your Redemption draweth nigh.

One would think this were a strange consequent deduced from
such an Antecedent. A Consequent so comfortable, from an
Antecedent so terrible. It seems strange, that such a terrible Do-
minas this, should afford an use of Conolation. Yet so it is. Bee
the Promises what they will, the Conclusion is good. Bee his Provi-
dences what they will, his Promises are good; and those Promises
all turn all his Providences to good at the last.

2. As all the passages of God's Providence to the Church in gen-
eral: So every passage of his Providence to any Member of it in
particular, is for the good of the Church.

1. All your Injoyments, they are love. You may read the Heart of
Christ, the image of a friend, ingraven upon all you have. You
may behold the impress of love, the good will of God circled about
you do traiy.

All that wicked men do injoy, is but from the Hand of God, Ex ladeate
at the highest tenure they can have, even his general Providence, which causeth the Sun to shine upon the good and bad. And this
more may bee cut off at pleasure.

But all that you do injoy, is from the Heart and good will of God;
they are expressions of his good will to you, and you may read
for all.

Nay, they are the Earnests of further love. You may see and
Heaven and Glory in all you have.

Wee may well say, whatever the People of God do injoy, they are

1. The fruits of Prayer.
2. The performance of Promises.
3. Expressions of Love.
4. Incouragements to beleue.
5. Inablements to obey.

2. All your wantes, as well as all your Injoyments are mercy, are.
c. There is an Expedient in all the sad passages of Gods provi-
dence to you. They are Expedient to try you, Expedient to humble
(K 2) you,
you, to exercise you, to winne you, to meane you, &c.

Whatever thy condition is, it proceeds,
1. From the best God.
2. From the best of God, his Heart and good will.
3. It is the best for thee.

Wicked men have a curse hid in their best things: a curse in their gold, a curse in their silver, a curse in their health. But Gods people have a blessing hid in the worst things. You have a blessing in poverty, a blessing in sickness, a blessing in crosses, a blessing in death it self.

Riches are not in the Promise, but Mercy is in the Promise. Though Poverty, yet Mercy; though Afflictions, yet Mercy. And you can all tell mee, A cross in Mercy, is better than a comfort in wrath. A life in love, better than an enjoyment in displeasure. More dye in the Blood, than in the Ebb. Though prosperity be more cordial, yet afflictions are more physical. Wee often surfeit of Cordials, when Physick doth us good. And a sanctified cross is better than an un sanctified comfort, &c.


If the Heart of Christ bee taken with his Church and People,
1. Then see what a fearful thing sin is, which doth cause God oftentimes to deal hardly with that, which his soul loves so dearly.
2. God doth oftentimes afflict and punish his Church sharply and severely: which yet his heart is much taken withall, And sin is the cause. And therefore what a fearful thing is sin!

How grievous would it bee to you, to bee forced to take hard courses with a Child your heart is taken withall: though it bee to do him good.

Why God is taken with his Church, and do you not think it moves God to afflict and chastise it?

Wee would fain do all the good wee can to the persons wee love. Oh! wee can never do enough for them. Why so it is with God to his Church: Hee loves his Church, and willingly would hee do any thing for it. And it is the grief of his soul, that hee must take contrary courses with us, to do us good: that hee must bee forced to afflict and chastise them hee loves so dearly: to bring them to Life by Death, to Good by Evil, to a Crown by Crosses.

When God parted with the ten Tribes, you see what a conflict there was in him: how his bowels shirred, and were moved towards them, notwithstanding all their sins, Hos. xi. 8. How shall I live thee up, Ephraim! How shall I deliver thee, Israel! How shall I make thee as Admah! How shall I set thee as Zeboim! My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.

How loath was God to seal to a Bill of Divorce! His heart loved
to his Spouse.

loved her, though she was an Adulteress to him.

And when Judah did justify the sin of her Sister Israel, exceeding her in Idols, what trouble was it to God to cast her off? How willing was she to receive her after all her adulteries? Jer. 3:1. Thou hast plaid the Harlot, etc. And when she would go on in her adulteries: Yet how unwilling still was she to give her up: till at last it grew so high, that there was no Remedy, 2 Chron. 36:16: she must needs do it.

And when she had done it, how exceedingly was God's heart moved, that she must bee forced to deal so hardly with them: she loved to dearly; read Jer. 12, 7, 8, 9, etc. See how God laments over the lofs of that which their sins would not give him leave to keep. -- I have forsaken mine house! I have left mine heritage! I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies! And what was it that forced God to deal so hardly with them; she loved to dearly? Why it was sin, 2 Chron. 36:15, 16. See how Messianers, because she had compassion on them. They mocked the Messangers of God, and despised his words; and unsted his Prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his People, till there was no Remedy. And which of these hath remained to bee done among us? How hath our Sun beene darkened, the Stars lost their light! How many burning and shining lights have been taken out of our Candlesticks, and planted in others! How many blown out by the rage of wicked men!

Did wee not justly fear, by reason of that Idolotry, Superstition, Prophanation of Sabbath, Persecution of the Saints, and messangers of God, that our day was gone, our night approaching?

Did wee not fear, that wee were come up to this, that there was no remedy? That God should have opened the Shews of his wrath, and let in a Sea of his displeasure upon us? made us an Acedema, a field of Blood, long before this?

Ah, my Brethren! Never Nation, never Church from whom God hath shewed himself more unwilling to depart and leave than England.

Look upon the passaiges of us to God, and his wayes towards us, and see how unwilling she declared himself. God hath upheld us, as if she himself should fall, if wee did not stand: as if his Glory could not stand, if wee fall: as if his Glory had depended upon our preservation.

And how can wee better answer Gods dealings towards us, than to abandon that which was our fear, and gave God just occasion to destroy us? Let us now do by our sins as the Israelites did by their Leaven. There was

1. Iniquitio fermenti. There was search made for it. So let us search for our that Leaven of sin, Superstition, Idolatry, which have sowed our Kingdom, and laid us open to the stroke of Gods wrath. Search your houses, search the land, search your hearts.

2. E-
2. Effluvia fermenti.
3. Insecreatio fermenti.

And let all bee found in us, if ever wee would have a Pass
over.

Other wise our Preservations from former, will bee but Reser
vations to future, and wors e evils: sin will cause God to punish
those hee loves.

5. Consecratory.

If the Heart of Christ bee so much taken with his Church,
Then let this discover to you, into what you way resolve all the
passages of Gods love to his Church and People, even into his
own Love. His Grace is the rise, and his Glory is the end.

There are two main streams, in which the goodness of God doth
run to his Church.

1. The higher, and
2. The lower.

But both these streams have the same Head, the same spring
from whence they come, even his own Love.

1. For the higher, or upper streams, and these are four.
1. Election. 2. Justification. 3. Sanctification. 4. Glorifi-
cation.

And all these arise from the great Abyss, and Sea of his mercy
toward his Church.

His heart is taken with us; and therefore

1. Hee chose us, Deut. 7. 7, 8. The Lord loved you not, nor
chose you, because you were more in number than any people: but be
cause the Lord loved you. So God did not let his heart on us, be
cause you were better than others; for there are others in the
World who might have been made more lovely.

His heart is taken with us, therefore

2. Hee justifies us. Wee could do nothing to strike off any for-
mer sorer: for all wee did, set us further in debt: it was but an
adding of sin to sin, guilt to guilt: the sin of our righteousness, to
the sin of our unrighteousness, Covering a blot with a blot, as tsa.

3. His heart was taken with us, there
fore did hee justify us, Tit. 3. 7. Wee are justified freely by his
Grace. The like, Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 4. 5. All which shew, that
into this, all the expressions of his love are resolved.

His heart is taken with us, therefore

3. Hee did sanctifie us. Our holiness is not wrought out of our
own Principles, Ipun out of own bowels; composd by our own
strength and industry: but freely imparted and given of God.

As our Righteousness is freely imparted: so our Holiness is freely
impacted.

That
That thou art not a killing Cain, a self-murdering Saul, a despai-
ring Judas, a prophane Esau, a drunken Baltazar, a filthy Sodomite, 
a ruffian from this, never mercy.

But that God hath not only restrained thee; but renewed 
thee: not only chained up thy spirit, but changed thy spi-
rit: This is Free-Mercy. And so the Scripture tells us, 1. Pet. 1. 
3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who 
of his abundant mercy hath begotten us again. -- Not only mercy, 
but abundance of mercy. So James 1. 18. of his own free-will he 
 begot us. And that in John 1. 13. We were born again; nor of blood, 
nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man: But of God;

Not of blood? Nor great men, nor good men can do it. Regene-
ration comes not by Generation.

Nor of the will of the flesh] Our will is but a fleshly will, and can-
not beget a spiritual nature.

Nor of the will of man] It is not all the inclinations of holy men, 
who labour to do us good, can do it.

But the Will of God] It is a mercy wee give least concurrence to, 
of all other. When wee have Grace, then wee are helpers for the 
growth, and increase of Grace; but who shall give Grace?

When the Candle is lighted, it will burn, but none but God 
can light up the Candle.

In after Sanctification wee concurre: There is no concurrence in 
Regeneration.

This is the freest Mercy of all other. When God hath wrought 
Grace, there is some engagement for God to go on: but, there is 
nothing to move him to bestow Grace. Here is the ground: His 
heart is taken; therefore he sanctifies us.

His heart is taken with us; therefore

4. Hee glorifies us. As our Justification, so our Sanctification, and 
Glorification arise from the same ground: His heart is taken with us.

The Papists indeed would have us to merit Heaven. And the 
Council of Trent denounce a curse upon thoe, who say, A jus-
tified person cannot merit Heaven. But alas! What are all our desires 
to this Glory! If a man should serve God, and suffer a thousand years; 
what were this to merit eternity in Glory?

No, here is the ground of all. His heart is taken with us, and 
therefore hee glorifies us. And so the Scripture speaks plain, Eph. 
2. 5. By Grace yee are saved. And lest hee should never make it 
firm enough, hee adds, in the 8, and 9. verses; By Grace yee are 
saved -- not of works.

So that you see into what to resolve the higher streams of his 
love: his hushing us, his justifying, his sanctifying, and his glo-
ifying us. His heart is taken with us; therefore hee chooseth us, 
therefore hee justifies us, &c.

2. As you may see into what to resolve all the higher: So the 
lower streams of his love to his Church. All into this. His heart is 
taken with his Church.
The Loves of Christ

His heart is taken with us; therefore be not provoked us.
His heart is taken with us; therefore be not grieved us.
His heart is taken with us; therefore be not disturb us.
His heart is taken with us; therefore be not disturb us.

All the good we have in hand, and all the good we have in hope: All the Mercies bestowed, and all those which God is bestowing on us: Look upon all as a continued thread spun out of the bowels of Grace, and Mercy.

God hath done great things for us, and from this they have arisen: His Heart is taken with us, his Love towards us, Jer. 31. 3, 4. I loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.

Alas! If God had looked upon us, and taken either ground or motive from any thing in us, to do this for us, we should never have enjoyed it.

1. There was no ground, no foundation of desert in us, (Wee abhorre the thoughts of it) for God to raise such a fabric of mercy upon, as he hath done.

If any thing in his Church were the foundation of the structure of mercy, which wee expect God to raise, wee might look for a mean building. Such weak foundations must have as weak a structure. A building must bee proportionable to the foundation. But seeing God's own heart is the foundation, his own mercy and good will towards us, which is so strong, so firm, so full a foundation: Hence it is, that we may expect a structure of mercy suitable to the foundation.

And, as this is the foundation of all those great and stupendous things, which God hath done for us: So it is a ground for us to expect, that God will yet do greater things for us, than ever he hath done.

Indeed, when we look upon our selves, we are at an end in our thoughts, and think God is at an end in his Mercy: but when we look up toward God, and see there the ground of what we have, this keeps up our hearts from sinking, and causes us to look upon all we have, as an earnest of more.

Men that are at the top of an high places, if they look downwards, their eyes daze, and their heads grow dizzy: but if they look up towards Heaven, they recover themselves again. God hath raised us up to some height of mercy, and if we look downwards, if we look upon our selves, we are driven past the utmost of our thoughts: but let us look up to Heaven, whence this mercy we have, hath its spring and foundation, and we shall quickly recover.

Though there be nothing in us, yet there is something in God; and that which is in God is the ground of this mercy, and therefore will he go on in the ways of his own mercy.

I have often thought within myself, how far God at this time hath
hath out-gone his people in Mercy.

Hee hath not only out-gone the deservings of his People, but out-gone the desires of his people, the prayers of his People. And consulting below, I am ready to think God is at an end of his Mercy.

But, when I recover myself, and look upon the ground of God's doing good to his Church and People: Not to be any goodness in the Church: but mercy his own goodness: This doth revive me again, put heart into me that God will yet do greater things for his Church, than yet hee hath done.

As I said before, when God doth execute Judgements upon his Church, hee adds Judgment to Judgement: So much more, when hee comes in a way of Mercy to his Church, hee adds Mercy to Mercy.

God is oftentimes weary in going on in a way of Judgement, because the exercise of his Judgements are drawn out by us, our sins. Hee is said not to afflict willingly: and his Judgements hee calls his strange work. It is not so natural to God, and therefore he is quickly weary of it.

But God is never weary of the exercise of his Mercies, and therefore hee goes on to addre Mercy to Mercy. Wee say, the Bee gives Honey naturally: the Sun only, when he is forced to it: So God, it is natural to him to shew Mercy, but hee is provoked to exercise Judgement.

Hence hee is called the Father of Mercies, begetts Mercy. Mercy is the Issue of God: most natural to God; and being so, hence Mercy pleaseth him. Actions of Nature are Actions of Delight. God is never so well pleased with any carriage towards his Church, as those which are in the ways of mercy.

Nay, if hee do afflict his Church, it is to shew Mercy. Mercy is the end of all his dealings towards his Church, and therefore Mercy being so natural, so pleasing, and that the Mercy of God is the ground of his expressions of love to us, as it is: though our sins may draw out the expressions of his Justice, yet his Mercy doth arise from himself: Hence wee may have a ground to expect yet greater things than ever.


If the heart of Christ bee so much taken with his Church. Then see with what confidence wee may pray for the good of the Church of Christ. Christ's heart is taken with it.

A man may pray for himselfe, and doubt of hearing; because hee is not able to make out his particular interest in God's Love. But if a man pray for the good of the Church, hee is sure to have hearing, because the heart of Christ is taken with it.

Let us then make use of all our interest and acquaintance in Heaven, in the behalf of the Church at this time.

(L)
The Loves of Christ

1. It is a thing, which God commands.
2. A thing, which God expects.
3. A thing, which God rewards.
4. A thing, which God threatens the neglect of.

Much might be said to move you. Your good, and your evil lies in the Churches. As Jeremiah used this as an argument, why, to pray for the civil estate of Babylon; because in the peace thereof they should have peace: if theirs in Babylons, how much more ours in Sions?

7. Consecutary.

* If the heart of Christ bee so much taken with his Church, then what will become of those, who are enemies to his Church and People!

Is the heart of Christ so much taken with his Church and People. Then woe be to them that offend his Church. If you touch them, you touch the apple of his eye.

Gods People are dear to God. They are his Spouse, his Children, his Members, purchased with the price of his blood, his inheritance, his Portion, all his commings-in. Those hee dyed for, shed his blood for, one drop whereof is worth a thousand Worlds. And therefore those whom hee was content to shed his blood for, certainly hee doth more esteem than all the World besides.

Woe say, whilsts the Iron is in its own nature, you may handle it, and meddle with it; but if once the nature of fire bee added unto it, if you touch it, it will burn you: So whilsts the Children of God, are but the Children of men, you may deal with them as with other men, but if once the nature of God bee stamped on them, the Image of Christ bee drawn upon them, it will bee dangerous for you to meddle with them, leaft fire break out of their mouth to devour you.

* Wee read, Zach. 12. 3. God said, hee would make his Church a burthen some stone, &c.

St. Jerom on that place faith, it was a Metaphor taken from the custome of the Jews, who to try their strength, had at the gates of the City great stones, if they could lift them, well and good; but if not, they crushed themselves with them: So God will make his Church a burthen some stone. Whoever lifeth at it, shall crush himself; whoever seeks to hurt it, shall ruin himself. You see it in Pharaoh, Haman, Acharitophel, Julian.

Haman lifted so long at this stone, that it fell on him at last, and crushed him.

Pharaoh followed the Children of Israel so long, that hee could not return at last, but was overwhelmed in the Waters.

Julian attempted it so long, till at last himself was overthrown.

Hee
He that shoots in a Piece over-charged, strikes down himself, or that which he aimed at. He who intends evil against the Church, shoots in a Piece over-charged, and is sure to be struck with his own recoil.

We see it in our days. They who have digged pits for us, have fallen into them themselves. They who laid snares for us, them is their own foot taken. They have but made Rods for their own backs, paved a way to their own destruction, digged raves to bury themselves, in seeking our ruin.

The Scepter of Christ hath been too strong for the Principality of Satan, he hath a Rod of Iron, a Scepter of Power, an arm of strength, to crush in pieces all his enemies. And therefore as Peter's wife said of Christ, Have nothing to do with that just man; I to thee, feelest thou a godly man? beware of having any thing to do with him, by way of offence. For their Angels always hold the face of their heavenly Father.

8. Consolatory.

If the heart of Christ be so much taken with his Church, then see here the Ground of Acceptation of the services of his people. God being taken with the Persons, is taken with the performances of his People. Hee had respect to Abel, and then to his offering. Christ, his heart was taken with the person, and then with his performance.

Hence Christ's faith to his Church, Cant. 2. 14. Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice: for thy countenance is comely, thy voice is sweet.

Indeed, if Acceptation should arise from the worthiness of our services, wee should never look to be accepted. There is so much evil in our services, so much sin in our hearts, so much formality in our chiefest power, so much aduersity in our chiefest life, so much of the World, so much of our remoteness from Heaven. And if Acceptation should arise from any worth in them, we should bee sure to mis of it: it arising from his good will and Mercy to us, his heart being first taken with us, is taken with our performances. Hence the Affluence of Acceptation.

Nay, and not only of our purest and perfectest services; but of our poor and imperfect duties, such as we throw away for another, and cast prayers, Cant. 5. 1. Hee drinks the Milk as well as the Wine.

Wee look upon a prayer accompanied with deadness, distraction, as a cast prayer. Oh! say wee, how can God accept of impure, imperfect services?

But hence it ariseth not from the excellency of your prayers, but in the indulgence of his Grace. It is the voice of his Spouse, though
though never so weak. It is the cry of a Member of his, though never so faint. And he can put his odours, his incense to them, though never so impure, and make them acceptable, Rev. S. 4.

Use of Examination.

But now, my Brethren, it will be a great matter of inquiry, whether we have an interest in this love.

As one said when he looked upon the Rainbow, and in that read God's Covenant, never to drown the world again. Ah! but faith, this is to mee, if I be drowned, I may be drowned, though the world be not drowned.

So may you say, You tell us of the exceeding love of Christ to his Church. But what if I be not of his Church? what if I have no interest in his love? what's all this to mee?

But then I suppose you are desirous to know whether you have an interest in this love. It concerns your everlasting good to have an interest, and your present comfort to know you have an interest.

Now in this inquiry I would have you

1. To examine your hearts thoroughly. Deceits lie low. A false evidence is the fruit of a slight and superficial search.

2. In your inquiry let not any thing which is compatible with any who have no interest in this love, bee a bottom, on which your soul refeth.

I have told you sometimes, and tell you again. Whatever another man may have and do, and yet have no interest in this love of Christ, cannot be a sufficient evidence for thee, that thou having or doing that, hast an interest. -- Acquaint thy self with the most clearing and proving evidences.

3. Take thy evidences from the carriage of the Spirit: neither at the best, nor at the worst, but the middle way, which is most thy self.

If thou look upon thy self at the worst, thou mayest bee discouraged. If at the best, thou mayest bee deceived. Many have had such affections in an Heat, which in cold blood have nothing of them.

4. Judge not of thy self by particular actions and carriages: but look upon the universal frame and bent of thy Spirit. No certain rule is to bee established upon a particular instance, whether good or bad.

I might lay down other rules to observe in your inquiry. But wee will come to the inquiry itself.

Wouldst thou know whether thou art a one with whom Christ's heart is taken? See whether thou art of his Church. Art thou one, who are taken out of the World? Art thou one, whom God hath called? one whom hee hath justified? one whom hee hath re-
to his Spouse.

regenerated; sanctified; Art thou one, who art washed, purged, renewed?

These might bee in the general; but are too obscure. But I will name you but one, and it is a plain one, and none more demonstrative.

Wouldest thou know whether the heart of Christ bee taken with thee? why then see,

Art thou one, whose heart is taken with Christ? If Christ bee taken with thee, thou art taken with Christ. It is a mutual, a reciprocal taking. Whatever God doth to the soul, it makes an impression in the soul of the like to God. God delights in us, and thereupon we come to delight in him. God knows us, and thereupon we know him, Job 10. 14. God apprehends us, and thereupon we apprehend him. Hee chuseth us, and thereupon wee chuse him. Hee loves us, and thereupon wee love him, 1 Job 4. 19. His heart is taken with us, and thereupon our hearts come to bee taken with him. Our love to him is nothing else but radium amoris Dei erga nos in Deum reflexus: a beam of Gods love reflected back upon God. So that this now is a true character of Christ's heart being taken with thee, if thy heart bee taken with Christ.

Quest. But you will say, How shall I know whether my heart bee taken with Christ?

Ans. For the answer of this, because upon this foundation I will lay the whole weight of this discourse, in this Use,

1. A heart taken with Christ, is a heart which knows Christ, and hath tasted of Christ. Are you such as know Christ? For knowledge of Christ precedes the love of Christ. Hee who doth not know, cannot love. Things unseen may, but things unknown cannot be loved, 1 Pet. 1. 8. Whom having not seen see love, but never not known.

All love to Christ doth arise from discoveries and manifestations of Christ to the soul. Either from the discoveries of those beauties, those attractive excellencies that are in him, or with that, from the discovery of his heart and good will towards us.

Now blind men cannot discern of beauties; nor ignorant men of the beauties of Christ. Christ is to them as a Mine of Gold covered over with earth and rubbish: as a Bed of Pearl and Diamonds hid with an heap of sand: as a glorious Messiah under a contemptible outside. And wanting eyes to see through the Veil of his Flesh, through the bark and outside of his Humanity, they can behold no beauty in him. As Isaiah speaks of carnal men, Isa. 53. 2. When you behold him, you see no beauty in him, that shall make him desired.

Now then, art thou one who knows Christ? did ever God reveal him to thee in a promisse? what apparitions hath Christ made to thy soul? what manifestations? what discoveries that may evidence to thee, that thou knowest him?

There
There are four manifestations, or discoveries of Christ to the soul, which do exceedingly take the soul. Indeed every apparition of Christ doth take the heart: but at these times the heart is not only wooed and won, but overcome with his sweetness and glory.

1. After the soul hath long been bedrid in sorrow, been overwhelmed in the deeps of Legal humiliation, and have been broken and shattered in pieces with consternation, and apprehensions of sin, and God's wrath for it. Then a discovery of Christ, and apparition of Christ to the soul, is a resurrection from the dead.

When Christ comes by a promise into the soul, and disposes his glory, the Riches, and Greatness, and Freeness of his Grace, as to Moses, The Lord God, gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin, Exod. 34. 6. I am he who forgiveth thy iniquities, &c. Isa. 43. 25. Then is the soul beyond expression, inamoured with him; now it is overcome with his beauties and excellencies, and even ravished with his love. And this is the first eminent taking of the heart with Christ.

2. When the soul hath been upon the stormy Sea of temptations and desertions; hath long laboured under the sense of God's withdrawings and absence from the soul. And Christ returns again, breaking the dark and thick cloud, and shining into the soul. Who can then express the warmth, the comfort, the revivings, the holy heats and flames of love and affection to Christ.

You see how it was with Job. I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear: But now mine eyes see thee. And certainly the sight of his beauties did take him; those eyes which saw him were like a burning-glasse to the heart, to kindle the flames and fervors of holy affections towards him again.

You see how it was with the Church, Cant. 3. 4. Christ had withdrawn himself: Shee makes inquiry after him, but could not hear of him. At last after all her trouble, Christ appears to her soul, and you may read there, how exceedingly her heart was taken with his return. I found him whom my soul loved; I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, Cant. 3. 4.

3. When the soul doth sit down to contemplate, and read over the beauties and loves of Christ: when it is in the contemplations of those surprising excellencies, and admired sweetness which is in Christ. And Christ (while the soul is busy in feeding on these thoughts) doth make a discovery of himself to the soul: makes the soul to fee a vision of his glory: Oh! how is the heart taken with him! it is even drowned and sunk in a sea of glory. Ah! what clapsing, what embracing! what loves are there then betwixt Christ and the soul! It is impossible for mee to express: or for mee, or you to conceive. It is a vision of glory, the porch of Heaven.

4. When
4. When the soul is under outward pressures, afflictions, prison, sickness, upon death-bed. Then a visit of Christ, a discovery of himself doth exceedingly ravish and take the heart. Here is kindness indeed, riches for the poor, liberty for a prisoner, a cordial for the sick. Here is all in Christ's manifestation.

Well then, wouldst thou know whether thy heart be taken with Christ? dost thou know Christ? didst thou ever see the face of Christ in a promise? what apparitions hath Christ made to thee? what manifestations within thee, in the work of Grace? what manifestations to thee, in the beginning of glory? You who know not Christ, cannot love Christ.

2. Sign.

An heart taken with Christ, is not excessively taken with any thing else.

The sweetnels of Christ doth overcome all the sweetnes in other things, in the Creatures.

As it is nothing but ignorance which makes men admire any thing here on earth: if men knew the excellencie of other things, they could not admire such trifles as they do.

So here, it is nothing but ignorance of better things which makes us dote upon things here below. Did wee see his beauties, all the World would bee blackness. Did wee see his fulnes, all the World were but emptines.

I say, did wee but know the excellencies and beauties of Christ, and the satisfying-sweetness of his love: Nothing should have a room in our hearts, save hee only. The higher wee ascend toward Heaven, the leffer will the things on earth appear.

If you go to the top of the Mountains, men would appear but small: but if it were possible to go up to the Sun, the Mountains would appear nothing.

The love of Christ hath a raising-power, working our hearts as high as Heaven, and being there, all things here below are of no account and esteem to the soul. So saith Paul, a man on fire with the love of Christ. Yea doubtless I count all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ; -- And do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, Phil 3. 8.

Well then, they whose hearts are taken with the Creature, taken with the World, taken with sin and vanity: These are too gross to bee taken with spiritual loves.


What the heart is taken withall, the soul seems to live more in it, than in it self. Do but examine it in any thing the heart is taken,
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taken withall, whether your comforts, your delights, your happiness lies not in them. The Worldling hee lives in his possessions. The Voluptuous man in his pleasures. And can no more live out of them, than the Fish out of the water, the Salamander out of fire. So here. If thy heart bee taken with Christ, then thou livest more in Christ, than thou dost in thy self. I love, yet not I, but Christ, faith the Apostle, Gal. 2. 20. Thou canst no more livest without him, than the Beam without the Sun: than the Spark without the fire. Nay, no more live without him, than the body without meat, nay, the body without the soul. Christ is to the soul, as the soul is to the body. Now as the body cannot live without the soul: So the soul cannot live but in Christ, who is Animus Animae, the Soul of the Soul, for me to love is Christ.

I say, if thy heart bee taken with Christ, thou livest in Christ more than in thy self. Thy life, thy comforts, thy happiness, they are all folded up in him.

As Judah said of Benjamin. Jacob's life was bound up in the Lord's life, Gen. 44. 30. So the Soul of Christ, my life, my joyes, my comforts, they are all bound up in thee. All my fresh springs are in thee, faith God of his Church, Psal. 87. 7. And, whom have I in Heaven but thee! and in earth in comparison of thee! Psal. 73. 25, faith the inamoured soul of God, his heart was taken with God, and hee lived in God more than in himself.

It was the speech of Luther, who (being in a great distress and spirituall trouble) had writ about the walls and table in his study, in great letters, Vivit. A friend comes to him, and demands the reason. Hee replies, Vivit Christus, et non, non optarum animam hortabatur vivere. -- His life was in Christ. Hee lived more in Christ than in himself.

Which makes the life of a Christian so safe, none can hurt him, and so sweet too, being a life in Christ out of himself. The best of others lies in themselves: but the best of a Christian, those precious things in him, lies out of himself, and lies in Christ.

4. Sign.

What the heart is taken withall, that the comforts of the life are upheld by from day to day. Wee have many a weary step to go, and can no more go without comfort, than Elijah without food. Comfort is to the soul, as the soul is to the body. As the body without the soul is dead, so is the soul of men without comfort.

Now would you know what your heart is taken withall? see what the comfort of your life is upheld by from day to day.

Is Jesus Christ the comfort of your life? is hee the joy of your hearts?

Wicked men have variety of springs. If one bee drye, they go to another.

But
to his Spouse.

But the Saints have but one: Christ. And if hee bee gone, all is gone.

5. Sign.

An heart taken with Christ hath high apprehensions and valuations of Christ. It values and esteems him above all the comforts and contentions in Heaven and Earth, Psalm 73, 25, whom have I in Heaven, but thee! and in the Earth, in comparison of thee! Here is the breathing of a soul taken with Christ. Hee prizeth Christ above all the comforts and contentes in the World.

For the better unfolding of this sign, there is

1. Something considerable in the Affect.
2. Something in the Object -- Christ priz'd.
3. Something in the Measure -- above all the comforts, contentes, etc.

1. In the Affect of prizing Christ, that wee do not mean a bare and naked Estimate of Christ, in the Understanding: but such an one as prevails with the soul, and commands the spirit of a man to do actions consonant and agreeable to that rate the judgement set on Christ. I say, by prizing of Christ, wee do not mean a bare notion of Judicature, what a man in his Judgement may conclude Christ to bee worth. Many bee, that will tell you, they conclude Christ to bee worth a World; who yet will not part with any thing for Christ.

But I mean such an act of the understanding, as brings up the Heart, and the affections to clothe with Christ in that height which the Understanding rates him at.

I say, such an Affect of Apprehension as prevails with a man to do actions consonant and agreeable to the rate it pretends to set on Christ. As you see the wise Merchant. Hee did not barely judge that the Pearl was worth all hee had: but hee did Actions consonant and agreeable to it. Seeing hee could not enjoy the Pearl without parting withall hee had to compass it, hee sells all to compass the Pearl.

That is the first. A soul taken with Christ doth not only barely judge and esteem Christ worth all, but will part with all for the compassing of Christ.

2. Here is something considerable in the Object. Christ priz'd.
1. Wee do not restrain and limit this only to the Person of Christ. There is something in the Person of Christ, which may prevail with an Unbeliever, to esteem of him. The dignity of his Person being God-Man, having all beauties and excellencies in him. This may raise up a kind of esteem of Christ in the hearts of unbelievers.

2. Neither do we limit it only to the Benefits of Christ, and the great things which hee hath done for man in general, in his
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his humiliation, death, passion, &c.

But we must take Christ in the extent of Christ: Christ in his whole Nature: Christ in his Divinity; Christ in this, his Law, Christ in his Government, Christ in his Truth, Christ in Christ, the whole of Christ. Here that prizeth not Christ, in his whole latitude, and extent, doth not prize Christ at all as he ought to do.

As weekly of Truth, it doth not degre Objection, it doth not chuse its Object, single out what it will esteem, and what not: but prizeth of Christ fully in the latitude and extent of Christ, of Christ in his reason, Christ in his Becomes, Christ in his Laws, in his Holiness, Truth, Government. And so highly, that they sold themselves to gains a Truth, lost themselves to have a Truth: They have made this brave adventure, thrown away themselves, that they might keep up a Truth, as you see in Queen Mary's case, in point of Transubstantiation. So that is the second. The soul taken with Christ is taken with All-Christ. As all in him is lovely: it is to the soul loves all, and prizes and affecteth of all of Christ.

3. That which is considerable in the Scripture is, That a soul taken with Christ, doth prize Christ above all comforts and contents in Heaven and Earth.

This Christ commands, Mat. 16. 24. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself. If any, it is set down indefinitely. Not only you, who are poor, and have little to live, and deny yourselves in: but they, who have most. You that are rich, you that have lands, possessions, have Crowns and Scepters. If any poor, any rich, any beggar, any Prince, &c.

How must deny himself? Not only in things unlawful, but lawful. He must yield up his sins as a fine, his comports, estate, and all as a Sacrifice for Christ, if he call for them, Mat. 19. 37. He that loves Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me. These relations are expressed: but under these are comprized all the comforts and contents on earth.

And this was not only commanded, but it is practised by those, whose hearts are taken with Christ. You see in Abraham, who left all in Egypt, who prized more of the reproach of Christ, than all the treasures in Egypt; in David, Psal. 73. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? or in Earth, in comparison of thee!

As the World would be nothing else but Anceful Abundance, a noisome sink, a prison to a godly man, were it not that he enjoys something of Christ here: So Heaven it felt were but a gaudy Pageant, Pajament, Vanity, if God and Christ were not there.

The Heaven, which central man do fancy is a Turkish-Heaven, an heaven of pleasures, delights, comforts, but fleshly, outward. They conceive of it, according to their Principle.

But the Heaven of a godly man, it lies in God, it lies in Christ.

Indeed

That is not Heaven, which is by God; but that is Heaven, which
which lies in God, to a godly man.

It was the meditation of one: Not Heaven, O Lord; but God, and Christ. Rather ten thousand times Christ without Heaven, than Heaven without Christ.

Thus doth the soul, that is taken with Christ, prize Christ above all the comforts, contentments of Heaven and Earth.


An heart taken with Christ, the thoughts are taken up with Christ. Such a man hee thinks Christ, and hee speaks Christ, hee lives Christ.

You know whatever a mans heart is taken with, it is never off his thoughts, never off his heart, hee is never well but thinking and speaking of that hee loves. The thoughts are the character of what the heart is taken withall. If thy heart bee taken with Christ, thy thoughts are taken up with him. Christ is always upon thy thoughts; hee lies next to thy heart, when thou goest to bed hee is with thee, Cant. 1. 13. and when thou awakest hee is with thee, as David saith, Psal. 139. 18.

Indeed Gods people may have swarms of other thoughts; but they are not entertained, they are not welcome to them; they are their burden, and trouble. They come in as Intruders, and are not entertained as Guests. A wicked man entertains them as Guests, as friends, but they come into a godly man, as intruders, never invited, nor finde they welcome. This is that Jeremiah speaks. How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee? in a wicked mans heart they are Lodgers, and entertained as Guests; hee keeps doors open, spreads a Table for them, makes them a bed, bids them welcome: But in a godly man they crowd in, and finde no entertainment.

And as the Thoughts are taken up with Christ, so the Tongue. Hee thinks, and hee speaks Christ. When Christ is in the heart, the tongue will discourse and speak of him. Whatever is in the heart, and the heart is taken withall, that a mans discourse is most taken up withall, As Psal. 37. 30. The mouth of the Righteous speaketh wisdom, and his Tongue is kept in Judgement. And why? because the Law of his God is in his heart, ver 31. So here on the same ground. Thy talk shall bee of Christ, of his beauties, his love, &c. because Christ is in thy heart. What the heart is taken withall, the Tongue will discourse on.

1. And indeed wee cannot have a fuller Subject to discourse on. Other Subjects they are empty Subjects, quickly barren. Talk of what you will, you will bee quickly at an end. The bottome of other things are quickly founded. But Christ is a full Subject. (Whatever you fall upon, is fulness in Christ.) An everlasting spring, which affordeth fresh supplies of matter. New and unconceivable.
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ceivable discoveries do arise after bee matter of supply to all eternity.

2. You cannot have a sweeter subject. Christ is All-sweet: A Rose without prickles. A Rose, for sweetness; without prickles, for content. And nothing is so but Christ. All the things of the world since the fall, have been Roses beset with thorns. Though there be many sweets in the World; yet they are not all-sweet; they are beset with thorns: crosses with comforts, and afflictions with affections. Christ is All-sweet, and nothing but sweet. Tota pulchra, as he said of his Spoufe. Thou art all-saint, Beauty without spot. Sweet without prickles. He is a Garden full of flowers, full of sweets. You can light of none but you may lade your thighs, and go home satisfied.

3. You cannot have a more delightfull subject. Christ is the delight of all both in Heaven and Earth. Hee is Gods delight, his heart is taken with him; hee lies in his bosom. And his Son, in whom he is well pleased, hee is the delight of the Angels, whose delight it is to study Christ, and desire to learn and hear further discoveries of Christ by his Church, as Peter hath it, 1 Pet. 1. 12.

4. You cannot have a more profitable subject. A subject which in conversing upon, wee are transformed into his Glory, 2 Cor. 3. 18. into the glory of him, who is the subject of the discourse. Have you not been kindled with heavenly fire? have not your hearts burned in the converses of him, as well as in the converses with him? Indeed wee cannot converse of him aright, but in some measure wee converse with him.

Doth it not sometimes fetch up your souls to glory, and leave you in Heaven?

Do you not finde it profitable to quicken you: to raise you: to comfort you: to inflame you: to humble you: to melt you: to transform you:

Doth not a discourse of his love quicken you, when you are dead: comfort you, when you are dejected: raise you, when fallen: humble you, when proud: inflame you, when cold: Inlarge you, when straitned: and penit within your selves:

Oh! That such worthless subjects should so often take up our Tongues and Thoughts! And Christ, so full, so sweet, so delightfull, so profitable a subject, which shall bee matter for our souls discourse to all Eternity, shall bee thrown aside, as if not worth taking up!

You, whose hearts are taken with Christ, declare it to your own comfort, and the good of others. In this let your thoughts bee taken up with him; let your discourses bee more of him, then your selves to love him, by thinking Christ, speaking Christ, living Christ more.
to his Spouse.

6. **Sign.**

An heart taken with *Christ*, thirsts after communion with, and nearer conjunction to *Christ*. You know whatever your hearts are taken withall, you desire, and thirst after communion, and converses withall. So it is here betwixt *Christ* and the soul. The soul taken with *Christ* longs to bee with him, and thirsts after communion with him.

1. **In Grace here.**

2. **In Glory hereafter.**

1. **In Grace here.** Oh! How the soul once taken with *Christ* desires converses with him, in prayer, in hearing, in meditation, Isa. 26, 8, 9. The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early. And this is the Genus of a soul taken with *Christ*: that duty doth not content him, if hee finde not *Christ* in duty. If the end of a duty have left him on this side *Christ*, it hath left him so far short of comfort.

Others indeed, though they do a duty, yet as their hearts seek not *Christ* in the duty, so their souls can rest content without him, when the duty is done: but it is otherwise with a right-born soul.

'Twas the speech of **Bradford**, that hee could never leave a duty, till hee had found communion with *Christ* in the duty: till he had brought his heart into a duty-frame. Hee could not leave confession, till hee had found his heart touched, broken, and humbled for sin; nor Petition, till hee had found his heart taken with the beauties of the things desired, and carried out after them: nor could hee leave thanksgiving, till hee had found his spirit enlarged, and his soul quickened in the return of praises.

And it was the happinesse of **Bernard**, a Heaven upon Earth, that hee faith of himself, I never went from thee, without thee. Hee found God in every duty: hee had communion with God in every prayer; which indeed is Heaven **on this side Heaven**.

Thus hee, whose heart is taken with *Christ*, thirsts after communion with him, and no duty contents him, wherein hee hath not found either his quickening, or his comforting-presence: either communion with his **Grace**, or communion with his comfort.

2. **As hee thirsts after communion with him here in Grace: to both hee desire communion with him in Glory, To bee with the Lord, as the Apostle.**

While the soul is here, it sees the distance too great betwixt *Christ* and it, that hee cannot enjoy that sweet communion with him. As the Apostle faith. While we are present in the flesh, we are absent from the Lord. And therefore the soul breathes after him, esires to bee with him, Cupio dissoluo, faith the Apostle, I desire.
to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.

The like of David, Psal. 42. 1, 2. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God! Hee had tasted the sweetness of Christ, and did not fear the bitterness of death.

Hee had Life in Patience, Death in Desire; because by death hee should bee carried to more sweet and intimate conjunction with Christ.

It was the speech of Augustine. Lord, I will dye, that I may enjoy thee. I will not live, but I will dye. I desire to dye, that I may see Christ: and refuse to live, that I may live with Christ.

And this disposition you see in the Spenser here. Her heart being taken with Christ, shee could not brooke the distance betwixt Christ and her; and therefore dyes out, Cant. 8. 1. Make haste, make haste, my beloved.

Though in one sentence it is true, shee that believeth makes not haste; yet here shee that believeth most, and loves most, makes most haste.

The more the soul believeth, and the more the heart is taken with Christ, the greater are the desires to be with him.

Till Simeon had gotten Christ into his armes, shee was unwilling to dye: but after shee had Christ in his armes, he left to be there than to be with Christ, depart in peace; for my eyes have seen thy salvation.

Indeed here are but the Esponials between Christ and the soul. Some Broken Rings, Contracts, Esponials, betwixt Christ and us; but then is the great Marriage-day, the Solemnization of our Nuptials, to all eternity.

Here wee do see him but dimly and darkly, at the best, and there are oftentimes clouds come in, and interpole themselves, between Christ and us: but then wee shall see him face to face, and never shall there cloud come between Christ and us to all eternity. There wee shall see him in his Glory, his full discoveries.

Here wee enjoy him but in part. The distance is great betwixt him and us. All which distance doth arise from that within us. Were it not for sin wee might see in Glory, even in Grace. But then wee shall enjoy him in fulness.

Heaven is the place, which God hath intended to set forth himself to his People in his Glory, to all eternity. Where there shall bee no fears, no sin, never smake of distressing thoughts shall arise more. Where there shall bee no sorrow, no tears. All sighing and sobbing shall pass away; and nothing but joy shall keep the house.

Wee are now the Sons of God. But it doth not yet appear what we shall bee; for wee shall see him as hee is.
A heart taken with Christ thinketh nothing too much to do, nothing too much to suffer for Christ.

You know love cannot beasted. Wee say, there is no difficultie in love. Things impossible to others, are ease to them who love. And things burdensome to others, delight full to them who love. If once thy heart be taken with Christ, thou wilt think nothing too much to do, nothing too much to suffer for him.

As Christ thought nothing too much for us, because his heart was taken with us, neither shall we think anything too much for Christ.

Wee read how prodigious the Saints have been of their Riches, their Blood, their Lives for Christ, because they loved him.

1. They have not accounted their estates too dear for him, Heb. 10. 34. They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods.
2. They have not accounted their lives too dear, Rev. 12. 11. They loved not their lives to death for him.

If they would dig in Mines, or be cast to bee devoued by Wild-Beasts for Christas, as it was the usual sentence of Christians in the primitive times, they were willing to do and suffer it.

So this in the Virgin of whom Basil speaks, who was condemned to death, because she would not worship Idols.

And the like of old Polycarp, and others.

This is certain: A soul taken with Christ knows no difficulty in its love. It loves him with an unlimited, an unconquerable love, which no duty, no difficulty can oppose.


A heart taken with Christ is exceedingly cast down with the withdrawals and absence of Christ.

The comforts of the soul are laid up in Christ: and when he is gone, all is gone. Comfort gone, Joy gone, the Heart gone with him.

As Mephibosheth said, Take all, now my Lord is come back: To the soul faith, Take all, take the World, take Riches, take Heaven, and Glory, so far as Heaven and thou are two things. That my Lord may return with my soul. Darkness is terrible to the soul, and this is thick darkness, and therefore faith with Absalom, let mee see his fate, mee now, profess finde, nothing besides thee, can either satistie or profit mee.

9. Sign
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10.4. Sign. ☞

A heart taken with Christ is fully content and satisfied with the enjoyments and possession of Christ.

The possession of the thing beloved doth content the soul so far as there is satisfaction and contentment with it. The reason why we do not meet with full contentments and satisfactions here in the possession of our loves, is because they want of fulness.

But now it is not so with Christ. He is able to bring the soul to satiate the spirit to answer all the desires of the heart, and therefore the heart taken with him, needs must rest satisfied and contented with him.

Such a full of desire is in the soul of men, that if God should cast in a thousand worlds, there could be no contentment, except Christ be cast in. And Christ is so full of contentment, that if God be cast away, they will neither need nor desire any more.

And thus much shall serve for the use of trial, we will now come to an use of Exhortation, and conclude this.

Use of Exhortation.

1. To them of his Church.
2. To them who are not of the Church.
3. To them of his Church.

Is it so that the heart of Christ is so much taken with his Church and People?

1. Walk suitably to this love. Dignities, and suitable walkings to dignities must go together.

Now this suitable walking we will express in these five things.

1. Walk cheerfully. Walk as Heirs of such a Mercy. Here is a truth speaks comfort, when all the world speaks nothing but terror.

2. Beware of abusing this love. Precious things are committed to us by a word of Caution. This is a precious Truth, and therefore let me add to it this word of Caution. Beware of abusing this Love of Christ.

Christ's Love are his bowels, and hee will never endure to have his bowels injured, his love abused. You know a man will not have his love injured, the abuse of his power, of his wisdom, greatness, doth not touch a man so nearly, as the abuse of his love. This is an injury men cannot endure.

So to speak after the manner of men; Christ can least endure his
his Love should be abused. There is no abuse like it. Therefore beware of it.

Now this Love of Christ is injured these ways, and beware
1. When we slight the mercies, reject the tenders, cast aside the offers and blessings of his Love.

When love flouts you, when the mercy and goodness of Christ doth as it were, come on its knees to you, and entreats you to do this, or not to do that.

And yet you will stop your ears, pull back your shoulder, slight the entreaties. This is an abuse.

2. When the Love of Christ doth slacken our hearts to duty, loosen our engagements, makes us more remiss to or in service. This is to abuse his Love.

We should reason from Mercy to Duty, and not from Mercy to Liberty. Abundance of Grace calls in for abundance of Duty.

The Love of Christ should restrain us; as the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5.

This should make us live more humbly, more actively, more studious to please, more diligent to obey, more careful to serve him.

This should make us live at higher rates for Heaven, more spiritual, more heavenly minded. It is a Cord let down from Heaven, to fetch our souls up thither.

And doth this cause us to be more remiss, more careless? Doth this, which should quicken, slacken our hand to duty? Oh base ungrateful neglect of Love!

3. When we take heart to sin thereby. Grow more loose, careless.

This is an high abuse of this Love.

Because God is Good, wilt thou bee Evil? because hee is Merciful, wilt thou bee Sinful? because hee is Gracious, wilt thou bee Impious? What fearful abuse of Love is this! This is to wound Christ in the house of his friends.

To return good for good, is but Humane.

To return evil for good, is Wicked.

To return good for evil, is Christian-like. But

To return evil for good, and the greatest evil for the greatest good,

Sin for Love, this is devilish.

Were you his enemies, hee knew how to deal with you; hee could revenge himself, and the abuses of his love upon you: but you are his friends, and those bowls which you wrong, are stirred in him, when hee goes about to punishe you. Oh Ephraim! How shall I give thee up! how shall I deliver thee, Israel! my bowls are turned within me. My repentings are kindled together, Hos. 11. 8.

The greatness of God prevails with wicked men; that aves them often, that they dare not sin against him. But the goodness of God; this should prevail with us. There is mercy with thee, therefore thou art to be feared.

It is set down as the Principle in such, with whom the heart
The Loves of Christ

of Christ is taken, Hos. 3. alt. They shall fear the Lord, and his goodness, in the latter days.

None but venomous spirits will suck poison from such a sweet, as thence to draw encouragements to sin, from that which is the great encouragement to service.

The Love of Christ had so prevailed with Chrysostome, that he used to say, Ego sic te cento, sic asidec predicabo.

And Anselm: That if on the one hand, he should see sin, and on the other, the torments of Hell: he had rather close to fall into Hell, than fall into sin.

4. When we stagger and doubt, give way to misgiving thoughts of Christ’s Loves, and unbelieving of our own hearts: wee abuse this Love.

What is it possible that Christ should do or suffer more than he hath done and suffered to pervert your hearts of his Love?

If Christ should ask the question of you, who doubt most of his Love, What shall I do to answer your scruples? to satisfy your souls for ever, in this, that I love you: could you rationally define more than what he hath expressed in his words, and to your hearts, and if notwithstanding, all bee in vain, may bee not justified as David of Nabul. Surely in vain have I done all this, when this all commeth to nothing.

3. Dwell much upon this. This Love of Christ will bee matter of eternal perusal in Heaven. Wee shall do nothing but read over this Love. Oh! let us not bee strangers to it now.

View it in the
1. Fulness.
2. Freeness.
3. Bounty.
4. Perpetuity thereof.

1. Measure it in the Fulness of it. It is a Love which reacheth to every necessity.

A love able to make you holy, and able to make you happy. Thou art under guilt and sin, thou art terrified by the one, and ashamed and contemned because so loathly defiled by the other. Why it is a pardoning, a purging, a sanctifying Love, it is a Love as large as himself, though the person’s beloved bee finite.

2. Read it over in the Freeness of it.

1. It was an undeserved.
2. It was an unsought-for Love.

1. It was an undeserved Love. Wee may provoke him to anger, but wee cannot tempt him to love. The former doth arise from our sins, the latter from himself.

His chusing, justifying, adopting, giving love, all are free.

2. It was an unsought-for Love. Never a prayer put up for it. I am found of them that sought mee not, Isa. 65. 1.

3. Read
3. Read it over in the Bounty and Expressions of it,
   1. What he did.
   2. What he suffered.
   3. What he hath given to his Church.

4. Look upon it, in the Perpetuity, Permanency, and continuity thereof. A Love which reaches from Eternity to Eternity. From Eternal Churling, to Eternal glorifying. An unchangeable Love.

Let us then peruse this Love. Read it over in all the Dimensions. Dwell upon the thoughts of it till your hearts be Humbled, melted, inabled, in-nobled, winned, quickened, comforted, &c.

The Thoughts of this Love are

1. Soul-humbling Thoughts. Nothing lays the soul lower than Love. The consideration of this will vile a man to Hell, Ezek. 36. 25, to 33, where you may read some expressions of love, how it affects.

These would be

2. Soul-melting Thoughts. They will not only humble, but melt, not only break, but dissolve the heart. Nothing doth melt the soul more than Love.

The Law may break us, but it is as the breaking of a flint; every durt retains hardness: but it is the Gospel that melteth us.

The thoughts of God's Justice do stone the heart, make it more hard: but the thoughts of God's Mercy do melt the heart.

You know you never mourn indeed, till Love, till Mercy do melt you. Every drop of tears sticks like an' hailstone, and congeals in the eyes: but when Love comes in, then all the springs are opened, and a man is dissolved into waters.

So much apprehensions of this Love of Christ: so much godly sorrow. They are like the Fountain and the Stream, whereof the one doth rise no higher than the other.

The thoughts of this Love have

3. A Soul-enabling Power. It will not only ingage us to service, (as the Apostle. The Love of Christ constrains me.) But it will enable us to service, make us pray, and pray with affections; pray with life; make us hear, and hear with strength. This puts us upon work, and puts life, verite and vigor into our actions.

No actions stronger than those that come from Love: Things incredible and impossible to others, are yet easy to them who love.

See what the Saints have gone through, what they have done, what they have suffered. Let but the thoughts of this love ly on your spirits a little, and you will finde that Love is strong as death, Cant. 8. 6. and will mightily carry us through that, which otherwise may seem impossible.

They will bee
4. Soul-innobling thoughts. They will make you like themselves. Whatever the soul feeds on, the soul is digested into the nature of it. So here, feed on the thoughts of this love, and your spirit will bee digested into it. While we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord; we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor. 3:18.

In nature the meat is digested into the nature of the eater. Here the eater is turned into the nature of the meat. The contemplation of his glory makes you glorious.

They will bee

5. Soul-winning Thoughts. Love you know is of an attractive nature. Nothing wins more than Love. Love is the Loadstone to draw Love again.

As the Sun shining upon a Glass begets a reflection of the beams back again: So the love of God dwelk abroad in our hearts, begets a reflection of love back again toward God. You see Mary, Much was forgiven her, shee had casts of much love from God; and shee returned much love again to him. Shee loved much.

The Power of God doth make the heart:

The Majesty of God doth dread the heart:

The Justice of God doth awe the heart:

But it is the Mercy of God, the Love of God, which doth persuade, win, and draw the heart: Nothing wins a mans heart to God but his Love.

The fear of God, dread of God, may bring a mans feet into his wayses: but it is the Love of God, which brings his Heart into his wayses.

They are


Oh then! that wee were but wise to improve this Doctrine, this truth, to the good of our souls!

I tell thee Christian, if thou wouldest give this truth but scope in thy heart, it would help thee; and relieve thee of all the burdens under which thou groanest.

1. Dost thou labour under a proud heart? This would humble thee.

2. Dost thou labour under a dejected heart? This would raise thee.

3. Under a dark heart? This would comfort, revive thee.

4. Under a dead heart? This would quicken thee, and put the Spirit of Heaven into thee, while thou art on earth.

5. Under an hard heart? This would break thee. Nay this would melt thee, dissolve thee into waters.

Say, the more thou gets up (with Eliah) into this Chariot of love, the more would the mantle of sin and corruption depart from thee.

6. Under a worldly heart? This would dead thy heart for ever to the World, and set thee all on flame with the fire of heavenly affections.
to his Spouse.

I am confident of it, whatever a Christian desires to enjoy; whatever a Christian desires to bee rid of, if hee can but dwell upon this truth, and bee able to manage it: He shall have it more fully, bee shall have it more quickly than any other way.

Wouldst thou bee rid of a proud heart? Wouldst thou have an humble heart? Wouldst bee rid of a dead heart, and desirest a quick heart? Wouldst bee rid of an hard heart, and have a broken heart? Wouldst bee rid of an unbelieving, of a doubting, of a dejected heart, and wouldst bee mighty in Faith, full of comfort? Why, do but let thy soul bee carried captive with this Truth: bee but content this Truth should master thee; bee but willing to entertain it, believe it, imbrace it. I am confident on it, all this will bee done. I may set down a probatum eft, to it. Oh! That wee were wise to manage this Truth!

There are many look upon this but as a pleasant dream, a Chimera, a fiction.

And some believe it; but slightly; there wants depth of earth.

And some there are (poor souls!) to whom the comfort of this truth belongs, who think this is too good news for them. They think, if they should own it, it would bee but too great a sale for too small a Boat; rather overturn them, than do them good; rather runne them, than help them. And therefore they must feed upon black thoughts, upon Hell, upon justice, upon sin, upon their corruptions.

Ah! Poor souls! Satan deludes you; you take a way to undo your selves. Either to discourage you, to say there is no hope; or else to break you, that you shall never bee able to do God service.

Look as long as you will into Hell: pray as long as you will into the dark vaults of your souls: take as long as you will into the kennel of your hearts. You shall finde nothing in Hell, but Hell, in your hearts but sin, and having found it, run from him.

That man looks too much on sin, who shutteth his eyes from a mutual interview of love between God and his soul.

And hither you must come at last, Free-Grace must bee owned; Free-Mercy must bee acknowledged, and advanced by you; if ever you would bee saved; if ever you would bee comforted.

You may think what you will, but sure I am,

1. There are no Christians more cheerful.
2. None are more thankful.
3. None are more humble.
4. None are more believing.
5. None are more affitive.
6. None are more courageous.
7. None more serviceable and useful toward God and men, than they, who ly continually at the breast of the promise; than they, who
The Loves of Christ

who set up God's Free-Grace, and own that good which God makes out to them.

Thou mayest bee a Christian; but thou wilt bee a sad Christian, an uncomfortable Christian, a dark Christian, a deserted Christian, a dead Christian, an uneventful Christian. If thou dost go on to feed upon black thoughts; and wilt not own that comfort which Christ tenders; embrace that good which Christ speaks, and believe the Riches of his Grace and Mercy to poor sinners.

Do but sit down, and from the sight and sense of thine own unworthiness, take but occasion to advance Free-Grace and Mercy. Let there bee place for that to come in. Let thofe thoughts finde entertainment. And thou shalt quickly finde a strange change in thy spirit.

1. Thou, who couldst not mourn before, shall now bee able to pour out our tears, as if thou were all turned to weep.

2. Thou, who before couldst not believe, couldst not bee comforted, wilt even think it a wonder, that ever thy heart should bee so dark, so doubtful.

3. Thou, who before waft dead, shalt now finde a spirit of life come into thee, and make thee active in the work of the Lord.

Make but the Experiment, and thou wilt converse more with the promise, with the Love of Christ, with the Free-Grace of God, whiles thou livest; if you would but remove your unbelief.

But who shall remove this stone? God alone must do it. But if this were done, this truth would let in a flood of mercy upon you, and even sink and over-whelm you in a Sea of mercy and glory, where now you go drooping, and hang down your heads, because you will not own that portion, which Christ hath left you, nor that comfort which Christ doth tender and speak to you.

4. Direction to them of the Church.


Whatever God doth to the soul, it makes an impression in the soul of the fame to God. Hee loves us, and thereupon wee love him; so his heart is taken with us, thereupon our hearts are taken with him. You see here the mutual inwardness between Christ and his Church, Cant. 5. 16.

Paul's heart was so much taken with Christ, that hee was ever in his thoughts, ever upon his tongue. Hee names him sixteen, or seventeen several times in one chapter, 1 Cor. 1. 11. as Christ's name notes.

Peter did but let a word of Christ fall, and it is a door to open to further discourse of him. Hee takes occasion upon the naming of him,
him, to enter into discourse concerning him. As you see, 1 Pet. 1. 7, 8. So greatly were their hearts taken with Christ, that they could think nothing but Christ, speak nothing but Christ. No sentence compleat, wherein Christ was not part of it.

Hee was the one of their esteem.s, the one of their affections, the one of their desires, the one of their delights. And so ought hee to bee of ours.

Get your hearts taken with Christ, this will make you Christians indeed; this will make you humble, active, cheerful Christians.

An heart taken with Christ is Heaven on this side Heaven. An Heaven on Earth. Glory in Clay.

It is the Paradise, where Christ delights to walk.
It is the House, where Christ delights to dwell.
It is the Throne, where Christ sits in his glory.
It is the Habitation of the blessed Spirit.
It is the Delight of all the blessed Trinity.

An heart taken with Christ is the humble soul indeed, the active soul, the living soul, which breathes forth nothing but love and desire after Christ.

It is an heart dead to the world; for the World can never take that heart which once is taken with Christ. All is empty to him, whom falseness fills. All is blackness where beauty shines.

Oh! then get but an heart taken with him, and thou livest a Life of Glory, and a Life of Grace. This is the Porch of Glory, the suburbs of Heaven.

I told you before, there were four speciall times in which the heart was taken with Christ. I might add a fifth, which I hope is our times. - When Christ goes forth in his glory, for the redemption and deliverance of his Church, and punishment of his enemies: Then is the heart taken with him.

1. Taken with his Wisdom.
2. With his Justice.
3. With his Power.
4. With his Mercy and goodness. Which are the visible attributes Christ doth manifest in the deliverance of his Church.

You see this, Isa. 25. 9. when God went forth in his Glory, to deliver his Church, the Saints were taken with him, even to admiration, and speak glorying. Lue, This is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us. This is the Lord, we have waited, and will bee glad in his salvation.

Here was a Triumphant song of the Church. This is our God, This who appears so glorious, so full of Majesty. This, This is our God, not yours. And good reason.

1. Christ never appears in his Glory to his Church, but hee makes his Church glorious.

You see, when God delivered his Church from Babylon, hee did appear in his Glory. Psal. 102. 16. When the Lord shall build up
up Zion, bee shall appear in his glory.

And you see, as hee appeared in his Glory, so hee made the Church glorious, Isa. 54. 11, 12, 13. (speaking of the same time.) 

Behold I will lay thy foundations with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphires. I will make thy windows of Agates, and thy gates of Carvanels, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

2. Christ now comes in, with the Performance of Promises; and needs then must he be glorious, and the Church be taken with him.

If Christ were to glorious, when hee made those promises: what is hee, when hee comes in to make good those Promises? Christ hath reserved abundance of his visible Glory to bee seen by his Church; now at the end of the World.

Our Fore-Fathers have seen him but an obscure Christ, a persecuted and kept-down Christ. Though glorious, yet humble-glory. But it will not bee long before the Church see him in his Glory, when hee comes to destroy that man of sin with the brightness of his comming.

Blessed bee God for what our eyes see. Let us follow him with admiration with the Church. This is our God, follow with spiritual triumph. This is our God. And let our hearts bee taken with his goings forth; who is set forth in his glory now to redeem, and to deliver his Church and People.
A TREATISE OF THE NATURE AND ROYALTIES OF FAITH.

BY SAMUEL BOLTON, D.D.

And Master of C.C.G.

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A TREATISE
OF THE
NATURE & ROYALTIES
OF
FAITH.

JOHN 3:15.
That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.

I have intended (with God's assistance) to enter upon a Discourse of Faith, which might last till we come to the place, where faith shall be no more. And although my preaching of faith may end before, yet your practicing of it must not. The just shall live by faith, and the just must dye in faith.

This Text I have chosen for the foundation of this Discourse: Which, before I come to handle in particular, I shall shew what coherence and dependance it hath with the former words. For which purpose, you must know that this Chapter, from the beginning to Verse 22, contains a discourse between Christ and Nicodemus. In which you may observe,

1. The Occasion of the Discourse.
2. The Discourse itself.

1. The occasion of this Discourse most likely, was a Question put by Nicodemus, which is not here expressed, but is probably implied in Verse 3, in that it is said, That Jesus Answered, and by the Answer, you may guess what the Question was. It may
Of the Nature, and
may be, such an one as this, What he must do that he might be
saved?

2. We have the Discourse itself: Which was partly con-
tinued, and partly interrupted. Continued by Christ, and par-
tly interrupted by Nicolaemus, in divers places, by his Objections,
Cavils, and feebly Reasonings.

This Text is a part of Christ's continued discourse, and hath
special relation to the foregoing verse, As Moses lift up,
&c. so must the Son of man be lifted up: Verse 14. That who-
ever believeth in him, be he who he will, Jew or Gentile, bond or free,
Barbarian, Scythian, &c.

Or be his sins what they will, for nature, never so hainous; for
number, never so many; for continuance, never so long practiced:
Yet whoever believeth, &c. if they believe, they shall be as
readily and certainly pardoned and saved, as other less of-
fenders.

Whoever believeth,

In which words we have,

1. The Promise.
2. The Condition of the Promise.

Or here is 1. An act, Believe. 2. The object, Christ. 3. The
Fruits and Benefit that comes in thereby, 1. Negatively, Should
not perish. 2. Positively, But have Eternal Life.

Now about the Act and the Object, we shall make these two
enquiries, before we come to lay down the Conclusion,

1. What act of faith is, whereby a sinner stands justified before God?

2. Upon what Object this Act is to be terminated?

1. For the first, What Act is that is? You must know, that faith
in the general consideration, hath divers acts and objects, and
that the acts are diversified, according to the diversity of the
objects: so many particulars as are recorded in Scripture, so many
particular objects: and accordingly so many particular acts there
are of faith in general. But our enquiry is, what is the formal
Act and Object of justifying faith?

Now for the first, viz. What is the formal Act of Faith? You
must know, that there is much difference amongst Divines
about it.

1. Some would have it to be a bare and naked assent to every
truth revealed by God. Thus the Papists.
2. Some say it is a firm and radical assent to this great Proposition,
That Christ is Messiah and Saviour of the world.
3. Others place it in a receiving of Christ in all his Offices, as
a King, Priest, and Prophet.
4. Some in Assurance and Particular Knowledge, or Persuasion,
sation that we are in the state of Grace, and have an interest in Christ, &c.

5. Others do place it in rowling out our selves upon Christ, and resting in him, when the soul assenting to that great Proposition, that Christ is the Saviour, the Mediator, doth rowl and rest it self upon him, and trutheth in him. 

In most of which different opinions, we finde this agreement.

1. That it is an Act of Faith whereby wee are justified, not Faith as an Habit of Grace inherent in us, but Faith as an Act; not Faith in actu primo as an Habit intus, but in actu secundo.

2. That it is such an Act as is not wrought out of our selves, or our own Principles, but such as is wrought by the Spirit of Christ, and the mighty Power of God.

3. That it is such an Act as bringeth over the soul to the true object, to Christ, by whom wee are justified.

4. Such an one as all the benefits of Christ do belong unto; accompany Christ in blood, Christ in water, Christ for Justification, Christ for Sanctification, Christ for Salvation; in all these there is an exact agreement among them. And therefore although there be some difference in respect of that formall Act which justifieth; yet seeing they preach, and cry down themselves, and advance and set up free grace, and mercy, both in the work and fruit of it, The Papists have no caufe to cry us down for dis-agreement, which for their parts, they are like the four winds blowing in the faces of one another in many points, as might easilly be shewed, if here it were pertinent.

Wee know, that while wee are here, differences there will bee, for wee know in part, and prophesy but, in part. It were an happy thing if wee could bee all of one heart, and all of one mind, but seeing it will not bee. I could wish that although wee bee not all of one mind, yet wee might bee all of one heart, and that difference in judgement, might not breed alienation in affection, especially seeing wee all aime at one thing, one mark, one end. All agree in hoc uno, in this one, to set up Christ, the mercy of God, free grace, and by crying down our selves, and why then should wee not agree amongst our selves?

And therefore in all these diversities of Judgements concerning the formal Act of Faith, whereby wee stand justified before God. I shall not deal so much in the throwing down of other mens opinions, as in the establishing of mine own.

1. Because I conceive there is little wisdom in it, to uncover the nakedness of our Brethren, by bringing them in, contending with one another.

2. Because I think there is little profit in it, especially in promiscuous Congregations. Such debates being fitter for the Schools.
Of the Nature, and

Schools than for the Pulpit. Polemical and Controversial points may
beget Notion, little Motion: fill our heads with Notions, but make our
hearts with sanctified affections. And therefore I will break my self in
as plain and modest a manner as I can; amongst all these differences to
declare what I adhere to, and to establishe it by some Scriptures, and to
passe it.

Now then I conceive that that formal act of Faith whereby wee are
justified and instructed into Christ, is an Act of Assurance, and secumbency,
rowling resting, trusting on Christ for Justification, and consequent for
Saving.

For the proof whereof wee are to observe, that the words both in the
Old and New Testament, by which the Act of Faith is expressed, do
import such an act as this.

In the Old Testament wee meet with three words especially which
import this Act of Faith, נשׁי לב אсан which being referred to Christ,
do express that Act whereby we are justified.
1 More the fault of them, as Rabbi Kimchi observeth, doth primi-

tively and properly signifie to retire into some safe place for habitation


shelter; So Judg. 9:15, וְנַשְׁף (faith the Bramble) shelter or
cover you under my shadow, and the Prophet useth the same word,


ירח 57. 1, יִשְׁפְּשֶׁנָּני שְׁפִּיתֶנֶּה in thee, I will retire my self


under the shadow of thy wings, and so being referred to Christ, betoken-


eth that Act whereby wee do betake our selves to him as to our San-

tuary, where wee may be preferr'd in safety from the tempest of


Gods displeasures and to Psal. 2:11, when his wrath is kindled, yet


but a little, רִבְּנֵית רְבֵית לָא בָּד בֵּימֶיה בֵּים and blessed are all they


that put their trust in him, or that retire themselves to him; upon which place Junius noteth,


that that retiring unto God, which is affirmed to bee the cause of our


blessedness is no other than sincere Faith, and what act of it, but this of

affiance?

2 נְשָׁי The second word in the Old Testament signifieth to rowle,


and being joyned with the Proposition וב signifieth to devolve and rowle


something on another, as Psal. 37:5, וְשַׁלָּמֵהוּ בָּד בָּד בָּד בָּד בָּד בָּד בָּד


rowe the workes upon the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established, agree-


able to which is Job 14:2, cast thy burden upon the Lord, &c.


And this word applied to Christ, import that Act, whereby, being laden


with sin, and seeking ease, wee at last discharge our load, and cast


it upon Christ.

3 נְשָׁי The third word signifieth, to put confidence, trust, and assurance


in any thing or person; so as securely to lean and reft upon it. So Isa.


50:10, hee that walkes in darkness, and feedeth no light, יִשְׁפְּשֶׁנָּני אֶל


in him trust in the name of the Lord, וְנַשְׁף and stay or lean upon his God,


and Isa. 26:3, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is fixed


on thee, וְנַשְׁף יִשְׁפְּשֶׁנָּני בְּשָׁפֵשְׁנָּני ב גְּבֵר בֵּיתוֹ, for the trusteth in me, which word in the


matter of Justification, designeth that Act, whereby, finding and feeling


our own weaknesses, as unable to support our selves, wee do lean and reft


on Christ; as David, Psal. 28:7, The Lord is my strength, and my shield,


my heart נְשָׁי trusteth in him, and I am helped &c.

And to these words in the Old Testament, wee may add the forms


of words in the New, and so wee shall finde that what in the Old is


expressed by some one of these words, is in the New expressed by believing


in and upon. To instance in a few.
We trust in the name of his Holiness; faith the Old Testament, 
Psal. 33. 21. and He that believeth in his name, faith the New, 

Trust in the Lord with thy whole heart, faith the Old, Prov. 3. 5. 
If thou believeth with thy whole heart, faith the New, Acts 8. 
34. 37.

In thee, 0 Lord, have I trusted, let me not be confounded, faith 
the New, Psal. 31. 1. & 25. 2. and, He that believeth on him shall 
be delivered, faith the New, Rom. 10. 11. So that you see, that 
trust and to believe, are Synonimous, import the same things, 
though they differ in name, yet not in nature: He that Trusteth 
Believeth, and he that Believeth Trusteth.

In which sense we have the phrases of believing in or upon, 
1 Pet. 2. 6. Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, and he that 
believeth on him shall not be confounded: Where, by believing on 
him, cannot be meant any thing, but a laying and building our 
believes upon Christ as the foundation, that we may be made a 
spiritual house; as you have it in verse 4. 5. the like we have 
Rom. 10. 10. 11. He that believeth on him: and so, 2 Tim. 1. 12. 
For I know in whom I have believed, &c. δείκνυται: Whence it 
is apparent, that to believe in God, is as much as to commit our 
believes to his trust: for so it there followeth, I am persuaded, that 
he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, or depo-
sited with him, or delivered up unto his keeping to that day, 
that is, his soul to everlasting life: So that we see, that to be-
lieve in Christ is, with confidence and trust to rely upon him. And 
thus much for the formal act of faith.

2. For the formal object of faith; and that not of faith at 
large, for so the word of God is the objectum adequantum of it, 
but as it is particularly justifying faith, quattuors justificat, as it 
properly justifieth, which is not the believing of every truth of 
God, but that only which by way of eminency, is called, The 
Truth, that is, Christ himself, with all his merits, John 14. 6. 
and so here in the Text, He that believeth in him: Hence justifying 
faith, is often called the Faith of Christ, because he is the proper 
object of it, Rom. 3. 22. 26. Gal. 2. 16. 20. And faith in Christ, 
Acts 20. 21. and Faith in the blood of Christ: Whence I thus 
argue:

That Object to the Belief, of which justification and salvation is 
proposed, that is the Object of justifying faith.

But to believe in Christ, is justification and salvation prom-
ised:

Therefore Christ is the object of justifying faith.

Thus, as briefly as I could, having shewed what is the formal 
both act and object of justifying faith, I shall now lay down this 
one Conclusion,
Of the Nature, and

Doct. That the great thing which is required at our hands for Justification and Salvation, is believing in Christ. He that believes shall be saved.

In the prosecution of this, we will shew,
1. What Faith is.
2. That Faith is the great requisite.
3. Why God hath made choice of this to be the instrument of Justification.
4. How Faith doth justify, whether formally, or instrumentally.
5. What are the Royalties of Faith.

For the first, What Faith is, we will not define the habit of Faith, but the Act of Faith; nor every Act, but that only which justifieth. Now according to the diversity of opinions herein, such is the diversity of Definitions.

They who hold the Assent to be the Act of Justifying Faith, define it to be a firm and willing Assent to the truth of God in general, and to this truth in particular, that Christ is the Messiah and Saviour of the World. They who hold it to be the receiving of Christ, define it to be such an Act, as whereby we receive Christ in all his offices.

But not to trouble you with these. That which I will give you is this.

Faith is an Act of a regenerate person, whereby knowing, and assenting unto the Promises of God, and to this Truth in particular, that Christ is the Messiah or Saviour of the World, doth rest upon him for Justification, Sanctification, and consequently for Salvation.

Now to explain this Definition.

1. I say, that Faith is an Act, for we speak not of Faith in acta primum, as an habit infused, and implanted in us, but in acta secundo, as an Act whereby we are justified, for we are not justified by Faith as a habit, or as a grace inherent in us, but (as I said) by Faith as an Act, as it goeth over to Christ; as we see here the Promise is not made to the Habit, but to the Act of Faith. See that believeoth, &c. That is the first, I call it an Act, etc.

2. The subject person, so it is said to be an Act of a regenerate person, a man universally sanctified, regenerated and born again: for take Faith which way you please, for the Act or for the Habit, neither of them are before Regeneration.

The Act of Faith, that is not before the Habit of Faith, a thing must be in effect before it can be in operation, there must be a Habit of Faith within, before there can be the exercise of Faith without.

And this Habit of Faith is not infused before other graces, it being part of our inherent Sanctification, as infidelity is a part of our corruption, nor is it again infused alone, but together with the rest of the graces of God's Spirit, by which we are regenerated.
nerated. So that Faith is an Act of a regenerated soul.

A man cannot believe till his understanding be enlightened, and his will changed, and this is not by Grace.

Again, to believe is an Act of a living man, not of a soul dead in sin, and therefore the soul must first be indwelt with the life of Grace, before it can perform this living action.

Indeed we are said to be sanctified by Faith, and so it might seem that our Sanctification was a fruit of Faith, an effect of Faith, but we are not to understand this as meant of the first work of Sanctification, which is not acquired or put forth by us, but infused by God, together with Faith, as being a part of it: But it is meant of the second or further work of Sanctification, and fo Faith sanctifieth us, as it lends a hand to help forward, and to perfect our Sanctification, for fo Faith doth strengthen and increase Grace in us, by drawing down strength and life from Christ daily; and in this sense, as to their bene or melius esse, all our graces have a kind of dependance upon Faith, as a Mediator grace (as I may say) as our Mediator to our Mediator, in fetching down influence and strength, for the strengthening and increasing of grace in us.

And therefore by the way, it may bee a good Admonition to you, when you finde any weakness in your love, patience, or in any other grace, still to strengthen and increase Faith, whereby you may draw down from Christ strength to all the rest.

3 The third thing in the definition expresseth what this formal act is, and here we have 1 The essentiale Antecedens. 2 The essentiale consequens.

1 The essentiale Antecedens, essentially pre-requisite to the justifying Act, and this is knowing and assenting, which two I might separate for the better discovery of our adversaries error, in their implicit Faith, who hold that it is sufficient for some only to believe as the Church believeth, although they know not themselves any thing that they believe, to maintain which blind Faith, they say that Justifying Faith may bee without knowledge, nay, that it were better to bee defined by ignorance, than by knowledge.

But wee must not stand to answer every thing that commeth in the way, for so wee should stay long enough at the threshold.

I will therefore joyn these two both together, as essentially pre-requisite, whereby wee know and assent to our own miserable estate, the freeness of God promise, and grace which he hath tended to the soul in Christ, both essentiale Antecedents to justification, of which some expound that, John 6. 40, every one that believeth the Son and believeth on him, shall have everlasting life. Whereby, by seeing they lay is meant Christum prae dicatum videre, et agnosce re pro filio Dei, to see and acknowledge Christ the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, and indeed this must go before. It is gradus ad rem, though not gradus in re, it is a pre-requisite or preparatory
Of the Nature, and
tory to justifying Faith, but it is not justifying Faith, as in the
Generation of a man, the sensitive soul goeth before, and prepar-
et a fit organ for the infusion of the reasonable soul; and yet not
the sensitive, but the reasonable soul doth inform, so in the repara-
tion of man, historical faith doth precede, and make way for
the inducement of justifying Faith, and yet not the former but his
doctrine, as Calvin faith, a Vulgar knowledge and affront to
truth, doth join a man no more to God, than the sight of the Sun
doth lift a man to Heaven. Otherwise did this historical affair
justifying, then it as well as Justification should be proper only
to the Elect; so Justification is, Rom. 8. 30, but so is not an historical
affirmation, for that Simon Magus had, and other Reprobates may
have.

2. Essential constituents, or that formal Act whereby we are
justified, and that is owling or resting our selves upon Christ,
or trusting on him, for they are Synonymae, expressing the same
thing in different words.

And that this is the formal Act of justifying Faith, I refer my
self and you to what in this kind was said before. I here only say,
that that which is imputed for Righteousness, and by which we
are justified, that is the true and formal Act of justifying Faith.

But such a kind of believing is imputed for Righteousness, and
is that by which we are justified; so faith the Apostle, Rom. 4. 5,
to him who believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is
imputed to him for Righteousness, and Rom. 10. 10. 11. with the best
man believing unto Righteousness, and in the next verse, he interprets
that believing, by believing on him, for the Scripture saith,
whoever believeth on him, etc.

And therefore we conclude, so to believe is the justifying Act
of Faith.

4. The fourth thing in the Definition, is the fruit which cometh
in, or the end of this Act, and that is,

But here some may object,

Object. 1. First, there are many who do trust, and yet are not jus-
tified: many who profess that they do this act, but yet live in that
sins, as Balaam, &c. Therefore this is not the justifying Act.

Ans. I answer, That although every one say hee trusteth, yet
every one doth not truly trust, for there is a double Alliance or
trust. The one is a slight and superficial alliance, grounded upon
other foundation than a great apprehension, that it is good to be
saved by Christ, but yet so as neither to leave their old course
or imbrace a new. The other is a settled and grounded alliance
and so qualified, as that it is not to be found in any not truly ju-
stified, if it be, I shall yield the cause.
1. It is a holy Trust: *Jude*, v. 20. Build up one another in your holy faith; not as though holiness were required as an ingredient into faith, in the act of Justification, or giving us our first interest in Christ; but this I mean, by a holy trust, that it is such a trust as is accompanied with holiness in the root, and brings forth works of holiness in the fruit; such a trust as is accompanied with holiness in the heart, and declared in the holiness of our lives: For although it be *sides sola*, faith alone which justifieth, and gives us the first interest in Christ; yet it is not *sides quae sola et sola sola*; it is not a faith which is alone, but such a faith as is accompanied with holiness in the root, the graces of God’s Spirit, and holiness in the life.

The faith which doth justifie us, is not in formis, but formata; not a dead faith, but animated and quickened with grace and holiness, the whole man being sanctified.

2. It must be an unfeigned Trust: *1 Tim.* 1. 5. 2 *Tim.* 1. 5. There is a counterfeit and hypocritical Trust, such as never comes to God from love, but for shelter in a storm, *Psal.* 78. 34, 35, 36. When he slew them, then they sought him, and yet did but flatter, &c.

Or such a faith it is, that closeth not fully with Christ in all his Offices. They are content to have him as a Saviour, but not as a Lord; the privileges and dignities that come in by Christ, they are willing to own, but not the duties and services which he requires. They will commit themselves to Christ to save, when in trouble, then, Lord help; but to the Devil to serve, Who is Lord over us?

Whereas now a true faith, is as careful to do its services, as to partake of its privileges; if it throw itself into the arms of Christ, to save it, it will throw itself at the feet of Christ, to serve him, as Paul, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

3. It must be such a Trust, as ariseth from a believing disposition within: There must be a seed and habit of faith, before there can be an act of faith: Although the acts be discerned before the habits, yet there must be a habit, a believing disposition within, before we can act. I know there are many, who in case of danger, lying upon their deathbed, or some present wrack and difficulty, will make shift of doing this act of faith; but yet wanting this believing disposition within, like *Jonah’s Gourd,* or the untimely fruit of a woman, or the stony ground seed, having no root, soon withers, decays, and cometh to nothing. God respecteth not the act of faith, if it arise not from a believing disposition within, but God hath sometimes accepted of the believing disposition and desires of faith, when there hath not been strength enough to erect any vigorous act of believing. I believe, help my unbelief.

4. It must be a perfect Trust: *1 Pet.* 1. 13. Trust perfectly in the
Of the Nature, and
the grace revealed. Perfect, I lay, not in respect of the means and degrees of Truth, there is none such here: But yet perfect in respect of the nature of it; i.e. there must be a full carrying of the soul over to Christ, and a full rolling and resting on him. It cannot be meant of the perfection of degrees, for there can be no such absolute perfection, to which another degree may not be added; there is none so perfect in faith, but that he may be more perfect, none so strong, but that he may be stronger; although we cannot be more justified to day, than we were yesterday, in the sight of God. For we say, that Gratia remittit et justificat, the justifying grace of God admits of no degrees, is not capable of magis et minus. Yet the assurance of our justification, a man may be more assured of his Justification to day, than he was yesterday.

As justifying faith doth imply imperfection in the subject, so the faith itself, whereby we are justified is imperfect, whilst we are here, in respect of degrees.

But in the nature of it, it must be so perfect, that it carries the soul over wholly to Christ alone, rolling and resting on him, for an imperfect trust in this kind, is as good as nothing. He that doth not rest the full weight and freight of his soul on Christ, doth nothing for the matter of trust. It is not every faint folding and moving of the heart, nor every incomplete rolling, but such a full rest of the soul upon Christ, that if he fails us, we are sunk and undone forever.

As you know a man is said to lean upon a thing, not when he bears up himself only by his own feet, but when he rests a great part, if not the whole weight of his body, upon some thing or person else, so that if it fail, he falls: so thus it is to lean, to rest upon Christ, to commit the whole weight and freight of our souls to him, that if he fail me, I am undone, I am left for ever, I see I am in a miserable condition, I see he is an all-sufficient Saviour, I see that there is nothing but death in me, I see there is life enough in him, and he invites me to come over to him, he intends, he beareth, he promiseth, and therefore I will go over to him, I will cast my lot wholly on him, I will look no other way, therewill I trust, and if I perish, I perish: I will dye in his arms, I will dye believing. This indeed is that great act of faith, which entituleth us to Christ, and gives us an interest in him; even in the dusk of the morning the foul hath an interest. And therefore on the contrary, there is no readier way to be mistaken, and so to miscarry, than to trust equally to two strays, to trust to Christ, and to trust to our selves too. As there is no way whereby a man is likelier to fall, than to trust equally to two boughs, whereby the one is found, and the other rotten, whereas if one break, it is as bad as if both did, the man is sure to come to the ground; whereas had he pitched
pitched his whole weight on the found one only, he had been born up. So here, in leaning both on Christ and our selves, whereas if we commit our souls, and all their burdens to Christ only, if we fail, he sinks with us: We are sure to be upheld, the Promise, Covenant, the Oath of Christ, even Christ himself, and all would sink, if we fail.

If thy trust be thus qualified, I pronounce thee a justified person, no soul ever miscarried in a trusting way, it is such an act as doth engage all the Attributes of God, his Justice, Truth, Mercy, Power, and all to do us good.

Object 2. But I have put forth this act of faith, and yet, alas, I am not justified.

Answ. Thou sayest thou puts forth this act of faith, and thus qualified, and yet thou sayest thou art not justified. How knowest thou that? Thou sayest thou art not, because thou dost not know thou art, I know that will be the next. For thus poor hearts reason to their own discouragement, I want assurance of Justification, therefore I am not justified; I want that inward peace, and therefore fear my peace is not made with God. Though there be nothing more clear than this, that a man may have peace with God, and yet want the peace of this in himself; it is possible for a man to be justified, and yet want assurance of it within. Assurance, doth justifie in the Court of God; Assurance justifyeth in the Court of Conscience, to be justified is one thing, to be assured is another.

In the object all is sure, in the subject there may be much uncertainty: It is possible for a man to put forth the act of faith, yet, and to continue in so doing, and yet walk without peace, and apprehensions of his own safety; thy condition may be safe in the promise to the eye of faith, though not to thy self in the evidence of sense. Thy condition may be safe and secure, although thou for the present dost not apprehend, thy own safety, or the security of it. It is secure in the promise, in respect of God, though stormy and troubled to sense, in respect of our selves.

Thou must not therefore look for a clear day, and that the shower be over, as soon as thou hast taken shelter; nor for a calm, so soon as thou hast cast anchor: but thou must abide under the shelter, and ride at anchor, till the shower and storm be over, and wait till times of refreshment shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Godly security, and apprehensions of safety, do not ever presently attend the act of faith at the heels. Thou must stay the Lords leisure, and wait till all clouds and storms be blown over, till all doubts and fears shall vanish, Psal 57.1.

Light is shown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart: but, with the Husbandman, we must wait in patience, till the corn come up, and the crop come in.

The
Of the Nature, and

The storm doth not cease, as soon as the shipman hath cast anchor, the winds then may yet blow, and the tempest may be as strong, nay, it may be stronger than before; but the rock to which thou art fastened is sure, or if thy anchor hold, all is sure. Nothing shall hinder safety, though something may interrupt thy security to thine own apprehension.

To trust is the act of faith, but apprehended security is the fruit of believing, and therefore cometh not till afterward, it may be some moneths, may be some years, after long experience. Nay, it is not an inseparable fruit of believing, I mean, thy apprehended security is not: thou must possibly never in this life reach the apprehensions of thy security, and yet thy condition may be secure. It is secure (as I said) in the promises though not to temining, if thou dyest whilst thou ridest at Anchor, having thrown it out, and fastened it on Christ, yet thou dost in the ship and not in the sea; thou dost in the Covenant of Peace, and there is safety though the storm in this world may never cease. That which I would commend to thee, is to be much in self-purging, self-humbling, self-examination, trust much, and steadfastly to the end. Do as they did in that great storm, when neither Sun nor Stars were seen for many days, cast out anchor, and with for day, may cast out two anchors (that is fasten in a tempestuous night) trust and pray, that God would break into thy soul with a calm morning light, and mean while wait, and say, When will the day break, and these shadows, this darkness, this tempest fly away. My soul, will thou solely upon God, for my expectation is from him. Psalm 62:5.

Object 3. But (say some) To believe is an act of the understanding, and is nothing else, but an assent to the truth of Divine Revelations; which is expressed in Scripture, by receiving of Christ, John 1:12. --To as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God: even so as many as believe in his name. Where receiving of Christ (which, say they, is an act of the understanding assenting to this truth, That Christ is the Mediator, and Saviour of the world) is made all one with Believing. And so, Rsa. 53:11. --By his knowledge (Notitia Fui, not, fuit) By the knowledge of him, shall my righteous servants justify the many: which knowing is an act of the understanding also.

The like, John 17:3. --This is life eternal, to know thee, and all which places do report thus much, That Faith is an act of the understanding, not of the will. And to this they allledge the testimony of the Greek Fathers; which make Faith,アクセス: An undoubted assent to the Doctrine of Salvation, and to this Proposition in particular, That Christ is the Messiah. So that by all this, it is clear (unto them) that Faith is an act of the understanding, not of the will: But now Trust is an act of the will, and therefore cannot be the formal act of Justifying Faith. Answ.
Royalties of Faith.

Answ. Now, for Answr of this, we must know, that
1. To Believe: In the general, is no more, than to assert to the
truth of a Proposition for the Authority of the Speaker. It is no more
than an act of the understanding, whereby we assert to the truth of
Divine Revelations.

But we speak not of Faith in general, but of justifying Faith,
of that formal act of Faith, whereby we stand justified before God.
And here we say, that--Faith is not an act of the understanding
only, but of the mind also.

The first: It is too Low: Non pertinent ad justificationem; as
one faith, it reaches not so high as justification.
The second, brings the soul over to Christ, by an act of trust,
whereby a man is justified.

By the first, we do but Discover the Justifying-Cause, the Foun-
dain of Life, Christ himself.
By the latter, we throw our selves into this Fountain, and draw
water of life from him.

Hence one, none can be justified, but by union with Christ; and
the first union is by Faith.

By what Faith? The Speculative act of Faith?
No more: This doth not more unite the soul to Christ than the
flight of the Sun, doth draw a man up to heaven.
By what Faith then? But by this act of Trusting, Resting,
Lening, &c.

Hence Augustine--To believe in Christ, is by believing to go into
Christ, and to be incorporated into his body; which the Papists
themselves will not say, is done by a bare act of the under-
standing.

And therefore to pass this, and come to the places alleged:
Where the first is,

1 John 1. 12--As many as received him, to them he gave
power, &c. where, say they, by Receiving, is meant no more but
An act of the understanding, whereby they asserct to this; That he was
the Messiah.

For answer to this place, we say, That this word Receiving,
doth not only denote the understanding, but implies the will also.
Which will appear by this one Reason, among many.

That Receiving is to be understood, which is opposed to the
Sons not receiving of him. For, having said in Verse 11--He came
to his own, and his own received him not. Immediately is added--
But as many as did receive him, to them he gave power to become the
sons of God: So that the matter of Inquiry will be, How the Jews
did not receive him.

Was it then only in this, Their not assercttng that he was the
Messias? or, Rejecting him, and Refusing him for a Sa-
vior?

It could not be the former, Their non-assenting to the truth of
this.
this. That he was the Messiah: Though it was the ground why Sundry did not receive him; yet it was not the ground, why all did not receive him.

For we read, There were divers of the Scribes, and Pharisees, and Priests, who knew right well, that he was the Christ: For so much do the Husbandmen themselves confess, in the Parable, as Christ brings them in (Mat. 21. 38.) Saying—This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and seize upon his inheritance.

And how could our Saviour justly charge them with the Sin against the Holy Ghost, unless they had known him to be the Messiah? Mat. 12. 32. and wilfully rejected him against knowledge and conscience.

And how can any be said, To make shipwreck of Faith, which yet the Scripture faith some have done? 1 Tim. 1. 19. unless you will say, A man made shipwreck of that he never had; except he do historically believe, as Simon Magus, and others did; who did not feign a Faith in words, as Calvin's faith; but being overcome with the Majestic of the Gospel, did in a sort (f. historically) believe and acknowledge Christ the Author of Life and Salvation.

Nay, and if man did not historically believe, then all the sins committed against the Gospel, were only sins of Ignorance, and not against Knowledge. So that there were no sins in the Gospel against Knowledge: Nor, Now neither, if this bee granted.

And therefore, as their Non-Receiving of him, was not so much an Act of the Understanding, whereby they Assented not to this, That CHRIST was the Messiah: But rather an Act of the Will, whereby they refused him to bee their Saviour. As you see plainly expressed by CHRIST, Luk. 19. 14. wee will not have this man to reign over us. So Mat. 23. 37.

So that their Receiving of him was not a bare Act of the Understanding, whereby they Assented to this, That CHRIST was the Saviour: But an Act of the Will, whereby they chose him, rested and trusted upon him as a Saviour.

And therefore, seeing this Act of Receiving of CHRIST, is not an Act of the Understanding; but an Act of the Will embracing him, trusting on him: And that this Receiving is Believing, as the Evangelist faith.

Therefore To believe is to trust.

To the other places, Isa. 53. 11. & John 17. 3. where Faith seems to bee an Act of the Understanding. As -- By his Knowledge shall bee justified many. And -- This is eternal life. To know thee, &c.

Wee are to understand them Senseabstractionly: where part is set down for the whole: The whole nature of Faith being implied in those Phrases.

These Phrases are Hebraisms: In which language, words of
of Knowledge and Sense, do imply the Will and Affections. They do not only signify the All of the mind and Sense, but imply the Will and Affections too.

As you see, Psa. 1. 6. -- The Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous, That is, The Lord loveth, The Lord approveth of the way of the Righteous.

So where it is said. -- Depart from me, I know you not. That is, I love you not; I allow not of you, I approve you not.

And so may that place in Isa. 53. 11. bee interpreted. It doth not only signify the knowledge of the person, and benefits of Christ, but resting and trusting upon them, Such a Knowledge of Christ, as is mixed with Faith, and works our Will to accept of CHRIST, to trust in him. CHRIST, being so known, (as to bee Embraced, Rested upon, Trusted upon) shall justify many. Hee speaks of such a Knowledge of CHRIST as is joyned with Faith.

And, to the Testimony of the Fathers alledged. As wee will not Resolve our Faith into the Authority of any, though never so eminent in the Church: So, No Authority shall bear us down in this matter, if it bee not Consentaneous, and Agreeable to the Word of Truth. It is no matter what others have taught before us, but what CHRIST himself (who was before all) hath taught, who is Truth himself.

So that, seeing this is not manifested, I might refel them with the same ease, as they are alledged.

But, seeing Authority is stood upon; And I reverence Authority, when it is with God.

And that Authority doth make Faith nothing, but An All of the Understanding, whereby we assent.

Wee will in the same way overthrow that, by setting Authority against Authority, Weight against Weight: That, if nothing will bee said for us; so nothing may bee said against us. One may balance the other, if not weight it down.

Now, that it is An All of the Will also, let us hear Augustine; -- Fides sine Voluntate non potest esse. Et Fides in Credentium Voluntate consistit: Faith lies in the Will. Again. -- Voluntate unica credimus: Verily we believe with the Will. Credere non potest, nisi Volens. August. upon John 6. 44. God makes a man willing before he can believe. A man may receive the Sacrament against his Will; pray against his Will. But hee cannot believe against his Will, said Augustine.

Another, -- It were not Vertuoae to believe, if it were not voluntary. -- Ipsum velle credere, est essentiae Fides: To believe willingly, is essential to Faith.

Another upon Rom. 10. -- With the heart man believeth; upon which hee faith -- Signante dictis, Corde creditis, id est Voluntate: Hee faith remarkably, man believeth with the heart, that is, with the Will.
Of the Nature, and

To these I might alledge many more. But these shall suffice. By which you see, That Authority is more for us, than against us. But, leaving the Contestation, wee will come to the Issue, and conclude this.

And, To speak what I think. I conceive, that to beleive, is not an Act of the Will only: Nor an Act of the Understanding only: But an Act of the whole Soul.

It is so an Act of the Will, as the Understanding is folded up in it: And so an Act of the Understanding, as that the Will and Affections are joyned with it.

Hence, by some it's call'd (Actus Complicatus) An Act, wherein many Acts are fold up. An Act of the Understanding, An Act of the Will.

And it's not Absurd to mee, but very fit to Say, That That, whereby the whole Soul is justified, pardoned, purified, is an Act of the whole Soul.

As the Apostle faith. With the Heart man believeth to Righteousness. So that, In Intellecto habet Inium; In Voluntate Complementum: It begins in the Understanding, it is compleat in the Will and Affections.

All that I know of moment against this, will bee this, That we shall set Faith in diverse faculties, which is improper.

Now, for the Answer, or removing this, wee say

1. That definition of Faculties is a Philosophical Opinion, and not received by all. So that the Will and the Understanding are two distinct Faculties, is an Opinion not received by all. Many there are that make them more Notional than Real: As the East, West, North and South in the Heavens. Not that there are such things, but that such things are feigned, for our clearer Understanding.

It is thought by many of good worth, that Animam intelligit in intellectu: Eliget in Voluntate, &c. That there's no such distinction of Faculties: But that the same Soul doth understand in the Understanding: Will in the Will: Both understand, Will, Love, and do all.

And there's Scripture for it, where wee read all these Acts attributed to the Soul it self: As namely an Understanding Heart, A willing mind, &c. And therefore seeing it is a bare Philosophical Opinion, and not received by All, This will not overthrow, nor strengthen any Divine Truths.

2. Though this were true, That there were distinction of Faculties: yet, I say, Making of Faith an Act of the whole Soul, of the Understanding, Will and Affections: There's no Necessity will follow thereupon, of planting it in diverse and distinct Faculties.

Why may it not bee Planted and Subjected in the Heart? which is the proper seat of Faith, as well as of other Graces. As
Royalties of Faith.

As others, who have made The Formal Aff of Faith, a willing Assent, which is both An Aff of the Will and Understanding, to avoid the seating of the Habits in diverse Faculties, have placed it in the Mind; which, (lay they) comprehends the Understanding and the Will:

So we here, To avoid the like, do seat it more properly in the Heart. And therefore that absurdity of seating Faith in diverse Faculties will not follow on us. Though we say, That this Aff of Faith, whereby we are justified, bee such an Aff, wherein many other Affs are folded up: The Understanding assenting, The Will yielding, &c.

Object. 4 But to believe, is to be assured. And therefore it is not to trust.

Ans. I say, That to believe, is not to be assured. And to be assured, is not to believe. Faith is not Assurance, Nor is Assurance Faith, as many have held.

I will not trouble you with the Controversie; only I will infer these things.

1 If Assurance were the Aff of Faith, whereby we are justified: Then where there’s no Assurance, there’s no Faith. This were an hard Consequent. Nay, then, VVhichever lives and dies without Assurance, cannot bee saved. They who live and dye without Faith cannot bee saved; And if Faith were Assurance: Then, Whenever lived and dyed without Assurance could not bee saved: Which far bee it from me to hold.

2 That which is a Consequent of Justifying Faith, is not Justifying Faith. This is plain.

But Assurance is a Consequent of Justifying Faith. It is that which follows it.

1 Sometimes in order of Time.

2 Always in order of Nature.

1 Sometimes in order of Time, 1 John 5, 13. --These things have I written unto you, that believing on the Name of the Son of God, that you might know, that you have Eternal life: where you see Believing goes before, and Knowing or Assurance follows after. It is not contemporary with Faith, but follows it.

2 Always in order of Nature. As we say, The Truth of a Proposition is ever in order of Nature, before the Knowledge of the Truth of it, Things must bee in ESTATE: Things must bee, before they can bee known to bee: So there must bee pardon of sins, before there can bee Assurance of pardon. A man must bee Justified, before he can bee assured hee is Justified. Justification must needs go before the apprehension of Justification.

Now, that which apprehends Justification, is not Justifying Faith, but follows it: For Apprehension follows Justification. No man can truly apprehend himselfe to bee Justified, till hee bee Justified.
But Justifying Faith is in nature before justification.
And therefore, unless we should say, that That which follows, is That which goes before; we cannot say, that that which apprehends Justification, is Justification: And by Consequence, Assurance is not that Faith which Justifies.

3 Again, If to believe were to bee assured that wee are Justified, and our sins pardoned: Then it will follow; God commands us to believe an untruth.

Why, How will that follow?
Thus, Because God commands every one to believe, 1 Joh. 3.22;
- This is his Commandment, that wee believe on the name of his Son JESUS CHRIST.

Now, If to believe were to bee assured, wee are Justified, and our sins pardoned: Then God commands to believe an untruth: That our sins are pardoned, before they are pardoned: That wee are Justified, before wee are Justified.

Nay, Such as are Reprobate, and shall never bee pardoned: If he believe, were to bee assured of pardon: Then, I say, God commands them to bee assured of pardon: And so commands to believe a lye, an untruth.

There is
1 The Act of Faith, and
2 The Fruit of Faith.

The Act of Faith is, To cast our selves on CHRIST, to rest, a trust, on him.

The Fruit of Faith, is Justification, pardon of sin, Reconciliation:

Now God commands no man to believe the Fruit of Faith, until he hath done the Act of Faith. Hee commands no man to believe hee hath an interest in the Promise, till hee hath performed the condition of the Promise.

The Promise runs upon this condition. Hee that believes, shall receive remission of sins, Act. 10.43. Act. 16.31.

To the first Act of Faith, All men indeed are eyed under pain of damnation, Mar. 16.16. Joh. 3.18. The World shall bee condemned for unbelief. And there's no condemnation, but upon breach of some Commandement. And therefore all men are eyed to do the first Act.

But now to the latter, none are eyed, but such as have done the former.

The first is the condition of the Promise: Or, The Duty. The second is the Benefit, or Fruit of the Promise.

So that wee conclude this: That Assurance is not the Act of Faith whereby wee are Justified before God: But yet, That whereby wee are Justified in our selves: in the Court of Conscience.

Wee are said to bee Justified in three Courts.
Royalties of Faith.

1. In foro Dei: In God's Court.
2. In foro Conscientiæ: in Court of Conscience.
3. In foro Communi: in the Court of men.
4. In the Court of God, It is not Assurance: But Faith, Assurance, faith, that doth justify.
5. In the Court of Conscience, It is not Faith, but Assurance which justifies. Where the testimony of the first Proposition is the undeniable Word of God; be it that believes shall be saved. The testimony or Assumption is the Testimony of our own spirit, with that word. The testimony is the verdict, and Testimony of the SPIRIT of God, testifying with our spirit, according to the word, whereby we have Assurance.
6. In the Court of men: It is not Faith, nor Assurance, that justifies, but works.

Object. 5 But you will say, If Assurance bee not the All whereby we are justified, Because it is a Fruit of Justifying Faith: Much less can Trust bee the All of it, because it is the Fruit of Assurance.

That which is the Fruit of Assurance, cannot bee the All of Justifying Faith.

But this Trust and Assurance is a fruit of Assurances; Assurance is the cause, and works Assurance as the Effect. Therefore Trust or Assurance cannot bee the Act of Justifying Faith.

A. v. Assurance is twofold
1. Principiorum, of Principles.
2. Conclusionum, of Conclusions.
The first, The Assurance of Principles is no more but such a grounded, undoubted Assurance as Believes the main Proposition of the Gospel: as, -- Hee that believes shall bee saved.
The second, The Assurance of Conclusions, is such an Assurance as is necessarily deduced from the word, by Application, in a practical Syllogism; after this manner.

Hec that believes shall bee saved.

But I believe.

Therefore I shall bee saved.
The first is, The Assurance of the Object.
The second is, The Assurance of the Subject.
The first, of the thing believed.
The second, of the believer.
The first is, The Assurance of the general Proposition -- whoever believes shall bee saved; which is called -- ἐν πίστει τῆς ἰδίας, 2 Cor. 2. The full Assurance of Understanding, or Knowledge, which is the Perfection of Assent to the Truth of the Gospel, touching CHRIST a Saviour.
The second is, πεπιστεύκεις πίστις, The Assurance of Faith, Heb. 10. 22. And that is, when we are assured, CHRIST is OUR SAVIOUR.

The first goes before the Act of Trust.
Of the Nature, and

The second follows the Act of Trust.

And this Act of trusting and resting upon CHRIST, is the ground of such Assurance.

Object. But you will say, How shall we rest upon CHRIST for Salvation, unless we be first assured of Salvation by him?

Answer. Indeed, unless we know CHRIST to be the only Saviour, we cannot rest upon him for Salvation. But to say, A man cannot rest upon him for Justification and Salvation, except he know he has already Justified, and shall be saved; I see little sense for that.

May not a man trust upon his friend, who hath engaged himself, and promised to do such a thing for him, until he knows it were already done for him? So here. May not the Soul rest upon CHRIST, who hath promised pardon and forgiveness to them that trust on him, except it first knew, that CHRIST had already pardoned and forgiven him?

The ground of this mistake, I conceive to arise from one of these two grounds.

1. That they take TRUST for ASSURANCE; or
2. That they take TRUST for a FRUIT of ASSURANCE: And so all one with HOPE.

Now, for the clearing of the first, you must know, that TRUST doth signify these two things.

1. Ipsum Actum Inmitendi, the very act of intending, &c.
2. Consequens effectum Fidei, the consequent effect of Faith.

It signifies that very act of Leaning, Resting, Relying on CHRIST, which is properly the act that Justifies.

Sometimes it signifies, the consequent effect of Faith, as full assurance, and persuasion, the truly sense of pardon, and remission of sins.

But when you speak of that act of Trust, which Justifies, we mean not Trust in this second Acceptation. For this is not Justifying Faith: but Fidei Justificantis Fides: the Daughter of Justifying Faith, which comes after much sweat and pains in the work of God, trial and experience of our selves, and truth of our Graces.

But we speak of Trust in the first Acceptation, the resting and relying on the soul upon CHRIST.

The former we say is the act of Justifying Faith: and propriaee actus Fidei justificantis: the most proper act of Justifying Faith.

The latter we say is the fruit of the former Trust, and Assurance, both set down by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 1. 12. -- I Know (Faith the Apostle) whom I have believed: & veritatem: whom I have trusted, or committed my soul unto. There is the first act of Faith. -- And I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to his trust, to eternal life. There's the second act of Trust. Hee will be all this to mee, which I have trusted to him for.
Royalties of Faith.

1. I know | There was Hystorical Faith, Assent.
2. Whom I have trusted or committed my soul to. Therewas justifying Faith.
3. I am persuaded. There was the fruit of it.

To the first Act there concurs,

1. A discovery of our own emptines.
2. A Discovery of CHRIST'S fulnesse for justifiction.
3. A casting of the soul upon him, for justicification and salvation: Going out of our selves, and casting our souls upon Christ.

To the second Act, there is required,

1. Not only a knowledge, that hee is a Saviour.
2. But also, a knowledge that hee is My Saviour, upon whom I trust, or I am persuaded of salvation by.

The second mistake is, That they take Trust for a fruit of assurance. And so were but Hope. Proper Spem Roboratam: for strengthened Hope.

Now, That this act of Trust, which wee make justifying Faith, is not an act of Hope, but doth differ from Hope, or that alliance which they make Hope strengthened, in this,

1. That Hope looks to the end, which is Salvation: But this act of Trust, looks to the means, which brings to the end, and that is Christ.
2. The act of Hope is to expect: But the act of Trust is to lean, and rest.
3. The Object of Hope is, Bonum Futurum, a Future Good: But the object of Trust is, Bonum Presens, a Present Good.

This act of Trust doth rest upon Christ, Non per modum expctantis, sed per modum posidentis, not by way of expectation, but by way of possession. As — Hee that beleevs in the Son hath life. It is not said, — Hee shall have life; but — Hee hath life: not in Spe, but in Re, not in Hope only, but in Hand: The life of righteousness, and justification in hand: The life of Glory and salvation in hope.

And thus much shall serve for the first thing, what Faith is. In which, I hope, most of the controversy is over.

2. Wee now come to the second, That Faith is the only requisite, whereby wee should bee justified, and saved.
I shall now need to stand long on it.

1. Union, and Communion with Christ is requisite to justification and salvation. There was no way whereby we should bee justified, whereby wee should bee saved: But only by virtue of our union, and communion with Christ.

1. No other way, but by virtue of our Union with Christ. In our selves wee were dead Branches, and grew upon a dead stock: and there was no help, nor hope for us, till wee were cut off from our own stocks: the stock of nature, And were ingrafted into Christ,
Of the Nature, and

Christ, who is the Stock of Life. Hence the Apostle. — Hee that hath the Son hath Life; and hee that hath not the Son, hath not Life. Hee that is united and ingrafted into Christ, hath Life; the Life of Justification here, and shall have the Life of Glorification hereafter. — But hee that hath not the Son — Hee, who is not united to Christ, hath not Life: Nor the Life of Justification here: Nor the Life of Glorification hereafter. So that you see, there is no Life of Life, or Justification, except wee bee united to Christ, who hath all Life in him. There's nothing but death in the World, out of him: And there's no way to have Union with Christ, but by Faith, which is one bond of our Union with Christ.

It is Faith that unites us to Christ, as Members to the Head. And being Members of Christ, God pardons us.

If a Malefactor had committed treason against a King, and were adjudged to lose his hand, or his eye. If hee could now make his Hand, or his eye which hee were to lose, to become the Hand, or the eye of the Kings Son: Hee should bee spared; hee should not lose them: They were the hands and the eyes of the Kings Son: And the King would spare them for his Sons sake: So here.

Wee were guilty of Treason: were condemned to death. Now this is the dexterity of Faith, to make our selves to bee Members of Christ: It is Faith that doth ingraft us into Christ, whereas before wee grew upon dead stocks: now being ingrafted into the Stock of Christ, the Stock of Life, wee have Life derived to us.

It is Faith that marries us to Christ; and being married to him, hee anwers all our debts.

It is by Faith wee put on Christ, by Faith wee are built on Christ, as the House on its Foundation.

And therefore, seeing there is no way to bee saved, but by our Union with Christ. And there is no Union but by Faith. Therefore it follows, Faith is the great requisite whereby wee must be saved. That for Union.

2. For our Communion with Christ, Faith is necessary. There is no way to bee saved, but by vertue of communion with the Righteousness of Christ.

1 Not by our own, any done by us, or wrought out of our selves. This is too short: — A menitrous ragge. A ragge, and not able to cover us, as a Garmen, too narrow for us. Wee cannot weave a web of Righteousness of our own, able to cover us; wee shall but add the sin to sin.

2. Not by Righteousness of Saints, or Angels.

1. Theirs is incommunicable. There's no way, whereby wee should have communion with it. They are not of our Nature, to wit, the Angels. There must bee an union of Nature, before there can bee communion. Nay: But wee are incommunicable: yet it were insufficient, It is but a finite Righteousness, and therefore
not able to answer an infinite debt.

If the least sin did lie upon the back of the tallest Angel in Heaven, it were not enough, All the Righteousness hee had would not bee enough to save him from Hell. And therefore theirs can do us no good.

To make short of it.

There's no way to bee justified, and saved, but by Communion with the Righteousnes of Christ: the Righteousnes of his active and passive obedience: Obedience Legis, Obedience Crucis.
1. The one, In Preciun.
2. The other, In Premium.

By the one, answering Gods condemning Justice.
By the other, answering Gods commanding Justice.

By the one, satisfying his vindictive Justice, whereby he did bear our scourges.
By the other, answering Gods remunerative Justice, whereby he did perform our services.

Now there was no way to have Communion with this Righteousness of Christ, but by Faith.

Faith gives us Union with Christ. And by vertue of our Union, we have Communion with him.

As, by vertue of our oneness with the first Adam, His sin was made ours: So, by vertue of our oneness with the second Adam, His Righteousness is made ours.

Faith makes us Members of Christ. Faith unites us to Christ. And, by vertue of our Union with him, as the Members with the Head, we have derived from him Life and Spirit, Sense and Motion.

Wee have communion with him, In his Wisdom to direct us; In his Righteousness to justify us; In his Holiness to sanctifie us; In his Redemption to glorifie us. -- Christ is made to us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

Faith ingrafts us into Christ, as the Branch into the Vine. And by vertue of our ingrafture into him, wee draw forth Life, Strength, and nourishment from him, who is our root.

By Faith wee put on Christ, and so have communion with the Robes of his Righteousnes, whereby wee stand justified in Gods sight.

As Jacob got the blessing, by his elder Brothers apparel: So wee by the Robes of Christ, which are called eXarapholos the äpikos: The Righteousness of Saints.

By Faith wee are married to Christ, and by vertue of this marriage, wee have communion with all his Riches, as the Wife hath with her Husbands Estate: And Christ hath communion with all our debts.

So that you see, Faith is that Grace, which gives us union with Christ. And, by vertue of that union with him, we have communion with all of Christ.
It gives us communion with the Righteousness of Christ. He is the Lord our Righteousness. And by Faith, it is as truly ours, to save us, as his, to glorifie him.

It gives us communion with the Life and Spirit of Christ: with the death and sufferings of Christ; with the merits and victories of Christ; with the priviledges and immunities of Christ, as Adoption, Son-ship, &c.

It gives us communion with his Wisdom, to direct us, with his Power, to protect us, with his Mercy, to save us.

So that, As David said, -- God hath sworn in his Holiness -- He had made a Promise to him. And therefore hee faith -- I will rejoice. I will divide Shechem, and wete out the Valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine: so the soul may say, God hath said, This Soul mine I have given you, Isa. 9. 6. And therefore Christ is mine.

3. Why God should make choice of this Grace for our Justification?

Not to say anything of this, which might bee one Reason, That the Remedy might answer the Fall. The Fall was by unbelieving. As you see, Hee gave credit to the Serpent, and not to God. So God would make our Recovery by Faith. But this wee pafs.

Wee read in Scripture of four grounds, wherefore God made choice of this Grace for the Justification of a finner.

1. That Justification might bee of Grace,
2. That the Promise might bee sure,
3. That it might bee to all the seed,
4. That no man might boast.

The three former you shall read, Rom. 4. 16. The last, Eph.

2. 9.

1. For the first, God made choice of this, that wee should have Justification by way of believing, That it might bee by Grace. If it had been by any other way, by reason of any thing wrought in us, or by us; If it had been by Desir, not of Grace, of Wages, not of Mercy, of Debt; not of Favour: If God had promised Justification upon any work of ours; had told us, we must bring so much Humiliation, so much Repentance, so much Breakenfe of Spirits, so much Grace, so many Prayers, Alms-deeds: and then wee should bee Justified: It had not then been of Grace, not of Free-Mercy.

And therefore God, For the advancement of his Free-Grace and Free-Mercy, that wee might cry out with them in Zech. 4. 7. Grace, Grace. That wee might see, admire, adore, the Riches of his Grace, The height, and depth, and breadth and length of his Free-Mercy. Therefore hath God chose this way for the Justification of a finner.

That the Promise might bee sure. If it had been any other way, the Promise could not have been sure.

That which makes the Promise sure, is this.

1. That it is not founded upon any thing in us. If it were, it could
Royalties of Faith.

could never be sure. If there were any thing besides the breast of God to bee a bottom and foundation for the Promise, it could never be sure.

2. That it is not performed, nor contrived for any thing done by us; but out of his Free-Mercy and Love. If indeed, there had been anything in us, which should have been the ground of the performance of this Promise to us: wee had been lost long ago.

If God had put us upon the condition of Obedience, and had given us Grace, as hee did Adam: yet the Law is strict, requiring an exact, Personal, Universal, and constant obedience: And every failing would have lost us, undone us for ever.

But now, When our Righteousness is in Christ, A Righteousness not wrought by us, but wrought by Christ himself: And freely given to us upon the alone condition of Faith, This makes our condition sure.

3. That the Promise might bee to all the seed, not to them of the Law only, but to them who were strangers to the Law of God.

God had made a promise to bee the Father of Abraham, and of his seed.

Now this Promise could not have belonged unto us, If God had not provided a way, that we might bee of his seed. Now, according to the flesh, this was impossible: That we should bee of Abrahams seed; and therefore by consequence, we could have had no interest in this Promise.

And therefore God hath made Faith to bee that Grace, which makes us spiritually to bee the Seed of Abraham, that to the Promise might belong to us.

If God had made the Law the condition of the Promise: Or, if hee had made the Law and Faith together: yet then wee had never come to bee of Abrahams Seed: Because wee were not under the Law.

But God having made Faith the Grace, which doth make us the Children of Abraham. Hence is the Promise to us, as to his seed: not to that part which is of the Law, but to that part which is of the Faith of Abraham — who is the Father of all that believe.

Though wee are never so far from the Law, and the kindred of Abraham in the flesh, yet God hath provided security for us, that wee might bee his Children, and bee inheritors in the Promise, which is, by Faith.

Therefore God chose Faith, that the Promise might bee to all the seed, not to the flesh only; for then we should not bee of his seed, but to the Spirit.

4. The fourth Reason is, Ephes. 2. 9. That no man might boast: That is, That no man might have cause to glory in himself, or rejoice in himself.

Now
Of the Nature, and

Now, if it had been by any other way, by anything done by us, we should have gloried. And therefore God chose this way, that we might glory alone in him, 1 Cor. 1:30, 31. That no flesh might glory in his presence: Christ is made Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, that he, that glories, might glory in the Lord, Isa. 45:24, 25. In me ye shall have Righteousness and Strength, and in me ye shall glory.

God is exceeding chary of his Glory. As in our Salvation, he aimed at the manifestation of his Glory: So he hath had care to bring it about in such a way wherein there may be the Preservation of his Glory.

Now, if God had pitcht it in any other way, than in the way of believing, his Glory could not have been preferred: we would have been sharers with God; we should have divided the spoils of Glory with him.

And therefore God chose this, which is

A mean Grace in itself. And so his Glory shall not be obscured, but more perspicuous, as 1 Cor. 1.

Nay, such a Grace, as doth throw a man out of himself: empit a man of himself, and casts him upon another. It is such a Grace, as makes the Soul all in another, nothing in itself: Rich in another, poor in itself; found in another; lost in itself: Saved by another, damned by itself. - I live (faith Paul) yet not I, but Christ in me, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, or Faith in the Son of God, Gal. 2:20.

It is such a Grace as makes a man stand upon another's bottom: live by another's life; Rich by another's riches: clothed by another Apparel: fed by another's meat. A poor beggarly grace in itself. And therefore God chose this.

It is such a Grace, as gives God all the Glory: As it was said of Abraham -- He gave glory to God by believing, Rom. 4. Hee gave glory to his Truth, to his Power, to his Wisdom, to his Mercy: So this Grace in the Justification of a sinner, it gives God all the glory, it robs him not of any piece of Glory, it gives him the glory of his Mercy, of his Truth. - He that believeth, putteth his faith, that God is true. It sets up God, makes him Alpha and Omega, the beginner and finisher of all. And therefore it being a Grace that honours God above all, therefore God honours it above all other, making it the Instrument of Justification.

And therefore, my Brethren, if ever you would have pardon from him, give him the glory of his own Free-Grace.

Here is the controversy between God and man, to this day. God is willing to save us, if we will give him his Glory: But our proud hearts will not yeeld to that, That God should be all to all.

Every man would willingly bee something in himself, stand upon his own bottom. God is willing to give us a Righteousness wrought
Royalties of Faith.

wrought out for us: But wee would have a Righteousness of our own making. Wee love the Spiders motto, — Mihi soli debo. To owe nothing to any, but to our selves.

Wee are too like that proud Papist, who said, — Hee would not have Heaven. Gratia, wee would merit it.

God is willing, to give us objective worthines, worthines in another, in Christ. But wee would have subjective worthines: A worth in our selves. But this will not bee allowed. God will have us poor in our selves, empty in our selves, cast out of our selves, unbrowned of our selves. Hee will have us poor, and blind, and naked, before hee will bestow mercy on us.

God will not have us bring our penny to his purchase: One dram to this fulness; one shred to this garment of Christ. Hee will have it by Faith, that so it might bee of Grace; that not wee, but hee might have all the Glory.

This is the Reason I am persuaded of the enlargement of our troubles of spirit, and breakings. Because wee will not let God be all in all: wee will not let God have all the Glory. Glad we should bee, to see sharers in our own Salvation. Glad, to do something. We would have it of Debt, not of Grace, of Works, not of Faith, of Merit, not of Mercy.

God would forgive us our debts, but wee would pay them; wee are leath to bee proclaimed Bankrupts, unable to pay. God would willingly cloathe us, but wee would make a garment of our own.

God would give us Heaven, but wee would deserve it.

God would give us pardon upon believing, that so wee might have glory in our selves, but in him: But wee would have it by way of working. That all, or at least something, might bee attributed to our selves.

But you see, God hath aimed at the Magnifying of his own Glory: and therefore hee hath chosen Faith, to bee the Grace whereby wee should bee Justified. And if ever you would bee justified, if ever you would have Glory, give him Glory.

4. The fourth thing at first propounded to bee cleared, was, how Faith justifieth?

For the clearer answer whereto, wee will lay down these two Distinctions.

1. Faith may be considered,

1. Either formally, as an inherent Grace of God in us.

2. Or instrumentally, as that whereby wee receive Christ. In the first sense, it hath nothing to do with Justification.

The Papist, because wee deny Faith to justifie in respect of its own worthines, say that we make it vitalum sine re, as it were a matter of nothing, whereas in respect of Justification, wee acknowledge it the only instrument, and that is much to bee said of it.

2. Faith is considered,
1. Either absolutely as a Habit, or Act of ours.

2. Or Relatively, as it hath relation to Christ, and makes us one with him.

In the former sense again it hath nothing to do with Justification, but in the second sense as it is related to Christ, and brings us over to Christ, so it is said to justify us, because it brings us to him, by whom we are justified, Acts 13:39. By him (speaking of Christ) all that believe are justified, by him, but not by faith absolutely, but only as relating to him.

Indeed we are said to live by Faith, as well as by Christ, Gal. 2:20. to have remission of sins by Faith, Acts 10:43. as well, by Christ, Ephes. 1:7. to bee justified by Faith, Romans 3:28. 3 as well, as by Christ, Isa. 53:11. to have peace with God by Faith, Romans 5:1. as well as by Christ, Col. 1:20. to bee sanctified by Faith, Acts 15:9. as well as by Christ, 1 Cor. 1:30. to overcome the World by Faith, 1 John 5:4, 5, as well as by Christ, John 3:33.


But now you must consider that none of these are spoken of Faith absolutely considered, as either an Habit or Act of ours, but only relatively, as Faith brings us to Christ, and makes us one with him, by whom alone we are justified, adopted, sanctified &c. for between Christ and Faith there is such a Relation, that Justifying Faith is called the Faith of Christ, or Faith in Christ or Faith in his blood, so again the Righteousness of Christ, by which we are justified, is called the Righteousness of Faith.

And so wee conclude this point, that Faith doth not justify absolutely considered in itself, but relatively, as it hath relation to Christ the object, and as it brings the soul over to him, makes us one with him, by whom wee are justified, have remission of sins, salvation, &c.

5 What are the Royalties and Priviledges of Faith?

First Royalty.

1. Faith is an heart-clearing Grace.

When we are under the guilt of sin, Faith doth justify us and it is one of the Royalties of Faith, one of the Peculiar of Faith, that Faith alone doth justify: As the Apostle, Romans 3:28. And therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by Faith, without the deeds of the Law. And this Faith clears the heart of the guilt of sin.

1. By procuring a sufficient Pay-master, Christ, who hath satisfied God's Justice to the full, answered all Bills, Bonds, par
our debt to the utmost farthing. Hence, John 16, 10, -- I will send the Spirit, and he shall convince the world of Righteousness, because I go to my Father, and you shall see me no more; -- That is, he shall convince the world, That Perfect Righteousness is wrought for them. That God's Justice is compleatly satisfied. But how shall we know that? -- Because -- I go to my Father, and you shall see me no more; -- That is, you shall see me no more in this kind, you shall see me no more to come to suffer, or satisfy for sin; for I have done that already, I have compleatly satisfied God's Justice for sin. And therefore you shall see me no more in this kind.

Indeed, if Justice had not been compleatly satisfied; If there had been but one sin upon the file unsatisfied for, wee should have seen him again. Heaven could not have held him. But now seeing he is gone, and wee see him no more an humbled, a suffering Saviour; this shews all is done.

To this I might add, Col. 2, 14. -- Hee hath blotted out the hand writing of Ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and hath taken it out of the way, and nailed it to his Cross; -- where, by hand-writing of Ordinances, is not meant the Ceremonial-Law only, but whatever did binde us over to the Curse; whatever did binde us over to death. -- All which Christ hath removed by his death.

And the Apostles Gradation is observable here. In the 13th verse hee had set down, that our sins were forgiven. -- Yes, but that is not enough, may some say. Though the debt bee discharged, yet the writing is to shew. -- No, faith the Apostle. The hand-writing of Ordinances is blotted out. -- But, may some say again, it is not so blotted out, so defaced, but it may bee read, and put in suit again, a new quarrel may arise. No, faith the Apostle, -- It is taken away. Oh! But (you will say) it is not so taken away, but as it is laid aside for a time: it may be produced hereafter. No, faith the Apostle, there is no fear of that -- it is nailed to the Cross; it is torn in pieces, it shall never be seen again, never shall a new quarrel arise for the same. Christ hath not only paid the debt, but canceled, and torn in pieces whatever might witness or testify against us.

If a Debtor did know his Debt were answered, yet if hee have his Bonds and Bills uncall'd in, hee is still in fear: But, when hee hath all things which acknowledged his debt, crossed, torn in pieces, made utterly void; then hee is safe, hee knows there is a discharge.

Why Christ did not only discharge our debt, but defaced and abolished all such things, as made acknowledgement of our debt; hee left nothing, that might witness against us untaken away.

And this is the first way whereby Faith doth clear us, viz. by producing, and bringing forth Christ, who hath cleared all, who is called a Surety, Heb. 7, 22. Not only in passing his word for us, but paying the Debt for us, answering all, and cancelling all, that was
was against us. But Faith doth not clear us only by producing of a sufficient Pay-master, but

2. By making us one with Christ, by which this payment is ours, is all for us. So that we may say with Ambrose -- *Pro me nati
pro me vivit, pro me moriamur.* Faith will say, hee was born for mee, hee loved for mee, hee dyed for mee: for mee hee fulfilled all Righteousness, satisfying both Gods Commandings, and his Condemning Justice, doing my services. And why hee is called, *Jehovah Tsickem.* *The Lord our Righteousness:* by Faith having communion with this Righteousness, as if it were our own, a Righteousness wrought by us. Hence *Jeb 33, 26* -- *God shall render to many his Righteousness,* that is the Righteousness of Christ, which is called ours by Faith, and is as much ours to justifie and save us, as His, to glorifie him. Hence the Apostle, *Rom. 8, 1.* -- *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ,* that is, to such as are believers: for they are all one. And why no condemnation? They are sinners as well as others. It's true, they are. And therefore the Apostle doth not say -- *There is nothing worthy of condemnation in them,* but -- *There is no condemnation:* Because Christ hath taken away the guilt, and condemning power of sin, hee hath answered all our debts, canceled all Books, satisfied for all our sins, which did bind us over to condemnation, and wrath of God. So that we may say, -- *There is no condemnation to such.*

As for the Law, it cannot condemn us, because wee appeal from the law to the Gospel, from the Court of Justice, to the Court of Mercy: So that the Law hath nothing to do with us.

And, as for the Gospel, that cannot condemn us, because we are Believers. The Gospel doth not require what sinners we have been, what sins we are guilty of: but whether the appealer do believe, whether wee believers or no, which being once cleared, wee are justified.

You see this in the poor Publican. Hee was dragged forth into the Court of Justice, and was there cast: Yet the sentence took no hold of him, because of his appeal to the Throne of Grace, the Court of Mercy, where by Faith pleading nothing but Gods Mercy, and his own misery -- *God be merciful to mee a sinner:* hee went away justified, faith the Text, *Luk. 18, 14.*

And this is the first Royalty of Faith.

It is an Heart-clearing-Grace, which it doth, by producing one, who hath cleared all, and by making us one with him, in all he hath done, giving us an interest in all.

Second Royalty.

2. Faith is an Heart-clearing-Grace, an Heart-purifying, and purging-Grace. Hence *Afr. 13, 9.* it is said -- Their hearts were purified by Faith. Faith opens a way for a stream of blood to run through the soul, whereby the soul is washed, not from the guilt,
of sin only, but from the filth of sin also. -- The Blood of Christ doth cleanse us from all sin, not only from the guilt, but from the filth of sin. Hence the Apostle: -- If the blood of Bulls and Goats, and the ashes of an Heifer sprinkled upon the unclean did purify the Flesh: How much more shall the Blood of Christ (who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot) purge and cleanse our Consciences from all dead works, to serve the living God? Heb. 9. 13, 14.

And Faith doth cleanse the Heart,
1. Argumentatively.
2. Operatively.

1. Argumentatively. 
By way of Argument, where in Faith takes up Arguments,
1. From God.
2. From our selves.
3. From God, and that.

1. From his Nature. Hee is an holy God: and therefore hee will have an holy People. A pure God: and therefore hee will have a pure People. Hence Lev. 11. 44. -- To shall be Holy, for I am Holy. The like, Lev. 19. 2. And Peter urges the same, 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. -- As he which hath called you is Holy: so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation: For it is written, bee ye Holy, for I am Holy.

2. From his Mercies,
1. In Redeeming us.
2. In calling us.
3. In Justifying us.
4. In promising to glorifie us.

1. In Redeeming us. Hath Christ dyed for mee, and shal not live to him? Hath hee shed his Blood for mee, that I should bee holy and clean? And shall I delight in uncleannesse, and filthiness? was hee slain for mee? and shall I delight in sin? Hath hee suffered so much to purifie mee? and shall I bee unclean still? hath hee done so much to wash mee? and shall I bee filthy still?

2. In calling us, 1 Pet. 1. 75, 16. -- As he which hath called you is Holy: so bee you Holy in all manner of Conversation: It is an holy Calling, 2 Tim. 1. 9. that calleth us to Holines, and Faith, purged ear, that hearkeneth to that call.

3. In Justifying us. Hath hee freed mee from the damning nature of sin? and shall I delight in the defiling nature of sin? hath hee freed mee from the guilt of sin? and shall I love the filth of sin? Hath hee suffered so much to purifie mee? and shall I delight in uncleannesse still? Hath hee made mee a Member of Christ? and all I bee a filthy Member of so holy a Body? Hath hee made mee a Branch, and shall I bee a polluted Branch of so holy a Stock? Hath hee lifted up the light of his Countenance on mee? and shall I ever countenance sin? hath hee smiled on mee? and shall I ever smile upon sin? -- K 2

4. In
4. In Promises to glorifie us, 2 Cor. 7: 1. Having therefore such precious promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. As if he had said -- Seeing God hath been so merciful, and gracious to us, to make us precious promises, let this put us on self-purging, and self-purifying. Thou lookest for an holy Heaven, and wilt thou not be holy? Thou hopest for Salvation, and wilt thou not purifie thy self? -- Hee that hath this hope, purifies himself, as God is pure, 1 J ohn 3: 3.

Thus doth Faith take up Arguments from God, his Nature, his Mercies.

2. It takes Arguments from ourselves,
1. From the necessity of being cleansed.
2. From the convenience thereof.

1 From the Necessity: Because otherwise, wee can have no assurance of Justification. They who are freed from the guilt of sin, are freed from the filth of sin. They who partake of the Blood of Christ for pardon, partake of the water of Christ, to purify. Christ came by Water and Blood. They who will have him a Redeemer, must have him also a Refiner, to take away their Swinish nature, to wash them inwardly, not outwardly: for so may a Swine bee.

2. Because otherwise we can never have assurance of Salvation. -- They who look for new Heavens must have new hearts. They who look for Glory, must have Grace: First Grace, then Glory. -- For without Holiness no man can see the Lord. -- No unclean thing shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven -- hee that hath this hope, will fit himself for the Place, hee will labour to bee a pure person, as hee desires to enjoy a pure place. -- Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. A pure God, a pure Heaven, a pure Place, requires a pure Person.

2. The Convenience: This is fully made out in the necessity of it, and that with an advantage, there is such a convenience, as that it riseth up to a necessity in all the former particulars; so that to an holy heart there is a moral impossibility of the contrary. How can I do this great wickednesse, and sin against God? said Joseph Gen. 39: 9.

This is the first way of Faiths purifying the Heart, -- Argumentative -- or by way of Argument.

2. Operative. As Faith doth operate and work for the cleansing of our nature, making use of Christ, who is called

A Refiner, Mal. 3: 3.
A Purger, Job. 15: 2.

Hee is said to come with Refiners fire, with Fullers Sope, to purge and purifie us. And thus Faith makes use of Christ, by the least touch of whom, the finfull flux of sin is dried up and fluid. And Faith makes use.
1. Of the Merit of Christ, the Blood of Christ, which is apt to purge us, and cleanse us from sin. And for this end was his Blood shed, even to cleanse us from sin, Tit. 2. 14. — Hee gave himself, (not only to bee a Redeemer, to redeem us from Hell, and the guilt of sin but) to purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Ephes. 5. 26, 27. — Hee gave himself for us, that hee might sanctifie us, and cleanse us by the washing of Water, through the Word.

So Faith makes use of this Fountain, to wash and cleanse the soul; it opens this Fountain to the washing of the soul.

2. It makes use of the Prayer of Christ, John 17. 17. — Sanctifie them through the Truth, thy Word is Truth:

3. Faith makes use of the Promise of Christ, wherein his Fidelity and Truth is engaged for our Purification, Jer. 33. 8. I will cleanse them from all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, Ezek. 33. 25. — I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you, Lev. 14. 4. — The Lord shall wash away the filth of the Daughter of Zion, and purge away the blood of Jerusalem, from the midst thereof. Hence they are called Purging-Promises.

Thus Faith makes use of Christ, of the Merit of Christ, of the Blood of Christ, of the Prayer and Promise of Christ, whereby it sets on the work of Self-cleansing; whereby it purifies the soul: By verse 7 of which it washes the soul from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, 1 Cor. 7. 1.

Third Royalty.

Faith is a Heart-commanding Grace.

Christ's Vice-Roy here in the Soul, which Governs, Rules, and bears away in the soul, by virtue of the power and Scepter of Christ. Christ hath made Faith his Deputy here in the Soul, and not any other Grace but Faith. Hee knows Faith will rule by Christ, by his power, not its own: So Rule, as not to wrest the Scepter out of Christ's hand: It will rule for Christ, and to Christ: for his Glory, and to his Glory, not its own: and therefore he hath given Faith jurisdiction in the Soul. So that it is a Soul-commanding Grace: It is the Taskmaster of the Soul, puts every Grace upon its work, and burden: It will not suffer any Grace to bee idle, but puts every Grace to its work.

Nay, it imbleth the Soul to Doe, what it Commands the Soul to Doe.

To every Precept wee have still a Promise. Nay, every Precept is a Promise.

Where God Commands us to Repent and Believe: to make our selves new hearts; to wash and cleanse our selves; to circumcise our hearts; Hee hath promis'd in his new Covenant to do what hee
Of the Nature, and
hee hath commanded, to give us Faith to work Repentance in
us, to make us new hearts; to circumcise the heart, to wash and
cleanse us from our filthiness.

And Faith urging the Precepts of God, makes use of the Promises of God: swears out the Promise, and fetches strength from
the Promise, to perform the Precept. — Lord, thou hast com-
manded me to make me a new heart: and thou hast promised to take
this sordy heart from me, and to give me an heart of Flesh: Lord,
perform thy Promise to thy Servant, in which thou madest mee put
my trust. Thou commandest mee to bee Holy, and thou hast promis-
ced to make mee holy: Thou art the Lord, that Sanctifies. Lord,
make mee Holy. — Da quod voces, & jube quod vis: sic enim impli-
citur voluntas tua, & obedientia nostra: give what thou com-
mandest, and command what thou wilt: and to both our obedience
and thy Will shall bee fulfilled.

Thus you see, as God, so Faith ruling by God, from God, doth
not only authoritatively impose commands, and lay duties upon
the soul, but mercifully and friendly helps and enables the soul to
do what is commanded.

It is not a Rigid Master. — Reaping where it sows not; com-
manding fruit from that ground whereon it sows no seed: but
sows strength to reap Obedience: inables to do what is com-
ded to do.

It is said — by Faith Abraham obeyed Faith did enable him to
obey, and made his obedience fruitfull, and acceptable. Faith
enabled him to obey, even in that great act of Obedience, when
his Son, his only Son, the Son of his Love, the Son of the Pro-
mise, the Son of his Old Age, &c. was to bee taken away by
death, killed, murdered, and that by his own hands, &c. And
yet Faith enabled him hereunto.

Fourth Royalty,

Faith is an Heart-queting Grace, an Heart-calming
and stilling Grace.

It is a Grace they layes all the tumults in the Soul: all the in-
surrections in the Soul. When Passions are up, and unruly Af-
fections do stir, Faith doth allay and hush them. When Passions
of Fear are up, Faith laces them, will not suffer unruly fears to
come into the Throne, to command the Soul.

When Passions of Anger are up, Faith doth quench their heat:
when Grief stirrs, Faith doth bridle and moderate this: when Dis-
content is up, and the Soul is ready to mutter and quarrel against
God, and his dealings, Faith doth lay all these risings. Faith
hath a special art to still the Soul, to strike it dumb in these cases.
Hence you see David. — I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, becase
Royalties of Faith.

because it was thy doing. — Faith struck him dumb.

Wee read indeed Zacharie was dumb; but Infidelity struck him dumb. — David Faith here — hee was dumb, but Faith struck him dumb. The former was a Penal-dumbness: God silenced his Tongue, because hee suspended his Faith: But this latter was a dutifull-Dumbness, such a Dumbness as Faith hath caused in the Soul, which shut up his lips, from murmuring, not from praying, Psa. 39.9. Hec prays there, — I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, and yet — Take the Plague from mee, I am consumed by the Strake of thy hand, &c.

The like power of Faith you see in the case of Aaron, when it silenced his Soul, in such a fit condition, Leuit. 10. 3, 4. — And Moses said unto him, This is that, the Lord said, &c. And Aaron held his peace. Why, what was his tryall? why it was the loss of his Sons, the loss of his Eldest Sons, when they were young, and without potterity; in the first day of their Ministration, in the sight of all the Congregation, and by so fearful a Judgement, as fire from the Lord, and in the act of their Sin, offering strange fire: Nay, and which (some think) was joyned with Drunkenness too: whereupon immediately follows the prohibition of Wine. So that the Congregation might suspect, they went but from fire to fire; from a destruction by fire, to a preservation in fire, from a temporal, to an eternal burning.

Yet now in all this mark the Power of Faith. Moses having declared the Author God: the cause, their sin: It’s said, Aaron was dumb, and held his peace: Audith voluntate Dei flet: having heard the Will of God, hee was mute and silent, his Tongue was chained up, hereby confessing, faith Calvin, Fusto Dei judicio extin-ducta: That they were slain by the Just Judgement of God. The like you see in Eli, when Samuel had declared what God had said to him concerning the destruction of his house: why, faith he, — It is the Lord, let him do what pleaseth him, 1 Sam. 3, 18.

And remarkable was that in Job. — You may read in the first Chapter, how one wave came upon the neck of another.

1. The Sabeans fell upon his Oxen, and his Asses, and slew his Servants.

2. Another comes and tells him, — Fire from Heaven had burnt up his Sheep.

3. A third tells him, — The Caldeans had taken away his Camels.

4. A fourth hee comes and tells him, — His Sons and his Daughters were eating and drinking, and a wind blew down the house on their Heads, and buried them all in one grave. His whole stock was lost in one day. Nay, hee loft not his stock of Castel only, but of his Children also.

My Brethren these were great trials, enough to put a man out of patience; enough to make the most composed man besides himself:
Of the Nature, and
self: To lose his goods, his Cattel, his Substance, and all in a
day: Nay, to lose his Sons and his Daughters, which were his
whole Posterity, the stay and hope of his Family: yea and all at
once, at one clap: and that so suddenly, yea, and in the midst of
their merriments.

These were great Tryals: where Yesterday it might have been
said, who so rich as Job? now to day, who so poor as Job?

Yet mark here now the Power of Faith; how it silenced the
Soul. In stead of murmuring, hee fell down, and worshiped and
said, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be
the Name of the Lord. Thus you fee the Power of Faith.

And, my Brethren, you had need of Faith. As the Apostle
said of Patience: So I of Faith: _You have need of Faith._ As you
walk in the way of this life, you shall meet with such things as will
move you, as will put you besides your selves: If Faith do not
settle and compose you, you cannot bee undeg; sursum (like a
Dye) light upon your square: if Faith bee not your bottom.

You may have crosses and losses before you die. You may lose
your Husbands, your Wives, your Children, your Goods. _Job_
lot may befall you.

And every one of these may cause a man to rise up against him-
sel, may cause an uproar in the Soul. Wee are not Stoicks, we
are not without Passions, nor sinfull-Passions, mutesious-Affections:
And therefore wee had need of something in the Soul to sway and
keep down these unruly distempers. And this is only Faith which
can still, and calm the soul in all storms, and tempests.
A man without Faith in such a case as this, is like a naked man
in a storm; like an unarmed man in a battel; like a Ship unbal-
canced, and unanchored in a Tempest. A man without Faith is un-
der no command. Passions of Anger, Fear, Grief, and all com-
mand him. And Passions without Faith is violent, breaks down
all banks, drowns, overwhelms, and destroies the Soul. And
therefore you had need of something to bal ance the Soul, to
charge the Soul, to calm and still the Soul, in such a condi-
tion.

Now you fee _Faith is an Heart-calming, an Heart-quilting,
and stilling-Grace; which it doth after this manner._

1. Imperiously.
2. Persuasively.

1. Sometimes Imperiously; and that either
2. Commanding, or
3. Checking the Soul.

1. Imperiously commanding the Soul. Laying charge on the
Soul to bee quiet, to bee still. _My Soul, bee silent to Jehovah,
said David._

As Christ did the Waters and the Wind. _Peace, and bee still,
and there was a great calm._ So here, when the Waves are up, and
threaten
threaten to overflow the banks, to overwhelm the soul; Faith lays her command upon the soul, — Peace, and be still. No more words. Leave your murmuring. Leave your impatience. Thus sometimes Faith calms the soul.

2. Imperiously checking the soul. — You do not well to be angry. You do not well to grieve. You do not well to be discontented, to be impatient. You offend God, cause him to scourge you more, to lay more load upon you; seeing you bear this so impatiently.

As the Town-Clerk of Ephesus stilled that uproar with these words, Acts 19. 40. — We shall very bee called in question for this days uproar, seeing there is no cause can bee given of this concourse: So Faith doth sometimes lay the tumults in the soul. — You shall very bee called in question one day, for this Passion, this Discontent, this Murrain, this Uproar; seeing no cause can bee given, that you should quarrel with God, as you do.

2. Faith doth sometimes calm the Soul, in a Mild, and persuasive way, wherein it reasoneth with the Soul — Why art thou so much cast down, oh, my Soul! Why art thou so troubled! so disquieted within thee? In which reasoning, Faith will take an Argument of Patience.

1. From the Author of Afflictions. That is God. Afflictions, troubles arife not out of the dust, but from God, which was the ground of David's patience. — I was dumb, &e. Because it was thy doing. So of Job, — The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. So in case of Shimai his cursing David. David did not sit at the stone, and never mind the thrower: but bee looks up, discovers the hand, as well as the stone. — Let him alone. It may bee God hath bid him go forth, and curse David.

2. Sometimes from the ground of God's dealings, and that is in, Faith produceth sin to be the cause. For this cause, and his throws the mouth. Psal. 51. That thou mayest bee just when thou art judged. This laies a Soul in the dust, makes a man accept of the punishment of his iniquity. As you have the phrase, Levit. 26. 41. That is, lye down, justify God, clear God in all his dealings: bee afar from murmuring, that the Soul will take Gods part in all; hearing God, and condemning itself.

Thus you see the Church — Wherefore doth a living man complain? A man for the punishment of his sin? — it is his mercy that we are not consumed. Thus Faith brings to remembrance our sins. Such a time: such place, &c.

It laies the finger on the sore place, discovers the cause, which aizes a man to make himself the subject of Gods anger: and aims a mans anger against himself.

This was some ground of Davids patience, when Shimai used. — Go up thou bloody man. — It made him smell his own
own sin, his Blood, and to become patient.

3. Sometimes from the end of God's dealings.

4. In general. And that is for good, though it bee not bonum, yet it is in bonum: Though it be not good, yet it is for good. It is a Chastizing-mercy; not in vindictive-justice.

There is a Misericordia-punctens: and there is a Justitia-punctens: A punishing-Mercy, and a sparing-Justice.

As God doth exercise his Sparing-Justice towards the wicked, when he suffereth them to go on in sin, and doth not punish them, as we see read, Hos. 4. 14. — I will not punish your Daughters when they commit Whoredome, nor your Spouses, when they commit Adultery, the like, Ezek. 16. 42. — I will cause my fury towards them to rest, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry. Upon which one faith, — Solo ac mea tremisco, I tremble at the very hearing. For, if God will correct no more, then he will destroy next. This is a Sparing-Justice. And, as God doth exercise this towards the wicked: so he exerciseth a punishing-mercy toward the good. Hence the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11. 32. — We are chastised of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the World. That we may not be condemned with the World, He suffers the World to condemn us. That we may not love the World, he suffers the World to hate us. That we may be crucified to the World, he suffers the World to crucify us. Therefore we meet with crosses, with abuses in the World, because he will not have us perish with the World.

God takes liberty to chastise our carkasses, to heal our consciences: to afflict our bodies, to save our souls. And we have oftentimes occasion to bless God more for crosses, than for comforts.

As there is a blemish hid in the best things to the wicked: so there is a blemish hid in the worst things to the Godly. There is a blemish in sickness, a blemish in crosses, in losses, &c.

Hence, — All his ways are ways of mercy. His correcting, and comforting ways: His scourging and soothaying ways. The ways of health, and the ways of sickness, ways of prosperity, and ways of adversity. All are in Mercy — All things shall work together for good unto them that love God.

Thus in the general, Faith doth clear to the soul, whereby it doth possess the Soul with patience under any evil, and laces the tumults and quarrels of the Soul.

2. In particular, Faith discovers at what end God aims.

1. It may bee the trial and exercise of our Graces, as in Job.

2. It may bee for the Destruction of sin, and ruin thereof. Either Pride, Worldly-mindedness, Adversity to the Creature, with many more. To humble us, to wean us, to win us, to make us more thankful, with many such ends. All which discovered
Fifth Royalty.

5. Faith is a Soul-Securing Grace.

It is such a Grace that doth shelter and secure the Soul from all evil. Hence, Prov. 29. 25. — They who trust in the Lord shall be safe, or, shall be lifted up on high, (as the word signifies) above men, above the World, above all storms, above all troubles, shall bee set out of danger, out of Gunshot.

As Noahs Ark was carried above all waters, So Faith shall carry the Soul above all dangers. See that trust in shall bee safe. So that you see Faith is an Heart-Securing Grace. Wee may sit down securely under the shadow of Faith.

It is a Soul-Securing Grace. Nothing else will secure you but believing. Build as many Towers of succour as you can, Raise up as many Castles of strength, as your provisions will reach: yet all these are but Castles in the Air; there’s no foundation for them, no shelter in them. Beat, and cast out as many Anchors as you can; yet you will but Anchor on the waves; you shall never finde a bottom to rest on, to secure your souls from trouble.

All the provisions in the Creature, All that thy power, thy Policy can do, and finde out, will not compasse thee with safety, if thou do not trust. There is nothing does the Soul, and let the Soul out of danger, but a Resolved-Trufl. And no Trufl, but a Trufl in God.

1. Not a Trufl in Riches. — The Rich man’s wealth is his strong City: but it’s so in his conceit only; it is weak.

2. Not a Trufl in Friends. — Deceitful Friends Job calls them. — Waters that fail — as Jeremy calls them. But — broken Walls, and towering Fences, as the Psalmist titles them, Psal. 62. 3.

3. Not a Trufl in Princes. If any could secure the Soul, one would think they might; but these cannot, Psal. 62. throughout, Psal. 146. 3, 4. Prov. 10. 15. Nahum. 3. 12, 13. Wee read the Children of Israel would trust in the shadow of Egypt. Egypt was a Wel-Spread-Tree, it promised security under her boughs, and branches; but it could not; there was no security, Jer. 2. 37. God threatens hee would reject their confidences, and they should not prosper thereby.

So that no Trufl, but a Trufl in God will compasse the Soul with safety, and this will; it is an Heart-Securing Grace.

1. It sets a man upon a Soul-Securing Bottom, which is God himself; Christ himself, This is that Bottom David caryed to bee set upon. — Set mee upon the Rock, that is higher than I. Why one would have thought, David had been secure enough upon his own Bottom.
Of the Nature, and

tom: Hee had a good bottom to stand on, if there bee one in the World. Hee was a King, and had provisions for lattency. If any man might be secure, then he. But hee sees hee could not be secure in himself.

-- His feet began to sink: And therefore crys out for a better bottom. Oh! Set me upon the Rock, that is higher than I.

Time was, a Man was his own bottom: A bottom to himself; but it was but a Sandy-bottom. Even in his Innocency there was no Security in it. But now God hath appointed our Bottom to bee out of our selves, and to bee in him. And therefore our conditions are secure: the Soul that stands on this bottome, is life, is secure.

This Christ sets down in the Parable of the House built upon a Rock; that is, upon himself. Though The winds blow, the waves and billows beat; yet there is no danger of our fall.--Wee stand upon a Rock.

Why, but may not a Weak and Tottering house bee built upon a strong foundation? And what is it then the inner for the Foundation? It may bee blown down, though the foundation bee never so strong. Yea, But now Christ is such a Rock, as doth derive vertue and strength unto the structure and building.

Indeed a man may build a weak house upon a strong foundation, and the house fall for all that: because the rock is a dead thing; and cannot impart any of its strength unto the structure.

But it is not so here. Bee the building never so weak: yet this Rock can hold it up: because it diffuseth its strength into the building. Hence 1 Pet. 2.4.5. Christ is called a living, not a dead, Rock.--A living Stone.--To whom comming as to a living Stone, wee also as lively-stones are built up a spiritual house, Which shews the transformation of the building into the nature and fineness of the Rock.

Thus you see, Faith is a soul-securing-grace.

It sets a man upon a soul-securing-bottome. It makes God our security, who is called,

The strong-God. A Tower.
The mighty-God. A Fort.
The Rock of Refuge. An High-place, Mich. 4.8.
A defence. The Tower of his Flock.
A Shield. The strong hold of the daughter of Zion. A Covert from the storm, Is. 33.

Faith makes All-God our security. It ingages all-God to be our security.

His Power. And is not this able to secure us? His Wisdom. And will not this secure us? His Truth. And will not this secure us? His Mercy. And cannot all this secure us?

Hee, who trusts in the Lord, Mercy shall compass him on ev
Royalties of Faith.

The side: He is hallowed in with Mercy. Or mercy imbracest him on every side, to secure him.

As truth doth compass mercy: So mercy doth compass truth. As truth imbraceth mercy: So mercy imbraceth truth.

It is not Faith it tells, that doth secure us: But Faith doth make God our security. It sets a man upon a soul-securing-bottome: On a soul-securing-God: On a soul-securing-Power, on a soul-securing-Mercy. Therefore needs must a Believing, a Trusting-foul be secure.

2. It inflates the soul, in soul-securing-promises. The promises of preservation from trouble. Promises of Deliverance out of trouble.

All the promises, which God hath made of Security. Faith inflates the soul into them all.

He hath promised -- when we pass through the waters he will be with us, and the waters shall not overflow us; When we pass through the fire, the flame shall not kindle upon us, Isa. 43. 2.

He hath promised -- He will stand at our right hand, and we will not be moved. - Psal. 16. - He will never leave us, neither forsake us, - Heb. 13. 6. - The Gates of Hell shall never prevail against us, Mar. 16. 18.

He hath promised to bee a Tower, a Rock, a Refuge, a Cot- yer from a storm, an hiding place in time of Danger, &c. And it is faith, that doth inflate us, into these Soul-securing-Promises.

As there is no promise to us, till we believe: So, if once we believe, all the Promises are ours.

Look into the word of God: and what promises foever there are made for securing the soul, all these are thine.

3. Faith doth inflate us into soul-securing-Privileges.

1. It makes us the Sons and Daughters of God, John. 1. 12. 13 -- As many as receiued him, to them he gave power, or privilege, to become the Sons of God: Even to as many as believed in his name, -- Gal. 3. 26. You are the children of God by faith in Christ, And will not a father secure his child?

2. Faith makes us the Spoues of Christ, the members of Christ. It ingrafts us, and unites us into him, And will he not secure his members.

3. It makes us the inheritance of Christ. He hath promised to bee a Tower to his Flock. A strong-hold to the Daughters of Zion. These are all soul-securing-privileges: And therefore believing souls shall be secure.

Oh! Then, Would you bee secured from the evil-day? Would you bee secured in the evil day? Labour for Faith. This alone secures the soul. It sets a man upon a soul-securing-bottome, Inflates a man in soul-securing-promises, Gives him right to soul-securing-privileges.
Abrogate fears, Surrogate Faith, Down with tears, which betray the luminous of the soul, and set up believing.

Sixth Royalty.

6 Faith is an heart-humbling Grace.

Whether it be a Legal, or whether it be an Evangelical Faith, it works humiliation. The one a Legal humiliation, and casting down: The other an Evangelical -humiliation; we shall in this chefield deal with the first.

It is said of Akab, that he humbled himself, put on sackcloth, and went softly. And this was the fruit and effect of his Legal Faith, whereby he believed the truth, and certainty of God's Judgments denounced against him, and his house. The men Nineveh, when Jonah preached that fast Sermon, Jonah 3:4 -

Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed. It is said - They believed God. That is, the truth of that message, which Jonah brought from God. And it follows, as an effect of this Faith:- They humbled themselves, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, and fast in ashes, from the King upon the Throne, to the meanest of them.

And my Brethren, Faith hath a great influence into the work of self-humbling.

1. It takes up self-humbling Considerations.

From God, the justice of God, the threatenings, the curses God hath denounced against sin.

2. Faith doth Realize all this to the Soul, which God hath said against sin. Faith doth not make these things more real, then they are: but doth Realize things to the Soul, not imaginary, but real things, which, being looked upon as real things, do humble.

This is the Reason, why one, when he hears of God's threatenings denounced against Sin, goes home, and lies in the dust, is humbled, and cast down: as Jonah, when he read the book of the Law. And another stands up, out-faceth Hell, and the curse; He is never humbled, nor cast down. It is because the one he looks upon these things as real, and true: the other hee looks upon them, as fancies, Imaginary things.

If men believed, that all that evil, which God hath threatened against Sin, were true, they could not drink down Sin's water, nor eat the bread of Sin, with such delight, as they do.

If the sweareth did believe, there were a flying Rod gone out against him, as Zachary faith. If the Drunkard did see death in the Pot, &c. If I say, wicked men believed the Reality and Truth of these things; they could not go on so quietly in their wick-
wicked courtes: but would be humbled.

Hence the Apostle sets this down for the ground, why the preaching of the word was not profitable to them. -- Because it was not mixed with Faith in them that heard it. They did not believe what they heard: and so neither the word of Terror, nor the word of Comfort did profit them.

As the promises of God are not quickening, raising, comforting, except there bee Faith: so the Threats are not Killing, humbling, working, if Faith be not there.

We may preach, till our spirits fail, and spend our labour in vain, our strength and pains for nought, if the things which God speaks, and we preach, be not believed.

If you by unbelief, do flight all the threats of God denounced against sin, if you make childrens play of them, as the word signifies,

2 Pet. 3. 3.

If you look upon these, but as Bug-bears, things to keep men awake, and not real things: No marvel if you bee not humbled.

But, if by Faith you would Realize these things to your selves, and behold them not as Fancies, and sad dreams, but such things as are infallibly true, real things, not as painted Hell, painted fire, but as real: you would then finde them to work; These mingled with Faith, would lay a man in the dust. Now this is a property of Faith, to Realize the Object, or thing believ'd, and hence comes an influence on the soul, to humble and abase it.

3 Faith doth not only take up humbling Considerations, and Realizeth all these to the Soul. But Faith makes all this present. Faith doth give a present being to all this. Hence Heb. 11. 13. Faith embraceth the promise. The word is Καταπληκτικον. -- Faith killeth the promise; gives a present being to the promise.

And as it gives a present being to the promise, or word of comfort: so to the threatening and word of terror. Faith discovers death and hell, and all at hand for Sin. Faith looks upon sinne, in all its Doomef-day apparel, and array: fuels fire and Brimstone in sin.

Whereas unbelievers, they look on these things, at the wrong end of the Prospective, and that makes things near, seem a far off, and that afar off, is not seen at all.

But Faith looks upon them through the right end of the prospective. And there things a far off, are seen at hand, present. Hence it is called -- The Evidence of things not seen. As it was said of Abraham -- Hee saw the day of Christ, and rejoiced; and yet Abraham was dead many hundred of years before Christ: yet by vertue of his prospective, by vertue of his Faith, hee saw it, as if it had been present, though it were never so far off: So here though the second day of Christ, the day of judgement bee a far
4. Faith applies and brings home all this to the Soul. As the word of Comfort, the Promise is applied, and brought home to the Soul by Faith: so the word of Terror, the Threatenings brought home to the Soul by the same Faith, by which the Soul is cast down and humbled.

The manner of Faith's Application is by a practical Syllogism, where the Major, or first Proposition is the Word of God: The Assumption, or second Proposition is the Testimony of Conscience: and the conclusion is inferred from them both, as he that believes not, but continueth in sin, is for the present guilty and obnoxious to wrath, at the last Judgment.

But I believe not, but continue in sin.

Therefore I am for the present guilty and obnoxious to wrath, to be inflicted at the last Judgment.

Seventh Royalty.

7. Faith is an Heart-softening Grace.

Such a Grace as doth not only humble us, but soften us: not only break us, but melt us. In the Law it humbles us, it breaks us: but the heart like a flint, every dust still retains its flinty, stony Nature, is a flint. And therefore in the Gospel it melts us, it dissolves us. Thunders of Sinai terrifie, but Dews of Sinai mollifie.

So much Faith, so much Sorrow, they are like the Fountain and the Stream, whereof the one ariseth no higher than the other. So much Faith and apprehension of Mercy: so much brokenness of Spirit for sin.

Where Unbelief doth flint the Heart, harden the Heart, dry up the spring and issues of sorrow. No Heart is so hard as an Unbelieving-heart: neither the Promises, nor Threatenings, neither Mercy, nor Justice, neither Word, nor works will melt it: Faith on the contrary turns the Soul into Water: dissolves a man into tears, opens all the deep springs of sorrow in the Soul.

1. Faith looks upon Heart-melting-Promises: Takes a survey of the Riches of God's Love and Mercy, in making such precious Promises, which doth exceedingly melt.

2. Faith takes up Heart-softening-Considerations, from the Love and Mercy of God towards us, which are heart-melting-Mercies; from the goodness and sweetness of God, Faith makes us see God as he is. It makes God no otherwise than he is, not more gracious, not more merciful than he is: But Faith discovers him as he is, a gracious and a mercifull God. It doth but undraw the Curtain, but take off the Mask, which Satan and Infidelity have put
Royalties of Faith.

put on; and makes us to behold God as he is, in all his glorious excellencies; Soul taving attributes, and Mercies; which who can behold by Faith, but must needs morn and divell into tears, that they have offended him? Thus you see, Ezek. 36. 31. when God had discovered himself in his Pardonng-Mercy, his washing, Forgiving Mercy to the believing soul, then they shall mourn and be humbled.

Oh! There is nothing breaks the heart more than Mercy; nothing melts a man more than the smiles of God, the Mercies of God; which being discovered to the Soul, the Soul is not able to stand stubborn under it.

3. Faith looks upon a Soul-melting, a Soul-satisfying Object, upon Christ, a wounded, a broken Christ. And who can behold him but with an humbled, and a broken-heart? A bleeding Christ, without a bleeding Heart.

Oh! Here is enough in this Object to open all the springs of sorrow in us, wee need not to go to Berthinne Twelve Considerations to open the Fountain of tears in us, wee need not bring in the miferies of mankind for one, nor the sad condition of the Souls in Purgatory for another. Wee need not be beholden to him for such considerations as these, to help us to mourn. Oh! Here is enough in Christ, in a broken and wounded Christ, to open all the springs in thee, and if thou hadst a Fountain of tears, to spend them all. The Considerations of his sufferings,

1. Either in themselves.
2. Or in their cause.
3. Or as the Effects of sin.

1. The Considerations of his breakings and sufferings as they were in themselves.

1. The sufferings of his Body. What woundings & breakings & scourglings? crowning's? piercing's did he endure upon his Body?

2. The sufferings on his Soul. What conflicts and struglings with the wrath of God? the powers of darkness? what weights? what burdens? what wrath did he undergo, when his Soul was heavy into death, beset with terrors? as the word implies. When he drank that bitter Cup, that Cup of bitterness? that Cup mingled with carpse, which made him sweat drops of blood? which if men or Angels had but sip'd of, would have made them reel, stagger, and tumble into Hell.

2. The Consideration of his sufferings, in the Cause, as the meritng cause of all our good, procurer of all our Peace, Life, Salvation. -- Hee was wounded, that wee might bee healed, scourged, that wee might bee solaced; drank the bitter Cup of wrath, that wee might have the draught of Mercy. -- Hee was slain.

But not for himself, faith Daniel. But -- wounded for our trans-
Of the Nature, and

gressions, broken for our iniquities; The Sufferings of our peace was upon him. Faith looks upon these his sufferings, as the ministering cauws of our good.

3. The Considerations of his sufferings, as effects of sin, as the effects of our sin, as that which our sins have brought upon him: Which Consideration must needs effect and break our hearts.

When the soul shall look upon Christ, and say, It was I, that have been the murderers, I, that have been the Traitor: my sins which brought all this evil on thee. I find, and thou sufferedst. It was I, that did eat the seven grapes, and thy teeth were set on edge. My sins were thy death; yet by thy death, thou broughtst the bitter life. I have wounded thee, yet thou hast healed me: even out of that wound which my sins have made, hast thou sent out a Plaister, even thy Blood for my sins. Oh! This must needs fill the heart with sorrow.

Faith still looks upon a Humbled Christ, with an Humbled Heart, upon a Broken Heart, with a Broken Heart: upon a Bleeding Christ, with a Bleeding Heart: upon a Wounded Christ, with a Wounded Heart: Hence, Zach. 12. 10. — They shall look upon him whom they have pierced. And how shall that sight affect them? It follows: — "They shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and lament for him, as one lamenteth for his first born. In that day shall be a great mourning, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon, in the Valley of Megiddon.

God made the same Organ for seeing, and for weeping. And the soul that sees well, weeps well. Never soul that did by the Eye of Faith look upon this Son of Righteousness, but their frozen hearts did melt within them.

Would you ever see mourning men and Women for sin? would you see in bitterness, as one is in bitterness for his first born? Oh! Steep your thoughts in the blood of the Lamb: Dwell a little on Christ crucified: Look wistfully upon Christ by Faith: and this will solvere Celciudum: melt and thaw our frozen hearts; turn us from stones into flesh.

Eight Royalty.

8. Faith is an Heart-transforming-Grace.

Such a Grace as doth transform the Soul into the nature of the Object. Faith is as powerful in this spiritual conception, to work in us the image of the Object seen, as Fantauly is oftentimes in the natural conception.

The Poets tell us of some that did transform such as beheld them, into stones: such a power there was in the Object, the thing beheld, as to transform say they. But here it is true. If by Faith we call our Eyes upon Christ, of stones, we shall be turned
Royalties of Faith.

turned into men, of sinners into Saints, of a hard heart, to a soft and fleshly, of Children of Satan, to the Sons and Daughters of

\[\text{Job 1:12}\] -- As many as believe on him, to them he gave

*power to see the Sons of God.* Sons, not born of the flesh, or the will

*of the flesh;* but of God, who begets like himself. -- As that which

*is born of the flesh, is flesh;* so that which is born of the Spirit, is

*Spirit.* -- Hence we are made to be -- made partakers of the

Divine Nature. -- To be transformed into the image and likeness of

God. To be holy, as He is holy. Pure as He is pure. To be as

he is in this World.

Never soul that looked on him by Faith, but came away with

another heart. -- They looked to him, and were enlightened, faith the

Psalms, Psalms 34:5.

But plainly you shall read the Transforming Power of Faith,

\[\text{2 Cor 3:18}\] -- While beholding as in a glass, the Glory of the

*Lord,* we are changed into the same image, from Glory to Glory.

Such a glass he is, that never did the Eye of Faith behold

him, but the soul was changed with the sight, from a Wolf into

a Lamb, from a sinner, into a Saint, from Darkness to Light.

*You were once Darkness; now are you Light in the Lord.* It turns a

man upside down, wholly transforms him.

Indeed, there is no change of the substance of soul and body,

nor of the faculties of soul and body: but the qualities of the fac-

ulties are clearer changed.

The Head is transformed: where before was darkness, now

there's Light: where before it did judge highly of carnal things,

and low esteemed spiritual: it doth now the quite contrary.

The Will is transformed: where before it was full of obstina-

cy and stubbornness, contradiction and rebellion: now there is pli-

ableness to good, and conformity between God's Will and his.

They are not two, but one Will. God's Amen, is his Amen:

Gods Faith, his Faith: God's Will, his will.

So the Heart, that is transformed, whereas before it was noth-

ing but a noisome sink of sin, nothing but a Cage of unclean

birds, the womb of sin, a seminary of lust: Now it is washed,

purged, purified, sanctified, made a fit Receptacle for Christ, an

Habitation for God, by his Spirit.

Thus you see *Faith is an Heart-transforming Grace.* Wee cry

and say, *Oh! If I had another heart I could believe. If my

heart were more holy, more sanctified: why the way to get an-

other heart is to believe.* Do but believe, and you shall see another

heart come into you, another Spirit, another Soul. Do but look upon

Christ, and you shall be transformed. It is such a look as sends

a man away with another heart.

As the Wife men: It is said, -- After they had seen Christ, be-

held Christ, they went home another way: So, when by *Faith*

wee have seen Christ, it sends the Soul another way, with ano-

ther
ther Spirit, with other Principles, with other Resolutions.

There is this Power of Faith, to transform the Soul into the nature of the Object believed. Belief of the Promises breeds Principles in the Heart suitable to the Promises. Belief in Christ breeds a Spirit suitable to Christ.

As Faith, Belief in God a Father, breeds Principles of Love, Fear, Reverence, and Obedience in the Soul; such things as are agreeable. So the belief in Christ a Saviour, breeds Principles of Trust, of Love, of Desire, with the like.

Ninth Royalty.

9 Faith is an heart-passifying Grace.

Isa. 26. 3. — Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. A place alluded by One, who (lying on his death-bed, and injoying abundance of peace and calmsness of Spirit; being demanded, how it came to pass, he was not now assaulted with Satan) replied, Hee knew no ground, no cause, save this: God had promised — To keep his soul in perfect Peace, whose mind was stayed on him, who trusted on him. Hee relied on Christ, and therefore injoyed rest.

Isa. 27. 5. — Let him take hold of my strength. That is, by Faith, lay hold on my Covenant, my Christ: and I will be at peace with him. Hence the Apostle, Rom. 5. 1. — Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God. Rom. 15. 13. — Now the God of all hope fill you with joy, and peace in believing.

An unbelieving-heart is a stormy heart, an unpeaceable-heart. All things

Above us.

Within us.

Below us, are all against us, whilst wee are Unbelievers.

1. Above us, wee have an angry and displeased God.

2. Within us, wee have a stormy and troublesome Conscience, threatning nothing but death, like the troubled Sea, calling up mire and dirt, as Faith speaks, Isa. 57. 20. — There is no Peace, faith my God to the wicked.

3 Below us, we have there all the Creatures our enemies, ready upon Gods commissin to execute his displeasure upon us.

But now, being Beelievers, all is at Peace.

1. All above us is at Peace. The Controversy betwixt God and us is ended. Faith takes up the quarrel betwixt God and us.

— Wee have Peace with God, Rom. 5. 1.

2. All within us is at Peace. A peaceable God makes all at Peace: when once our Peace is made in the Court of Heaven (which is upon the first act of believing.) Then follows Peace in the Court of Conscience — Peace which posseth all understanding.
Phil. 4. 7. Our rest is, to behold God at rest; our Peace is, to see him at Peace.

3. All below us are at Peace with us. We have Peace with all the Creatures. All are now our Friends, Job 5. 23. — The fruits of the Field shall bee at enmity with thee, the Beasts of the Field shall bee at peace with thee, &c. Thou shalt know that Peace shall be thy Tabernacle.

Prov. 16. 7. When a man mayes please the Lord, hee will make his enemies to bee at peace with him: When before upon our Rebellion with God, all the Creatures were our enemies, now being reconciled, all are made friends.

1. Faith makes us the Servants to the God of Peace, in whose service there is Peace, Prov. 3. 17. — All his Paths are Peace. Every step of Godliness hath Peace with it: And the reward of whose service shall bee Peace, Psal. 29. 11. — The Lord will blest his people with Peace, Psal. 85. 8. — The Lord will speak Peace to his people, at the last, though they meet with much trouble for the present, war within, and war without, war with lusts, war with Satan: yet the God of Peace shall tread down Satan under our feet at last; and put an end to this war, Rom. 16. 20. They shall have a Peace in the Conclusion: And a Peace after war is the fairest and most settled Peace, Psal. 37. 37. — Mark the upright man. — The end of that man is Peace. Though there bee storms and troubles in the way, yet the end of the journey, that shall bee Peace; A calm after storms, and never shall there arise storms more, to all Eternity.

2. Faith makes us Subjects to the Prince of Peace, unto Christ, who is called — our Peace, Ephes. 2. 14. And our Peace here is.

1. Not only meritoriously, by shedding his Blood for the purchase of our Peace, Col. 1. 20. — Christ is our Peace, having made Peace through the Blood of his Cross. So Isa. 53. — The chastisement of our Peace was upon him; Or, that chastisement (which did meritoriously procure our Peace) was upon him. God directed all the war against him, that wee might have Peace: As Jonah was thrown into the Sea, that the storm might cease; so Christ upon the Cross, into the Grave, that God and wee might bee at peace together.

But Christ is not only our Peace thus meritoriously by procuring Peace for us, But also,

1. Efficiently; by working of Peace in us. Christ hath not only wrought Peace for us, but hee works Peace in us; Pacifying our Consciences, calming our stormy spirits, settling and establishing his Peace in us.

Christ is called the Prince of Peace; as the King is the Fountain of Honours, and bestows them where hee will, so Christ is of Peace, and bestows it when and where hee pleareth.

Wee
Wee read that Moses was a man of Peace: but hee was not Prince of Peace. Hee could not bestow Peace: hee could not still peaceable and calm affections into the mutinous Israelites.

But Christ, hee is not a man of Peace: but King of Salem, Prince of Peace, who is able to bestow Peace, who can calm the most stormy and troublesome spirits, with as much ease, as hee did the Winds and Waters; which was but with a word -- Peace and bee still.

Now Faith makes us one with Christ, who is the Prince of Peace. Christ joyned God and us together, and Faith joyns Christ and us together; in whom wee have Peace. In mee yee shall have Peace. Faith makes us subjects to this Prince of Peace, whose Kingdome and reign over his people doth consist in meat and drink, but in Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.

3. Faith doth interest us into the Covenant of Peace; and therefore being Beleevers, wee must needs have Peace. I say, Faith doth interest us into the Covenant of Peace, the Gospel of Peace, the alone condition whereof is believing. Whosoever believeth shall bee saved.

Time was, that [Hoc age: do this] was the condition of life. do this and live. So ran the old Covenant: But now [Credo: Beleeve: and bee saved] The Law required works. It's called a Covenant of Works: but the Gospel Faith: Its a Covenant of Grace, Made out of meer Grace, and performed of meer Grace, wherein God promiseth pardon of sins, upon meer Mercy and Grace.

4. Faith doth ininterest us into the conditions of Peace. Faith gives us the grounds of Peace. Justification, Reconciliation with God, pardon of sin, and Sanctification of the whole man. As there is no Peace, where God is not propitious; so there's no Peace where the sinner is not sanctified.

A Believing heart is an holy heart: and an holy heart is a peaceable heart. Grace and Peace: and Righteousness, and Peace, are still coupled together. To shew, that where there is no Grace, there is no Peace: and where there is Grace, there is Peace, though not ever in the Possession, and sensible enjoyment; yet ever in the hope and assurance of the promise of Peace. Grace is the root, and Peace is the fruit. -- A good Conscience is a continual Feast. They who do the work of God, shall have the Peace of God.

Gal. 6. -- They who walk according to this Rule, Peace shall bee in them, &c. Hence the Psalmist, Psal. 119 165. -- Great Peace have they that love thy Law. They which love the Law of God, shall have the Peace of God.

Object. But you will say. Many have Peace, who yet are not Believers. And many are Believers, and yet want Peace. Therefore Peace is not a Fruit of Faith.
Royalties of Faith.

A n s. Now to meet and to refit this Objection, which like a two-edged sword, strikes both ways.

For the first. Many have Peace, who yet are not Believers. I grant it: Many who are unbelievers have quiet Peace. -- Are not in trouble as other men, Phil. 7. 3. 5.

1. A Peace they have; but it is a false Peace. And a true war is better than a false Peace.

2. A Peace they have: but it is not the Peace of God, rather the Peace of the Devil. -- The strong man keeps the house, and therefore all is at Peace.

3. A Peace they have, but it is but an outward Peace: not an inward Peace. -- The heart knows its own bitterness -- even in the midst of laughter, the heart is sorrowfull, when the Countenance is full of cheer, the Conscience is full of woe.

As the godly have often the Pearl of Joy in the Heart, when the dew of tears is in their eyes: so the wicked

4. A Peace they have, but it is but the Peace of a dreaming, sleeping man: not the Peace of a man awakened, or it is but

5. A Peace of a condemned man, before his Execution: The Peace of a calm before a storm.

There shewed you, there is a fourfold Conscience.

1. Good and quiet.

2. Not good, nor quiet.

3. Good, but not quiet.

4. Quiet, but not good, which quiet doth arise partly.

From ignorance of their condition: or
From carnal security: or
From brawniness of Conscience, want of inquiry into Conscience. But it is far from true Peace. Sure I am. Where there is no Grace, there is no Peace. Hence faith one, Peace is the inheritance of Saints, only. 'Twas all the Legacy which the Prince of Peace left to his Subjects. -- Peace I leave with you, my Peace give unto you, John. 14. 27.

There may be godliness without Peace, for a time, but there is no Peace without godliness. As Elea said to Jehoram, -- this Peace? so long as the Whoredoms of thy Mother, and her itcheries, bee so many? So I say to you. What Peace?

-- There is no Peace, faith my God to the wicked, Isa. 57. 21.

1. They have no Peace with God: God is their enemy.

2. They have no Peace with Conscience: that is full of storms: for said of Jonah, ibi peccatum, ibi procelia: Where sin is, there is a storm. A sinfull Conscience, is a storny Conscience: though the present it is quiet: yet it is like a Book bound up, whereof ever it bee unclasped, it ever it bee opened; nothing but trift Tragedies will appear.

And, that Peace thou hast in a sinfull way, it is a fore-runner of
Of the Nature, and

of eternal war: it is but like the Peace of the old World. Let

are, they drank, they married, and gave in marriage, till the

flood came, and swept them all away. Luke 17:27. It is but the

Peace of Sodom, the Peace of Agag, the Peace of Tadmor, and

Sodom, the Peace of Ed's house: the Peace of all ungodly men—

when they say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction, as travely-

en a woman with children, so that they shall not escape. 1 Thess. 5:3.

Object, 2. The second part of the Object is, Many are Believers,

who yet want Peace.

Ans. Indeed the best have no perfection of Peace; because

they want a perfection of Grace. They have no perfection of

Peace, because they have not the perfection of Faith, the per-

fection of Grace.

If there were a perfection of Grace, then there might be a

perfection of Peace. But the perfection of both is referred to

another world.

Though sometimes Believers may have such a Peace as may

overcome all doubts, fears, troubles, &c. yet ordinarily their Peace

is not so high. There is doubting as well as confidence, fear as

well as Faith, trouble as well as Peace.

The Peace of the godly here is a peace joyned with war. Our

inward Peace is joyned with inward War, war against Sin and cor-

ruption. It is such a Peace as doth not consist in freedom from

war; but in an actual warring: The flesh still lusteth against the spir-

it, and the Spirit against the flesh. And, till this great Make-bite

bee taken away, till Sin be destroyed, we must look for no per-

fect Peace.

2. But secondly. You say, Believers want Peace. It may

bee they do: They want the fente of Peace, but not the ground

of Peace. They have the ground of Peace, interest in Christ, Re-

conciliation with God, Justification, pardon of Sin, Sanctification;

although for present, they want the fente of Peace, the clear ap-

prehensions of all this to their Souls.

They have Peace with God, Rom. 5:1. But they want Peace

with themselves. The direct act of Faith gives a man Peace with

God, 1 Thes. 27:5. Let him take hold of my strength, and I will be

at Peace with him. But the Reflect act of Faith is it which gives

a man Peace within himself. A man may have the one, and yet

want the other.

3. It may bee they hold some secret Compliance with some

secret and sweet corruption. There may be some secret Jonah

which lies under hatches; some secret Achan, which lies undisco-

vered; some secret close corruption, which may caufe God to

make War against his own people, and deny them Peace.

And therefore, in this case we must do as the Mariners in the

storm, as Israel in their trouble; cast lots, enter upon inquiry

what that is, that troubles our Peace; and then cast him over

board
board, that our hearts may be calmed.

Wee have a passage worth observation, 2 Sam. 20, from vers. 16 to 23. Joab besieged Abel, and threatened war. A woman eyes out from the City, to know the cause. She returns her answer, -- There was one Shemt the son of Bichri, who was a traitor in the King. Cast his head over the Wall, and all shall be at peace, which done, Joab, and all Israel retired every man to his tent, and there was a Peace.

Thus God doth oftentimes besiege one of his own Subjects, because they harbour some secret Traitors, some close lusts and corruptions. And therefore it would bee our wisdome to inquire and finde out the Traitor: to yeeld up our sins, and God will bee at Peace with us, whereas otherwise God will never bee at Peace with him, who is at Peace with his lusts, nor spare him, that spares his sin.

4. It may bee they want present Peace, because for present, they are in warring conditions,

1. In great Combates with lusts and corruptions.
2. In great Conflicts with Satan.
3. In sad dejected conditions. At which times they may want the sense of Peace.

The Soul is now in the pursuit of Peace. And, though with Rebekah, they have some stragling in the womb for a time: yet God will part the womb at last: Hee will speak Peace to his People at last: hee will break the Cloud, and discover himself.

5. You say, Believers want Peace.

But it is, not as they are Believers, but as they are Doubters; if they had more Faith, they would have more Peace.

It may bee they give way to jealous mis-giving, and mistrusting thoughts of God, or of themselves.

Some there are who do nothing but make objections against themselves, and Gods dealings with them. And a quarrelsome heart is for the most part, a troublesome heart.

You shall see some to whom God hath given evidences of their estate and condition, and such as might content them, such as they might have Peace in: But they will quarrel against them.

Either their evidences are not so clear as others are, not written in so fair and legible characters as others are.

Or else they want faith. And therefore they will take no comfort in them.

Thus do many forsake their own mercies, breed their own disquiet, and are injurious to their own peace. When God hath spoken Peace, and Peace to their Souls: yet they return back again to folly, to the folly of Unbelieving, Doubting, Questioning of Gods love. And no marvel, if such do want Peace.

Men, that will forget their evidences, give up their claim and title to Christ. Men whom Satan can make infay what they know N

God
God hath said to their hearts, may soon sit down in dumb silence and discouragement.

If when God hath manifested himself to you, hath come and dappled with you; hath given you the white stone of absolution, the Hidden Manna of comfort and consolation; those manifest experiments of his love: and yet you will join Illue with Satan, give way to doubts: No marvel if you disturb your peace, bring insufferable fears and disquiet upon your selves. And it were just with God, to leave you to the doubts and mis-givings of your own hearts, and never to give you a word of Peace more: but suffer you to bring your gray hairs with sorrow to the Grave, seeing nothing will satisfy you.

6. The Reason why Believers have no more Peace, is, because they seek Peace no more in a way of believing. They seek it more in the Law, than in the Gospel: more in Sanctification than in Justification: more in the Precept than in the Promise: more in working, than in believing: more in their Obedience than in Christ.

And therefore no marvel, seeing all this is imperfect, that they have no more perfection of peace.

So long as you make the grounds of your peace any thing within your selves, or any thing wrought by your selves; you will never have fullness of peace.

There may be some peace for a time in these things: but it is not a full and satisfying peace; nor yet a permanent and constant peace, it may be gotten to day, lost, or incumbered to morrow.

Every imperfection will disturb your peace. Every failing will raise up a new and fresh storm, breed a new quarrel in the soul.

Hee that would have peace, must seek it in the God of Peace; in the Prince of Peace, in Christ himself, in whom hee said, Joh. 16. 33. -- Wee should have Peace.

When there's a storm in your selves, there's peace in him; when there's no peace in you in regard of your imperfections and failings, there's yet peace in Christ, who is a perfect Saviour. The Sacrifice is imperfect, but the Priest is perfect.

Tenth Royalty.

10 Faith is an Heart-inabling-Grace.

It is such a Grace as inables a man,
1. To do.
2. To suffer.

A Believing Christian is a strong Christian. He is strong for any service. It is said; -- By Faith Abraham obeyed God, Faith did enable him to obey. And it was a great act of Obedience, as you may read, feil. The offering of his Son, his only Son, the Son of his love.
Royalties of Faith.

love. If it had been an adopted Son only, and not his Natural, or his Natural, and but one among many, the trial had not been so great. But he was his own, and only Son, and the Son of his old age; and therefore like to have no more; the Son of the promise; not an Isaac, but an Isaac, a Son long expected, now exceedingly rejoiced in; he was the Son of his Love. Now to part with such a Son was a great trial.

But here was not all the trial. If he had but parted with him in the way of Nature, by a natural death, this had not been so much; but to part with him in the way of Sacrifice, wherein he was to be cut in pieces; nay, and he himself must be the Butcher of his Son of his Love, must imbibe his own hands in the blood of this Son. This was a great trial; yet here was seen the power of Faith, the it was able him to obey. He did not consult with Flesh and Blood; did not dispute, but obey -- By Faith his obeyed.

Faith it is an Heart-waxing-Grace. It will enable you to pray, yet, and to pray to purpose, to wrestle with God. Believing-prayers, are wrestling prayers; wherein the Soul wrestles with God by strength of his Promise, his Covenant, his Truth, his Christ.

It enables you to hear, and to hear with profit; when Faith, doth incorporate it self with the Word, it will be profitable. Faithful hearing is ever fruitful hearing.

It will enable you to receive the Sacrament, and to receive with comfort; Faith is the Organ, whereby we feed on Christ; receive Christ. Faith is the instrument that conveys Christ the Conduit-pipe.

A believing Receiver is a blessed Receiver.

It will enable you to bring forth much fruit. To be fruitful in Obedience. It plants us into a fruitful stock; and how can wee bee barren Plants? It draws life and nourishment from Christ. A faithful Christian is a fruitful Christian. Men of a good Beleef, are men of a good Life. That soul that hath yielded obedience to the Promise, in a way of believing, is ready to subject itself to every Precept, in a way of Obedience.

Faith doth enable a man to contend with lusts, with the strongest corruptions. -- The sons of Zeruiah, which else would bee too hard for us.

It enables us to combat with Satan. It is our shield, whereby we resist; it is our weapon, whereby we conquer; It fells Christ against Satan, by whom we over-conquer, as the word is. -- We are -- more than Conquerors.

It enables us to overcome the World. -- This is our Victory where by we over-conquer the World -- even our Faith.

Whereas unbelieving doth slay and disable the heart, both from doing and suffering. An unbelieving heart is an impotent heart. The state of unbeliefe is a state of impotency and disability, to the performance of any thing, that is good. There is a total, and univ...
vertial impotency in an unbelieving heart. Hee cannot pray, hear, receive.

Faith, on the contrary doth enable and strengthen the soul to all Obedience. It enables a man to yield.

A willing Obedience, cheerful Obedience, voluntary Obedience, a constant, a fruitful, an universal Obedience: It will enable a man to do his duty,

Towards God,
Towards others,
Towards himself. It enables a man to walk through the duties of all relations faithfully. The Husband to the Wife: The Wife to the Husband; The Parent to the Child; The Child to the Parent; The Master to the Servant; The Servant to the Master, &c.

Faith is the great Task-Master of the Soul. But it is not like Pharaoh's Task-Master, to command burdens, and afford no help: To require the Tale of Brick, and give no Straw. This indeed the Law doth. It is an hard Task-Master. It commands; but gives no ability.

But not so Faith. It commands, and lays in strength to do. It gives what it commands; by going over to Christ, and fetching strength from him, whereby the soul is enabled to obey what is commanded.

It is said of Christ, That — His Government shall be upon his shoulders: Not only in his hand having a Scepter only to command, but upon his shoulders, wherein there is support to obey commands. So it may be said of Faith, which governeth from Christ, and by Christ. Its Government is upon its shoulder, inabling the soul to do what it commands.

1. Faith begets Soul-enabling-Principles; Principles in the soul suitable to the thing commanded, whereby a man is enabled to obey.

All strength for new Obedience ariseth from a new Nature. And this new Nature is nothing else, but that conformity to the Law of God, whereby a man is not only able to obey, but willing to obey: when Principles are wrought in our hearts suitable to the Precepts: when there is a Law within us, anwering to the Law without us: — It will be meat and drink, it will be natural to obey: it is not now hard to pray to hear. — The yoke is easy, the burden is light. These things are not tasks but delights; not medicines, but meat; not physic, but food, Psal. 40. — I delight to do thy Will, faith David: and what was the ground? — Thy Law is in my heart. There were Principles agreeable to the Precepts, and that made him not only to obey, but to obey with delight.

2. Faith supplies a man with Soul-enabling-Strength, from without. Wee have need not only of preventing, but assifting Grace: not only of operative, but cooperative strength: not only of inherent, but of assistiant, the continual succours, aids and supplies of the
Royalties of Faith.

the Spirit of Christ. And Faith doth supply the soul with strength from him, -- without whom we can do nothing, and through whose might we are enabled to do all things.

Faith laces in supplies of strength from Christ, wherewith we are enabled for any service. It calls in for all the strength of Christ, the aids of the Spirit, whereby we are strengthened.

3. Faith doth furnish a man with Soul-inabling-considerations.

1. From God, the mercies of God, the goodness and sweetness of God; All which do encourage and enable the soul to obey. A loving Master makes a diligent Servant. A mercifull God, a working Christian. Nothing doth so prevail with the heart as love.--The Love of Christ constrains us.

When Faith shall discover to the heart what we were, what we are, what God might, what God hath done with us; it will break out with David with a--Quid Residuam, &c. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? I will take the cup of Salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows, &c. Psal. 116. 12.

This overcomes the Soul with Love. That heart that is overcome with the sweetness of mercy, is prepared to overcome any difficulty of service. -- My heart is prepared, my heart is prepared.

2. From the work. Faith furnishes a man with soul-inabling-considerations from the excellency of the employments: hee fees a piece of Heaven in them: hee fees these services full of beauty, sweetness, delightfulness, No service to the service of the King.

that which is the service of the King of Kings.

3. From the rewards which God hath promised to obedience, and these rewards Faith makes use of, to quicken and stir up the to Obedience, to bee spurs and incentives to us, as they were to Moses, who -- had an eye to the recompence of the Reward, as they set to Christ himself, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the shame, Heb. 12. 2, and Heb. 12. 6. All which have a mighty influence into the soul, to enable it to Obedience.

2. Faith inables the Soul to suffer. Yea, and to suffer the sufferings of the greatest magnitude. You see, Heb. 11. -- Through what they were stoned, they were cast asunder, were slain with the sword.

1. It puts the soul into a suffering frame. It deadens a man to the world, mortifies a man to the world, and makes a man alive to God.

A man dead to the world doth not much care either to leave the world, or any thing in the world: now Faith deadens a man to the World.

1. Faith puts the Judgement into a right frame. It makes the judgement lightly to esteem of earthly, and highly to esteem of heavenly things: lightly to esteem the favours and frowns of men,
men, highly to value the favour, and fear the frowns of God.

2. Faith prevails with the Will, to chuse God above all, and to part with all, to leave all, if they come in competition with God. This Faith doth habitually, in habitual prepar[ations in the work of Grace, when first the Will chuseth with Christ. Thus Faith enables the soul to do actually, when ever it is brought to thy all.

3. Faith works upon the Affections, to love God above all, to delight in God, to fear him, &c.

A man, who loves any thing, chuseth any thing, prizeth any thing above God, is a man unfit for sufferings: he is not in a suffering frame. If God and these things come in competition, they with Demons will forfeit God, and cleave to the present world. Men, whose hearts are too much engag'd to the World, whose affections are too much let upon the Creature: men, whose wills chuseth any thing more than God: whose Judgements do prize and esteem of any thing more than God, to whom God is little, and the world is great: these men are unfit for trials.

And therefore this is the first way, whereby Faith doth enable the Soul, by putting it into a suffering frame.

2. Faith doth furnish the soul with suffering Resolutions. A beleeving heart is a resolved heart. Nothing causeth a suspention in the Will more than Unbeliefe. Hee that doubtest is like awae of the Sea, sometimes going this way, and sometimes carried back again. Whereas Faith doth resolve the heart, makes the soul resolve as Peter, but in a better strength, - I will dye, rather than deny thee.

Faith doth cleathe the soul with suffering resolutions, to go through a Sea, through a Wildernets, through the harshest Skirmishes, the hardest Trials for Christ. You see it every where in Scripture. In Michael, in Jeremiah, in the three Children, in Daniel, in the Apostles. And to thee I might add many more. As that of old Polyam, when he was perswaded to deny Christ, rather than to dye for Christ. These fourscore and six years I have serv'd Christ; and he hath never hurt mee all this times, and how then can I blapheme my King and Saviour?

The like of Lyran, who being desired to consult with himself, before hee should suffer, replies, - Do your office. In so much a thing as this there needs no Consultation.

The like of that rich Virgin which Basil speaks of, who being condemned to the fire, was offered her life and estate, if she would renounce her Faith; she returns Valesat vita, pereat pecunia, &c. Lest my many perils, my life cannot: and though I lose this life, I shall have a more enduring, a more abiding, a more abounding life in Christ.

To these many more might bee added, to shew how Faith doth furnish the Soul with suffering Resolutions, as that of [Christian]
3. Faith begets sufferings, graces, courage, magnanimity, patience, humility, self-denial, contempt of the World, high prize of God. It lets God above all the comforts and contentments in Heaven and Earth. It gives adherence to the Truth, by which the Soul is unable to undergo any thing.

4. It lies in suffering-strength, strength from God, strength from the Promise, which faith — when thou passeth through the water, it shall not overflow thee, when thou passeth through the fire, it shall not kindle upon thee, [Isa. 43:2]. It fetcheth strength from Christ, who is like Simon of Cyrene, helps to bear part of every Cross.

Thus Faith goes out of it self, stands upon another's bottom, leans upon another's power, rests upon another's strength, whereby the Soul is unable to go through any thing. All this is conveyed by this Instrument of Faith.

5. It propounds to the Soul suffering-rewards. That — For these light afflictions which are but for a moment, we shall receive a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

That for the loss of temporals we shall gain eternals. That — if we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with Christ.

"That no man shall lose Father or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, or Houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, for his sake: but he shall receive an hundredfold more here, and shall inherit everlasting life, Matt. 19:29. God will be all this to thee. Nay, God will be more than all this to thee. More than Riches, more than Friends, more than Life it self unto thee.

All which considerations do exceedingly enable the Soul to undergo sufferings and tryals.

Eleventh Royalty.

II. Faith is an Heart-in-nobling-Grace.

That which sets one man above another: That which doth raise up and exalt one man above another, in God's esteem, is Faith, that which doth put a difference between man and man, is Faith or nothing, Acts 15:9.

1. Faith is such a Grace as sets us above others, our Persons above others, A Grace which makes us Kings, and Priests unto God: which raiseth us, and sets us out of the crowd. They are noble, whom God doth in noble: honourable, whom God doth honour. God is the King of Kings, the Fountain of all Honour, who can exalt whom he pleaseth, and throw down whom he pleaseth: who can in-noble whom he pleases, and raise whom he will. And this honour have all his Saints.

This hath God thrown upon the poorest Beleever, hee hath made
made him a King, and a Priest, Rev. 1. 6, 1 Pet. 2. 5. 9.

2. Faith sets our performances above others. Our prayers, our duties, our obedience. Faith raises them above others, Heb. 11.

4.-By Faith Abel offered to God a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain. Cain offered Sacrifice as well as Abel: But Faith put the difference betwixt them. — By Faith hee offered a more excellent, a more noble Sacrifice than Cain.

Faith puts a difference betwixt the works of Christians, and the works of Heathens. Though there were no difference for the matter, yet Faith puts a vast difference for the manner.


Faith is an Heart-in-nobling-Grace.

1. It begets in us Soul-in-nobling-Principles. Principles like our selves. It is such a Grace as doth sublimate a man, begets high, glorious, and heavenly Principles in the soul. By this we are made partakers of the divine nature. It is an Heart-spiritualizing-Grace.

Whereas Unbeleev doth sensualize a man, bealls a man, as Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. 5. 20. 21. Hence wee read, An Unbelieving heart is called a grog heart: — make their heart grogs: because it's conversant about groggs and sensual things only: so faith doth raise up a man, spiritualizes a man. A Believing heart is a fine heart, a spiritual heart. It refines the soul.

Faith doth raise up a man as high above reason, as reason doth raise a man above mere sense. It sets a man as high above a man, as Reason doth a man above a Beast.

Faith is the Spirit of Grace. Not only a spiritual Grace: but the Spirit of all our spiritual Graces. It hath nothing but spirituality in it; and hath to do with nothing but spiritual things, with God, with Christ, with Heaven, with Justification, pardon of sin. All which are spiritual things, far above sense, may, and Reason too: their objects reach not so high, which things though they be Real, and none more Real, yet they are spiritually Real, not sensually; Real to Faith, but not to sense, nor to Reason either. And therefore unbelieving men do esteem these things either mere-nothings, or they are next door to nothing in their thoughts; Imaginary things: Notiones secunda: which have no foundation in Being, no existence in the World.

2. Faith doth implant us into Soul-in-nobling-Relations.

1. It makes us Servants to the great God of Heaven and Earth; who (though it were Hyperbolically said of Tyros Merchants, yet may it truly be said of God) makes all his servants Kings. God's service is an honourable, a noble service. Nay, it makes us not only Servants, but
2. It makes us friends of God. Abraham a Believer, was call'd God's Friend: may, not only Friends, but
3. It makes us Sons and Daughters of God: Gal. 3. 26. -- To
   me the Children of God by Faith. Wee may glory in our Pe-
   degree. A Believer is bel born, nobly born; Jam. 1. 18. -- of his
   own Will begun bee us, by the Word of Truth, Joh. 1. 13. -- Born of
   God. Nay.
4. It makes us the Spouse of Christ, who is such an Husband as
   doth en-noble his Wife. Wee know among men, The Wife is
   honoured with her Husband's honour. The Lawyers have a speech,
   -- Matt. 19. 6. -- Wedded are not, but the wife, The Wife shone with the Husband's Rayes: there shines with his brightness. If thee bee honourable, whatsoever thee was before, yet now thee cannot bee base: If thee noble, thee cannot bee ignoble, because thee confers and throws all his honours upon his Wife.

5. It makes us the Members of Christ, who is such an Head as doth en-noble his Members. Christ throws more Glory and Honour upon the meanest Member of his Body, than all the World is able to make us heirs of. It were better to bee the meanest Member of Christ, than to have all the Glory of the World, out of Christ; better to bee the meanest twig in this Vine, than to bee the most glorious branch in the World, out of Christ. Better is Christ's end.

3. Faith puts us upon Soul-in-nobling imployments.

It puts a man upon Prayer, Holy exercises, Communion with God, which are noble Imployments, above the World. Faith makes the soul live high, above the World, above the Earth. Faith carries the soul to Heaven, makes it live where it had its first breath, and being, makes our way to ly above, our Conversation to bee in Heaven, our joyes to bee there, our affections there, our hearts there. -- By Faith Enoch walked with God; hee converted with God, had to do with God daily, the great God of Heaven and Earth daily in supplications and meditations, and holy conversation. All which are noble imployments. The higher the person wee have to do withall, the more noble are the imployments.

And they are such as do in-noble the Soul. No man hath to
do with God in any way, but hee is in-nobled by it. -- Moses face
shine, when hee had been conversing with God. God doth shed
O Glory
Glory upon all those, who have to do with him. None have to do with a glorious God, but are made glorious. None with an Holy God, but are made holy. If you have to do with him in Prayer, or any of his Ordinances, hee sends you still betteraway.

4. Faith doth intitle us unto a Soul-in-nobling Inheritance: unto Heaven, unto Glory. It makes us not only Sons of God, but Heirs. Every Son is an Heir, nay, and a Joint-Heir with Christ, unto that eternal inheritance of Glory. Rom. 8. 17. Hence the Apostle, 1 Joh. 3. 2. Now we are the Sons of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know when wee shall appear, we shall be like him, for wee shall see him as hee is. When Christ who is our life shall appear, wee shall also appear with him in Glory, Col. 3. 4.

Wee shall bee Citizens of Heaven. Faith doth intitle us to Crowns of Glory. To that House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. 2 Cor. 5. 1. To an inheritance, incorruptible, and that fadeth not, reserved in Heaven for us. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Too far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. 1 Cor. 4. 17.

Which Inheritance is to certain, by Faith to Believers, that the Apostle faith, wee sit together with him in heavenly places, Ephes. 2. 6. wee sit now with him in respect of our Union by Faith; and shall sit with him hereafter, in our Communion with his Glory, when wee shall bee invested with those Royal Roes of Glory.

Thus you see Faith is a Soul-in-nobling-Grace. It makes God a Father, Christ a Brother, Angels fellow-servants, Heaven our Inheritance. It brings a man into a noble kindred, a noble family, the family of Heaven, and makes all the family of Heaven our kindred. It brings a man unto noble acquaintance, puts a man upon noble employments; intitles a man unto a noble inheritance: invests us with in-nobling Priviledges; and begets us a noble spirit, a spirit suitable to all these; suitable to our Father, our Kindred, our Acquaintance, our Employments, our Inheritance.

The whole frame of Christianity turns upon the hinge of Faith. As the Blood through the veins, so Faith runs through every vein of the whole body of Religion. It is the staff of our strength, the support of all our comfort, and the life of our soul.

In my discourse, of which I have (though indeed the Priviledges of Faith requires an Angel rather than a Man, to make relation of it; yet I say, I have) adventured to lay down diverse Royalties and Priviledges of this Grace: wherein all that I have laid, or can say, falls short of the excellency of it. When I have told you what I can, you may say (as the Queen of Sheba, when shee found the Truth to exceed the Relation) that the one half hath not been told you. Cæcum & Deus; Io Cæcum & Fides non patiuntur Hyperbolæ. I cannot here Hyperbolize, I cannot play the Manner.
Royalties of Faith.

Mountebank; to set down more in the Bill than is in the Physick; more in the Relation than is in the Balance. All I can say will fall short of the preciousness of Faith.

Yet mistake me not, whatever I have said, or shall say of Faith, I speak not of Faith absolutely, but of Faith relatively: The Act with its Object. We will not make a Christ of Faith, nor raise up Faith any higher, than we may set up Christ with it, by it, above it. Well then, to proceed, we have laid down diverse glorious Privilegges, or Royalties of Faith: we have yet more remaining such as these.

Twelfth Royalty.

12. Faith is a Soul-satiating-Grace.

The believing Christian is the thriving Christian. It is such a Grace as doth nourish and strengthen the soul. It weakens corrup[...]

Unbeliever is the Gaterer and the Provider for sin. Sin hath its full desire in an unbelieving heart; whatever it lusts after, it shall have: nothing shall bee wanting to feed lust.

If a man bee addicted to the lust of uncleanness; there is nothing the lust doth desire, but an unbelieving heart will make a supply of. It shall have Books, Ballads, Plays for the purpose. It shall have obscene objects, and pictures to gaze upon. There shall bee nothing wanting for the fomenting and cherishing of the corruption: nothing shall bee denied, that may oile and increase the flame of lust. All a man hath, all his power, all his riches, his estate shall bee laid out for the swelling of his corruption, and so I might shew in other lusts.

But now Faith, it starves sin: it will not hold out the dagg to nourish a corruption: It will not provide for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof: It will abridge sin, and cut it short of those dainty bits, which formerly it had in the soul: It will not afford it a thought, a motion, a look, nor any thing that may swell it, or feed it.

It is a soul-satiating-Grace. But though it starve the flesh, it fastens the spirit. It is a soul-satiating-Grace, which it doth after this manner.

First. Preparatory way.

1. By a Negative way. By destroying Soul-consuming, Soul-destroying, Soul-pining.
Of the Nature, and

...ning lusts and corruptions, which will hinder our spiritual far-

ning.

Men use to purge, before they go to fatten. Faith must give
the soul a purge: other wise the soul would never thrive, though
the pasture bee never so good. If there bee corruptions in the
soul unpurged, the soul will never grow and thrive.

If a Child do secretly feed upon Chalk or Dust, or such like
trash, it will never grow nor thrive: though the food it eats be
never so good and wholesome meat.

So if the Soul do secretly feed upon some secret lust or corrup-
tion, it will never grow, never thrive, though the food it feeds
upon bee never so nourishing.

And therefore Faith doth purge the heart of lust and corrup-
tion, which may hinder our spiritual growth. Faith cuts off the
fuckers from the Tree, which doth eat out the heart of the root,
and hinder the growth of the Tree. Faith takes the Child
from the Dugge, which consumes the Parent. Faith will sep-
rate a man from his lust, and will not suffer a corruption to hang
upon us, to hinder our spiritual growth.

2. Faith doth put a man into a Soul-farthing pasture. The whole
Word of God is the Pasture for Faith. The Word of God is ob-
jectum Adequatum, the Even and Adequate object of Faith.
There is the only walk of Faith, which, though it bee an inclosed
Pasture, a Field inclosed, a Pasture pale in: yet there is enough
in it to satisfy Faith. Wee shall not need to stray any whither
else for want of Pasture; here we may go in, and go on, and
find Pasture; we shall not need to feed upon stubble and straw
of humane traditions: here’s enough in it to nourish us up to eternal
life. -- The Scriptures are perfect, and able to make perfect the man of
God to every good work, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. Here is Milk for Babes,
and meat for stronger men. -- Here the tallest Elephant may swim,
and the poorest Lamb may wade. Great and small, strong and
weak may finde nourishment in the Scripture. Here wee may finde
nourishment for our Knowledge, for our love, for our zeal, pa-
tience, humility, and all our Graces. They are able to make a man
wise to Salvation. They nourish our Obedience.

Wouldst thou then nourish thy Knowledge? Read here. The
Scriptures are able to make thee wise to Salvation.

Wouldst thou nourish thy Faith? Read here upon those Faith-
strengthening Promises, God hath made for that purpose.

Wouldst thou nourish thy Love? Oh, Read here of the Love
of God to thee; that height, depth, that length and breadth of
his love in Christ, That love that puffeth Knowledge. And this will
bee a burning Glass to kindle love and affections to him. This will
bee the Load-stone to draw thee. Read here of the excellencies
of God, which may draw thy affections.

Wouldst thou nourish thy Humility? Oh, Read here, what

thou
Royalties of Faith.

thou wait by Nature. Look into the Glass of the Law. That will
discover thy vileness, lay thee in the dust. Read Ezek. 16. See
what a piece thou wait, and then bee proud if thou canst.
Wouldst thou nourish thy Zeal? Read here of the Zeal of oth-
ers; which may kindle Zeal in thee.
Wouldst thou nourish thy Patience? Read here examples of
Patience in Job, Jeremiah and others, whose long suffering will
shame thy short breathed impatience.
Wouldst thou nourish thy fear of God? Why here see what
is the excellency of fear, &c.
3. Faith feeds upon Soul-satiating-Dainties: meat which the
World knows not of, As Christ said, I have meat, which you
know not of: So Faith hath meat, which the World knows not
of. As the life of a Christian is an hidden life: so the food of a
Christian, the meat of a Christian, is an hidden meal, an hidden
manna.
Faith feeds upon Soul-satiating-dainties; choice food; the cream
of nourishment; and that is
1. Upon the Promises.
2. Upon Christ himself.

1. Faith feeds upon Soul-satiating-Promises. Indeed the whole
Word of God is food for Faith; both the Precept, and the Pro-
mise: But Faith feeds chiefly upon the Promise, whereby it is
inabled to walk in the Precept.
The whole Word of God is sincere Milk, whereby wee grow:
and the Old and New Testament may bee called, The Breasts of
Consolation, but the New is the better Breast. More of Gods
heart and love runs in the New, than in the Old. The Children
of the Bondwoman suck at the Breast of the Old, at the Law:
But the Children of the Free-woman suck here, at this Breast;
The Gospel.
Thus Faith, feeds, not only upon the Word: but the choice of
the Word, the Promises. Yea, and not only the Promises, but
the choice and freest of the Promises: the Cream, the spirits of
Nourishment.
And according to the proportion of Faiths feeding hereon, such
is the proportion of strength and nourishment conveyed down in-
to the Soul. Hee that feeds sparingly, is but a spare Christian;
gere but little strength: Hee that eats liberally is strongly nourish-
ed.
The difference that wee see in Christians here: some weak,
others strong; some Infants and Babes, others Growen men, some
thrown down with every blast of Temptation, others able to stand
out all affright; The difference ariseth hence, that some feed
more sparingly, some more liberally by Faith upon the Promises
of Grace; and so some are stronger than others are.
If you grow not, 'tis because you feed not: you play with the
Breast,
Breast, you lack not daily. A man may have meat before him, and yet die, if hee feed not. The best feeder here is the best grower. The larger the appetite, the stronger the Christian. The more the soul doth feed upon Promise, still the more strength is conveyed to the soul, the more the soul is nourished.

2. Faith feeds upon a Soul-satisfying Christ. The choicest dill that Faith doth feed upon is Christ himself.

Christ is food for the Soul -- His Flesh is meat indeed, and his Blood is Drink indeed. And hee who feeds upon Christ most, is the most living, the most growing, the most fasting Christian.

Christ is the breeder, and the feeder of spiritual life: the begetter and the nourisher of life in us. Hence he is called -- The Bread of Life. Not only bread to beget life in dead men, but bread to nourish and increase life in living men. And by Faith wee feed upon Christ; Faith is the Organ whereby wee feed upon Christ, and gets nourishment for it self, and all its fellow-Graces.

When Faith hath had a good meal here, all the Graces of Gods Spirit are bettered by it: our Love, Humility, &c. all are strengthened by it.

Now Faith feeds upon Christ
1. In the Word.
2. In the Sacrament.

Christ is Bread.

Christ is Spiritual Bread in the Word, to beget and increase life.

Christ is Sacramental Bread in the Eucharist, to nourish and augment our Spiritual life in us.

The one is Christ, in Ordinary. Christ in the Word is the Dayly-Bread for Faith to feed upon.

The other is Christ Extraordinary, for Festival Gaudy-days.

And in this order Faith feeds on Christ.

First, Faith feeds upon Christ in the Word, and then Secondly, Faith feeds upon Christ in the Sacrament.

None feed on Christ in the Sacrament, but they who have fed on Christ in the Word.

By the one wee have Union, by the other Communion with Christ: By the one ingraftment into Christ, by the other we have nourishment from Christ. By the one Christ is formed in us, by the other Christ grows up in us, to a perfect man.

Faith thus feeds upon Christ, who is the summe of all nourishing things: who is the heart, the staff of nourishment. Hence hee is called Bread, which is the staff of nourishment.

Christ is the heart of nourishment in the Word, in the Sacraments, in every Ordinance: All which are but empty things, con-
convey no spiritual strength to us, if we feed not upon Christ in them.

If Christ do withdraw himself from the Ordinances, if we feed not upon Christ in them, they will do us no good. If we feed not upon Christ in the Word, the Word will not profits. If we feed not upon Christ in the Sacraments, the Sacraments will not nourish.

Men may live out their days under the Ordinances, come to the Word, and to the Sacraments, and yet, when all is done, be like Pharaoh's lean Kine, never the fatter for all this food, if they feed not upon Christ in them.

And it is fulsome, when men live under such precious Ordinances, and yet grow no more, that surely they feed not on Christ.

Also! Could we bee so barren in our Graces, so lean in our lives, seeing we go in such rich Pastures, and are fed with such precious dainties, the Word, and Sacraments; if we feed upon Christ in these! No, my Brethren, this is the great reason why we have such pined and starved soules: This is the reason of all our weaknesses, our spiritual faintings, our declinings, our consumption under the Ordinances; we feed not upon the Spirits of nourishment, we feed not upon Christ in them: we let not Faith feed on Christ, and so are not nourished. We eat the Bread of the Lord, but not the Bread which is the Lord: we feed upon the Elements, not upon Christ. It is true here; The pure Elements are no nourishment. If Christ run not through the Bread and Wine they nourish not.

Well then, would you have your Soul nourished? take your fill of these Soul-refreshing-Dainties, whereby you may get strength. Here drink your fill. The best measure is no measure.

Feed upon the Promises, feed upon Christ, whereby you may be nourished. Feed on Christ daily. Sometimes we have such a Feast on Christ, as, in the strength of which (with Elijah) we go many days. God sometimes gives such abundance of Refreshments, that the Soul goes cheerfully a long time. But this is not Ordinary. And therefore there is need of our Daily feeding upon Christ. Christ must bee Daily-Bread for Faith to feed on. And it must bee our Prayer for the Soul, as well as for the Body — Give us our Daily-Bread — Bread for the Soul, as well as Bread for the Body.

That Day, wherein Christ hath not been fed on, is a Declining-day.

Thirteenth Royalty.

13. Faith is an Heart-Emptying-Grace.

There are two things, which are the most natural acts of Faith.

1. It.
Of the Nature, and

1. It empties a man of himself.
2. It fills the Soul with Christ.

The Soul cannot bee fill'd with Christ, whilest it is full of itself. And therefore Faith doth first empty a man of himself, cast a man out of himself, and then fills the Soul with Christ.

Faith doth cut a man off his own flock, the flock of Nature, the flock of Death, before it doth ingraft us into Christ, the flock of Life. Faith doth strip a man of his own cloaths, his own garments, which are too short to cover him, before it puts on the robes of Christ. It throws us off from our own bottom, whereon we stand, before it lets a man upon another Foundation. It makes a man poor in himself, before it enriches him with Christ. It empties a man of himself, before it fills the Soul with Christ.

Now there are two things in general, which Faith doth empty the Soul of,

1. Of all Opinion of Righteousness in our selves.
2. Of all Opinion of strength to help our selves.

1. It doth empty the Soul of that windy conceit, that Phrenetical Opinion of Righteousness in our selves. Faith doth not empty a man of any Righteousness, but of the false Opinion of Righteousness. It doth not empty us of any worth in our selves, there is none but of that fond conceit of worth in our selves. Faith makes us see we are worthlesse Creatures, Rev. 3. 17, 18. — Thou art wretched, and knowest not, that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me a Gold, that thou mayest bee rich, &c.

My Brethren, we are all of us naturally, full of ourselves, full of the self of Pride, full of the self of Love, Self-love, full of Self-conceits, full of Self-sufficiency; we are apt to think highly to ourselves. Wee all hold of Adam in Capite, wee are all full of Pride. As Pride was the Fall of Adam, so it would bee the ruine of us.

Wee think wee are Rich, full, need nothing. As the Church did in the place afore quoted, Rev. 3. 17, 18.

Thus, where Faith comes, it empties a man of himself; his Self-conceits; it doth discover our selves, to our selves; makes us see our selves, as wee liewelling in blood, in our own blood, Ezek. 16. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, even in the Blood of Christ, and the Blood of Flib. It puts down those Towering thoughts, those Ayery imaginatious, those Mountaneous conceits which men had of themselves. It casts us out of ourselves, makes us nothing in ourselves, makes us poor in ourselves, a lost thing as the word is, Mat. 5. 3. — Beggars in Spirit: Poor Beggars. It makes us miserable in ourselves, empty in ourselves, blind, naked, lost in ourselves. Faith makes us to see all this in our selves.

Faith makes us see, in stead of Righteousness, there's nothing but
Royalties of Faith.

Sin in us, in stead of beauty, blackness; in stead of continence, deformity. It discovers, there's nothing but Damnation and Hell in us; nothing but Hell in our parts, Hell in our Principles, Nay, Hell in our prayers: That not our persons only, but our prayers stand in need of Christ, that if hee save not our prayers, as well as our persons, our Prayers will damn us.

Faith is such a Grace as is rais'd up, upon the ruins of our selves, not the Substance, but the Sin; the ruins of our sinful selves; the ruin of our self of Pride, of Self-confidence, self-sufficiency, all which are thrown down, before Faith be rais'd.

As the Shipman's Fatal Star, which they say, is never seen, but before wrack, and death: So Faith is never seen, but before the wrack and death of sinful nature, which hath one wrack by Faith, but the universal wrack by death. And this is the first work, and the mighty work of Faith, which must bee done, before we come over to Christ. As the opinion of something in themselves, was that which kept off the Jews from coming to Christ; so it doth us. And therefore Faith empties us of this Opinion, makes us poor, that so we may be fit to receive the Gospel. — The poor receive the Gospel. The Gospel is but a merciful Hospital for the relief of the Poor, Blind, Naked, Lame, and lost Sinners. Here's nothing for those, who are Rich and Full, and think they want nothing.

Faith empties the Soul of that Opinion of strength to help itself.

Though a man were convinced, hee had nothing; yet if hee have such a conceit as this, That hee can help himself, that hee is able to recover and make himself out of that condition wherein he is: hee would then stand upon his own bottom: bee a Buckler to himself, and would never come over to Christ.

That which kept the Prodigal from his Father, was not the opinion of any worthiness in himself; hee saw hee was poor and ready to famish; but hee thought hee could recover himself, live of himself, without the help of a Father. And this conceit kept him off.

So the Woman with the Bloody-issue. It was not her opinion that shee had no need of Christ, which kept her off from coming to Christ, but shee thought shee was able to purchase help out of her own store, without going to him: And even in the last penny, shee conceited shee should have help, when shee had spent all (not before.) Then shee came. And, whilst a man hath this conceit, that hee is able to work out his own Peace, compass his own Happiness; Though hee bee poor, yet conceits, hee is able to enrich himself. Though naked, yet hee is able to weave a web of Righteousness to cloath himself. Though in debt, yet hee is able to make payment. Though undone, yet hee is able to recover himself. I say, so long as a man hath this conceit, thinks hee hath any strength of his own, to winde himself out of the misery, into which hee fees himself to bee plunged: so long hee will never come over to Christ. This conceitedness will keep off the Soul from Christ.
Men, you know, will rather make use of their own gold, than of others; of their own cloaths than of others; of their own friends, than of others; of their own power, than of others. Men will dig to the clay, (as Pliny faith) before they will go borrow water of their neighbours. Such a spirit there is in man, that hee will found the bottome, try the utmost what hee can do, before hee will call in for another help.

But now, when Faith comes, and discovers us, not only to be miserable, but unable to extricate our selves out of this misery, not only to bee poor, but unable to enrich our selves, not only under the burden of sin, but unable to call off this burden, not only indebted, but unable to pay, in prison, but unable to come forth: then will the soul hasten, and come over to Christ.

Now this is that which Faith doth. It doth not only empty a man of all opinion of Righteousness in the discovery of his misery, but also it empties a man of all that opinion of strength, to help himself out of this misery. That hee can neither do nor suffer any thing to relieve himself. That all his doings and sufferings are too short to help him.

That the state of nature is not only a state of misery, but a state of impotency, and utter disability to do anything to help it itself. Hence the Apostle faith, Rom. 5. 6, 8. -- That we were not only sinners, but without strength, not able to help our selves out of this condition of sin. -- Wee were dead in trespasses and sins. So that wee were unable to do, or (if any thing) yet dead works, such as let us further in debt, but wipe off no score. Hence Christ faith -- Without mee wee can do nothing. All our actions are so many Cyphers, so many Nothings.

1. Wee can do nothing to please God: our best works, but each other: The Gift of an Enemy: The Sacrifice of Fools. -- They, that are in the flesh, cannot please God.

2. Wee can do nothing, which is truly, really, and substantially Good. What Nathaniel (pake doubtingly concerning Christ, John 1. 46. -- Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? may preposterously bee here affirmed. No good can come out of an evil heart. No good fruit from a bad root. -- Do men gather Grapes of Thorns? or Figs of Thistles? -- Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? It's impossible.

3. Wee can do nothing to settle a sound and substantial Peace in our Consciences: though wee sin them over for a time, calm and still them for a time, yet wee cannot work a sound cure, nor settle a substantial Peace there.

4. Wee can do nothing, which may purchase any blessing or favor from God. Though God reward the works of wicked men sometimes, as hee did Abba, Sennai, Nebuchadnezzar; yet it is not that the works deserve a reward, but because hee is a plentiful rewarder.

Thus Faith discovers the impotency and utter disability to help our selves. Hence wee are laid
Royalties of Faith.

1. Not to be able to think a good thought.
2. Cor. 3: 5. -- Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves. All our sufficiency is of God.
3. Not to be able to understand, 1 Cor. 2: 14. -- The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him: nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
4. Not able to will any thing that is good, Phil. 2: 13. -- God worketh the will and the deed of his own good pleasure.
5. Not able to begin a good work, Phil. 1: 6. -- Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.
6. Not able to perfect it, when it is begun to our hands, -- Isa. 26: 12. -- Lord, thou hast wrought all our works in us, or for us. So Rom. 7: 18. -- To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I finde not.

There is a partial impotency in the hearts of the best; and this is more or less according to the vigor and power of corruption in us. As you see in Rom. 7: 18. For I know, that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present, but not to perform.

But there is a total universal impotency in unregenerate men -- Every imagination, motion, figment of his heart being evil, only evil, every day.

But admit wee could do any thing; could make as many prayers, as stars in Heaven; weep as many tears, as the sea holds drops; Nay could wee do as much as the tallest Angel in Heaven; all this would be too short to winde us out of our misery, that sin casts us into.

1. We are not able to suffer, and by our sufferings to help our selves out of this. If wee should maceate and afflic our bodies, suffer all the miseries in the world in way of satisfaction for the least sin: Ah! all would bee too little, too short, would not amount and come up to the least debt.

But what do I speak of this? If wee could suffer as many thousand millions of years torments in hell, as the World hath flood minutes from the Creation: Nay, and God should widen the capacities of the Soul, make a man more strong and able to bear more wrath, make a man a larger vessell, to receive more torments, that in time, the springs of his Justice may bee drawn dry, the treasures of his wrath might bee expended, and a full satisfaction bee made, yet there would bee no time, no eternity of torment, whereas there would bee enough endured, as a full satisfaction for the least sin, for the least oath, thou haft ever sworn; for the least idle thought thou haft ever conceived, &c. The reason is, all this is but finite, and therefore cannot come up to satisfie for an offence of infinite demerit.
Thus Faith empties a man, not only of opinion of Righteousness in himself, but of opinion of helping himself by any strength of his own, out of this. Faith will tell thee, There is an eternal Law violated, and thou canst not make up that: there is guilt of sin, and thou art not able to satisfy for that; God is an enemy, and thou art unable to make him thy friend: God is angry, and thou art unable to appease him: thou art liable to wrath, and not able to avoid it; thou art under the Curse, and art unable to undergo it: art cast into debt, and art unable to make payment.

All which being discovered to the soul, the soul falls down at God's feet, and faith not with him in the Gospel: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. But, Have mercy upon me, for I am unable to pay. God be merciful to me a sinner.

Oh! This will make a soul fall down at the feet of God, and implore that mercy of God, that he would cancel all the obligations, reverse all his Proceedings, cross all Books; pardon all debts, between him and the soul.

Fourteenth Royalty.

14 Faith is an Heart-inriching, and filling-Grace.

When Faith hath once emptied a man of himself, makes him a fit receptacle: then it fills his soul with Christ: when it hath stripped a man of his own rags, then it puts on the Garments of Christ: when it hath made a man poor in himself, it enriches the soul with Christ: when we are nothing in our selves, then Christ is made all to us. -- Wisdom, Justification, Sanctification and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30.

An humble empty heart is the vessel of all Grace. So much Emptiness, so much Grace. Because humility doth empty the heart for God to fill it. If the heart be emptied once, it must needs be filled. Nature abhors emptiness, Grace much more.

Faith doth enrich the soul with all the merits of Christ, with the Spirit of Christ, Christ imputed, Christ imparted, Christ infused: with the Righteousness of Christ for Justification: with the Holiness of Christ for Sanctification. Faith will not want it, if Christ have it: Faith will not bee poor, if Christ be rich, will not bee empty, if Christ bee full. -- I cannot bee poor. (faith Bernard) So long as God is rich: his Riches are mine: Of his fulness I receive Grace for Grace.

Christ indeed is a Fountain, but hee is a Fountain sealed up: Hee is a Treasure, but hee is a Treasure locked up to an unbelieving heart. Faith is the Key that unlocks this Treasure, opening the Treasures of Heaven, making an inlet of all the Glory of Christ. Faith gives the soul communion with all the Riches of Christ. So far as it is possible for Christ to bee communicated; hee is made ours by Faith;

Ego non sum meriti inops, quondamille non est inops meritationis, Bernard.
Royalties of Faith.

by it there is a conveyance made of all the great revenues of Christ. The great stock, which Christ did purchase by his Blood, is passed over to the believing soul. There is a Deed of Gift made to such, wherein I say, Not the whole Righteousness of the Mediator, his essential and incomunicable Righteousness: but his whole mediatory Righteousness; that Righteousness which Christ purchased for us as Mediator, the Righteousness of his active and passive obedience; by the one doing our services, by the other bearing our scourges; by the one as was said before, answering Gods commanding Justice, by the other answering Gods condemning Justice: the one in Preamum, to free us from wrath: the other in Preamum, to induce us to Glory: all this is made ours.

As Boaz said to his Kinsman -- Marry the Woman, and the Field shall be yours: So when once by Faith we are married to Christ, his Blood is ours, his merits are ours, his Spirit are ours: all are ours: Faith gives us a propriety in all. So that Faith may break forth into this rapture with that Father: -- Lord, I am thy death, thou art my life; I am thy hell, thou art my Heaven; I am thy sin, thou art my Righteousness; I am thy poverty, thou art my Riches. And all the Riches which Christ did purchase with his Blood and set down and think what the Blood of Christ, the Blood of God (as the Apostle calls it, by communication of Properties) what this might buy out, at the hands of a Father: why all this is made thine by Faith.

So that you see, Faith is a Soul-inriching Grace. It gives a man not only Title, and interest into a Soul-inriching-God, a Soul-inriching-Christ, a Soul-inriching-Treasure: but gives the soul the possession and enjoyment of all this. By Faith we possess God, in Christ, and by no other way, but by Faith in Christ.

Though Faith be poor in itself, the poorest Grace of all, as having nothing of its own, such a Grace as lives upon another's grace, is fed with another's food, rich by another's riches, as the pox said of himself: -- Hee was poor, yet making many rich, having nothing, yet possessing all things: so I may say of Faith. Though bee poor in it itself, yet it makes us rich, doth enrich us with all riches of Christ, though it hath nothing in it itself; yet it possesses all things, it possesses Christ, which is all. Oh! If you bee rich in Faith, you cannot bee poor in Grace, or in Holiness: Faith faciliities. So much Faith, so much grace; so much Faith, so much Love; so much Faith, so much Peace; so much Faith, so much Humility, so much brokers of spirit for sin, so much Patience, Zeal, &c. Never was it known among Beleever to bee a weak Christian. So much Faith write down, much Grace. Little in Faith, and little in Grace, little in love, &c. grace is still proportionable to the measure and degrees of Faith, as the fountain and the flood, Hence Faith is called the Mother-Grace, 2. Pet. 1. 2. 3. -- Grace and Peace bee multiplied on you; by the knowledge and love of God: &c. This Entwors: By the acknowledge-
Of the Nature, and

mem: that is, by Faith. The augmentation of Faith doth cause the multiplication of Grace, not in the kinds only, but in the degrees. The more Faith in degrees, the more Grace. Grow in Faith, and you grow in all Grace. Decrease in Faith, and all the Grace of God decrease in thee. There is decay of Love, of Joy, of Patience. The ground of all decayes, is the decay of Faith.

Well then. To draw to a conclusion of this; you see Faith is an enriching Grace.

1. It enricheth the understanding with knowledge, with heavenly wisdom, which is better than gold. It makes the Head of house of divine knowledge.

There is some Knowledge before Faith. Scienta Principium, the Knowledge of Principles. But the best Knowledge is after Believing. -- We believe and know, faith John. First believe, and then know. Credere et intelligere: believe, that thou mayest understand. Hence David, Psa. 119. -- Teach mee good Judgement, for I have believed thy Word. Not that I may believe: but -- that I may have believed.

Hence Augustine, upon Heb. 4. 2. (-- The Word did not profit them, because it was not mixt with Faith in them, that heard it) faith, -- They cannot learn, because they will not believe. See that would learn, must believe.

As Knowledge of things revealed goes before Faith, so Faith goes before the exact understanding, and clear apprehensions of them. How shall a man bee able to understand these heavenly Mysteries in the Word, all which are far above Reason. The Mystery of the Trinity, the Mystery of Christ, in whom there is nothing but Mysteries.

"His Person a Mystery, his Nature his Works, all Mysteries" Tim.

3, 16. -- Without Controversy great is the Mystery of Godliness; God manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, received up in Glory. That hee should bee God-Man, mortal, and immortal: That there should bee such greatness, and such basenesse: such infiniteness, and yet such finitenees in one Person. These are all Mysteries.

Hence Christ is called (Isa. 9. 6.) Wondeirful, because all is wonderful in Christ; he is wonderful in his Person, in his Nature, in his offices, in the managing of them. A chain of wonders.

So the Creation a Mystery, Resurrection a Mystery. Christian Religion is nothing else but a bundle of holy Mysteries.

Which, how shall any man understand, until first he believe: Hee that seeks to know before hee believe, shall never know.

The better way to know, is to shut your eyes, captivate Reason and Beleeve: and then you shall see and know.

Thus you see, Faith enricheth with Spiritual Knowledge.
Royalties of Faith.

2. As Faith enriches the Understanding, the Head with Knowledge, so it enriches the Heart with Grace. It makes the Heart a Treasury of Divine and holy Graces. The least of which are worth all the Riches of the World.

Divines set down four invaluable things.

1. The Favour of God in Christ.
2. The Souls of Men.
3. The Spirit.

1. The Favour of God; That's invaluable, Psal. 63. 3. -- Thy loving kindness is better than Life. And Life is the most precious thing a man hath in the World -- Skin for Skin, and all a man hath will be given for his Life. The Devil was right there. Now God's loving-kindness is better than Life.

2. The Souls of Men. -- What will it profit a man to gain the whole World, and lose his Soul? Christ sets the gain of the whole World against the loss of one Soul. Hee puts one Soul in one Balance, and the whole World in another. And one Soul weighs down all. -- What will it profit? Its too light. All that gain cannot make up this loss. It is an incomparable loss, because an irreparable loss; once lost, lost for ever. There's no recovery of a lost soul. Though a man may lose other things, yet may hee recover them again: Man may lose Riches, &c. but not his Soul, when once lost for want of believing.

3. The third invaluable, is the Spirit: not to bee -- bought with Power or gold. Hence Peter told Simon-Magus, when hee would have bought the Spirit. -- Thy money perish with thee. Thinkest thou the Gift of God may be bought with money?

4. The Graces of the Spirit. The least of which doth weigh down all the World. The least gain of Grace, of Love, of Repentance, of Godly sorrow, Humility, is worth ten thousand Worlds. -- Faith is more precious than gold, faith Peter. Now hee are the Riches, that Faith doth possess the Soul of, the invaluable Riches of Grace.

Other Riches God deals out promiscuously, and -- No man knows their love or hatred, by any thing before him. A man may do wickedly and prosper, as it was said of Antochus Epiphanes. These riches Gods enemies do share in, as well as his friends. Nay, and we often the greatest share, the greatest portion, Job 21. 7. Jer. 2. 1. Dives may have more wealth; Sanid more command, Agrippa more gorgeous apparel, than the dearest of Gods Saints.

But now these are such Riches as God bestows upon none but believers. -- Abraham gave portions to the Sons of the Concubines, and sent them away: but unto Isaac he gave all hee had.

Other Riches may bee taken away. A man may bee rich to day, and poor to morrow. -- The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. Both with one breath. Hence the wise man. -- Riches abhorr. make
Of the Nature, and

make themselves wings, and fly away. But there are abiding Treasure: A Treasure, whose spring is in Heaven; whose Foundation is in Christ. **Our life is hid with Christ in God**: not only hid for secrecy; but hid for safety. It is a safe life, an abiding life.

Nay, but if they should continue: yet will they do us no good in the day of trouble. They cannot save our souls from, nor in the day of wrath. They cannot save us from sickness, nor from death; not from Hell. Nor are they able to mitigate our Torments, to purchase one drop of water in that lake of fire. What profit had **Ahab** of his Vineyard? **Balthazar** of his cups? **Dives** of his wealth? **Judas** of his thirty-pence? **Agrippa** of his gay apparel? The rich fool of his full barns? All these would do them no good. Neither quench, nor bribe them flames, but rather afford Oile to increase them.

But now Grace; that riches, which Faith doth enrich us with, all; it is such as will uphold us in sickness, see a choice cordial in that bitter potion: it will deliver us in death, save us in the day of wrath, and enable us to lift up our heads with joy and boldness in the day of Judgement, that terrible day of the Lord, when the wicked shall tremble before the Judge, and call upon the Mountains to fall upon them, and the Hills to cover them from the presence of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lord.


Thus you see, **Faith is an Heart-inriching Grace.** A Believer hath title to all.

A Believer is the poorest and the richest man in the World. As none is poorer than a godly man in himself; so none is richer than a Believer in Christ. **He is as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. Christ is the Heir of all things. All are yours, if you be Christ's. No sooner can the soul lay -- Christ is mine; but he may say -- His Blood is mine, his Spirit mine, his Glory mine, all is mine.**

**Christ and all his are conveyed and made over by the same Deed of Gift.** Hence the Apostle faith -- We are made partakers of Christ: Not of some part: but of Christ, all Christ, nor of justification only, but say Christ, and there is all.

Fifteenth Royalty.

15. **Faith is an Heart-inriching Grace.**

There is a threefold Death, that Faith doth raise up the soul from.

1. The Death of Sin.
Royalties of Faith.

2. The Death of inward Trouble.
3. The Death of outward Trouble.

1. Faith raiseth up the soul from the Death of Sin. Wee are all of us -- Dead (by nature) in trespasses and sins, Ephes. 2. 1. Dead-Born. And as dead men, so wee have no notion to spiritual things, no motion, no strength to any good; no sense, being insensible of the weight of sin, insensible of mercies and judgements: wee have no desires after any thing good, no affection to them.

And a Death it is, not only Privity, A mere absence and privation of spiritual life; but a Positive Death, wherein there is an introduction of a Positive vicious Habit. As in Natural Death, there is not only a Privation of Life, of the former form: but the Possession of another form: there is another form left in the body. So in Spiritual Death, there is not only a mere Absence, a bare Privation of Life: But there is a Positive Evil, and Vicious Habit left in the soul. Hence, Heb. 9. 14. The works of natural men are called -- Dead works. There would bee a contradiction in calling them Dead works, if unregenerate men were only deprived of spiritual life, and had not another positive evil form in them.

Thus dead wee are then, not only Privatively, but Positively.

And it is Faith which doth raise up the Soul from the Death of Sin, to the Life of Grace. Faith is the Resurrection of the Soul from under the spiritual death, the Death of Sin.

The first rise of the Soul from the Death of Sin, is by believing. An holy life hath its rise from Faith, The Fountain of all our Spiritual Graces. The worker of all good things: That which begetteth Love, Fear, Repentance. Hence Calvin, faith, faith regenerate.

Repentance doth not only follow Faith, but doth arise from Faith. Hence Clements Alexandrinus. -- Faith is the first awakening, the first inclination of the Soul to Christ.

Hence by some, Faith, and the New Creation: Faith, and Sanctification do differ as much as the Cause and the Effect. -- Faith is the Instrument of Justification: but the efficient of Sanctification.

They who distinguish Regeneration, which is part of our Vocation, and Sanctification, do make Faith and Sanctification differ as much as Cause, and Effect. Vocation (say they) produceth Faith, and Faith being begotten produceth Sanctification both habitual and actual: Hence it's called the Mother-Grace.

But they who make Vocation and Sanctification all one, and both to be nothing else but our inherent Righteousness; or those Habits, that frame of Grace implanted in the Soul, (whereof Faith is a part), they do say, Faith doth not produce the Cause of the Habits of Graces: but Faith produceth the acts of Grace, of Love, Repentance, &c. Faith doth
doth not produce the Habits, but the acts of Grace.

For the clearing of this. Sanctification may be considered as it is either,

1. Habitual. Or
2. Actual.

1. For our Habitual Sanctification, There wee say, the Spirit God is the only Cause, and Faith is an Effect as well as others: Faith is a part of our inherent Sanctification.

2. For our Actual Sanctification, or as those Habits do act and exercise; and there wee say, Faith doth help to produce the acts of Grace, of Love, of Repentance. 1 Tim. 1. 5. -- Love out of a pure heart, and a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned. Faith doth not only lead an hand to its Fellow-Graces, for the perfecting of Grace, but Faith doth help to produce the Acts of Grace, the Acts of Love, of Repentance, Zeal, Patience, &c.

Though at the same time they bee all implanted, yet in Nature Faith hath the preceedency, and helps to produce the Acts all the rest.

As God the Father is before the Son in Nature, yet not in Time, Hee is not a Father till hee have a Son. So is it to bee understood concerning Faith, and all other Graces.

2. Faith raiseth us up from the Death of inward Troubles. As the sense of Gods Love, the apprehension of his favour is the life of the Soul. Psal. 30. 5. -- In his favour is Life. So the sense of God's Displeasure is the Death of the Soul. Psal. 88. 10. -- Shall the dead arise to praise thee? Hee speaks of that spiritual Death in which wee was, labouring under the sense of Gods wrath and displeasure; which hee calls the Death of the Soul. -- Shall the Dead arise to praise thee? Shall my Soul, dead and sunk with discouragements, and apprehensions of thy wrath; Shall it arise to praise thee? So that this is the Death of the Soul.

Now, Faith doth raise the Soul up from this Death. When the Soul seems to bee sunk and buried under the apprehensions of God's displeasure, is slaine with discouragements, lies gasping and breathing for comfort. The least touch of the Promise by Faith doth raise up and revive the Soul, and fetches a man to life again.

All the while that sense works, a man sinks deeper and deeper into this sad condition. But let sense be still, and Faith come in, and act its part, and the Soul cannot lie so low in Trouble, but it will raise it up, Psal. 77. 10. -- I said, this is my Death; yet will I remember the years of the right hand of the most high, &c.

What a precious thing is Faith? It is called precious Faith. And so it is indeed; that is able to work such wonders in the Soul, in an infant.

What a Cordial is this! when a man is in wounding, and fainting fits, that one taste of the Promise by Faith, will fetch him to life again, when the soul lies in the dust, under sad apprehensions, heavy
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heavy Agonies, sinking and dying; one dram, one grain of Faith, will fetch him to life again, set him on his feet again, walking and leaping, and praising God. This is precious Faith indeed.

Now, for the manner how Faith doth work for the raising up of the Soul from under these spiritual Troubles, we will only add these particulars.

1. Faith doth in this condition look back upon soul-raising Experiences. It causes a man to consider the days of old, the years of ancient times, as David did, in the same condition, Psal. 77:5.

It makes a man revive those former experiences of God's Love, those former workings, those fore-past evidences, those broken Rings, Pledges, Love-tokens, which have passed betwixt God, and the Soul.

Such a time he took me up into His Chariot, and spake friendly to me: Such a time, I sat down under His shadow, and His Banner over me was love: Such a time He took me down into His Winecellar, hid me with flags; Such a time, He brake into my soul, discovered himself to me a Reconciled God, gave me an earnest of His love, a testimony that He manifested Himself to me, came and supped with me; gave me the White Stone, the Hidden Manna, the New Name, &c.

This is the Art of Faith. Thus doth it produce the former evidences and experiences of Love; and from these doth take up arguments to raise the Soul, in this dark condition.

Why shall Faith lay? Once a Father, and ever a Father. Once a Friend, and never an Enemy. Though we change, yet God doth not change — With Him there is no variableness, nor shadow of change. His carriage may alter, his heart cannot. His expression may vary, his Affections cannot. God hath spoken Peace, and peace will never unfay what He hath said. He hath given me sure evidences, and He will never take them away again, though He may withhold the comfort of them. Hee that hath been gracious, will be gracious. Men shet their hands, because they have opened them: but because He hath once opened his hands, Hee will never shut them.

2. Faith looks upon Soul-raising Promises. Such as are not only made for support, but for deliverance. — I will not contend for ever, nor will I be always wroth, leaf the Spirit which I have made should fail before me, and the Soul which I have created, I was angry with him, I bid my face from him. But I will heal him, I will lead him also, and restore comfort to him, and to his mourners, Isa. 57: 16, 17, 18. For a moment I have forsaken thee, but with everlasting kindness have I had compassion on thee, faith the Lord thy Redeemer, &c. Isa. 54: 8, 9, 10, 11. — Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me; my God hath forgotten me! Can a Wo-
Of the Nature, and

man forget her child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her womb? But they may: but I will never forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands: thy ways are ever in my sight.

Thence and such like promises Faith looks upon. It doth not so much look at the Face of God; God's outward carriage and expression in the condition, as at the Heart of God, and his inward affection, which lies in the Promise.

Full well Faith knows, The Ground of Comfort doth not lie in the Face of God, the aspects of God. If so, then our comfort could not bee stable. This alters, as wee alter, changeth, as we change: But the ground of Faiths comfort lies in the Promise; and thither it hath recour, when from Outward appearance it can get no comfort.

Sense looks upon the face of God onely, upon his outward presence: But Faith looks upon the Heart of God in the Promise, where it sees a Calm heart under a Stormy countenance, inward Smiles, though outward frowns, Inward Affections of Love, under Outward expressions of displeasure.

As Joseph had the affections of a brother, under the expressions of an Enemy. Hee could put on expressions of an enemy; An angry countenance: but yet put off Affections of a brother; a loving heart: so is it often with God.

And therefore Faith doth view him in the Promise, hath recourse thither, as you see poor David had, in the like case, Psal. 77. to the tenth verse. Hee was in sad Conditions, and nothing could raise him. God abstained himself from him: Hee fell to praying, to complaining: but yet no comfort came. -- Hee complained and his spirit was overwhelmed. Hee was so farre from Ease by this, that his Spirit was more oppressed. Nay -- Hee called to remembrance times past. All this while comfort came not in. At last wee betake our souls to the Promise, hath recourse to the Covenant: and then his soul revived, ver. 10.

Thus Faith looks upon the firmness of the Covenant, the stability of the Promise, and is raised, revived. Read Isa. 49. 14, 15. 11a. 54. from seven to eleven, which are Soul-raising-promises.

3 Faith lays hold upon a soul-raising-Christ. Upon whom whatsoever doth lay hold, hee will pull him out of the deepest waters. If a man under water have hold of any thing above him, it will pull him out, hee shall not sink. So here, when wee are overwhelmed in these deep waters, if, by Faith the Soul lay hold on Christ, it will bear him up, and bring him forth, John 12. 26. -- I am come a light into the world (Faith, Christ) that whosoever believeth in me, should not abide in darkness. The least touch of Christ by Faith, doth raise up and revive the Soul in this sad Condition.

As the dead man was raised to life, and revived, but by touching the dead bones of Elisha, 2 King. 13. 21. so the Dead Soul, if
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In doing but touch the dead and crucified body of Christ by faith, is raised up and revived. Such a virtue and influence comes from Christ, as doth raise up and comfort the soul.

Thus faith doth raise the heart by laying hold on Christ, He, who raised up himself, will raise up all his members. If our head had been still under water, we had then perished: but he being risen, will raise us up also being his members.

4. Faith enables a man to put up soul-raising prayers; induces soul-raising prayers, strong prayers, and cries to God. As prayer helps faith: so faith helps prayer. It enables a man to wrestle with God, now in the dark of desertion, as it did Jacob in the dark of the night. Yea, and to wrestle with him, by his own strength, the strength of his Covenant, of his promise, of his Christ.

In which encounter, faith will take up arguments,

1. From itself.
2. From God.

1. From itself: By presenting its miserable condition in the absence of God: That all his own work is ready to sink, and dy, to come to nothing; if he help not. Oh! (will faith say) Lord, my heart fails, my strength fails, my spirit fails. Oh! I come down before I dye: come, strengthen the things that are ready to be thrown in me.

This argument David took up, Psal. 143. 7. — Hear me speedily, O Lord, my spirit fails. Oh! Hide not thy face from me, lest I melt into them that go down into the pit. So Psal. 39. 10, 11. 13. — Take thy plague from me, I am consumed by the stroke of thy hand, &c. Hear my prayer, O Lord, hearken to my cry. Keep not silence among tears, for I am a stranger with thee; a sojourner as all my fathers were — Oh! spare a little, that I may recover strength before I go hence, and be no more.

2. Faith will take up arguments from God.

1. From the justice and truth of God, He hath promised never to save nor forsake his people.

2. From the immutability of God. — Thou art JEHOVAH, thou hastest not: therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed, Mat. 6. Thou never repentest of thine own work. Thou never hast wasted my heart, to lose it again. Thou never tookest my heart, to leave it again, and take my heart clean away. Thou never didst set thy heart on me, to take it off again.

3. From the power of God. Abraham at a plunge was supported with this strong staff of comfort, when though by God's command he was to sacrifice his Son, yet he accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, Heb. 11. 19.

4. From the mercy of God. Lord, thou art gracious and merciful, ready to relieve. It's true, I am a sinner, but thou art a Saviour. I am sinful: but thou art merciful. I am impious, but thou art gracious.
"Ours, I have done that, for which thou mightest damn me: but thou hast not left that, by which thou mightest save me. True, I am not worthy of a smile from Heaven. I have deserved to be sent from darkness here, to everlasting darkness hereafter: from this parish, to total and universal darkness. But Lord, proportion not thy dealings to me, according to my deservings from thee. Let not the strong God take a pattern from my weakness, good God, do not even remember my soul, lest thou forget thine own goodness, thine own mercy. But, thou, who art found of them, who seek thee not, oh! be mercifully found of a soul, who seeketh thee.

Thus will Faith work it self out of trouble, and gather arguments to prevail with God, for deliverance.

It will take up arguments,
From Soul-raising Attributes.
From Soul-raising Promises.
From Soul-raising Relations.
From Soul-raising Experiences.

It will incompass God with Gods own strength. And God cannot, because hee will not deny. God will not reject his own strength, not strive against his own mercy, not relist his own Spirit, not falsifie his own Truth, but will raise up, and revive the Soul.

Thus you see, Faith is a Soul-raising Grace. Where Unbeli holds the soul under water, buries the soul in these sad conditions. Faith raiseth up and reviveth it. A believing soul cannot long lie under trouble. If all the Power, Truth, and Mercy of God will fetch him out, hee shall bee sure to bee delivered. Faith ingages and fets awork all these to help.

Oh! The Reason, my Brethren why you lye so long in spiritual Agonies, buried up in spiritual troubles, is, because you li not Faith come in to work for you, lest Faith have her perfect work, and it will raise you.

Sixteenth Royalty.

16. Faith is an Heart-chearing Grace.

Faith is such a Grace as doth cheer and comfort the soul with unexpressible Consolations: It is such a Grace as makes an inlet of all the Consolations of God into the Soul.

Faith brings a report to the Soul, that God is his God, Christ is his Christ: that his Name is written in the Book of Life: his sins are pardoned: his soul shall bee saved. And such news as this must needs fill the soul with unexpressible Consolations, with joys unspeakable and full of glory.

All other joyes are but mad, and disorderly joyes. They are carnal, not spiritual; outward, not inward joyes, they are but painted.
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red, not true Joys, imaginary, not real Joys, unsatisfying, not all Joys, inconsistent, not stable Joys. The best, false Raptures, Amautophtetall Illusions: not true Joys.

But this Joy. The Joy of Faith, it is a grounded Joy; it is
1. A spiritual Joy, for the Nature of it.
2. A white Joy, for the Fear of it; a Joy in the heart.
3. A satisfying Joy, for the Fulness of it.
4. A Constant Permanent Joy, for the Duration of it. — My Joy shall no man take from you.

Also! What are all other Joys to the Joy of Faith? The least model of this Joy, is worth all the full meals of worldly delights. The least gleanings of this Joy, is worth the whole Harvest of carnal mirth. The least drop of this, is worth an ocean of any other. There is more moisture in one drop of this, than in a flood of temporal, and carnal delights.

True Joy grows upon the stock of Faith. Where there is no Faith, there is no true Joy. Faith is the Root, and Joy is the Fruit. It is called, The Joy of Believers: Believers are the Subjects of it, and Joy in Believing: Believing is the Root of it, Rom. 5. 1. 2. — Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also through Faith, we have access into this Grace wherein we stand, rejoicing under the hope of the Glory of God, Rom. 5. 13. — The God of Hope fill you with all Joy and Peace in Believing. Where there's Faith, there's Joy.

If Faith of Evidence, there Joy doth naturally result and derive from it: If but Faith of Adherence, there Joy is hid and secret, though it doth not appear. The seed of Joy is hid as yet under the Clouds of Faith, but in time it will break forth and appear. Joy is there though it be not seen.

There may be a divorce between Faith and actual rejoicing for a time, but there can be no divorce between Faith, and the Matter, and Ground of rejoicing: not between Faith and the Affection of Joy. — My Joy shall none take from you.

Thus you see Faith is an Heart-cheering Grace. It fills the soul with such a Joy, as nothing is able to bereave the soul thereof. It is the Losses, Crosses, Poverty, Sickness, Prisons, Persecutions, which are able to take away this Joy of Faith.

1. Faith will enable a man to rejoice in Bonds, to rejoice in Tribulations and Sufferings for Christ, as the Apostle faith — As Sufferings abound, the Consolations shall superabound. As if all the floods of Consolation did issue from the spring of Sufferings.

2. It will enable a man to rejoice in fickleness. Faith will be our Cordial, and let such a beam of God's love into the Soul, as will cheer and comfort the heart in this condition: warm and enlighten it: not only enlighten, but warm the heart in this condition.

3. It will enable a man to Rejoice in Poverty, in Calamity, in Famine.
Of the Nature, and

You see Habakkuk's confidence, Hab. 3. 17, 18. -- Although the Figure do not blessome, yet let them be found in the Vine; though the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat: though the sheep be cut off from the Fold, and there be no Bullock in the Stable; yet I will rejoice in the Lord: I will joy in the God of my Salvation.

Though the waters of Calamity should rise so high as to drown up all his comforts: yet he could rejoice in God.

In the absence of all worldly comforts, Faith can let in springs of Consolation from God, to rejoice the Soul. If God, if Christ, if Glory can rejoice the heart, Faith will not want matter of Joy in the faddest condition. It is an Heart-cheering-Grace. Faith will present to man Soul-rejoicing-gronds. There are these five grounds of Rejoicing.

1. Our Election.

Hence Christ's faith, -- Rejoyce that your Names are written in the Book of Life.

2. Our Redemption.

3. Our Justification.

4. Our Sanctification.

5. The Promises and Hopes of Glorification.

And Faith presents all these grounds of rejoicing. It makes a discovery to the soul, that we are God's chosen, such as he hath elected; that we are his Redeemed ones, such as he hath purchased; that we are his Justified ones, such as he hath pardoned: that we are his holy ones, such as he hath sanctified: and shall be hereafter glorified.

And, when such a report is made to the soul, from Heaven, when Faith hath been in Heaven, and brings this news down to the soul, how can it bee but the Soul must rejoice, and bee filled with all Conolations?

Object. But alas! you will say, Who are more sad? who are most disconsolate than Believers are? And therefore, how is Faith an Heart-cheering-Grace?

Ans. 1. Believers may rejoice, and thou not discern it.

It is a Joy which is not known but by experience. Hence the Apostle faith, -- It is a Joy that passeth all understanding. None know it, but they who feel it. -- A stranger doth not intermeddle with this Joy. As they cannot feel it, so they cannot see it: and therefore are no competent Judges, whether Gods people are joyfull, or whether they bee sorrowfull.

2. But to answer further. You say, Believers are sad and disconsolate people.

1. All Believers are not so. They are such as are

1. Under some present cross and affliction, God's hand is gone out against them, though for good. -- For all things work together for good to them that love God, and are chosen according to his purpose. But I say, some
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Some present evil is upon them, and this may sadden the spirits of the best for a time, though this may bee their infirmity.

Paul had learned in all estates therein to bee content, and if to bee content, then to rejoice, unless it were Contemplation by force, sure not well pleasing to God.

If indeed their comfort did lye in the presence and enjoyment of these outward things, then no marvel, if in the absence of them, they were cast down. I say, if the floods of their comfort were maintained by such springs as these, then no marvel, if these being taken away, they bee bereaved of their joy.

But seeing these things are too short either to breed, or feed: either to beget, or fuel a Christian’s joy: why should the depravation of them so much affect the heart, as to take away their joy?

Have you not still the ground of joy? you have lost your goods, but not your God. You are deprived of your comforts, not of your Christ. And therefore except you do make Gods of the Creature, prize them too highly in your Judgement, ingage your hearts and affections too much to them: why should your joy be taken away?

You see Paul had learned in all estates to bee content, and the Prophet Habakkuk before mentioned: and why not you?

2. Such they are, as for the present are under some sad and sore Temptation, combat with Satan, and for the present their spirits are saddened, and cast down.

3. Such as are in deserted conditions; God having withdrawn himself, and hid his face from the soul. Than which there is no sadder condition in the World, when not a star, but the sun itself shone from the sky; when not a single comfort, but the universal comfort seems to be gone. This may sadden the spirit of Gods people for a time.

All Job’s crosses did not so much affect him as this. The loss of his Goods, of his Possession, of his Children came not so near him, as the apprehension of the loss of his God. Hee could lift up his head under all the other: but here hee was ready to sink.

Such a condition Gods people may bee in, which may cause sadness of spirit, as was David, Heman, Hezekiah, and others.

2. So secondly for those of Gods people, that are thus sad and disconsolate, it is not as they are Believers, but as they are Doubters. Their Trouble ariseth from Doubting, not from Believing. It is not Faith, but the want of Faith, which is the cause of their uncomfortable walking.

If Gods people would live more out of themselves, and more in Christ: if they would live more the Life of Faith, and less the Life of Sense: if they would live more in the Heaven of Promise, they would not bee so much cast down. The more trust, the less trouble.

Faith would bring Christ into the Soul, and there is cheer-dough with Christ.
Of the Nature, and

Faith would bring Heaven into the soul, and there is Comfort enough in Heaven.

Faith would open a way for the Love of God to enter; and that would thrust out all other grievances.

But I will not go about to excuse uncomfortable walking with God. Why should I give indulgence to mens Passions. Gods people are to be exceedingly blamed for their unheurful walking with God.

They are the shame of a good God, and give occasion to men to think he is an hard and rigid Master.

They wrong a good Cause, and discourage the hearts of others from entering into the ways of God.

Sure I am, There is no Condition, that Gods people can bee in, but they have always ground, and cause of rejoicing.

Either, A Rebus exhibitis, from things bestowed,
Or, A Rebus promissis, from things promised.

Either, From things in hand, and possession,
Or, From things in hope, and promise.

And therefore how blame-worthy are they, who disquiet themselves with needless perplexities, and lay the burden of sorrow on themselves, which God doth not?

Let us examine the grounds of these sorrows, and arraign them before the Bar of right Reason. What is it that troubles thee?

1. Is it thy former sins? why should these trouble thee? God hath pardoned them. And wilt thou bring the old guilt upon thy conscience again, which God hath cleared and pardoned? wilt thou bind, when God hath loosed? condemn, when hee hath absolved?

2. Is it thy present Corruption? God hath promised to subdue it. -- Sin shall have no more dominion over you. Hee hath promised to purge, to purifie: Hee came with Refiners fire, and Full of Hope, Mal. 3. 3.

3. Is it thy Imperfections? That there is so much formality, so little power? so much coldness, so little heat, &c? why God hath promised to pass by infirmities, to hide and cover imperfections.

4. Is it, because thou art in some present Afflictions? why, Hee hath promised, that All things shall work together for good to them that love God, and are chosen according to his purpose.

5. Is it, because thou art under some present Temptations? why St. James faith -- Count it exceeding joy, great joy, when ye fall into diverse temptations.

There is matter of Joy as well as of Sorrow, if by Faith thou wouldst but see what God aims at.

1. It may bee, for trial of Grace, as in Abrahams and Jobs case; whole temptation was of purpose to try and justifie his Graces.

2. It
2. It may bee, for exercise of Grace, of Faith, of Patience, &c.
3. It may bee, for discovery of sin, may for destruction of sin.
4. It may bee, to make us more humble, as Paul: more prayerful, &c.
5. Is it because thou art under some present Desperation? Yet it by Faith thou look upon the firmness of the Promise, the stability of the Covenant; in the absence of sense, thou shalt finde matter of Comfort.

Thus you see David did, Psal. 77, 10. Hee was in a great Desperation: hee cries and prayes: Hee prayes and cryes: Hee renewes his former evidences and experiences, yet gets hee no comfort. At last, by Faith hee looks upon the truth of Gods Promise, and "the stability of the Covenant. And then his soul revived, I remembered the days of old, the years of ancient times, I called to minde my songs in the nights, I communed with my own heart, my soul made diligent search. Will the Lord absente himself for ever, &c:" And I said, this is my infirmity. Yet I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High, &c.

Do but in this lad condition, behold these dealings of God, as the mates of a Father to thee, which are divers of Love, of Mercy and Truth, to them that keep his Covenant and his Testament.

Whether Gods end bee for Chastisement, as it was in David; Or for Tryal, as it was in Job; Or whether it bee for Prevention, as it was in Paul; left bee should bee putt’d up; yet all is in love, and therefore cause of rejoicing.

So that there is no condition so bad, but Gods people have still cause of rejoicing in it. Thou canst think of nothing, if thou bee a Believer, that can minister just cause of trouble to thee. And therefore why art thou cast down?

If there were more Trust, there would bee less Trouble. I dare bee bold to say, that all the troubles, all the disquiets of Gods people do arise from want of Faith. Were there more Faith, there would bee more Comfort. And therefore as David physticked his soul, when it was cast down and discouraged — Why art thou cast down, 0 my soul? and why are thou disquieted within me? Trust in God: So let us exercise our Trust, and all our Troubles will vanish, all our disquiets will disappene and bee gone.

Let Faith come in, and discover the Promises of God, made to thee in this thy lad condition.

Hee hath promis’d it shall not bee too great, 1 Cor. 10, 18. There hath no temptation taken you but what is humane: and God is faithful, and will not suffer you to bee tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation give an issue, that you may bee able to bear it. Hee hath promis’d it shall not bee too long, Rom. 16, 20. — The God of Peace shall stand under you feet shortly. — Hee will not contend for ever. Hee hath promis’d to deliver us, when in the day of trouble wee call upon him, Psal. 50.
Seventeenth Royalty.

17. Faith is an Heart-guiding Grace.

Faith is the eye of the soul, to direct and guide us. Faith is to the soul as the Pole-star to the Mariner, to direct the Mariner which way to steer his course. And the soul is like the Needle in the Compass, which ever looks towards God for direction. It is as if it were the Pillar of fire to us, in the Wilderness of this World, to direct our steps to our Heavenly Canaan.

Our life is called a Way. And not only a straight Way, but a difficult Way. We shall meet with many turnings in this Way. And if Faith doth not guide us, we shall either stand still, and not go forward: or we shall go into wrong ways, the way to Death.

My Brethren, we shall meet with many exigents in our way to Heaven. And, if Faith do not guide, we are sure to go astray.

You see what an Exigent Ester was put unto: Either to neglect duty, or to endanger her life. She put her life in her hand, for the good of the Church of God. If she had now consulted with flesh and blood, if she had followed the guidance of Reason, she had been mistook.

No doubt but sense and Reason would have told her, that it had been best, to not hazard her self, and put her life in jeopardy: but consulting with Faith, and following the guidance thereof, she was resolved to do the duty, though she perished in the doing thereof: And it was her safety.

The like in Abraham. You see what an Exigent hee was put unto. Hee was to part with his Son, his only Son, the Son of his Love, the Son of his old age, a Son of so many Prayers, and so many Promises. No doubt, if hee had consulted with flesh and blood, and with reason, they would have bid him to spare his Son: but following the guidance of Faith, hee was willing to sacrifice his Son, Heb. 11. 17. -- By Faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up his Son Isaac: of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, &c.

So it was Faith which guided Moses to leave the pomp and glory of Pharaoh's Court, and to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, foregoing the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. 24. If hee had followed the guidance of Reason, or sense, hee had miscarried. That would have told him, that hee was to regard himself, and his present happiness, and not throw himself out of all. But then hee had been miscarried. But following the guidance of Faith hee forsoake all.
This Guidance of Faith they wanted, Job 12:42. Who durst not confess Christ, for fear of being thrown out of the Synagogue. If they had had Faith, it would have guided them to Jesus Christ; be the line what it will.

The like of the Young-man. He went far, but when it was put to him, to leave all, to follow Christ, to sell all: it is said -- Hee went away forensiful. Hee consulted with Senfe and Reafon; hee wanted the Guidance of Faith, which would have directed him to part with all, to cast away all, rather than to leave Christ.

The like of Balaam. Either hee must forsake the wages of U-nrighteousness, or curse the People: but hee had more desire of mans reward, than hee had Faith to expect God, and so hee miscarried.

And, my Brethren, such like straits wee may meet withall in our way to Heaven. And, if wee follow not the Guidance of Faith, wee are sure to bee miscled.

It hath been the ordinary choice that the Saints have been put to. Either forsake thy God, or forsaile thy goods: Either leave Christ, or leave thy Comforts: Either renounce Christ, or lose thy Friends, thy Father, thy Mother, thy life. To these exigencies and straits Gods people have been driven. And had they not had Faith, they had surely been miscled: but having Faith, it guided them to suffer loss of friends, loss of goods, loss of liberty, loss of life it felt for Christ: as you see up and down, in Abraham, in Moses, in Jeremy, in Paul, and the rest of the Apostles, who accounted not their lives dear to them, for Christ.

And it was the usual speech of the Primitive Martyrs, when they were persuaded to leave Christ, rather than to suffer. -- Spare God Emperor, thou canst but cast into prison: God into Hell.

The like of Cyprian, of Polycarp.

The like of Frederick the Elector of Saxony, who was prisoned to Charles the Fifth, and was promised enlargement and restitution to his former dignity; If hee would come to Mars, It was Faith guided him to return this answer. -- In earthly things I am ready to yield to Caesar. In heavenly, only to Christ. And Christ is more welcome to me in Bonds, than Caesars Court without Christ.

Thus I might run down in particular examples in all ages; and then you know Faith hath guided men in these straits: which had they followed the direction of Reason and Sense, they had been lost for ever.

It is Faith which guides the hearts in these difficult cases. It is an Heart-guiding Grace. And this is the way.

Faith doth reject the wisdome of the flesh, and goes by Gods light. It shuts our eyes, and walks by Gods light. It follows God, as the blinde man follows his Guide, all his dayes. Hee who makes Gods Word all his Reason, shall have God a Counsellor. Faith will not own the wisdome of the flesh. -- the carnal minde is enmity to
Of the Nature, and
to God. It will not bee subject. It is full of contumacy and flourish against God and his ways.
Faith will neither own the Flesh, as a King, nor as a Counsellor. As it will not obey the commands of the flesh, so it will not follow the counsels of the flesh.
Peter would not consult with flesh and blood, but was obedient to the heavenly vision: where is implied, if hee had hearkened to flesh and blood, hee had been disobedient to the heavenly vision.
But Faith makes God its guide, Psal. 48. 14. - This God is our God for ever: he shall bee our guide unto death. Faith seeks direction from God, who is the Counsellor, the God of all wisdom. And the Soul, that leans upon God for wisdom, shall not want it. He who trusts in the God of wisdom shall not want direction. I say, hee, who flirts his own eyes, and sincerely falls down at the feet of God for counsel, shall have direction from him.
If indeed, wee seek as Balaam, with a double heart, or as the Children of Israel did, Jer. 42. who asked counsel, but were resolved of their way; wee then may miscarry. But hee who seeks with an humble and upright heart, that asks the way to Sion, with his face thitherward, resolved to go, as God directs, Such will God direct in his way: such hee will guide in all the ways of judgement.
As the Moon by darting her beams and influence into the Sea, doth move that great body backward and forward; which they say, is the cause of the ebings and flowings of the Sea; so God doth in difficult cases, dart such a beam of light into the Soul, such strong influences into the Spirit, as doth carry the soul the way it should go.
A man may follow his own wisdom and miscarry: but hee that shuts his eyes and follows God, is sure not to bee misled. Hee, who rejects the counsel of the flesh, and is resolved to walk by the direction of the Spirit, though never so unlikely to flesh and blood, is sure to go right.
You see an example of this in Balaam, in Saul sparing of Agag; and the best of the flock, in sacrificing before Samuel came to him. But I name but one.
Jer. 41. 10. to the end of the Chapter. Ishbosheth, who was the Captain of the Residue of the Jews left in Jerusalem, desired Jeremy (though with a double and deceitful heart) to enquire of the Lord, whether hee should go down to Egypt, or abide at Jerusalem: And bound himself with a vow, that - Whatever the Lord said, bee would do it.
Jeremy comes, and tells him, bee must abide at Jerusalem, and God would preserve him. But Ishbosheth wanted Faith to believe there was safety, where there was no means of safety. And therefore hee chose rather to go down to Egypt, than to abide at Jerusalem. And if that mans reason might direct it, 'twas the likeliest way; for
Royalties of Faith.

In Jerusalem was nothing but Poverty, Want, Famine and War: In Egypt there was Plenty, Peace, and all abundance.

But now observe. Though the way were never so likely, yet following his own wisdom, and rejecting the counsel of God: I say, following his own wisdom and counsel, and neglecting the direction of God, he fell upon his own ruin; it was his utter undoing. You fee there, the thing he thought he should avoid, he fell into: He thought to have avoided the Sword, Famine, and Pestilence: but all these followed him. God would make him know, it was better to follow the guidance of Faith, though the way were never so dangerous, unlikely, to carnal wisdom, than to be blest by his own wisdom, though ’twere never so likely. Men that would avoid danger out of God’s way, do surely run into it. He that will follow his own wisdom, not Gods, shall run into mischief.

You fee this in Jeroboam. It was a likely project in carnal reason, in man’s way. To continue his throne and kingdom, by making a God of calves, that so the people might be kept from Jerusalem, and might not return back to Judah. But in God’s way, it was the way to his ruin, the overthrow of him, and all his house.

Eighteenth Royalty.

18. Faith is an Heart-establishing-Grace.

It settles a man upon such a Foundation, as nothing can unsettle him, Psal. 127. 1. -- They who trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. Such a man is Homo quadratus. Fall hee which way hee will, hee lights upon his square, Psal. 112. -- His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord; his heart is established; hee will not fear.

Whereas, Unbelieving doth unsettle the soul; fills a man with unutterable perplexities; sets a man upon the rack of fears. It is that which keeps a man in fears, and that which causeth a fresh return of doubts and fears, -- if you do not believe, you shall not be established. An Unbelieving man is an house without a foundation, a man without a bottom, like a ship unballasted in a Tempest, tossed hither and thither.

Faith on the contrary doth make a man a rock in a storm: doth establish and settle the heart in the greatest Tempest.

The lesse Faith, the more Fear, the more Unsteadiness. The more Faith, the lesse Fear, the more Stability.

Faith doth unburden our hearts of all our fears, and all our cares. When a man believes not, all the burden lies upon a man’s self. But when we believe, wee cast all the burden upon the Lord.

We are troubled, and afraid what shall become of our souls, what
what of our bodies, what of our Children. But Faith doth unburden the soul of these cares and thoughts: it doth quiet and discharge the soul of these fears. Faith casts the whole burden upon the Lord: makes God to bear all the burden: not only the burden of sins, but the burden of cares and fears, comming to him weary and heavy laden, and by Faith casting our burden upon him, hee bears all, Prov. 16. 2. -- Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established, Psal. 55. 22. -- Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustaine thee.

There are two things Faith establisheth the soul against,

1. Against Fears.
2. Against Falling.

1. Faith establisheth the heart against Fears. When a man beleeves not, hee is nothing but fears and scruples: But, when once Faith comes, it doth answer all cases, silences all doubts, establisheth the heart against all fears.

There are five Fears which Faith doth establish the heart against,

1. The Fear of Men.
2. The Fear of Want.
3. The Fear of Death.
4. The Fear of Hell.
5. The Fear of Judgement.

1. Faith establisheth the heart against humane Fears, the fear of men. Faith will banish these unlawful and tyrannical fears. It will not suffer them to enter the Throne, and take possession of the heart, Psal. 27. 1. 2. -- The Lord is my light and my Salvation. There was his Faith -- Whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: in another Psalm. -- God is our hope and strength, a help in trouble ready to be found. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be moved, though the mountains be hurled into the midst of the sea, Psal. 46. 1. 2.

2. Faith doth establish us against the Fear of Want. Many there are that fear to out-live their labours, to out-live their Riches, their Comforts. Oh! say they, I shall one day want, and bee in misery.

Now Faith settles the soul against these fears. Why, will Faith say, hath not God said, -- The Lions shall hunger and suffer want. (That is, as the Septuagint read it) the mighty Nimrods, the great ones of the World, who have their baggs full: They shall sooner want, than they that fear the Lord, shall want anything that's good. Why will Faith say, -- Doth God cloathe the Lilies, feed the Ravens, and will he not take care for thee? Mat. 6. 24. to the 34. -- what hath not God engaged himself to bear thy charges to Heaven? Hath hee not promised to give thee all things necessary both for life and godliness? not only for Godliness, for Spirituals: but for Life too, for Temporals?
Hath not God given the promise of this Life, that now is, and of that, that is to come? Doth God take care for Ravens, for the Beasts of the field? Doth he feed his Enemies? and will he forget his friends? Hath he given thee a blessing? and doubtest thou he will give thee a crumb? will he not give us all things, who hath not withheld himself from us? I thus the Apostle doth reason, Rom. 8. 32. -- He that spared not his own Son, but freely gave him for us: how shall he not with him, freely also give us all things?

Sure he, who trusts God for his soul, will trust God for his body. Faith doth not single and chuse out its Object, to believe this, not that, but all coming from the same Truth, the same God; it believes one as well as another. He who depends on God for the many, will depend on him for the less: He who quits God for pounds, will trust him also for pence. -- If I tell you earthy things (faith Christ to Nicodemus) and you believe not: how will you believe, if I tell you heavenly things? So, if you will not believe God for earthy things, how can you believe him for heavenly things? If not for justification: how then for salvation?

3. Faith doth establish the heart against the Fear of Death; the King of Fears, as Job calls it: And of all terrible, the most terrible, as the Philosopher speaks. Unbelief doth lay the heart with fears. A man, that knows not what shall become of his soul to all eternity: no marvel if he be afraid to dye. When a man shall lie upon his death-bed, and knows not whether he shall go. Quod vadatam nescio. As it was said of Aristotle. I go I know not whither: Or, when a man shall look upon death, and Hell behind it: upon the pale Horse, and Hell behind: as we have it, Rev. 6. no marvel if he be afraid to dye. But when by Faith we can look upon God a Father: Christ a Saviour: and can say, -- God is my God; Christ is my Christ; Heaven is my Inheritance; Glory is my portion; no marvel then, if death be not terrible, no marvel then if he be ready to meet death, and say with Simon -- Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace. Or with Paul, I figh out, Cupio dissolveri: I desire to bee dissolved, and to bee with Christ.

Men that have not assurance of a better life, it is no wonder if they bee loath to leave this: they know not where to mend themselves. Earth in Possession, is better than Heaven in Reversion.

But when God hath given a man the assurance of a better life; when a man hath his hope in his hand, his evidences sealed; Oh! then death is not terrible: There will bee a willing Renunciation of the soul into God's hands.

It's true, in some cases, Hee that beleeveth maketh not haste, but here, the more wee beleev, the more haste wee make to bee with God.

4. Faith Stabliseth the heart against the Fear of Hell. Faith knows
knows who was in pretium, as well as in pretium, and beholds Christ not only in pretium, to intitle us to Heaven; but in pretium, as the price of our Redemption, to free us from Hell. As by his active Obedience hee answered Gods commanding and reimitative Justice: So by his passive Obedience hee answered Gods condemning and vindictive Justice, freeing us from that wrath and misery, which otherwise wee should unavoidably have fallen into.

5. Faith doth establish the heart against the Fear of Judgement.

There shall be no condemnation to such as are in Christ Jesus, such as are Believers. The Judge is our Advocate, our Saviour: Hee, to whom wee are to answer, hath answered for us: Hee, to whom wee are to give satisfaction, hath satisfied for us: Hee is our Redeemer, who hath laid down his life for us. Faith knows Christ will bee All, in All to the soul, not only in life to preserve it, but in death to comfort, and in judgement to abolve thee, and save thee.

2. Faith doth establish the heart against falling,

1. Against Total Apostasy.

2. Against Final Apostasy.

1. Against Total. There is not a Total Apostasy. Though the Saints fall sadly, yet not totally.

1. A Child of God may lose all the comforts of spiritual life: yet not spiritual life itself. Hee may bring himself into such a condition by sin, that hee may sin away all the comforts of his life. Thus, David, Phil. 5.1. -- Restore to me the joy of thy Salvation. Hee had not lost life, but the comforts of it, and desires they may be restored. A man may out-live the comforts of life: this is a sad thing to out-live comforts here, but Faith, at least, layeth the grounds of those comforts that are endless.

2. A man may lose all the vigorous and powerful operations of Grace, and Life: yet not life itself. It may bee with a Child of God, as with a man in a dead Swoon, though there bee life in him, yet the operations of Grace are but little discerned. It's not with him, as it was with his. Hee thinks to go out (as sometimes Samson) in prayer, &c. but his strength is gone from him, as his was. But he sees God in Christ, as the Apostle hath it, Col. 3.3.

3. A man may lose some measures and degrees of spiritual life: yet not life itself. Hee may suffer a great decay in his Faith, a great abatement in his Love, and Zeal, &c. and yet life is not "lost. Thus it was with the Church of Ephesus, Rev. 2.5. -- Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first Works. -- Wee are not to think that the Church was fallen from Grace: but only from some measures and degrees of Grace. And concerning the same Church Rev. 2.4. when it is said, -- Shee had lost her first love: it is not meant, that shee had lost the grace of Charity: you see the fruits of it in the second and third verses:

But
But flee had left the degrees. It was not extinguished, but cooled only. The word is [Ἀνήλθεν,] which signifies not that he did altogether [Amittère] lose it: but somewhat [Aemissère] re-emit and abate of the fervency of it. As one faith of Peter. -- The strength of spiritual life was moved in him, but not removed; shaken in wise, but not shaken off. He remitted the Grace of Faith, in-termitted the act of Faith, but left not the Habit.  

"Isa. 6. 13. -- Hee shall bee like an Oak, whose substance is in him, when it casts its leaves: so the Holy seed shall bee the substance thereof. Like to that, is that of 1 Joh. 3. 9. -- Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him: neither can bee sin, because bee is born of God. It may bee with him, as 'twas with Nebuchadnezzar. The Tree may bee hewn down, but the stump is bound with a bond of Iron.

2 Faith establishes the heart against final Aposcy. Though they fell foulily, yet not finally. They have the Prayer and Intercession of Christ, the Power of Christ, the Merit of Christ, the Promise of Christ. Faith produceth all these.

Wee are said to bee established by Faith, to live by Faith, to stand by Faith, to bee preferred by Faith, as with a guard, 1 Pet. 1. 5. -- We are kept by the Power of God, through Faith unto salvation. By Faith wee are said to subdue the flesh, to have victory over the World, to quench the fiery darts of Satan, to bee saved by Faith, &c.

Indeed all ages give reports to us of many, who have been eminent in Profession, and yet have come to nought. Some fallen from Grace to balanenle, some fallen from Grace to bittemnesse, some from Grace to vitiouhnesse, some from Grace to malitiohnesse: But these were never true Beleevers. A Star fallen is not a Star. \[Stella cadens\] They went out from us, because they were not of us: for had they been of us, they would have continued with us, 1 Joh. 2. 19. It is the evil heart of Unbelief that causeth them to depart from the living God, Heb 3. 12.

Where there is true Faith, there is stability. Faith doth establish the heart from falling.

1. Faith sets a man upon a Soul-establishing-bottom, upon a sure Foundation, upon Christ: and hee is sure who is built there: as the houle on the Rock, so the soul on Christ is life. Time was, a man was his own Foundation, but it was a sandy one: but now his Foundation is Christ, a Rock of ages.

2. Faith doth interest a man in a Soul-establishing-Covenant: not a Covenant of Works, but of Grace, Jer. 32. 40. -- I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will never turn from them to do them good: But I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me, Isa. 54. 9, 10. -- This is as the Waters of Noth shall never go over the Earth: so have I sworn that I will not bee angry with thee, nor rebuke thee.
3. Faith doth beget in a man Soul-establishing-Principles. The Principles of Grace and Holiness: The Graces of God, which are (Ἀμαρτίαν) Without Repentance: i.e. God doth never give himself to those upon whom he hath bestowed these Graces, as though he repented of the bestowing of them. Whom he hath enlightened, he doth not blind; whom he builds, he doth not destroy; and whom he plants, he doth not pull up.

And Faith hath a great influence into this, to preserve and establish the heart from falling. It is said, -- We are kept by the power of God through Faith to salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5.

1. Faith doth ingraft us, and unite us to Christ, makes us Members of Christ, the Spouse of Christ, and Christ will not lose either his Spouse, or the leaf of his Members.

2. Faith doth keep out the grand Enemy to this, flattering thus falsely, and that's Hypocrifie. If a man's heart be unawed, let his show and appearance be what it will be, all will come to nothing as in Jered, Judas, &c. If an Apple bee corrupt and rotten at heart, though the rind, and out side bee never so lovely and splendid, twill not long last: the corrupt inside will mar the fine outside in the end.

An Hypocrite is but an Apostate cas'd; and an Apostate is but an Hypocrite uncas'd.

3. Faith establishes the heart against fears of men, the frowns and menaces of men.

4. Faith will keep the heart constant to duty, to the use of the Ordinances, which are strong means to hold up the soul in God's way.

5. Faith makes a man jealous and watchful over his own heart, of Declinings either in Action, or in Affection. It will not suffer a man to give way to the least coldness in love, lukewarmness in zeal, reminiscens in duty. If any steal upon his heart, he is never quiet till he have recovered his former heart.

6. Faith doth maintain in the heart an holy fear of falling; which is a great means to preserve from falling, Jer. 32. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Such a Fear it keeps as may curb and keep under the flesh: but not discourage and weaken the Spirit. An industrious fear, not a discouraging fear: a faithful fear, not a despairing fear. A fear joyned with Faith, and a Faith mingled with fear. A man may bee fearful, and faithful. Fearful in himself, faithful in Christ: weak in himself, strong in Christ.

There are four fears which Faith calls out,

1. A servile, and legal Fear.
2. A discouraging Fear.
3. A despairing and discouraging Fear.
4. A careless Fear.

As security is fearles, so sometimes Fear is careles, if it bee excessive.

There
There are also four Fears which Faith retains.

1. An aweful Fear. Such a Fear as restrains from adventuring on occasions of sinning. It is as bad Divinity to grant the occasion, and deny the sin, as it is Logick, to grant the Premises, and deny the conclusion.

The Nazarite was forbidden Wine; and withal that hee must not take: the Kernel of the Grape, lest that might be an occasion to draw on the other. Wee have a sad example in Monica, Augustines Mother. Shee looked on the Wine in the Cup: from looking, shee fell to liking, from liking, to tasting, from tasting, to sipping, from that to drinking, and so to Exceede. Sins in Divinity are like absurdities in Philosophy. One absurdity granted, multitudes follow.

2. Such a Fear as makes us to go out of our selves, and lean and rely wholly on Christ. A Fear of our selves, of our own strength, &c.

Alas! What are we to Adam? to David? to Solomon? to Hezekiah? Peter? men of sweete and familiar acquaintance with God. Yet see what Testimonies of mens frailties they left behind them. And all this to reach us to maintain an holy Fear and Jelously over our own selves: that wee might go out of our selves, and lean all upon Christ, without whom wee cannot bee sure.

3. An Industrious Fear. Such a Fear as puts us upon all holy duties, and means for our establishment to preserve us. God promised to add fifteen years to Hezekiah’s life: yet hee was to preserve this life, and uphold it, with food and dyet, and other necessaries for life: so God promised wee shall not fall: yet wee must be contentable in the use of all good means, whereby wee may stand, otherwise wee tempt God: and just it is with God to let us fall, if wee neglect Prayer, and the rest of his Ordinances appointed by him for our perseverance.

4. A Jealous Fear over our own hearts. They are deceitful, and wee need to bee jealous over them, and watch. Think not thy self so far at distance from any sin, but thou mayest fall into, if God keep thee not.

Who could bee further from Drunkenness than Noah? who was the only sober man, in the drunken old World. Who from Incest than Lot? the only chast man in Sodom. Who from Murder, than David? Whole heart smote him for but cutting off the lapp of Sauls garment. Who from denying of Christ, than was Peter? who had rather dye with him, than be forsaken. And therefore wee had need to bee jealous, and watch over our own hearts.

There is no place so good, but wee may offend in it. As the Angels in Heaven, Adam in Paradise. There is no company so good, but wee may sin in it. As did Sarah in the Angels company, Findus in Christs.

Thus let us maintain these holy Fears in our hearts, and by
Of the Nature, and
by that bee kept from falling.

Use of Examination.

Let this then put us upon the Tryal, whether or no wee have Faith.

You see the Needess of Faith in respect, Of Justification.
Of Sanctification.
Of Salvation.

I have shew you, it was the great thing, which God did require to Justification and Salvation of a sinner. And you have seen the Excellency of this Grace laid down in many Glorious Priviledges and Royalties. You have seen that God hath poured more honour upon the head of Faith, than upon any other Grace. Let all this per Siuie with us, to put our selves upon the search and tryal, whether wee have Faith or no.

Put such a question as this to thy own Sould. Am I a Believer, yea or no? Have I Faith, yea or no?

It was a duty which the Apostle did commend to the Corinthians, 2 Cor. 13:5. Examine your selves, whether yee bee in the Faith, prove your own selves. And it is that, which, after this long discourse of Faith I would commend to you all. That you would put your selves to the Tryal. Examine whether you have Faith or no. Therefore hath God given us a faculty different from all Creatures, whereby wee may reflect upon our selves. Many there are, who will winnow others, but not sift themselves; spei others, but not read themselves; searching others rather than themselves. But let it bee your care every one to prove and examine himself.

The incouragement to this duty I will take from these two grounds.

1. It is a thing possible to bee known, whether you are Believers, yea or no.

2. It is a thing necessary to bee known.

1. It is a thing possible to bee known. Hence have wee so many exhortations, to examine and search, If it were not possible to be known, in vain were these exhortations. God doth not use to put us upon Impossibilities. Though God in the Law may require that of a natural man, which is impossible for him to do, Rom. 8.

3. because bee gave man once ability to do whatever is commanded, yet in the Gospel Christ doth require nothing of the faithful, which by Grace is not possible to bee done. Possible then it is. There is light enough in the Word, if a man will bring his heart unto it; and deal impartially with himself, in the search, whether bee hath Faith or no.

The Papists indeed do say: It is a thing impossible to know, whether
the bee be a Believer or no. If men did know they did believe, then they might be assured of their own Salvation. But this (say they) no man can be assured of.

A Politian clean against Scripture, Authority, and Reason.
The Scripture is plain, the Precepts of the Scripture plain, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Gal. 6. 4. — Let every man prove his own work. — Let every man examine himself.

They who are commanded to try, may upon Tryal, know whether they have Faith or no.

But every man is commanded to try. God in the Gospel doth not put us upon Impossibilities.

Besides, the examples of Scripture are plain. The Eunuch a new Convert, when Philip told him, he might bee baptized, if hee did believe, answer'd. — I beleve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Acts. 8. 37.

The like of the Father of the possess'd Child, when, having a weak Faith, yet could say, — Lord, I do beleive, Mark. 9. 23. So John. 6. 69. — Wee beleive and know, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God, John. 11. 27, 27. — Believest thou this Faith our Saviour to Martha there, Shee answer'd — Yea Lord, I beleive thou art that Christ that should come into the World.

Hence faith Augustine — The Believer seeth his own Faith whereby hee doth believe. Again, — as soon as Faith is in us, we see it in us.

The mind is not ignorant of its own actions. When it understandeth, it knows itself to understand. When it discourses, it knows itself to discourse. When it desir'd, it knows itself to desire.

To take away this act of the soul, whereby a man reflecting upon himself and his own actions, is able to know and judge of them: were to destroy the Prerogative royal of an intellectual nature.

Now if the naked spirit of a man bee able to judge of his own actions here: how much more the Spirit of a man being helped by the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2. 12.

If Faith is self bee a witness (— Hee that believeth hath the Witness in himself), 1 John 5. 10.) How much more when the Witness of God's Spirit joynes with us: when the Spirit witnesseth, what place is left for doubting?

If Faith it self bee a Light, How much more, when God's Light comes in with ours? The Light of the Spirit, to the Light of our Spirit.

Besides, How shall a man receive the comfort of his own Faith, (as Hezekiah did, Isa. 38. 3. and Paul, 2 Cor. 1. 12.) if it bee not possible for a man to evidence to himself, that hee doth believe.

Is it possible for a man to know his vicious actions, to his humiliation: and not possible to know his vertuous actions, to his
Of the Nature, and

conciliation? If it bee granted of the one, why should it bee denied of the other.

Indeed, I will grant thus much; though it bee possible, yet it is exceedingly difficult.

1. In respect of the deceit.

2. In respect of the doubts and mis-givings of our own brain.

In regard of the deceit of a man's own spirit. -- The heart is deceitful above measure; who can know it? Jer. 17. 9. And -- the heart left the Light within you, Or, That Light you think to be within you, prove darkness.

They that are much vers'd with their own hearts, do finde an Hell of deceit in them. Mens hearts are like some pictures: if you look on one side, there's an Angel, but on the other, a Devil.

There are depths of deceit in the hearts of men, which makes the work exceeding difficult. -- Every way of man is good in his own eyes. -- There is a Generation of men (faith Agur) who are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness.

Such deceits there are in the heart, that if a man will take all at trust, which comes up, hee will surely bee deceived.

You see this in the Children of Israel, Deut. 5. 27, 28. They said -- Whatever the Lord said unto them, they would do it. It is like, they spake as they meant, at that time. But hee that searched the heart saw deeper into them, than themselves into themselves. Hee espied deceits to lyse low, which they were not perhaps aware of. And therefore faith -- Oh! That there were such a heart in them, that they might keep my Commandments alway. Hee saw, they wanted yet the Heart. This was but self-deceiving.

I might instance also in Haaaziel, when the Prophet told him what beastly cruelty hee should exercise toward the Children of Israel. -- What! (faith hee) Is thy servant a Dog, that hee should do such bellaine and beastly cruelty? It may bee hee spake what was uppermost: hee spake as hee meant for the time: hee was not aware, nor did hee discern the deceit of his heart: hee thought his heart to bee far from that now, which afterward hee fell into.

The like of the Israelites, Jer. 42. throughout. So that you see, it is a matter of some difficulty. And therefore the Apostle, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Bids us not only examine, but prove. Not only to examine, and take the first evidence the heart gives in, but to prove whether the evidence given in, bee true. It may bee you have examined your selves, by the rules of the Word. Your heart hath given in an evidence for you. Why, but prove, if this evidence bee true: see an evidence of that evidence.

As in Solomons Temple, there was Light set against Light: so here you must set Light against Light. As for example. Inquiry is made, whether I have Faith or no. Answer is given in upon the
Royalties of Faith.

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Now then. Is thy heart cleansed from filthiness? Art thou sanctified, &c.

The life in another. Inquiry is made, whether a man love God yes or no. It may bee the heart gives up this answer, that he doth love God. Why, but now prove it. He that loves God, keeps his Commandments, John 14:15. He that loves God will obey him, will not displease him. He who loves God will not sin.

And so in any other. Thus you see, though it bee possible, yet it's a matter of difficulty, in regard of the deceits of our hearts. And therefore we are to take the more pains.

1. It is difficult in regard of the doubts and mis-givings of our hearts. And this at all times; if God's Spirit come not to witness with our spirits, our own spirits will be born down with doubts and mis-givings of our unbelieving hearts; and we shall never know what our condition is.

Hence we have these phrases, Rom. 8:16. The Spirit doth witness with our spirits, that we are the Children of God. It's not the witnesses of our own spirit, that will answer all the doubts and objections of our hearts. If God's Spirit strike not in too, and bear witness with us.

The like we have, 1 John 5:6,7,8. And other places, especially that of 1 Cor. 2:10 from 9. to the 13. verse, where you shall see, that it is a work of God's own Spirit, to settle the soul in the assurance of his good condition.

And, as at all times, so especially at three times. It is exceeding difficult.

1. In times of humiliation.

2. In times of temptation.

3. In times of desertion.

1. In times of humiliation. As some call evil good; a thou calls good evil. Now, As some take the shadow for the substance; so thou the substance for the shadow. As some depend on false grounds; so thou denyest the true. As some feed, and cherish matter of false comfort; so thou feedest on matter of discouragement. Some heat themselves by a painted fire, Isa. 50:11. and thou quenchest the sparks of God's own kindling, if the Spirit of God break not in at that time.

2. In times of temptation, when Satan assaults a man, tells him, that all his graces are false and counterfeit; that he is an hypocrite. And presents an Army of confirmations at once, in an instant, and so manages them, that whatever evidences a man can think of to the contrary, they are either taken away, or seem-
Of the Nature, and

ingly confused, as fast as they are thought on.
In this case a man may be ignorant of his Faith and Graces. At
such a time, if a man inquire, either the spirit of a man will be fi-
 lent, and return no answer; or, if it do return any, it is a disor-
bed one. If a man reflect back at such a time as this, he shall
find nothing, but of Satan's party to return him an answer.

3. In time of Distress, when it may be, our Evidences be
hid in the dark, the soul is in a mist, and cannot read its own Faith.
The Glass can give no reflex, except the Sun give light: Nor a
man's Graces appear to comfort him; except God shine upon
them. As the Moon and Stars, so our Graces do shine with a bor-
rowed Light. And unless God do shine secretly into our hearts,
irradiate, and give light unto our Graces: though they bee in
se, in being in the heart: yet not in cognosc, in the apprehension
they will not appear at all, to comfort us.

In these cases, the work is Difficult. But what then! Things
must not bee left for Difficulties; because they bee beset with Diffi-
culties. Difficulties must not use us off from Trepid, but use us on
to try more thoroughly. Hee who faith, there is a Lion in the way,
is not fit for Heaven. They that feared the Giants were not fit for
Canaan. It is a sign of a base and degenerate spirit to desist in the
pursuit of a good way, because of Difficulties. Though it bee dif-
cult, yet it is possible. A thing it is that hath been attained in
all ages of the World. Others of Gods people have known, and
to mayest thou.

2. It is not only possible, but necessary that you should know whe-
ther you bee Believers or no. It is Necessary,

1. In respect of your Comforts.
2. In respect of your more lively Obedience.

1. It is necessary in respect of your Comforts. What comfort can
a soul have in this, That Christ is a Saviour, if hee know not, hee
is his Saviour? And how shall he bee know this, except hee know the
thing doth beleue? --- hee is the Saviour of them that beleue, only.

What comfort is it to know there's pardon of sins, if wee do not
know that our sins bee pardoned? And how shall wee know this, ex-
cept wee doe know that we bee beleue. They only that beleue, have
their sins pardoned.

What comfort can wee have in the Merits, Death, and Blood of
Christ? What comfort, in the Promises of the Gospel, till wee know
wee are Believers? Such to whom Christ and the Promises be-
long?

If a man did but once clear this. How might hee run down all
the Promises, and fetch in comfort from them all? why, (might
the soul say) Christ is mine: his Blood is mine: his Spirit is mine:
his Merits are mine: his Righteousness is mine, to justify mee. His
Helmets is mine, to sanctifie mee. His Mercy is mine, to save mee. All
is mine, if I bee a Believer.

Oh!
Royalties of Faith.

Oh! Thou dost not know what wrong thou dost to thy soul, in neglecting to clear and evidence this to thy self.

Why, you will live without Comfort: you will dye without Comfort.

My Brethren. If you would not live without Comfort, if you would not dye without Comfort, labour to evidence this to your souls, that you are Believers.

Oh! It would add much to your Joy and Comfort to know this. Many there are who live without comfort, who lie upon the rack of fears and discouragements, are in unsufferable troubles all their dayes.

Many, who for want of clearing this to their souls, that they are Believers, go with a spark in stead of a flame.

And as you live: if you will dye without Comfort, if you do not take care to evidence this to your souls.

And this were a sad condition. Whatever a man hath in this life, yet when hee comes to dye, hee would willingly have all the Comfort possible. Though a man may bee content to go Quarter-fail, and Quarter-wind, here in this life: yet when hee comes to dye, hee would willingly go Full-fail to Heaven.

Lefte Comfort may serve a man to live by, than to dye by; becauе, whiles a man lives, other things come in, to make up the want of Comfort: every thing casts in something; to make the soul a flock of comfort. But if this will not do, if a man cannot peace up his Comforts with other things: yet, whiles a man lives, there's hope and expectation still of more Comfort.

But, when a man comes to dye, that hope is gone; there's no hope then of ever getting more. And this is a sad condition.

And, My Brethren. It is a thing which God doth oft in deny at death: because wee have been no more: solicitous to clear our Evidences in our life. I say, God doth now withhold the Comfort of Faith; because wee have neglected to clear our Evidence of Faith, which is a sad condition. Though the condition of the soul bee never the less safe: yet the condition is less comfortable to our souls.

2. It's necessary in respect of our more lively obedience. The knowledge of this, will make us lay out our selves: for God. It will make us industrious and active, in all holy Obedience. It will make us burn out, not smother out: wear out, not rust out. It will make a man a Volunteer in Gods work: to sweat and take pains in the Vineyard of the Lord.

It's false what the Popish Doctors say. That the knowledge of our good condition should slack the hand, make a man supine and remiss in holy Obedience. As much as it will make a Traveller slack his pace, becauе hee knoweth hee is in his way, and that by making speed in it, hee shall come to the end of his journey.

Oh then! Is it a thing possible to bee attained? Is it necessary? why then are wee so injurious to our selves, to rob our selves of
that Comfort, which the Knowledge of our Faith would contribute to our souls afterward.

Do you delight to know all things else? and bee ignorant of your selves? will you prove all things else? and not your selves? you will prove your Gold, you will prove your Silver, you will prove your Evidences, and will you not prove your selves? There's nothing of worth that a man will take upon trust, without trial.

Do you delight to bee kept upon the rack of fears, and perplexities of spirit? do you delight to hang between Heaven and Hell? As Ahabolam between Earth and Heaven? and not know what shall become of your eternal souls to all eternity?

Why, if you do not thus, then take some pains in the search and examination of your selves. -- Prove your selves whether you are in the Faith or no?

Thus having premised this, upon which I have on purpose insinuated the more largely, in respect of the Necessity of this duty of Self-Examination, wee will now come to lay down some Rules, whereby wee may discover to them, who are willing to take pains in the search of their own hearts, whether they have Faith, or no.

In the laying down of which, that I may not err, I shall desire to go by these two Rules.

1. The grand Rule is, the Word of God. The Book shall try you. That Book that shall save or damn you at the last day, shall try you now whether you have Faith or no.

And I hope, if the Word convince you, that you have not Faith, you will subscribe to the conviction. If the Word say it, I hope you will conclude it. But, whether you will or no, That which the Word says is true. That conviction which the Word doth fasten upon you, shall lye upon you at the great day, if now you get it not off.

2. The Second Rule I shall desire to go by, is this, to lay down such Evidences as are universal; and belong to all Believers, weak, as well as strong; the least degree of saving Faith, as well as the highest measure of it. I shall desire to comfort the strong, as not to discourage the weak: so to satisfy the strong, as I may also establish the weak.

I conceive, There's a great Error committed in the laying down of Evidences, to take an Evidence from the highest degree of Faith.

As when wee should lay down an Evidence of Faith, wee take our Evidences from Assurance. This is a great Error. By this means wee shall cast out many thousands, who are true Believers, and yet want Assurance.

And yet my care shall bee, as not to quench the smoaking flax; so not to cherish a false flame: as not to discourage the meanest;
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so not to encourage the strongest, if false: as not to discountenance a true, so not to countenance a false. But that the false may have no Comfort; the true no discouragement.

Now the Method, that I will observe, to evince this to your souls, whether you have Faith or no, shall be some Evidences taken,

1. From the usual manner of God's working in this Grace of Faith, in the hearts of unbelieving men.

2. From the Grace is itself wrought in the soul.

3. From the manner of God's working this Grace, which is this.

1. God dost use to discover sin to the soul; Awakens a men's conscience, makes a man to see his sin, and his misery by reason of sin, that hee lies under the wrath of God by reason of sin, and that there's an utter impossibility in him, to winde or free himself out of this condition.

This is the first work. Men will not beleive, nor come over to Christ, till they first bee humbled, till they see and feel the man of Christ.

This you see in the Prodigal: in the Woman with the Bloody Issue. It was Misery brought them home. Men must bee cut off their own flock, before they can bee ingrafted upon another. Thrown off their own bottom, before they can cast themselves on Christ, the true Foundation.

The Terms of Mercy are too hard; the Take of Christ is too strait or such men, who were never humbled. What! To deny themselves cut off their right hand! to forsake their beloved sins! But Mercy upon any Terms to the humbled is desirous. No Poison can bee better for the Recovery of a dying man: No hard hold too sharp for a drowning man, to take hold of. So no Terms too hard for an humbled sinner.

Whereas, before a man bee humbled, the Proposition of Mercy and Pardon is but all lost labour. Hee makes Light of Mercy, Light of Christ, Light of a Pardon, as they did, that were invited to the upper. It's said -- They made Light of it.

Men will not seek after the Physician, before they feel themselves to bee sick; for ease, till they bee pester with burdens: for Plaster, before they bee wounded: for heavenly Riches, for sense of their Spiritual beggary: for Inlargement, and pardon, before they bee in Prison: for Mercy, before they smart under sense of Misery: Nor for a Christ, till the soul do finde a necessity in the want of Christ.

Hence the Law is laid to bee our Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. And it is upon this ground, among others, because it doth cover sin to us, and laff us, and humble us for it. And then we're ready to go from Sinai to Sion: from the Law of Moses accusing, the Gospel of Christ excusing: from the Law condemning, to the feel absolving.

2. God
2. God doth discover to the soul the fulness and al-sufficiency of Christ. — Who is able to save to the uttermost, them that come to God by him, and Heb. 7. 25. That there's enough in him to justify and save a vile sinner, as thou hast been. Christ his Righteousness is an everlasting Righteousness; such as an eternity of sinning is never able to expend and draw dry.

As our Faith can never out-grow the Righteousness of Christ, so neither can our sins, Rom. 1. 17. It is said to bee [A Righteousness revealed from Faith to Faith.] The more Faith, not the less, but the more Righteousness is revealed. The broader the Eye of Faith, the wider the Righteousness beheld.

As all the Faith in the World could never over-clasp the Righteousness of Christ: So all the sins in the World are not able to oppress, or pester it.

As it cannot bee over-looakt, or comprehended, by any Faith: So it cannot bee exhausted by any sins.

Both of these wee have set down, J oh. 16. 8, 9, 10. — I will send the Spirit, and he shall convince the world of sin. There is humiliation. — Of Righteousness. That is, that there is A complex and Al-sufficient Righteousness in mee. That I am able to save to the utmost, to pardon sin.

This God discovers. Faith must have a bottom to rest on: An Al-sufficient Saviour. No man will throw his soul away.

3. With the fulnesse, God discovers the freeness of this Righteousness to all comers: How willing God is to bestow Christ upon you and how willing Christ is to bestow himself upon you.

Hence wee have such invitations — Ho! Every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, Isa. 55. 1. — And — Let him that is thirsty, come, Rev. 22. 17. And — Come to mee, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, Matt. 11. 28. And — Him, that comes to me, I will by no means cast out, J oh. 6. 37.

4. God stirts up the soul to pursue Christ, with inlarged desires, and earnest prayers; kindles desires in the soul after him — Oh! That God would be low Christ upon mee! I see I am in misery, I see I am a sinner. Oh! That thou wouldest bestow Jesus Christ upon my poor soul! As the poor pursuied, Harth doth pant after the Brooks of water: So pantest such a soul after the Lord Jesus. Now Christ upon any termes is desireable.

5. Now God works the Grace of Faith in the soul, whereby the soul doth draw nigh to Christ, and throws it self into the arms of Christ, embraceth him with all his might; calls it self wholly on him for Life, and Salvation.

Have you not seen how a tender Infant, in the apprehension of danger, runs into the arms of the Parent for succour: so doth the soul pursuied by the Law, and affrighted by the apprehensions of Gods wrath, flye into the bosom and arms of Christ for succour; bespeaking him with all the termes of Love, and Confidence.


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duty. -- My Lord, My God, My Hope; My Fortress, My Strength; my Redeemer, save me, else I perish. Hide me in the clefts of this Rock. Pity me, succour me. Thou who art a Saviour, Lord save me. Thou, that art Mercy, show me Mercy.

And here now begins the Life of a Christian, though as yet hee feel little motion. Strong is hee now in desiring, though feeble in performing. Resolved hee is, by any means to stick to Christ; yet not sensible of any union with him. Hee admires the brightness of the Beams of his Mercy shining in the Gospel, but feels little warmth of joy and comfort in his heart. Hee hungers after the Word, but feels little nourishment. Here is the beginning of true Faith.

Now then, would you know whether you have Faith? Try your selves. Have you found, that God hath thus wrought in you? what hath thou been thus humbled in the sight and sense of sin? deeply affected with the fulness and freeness of the Grace of God in Christ, so as to raise up in thee those earnest longings and pantings after him, so as thus to cast and venture thy soul upon him, this faith to see the manner and way of God's working Faith in us; by which wee may come to know whether this Faith bee wrought in us, or no.

2. Some Evidences are taken from the Grace it self. In which, because Faith doth admit of degrees; some having stronger Faith, some weaker. Though all of us have (as it is in 2 Pet. 1. 1.) -- The like precious Faith, the same Faith for kind: yet all have not the same Faith for degrees. In some it is strong, in some it is weak: Siene in all. All men are not of like age: all Trees not of the like growth. Wee read of a little Faith. -- Oh yee of little Faith! Faith, though little. Wee read of a great Faith. -- Oh Woman! great is thy Faith. All Beleevers are not of the like stature in Christ. Some are but Babes, and some are grown men, there's a little Faith comparatively; and there's a great Faith. Therefore left I should unsure the weak in satisfying the strong, I will here give you

1. Some Evidences of a weak Faith.

2. Some Evidences of a strong Faith.

1. The Evidences of true Faith, though weak.

The weakest Faith hath strong desires to close with Christ in the terms of the Gospel: Is willing to take Christ in the whole latitude and extent of Christ: not only to know Christ, but to own Christ in all his Offices: not only as a Priest, but as a King, to whom the soul is as willing to yield Submission, as to have Salvation from him; as desirous to submit to his services, as to enjoy his Privileges; to do duty, as to partake of his bounty, to throw it self at the feet of Christ, with strong desires, though (it may bee for the present) but with weak assurance of Mercy from him.

Queft. But who doth not thus desire Christ? who is not willing to accept of Christ?

Answ.
Of the Nature, and

Answ. It is impossible that any unbelieving man should desire Christ in the latitude and extent of Christ. Hee may desire him for Salvation, but not for Sanctification: as a Priest, but not as a King, to rule and govern him; to bring every thought into subjection to himself; for happiness, but not for holiness. Such a one cares but to have a pardon from him: but not purging; Glory, but not Grace. Such a one can say with David thus far...tude thy face from me. But...create in me a clean heart. Then hee leaves him. Hee defines the end of a Christian, but not his beginnings.

2. The desires of a wicked man, of an Unbelieving man for Christ, they are transient, not permanent desires: which may be in times of trouble, in a storm; care not if hee have him as a shelter, under some rack of conscience, when hee lies on his bed. But there continue not. No sooner the storm is blown over, but the desire is gone. Or in a passion, when hee is in a good mood, as Balaam desired to dye the death of the Righteous: so hee, after a Sermon.

3. The desires of an Unbelieving man are faint, not strong and earnest desires: They are but slight and superficial desires, such as are put off with every thing. They are not vehement and strong desires, such as will not bee put off with any thing, but with the thing desired, like the desires of David after the Wells of Bethlehem. — Oh! that some would give me to drink of the Water of Bethlehem, &c. Like the desires of Christ, Luk. 22. 15. — With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. This is — with strong desires: not a single, but a double Desire: a desiring Desire.

Such may have some slight and superficial Desires, but they are put off with every thing. As the Mother puts a toy into the Childs hand, and the desire to the breast is gone: So here. The Devil bee puts a matter of profit, or pleasure into their hands, and then all their desire is lost.

True Desire is strong Desire, that will not bee satisfied, but with the thing desired: as Rachel for Children. — Give me Children, or else I dye: so here. — Give mee Christ, or else I dye. The soul is ready to faint and nul-carry, with the longings it hath after Christ.

4. They are idle, not industrious Desires. The Desires of the sluggard, who will not put his hand to the use of the means for obtaining of his Desire: who will not Hear, Read, Pray, &c.

Where on the contrary, a vehement intention after Christ, is joyned with a vehement intention after the use of means for the getting of Christ. True Desires after Christ, are ever joyned with honest industrons for Christ. Hee, who desires with an honest heart will labour with an industrious spirit.

2. Weak Faith, though it cannot close with the Promise, yet will...
close with the Precept. Though not with the Privileages of a Christian, yet with the services of a Christian. Though it cannot share in the Comforts, yet it will abide with the Duties of a Christian. Though it cannot clear it, whether God hath given Christ to him, yet it will yeeld up the soul to him. Though it know not whether he will receive it when it commeth, yet it will come. Though with Mary, it cannot say, — My Saviour, yet, with Thomas, it will say, — My Lord. It wants strength to throw it self into the arms of Christ, to live it. Oh! but yet it will cast it self at the feet of Christ to serve him. Though it want the Light of Comfort and Conolation, yet it will walk in the Light of command and Direction.

There's not one duty through the latitude and extent of a Christian walking, but the soul desires and endeavors to walk in it.

3. Weak Faith is joined with mourning and sorrow for the weakness of it. What it wants in comprehension, it makes up in humiliation. There is want of sense, but not of sighs: like the man in the Gospel. It's said — He speak with tears: Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. Lord, I cannot lay hold on thee: Oh! That thou wouldst lay hold on me! I cannot apprehend thee: do thou apprehend me: Fold mee up in the arms of thy mercy, that never unfolds: close mee up in the arms of that love, that shall never unclose.

An humble wanser, is better than a proud injoyer. An humble craver, than a proud haver.

4. Weak Faith is the unseigned Faith, 1 Tim. 1. 5. No, a Counterrant, and Hypocritical Faith: Such an one as never comes to God for Love: But in a storm for shelter, Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. —When he saw them, then they sought him, and inquired early after God. They remembered God was their strength, and the most High God their Redeemer. — But they flattered him with their mouth, and dissembled with him, with their Tongue: for their heart was not upright with him, nor were they steadfast in his Covenant. But such a one as comes to him out of Love, desires nothing more than to injoy him: to injoy him, rather than his.

5. Weak Faith is an holy Faith, Jude vers. 20. Build up one another in your holy Faith, &c. Such a Faith as is accompanied

1. With Holiness of Heart.

2. With Holiness in Life.

1. With Holiness of the Heart. The soul is universally sanctified. There's a Treasury of Grace. There are all Graces, though as yet in weakness. So much Faith as there is: so much Love, so much Hope, so much sorrow for sin. They are like the Fountain, and the Flood, whereof the one is higher than the other. Thus where there is Faith, there is Sanctification. Though Sanctification were no ingredient to Justification: yet Faith and Sanctification, Faith and the new Creature never were asunder. There is a new

Judge
Of the Nature, and


2. With Holiness in Life. Though it cannot bring forth strong fruits of Holiness: yet it will bring forth fruits according to its strength. A little Tree, a young Tree may bring forth some good fruits, though not in equal quantity to another of greater growth. So hee that hath the meanest Faith, hee lives an holy Life, brings forth some good fruits, though not so plentiful in good works, as they, whose Faith is come to a more perfect growth.

6. Weak Faith doth not rest in weakness: but labours after strength. Weak Faith is a growing Faith. Though it begins in weakness, yet it grows to strength, which growth is a character of all true Grace. And therefore doth it thirst after the Ordinances, as a new born Babe, that it may grow thereby. As the Word was the Beder of it: so it thirsteth after it to bee the Feeder. As it was the Begetter of it: (for true Faith is the Daughter of the Ministry.) Faith comes by hearing, Rom. 10.) so it thirsts after it for nourishment.

7. Weak Faith will cleave to Christ: will not forgo nor forsake Christ for any thing. What it wants in Approbation, it hath in Adhesion: what it wants in Evidence, it hath in Adherence.

Ask any, who are weakest in Faith: whether they would sell their part in Christ for a World: whether they would deny Christ to gain a World; and they will quickly answer it, with an earnest Negative, as Naboth did Ahab when hee would have bought of him his Vineyard, 1 Kings. 21. 2, 3.

Whereas a temporizing Faith doth hold to Christ for want of a temptation, as the Weather-cock, that standeth this way for want of another wind: A true Faith, though weak, will hold to Christ, out of Love; nothing shall take it away, in the midst of all temblings. It is of the Nature of true Faith, though never so weak, to adhere and cleave to Christ, Rom. 3. 8. — Thou hast but a little strength: yet thou hast kept my Word, and hast not denied my name. A little Strength, a little Faith will hold to Christ, will not give up Christ. I say not, but Gods people may fall, and in some respect forsake Christ, as Peter did. But this may arise from the violence of temptation, the strength of corruption, which overpowers Faith. It is (as said) of the Nature of Faith, to cleave to Christ.

Well then (to conclude with a word to them that are weak) you that canst this to your own hearts, that You have Faith, though it bee weak: bee not ye discouraged: bee not troubled though it bee weak. Consider

1. That the smallest degree of Faith is true; is saving Faith, as well as the greatest. A Sparkle of fire is as true fire as any is in the Element of fire. A drop of water is as true water as any is in the Ocean
Ocean. So the least grain of Faith is as true Faith, and as saving, as the greatest Faith in the World.

2. Though it be weak: yet it is a growing Faith. As all the flowers to all the Graces of God begin in Weakness. The tallest Cedar was at first but a sprig. The strongest Oak at first was an Acorn. The greatest fire at first was a spark: so the greatest measure of Faith at the first was but as a little seed. It had a beginning.

Those things God intended not for Growth, hee made perfect at first, as the Sun, the Moon, &c. But those hee intended for Growth, hee at first makes imperfect, as Men, Beasts, Plants, &c.

Christ compares Faith to a grain of Mustard-seed. Not to a stone, but to a seed. Stones are not capable of Growth, but seeds are. Hee compares it to a Mustard-seed: which, though it bee the least of seeds, yet grows up bigger. And such a seed is thy Faith. Though it bee small, though weak, bee not discouraged; the Mustard-seed will grow.

3. The weakest Faith doth give the Soul Union with the strong Redeemer, as well as the strongest. The smallest measure of Faith, never so little, if it bring but the soul over to Christ, it ingrafts thee into him, as well as the stronger; makes thee a Member of this Body; a Branch in this Vine.

4. The weakest measure of Faith gives thee Communion with Christ, as well as the strongest.

Wee know the least bud draws sap from the Root as well as the greatest bough: so the weakest measure of Faith, doth as truly ingraft thee into Christ, and by that draw life from Christ, as well as the strongest. The weakest Faith hath communion with the Merits and Blood of Christ, as well as the strongest: hath communion with the Spirit of Christ, the Graces of Christ, as well as the strongest.

Though thou art weak, Christ is strong. His strength is thine, as well as the strongest. Thou art impure, Christ is pure. His purity is thine as well as others. Thou art ignorant, Christ is wise. His wisdom is thine. Thus the soul hath a communion with Christ, in all his Graces.

The least Faith marries the soul to Christ. And where there is this union, there is a communion also with all of Christ.

The least Faith ingrafts into Christ, and being once ingrafted; the soul draws ample and spiritual life, sense and motion from Christ.

5. The weakest Faith hath as equal share in God's Love as the strongest. We are beloved in Christ. And the least measure of Faith makes us members of Christ. The least Faith hath equal right to the Promises, as the strongest. And therefore let not our souls be troubled; discouraged for weaknesses.

There is difference between Want, and Weakness. Canst thou doubt this to thy soul, that thou hast Faith, though it be a weak Faith? Yet therein rejoice and be comforted.

The least Faith lets as wide a difference between thee and un-
believers, as is between Heaven and Hell. And therefore study to bee thankful for the least degree of Faith, if it bee true Faith. Do not so much look, as to over-look. So look for more, as to over-look what thou hast received. Neglect not that Comfort your present Faith affords, by reaching after more.

Now having thus laid down the Evidences of a weak Faith, we shall now proceed to lay down the Evidences of a strong Faith, Now where there is a strong Faith, there is

1. An high prizing of Christ (which yet a weak Faith partakes of), 1 Pet. 2. 7. — Unto you that believe, bee is precious. The soul doth rate and value Christ above all the Comforts and contents, Riches, and Happines in Heaven, and Earth. Thus you see David, Psal. 73. — Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none in the Earth that I esteem in comparison of thee. Though hee esteemed of other things, yet Christ was the first figure. The estimate which his soul set on Christ, did infinitely exceed the rate which hee set upon any thing besides Christ. As Paul said — They were all but drosses and dung, in comparison with Christ. The most excellent things were lost and vile in respect of Christ.

There are two things which make Christ precious to a man.

1. The Knowledge of Christ.
2. The Apprehension of our Interest in him.

1. Of the Want of Christ.
2. Of the Worth of Christ.

1. The Want of Christ. When the soul apprehends the Necessity of Christ, in respect of Pardon, Purgation, Grace, Glory. When the soul sees hee is under the guilt of sin, and stands in need of Christ for Justification. Hee is under the guilt of sin, and stands in need of Christ for Satisfaction. Hee is under the power of sin, and stands in need of Christ, for the subduing and mortification of sin. His person and performances are unclean and filthy, and stands in need of Christ, to wash and sprinkle him: This makes Christ precious, sets a rate upon Christ.

2. The Knowledge of the Worth of Christ. It is not the worth of things, that makes things precious to us: but our Knowledge of the worth of them.

What is it that doth commend the Jewel to the Lapidary: but his knowledge of the worth of it. By others, that know it not, it is not valued nor esteemed. So that which doth commend Christ, the worth and preciousness of Christ to the soul, it is this, our Knowledge of the Worth of Christ. By others, who know him not, hee is a disfellowed hone, not worth the owning, 1 Pet. 2. 8.

2. The second thing which doth commend Christ to a soul, is The Apprehension of the soul's Interest in him. When the soul can look upon Christ, as his own, then hee esteems him, when hee knows hee hath a Propriety in Christ, a part in Christ.

Now
Now a strong Believer, hee,
1. Knows the Want of Christ. Hee sees hee cannot live without Christ. The more Faith, the more apprehension and sense of our wants.

2. Knows and sees the worth of Christ. Hee sees those excellencies and beauties in him, which to others lye hid, and are not discovered. To others hee is an Orient Pearl in an heap of Sand: a Mine of Gold covered over with rubbish and earth. They are not able to behold his beauties.

3. Hee sees and apprehends his own interest in him. And this makes the soul to prize him. Hee can say, Christ is mine. His Righteousness mine, to justify mee: His Holiness mine, to sanctifie mee: His Sufferings mine, to save mee. And upon this there ariseth an high prizing of Christ.

Quest. But you will say. Doth not every man prize Christ? who doth not value and esteem of Christ?

Ans. You may say, you do so. But there's no such matter. If Christ were precious in thy eyes, then

1. Thou wouldst not care what pains thou tookest for the compassing of Christ. You see a worldly man, to whom the World is precious, what pains hee takes for the attaining of the things of the World, Eccles. 4. 8. the like and greater pains wouldst thou take for the things of Christ, if hee were to thee as like precious.

2. Thou wouldst not care what thou partakest withall for the compassing of Christ. Thou wouldst count Christ thy greatest gain, and all losse in comparison of him, Phil. 3. 7, 8. Hee is not valued at all, if hee bee not valued above all.

3. Were Christ precious to thee, thou wouldst never think thy selfe to have enough of Christ. Drink, yea drink abundantly, o Beloved! Cant. 5. the more the soul tasteth and drinks, the more it thirsts, till it drink it new in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thus, where Christ is precious, there would bee actions suitable to that rate and esteem, the soul sets on him.

Now, when you will take no pains for the getting of Christ, when you will part with nothing for the keeping of Christ, when you will not heap up in most abundance whatever Christ is to others, write upon it, to you it is not precious.

4. Where Christ is precious indeed, all of Christ is precious. Hee is not only precious in his Person, in his Nature, in his Benefits: but all of Christ is precious.

Christ in his Holiness, Christ in his Lawes, Christ in his Government, Christ in his Truth. The soul looks upon all these as prizes of Christ. Hee who prizeth of Christ, doth prize of all these.

As wee say of Faith; It doth not eligere Objectum, it doth not chuse its Object, single out what it will beleive, and what it will not
Of the Nature, and not believe; but believes all, that God faith: So I may lay of this prizing of Christ. True prizing of Christ doth not single out its Object. Thus much of Christ I will prize, and thus much not: But there is a full prizing of all Christ. Christ in his Holiness, Lawes, Government, Truth, All. All which are parts of Christ; and are all to bee prized, if ever you would clear this, that you prize of Christ truly.

And without question, Gods people have seen to much Beauty in the Laws, Government and Holiness of Christ; that they have lost all, rather than they would lose their Obedience. And it was said of Christ. Vitam perdidimus, un Obaidendum perderet: Hee lost his Life, rather than hee would lose his Obedience: so may it bee said of them. They have taken up naked Obedience with the loss of all. They have seen so much beauty in a Truth, that they have hazarded and lost all, rather than they would lose a Truth. They have made this brave adventure, to lose themselves, to save a Truth; as you see in Queen Maries dayes, in point of Transubstantiation.

In these particulars a weak Faith sheweth flashes with a strong; but for what is more peculiar to a strong Faith.
1. Strong in Faith, and strong in Grace. According to the proportion of Faith, such is the measure of all Gods Graces in us. As weak in Faith, weak in Grace. So strong in Faith, strong in Grace. So much Faith, so much Love, so much Hope, so much Patience, so much Humility. Wee will mingle our Sones.
2. Strong in Faith, and strong in Affection and Love to Christ.

There are two things which make the soul to love Christ.
1. The discovery of the Beauties, and excellencies of Christ.
2. The Apprehension the soul hath in the interest it hath in this Christ.

Now both these are in a strong Faith.
1. There is a full discovery of the Beauties and Excellencies of Christ. The Beauties of his Person, the Beauties of his Nature, &c. And that in a larger measure, than is made known to a weak Believever.

A weak Faith sees the Excellencies of Christ in paranlo: in a narrow room: as we see the World in a Map: But a strong Faith it sees all the Excellencies of Christ, in circumstancia: Hee sees a larger, and fuller draught, hath a fuller discovery of it to his soul.

And who can see it, but hee must needs love him, who is all lovely, who hath all Beauties?

That Eye of Faith, which beholds the Beauties and Excellencies of Christ, will bee a Burning-Glass to the heart, to set the heat on fire, and kindle strong affections there.

2. There is (in a strong Faith) a strong apprehension of th
foul's interest in Christ. That Christ is his, and he is Christ: His Blood and Merits his, for Pardon, for Justification: His Grace and Holiness his, for Sanctification: His Wisdom, his, for Direction; And therefore the soul must needs love him.

Propriety we see in things makes us love them. Wee love our own Husbands, our own Wives, our own Children. The ground in this, the propriety we have in them.

So when the soul once sees Christ made over to him; that he hath a propriety in him, an interest in him, needs must the soul love him.

So you see then, where there is a strong Faith, there is a strong affection to Christ, strong Love to Christ: Such a love as no duty is too hard to undertake for Christ; no task too great to put his love to Christ.

It was said of Jacob, that hee endured many years servitude for Rachel: yet hee thought the time short, all was nothing, because he loved her. So all we can do for Christ, all will bee nothing, if we once love him.

Nay; not only all we can do; but all we can suffer will bee nothing to the soul that loves him. -- Love is no strong as Death. You feel in the Apostles, They counted not their lives too dear to give in death, for the Love of Christ.

It is not the Blood which is in the veins, the spirits, which are in the arteries, the Life, in the Body, which will be too dear.

There is a kind of unquenchable fire in Love, like the stone in Thracia, which burns in the Water. -- Much Water cannot quench Love.

1. Much Afflictions from God cannot quench our Affection to God. As all our dealings to God doth not alter God's affections to us; so all Gods dealings to us, will not alter our affections to God. -- Si diligis, Domine, fac quaecumque sis, was the speech of Calvin: Lord, if thou love mee, do what thou wilt. And Job: -- Though thou kill mee, yet I will still trust in thee. And the Church professest the like, Psal. 44. 17. 18. 19. -- All this is come upon us, yet do we not forget thee, nor have wee dealt falsely in thy Covenant: our heart is not turned back, nor have our steps gone out of thy paths: Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death, &c.

2. Much afflictions for God shall not cool our affections to God. Wee shall bee ready to go through a Sea, through a Wilderness, through the sharpest encounters for Christ. Nothing shall pole a strong Believer.

When once the soul is persuaded of the Love of God by Faith, then there follows abundance of love to God again, 1 John 4. from 15. to 19. -- Who soever confesseth that Jesus is the Son of God, in him dwelleth God, and he in God. And we have known and believ'd the love that God hath to us. God is Love, and he that dwelleth
Of the Nature, and

leth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him, &c. we love him, because he loved us first. And that of Mary. -- Much was forgiven her, and therefore she loved much.

While's a man looks upon God as an enemy, who hates him; he can never love him. But, when once the soul by Faith doth apprehend God's love to him, then doth the soul love God again. The love of God begets love in the soul to God. No man's heart is warmed with the fume of God's love, but it is inflamed with love to God again.

As the Sun beams shining upon a glass, begets a reflection of the Beams upon the Wall: So the Love of God shed abroad in our hearts, begets a reflection of love back again to God.

2. Strong in Faith, and strong in Hope, and expectations of the thing believed: which is that which holds up our head, and keeps the soul from sinking, in the midst of all these worldly troubles.

3. Strong Faith, and strong Patience. A strong Faith will bear strong Afflictions, with strong Patience. Faith doth strengthen a man's shoulders to bear evils and troubles with patience.

A weak Tree is blown down with that which moves not a stronger Tree. Weak shoulders sink under that burden, which a strong one will bear away. So a weak Faith would sink with that trial, which a strong Faith is able to undergo, with strength of Patience. And therefore it is God's goodness still to proportion the trial to the strength.

A strong Faith can receive a mercy and be thankful, and can render a mercy, and be patient.

A strong Faith can enjoy our blessings, and be cheerful, and can lose it, and be contented.

Hence faith, Paul. -- I have learned in all estates, therewith to be content. I know how to abound, and how to sufferwant, &c. He was a man strong in Faith.

And the ground of all is this, because a strong Faith having clear evidence and apprehensions that God is a Father, doth conclude that all his dealings are for good. -- All things shall work together for good, to them that love God. And he hath said, -- He will never depart from us, from doing us good.

Faith, like the Philosophers Stone, turns all into Gold; sees all God's dealings to be for good.

If God then afflict a man, why, will Faith say, It's for good. I have need of such Afflictions, to work out such a strong corruption.

Are the Afflictions many? why, will Faith say, I have need of many Afflictions, because I have many corruptions.

Are they long? why, I have need of that too: because sin and I are so hardly parted: It is so hard to make a divorce betwixt sin and my soul; and therefore the afflictions had need to continue long.
Royalties of Faith.

Faith teaches that God aims at this, to wean us from the world, to win us closer to him, to exercise and increase our graces, to weaken sin and corruption, to make us more fruitful. Therefore doth he prune us, that we may grow more. If a man chop trees at some times, they will wither and die; but at other times, they will be made more fruitful. God will afflict the wicked at such times. But the saints, when they may grow the more. Therefore God winnows us, fanns us, to blow away the chaff; therefore he puts us as gold into the fire, that we may come out much more pure.

Strong Faith and strong obedience. Obedience is proportionable to our faith. The greater the faith, the more the obedience. A little tree, a young tree may bring forth good fruit, as well as a greater, but not in equal quantity to the greater; so he that hath the least degree of true faith, lives a godly life, brings forth some fruits of obedience; but they are not so plentiful in good works, as those, whose faith is come to a higher degree.

Weak faith doth obey, and this obedience is a willing, a cheerful, a fruitful, a constant, an universal obedience, both,

1. In respect of the subject, the whole man, and
2. In respect of the object, the whole law.

There is a willing yielding of the soul up to God, to walk in every way of God. As David, Lord, I am thine; or as the Prophet, I shall say, I am the Lord. Otherwise it were not true obedience.

But they are not able to act so much as the stronger. They are as large in desires, in affections to obey; but not in expressions of obedience.

But the stronger the faith, the stronger is the obedience, the stronger the will, the stronger the affections, and the spirit in his obedience.

A child may do actions as well as a man, but not with that strength, as a man doth them: he cannot do them with so strong, so vigorously.

A weak believer may pray, hear, &c. but not pray so strongly, so powerfully, as others, who have more faith.

So that you see, where there is strong faith, there is strong obedience. A strong faith will follow God fully in every way, in labors, as well as in gaining labors: in suffering labors, as well as in doing labors: in disconvenienced labors, as well as in such as the world doth countenance: in strait labors, as well as in broad labors: in rugged labors, as well as in plain smooth labors. In difficult, as well as in easy labors.

You see this in Abraham concerning the sacrificing of his son: In which act he might seem to disbelieve in his obedience, and the dutiful yielding to it, might seem to contradict duty.

There seemed not only nature and reason to cry down this act of
Of the Nature, and

of Obedience: but even the word too.

The yeelding of Obedience did seem to jutle against the Pre-
ce of Obedience. Yet you see, hee obeyed God. It is said —
by Faith Abraham obeyed God. By Faith indeed. It was a strong
Faith.

That strong Faith that beleued hee should have a Son, did
now obey God, in offering of his Son. Strong Obedience pro-
cceeded from his strong Faith. Strong Faith produceth strong O-
bedience.

1. Strong for Active;
2. Strong for Passive Obedience.

The same Faith doth supply the soul with Active strength, for
doing duties: and with Passive strength for suffering duties.

1. A strong Faith is strong to bear Reproaches for Chrift. As No-
es, Hee esteemed the Reproach of Christ greater riches than the Tre-
asures of Egypt. Heb. 11. 26. And Paul — Therefore wee labour, and
suffer Reproach, because wee trust in the living God. 1 Tim. 4. 10.

2. A strong Faith is strong to bear losses for Christ. As they,
Heb. 10. 34. Who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods: as
if the enemy had done them a great courtesie.

A strong Faith is strong to bear Persecutions, Scourges, Death
it fell for Christ. You see what the Apostles indured, what Ste-
phen indured. Why, faith the Text — He is a man full of Faith,
Acts 5. 8. Strong Faith did enable them to suffer, and bear, and to
go through difficulties, prisons, persecutions, scourgings, &c. for
Christ.

A strong Beleever doth rejoyce if hee can hold up God (as it
were) though himself bee down: if hee can raise up Gods Glory,
though it bee by the ruine of himself: save his honour, by lotte
of himself.

What Epaminondas said: (who having resolved concerning his
Buckler, either to defend it, or to dye for it, being wounded to
death, brake forth into these words — Nam salus est Cybeus mi-
us? Is my Buckler safe? If that bee safe, I am well.) So the Be-
leever, in the midst of all his sufferings; if hee can keep his Buck-
ler safe, hold up God, and his Glory: All is well.

3. A strong Faith will beleve nothing contrary to his belief.
All the temptations of Satan, all the arguments of men shall ne-
ever bee able to reason him out of his Faith.

A weak Faith is quickly brought to deny his conclusion, to
yeeld up the cause: Satan may make a man unsafe, what formerly
hee hath said. But a strong Faith will hold the conclusion against
all Satans sophistry. His Faith hath been gotten up by many in-
vincible experiences, from Gods behaviour to him, as a Father;
from the souls behaviour to him, as a Child. And all that Satan
can do, shall not out-reason his Faith. What a man faith by feeling,
temptation may make him unsafe: but what a man faith by
Faith
Royalties of Faith.

Faith, nothing can make him untrue:
If Satan do affront such a man, and tell him, God doth not love him, God is not his Father: yet will the soul bind it self to this Matt, and hold his conclusion against all, with the Church, Isa. 63. 16. -- Doubtless then are our Father: thou Lord art our Father; our Redeemer.

Say, Satan takes up arguments from Gods,
1. Inward, Or
2. Outward dealings with us.

1. From his Inward dealings. May bee, a man is in some present Desortion, and wants the clear Evidences, which formerly hee had; and Satan from thence doth argue, That God is not our God; he is not our Father: yet will not a strong Faith bee reason'd out of his Faith.

The soul will yet conclude it, though it cannot clear it, and believe it, when it cannot see it. The strong Christian lives by Faith, not by feelings, and knows God may bee His God, though by sense it bee not discern'd, but that God is not his God. You see this, in Job. 22. 1. -- My God! My God! There's Faith. Why hast thou forsaken me! There's sense, Faith held the conclusion against sense, That God was his God: though sense could not apprehend, but that hee was forsaken of God.

And therefore, when the eye of Sense and Evidence is put out, yet hee hath the eyes of Faith, to see and believe. And -- Blessed is the man (faith our Saviour to Thomas) who believes, and sees not, Joh. 20. 29. A strong Faith will trust God further than hee sees him. Faith is the Evidence of things not seen, Heb. 11. 1. Faith will trust upon the Promise of Mercy, in the want of Sense of Mercy. Our Faith is not begotten by sense and feelings: but by the Promise: and therefore in the want of sense and feelings, the soul may believe, Isa. 50. 10. Though a man walk in darkness, and sees no light, yet may hee trust in the Lord, and lean upon his God.

A weak Faith if it want feeling, it is gone, but the strong Faith will -- Hope against Hope, Believe against Sense, Reason, and present Evidence, and can lay, God is mine, though it want the present Sense and Evidence of it. It will trust in God a Father, when his dealings seem to argue him an Enemy, Faith will read Love in his angry looks, and look through the mist of Desortion, and see the affections of a Father, under the expressions of an Enemy. Thus did Job by Faith -- Though thou know mee: yet will I trust in thee. Full well it knows, Though God hide his face, yet hee cannot deny himself.

2. Say hee takes an argument from Gods outward dealings in chastising and afflicting of us, and say, If God loved thee, hee would not so afflict thee: If God were thy Father, hee would not so chastise thee. However the weak Faith may bee born down with such a temptation as this; yet the strong Faith is not moved with such a
Of the Nature, and
temptation: it is able to resist on Satan; because God loves mee, therefore he scourgeth mee, that I might not be condenmed with the World. That I might not love the World, therefore hee suffers the World to frown on mee. That I might be cruelled to the World, therefore hee suffers mee to be crucified in the World. Because I am a Child, therefore hee afflicts mee. -- Hee scourgeth every Son, whom hee receiveth, Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8, 9, &c.

God takes liberty to chaffolde our bodies, to save our souls, And God loves tenderly, when hee corrects severely; Job 5. 17. Pro. 3. 11.

Thus doth a strong Faith hold up the conclusion of Faith against all the Reasonings of Satan against it. Let him produce never so many Evidences to the contrary, yet will hee not bee born down in it. It's a maxime of Faith, hee will hold to against all opposition whatsoever.

You see it was thus in Job. -- When God had taken away his goods, when his hand was upon his body, and upon his spirit too, not only withdrawing himself from him; but positively inflicting of his displeasure upon his soul: yet all that Satan could do by himself, all that hee could do by his friends, who joyned with Satan in the battel, could not make him unfay, what his heart and the Spirit of God had to often said, nothing shall make him turne his own words: Nothing shall cause him to deny his integrity. The root of the matter was still in him: and hee will live and dye with this in his heart, with this in his mouth, that notwithstanding all this; God is his God, God is his Father: his heart hath been sincere before him. And this was a strong Faith that would bee thus resolute in believings, when hee had so much reason on the other side to bear him down.

4. A strong Faith will trust in God in difficulties, in difficult cases, in exigents. Here is the tryst of Trust. It will trust in God,

1. With small means.
2. Without means.
3. Against means.

1. With small means. Strong Believers know full well, bee the means never so small; if God bid them to bee effectual, they shall do the work. As Jeremy was drawn out of the Dungeon with old rotten Rages: so God can make use of weak and contemptible means, to effect his own purposes, to draw thee out of the Dungeon of affliction.

Faith knows God can help with few, as well as with many; with a small hand, as well as with a great; all is one to him. It was that that Als said to God, when Zera the Ethiopian came against him, with such a great host, that hee seemed to bee but a Cer-
for we trust upon thee; and in thy name we go out against this great multitude. And the day was theirs. But in another he was overthrown, when the difficulty was left: because he trusted not on the Lord. The like we read of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. 20. 1, 2, 3, 4, and many others.

2. Strong Faith will trust in God without means.

Lev. 3. 12. - I will leave in the midst of thee, an afflicted and poor people. (2 people spoiled of all means) and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. So 2 Cor. 1. 10, 11. - Wee laid the sentence of death in our selves: wee saw no help, no means; and all this was - That wee should not trust in our selves, but in God, which raiseth the dead. 1 Tim. 5. 5. - Shee that is a widow in deed, and desolate, Trusts in God, &c.

Thus you see Strong Faith will trust in God, in the absence of means; when all means are wanting. It knows, God is able to do his work without, as well as with means. A strong Faith makes God all its confidence. And therefore when all means fail, when all props are taken away: yet confidence is not.

Unbelief will trust God no further than it sees means to bring about the thing it desires.

You see the unbelieving Noble Man, when the Prophet Elshai told him in that great famine, that the next day there should be such great plenty. What! faith hee, if God could open the window of heaven, how could this be? Though there were a famine much, hee had no reason to think there was a dearth in Heaven: God was able to do it, his hand was not shortened. But here it was. Hee saw no means whereby this might be effected; and therefore hee could not believe it.

God may work wonders, and yet in an ordinary way. You see it in this Famine. A wonder it was, that they should have such plenty, in so short a time. And it was too big for the noble mans honest to believe. But yet you see it was a wonder wrought in an ordinary way.

The like you see in the Israelites, Psa. 78. 19, 20. - Can God turn a Table in the Wilderness? Indeed hee struck the Rock, and the waters gushed out. But can hee provide flesh for his people also? One would have thought that the former experience of Gods power would have satisfied them in this: that they that granted the one, could not have denied the other, that God was able to do that also. But the former was over, and here was a new strait they were in: and they saw no means how it should be effected, therefore they could not believe it.

The like of Abaz, Isa. 7. 11, 12. God told him that his enemies that were come against him, should not prevail against him: God would fight for him. And that hee might believe certain of this, he bids him - Ask a sign in Heaven, or in the deep, for the confirmation of his Faith. But faith Abaz. - I will not tempt God. What's
that: I will provide for myself. I will not trust in the want of means. I should tempt God in so doing.

And many such Abuses we have in the World. They think, to trust in God in the absence of means, is to tempt God. Whereby they, does God work wonders, that he should do this without means? Why God can do wonders, and yet in an ordinary way.

Thus strong Faith will trust without means, God is not trusted at all, if not trusted alone. If we take in any thing with God, in our trust, we trust not God at all, as we ought.

When men are brought to the lowest strait, they are nearest to the highest God. And then will Faith work best, when it works alone; and then is God nearest in help, when means strengthen is small. Mans extremity is Gods opportunity.

The ancient Tragedians, when things were brought to that pafs, that they saw no possibility of humane help, they used to bring down some of their Gods. Hence that Proverb. 

Not much unlike that Proverb among the Jews. — In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

3. A strong Faith will trust against means; in the opposition of all means. Such know, that hee that can help without means, can help, if hee please against all means, — Is any thing too hard for the Lord?

Thus Moses trusted in God, when the Red Sea was before them, the Egyptians behind them, and the Mountains on each side of them. — Fear not, stand still, behold the salvation of the Lord. &c.

Thus David, when the people would have stoned him. The Text faith. David comforted himself in the Lord his God. Thus Daniel, and the Three Children. Abraham also both in the receiving and offering of his Son Isaac.

5. Strong Faith is accompanied

1. With much Peace.

2. With much Joy.

1. With much Peace. Strong Faith lives in the upper Region above all storms. There’s much variety of weather here below; now calms, now storms: but if a man were above, there’s a continual serenity, and clearness. Strong Faith lives in Heaven above all storms, and therefore there’s nothing but calms and quiet.

Rom. 5. 1. — Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, 12.

26. 3. — Thus will he preserve him in perfect Peace, whose mind is fixed on thee, Rom. 15. 13. — The God of all Consolation, fill you with all joy and Peace in believing.

Such a man, hee hath Peace above him. Peace with God. Hee hath Peace within him; a peaceable conscience, not a dead Peace, a sleepiness of Conscience, like unto the calms of the dead Sea, whose calms are not of Nature, but from a curse: But a found Peace, a spiritual Peace, a Peace after War, a Peace joyned with War, and Conflict, the surest Peace of all.

2. With
Royalties of Faith.

2. With much Joy. So much Faith, so much Joy, Rom. 15. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 8. In whom believing, ye rejoice with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory. There's attending a strong Faith, a full Joy, an Harvest Joy: Such a Joy as will hold out in troubles, Joy that's Persecution Proof, Prison Proof, Tribulation Proof, Rom. 5. 3. -- Wee joy in Tribulations. Other men may joy in Prosperity, in Abundance: But this is a Joy that out-lasts Riches, out-lasts Comforts, a Joy which nothing can quench.

6. Strong Faith will subdue strong corruptions, strong sins, strong lusts, those Sons of Leviathan, that are too hard for us.

Faith makes use of Sin-subduing Promises: of a Sin-subduing Christ. And the more Faith, the more Strength is conveyed from Christ to us.

Faith sets the Power of Christ against the power of lust: the strength of Christ against the strength of corruption, who is able to subdue all things unto himself, and to conquer the most untamed corruptions.

7. Strong Faith will overcome strong Temptations. Temptations from the World, Temptations from Satan. Strong Faith subdues, where weak Faith is blown down with every blast of Temptation, not being able to stand out against the assaults of Satan.

Strong Faith overcomes the allurements and threats of the World: it overcomes all. This is our victory, whereby we overcame the World, even our Faith.

8. Strong Faith overcomes strong doubts, answers strong Objections in the soul. Such doubts and objections move not them, that are ready to overwhelm a weak Faith. It will flye away with such twigs as will hinder the flight of weaker Christians.

There are doubts in the best Beleevers. So long as there is flesh, so long there will bee doubts: but strong Beleevers are not overcome with doubts, but will overcome doubts. Though Faith doth not expel, yet it conquers doubts, Rom. 4. 20. -- Abraham staggered not through unbelief, but being strong in Faith, gave Glory to God. That is, though there might bee some doubts, yet they prevailed not to the staggering of his Faith. His Faith overcame his doubts.

A weaker Faith is full of doubts, making the soul like a pure of Ballances, the scales whereof are wavering sometimes this way, sometimes that. The mind hath now its assenting, and by and by its dissenting: Now it faith, God is my God. Christ is my Christ; and anon it fears, Christ is not his. God is not his. Now it hopes its fins are pardoned, anon it fears, its fins are not pardoned.

Now the soul thrusts out for Comfort; and by and by draws back with discouragement. On this side it sees ground why it should beleive it shall bee saved: yet on the other side sees ground, whereby to fear it shall be damned.

But a strong Faith overcomes all these doubts: having strong persuasions of its interest in Christ. It faith, Christ is mine: and nothing
nothing shall make it unlay, Christ is not mine. It is able to answer all.

   1. Strong to wrestle with God.
   2. Strong to prevail with God.

1. Such are strong to wrestle with God. Faith doth furnish a man with a deep sense of his wants; with strong affections, with strong Promises to wrestle with God, to have those wants supplied. Jacob's Prayer was a wrestling with God. It was a wrestling-prayer, such an one as proceeded from a strong Faith, as you may read in the story, Gen. 32. 24. to the 30. where hee encounters God, with his own strength, the strength of his Promise, the strength of his Covenant. — O God of my Fathers, Abraham, Isaac!
   Thine hast said, thou wilt bless mee, thou hast mce return into my own Country; and thou wouldest deal well with mee. Deliver mee now, that I beseech thee, from the hand of my Brother, etc.

Moses' Prayer was a wrestling Prayer, Exod. 32. 10. to the 16. where he was so strong as to stop the proceedings of God, against a rebellious people: inasmuch that God bids him — let mee alone. It was a Beleauing Prayer.

So may it bee said of Hezekiah's Prayer, Daniel's Prayer: They were wrestling-Prayers, strong-Prayers.

I will instance but in one. The Woman of Canaan, Mat. 15. 21. to the 28. where you see how shee wrestled with Christ. Her case was doubtfull for a long time, shee went through great temptations: shee is reported to bee a Woman great in Faith.

1. There was Tentatio Tacturmissatis. There was the tryal of silence. Shee prays, and Christ answers her not a word. Here was a great tryal: when God shall hide himself in a Cloud, and not answer her prayers.

2. There was Tentatio Particularitatis: first nothing, then worse than nothing, verse 24. — I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As if hee had said, — Thou dost not belong to the election of Grace: thou art not in Covenant: I came only to mine own: unto thee: therefore I will not help thee.

3. There was Tentatio Indignitatis. The tryal of Indignity, verse 25. — It is not meet to take the Childrens bread, and cast it unto Dogs.

Yet see the strength of her faith, how it enabled her to outwrestle these temptations; how it enabled her to follow God. — True Lord: but yet the Dogs may eat the crumbs. Bee it, thinck I am but a Dog; yet thy Dog. And if thou wilt not give mee leave to eat of Childrens morsels: deny mee not Childrens crumbs, such as fall from their Table, such as they have no need of.

Thus you see, strong Faith produces strong Prayers, strong to wrestle with God himself.

2. Strong to prevail with God. They are not only wrestling, but prevailing-Prayers.
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Jacob wrestled, and Jacob prevailed: Moses wrestled, and Moses prevailed. David wrestled, and hee prevailed: The Woman of Canaan wrestled, and shee prevailed, ver. 28. — Oh Woman! great is thy Faith: See is unto thee, even as thou wilt. So the Church for Peter: and they brake open the Prison doors, and set him free.

They are called awaiting Prayers, Jam. 5. 19. — The effectual fervent Prayer of a Righteous man availeth much. Thus strong Faith hath strong Prayers.

And let me adde this more.

A strong Faith doth not only make strong Prayers: But a strong Faith can take

1. Long Delays.

2. Strong Denials, well at God's hand.

A strong Faith can take long Delays well at God's hand. — Hee that believes, makes not haste. Such a man can wait upon God's time, for the bestowing of a Mercy. Such a man knows that God hath a fulness of time to bestow mercy in:

And as it was said of the sending of Christ (that universal Mercy, that summum genus of Mercy) when the fulness of time was come, when his Son: So when the fulness of time is come, God will end us our desires, bestow the Mercy. And therefore hee can wait.

A weak Faith is quickly worn out, it cannot wait; if God come not presently, it is cast down, and can wait no longer. You see him in the Two Disciples going to Emmaus. — Wee hoped that this child had been hee that should have delivered Israel, but hee is dead: this is the third day. They might have waited a little longer; they were too quick and hasty: what though the third was come, was not yet expired: great things might have been done yet before. But weak Faith is impatient of delays. — This evil sitteth from the Lord: shall I wait on him any longer? was the voice of that wicked King, 2 King. 6. 33. — Every vision faileth, Ezek. 12. 22. But they, and too often many better than they.

But now a strong Faith will hold out in delays; yea, and pray earnestly. As you see David did: who though — his Eyes failed, his Flesh failed, though his Heart failed, yet hee renewed supplication from day to day. The like in Daniel, in the Woman of Canaan, in Hannah, and in the Blind man, hee was blamed for his impertinency; and was yet the more importunate.

Such a man knows, that hee who hath any thing from God must continue in Prayer. Jacob, all night. David, day and night. Abraham, three days and nights. Daniel, one and twenty days and nights. Moses, forty days, and forty nights. God often deters his people, to in patience, and raise up the price of mercy, to make them fit for mercy, more thankful for mercy. And therefore hee wait.

A strong Faith cannot only take long delays, But denyals well,
well, it can submit to denials, as well as to grants. You see it in David. He had strong desires for the continuance of the life of his Child. God denied it. See how calm, how submissive he was, in the denial; insomuch that he was a wonder to all his servants.

A weak Faith doth faint and is discouraged at the denials of request. It cannot tell how to take a denial of God: but a strong Faith can take denials as well as grants.

A strong Faith is clear in this, that God is a Father, and therefore his denials are in mercy: all is for good: hee knows, if God hear him not according to his will, yet according to his good.

A strong Faith submits to God's wisdom, and God's will, who is the only Wise. We may desire a thing at God's hand, and in our wisdom may judge it to bee good: But God in his Wisdom, who knows the issue of things, Hes it will bee for our hurt; and therefore denies it. And Faith submits to his wisdom, and follows him, as a blinde man his guide.

Wee may ask some things too earnestly, which are more profitably denied, then granted. As Solomon said of Adonijah's request, so I may say of many of ours: We ask our lives, we desire our Bane, such things as would hurt us, and undo us. And are not those things mercifully denied, which without hurt cannot bee granted? This is to cross us with a Mercy. A child desires knife of the Father, The Child sees no hurt in it: but the Father doth. And shall we not then submit to the Wisdom of our Father?

A man may desire this evil to bee taken away; this crosses, this affliction to bee removed; this temptation, this corruption to bee taken away. God denies it, seeing it best for a man to bee exercised with them. And Faith will submit.

Again, a man desires this outward mercy; it may bee Right, may bee Honours, the great things of the World: And thinks (it may bee) if God did raise him, hee would raise God: if God would make him great, hee would make God great.

But now God denies this. God sees it is better that thou want them, than enjoy them. And Faith submits to God's Wisdom, and to God's Will in it. God's Will is his will: and faith, Not my will, but thy will bee done. God's will is the best; and being best, will what is the best both for his own glory, and our good.

Again, thou desirest some spiritual mercy from God. Perhaps thou desirest Perfection of Grace in this life: and God sees it is better that corruptions should dwell in thee, as the Lees among the Wine, to keep the Wine sweet, to humble thee, or that they might bee as pricks in thy eyes, and goads in thy sides, to make thee more forward and fervent in holy performances.

Perhaps thou desirest a great deal of Knowledge with Sound, to bee higher by the head and shoulders, than thy fellow Christians: Or...
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Or with David, to be wiser than thy Teachers: God denies it; and Faith takes the denial: knowing all is for the best. It may be, it might beget pride; this would puff up; it would be too great a fall for to limb a Boat; and rather over-turn thee, than let thee forward.

Perhaps thou desirest to enjoy the continual light of God's comnance, to bee like the Island of Rhodes, in perpetuo Sole: in continual Sun-shine. But God denies it, thou art sometimes in the valley of tears, as well as sometimes in the Mountain of Joy. Thou hast cloudy and clear days, calmy and stormy seasons. And Faith submits to this denial. It sees all is for the best. That we should not have our Heaven upon Earth. This might occasion spiritual Pride, as you see in Paul. It might occasion a common esteem of so great a mercy. And therefore submits.

Thus you see how a strong Faith is strong in Prayers, can take long delays, and submit to delays too from God.

My Brethren, this is the strength of Faith that can be so strong in Desires, so patient in Delays, so submissive in Denials. Here is strong Faith.

10. Strong Faith hath strong desires to go to Christ by death, and that Christ should come to him by Judgement.

1. To go to Christ by death. A Believer hath Vitam in Patience, Mortem in Desiderio: Hee hath Life in Patience, Death in Desire. Life is his Sea, where hee meers with nothing but storms: Death is his Harbour.

Life is his way, his Inne at the best. But Heaven is his Home. There his best Friends are: there his chief business lies: there is his abiding-place; and thither hee desires to go.

A weak Faith is loath to dye: is afraid of death: hee hath not yet gotten his Evidence sealed, his hope in his hand. But when this is done, then with Paul, I desire to be dissolved. Or with Simo, when hee had once gotten Christ into his arms -- Lord, Now lettest thou thy servant depart in Peace, for my eyes have seen thy salvation. You hear how David cries, Psal. 42. 1, 2. As the hart panteth for the Water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, 0 Lord. My soul thirsteth for God, when shall I come and appear before God!

2. Strong Faith hath strong desires that Christ would come to Judgement. It is not well contented there should bee a distance betwixt Christ and it. And therefore cries with the Spoule, Cant. 8. 14. -- Make haste, my Beloved. -- Why are the Chariots so long in coming?

Though in another case it bee true, that the Prophet Ephes., -- Ife that believest makes not haste: yet in this case, Hee that believest most, makes most haste.

Here are but some broken Rings passing betwixt Christ and us. Here is but the contract and espousals made betwixt Christ and the
Of the Nature, and

but the day of Judgement is the great solemnization of the marriage. As the espoused Bride longs for the marriage day: so the soul that is espoused to Christ, longs for the consummation of this blessed marriage.

Weak Faith desires the coming of Christ, but yet would fain bee fitter and readier for him: as the Wife desires the presence of her Husband: but yet would have her house in order, before she come: so they.

But a strong Faith hath all in readiness, and desires nothing more than a consummation of these dates of sin, and the eternal fruition and enjoyment of her best Husband.

Wee are now fallen (at last) upon the last use, the Use of Exhortation, wherein I shall exhort you,

1. To get Faith.
2. To exercise Faith.
3. To grow in Faith.

Let me exhort you to labour to get Faith. Let the chief of your pains, and choice of your endeavours bee for the getting of Faith. It is a thing to bee lamented, how men do labour and toil for earthly things, and how they neglect Heavenly. Oh! That men should rise up early, and go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulness, for the compassing of earthly things! But in the mean time, the things of Heaven are neglected! no man labours for them. Faith and Grace are the great drugs of the World, they lye upon our hands, they will not off; no man bids mony for them, no man endeavours the compassing of them.

Oh! that men should care for the Body, and neglect the Soul! feed the Body, and starve the Soul! cloathe the Body, and the Soul go naked! That men should labour after other things, and never let themselves to the indeavour and compassing of this one thing necessary! Shall I urge some motives?

1. Consider the greatness of this sin of Unbelief.
2. The Necessity of Faith.
3. The Excellency of it.

Consider the greatness of the sin of Unbelief. It is such a sin as offers injury and wrong to All God. It wrongs all the attributes of God. As Faith doth honour all Gods attributes: It is said of Abraham, that Hee gave glory to God by believing, Rom. 4. 20. Hee honoured his Mercy, his Wisdome, his Power, &c. So on the contrary, unbelief is such a sin, as wrongs all: The Wisdome, Power, Mercy, Truth and Justice of God.

1. You wrong the Wisdome of God: you flith and undervalue the Glorious thoughts of his Wisdome, -- Rejecting the Counsel of God against your selves, Luk. 7. 30.

2. You wrong the Mercy and Love of God; even the most precious thoughts of Mercy, that ever his breast did conceive towards sinful men: the most glorious expresssion of love: Angels wonder.

3. You
3. You wrong the Power of God: you straiten and limit his Power, Psal. 78. 41. They tempted God, and limited the holy one of Israel in the wilderness, by their Unbelief. So we read in the Gospel, Mark 6. 5. Christ could not do any miracles in that place, because of their Unbelief.

4. You wrong his Truth. As -- Hee that believeth hath put to his seat, that God is true; that his Word is true; his Promise true; hee will save sinners: for on the contrary, Hee that believeth not, makes God a Liar, 1 Joh. 5. 10. Indeed God is true, and whether we believe, or believe not, God is faithful, as the Apostle hath it, 2 Tim. 2. 13.

But inasmuch as in us lies, woe make God untrue, make him a Liar. Our unbelief doth give God the real lye in all.

And of what a fearful nature then is Unbelief! God hath promised the pardon of sin, and hath annexed his Oath to his Promise, and his Seal to his Oath: and if we believe not, we make him untrue in his Promise, his Oath, his Covenant, &c.

2. Unbelief is a Mother-sin; it is a Root-sin, the summum genus of sin; such a sin as hath all sins folded up in the bowels of it, a catholic sin. And therefore the Apostle expresseth sinners of all sorts under this general (Children of Unbelief) which is as much as Children of all ungodliness, such as had all sin in them.

Unbelief is the Womb of sin. If you could rip up Unbelief, you shall finde all sin in the bowels of it. There is Pride, Prophaneness, Rebellion, contempt of God, contempt of his Word, hardness of Heart, Love of the World, Covetousness; There is all, all sin lye in the belly of this monster Unbelief.

An unbelieving man is a proud Person; an unbeliever is an hard-hearted Person: an unbelieving Person is a prophan sinned Person, a rebellious man; hee is all.

Unbelief is both the Entertainer, and Maintainer of sin. It is not only the Mother, but the Nurse of sin. Every sin doth suck the dung of Unbelief. It is a sin-succouring, a sin-nourishing sin. Not only the Breeder, but the Feeder of sin. Not only the Begetter, but the Nourisher of sin. It is such a Root as doth nourish and succour all the branches of sin.

There is nothing holds up the Kingdom of Sin, but Unbelief. If men would believe, the Kingdom of Sin would rotter and come down. But while men believe not, the hands of Sin are strengthened, the kingdom of Sin is held up in us.

Sin goes to Unbelief for protection, and there it hath it. Unbelief will bee a shield to keep off any blow that is given to Sin.

Sin goes to Unbelief for security, and unbelief secures and warrants Sin: Sin dwelleth where Unbelief keeps the house; Sin sits down securely under the shadow of unbelief. Let curse and Hell be threatened against Sin, yet unbelief will secure it. It makes but child's play of all the threats of God. Sin keeps the house, and unbelief bars the door, and keeps out all that would endanger Sin; it will secure it.
Of the Nature, and

Sinn goeth to unbelief, not only for defence, but for maintenance; and unbelief will maintain sin: it will fetch in provision for lust. It is not only the Entertainer, but the Maintainer of sin. It shall want no morsels: unbelief will furnish it.

3. Unbelief is a soul-kill ing-sin, a soul-damning-sin. It is a controversy among many, Whether Negative unbelief damn men.

But we will not enter on the controversy. For Positive unbelief, of which nature ours is now under the light of the Gospel, it is agreed upon all sides, that this is damming. Hee that believeth shall bee saved: but hee that believeth not, shall bee dammed. Mercy it self autho: Hee that you look to bee saved by, faith it, Mark 16, 16.

Nay, not only damned, but the forest damnation of all, the deepest Cellars of Hell, the lowest Tunnels of Hell are reserved for such, who are Unbelievers now under the Gospel. This is condemnation, (that is, the forest condemnation) That Light is come into the World, that a Christ is tendered to you, a Christ is offered to you and men love darkness rather than light: yet men will not believe, John 3, 18.

There is no fall into Hell, like such an one as is taken at a stumble at Christ: No damnation like that, which is pronounced in the Court of Mercy, An Unbeliever is condemned in the Court of Mercy. And when Mercy it self condems, as it shews the offence to bee hainous: so it makes the condemnation the more heavy.

As the lowest Vinegar comes from the sweetest Vine, so out of the sweetest Mercy, the forest condemnation. It will bee ten thousand times easier for those, who are condemned under the Law, their torments will not bee so heavy, Hell will not bee so hot to them, as to such who are now condemned under the Gospel.

It had been better for you, that you had been born Turks and Heathens, such as never heard of Christ, than Christians, if you live and dye in an unbelieving condition.

Thus you see, Unbelief is a remediless sin. Such a sin as there is no remedy for it, no plairer for it.

All other sins have a Remedy, and Christ is the Remedy: But unbelief denies the Remedy. There is a plairer for Drunkenness, for Swearing, for Murder, &c. All other sins have a Plairer, and Christ is that Plairer: But Unbelief denies the Plairer.

God gives the Mercy of the Book to all other sins; it sinn'd a gainst the Law, and condemned by the Law: yet hee renders the Mercy of the Book. Hee that believeth shall bee saved. But Unbelief rejects this Mercy: It will not read.

If the Law condemn us, wee are suffered to appeal to the Gospel: If Justice condemn us, wee are suffered to appeal to Mercy. As you fee, the Publican, who was arraign'd, sentenced, and condemned by the Law: But hee appeals to the Court of Mercy. God bee merciful.
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some a sinner. And you see the sentence took no hold on
him.

But now, if Mercy condemn us, if the Gospel condemn us, wheth-
er shall we appeal? whether shall we go? Now it is Mercy that
condemns unbelieving men: they are condemned in the Court of Mer-
cy. Hence one, There is no sin that doth peremptorily, (and Quoad
etiam) damn us, but unbelieving. There is no sin that doth (de
falso) bring death, but unbelieving. Other sins do create a merit
of death: but unbelief doth actually bring death upon the
soul. While a man believes not, he is under the Covenant of
works; and there sin doth de falso bring death: it bindes all sin
upon the conscience, makes a man to stand out, to answer for his
own guilt, bear his own curse; and therefore it is said, Job 3.
18. — Hee that beloveth not, is condemned already: He is condemned in
all Courts.

1. In the Court of Justice. The Law condemns him. — Cursed is
every man that continueth not in all things that is written in the Law,
to do the same, Gal. 3. 10.

2. In the Court of Mercy. That condemns him. This is the sen-
tence there — Hee that believeth not, shall be damned, Mark
16. 16.

3. In the Court of Conscience. He is self-condemned; and hath a
beginning of the execution.

Thus then you see of what a fearful nature is this sin of unbelief,
It is the greatest damning sin now under the Gospel.
2 Motives from the necessity of Faith.
1. In respect of our Persons.
2. In respect of our Performances.

1. Faith is needful, in respect of our Persons. Our Persons are.
1. Under the guilt of sin, of many thousand sins. And without
Faith, there is no justification.
2. Under the power of sin, of lust. And without Faith, no sub-
duing.
3. Under the pollution and filth of sin. And we had need of
Faith for the purifying of our hearts.

So that Faith is needful for the justifying of our Persons, the
subduing of our lusts, the purifying of our hearts.
2. Faith is needful, in respect of our Performances. Faith is ne-
cessary to every work of a Christian: needful to every Ordin-
ance.

Wee must pray in Faith, hear in Faith, receive in Faith, do all
things in Faith. Faith must incorporate it self with every duty. —
Whatever is not of Faith, is sin, Rom. 14. 23. Whatever is before
Faith is only the issue of a corrupt nature, and of a corrupt con-
science; and therefore it cannot please God, Tit. 1. 15. Rom.

Faith is the salt, which seakens and sweetens every duty. It is
the
the life, and soul of every performance; without which all are but dead, and stinking works; and cannot please God. Faith is to duty, as the soul is to the body.

When you go to Prayer, you had need of Faith, whereby you may cry Abba, Father; without which Prayer is but the complaint of Nature, or the cry of a hopeless and desperate heart.

When you go to hear, you had need of Faith, to incorporate it self with the word heard; without which the word will not profit us: nor the word Promising, nor the word threatening, the one to humble us, the other to raise us, and comfort us.

When you go to receive, you had need of Faith. Hee goes to work without tools, that goes to any Ordinance without Faith.

You have need of Faith to give you admission into God's Presence. -- Draw near with a true heart in assurance of Faith, Heb. 10. 22.

You have need of Faith to give you acceptance in the work.

You have need of Faith to procure a blessing, when all is done.

Faith is the great Grace, that is to beeployed in all the Ordinances of God. This must run through every Ordinance, if you would profit by them. The word must bee mingled with Faith, Prayer with Faith, &c.

Unbelief makes every Ordinance of God unprofitable to us. What is the reason that men hear the Word, and get no more benefit, but because they believe not? Heb. 4. 2. The Word preached did not profit them, because it was not mingled with Faith in them that heard it.

Do you think the word of Threatning could bee heard, and you not bee humbled, if you did believe the Truth of all that were able to lift up his head, nay to stand under the threats of the great God of Heaven and Earth, if hee did believe? It is said -- The Devils believe and tremble, Jam. 2. And had you but as much Faith as they to believe the truth of what God threatens against sin, it would make the foulest sinner of you all to tremble.

And do you think the word Promising, Beseeching, Intreating could bee so unprofitable, if you had Faith to mingle with it, to apply it to your selves?

It is, because you bring no Faith to the Word, that the Word of God is not a raising, a quickening, a comforting word to your souls: That it is not an enlightening, a convincing, a converting, and a reforming word.

So for the Sacraments. Could these bee so unprofitable; could you live under them, and get no further victory of lift? no more increase of Grace, if you did bring and exercise Faith here, to fetch from this treasure opened.

It is necessary to every Ordinance, necessary to your Callings; necessary to every condition, Wee had need of Faith to go through
through all the conditions of this life: Through 
Prosperity, Adversity, Sickness, Health: Losses and 
Injuries. As the Apostle said 
of Patience, the Daughter, to I say of Faith the Mother. -- You have 
need of Faith, that after you have suffered the Will of God, you might 
inherit the Promise, Heb. 10. 36.

If our condition be prosperous, wee had need of Faith, to see 
all for good, and need of Faith, to enable us to make a good 
use of it.

1. You had need of Faith, to see the Tenor of your enjoyments; That 
you enjoy them, not only out of leave, but out of Love: not only 
from a general Providence, but from a particular Promise.

2. You had need of Faith, to see further than your present Estates: 
to look upon these peace, and farthings as earnest of better things: 
as something in hand for those things in hope.

3. You had need of Faith, to see the heart of the giver in the gifts; 
His Affection, in the expression, the God of Mercy, in the enjoyment of 
Mercy, to take the fountain in the stream.

An unbelieving man hee is not able to clear this: Hee may 
have prosperity in Judgement, and heap up Riches to his own de-
struction. All his Wealth may bee but fuel to that fire, to make Hell 
better, as Oyle to kindle the flame of lust, so fuel to increase the fire 
of torment hereafter.

So if our condition bee troublesome and afflicted, wee had need 
of Faith to see all is for the best, and need wee had of Faith, to 
make the best use of it, to humble us, wean us, winne us, &c. Faith 
can see good in all, making all good to him, though in themselves 
ever to evil.

3. There are Motives drawn from the excellency of Faith. I shall 
lay no more of it, but what I have already said, and you may read 
in these several Royalties of Faith already laid down.

The second branch of the Exhortation is to you that have 
Faith.

Let me exhort you to exercise your Faith.

1. In matter of justification under the guilt of sin. Trust in God 
for Pardon, for Justification. What though thy sins bee never so 
great, Iniquity, Transgression, and sin's sins of Nature? sins of 
Concern? sins of Custom? what though they bee bloody and crimson 
sins? yet hee can pardon, hee can forgive them.

Thy sins are great: his Mercy is greater. Thy sins are many: 
His Mercies are more. Thy sins have abounded: His Mercy 
superabounds. As thou hast been plentiful in sinning, so hee is in 
Mercy for pardoning sin, Isa. 1. 18. Though your sins were as crimi-
sons, they shall bee made white as Snow: though as scarlet, they 
shall bee as Wool, Isa. 59. 17. Let him return to the Lord, and hee 
will have mercy upon him; and to our God: for hee will multiply 
pardons.

Though thy sins have weakened the Law, and made that unble
to save thee, or do thee good, Rom. 8 3. yet they have not weakened Christ and Grace. -- Christ is able to save to the utmost, even to the utmost of your sins, the utmost of your doubts and fears.

There is neither quality nor quantity of sins, that can pose the fulness of Christ. There is not too much evil in sin, in all thy sins -- as there is Mercy in him. -- If thou canst believe, -- all things are possible to the believer. They are Christ's own words, Mark. 9 23. It is possible for thy greatest rebellions to pass away as a cloud, and to be dispelled and scattered, as a mist, if thou canst believe. He can drown Mountains, as well as Molehills.

2. Trust in him for Sanctification. Christ is full of all Grace and Truth, Joh. 1 14. he is able to fill a World of hearts with Grace.

Thou desirest more love, brokenness of heart, sincerity, fruitfulness. Christ is able to afford thee all of all this.

3. Trust in him for mortification of thy lusts and corruptions. Go over to Christ for power to subdue thy lusts and unruly corruptions. If ever you would make any happy conquest of lust, by Faith, have recourse to Christ: there you shall have strength against your unruly affections. Christ is as able to cleanse, as to clear, to purge, to subdue, and take down the power of sin, as to take away the guilt of sin.

1. We have his Prayer, to subdue and conquer our lusts, to sanctify our Natures, John 17 17. -- Sanctifie them through thy Truth.

2. We have his Promise. -- I will subdue your iniquities, Micah 7 19. -- Sin shall no more have dominion over you, Rom. 6 14.

3. We have his Power, who is able to subdue all things to himself, Phil. 3 21. Hee will trample Satan under our feet.

4. Wee have his office and fidelity to appeal unto, where wee may complain of our own flesh, Hee undertook it, as a part of his business, to purge and cleanse his people, Tit. 2 14. Hee came not only to bee a Redeemer, but to bee a Refiner, a Purifier. Hee gave himself for us, to do us from all iniquities, and to cleanse and purifie us, to bee his peculiar people, zealous of good works.

5. Wee have his Merit, as a Sanctuary to fly to, as to a Laver, as to a Fountain set open so whosoever from all sin, filthiness and uncleanness, Zach. 13 1.

4. Exercise Faith, in case of Difficulties.

1. In case of Temptation. Thou art it may be in many Temptations, Exercise Trust. Thou knowest who hath conquered Death, Hell, who hath overcome Principalities and Powers, all the Powers of Darkness, who hath led captivity captive, and triumphed over all, on the Cross. Trust therefore in him.

1. For support and strength in the Combat: Hee hath promised, -- My Grace shall be sufficient, 2 Cor. 12 9. -- God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able: But will,
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with the Temptation give an issue, that we may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10. 13.

2. Trust in him for deliverance out of it, and victory over it. That we may conquer the strong man; and snatch us out of the fire, and tread down Satan under our feet, Rom. 16. 20. Deliver us out of Temptations, 2 Pet. 2. 9. -- The Lord knows how to deliver his people out of temptations.

3. Exercise trust in cases of desertion. When God seems to hide himself, or withdraw himself from our souls, withholding either his quickenings, or his comforting Spirit: yet trust still, for that walk in darkness and see no light: Trust in the Name of the Lord, and rest upon your God, Is. 50. 10. Trust in God in the darkest night of desertion, cast anchor there, as the Apostle did.

What though the soul were as dark as Hell? yet God can make it as light as Heaven. That God that caused light to shine out of darkness, can also shine into our dark hearts.

What though there be nothing within thee, nothing without thee, nothing round about thee, to comfort thee? yet there is something above thee. Cast anchor in Heaven there: there is an Almighty God, to stay thy soul upon. The Name of the Lord is a sufficient prop, and rock to rest upon in any condition. -- The Name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the Righteous fly to it, and is exalted.

Prov. 18. 10. or 11, in safety.

There's safety in the Tower, when all the other forts and bulwarks are gone; when Out-works are taken, and Walls are scaled, there is yet safety in the Tower.

So here, when all Out-works are gone, when all our evidences seem to be gone, when nothing appears to comfort us, yet the Name of the Lord is a strong Tower to fly to, a rock to rest on, whereupon being exalted, we are delivered from danger, and cut out of gun-shot. Hence we read the Name of the Lord opposed to all stiles and props, which Faith had to rest on, Is. 50. 10. -- He that walks in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

Here is such a bottom for Faith to rest upon, that if Faith should fail, All God would fail with it: His Mercy, His Truth, His Wisdom, His Power, &c.

Let us then cast anchor here, and wait till the time of refreshment come, wait till all storms and clouds be blown over. Light is shown for the Righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. But we must wait with the Husbandman with patience, till the crop be thoroughly ripe. Thou must not look for clear day, so soon as thou hast taken shelter: nor a calm so soon as thou hast cast anchor: but there thou must abide, ride at anchor, wait till the time of refreshment shall come from the Lord.

Godly security, and apprehension of safety do not ever attend the act of Faith at the heels. To trust is the act of Faith; and appre-
henden security is the fruit of believing, and therefore comes not till afterwards.

Here is thy comfort as was said before, if thou didst whilst thou liest at anchor, having anchored on this rock, thou didst in the ship, not in the Sea; thou didst in the Covenant, and there is safety, though the storm never cease. Thy condition is safe, and secure, though thou do not yet apprehend the safety and security of it.

Never soul miscarried in a trusting way. There is not one example in the World, no not one in the World, where ever man trusted in God, and was ashamed. — Psal. 22. 4, 5. Our Fathers trusted in shee. They trusted, and were delivered. God hath ingaged himself, hee hath not only set the Sun, and the Moon, and Stars to pawn, not only Heaven and Earth, but even himself too. Hee hath ingaged his Truth, his Mercy, his Promise, his Wisdom, and Power, to save and keep them who trust in him.

All Heaven would sink, if that soul that truly leans, and trusts in God should miscarry.

6. In case of outwad Calamity, not only Personal, but National. Other Nations God hath dealt withal, as with Jerusalem, Hee turned them upside down, as a Dish, and wiped them, 2 King. 21. 13. Indeed wee have injoyed Peace and Plenty: Peace with Plenty, and Plenty with Peace. How many ships deep laden with Mercy hath the stream of the Gospel brought to our shore? But yet our sins may give us occasion to suspect the water heating for us, Rods are preparing for us, except wee return.

Would you then bee safe in the evil day? Trust in the Lord, — Hee that trusteth in the Lord, Mercy shall compass him about, Psal. 32. 10. Hee shall bee begirt with Mercy, Mercy shall imbrace him on every side.

As Faith doth compass Mercy: so Mercy compasseth Faith. As the Beleeaver imbraces Mercy: so Mercy imbraces him: Hee shall bee begirt with Mercy. And not Mercy only, but all Gods attributes are for him.

As whilst a man is an Unbeleever, all God is against him: All the Power of God, the Witdome of God, the Justice of God is against him: so if one bee a Beleever, all is for him. Faith makes all God ours, his Mercy ours, his Power, his Justice, &c. As Jehoshaphas said to Ahab. — I am as thou art, and my people as thy people, 2 Chron. 18. 3. So God to a beleeving soul, all hee is, or hath, is for its use.

Faith doth initiate us into Covenant with God: And there being a Covenant, All God is for us.

Well then, Let this exhort us all to bee resolute and peremptory in beleeving, as Esther. — If I perish, I perish, in a beleeving way.

3. Let this exhort us to grow up in Trust, to grow to Perfection,
There is a Perfection
2. Of Degrees.

All Beleevers have the same Perfection of Faith, for kind: but all have not the same Perfection of degrees. Well then, you have that Perfection in the kind: labour for this Perfection of degrees also. Grow up from trust of Affiance, to the trust of Assurance. Let us not ever bee staggering and doubting: but come to some grounded persuasion of Gods Love; labour to bee rooted and grounded in love; labour to work out all doubts and fears, whereby wee dishonour God, wrong our selves.

1. Weakening our Faith.
2. Hindring our growth.
3. Disabling our selves to work.
4. Discouraging our selves in our Christian way.
5. Gratifying Satan.

And let us labour to grow up to higher measures in Believing. Many encourgements might bee named.

1. The more thou growest in Faith, the more thou growest in the love and favour of God; the more thou win'st his Love. There is nothing in the World doth so much win Gods favour, as a great degree of Faith; Abraham was therefore called the friend of God.

And therefore though thou mayest bee saved with a lesse degree: yet if thou wouldst grow more in Gods favour, grow more in Faith.

2. The more Faith, the more Grace: the more love of God, the more hope, the more Patience, the more Courage, Obedience, Repentance, Humility.

Thou weak Christian, if thou desirist more brokenness of heart for sin, more love to God, &c. Why the way is to strengthen thy Faith.

3. The more Faith, the more spiritual Comfort; the more Peace, Joy and consolation. These are the fruits of Faith.

4. The more Faith, the more strength to prevail with God in Prayer.

And therefore let this put you on to labour, for the increase of Faith. Grow from Faith to Faith.

In Temporals wee are ready to look above us, who is higher, richer, not below us, who is poorer. But in spirituals wee look below us, not above us; behind us, not before us; how many come short of our measure: not how many do outstrip us. And therefore wee content our selves with that wee have. But let us labour to forget all behind, and to press forward to the mark of the Rich calling of God in Christ Jesus, as the Apostle did. If thy Faith bee true, it is of a growing Nature.

Now to all this I will add some means.
1. To get Faith.
2. To increase Faith.
1. Means for the begetting of Faith.
   1. Labour to keep close to Faith-begging Ordinances. There are
   1. The Word.
   2. Prayer.

1. Frequent the powerful and sincere preaching of the word of God; a Faith-begging-mans. Faith comes by hearing, Rom. 10, 17. True Faith is the Daughter of Mercy. For this end God hath set up this Ordinance in the Church, that it might bee a means for the begetting Faith in the hearts of unbelieving men. And God doth often in the opening of Scripture, open our understandings, that we may believe, Luk. 24, 45, John 20, 31.

And in the hearing of the Word, keep thy Ear open, to hear what God faith by his Spirit in the Gospel. Faith comes not by mercy of the Law, but of the Gospel.

And in the Gospel, dwell upon Faith-breeding-Promises. Indeed, all the Promises tend to beget Faith: but especially such, wherein the good Will of God, and the Heart of God is discovered: such wherein the freeness and richnes of Gods Promises are discovered. Promises are of two sorts.

1. Such as are conditional; granted upon the performance of some duty in us. As such as these. -- Believe, and thou shalt be saved. -- Repent, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee.

2. Such as are made and performed in mere Mercy; such wherein God promises to give that condition which hee requires to the Promise.

Wee have not only promisses of giving pardon, and remission to the believing sinner; but wee have promisses of bestowing Faith upon the unbelieving sinner.

There are some Promises wherein wee are to bring Faith to the Promised. As here -- whoever believeth shall be saved, And

There are some Promises that wee must go unto for Faith. Some that wee must bring Faith to, and some that wee must go to for Faith: as these free and absolute Promises -- I will take away your heavy hearts, and give you hearts of flesh.

And such wherein hee hath said, -- Hee will work all our works in us, and for us.

Oh! say some, If I had but so much Repentance, so much brokenness of heart, if but so much love, then I could believe. Alas! wee must not bring our penny to the Promised. We must believe, and then all the rest will come in. The way to have a broken heart, is to believe, the way to repent, the way to love God.

2. The second Ordinance is Prayer. Though none of this Faith bee in Heaven, yet all Faith comes from Heaven. -- It is the gift of God. And therefore wee are to seek to him for it.
Wee may join our selves to Faith begetting means; But it is God that must make the means effectual, for the working of Faith.

It is a grace above the power of man; and therefore requires the power of God to work it. I say

1. It requires the Power of God. Nay, not only the Power; but

2. It requires the greatnes of his Power. Nay

3. The excess of greatness of his Power. Nay

4. The mightines of that excess. Yea and

5. The working of all this mighty Power. As the Apostle shews, Eph. 1. 19. where wee have all those five particulars set down. And therefore there is need of calling in for all the help of God, all the power of God for the working of it.

It is the hardest thing in the World to cast a man out of himself: to cut a man off his own Stock: to throw a man off his own foundation.

And when that is done, it is as hard a work to bring this man over to Christ: to make a man to lye full and flat upon the promise of Grace, for mercy.

And therefore how much need is there of stirring up our hearts? How much need of calling in for the strength of God by prayer?

This is the second. Prayer is a fruit of Faith, and yet prayer is a means for the begetting of Faith. As the Spirit is a fruit of Prayer, so prayer is a fruit of the Spirit. As you see, Luk. 11. 13, compared with Rom. 8. 15. In the one place the Spirit is said to be the fruit of Prayer. -- Hee will give his Spirit to them that ask him. In the other, Prayer is the fruit of the Spirit. -- You have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby you cry abba, Father.

3. Have much to do with Faith-begetting-company; Faith-begetting-conference: Where thou shalt hear the discoveries, how God hath wrought Faith in them, and how God doth work Faith in the hearts of unbelieving men. -- Did not our hearts burn within us, when he spake with us, by the way? and when he opened to us the Scriptures: said those two Disciples after their conference with Christ, travelling in company together to Emmaus, Luk. 24. 32. The like of Aquilla and Priscilla with Apollos, Act. 18. 26.

4. Dwell much upon, and cherish Faith-begetting-considerations, which are

1. Thoughts of our selves.

2. Thoughts of God.

Thoughts of our emptinesse, and thoughts of Gods fulnesse. Considerations of our own milery, and thoughts of his love and mercy.

Think how God hath dealt with you, and how God hath dealt with other sinners, who have come to him. Such were Manasses, "Mary, Paul. -- Wee all run after thee, O Lord, seeing thou despisest Omnes post te curissent, audientes, quod nulhum speciosis precestatem. -- Bernard.
Of the Nature, and

no sinners. Thou despisest not the weeping Mary, the begging Cana-
ante, the intreating Publican, the confessing Thees, the Adulterer,
man, the denying Disciple, the perfecting Paul. And if thou
refusest not these, thou wilt not reject me. If thou pardonest
them, thou wilt pardon me, if I believe in thee.

But in particular, cherish these three thoughts.

1. The consideration of thy own vileness, and emptiness, thy
sin, and misery by reason of sin. And this will drive thee out of
thy self.

2. The consideration of the fulness, riches, and al-sufficiency
of Christ: who hath all fulness in him, who is able to save to the
utmost: a bottom able to hold up any weight of sin.

3. The consideration of the freeness of Christ, and the Prom-
ise. God keeps open house; invites, invites; beseecheth us
to believe and come in. — He! Every one that thirsteth, come
unto the Waters, come by, and eat. Come by Wine and Milk without money, &c. Is. 55:1. And — He that
comes to me shall thirst (saith Christ, John 6:37.) I will by no means cast out. —
Let him that will come, whoever hath a mind, let him come. Bee his
funs what they will bee for nature, for number, for continuance;
yet come and finde acceptance. — Who is a God like unto thee? That
pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the Remnant of
thy inheritance? Thou receivest not anger for ever, for thou delightest in
shew mercy, Mic. 7:18.

There are two things when men are humbled, which keep them
off from believing, either,

1. A doubt of God's Power — Lord if thou cast.

2. A doubt of his Will — Lord, if thou wilt.

1. Some doubt of his Power. Oh! Is God able to pardon
such a sinner as I have been? Can he make all to go so great, so bloody,
so crimson sinns? If they were but such, or such, I should not
doubt. But being so great, how can God pardon?

2. Others doubt of his Will. They will bee ready to say. They
know there is a fulness of Power in God: hee is able to forgive
my sins; let them bee what they will bee; hee hath a Sea of Mercy,
able to drown Mountains as well as Mole-hills. But alas! I
doubt of his Will: whether hee will shew mercy to such a sinner.

And therefore, if ever you would believe, you must get an
heart convinced of the 1. Fulness and al-sufficiency of Christ to
pardon. 2. And of the freeness and willingness of Christ to shew
mercy, to such as do believe.

Dwell upon such considerations as these are, being means to be
get Faith. When men are once convinced of the fulness of God,
they will come over to him, if withall they bee fully convinced of
their own need.

It is possible for a man to believe this fulness in Christ, and yet
not
not bee able to clear his acceptance. Wee read of the Lepers, who seeing nothing but death in their condition, 2 King. 7. 3, 4. resolved not to stay there, but to go over to the Camp of the Assyrians. If they save us alive (say they) wee shall live; and if they kill us, wee can but die. And there were many reasons, which might cause them to expect no better, but death from them.

1. They were Jews, and so their enemies.
2. They might bee suspected for Spies.
3. If not yet they were Lepers, good for no service: such as might infect the whole Camp. Yet seeing their Misery, in want of bread, and knowing that there was bread to bee had: they resolved to adventure.

So, if there were but a through discovery
1. Of our own Misery, a conviction of that.
2. Of the falseness and all-sufficiency of Christ, it were possible to far to prevail with a man, as to throw himself on Christ, though hee bee not yet able to clear, whether God will ever accept him.

But when wee take that other consideration in, and do think of the sweetness, and freeness of Gods love and mercy to accept of poor returning sinners: what should then hinder, but the soul should come over, and believe in him? And therefore, if ever thou wouldest have Faith, cherish these thoughts, dwell much upon such considerations as these.

Men say, they would believe; but in the mean time, they never cherish such thoughts and considerations as may beget Faith.

If there bee any thing in the Word which makes against them, this they will harbor and cherish: they will feed upon the Wormwood, and the Gall: but if there bee any thing to nourish and cherish Faith, this they will suppress.

They have an ear open to hear what the Law, what sin, what Satan faith: but none to hear what God faith in the Promise.

They will promote the Devils cause, his arguments, sharpen his weapons against themselves: But they will silence the pleadings of Gods Spirit in them.

They will look upon the dark side of the Cloud, not the light side. The threatenings of the Law, they will apply, and set on with all their might: But if Promises come they finde no acceptance with them.

They will nourish considerations of their sins, their guilt, their misery, by reason of sin, and aggravate it to the utmost: but the thoughts of Gods Love, of the freeness of his Mercy, of the promises of pardoning sins, these they reject.

My Brethren, This is not the way to get Faith. If ever you would believe, you must study the freeness of Gods Mercy in Christ, his willingness to pardon and forgive poor sinners, if they come over to him.

2. The second means for the strengthening of Faith are these.

Aa
1. Make use of the Ordinances.
   1. The Word.
   2. The Sacraments.
   3. Prayer.

1. The Word. Wee say: *The same way things are begotten, the same way they are nourished.* Faith is begotten by the Word; and Faith is nourished by the Word. It is both the Begetter, and the Nourisher: both the Breeder and the Feeder of Faith, Rom. 15. 4. I Joh. 4.

2. The Sacraments, which were instituted and set up for this end, to increase your Faith. God knew hee had to deal with unbelieving persons; and therefore hee doth not only give the Promise, his Covenant, and Oath, for the confirmation of us: but to all these hee annexed his Seal, the Sacraments: Mountains upon Mountains, to confirm us.

A man would not desire so much of any honest man, as God hath here condescended to, for the confirmation of our Faith.

One would have thought his bare word had been enough, considering the Truth, and sufficiency of the Person, that spake it.

But hee hath given his Oath, Nay, but hee resteth not there: but his Seal too: The Sacraments. And therefore make use of them.

3. Be much in Prayer, that God would strengthen and increase thy Faith. Prayer is the fuel of Faith; the food of Faith.

A man may as well live without meat, as Faith without Prayer. As the soul lives by Faith: so Faith lives by Prayer. Faith helps Prayer, and Prayer helps Faith again.

As there is a Communion among the Ordinances, every Ordinance doth help another. The Word helps Prayer, and Prayer helps the Word: So there’s a Communion between Ordinances and Graces. Faith helps Prayer, and Prayer helps Faith. Prayer cannot say of Faith — I have no need of thee: nor Faith of Prayer — What need have I of thee?

As there is a mutual dependence of one Christian on another, a means to nourish Communion, as Christians help one another; One may say — Help my Seal, and I will increase thy knowledge; strengthen my Faith, and I will inflame or kindle thy affections: so here, There is a mutual dependence between Faith and Prayer. Faith faith to Prayer, Help me to believe, and I will help thee to pray: And Prayer to Faith, Help me to pray, and I will help thee to believe.

Such a Communion there is. And therefore bee much in prayer for strength.

4. Live much in the Heaven of the Promise. Feed upon the f Steven's, and sweetnes, and fatnes of the Promihe. Delight yourself in fatness. Let your way lye much above, live much out
of your selves. This is your way. A man shall never bee able to
strengthen Faith, that lives in himself.
5. Walk in the Earth of the Law. As Faith strengthens Obedience:
so Obedience strengthens Faith. As Faith multiplies, so let duty
multiply. The way to nourish the one, is the way to increase
the other.
6. Make it your chief riches, to bee rich in Faith. And then
all your designs and indevours will bee for the increase of it. The
worldly man labours, toils, sweats here for the World: And
what is the reason? but because hee makes this his riches, so it is
here.
7. Exercise Faith much. And this is the way to increase it.
Men that can imploy a greater measure of Faith, shall have it. Bee
carefull that the exercises of Faith may bee proportionable to the
measure of Faith received. It is the way to get it increased.
God will not have the flock lysely dead in our hands. Hee will
not give more than wee can imploy. The Talents were accord-
ing to their several abilities. Some had two, some one, some
five. When God sees a man of great layings out, hee layes in
more still.
Exercise Grace. For within the compass of the exercise of
Grace, lies that which will nourish and increase Grace.
8. Treasure up sound Evidences of Faith. The stronger our E-
vidences, the stronger our Faith. And therefore store up sound
Evidences.

One falshood among thy Evidences staggereth thy Faith.
9. Bee thankful for the measure thou already hast. Thankfulness is
Grace big with Mercy.
Men are often injurious to the inerease of Faith by unthankful-
ness, for that measure they have. Wee are too much like cove-
rrous men, looking after further degrees so much, as to overlook
that which God hath already bestowed. Our complaints would
bee others contents : others would bee glad of them.
Therefore let us get an heart enlarged for the measure wee
have. It is the way for God to enlarge his hand, to bestow more
upons us.
10. Maintain Humility, an humble spirit. God gives Grace, and
hee gives increase of Grace to the humble. Humility is the Nurse of
Grace. The empty heart shall bee filled. Nature abhors empti-
nes, Grace much more.
11. Bee much in acquaintance with God. Know more of his mind,
more of his heart. Read him as hee hath discovered himself in
the Word, in his Christ.
12. Gather and lay up Faith-strengthening Experiences. Keep a
Catalogue of holy Experiences of God's Love and goodness to
thee. All these are fuel to nourish and strengthen Faith.
And now having done with the Doctrin of Faith, I must con-
clude
clude with a Doctrin of works. Wherein I shall desire your practice of it, as soon as I have done the preaching of it.

It is very orderly, that works should follow Faith. Your works of Charity, our Doctrin of Faith.

The Papists do charge us that wee cry down works, and preach nothing but Faith, Faith, making it Titulum, sine Re.

I hope it will bee seen at this time, that preaching Faith Form.

And I could not possibly have taken up a better ground for works, than to preach the Doctrin of Faith first.

Indeed wee preach Faith without works in justification, as touching Justification. But wee say, Faith and works must go togethet in our conversation.

As Faith doth justify our Persons: so works do justify our Faith. And thus Abraham was justified by works: his works declared him to bee just.

Good works are the breath of Faith; as the word in James signifies. And as the body without breath is dead: so Faith without works is dead also.

Good works are the fruit of Faith: the Children and Inheritance of Faith. As Rachel said, — Give mee Children else I dye: so Faith.

Give mee children, give mee works, else I dye: otherwise I have not a living, but a dead Faith.

So you see, wee set up works too, though wee cry them down in the matter of Justification.

Are good works good for nothing; because not good to justify? The Sun is not good to give light to blind men. Is it therefore good for nothing: Gold is not good to affromise hunger. Is it therefore of no use?

Wee say works are necessary,

1. In respect of God.
2. In respect of our selves.
3. In respect of others.

1. In respect of God.
   1. To show our Obedience.
   2. To glorifie his Name.
   3. To testify our Thankfulness.
   4. To beassifie his Gospel.

2. In respect of our selves.
   1. To make our Calling and Election sure.
   2. To declare our Sincerity.
   3. To procure Mercy.

3. In respect of others.
   1. To refresh the Bowels of the Saints.
   2. For example of Virtue.
   3. To stop the mouths of wicked men, who would else take occasion to blaspHEME the Gospel; and speak evil of Profession.
4. To winne others, to gain enemies to the embracing of the Truth.

And therefore seeing good works are thus necessary: bee you stirred up to so concerning a duty. The Apostle faith --- Whiles you have opportunity to do good, do good to all men. Here is now an opportunity: Take it. God honours thee, if hee give thee an heart to do such a good work. *Your Bounty is your Honour.*
A TREATISE
OF THE
Slownesse of Heart
TO
BELEEVE.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D.D.
And Master of C.C.C.

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A TREATISE
OF THE
SLOWNESSE OF HEART
TO
BELIEVE

JOHN 1. 50.

Jesus answered and said unto him, because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, beleevest thou that I shall see greater things than these.

In the latter part of this Chapter we see, that goodness is of a diffusive and spreading nature. If thou be good, thou wilt desire and endeavour to make others good: when Christ hath once revealed himself to any soul, it will be very studious to make him known to others. So vers. 35, 36, you read, that God having revealed Christ to John, hee makes him known to his Disciples, one of whom was Andrew, vers. 40, hee could not conceal the good news, but makes it known to his Brother Peter, vers. 41. Afterward Christ reveals himself to Philip, vers. 43, and upon it Philip makes him known to Nathaniel, vers. 45. So communicative and diffusive is goodness, like the liquid Elements of Air and Water, which cannot bee kept in their own bounds and limits.

From the forty-fifth verse, to the end of this Chapter, there is contained a discourse 1. Between Philip and Nathaniel. And then 2. Between Christ and Nathaniel. The first between Philip and Nathaniel, is from the 45. to the 47. verse, where you have

Bb
1. Philips discovery of Christ to him, vers. 45. wee have found him of whom Mofes and the Prophets did write.

2. Nathaniels harsh entertainment of it, vers. 46. can any good thing come out, &c.

3. Philips care to resolve him, and to take away this prejudice, in the latter part of the 46. verses, come and see.

4. Nathaniels desire to bee satisfied: hee goeth out with him, and that is the summe of the discourse between Philip and Nathaniel.

The second discourse is between Christ and Nathaniel, from vers. 47. ad finem. In which you have five things observeable.

1. Christ's profession or commendation of him, vers. 47. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and faith of him; Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.

2. Nathaniel's reply, vers. 48. Whence knowest thou me? which may bee construed two ways.

1. Either by way of question, being convinced that hee spake right, and that hee discovered his heart to him, hee demands how it came to passe, that hee knew his spirit so right, as though hee had said, it is true, I desire to walk uprightly and sincerely with God, but how canst thou tell that? how is this discovered to thee? art thou able to judge of the heart? none knoweth that but God only.

2. Or the words may bee conceived as a blunt and more rude reply; whence knowest thou me? you never saw mee before, nor I you, and how then can you give so high a commendation of one you are no more acquainted with.

And I take them in this last sense, because hee came with such a prejudice against Christ, vers. 40.

3. Christ's further and clearer manifestation of himself to him, vers. 48. Jesus answered, before Philip called thee under the Fig-tree I saw thee, as though hee had said, I there saw enough to discovery sincerety. I saw what there thou didst; or because I saw thee, when thou thoughtest none did, thou mayest well think I know thy heart.

4. Nathaniel's noble confession or profession of Christ, vers. 49. Nathaniel said Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

5. We have Christ's commendation of this act of his Faith, vers. 50. Jesus answered, because I said I saw thee under the Fig-tree, believest thou with a promise of future and fuller revelation, thou shalt see greater things than these.

Here you see that Christ passeth by his failings, which were

1. His prejudice against Christ, because of the place; can any good thing, &c.

2. His rude reply to Christ, when he discovered himself to him, whence knowest thou mee: these Christ passeth by, and falls into the com-
commendation of his present act of Faith.

So gracious a Saviour we have, that when we present him with our duties, he will not remember our infirmities. Hee faith, I will remember your sins no more, viz. to object them against us, to upbraid, much less to condemn us for them. Hee did not object against Manasseh, his witchcrafts and idolatries, nor against David, his Murder and Adultery, nor against Matthew, that hee had been a Publican, and an Oppressor, nor against Zaccheus, that hee had been an Extortioner, nor against Mary Magdalen, that hee had been an Adulteress, nor here against Nathaniel his behaviour towards him, when once the soul comes in, hee receives it, and remembers its sins no more, but hides and covers them.

In the Text observe three general parts.

1. An open commendation of Nathaniel's Faith, because I said, &c.

2. A silent reprehension of others unbeliev. Believeest thou?

3. A gracious promise of future and fuller Revelation, thou shalt see greater, &c.

In the first consider,

1. The Person commending Christ.
2. The Person commended, Nathaniel.
3. The thing for what, his readiness to believe.
4. The ground of his Faith, because I said, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, believest thou? as if hee had said, doth so small a thing induce thee to believe, I have wrought no miracles, raised no dead, &c. I shall do greater things in the sight of others, heal the sick, give sight to the blind, cleanse the lepers, cast out Devils, raise the dead; and yet many of them will not believe.

For the promise of fuller Revelation; the words are, thou shalt see greater things than these: which is promised.

Either as a reward of his former Faith, or for the increas of his present Faith, and in those words hee points at what after miracles hee would do. Thus you see the parts of the Text laid open to you, but there is one thing yet which is necessarily to bee unfolded in the Text, before we leave the general view of it, which is the ground of his believing, which was Christ's saying, that hee saw him under the Fig-tree. The question is

Queft. How so small a thing as this, saying; that hee saw him under the Fig-tree, could bee likely to produce so noble a confession and profession of Christ, or make him to believe?

Anf. Wee will not now speak of Gods working by it, for so wee know nothing is so small, but by his working in, and by it, may prove admirably efficacious, as on the contrary, if hee work not, no thing, though never so great otherwise, and seemingly promising, will bee able to do anything, as wee see in the Jews, who although they saw his miracles, such as none but a God could do, yet they beleaved not.
Wee will consider the thing in it self, and so I finde these two things in it, which might draw out such a confession, and make him put forth such an act of Faith. Because I said unto thee, I saw shee under the Fig-tree.

1. It may bee hee was then taken up with the meditation of the Messiah, who was to come; for at this time their thoughts were all full of it, Lk. 2. 25. 48. and so God might now sugget him, that hee would reveal him to him.

2. Or it may bee out of evidence and conviction of the omnipresence of Christ, that hee could see him under the Fig-tree. Nathaniels thought that hee had been alone, and no eye had seen him, and therefore when such an evidence was brought to his spirit, that Christ saw him, yea, not only his person, and outward actions, but his heart also, hee was thereupon convinced of the divinity of Christ, and so cryeth out, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, &c.

Quest. 2. But you will say, How did this discover that Christ was the Son of God, or the divinity of Christ?

Ans. Hee knew that corporally hee was not there, and therefore although his eyes told him, that Christ was a man, yet in that when absent, hee could see him under the Fig-tree, it did discover and declare him to bee God. But

2. I think this speech of Christ, which was the ground of Nathaniels Faith, had not only relation to his seeing of Nathaniels person, but to some special piece of service which Nathaniels was then upon. Either meditation, prayer, or the like, which Christ saw, and his heart in it, as if Christ had said, I saw not only thy person under the Fig-tree, but also the working of thy spirit there, I saw in them the uprightness and sincerity of thy heart, and the goings out of thy soul, when thou wert there alone; which brought such a conviction of the divinity of Christ with it, that it made him cry out, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel, thou who knowest the heart must needs bee God, &c. as if a man should say to his friend, thou art one that art charitable, mournest for thy sin, and in case thee should answer, but how know you that? hee should reply, did I not see such an act of charity which you did? did I not see you mourn bitterly for sin at such a time, &c. this in some resemblance commeth somewhat near to this instance, but yet falleth short, because wee judge of the outward act, Christ here of the inward, which manifested him to bee God omniscient, the searcher of the heart, &c.

Thus I have shewed you the coherence with the parts of the Text, and have in part unfolded what might seem difficult and obscure in it.

Now there are some Doctrines which lye about the verge of the Text, some from the person commending, some from the person commended, and some from the thing, for which. But I shall touch
touch only upon those which arise from the main scope of the Text; and they are two.

Doct. 1. That the eyes of Christ run through the whole World, and behold the evil and the good.

Hee that saw Nathaniel under the Fig-tree, seeth thee in all places, in all companies, &c. to this purpose read Psalm 139. Amos 9. 2, 3, 4. Hee is totus oculus, all eye, to see, and all hand to feel and finde out. Hee who is to bee Judge of all the actions, and waies of men, must necessarily know them all.

Use 1. Say not then, that God sees not, say not that darkness shall cover thee, est quoquum nemo, non tanen nulius, though no man, yet some eye seeth thee.

Use 2. This may bee comfort to the Saints. Christ sees you under the Fig-tree, sees you in a corner, sees your persons, your actions, your spirits: Hee sees your prayers, hee sees your tears, hee sees your afflictions, your pressures, Exodus 3. 7. Hee hears your groans, &c.

Use 3. This is terror to wicked men, hee sees them too, hee sees your malice against his Saints, your vileness and abominable filthiness. I saw you in such a place, at such a time, in such and such pollutions, in which thou wouldst have been loath, in which thou would have been confounded, if men should then have seen thee.

From the commendation of Nathaniel's Faith. Observe,

Doct. 2. That such is the goodness of God, that hee commendst us for that which is his own.

Hee commends Nathaniel here for that Grace which hee had given him. God works graces in us, and then commendst us for them: hee gives us mony, and then commendst us for our riches; hee makes us beautifull, and then commendst us for our beauty, in which hee doth only beautifie his own beautie, and love his own graces in us. Hee doth here commend Nathaniel's Faith, which yet was only the Faith of his own powerfull working. Hee commends David for his uprightness, Hezekiah for his perfectness, Moses for his meekness, Cornelius for his devotion, the Publician for his compunction, the poor Widow for her liberality, and the Woman of Canaan for her Faith and importunity; all which was only the work of his own Grace in them. God will finde matter of love and liking in us, from that which is his own, hee can pass by ours; and own his. As a Father loveth his child for that which is of his own nature in him, and so doth God in us.

Use 1. Then see what a sweet Saviour wee have, who will pass by our imperfections and deformities, and take notice of his own beauties in us.

Use 2. And accordingly wee should learn to look upon our selves, as Christ doth, though black in our selves, yet beautiful in Christ; although I would have you to own, and to blush at your own
own deconsnities; yet not so as to blinde your eyes from beholding Christ's excellencies, as in himself, to in you by his grace, take the flame of your own sins, but let God have the honour of his own Graces; by this you shall nourish your humility, and yet not weaken your Faith, you shall abhor your selves, and yet extoll God's free Grace.

But these are but by the way, to which many others might bee added. I will fall upon those which the Text doth more fully hold out, and they are these.

1. That slowness of heart to beleve, is a temper of spirit very offensive to God; this is hinted in the implied tacit reprehension of others, whilst hee doth commend Nathaniels forwardness.

2. That God takes it well at our hands, or it is very pleasing unto God, when wee will beleve in him upon small Revelation.

3. That God will reveal great things to them, who do so beleve in him. Thou shalt see greater things than these, it is a promise of future and fuller manifestation to be vouchsafed to him.

Wee shall begin with the first, which is

Doct. That slowness of heart to beleve, is a temper of spirit very offensive unto God.

I need not stand long to cleare the truth of this Doctrin, if you look into Joh. 1. 50. that high commendation of Nathaniels Faith, is a silent upbraiding of others for their slowness of heart to beleve. Because I said, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, beleveest thou? It is as if hee had said, for that without question is implied, why I have done greater things in the sight of others. I have healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blinde, raised the dead, cast out Devils, and yet they have not beleved. And doth so small a manifestation work on thee. Because I said, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, &c. I have not raised thee from the dead: implying hee had done it to others. And hence hee is said to upbraid those Cities wherein his mighty works had been done, because they beleved not, Mar. 16. 14.

And this was a great aggravation of their sin, where to much had been done to perswade them to beleve, yet flow, &c.

The like in Joh. 12. 37; 38. But though hee had done so many miracles before them, yet they beleved not on him; that the saying of Ezechiel might bee fulfilled, who hath beleved? here was a great aggravation of their sin.

And upon this ground hee reproveth his Disciples, Luk. 24. 25.

Oh fools and slow of heart to beleve all that the Prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have enterred into his glory, &c?

And how often doth hee upon the same ground rebuke his Disciples, O yee of little Faith! Mar. 9. 19. O faillible Generation, how long shall I bee with you? how long shall I suffer you? Implying, it put Christ to the utmost of his patience to bear with them in their unbelief.

Which
Which yet if you read the story, you will finde it was no small work; it was because they could not cast out the dumb spirit out of a man possest, which yet hee himself tells them afterward, ver. 29, that this was the greatest of difficulties: this kinde came forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting, which shews the work was of more than ordinary difficulty; yet because their Faith was posed in it, hee tells them they were a Faithles Generation, and hee was weary of them, it put him to the utmost exercise of his patience to bear with them.

And you see the like of Peter, whose Faith was so great, as to carry him upon the waters, to walk upon the waves, upon a bare command and word of Christ, yet afterwards the wind growing strong, and corruption working, hee was afraid, and begins to sink, and then cryed, Lord, save mee, Mat. 14. 30, 31. And how much was Christ displeased at him, who had put forth so glorious an act of Faith, as to walk upon the waters upon a bare command, yet because hee held not out, Christ reproved him, Oh thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt! was this a little Faith? &c.

But wee will pass this, and in the prosecution of this Doctrin, wee will shew these eight things.

1. That wee are sloe of heart to beleue.
2. What are the grounds that wee are sloe of heart to beleue?
3. What are the reasons why this sloeness of heart is so offensive to God?

For the first, that wee are sloe of heart to beleue.
This will bee demonstrated to you, if you consider with mee these five particulars.

1. The greatnes of that power which God doth put forth, in the working Faith in an unbelieving heart.

Faith it self is called the work of Gods power, nay, of his almighty power. The same power which God put forth in the raising of Christ from the dead, even the same power hee doth put forth in the working of Faith in an unbelieving heart, Eph. 1. 19, 20.

There are many mighty works of God, which are not saving works. As the works of Creation, the works of Providence: These are mighty works, but they are not saving works.

But there are no saving works of God which are not mighty. Every work of mercy, is a work of might too, every work of grace, is a work of power too, though every work of power bee not a work of grace, yet every work of grace, is a work of power, And the work of an almighty power. Altius omnipotens. Altius omnipotenter.

Not only an Almighty God doth work, but also according to the Almightines of God, when hee works Faith and Grace in a graceles heart. There are two names given to this in Scripture, both which speake the greatnes of Gods power in the working of it.

7. It
1. It is called a resurrection from death to life, not of a dead body, but a dead soul, Psal. 88. 10. wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise to praise thee? He speaks not there of a natural death, but of the condition which he was in, lying for the present slain and dead as it were, under the apprehensions of God's wrath. Shall a soul that now lies dead and blm with the apprehensions of thy wrath and displeasure, arise by faith to praise thee? wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise to praise thee? That is, wilt thou shew the greatness of thy power in working faith in an unbelieving soul; this is no less than a resurrection from the dead, the dead arise, &c. And therefore this must needs require the greatness of God's power to effect it.

It is a great work to recover a sick man, but more to restore a dying man; but to raise a dead man to life, this is the work of God only. Yet all this is nothing to the resurrection of a dead soul.

To raise our bodies when consumed by fire, when vanished into air, when corrupted in the water, when turned into dust and rottenness, is not so great a work as to raise a dead soul, a soul dead in sin, to work faith in an unbelieving heart.

This is the Almighty work of God.

2. And hence, Secondly, It is called a work of Creation, 2 Cor. 5. 17, thus in Christ.

And you know Creation is the work of God only, it is the production of something out of nothing. Men may produce something out of something, but to produce something out of nothing is proper to God alone. There is little distance between the least dust, and the most glorious Angel in Heaven, than there is between it and nothing.

Wee say, and it is true, inter ens, & non ens, nulla proportio, there is infinite distance between something and nothing. Such a distance as none but a God can bring together. Now this work of faith and grace in the heart in an unregenerate and unbelieving man, is a new Creation. A Creation of light in a dark heart, of life in a dead heart, of faith in an unbelieving heart, of grace, in a graceless heart, which is a work which requires the almightiness of God's power for the effecting of it. And that is the first demonstration.

2. If you do consider the complaints of Believers, when they first come to believe.

What fights, what tears, what groans, what pains, what stragglings, with unbelieving, with doubts, with fears. Crying out with the man in the Gospel, Lord I do believe, help my unbelief. It may bee now the doubt of God's power in Christ's infirmity to pardon sin, to forgive so great and infamous wickedness, and say with him, Lord, if thou canst do any thing, help. Mark 9. 22. or if not so, yet they doubt of his will, whether God will pardon them, yea, or no, and say with another in the Gospel, Lord, if thou wilt, show
Every dayes experience tells us, how hard a thing it is to cast a man out of himself, and when that is done, Oh how hard a thing is it to bring that soul over to Christ, and the promise! Now a thousand objections are raised, the soul is now as full of scruples, of doubts, asthe Sun is full of motes.

Oh what swarms of unbelieving thoughts! what multitudes of doubts, and objections, that it is beyond the power of any, but of him alone that can deal with the heart, either to discover them, or answer them, or if answered, yet the soul is still unfealty, till God come in. This is plain in cast down and humbled souls.

3. If you look upon the Rhetorick, God useth to bring a poor humbled and cast down sinner to believe. Read Isa. 40. beginning. Comfort you, comfort ye my people, saith my God. Speak yee comfortingly. Say, your warfare is accomplished, your iniquities are pardoned, &c. But least any should say, alas, tell not mee of this! no comfort belongs to mee; hee is buried up in troubles; God doth nor regard him: why see how hee faith in ver. 27. Why sayest thou, Oh Jacob, and speakest Oh Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is passed over from my God? Haft thou not known, haft thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary? hee giveth power to the faint, &c.

Do you doubt of his power? why hee is the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, and hee can pardon, &c.

What though thy sins bee great, yet hee tells thee, hee will abundantly pardon, Isa. 55. 7, 8, 9. Let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and hee will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for hee will abundantly pardon; the word is, multiply to pardon, as thou hast to sin.

But you will say, how can this be? this is far above the thoughts of a Creature. Why but faith hee in the next verse. My thoughts are not as your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord; for as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. But alas! there are such and such conditions required. Why but faith hee, Ho! ever one that thirsteth, come, Rev. 22. 17.

Do you doubt of his will? Why hee tells you: It is not the will of your heavenly Father, that any of these little ones should perish, Matth. 18. 14. You think it is, but Christ saith it is not; hee knows the thoughts hee thinks to thee, they are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, &c. Jer. 29. 11.

And how doth hee say. As I live, I do not delight in the death of him that dies, turn you, turn you, and live; Oh why will yee dye! Ezek. 18. 31, 32.
And God would have all men sated by coming to the knowledge, &c. 1 Tim. 2. 4.

Yea, but this Covenant is not firm, I may sin away mine own mercy. See what God saith, Isa. 54. 10. The Mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, faith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. It is more firm than the Covenant of the day and night, Jer. 33. 20, 21. Can a Woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her womb? yea they may forget, yet will not I forget thee; Isa. 49. 15.

This with abundance such like Rhetoric God useth to draw a poor humbled doubting sinner to believe, and why should God use such Rhetoric to persuade with men, if it were so easy a matter, as men make it to believe.

This shews the difficulty of Faith.

4. If you consider the way that God takes to confirm the Covenant of mercy, and pardon to Believers.

Hee gives you his Promise, his Oath, his Seal; heaps Mountains upon Mountains, and all to confirm it; hee lays Heaven and Earth at stake, may hee pawn his Truth, his very being, and all, to persuade with unbelieving men to believe.

God needed not to do this in respect of himself; his purpose was as good as his promise, his Promise as good as his oath, his oath as firm as his seal; hee needed not to do this in respect of himself, as if that his oath would bind him more than his promise.

But God hath done this in respect of us, to strengthen our Faith, that wee might bee steadfast in God, when wee stagger in our selves, that wee might bee strong in God, when weak in our selves. As the Apostle in Heb. 6. 16, 17, 18. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to ly, &c. God hath thus condescended to all this, to beget Faith in unbelievers, that if his promise would not persuade with you, then his oath, if not that, yet his seal: The great Seal of Heaven.

You could not desire more of the most faithless and dishonest man in the World, than God hath condescended to, who is yet the faithfull and unchangeable God. You have a Promise, will not that doe? you would have an Oath, will not that doe? you have a Seal, witness, all.

And what doth all this, but plainly demonstrate the greatness of the difficulty to believe? Wee say, it is in vain to do that by more, which may bee as well done by leffe. If Promise would have done it, the Oath added had been in vain, but shall wee think that any thing of this was in vain? that wee cannot.

And was all this then required? would no leffe serve the turn? Tell mee then whether this do not fully enough demonstrate the difficulty of Faith?

Thou that thinkest Faith so easy, thou that never found the diffi-
difficulty of it, mayest well think thou hast no Faith. In this God shews the difficulty of believing, that his promise, his oath, &c. are all ingaged to work and confirm it.

5. If you consider the complaint of the Preacher. You hear his complaint, Isa. 53, 1. Who hath belieued our report? or our Doctrin, as the word may import. And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

And Christ complains of the same, Joh. 12, 37, 38. Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believe not on him, that the saying of the Prophet might be fulfilled, viz. who hath belieued our report?

And Paul hee takes up the same complaint, as you see at large, Rom. 10, 16, 17, 18, &c.

And wee our selves may take up the same complaint. Wee have spent our strength in vain, and our labour for nought.

Though wee have declared the wonderful things of the Gospel, the free gifts, vastness, greatness of the love of Christ, the preciousness of promises, yet men believe not. Oh that I could not complain of that, &c! how many offers of Christ have you had? how many tenders of mercy?

How often hath Christ unbowed himself to your souls in the promise! how often hath God invited, intreated, beleached, called, How every one that thirsteth come!

But yet fickle peoples do not thirst, and thirstless peoples do not come, &c. Oh! here is enough to demonstrate that wee are flow of hearts to believe.

2. Wee come to the second. What are the grounds, &c.
And wee will reduce them to these three general heads.

1. There are some grounds from Satan.

2. Some from our selves.

3. Some which are taken from others, which do forsooth the heart from believing in the promise.

You must know, I speak of men awakened, and convinced of their miserable condition, not such as go on with a high hand in their sins. I speak of men humbled.

1. Then the reasons or grounds why wee are so flow, &c. From Satan, are the delusions and false suggestions of Satan.

You must know there are two main stratagems which hold up Satan's Kingdom in the World.

1. Is to keep presumptuous sinners from being humbled.

2. The other is to keep humbled sinners from believing.

The first of these is by keeping of presumptuous sinners from being humbled, which hee doth these ways.

1. Either by persuading them they are no sins they live in, and hence hee tells the Prodigall hee is but liberal, the drunkard hee is but sober, the covetous person hee is but frugal, the proud person, hee is but comely, and handsome, &c. wee say, nullam virgintim sine patrocinio.

Cc2 Sauls
Sauls Covetousnes in sparing the best of the flock, twas his devotion, twas his zeal to Sacrifice, the Pharisees Covetousnes had an act of devotion to patronize or let it off with. So Jezabel paints her face, to make it seem comely.

2. Or else if hee cannot perswade them to that, that they are no sins, but conscience is enlightened and quickened, and checks him for them, hee cannot stand against his own light, nor under his own reproofs.

Then hee perswades them they are but veniall, and small sins, or if great, yet pardonable, nay, and that at any time, as the Theef upon the Cross, what lays hee, God is mercifull, and if but at the last thou canst say, God be mercifull to mee, Lord have mercy upon mee, why then all is well, there is no doubt of mercy.

And because men are better versed in the Service-book, than in the Scripture, perhaps hee will cite a Text out there.

At what time soever a sinner, \\
This is the first stratagem, to keep presumptuous sinners from being humbled. And if hee prevail not then, but that notwithstanding all these good words, a soul is convinced of sin, and humbled for it, then hee hath a second.

2. A second Stratagem, and that is to keep humbled sinners from believing, and that hee doth these ways.

1. Hee labours to have them despair of a pardon, and that upon one of these two grounds.

1. Hee will now tell you, either that your sins are greater than can hee pardon. As Cain, Gen. 4. 13.

So it is in the Original, my sins are greater than can hee pardon.

Hee will so aggravate mens sins, and heighten mens trespasses, and to lessen and freighten Gods mercy, that hee will endeavour to perswade their sins are above a pardon, they are greater than Gods mercie to pardon, and that is the first way which hee deals with ignorant consciences in trouble.

2. Or if hee cannot perswade in that, then hee hath another way to bring men to despair, and that is from the will of God.

Why will hee say, though thy sins are not greater than God can pardon, yet they are greater than God will pardon: hee will never be mercifull to such a wretch as thou hast been, dost thou think God will ever shew mercy to such a vile sinner as thou hast been? what, one who hath sinned against such a light, such means, such mercies, and committed so horrible sins, and continued in them. And thus hee aggravates sin.

As before hee lessened sin all hee could to keep men from being humbled, so now hee aggravates sin, all hee can, to keep men from believing. As before hee enlarged Gods mercy above the bounds of the Law, now hee enlargeth Gods Justice above the bounds of the Gospel.
Before hee presented to you, Gods mercy in a faile glafs, to make you presume. And now hee presents Gods Justice to you in a faile glafs, to make you despair.

And indeed of the two, hee is better able to set out Gods Justice, than his Mercy, because hee feels the one, and knows what it is, but hee shall never taste of the other, hee can therefore better present Gods Justice as it is, than Gods Mercy as it is.

2. Or if hee cannot bring men to despair upon these grounds,却又 another stratagem hee hath to keep men from beleewing.

3. And that is thirdly, by telling them they are not disposed and fitted for mercy, you are not broken for sin, you do not love God, &c.

And in this stratagem hee labours to hinder us, by telling us we want such dispositions, as follow beleewing, more than such as go before Faith; yet hee oftentimes useth the other, and tells men, they are not humbled enough, not broken enough; before they were humbled, then any thing would serve the turn to dispose and fit them for Mercy; and now they are humbled, hee tells them, they are never humbled enough.

Before, a figh in a good mood was enough to qualify them for Mercy, and the Promifie. Now sighs, groans, tears, daily breakings under the burden of sin is all nothing, all is too little.

Indeed hee fain would have thee to lye in Hell, and stay there, or if hee doth not object against thy soul the want of humiliation. Why then hee will tell thee, thou wants Faith; if thou hadst Faith, then thou might go over to the Promifie, but thou wants Faith, and what doth hee mean by that, why that is, thou wants assurance, hee would put men to assurance, before they do beleewe, hee would put them to the evidence, Christ is their Saviour, before hee suffer them to rest upon Christ as a Saviour. Or if not this, yet hee will tell thee, thou wantst such and such dispositions before thou can beleewe; hee would fain have men either to bring something of their own to the Promifie, or hee would have men to expect these things before they go to the Promifie, when indeed these things follow upon the souls closing with the Promifie.

Thus doth Satan keep many poor souls in a hoodwinkt condition, and hinders them from going over to Christ and the Promifie.

And that is the first.

2. The second ground why men are so slow to beleewe, and that is taken from themselves.

It doth arife from their ignorance, they know not the tenor of the Covenant, the terms of Mercy. Men brought out of a sinfull condition, once awakened to see their sins, can think of nothing but working themselves to life, licking themselves whole, therefore they fall upon prayers, duties (as I have sometimes told you) as to many bribes for a pardon, as so many pennies laid
The Slowness of

laid out for the purchase of Mercy.

Wee run naturally to the Covenant of works, but wee must bee
drawn before wee can go to the Covenant of Grace. No man can
come except, &c. John 6: 44. A convinced man runs to the Cove-
nant of works, but wee must bee a converted man, that goes tru-
ly to the Covenant of Grace.

2. It doth aside from our pride often, that wee will not take
Mercy gratis, wee will not deny our selves, and close with Mercy
as God tenders it.

You have a strange phrase in Rom. 10: 3, they would not submit
to the Righteousness of Faith, here are proud hearts indeed, that it
should bee matter of submission for a condemned man to take a
pardon, a wounded man to take a plaster, a sick man a cordial, a
naked man clothing, a lost ferrier a Saviour. One would think
this is strange, that it should bee matter of submission to accept
of the Righteousnes of Christ to bee saved.

But wee like well of the Spiders motto, mebi solo doceo, I owe
all to my self, and would bee content to climb to Heaven by a
thread of our own spinning.

God is willing to give, and wee would deserve, hee would have
all of Grace, and wee would have all of debt. Wee would
fain bring our penny to the Promise, yea when wee are nothing,
wee would bring our own nothingness, So hard it is to make a foul
empty, and when that is done to bring that empty soul over to
the Promise.

3. A third ground from our selves, which makes men humbled
to flow to believe. It may bee too much tenderness, they are af-
feard of abusing Gods Justice in their cloes with his Mercie; Oh
say they! I am afraid of presuming on Mercy. It was their fault
before to presume the fear of it, their fault now. I say to pre-
sume of Mercy was their fault before, and the fear of presuming is
their fault now.

One would think this to carry a fair forehead, they dare not
believe say they, and why for? because they are afraid to pre-
sume, is not this a good pretence?

But ah! here is the Prince of darkness, like the Angel of light,
let us examine it, thou sayest thou darest not believe, because thou
art afraid to presume. And why dost thou fear to presume?

It is presumption to believe Mercy, and yet continue in a way
of sin, and it is presumption to expect Mercy in a way of unbe-
liefe, but it is no presumption to beleive. Why dost thou fear
that thou presumest thou canst not say, thou takes that which
doeth not belong to thee, for it belongs to whoever can take it:
But it may bee thou sayest thou art not fitted for Mercy, thou art
then fit for Mercy, when thou art made willing to clothe with Mer-

cy in the terms of Mercy, that is to take Mercy, as to render up
thy self to duty, as to give up thy self to obey.

But
But thou sayest thou shalt presume, for thou art not worthy of Mercy.

And wouldst thou be worthy of Mercy? dost thou know what thou sayest? wouldst thou deserve Mercy? where then were Grace? This overthrows the Covenant of Grace; it cannot be a Covenant of Grace, if there should be any thing of thy bringing, which is not of God's bestowing.

May wee not say to thee truly what Eliah, David's Brother falsely laid to him, when hee told him hee came out for God's Glory. Hee tells him no, it was the pride of his heart, 1 Sam. 17: 18. So thou pretendst God's Glory, thou sayest because thou wouldst not wrong God's Justice, and make God's Mercy a sinfull mercy, therefore thou dost not believe, but take heed it bee not the pride of thy heart.

If the time would permit, I would put something to thee. 1. By way of Question. 2. By way of Supposal.

1. That which I should have put to thee by way of question should have been. 1. Couldst thou not have believed God would bee merciful unto thee, if thou wert not so sinfull? 2. If thou wert more humble, if thou hadst more Grace, couldst thou not bee content to penance thy self for a time, for thy former sin: were not this good, and what were this but to make thy humiliation a step to Mercy, to a pardon?

2. That which I would put by way of supposal. Suppose thou hadst been a Traitor, and thy Prince should offer thee a pardon for all thy treason, upon condition of acceptance, and rendring up thy self to him for service. And thou shouldst refuse a pardon because thou art a Rebel or Traitor, or because thou doubtest of the truth and reality of thy Prince's tending or else because thou thinkest thou art not able to do him service for future, therefore wilt not accept of a pardon for present, what should we think of this? Or suppose a Creditor should tell thee, if thou wouldst but bring thy books, come to him, and reckon with him, and acknowledge thy debt, hee would pardon thy debt. And the debtor should now refuse to come.

1. Either because hee is not able to pay. 2. Or because hee thinks hee shall bee able to discharge all himself in time. 3. Or else because hee doubts of the truth of his intention, instead of bringing him to reckon that hee might pardon him, hee intends to arrest him, and cast him into prison. Is not here a great deal of pride, and unbelief, and wronging of love?

And how shall we interpret this standing off? is not the case alike. God tenders mercy to thee, as a Prince, a pardon, and thou refusest, why? either thou believest not the truth of this, that God offers pardon upon believing, or else thou thinks to deserve thine own pardon.

So God offers thee an acquaintance, if thou wilt bring thy book, and
and come and reckon with him, confess sin, acknowledge Mercy; but thou commenest not, and what is the reason? either thou beleevest not the truth of this, this is too good news to bee true, thou thinkest it is but to take advantage against thee.

You think when you go to God in confession, you go as a debtor into the hands of a hard Creditor, who doth but wait to arrest him. You cannot beleeve the truth of this offer, or else you think you shall be able to pay your own debt in time.

4. Another ground from our selves, why wee are so slow to beleeve, is, that wee doubt of Gods will, wee doubt whether God will have mercy on us, yea or no.

It is with us as with a Prince or Creditor, as before: were wee but well settled in the Major of the Gospel, in these truths.

1. That God sent his Son for this end, into the World to save poor sinners.

2. That Christ was able to save to the utmost.

3. And that Christ was as willing as hee is powerful, wee should not bee so slow of heart to believe.

My Brethren, what can God do more to perswade you of his willingneesse may more, what could Christ do more than is done?

Will you go by his revealed will? and that you shall bee judged by at the last day, why there you see nothing but willingneesse of God and Christ to accept of them who come.

If you should go by the revealed will of man, you may bee deceived, they may speak one thing and intend another.

But if you go by the revealed will of God, you cannot miscarry, because Gods heart is really the same that his word is, hee speaks not a syllable more than hee will make good.

Men speak often more than their hearts, or they may speak contrary to their hearts, but God doth not, hee really intends what hee speaks.

And his revealed will tells thee, that hee would have thee saved by coming, &c. that if thou wilt beleeve, thou shalt be saved. That if thou confess, &c. therefore no cause to doubt of Gods will.

5. A fifth ground of our slowness to believe. It may bee you finde some rest to your souls on this side Christ.

It may bee you have been troubled for sin, have been in anguish of conscience, and you have prayed, you have mourned, and thereupon have gotten some peace, and quiet in your souls, and you seek no further.

This is to lick your selves whole.

And how often, how ordinarily doth these things stand between us and Christ, between us and the Promise; if wee found no peace nor satisfaction in these, then wee should go over to Christ, but finding this on this side Christ, therefore are wee slow of heart to believe.

Now
Now to take away this, you must know that that peace which is not felted upon the heart by a promise, by believing, that peace will never do you good, a true trouble were better.

It is not works, but Christ, not praying, but believing, not the Law, but the Gospel, Christ the Promise, that brings true peace into the soul.

Indeed the other may give a man some ease for the time, but this will never work a sound and substantial peace.

You read in the Wilderness there was no plaister for the flung Israelite, but looking up to the brazen Serpent.

So there is no remedy for a flung sinner, of which the former was a type, both in the malady, and in the remedy, but looking up unto Christ, believing in him.

And you see how Christ doth parallel them in Job. 3. 14, 15. As Mole lift up the Serpent in the Wilderness, &c.

If the flung Israelite had made a confection of the best herbs in the Wilderness, a plaister of all the sovereign ingredients in the World, and applied with it Mountains of Prayers, Seas of tears, yet this would not have helped him, if with all he had not looked up on the brazen Serpent.

God had set up that way, and nothing else should do the cure. So let the flung sinner make what plaister hee will of duty, of prayers, for the valuing of conscience, the healing of the wound, yet if hee do not look up, believe never, healed never.

I grant it (to prevent an objection) that these duties may do something for the stay of a mans spirit, and the quieting of conscience for a time, because being such things as God hath commanded, and in God's way, they may have some influence into a mans conscience, for the quieting and stilling of it for present.

But these are all too short to bring a sound and substantial peace into the soul; it is not working, but believing, not duty, but Christ that must do that.

If God had intended this for thy cure, if these had been sufficient, what need had hee to have sent Christ into the World; what need had Christ to have dyed and shed his blood? God might have given man ability to have performed duty, and all had then been done.

But the sending of Christ into the World, and the shedding of his blood, shews it was a greater work to redeem souls.

Indeed these things are subservient to the plaister, to the cure; but these things are not the plaister, not the cure.

By Prayer wee seek and beg for a plaister in a wounded condition, and by Prayer wee praise God when the plaister hath been applied, but this is not the cure, this is not the plaister, God never intended that.

So by hearing wee have discovered to us where the plaister is to
bee had; and by hearing afterward, wee do but discover our wi-
lingness to know more of Gods will, that wee might obey him,
but this is not the planter.

So by works and obedience before healing, wee do but carry
our selves in such a deportment and demeanour, as they should do,
who wait for such a mercy from God; and by works and obedi-
ence afterward, wee do but declare our thankfulness to God when
the cure is wrought, but this is not the cure, being justified wee
work, wee do not work that wee may bee justified.

And therefore though you should get some evident refresh-
ment by the performance of duties in the pursuit of Christ, yet let
not this slacken, but quicken you in your way, bee thankful for
it, quickened by it, and still remember to arise, this is not your
rest.

Hee who rests on this side Christ, will rest on this side Hea-
ven. All your duties will bee but ropes of sand, like chains of
glass, too brickle to draw your souls to Heaven. Though natur-
all conscience may get some satisfaction from these springs, the
performance of duties, yet these are too shallow to satisfy the
thirst of a gracious heart.

They are neither full, nor are they pure, nor are they perma-
nent and lasting springs. As I might shew you, not full, because
wrought out of our selves, not pure, because mingled with our
imperfections, muddy springs; our justifying righteousness is per-
fected, but our sanctifying righteousness is imperfect, nor are they
contant. Drought will come, the time will come, when these will
bee too short to reach comfort into thy soul, that if God lead thee
not to a spring, at last thou art undone.

The Brook Cherith did supply Elijah for a time, but at last it
dried up, and could afford him no Waters, and had not God
brought him then unto a spring hee had perished.

So there are many, who lye a long time by the springs of duty,
the streams of performances, and they get some refreshment there
which keep them off from going to Christ; but the time will
come that these waters will fail, and if then thou haft not a foun-
tain, a Christ to go to, thou wilt perish for all this.

Where on the contrary, here in the greatest drought thou shalt
 finde waters enough, Jer. 17. 7, 8. Blessed is the man who trusteth
in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for bee shall bee as a tree
planted by waters, and shall not see when drought commeth, his leaf
shall be green, and bee shall not bee carefull in the years of drought.

Years of drought bee shall never see, never bee sensible when
heat commeth; his leaf shall bee green. And thus much for the
second ground, why wee are so flow of heart to believe.

3. Ground why wee are so flow of heart to believe, is taken from
others,

1. Their heights.
2. Their depths.

1. Wee
We look upon the heights of others. We see others of the Same eminence in Grace, shining with holiness, adorned with gifts and gracious endowments; they can pray, they can command their passions. And then reflecting upon our selves, and seeing our own imperfections; our frowardness of spirit, our untowardness of heart, our weaknesses, and deadness, wee are thereupon discouraged, and kept off from the Promise of life &c.

I told you the last day, that wee look upon the best of others, and the worst of our selves, upon the best, not the worst of others. You look upon their enlargements, not their faults; their graces, not their corruptions; their heights, not their depths; their comforts, not their troubles; their victories, not their faults.

This is the difference between you and wicked men, they look upon the worst of the Saints, and by that draw encouragements to sin, or if not, yet make use of their imperfections to countenance their deadness, but you look upon the best of others; and because you fall short of that eminency in them, you are thereupon discouraged and wounded in your comforts.

But admit that others of the Saints were as excellent as thou seest them, as thou apprehends them, and grant it that thou wert weak and full of many imperfections. Yet why should this keep thee off from Christ and the Promise. It is strange that that which should draw thee to the promise, should drive thee from the promise; will a man refuse physic, because he is sick; a cordial, because he is faint; meat, because he is hungry; money, because he is poor; clothing, because naked, you would think this to be unreasonable, and why not the other?

Assure your selves, that is not a good sight of imperfection, that shall either blind, or bleer the eye of Faith, and hinder us from beholding Christ and the Promise, or that shall discourage, and deter us from going over to Christ and the Promise.

Thou wouldst be as others of the Saints before thou didst believe, thou must believe before thou can bee as others are, that which put a difference between thee and him was Faith; there is the same treasury, and the same fulness in Christ for thee, as for others, if thou get Faith to make use of it.

Besides, why should imperfections keep thee off? What man will reject a present pardon because he sees himself unable to do the Prince future service? who will not take it, and bee more thankful, and the more admire the Prince’s clemency that should accept of him after all his rebellions, when yet he could have no eye or respect to any future service or advantage bee could do the Prince. And why then should we reject God’s pardon, because we see not ourselves able to do him future service. You should take it and bee more thankfully, more admire the riches and free- nesses of God’s Grace, who justifies the ungodly.
Certainly that which gives you the advantage, and puts you into the way of the admiration of God, serves the end most which God aims at in giving of pardon; therefore hee pardons that you might admire and say, *Micah 7. 8. Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?* but the more sin, the more imperfections, the more advantage you have to admire the riches and freeness of God's Grace and Mercy; therefore why should this discourage you?

Besides, though Princes may pardon former treason, yet they cannot change the traitorous heart, nor can they inable them, for the future to bee loyal and obedient. But now God can, with the pardon of sin, hee can and doth change the heart of the sinner, hee lends him away with another heart, with the forgivenes of former disobedience, hee gives strength and ability to obey for future, and therefore why should either present sense of sin and imperfection, or the apprehension of the want of future ability, keep us off from closing with Christ and the Promise; seeing by this the sin is pardoned, the nature is healed, and the soul enabled to future service.

Indeed the way to do him service is to come in, &c.

2. As wee look upon others heights, so wee look upon others depths, and by that keep off from the Promise.

It may bee, wee see and hear of others of the Saints who have been exercised with great troubles, terrors, legal breakings, &c. and have been in sad conditions, it may bee, for many months, nay years, and thou reflectest upon thy self, and seest thou was never thus humbled, thou never had experience of such legal breakings, either none at all, or not in that measure which others have had; and thereupon thou concludest certainly the Promise doth not belong to mee.

And this is another ground which prevails with many, &c.

Now to take off this in a few words.

1. Why should anothers humiliation bee a pattern for thee when it may bee that which enlarged his troubles were.

1. Some outward ills and affliction which was joynd to his inward trouble; as when the fountains from below, and windows from above were opened, there was a great flood, a deluge.

So when afflictions from beneath, and troubles from above concurre, this is a deluge of sorrow.

2. Or may bee that which enlarged another mans trouble, was some horrible temptations, injections of Satan, blasphemous bloody thoughts, &c.

3. Or may bee some bodily distemper, the predominance of some humour, as melancholly, which gives edge and entertainment to terrors, and spiritual troubles.

4. Or may bee his ignorance, in the Covenant of Grace, the tears of Mercy.
5. Or may bee the long concealing of his trouble, as you see
David, Psal. 32.
6. Or may bee giving credit to the lying suggestions of Satan.
7. Or may bee his pride, his unbelief, jealousy, frowardness of
spirit, as it is with such as will nourish themselves in a needle
bondage, and will not hearken after comfort, making their chains
heavier than God hath made them, who will not suffer a thought
of hope or comfort to enter through the anguish of their bondage.
Like the Children of Israel in Egypt, Exod. 6, 9. God sent them
delivery, but they looked not after it, through the extremity of
their bondage. And is there any reason then, that others humilia-
tion shou’d bee a pattern to thee. Thou mightest as well desire
part of their crosses, which yet thou wouldest not do, for a great
part of many mens humiliations, is either their sin, or their crosses, &c.
2. Why should other mens humiliations bee a pattern for thee,
when yet God doth not require the same measure, nor is
the same measure alike necessary to all, neither in respect of God,
or of men?
1. Not in respect of man: some need not so much as others.
As some mens flesh is harder to heal than others, so some mens
hearts. A Needle may do that to one, which a lance will not do
to another. A Frown to one, which blows will not do to ano-
other.
Some men are of crabb’d and untoward spirits, and knotty
blocks had need of hard wedges.
2. Some men have longer scores, greater reckonings, have
been greater sinners than others, and though not ever, yet ordinar-
ily God doth proportion the sorrow to the sin.
3. Some men of greater parts, of greater places, who are not
so easily humbled, many things may bee in the subject, which may
vary the case.
And as the same measure is not necessary in respect of man, so
the same is not necessary in respect of God, his ends are various.
1. Some men hee intends to bestow greater measure of grace
upon, than upon others, and hee layes a proportionable founda-
tion.
2. Some hee intends to use as one of a thousand, to comfort oth-
ers; therefore hee doth exercise them with difficulties, with hu-
millations, eclipses of his favour, with temptations, injections of
Satan, decayes, relapses, that they may bee experimentally able
to settle and comfort others 2 Cor. 1, 4.
3. Some hee intends for great services; great employments,
to make them Champions in his cause. And therefore hee doth
humble them the more at their bringing in. As you see Paul,
Luther, Auguistine. All Gods people are Souldiers, but few are
Champions, some hee hath for lighter skirmishes, and less hu-
millation will serve their turn to prepare them for them. But
But tuch as hee intends for the main battle, to bee Champions in his cause, hee doth usually exercise with greater difficulties, that so they might not start aside in the day of trial.

4. Some hee intends to bee patterns and examples of mortification in the world, and therefore carres them on with troubles of spirit, and lets them lye longer in them, that being raised up, they may bee dead to the World ever after.

Thus you see the like measure are not necessary, neither irrespective of Gods ends, nor in respect of your selves; and why then should any mens humiliation bee a pattern for thee?

All that can bee said in it is this, that so much is required, as to cast us out of our selves, make us weary of our sins, willing to sell all, our off right hands, pull out right eyes, to part with the dearest and beloved sins for Christ.

Wee all agree, it is sufficient when it doth cast a man out of himself, and bring him over to Christ, and how much that is who can set down?

A les degree will do that in one, which it will not in another; if the same measure were alike necessary for all, then it would follow,

1. That every one is so to labour to come to that measure, as to receive no comfort in the Promise till hee have attained it.

2. And it would follow, that what comfort any may have gotten in the Promise, they are to yeeld up, if they have not had the like measure that others have attained to; and what perplexities, tears, doubts, would so bee lett in the confidences of men, so that they would never finde a bottome to stand on.

As in Grace, a man would never have comfort, if his comfort were to atttie from the measures, and not from the truth. So in humiliation, many poor souls in taking others for a pattern, have left the rule, and put themselves into a greater in capacity to close with the Promise, at a greater distance from Christ than they were before, and have made themselves miserable for the present, and for the future, and so have gone drooping even to their graves.

And it had been better for many speakers and hearers too, if this Doctrine had been pressed more before. How many have had their heads broken in pieces with it, and it is easier for these troubles to break the head, than to break the heart.

But thus much for the second.

Thus you see we have finished the two generals. That we are flow of heart to beleive.

What are the grounds that men are flow of heart to beleive?

3. Wee come to the next, what are the reasons that this temperament of spirit is so offensive unto God? I have given you many reasons in my Sabbath days discourse on the third of John. Why God was so severe against unbeliefe.

All which would serve as so many demonstrations of this point, we
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We will at this time adde but these three more.

Reaf. 1. Slownes of heart to beleev, is a temper very offensive to God, because it argues and speaks a corrupt heart.

A heart byasled with other respects which hindereth from closing with Christ. As Christ faith, Joh. 5. 44. How can you beleev when you feek honour, when you are byasled with such respects as these?

Such a spirit, either it argues ignorance, or pride, or love of sin, or jealously of the truth of God, the goodness of God, and this is very offensive; jealously is the rage of a man, &c. which is more provoking, because God hath so far condescended to our weaknesses for our establishment, that he hath not only given us his Promise, his Covenant, his Oath and Seal, and all to comfort us. And if notwithstanding all this, we shall nourish a spirit of jealousy, and cherishe our doubts and distrusts, this must needs bee very displeasing unto God. *Vitae nobis sine jurasti Deo credimus.* Aug. If a man should give you his Promise, and yet to satisfie you to his Promise, hee should annex his Oath, and to his Oath his Seal, &c. If yet notwithstanding you will bee jealous and distrust him, how would this make a mans blood to rise: how would hee break forth into rage: what, will you not beleev mee: do you think mee to bee a Devil: do you think I will bee perjured: &c.

And how much more must this provoke God, who is immutably true of his word. One syllable being a better bottome for a soul to rest upon, than all the Protestations of men and Angels; men though true, Angels though true, yet they are not in themselves immutably true, because they are but Creatures, but now God is, hee is truth it self, no shadow of change in him.

Nay, and not only true, but able to make good his Word, what hee hath promis'd. Men may bee true, and yet want ability to perform, but what God hath said, hee will do, because hee is faithfull, and hee is able to do, because almighty.

And hath God condescended to us so far, as not only to give us his Promise, his Oath, Covenant and Seal, and are wee yet how of heart to beleev: do wee yet nourish jealouslyes and distrusts: Why then judge if this must not needs bee a high provocation of God.

And that is the first reason, because this sin speaks corruption of heart.

Reaf. 2. Because such a spirit what in it lyes, makes void and null the great things of God, I say as much as in thee lyes, for thou canst not do it. As the Apostle faith, God is faithfull whether men beleev, or beleev not: so God is mercifull, powerfull, wise, gracious, true, whether men will beleev, or beleev not.

But this I say, as much as in thee lyes, thou makest void all the great and stupendous things of God, wee will name the seven.

1. Thou
1. Thou makest void the great counsels of God, all the thoughts of his wisdom in contriving such a way, to advance his glory in the salvation of men. God had purposed and contrived from everlasting to make himself glorious, to set up and advance the glory of his wisdom and grace, and thus is the way his wisdom pitched upon from everlasting, to do all this by sending of Christ into the World, and thou by standing out, dost not only frustrate God's ends in thy salvation, but as much as in thee lies, nullify and makest void all the thoughts and contrivings of his wisdom, for all this is to no purpose, while thou stand'st out and wilt not believe.

2. Thou makest void all the thoughts of his Mercy, in which he desired to set forth himself, and make himself visible to the lost tens of men, by sending of Christ into the World.

But now if thou wilt not believe, to what purpose were all these great things of God, to what purpose was all this glorious fabric of God's mercy and counsel, which was the greatest thing that ever came upon his heart: God's master-piece, which went to the height of his skill and wisdom, to the height of his mercy and love. Beyond which there is a noula in God's thoughts, there was no further or more, God could go no higher than himself, all was infinite, but thou in standing off dost annul, and make void all the thoughts of his mercy, and his love, if others should do the like, to what purpose then were all? it would make all this void, and to no purpose: thou dost it as much as in thee lies, if a man should make a curious piece that should publish his skill, his greatness, his wisdom, and a man come and break it all in pieces, would he not bee greatly offended? And what a fearful thing is it, to make void that wherein God set himself, to make himself glorious to obscure that in which God set himself, to make himself visible in: but thou, who art slow of heart to believe (as far as it lies in thee) dost this, and therefore what a provocation of God must this bee?

3. Thou dost as much as in thee lies, make void all the purposes of God's mercy to thee. The great end which God aimed at in this great work of sending Christ into the World, was that thou mightest believe in him, and live. Now if thou stand out, and will not come in, will not close with him, thou dost what lies in thee, to make void all the purposes of God to thee for good. I say, what lies in thee, for thou shalt never do it; the election shall bring thee in; God's purpose shall bring thee to his Promise. Our sins may alter God's conditional purposes of temporal mercies, as he tells them, 1 Sam. 2. 30. I said indeed, that thy house, and the house of thy fathers should walk before me for ever, but now with the Lord, bee it far from me, for they that honour me, I will honor, &c. But thou shalt never bee able to make void God's eternal purposes of good to thee; but yet take heed of tempting God, provoking God,
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God, God may make thy body smart for it, though he have thy soul at last; make thee know better, not try conclusions. But I lay, what lies in thee thou dost dishonour all the purposes of God to thee for good, which is a fearful thing.

4. Thou dost what lies in thee, frustrate the expectation of God. You know it is a great affliction to a man to have his expectation frustrated, and the greater the good which was expected, the greater the cut and wound to be disappointed and frustrated. Why I say (may I speak after the manner of men) thou dost what lies in thee, to frustrate all the expectations of God: Why, what were Gods expectations? but that thou shouldst receive his Son, if hee lent him, that thou shouldst imbrace Christ, believe in him. And this seems to be yearly inflamned in the parable, Mat. 21. 37. Mark, 12. 6. Surely they will reverence my Son, though they had abjured the Prophets, &c. yet surely they will reverence my Son; they owe so much homage to mee, or they will look upon him to great a parent; of the Son of God; Surely they will reverence my Son. But however his Person and Parentage should not procure reverence, yet the service he came about will be a grateful service; hee comes to be Saviour, hee comes to redeem them from Hell. Certainly hee will be a welcome guest to them; Oh how willing will they be to receive him? how glad to entertain him? with what open arms will they embrace him? how ready to obey him? Surely they will reverence my Son. And in reason who would not have thought so? what welcome might not the King of glory expect, the Prince expect, who came upon such a buttend? What might not a Prince expect, who came to loosen the captives, to redeem vassals, to relieve distressed, break chains! Sure all reason hee should have been received with all joy, with all acclamations and willing imbraces. This God expected. But now when in stead of receiving, we reject Christ, slight Christ, undervalue Christ, when we will not close with him, &c. how doth this cross the expectation, and frustrate it.

5. We do what lies in us to make void Gods end in sending Christ. What was the end which God aimed at in this plot, in contriving such a way, in sending Christ into the World? this was his end, that we might believe and live, his glory, in our salvation. Surely the end must needs be glorious, when the means and work was so glorious, if the foundation of this work were so glorious, what will the whole structure bee? Now this was one part of Gods end in sending of Christ, that thou shouldst receive Christ, believe in him. And so long as thou standest out, thou croisdest Gods end, frustrates the end of God. And this must needs be a great provocation of God. If a man did take a great deal of pains in a work; spent all his time and indeavours for some end, and at last be croisfed in the end, the work is nothing to him. This provokes, &c. Why thou dost frustrate Gods end?

6. Thou dost as much as in thee lyes, make void the death of Christ, methall all his sufferings, and all his blood shed to be to no purpose. What was the end that Christ shed his blood? what was the end Christ dyed? why it was no other but this, that we might believe in him, and have a pardon &c. But now so long as thou standest out, thou frustratest all this; if all were like thee, I pray thee, to what purpose were the death of Christ, the expense and shedding of his blood? And therefore this provokes much; if one of us should suffer much for the obtaining of such an end; if after hee had induced, to be disappointed of it, this much provokes us.

7. Thou dost as much as in thee lyes, make void all the Promises of God to Christ.

God promised and entered into Covenant with Christ; that if hee would lay down his life and blood, hee would make him King over Saints, hee would give the Heathen for his inheritance, &c. Isa. 53. Hee shall see of the travail of his soul, and bee satisfied. God promised Christ, that if hee would lay down his life for a people, hee should have them; hee would give a people to him. And thy standing out both what lies in thee, to make this Promise void, to make God a liar to his Son, &c. Thouhast not bee able. Christ shall have a people, God will yet set his King, &c.
yet if all were like thee, where were Christ's people?

Nay, and thou robblest Christ of the reward and fruit of all his death and sufferings, this was the reward Christ was to have for his death, &c.

If a man had sweat, or shed his blood for such a thing, you would not be so injurious to him, as to hinder him of the fruit of it, every one would be ready to cry out, of such an act of injustice.

Why, thou art Christ's reward, bee shed his blood, laid down his life for this end, for this purpose. And by thy standing out, thou dost what is in thee to rob Christ of this his reward, the fruit of his death, and therefore what a provocation is it?

REF. 3. Because this temper keeps a man in an unserviceable condition, both to God and man. And this must needs bee very offensive to God.

It was one great end, that God sent Christ into the World for, that we might be able to do him service; it was the end of our Creation, and of our redemption too, that being redeemed out of the hands of our enemies we should serve him, Luk. 1.74, 75.

Though our service was not the impulsive cause of God's redeeming us, though it was not the motive, which did persuade and prevail with God to send Christ into the World, to redeem us, yet this was an end, one main end which God aimed at in sending Christ into the World, that we might be able to serve him without fear, &c.

Christ did not discharge us from the debt of sin, to free us from the debt of service, but therefore did hee pay the one, that wee might be able to return the other. As the Apostle, Rom. 8.12, where having shewed that we are justified, and our sins forgiven, hee concludes, therefore brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh, &c. Christ hath broken the bands of subjection to others, that wee might take upon us the yoke of service to him.

Christ freed us from the curse of the Law, that wee might yield obedience to the Commands of the Law, from the penalties, that wee might obey the Precepts, from the Law, as a Covenant, that we might walk in obedience to the Law as a Rule. Planet dictum desce si fit legem quod omnia &c. That as the Law was given with Evangelical purposes, so it might now bee kept of us with Evangelical principles.

So that this was one main end that God aimed at in our redemption, that wee might bee able to do him service.

Now therefore that which crosth this great end which God aimed at, and keeps us in an unserviceable condition to God, must needs bee very offensive to God.

But that unbelieving doth. It makes you utterly unserviceable to God.

There is a twofold unbelief. 1. Reigning. 2. Remaining unbeliefe.
For the first, where Unbelief reigns, that man is altogether dead, and no more able to do a piece of service to God, than a dead man to perform actions of life. As Christ saith, Job. 15. 5. without mee ye can do nothing.

And for the second remaining Unbelief, so far as Unbelief remains, so far it acts, so far are you wounded, disabled to service. Though there be not a total and universal impotency, as in the former, yet there is a partial disability, and this is more or lees, according to the workings and prevailings of Unbelief in you.

It is laid of Abraham, Heb. 11. 8. That by Faith Abraham obeyed God. And it was a high act of obedience.

It is Faith which doth enable us to obey, and quicken us in obedience.

1. It begets Soul-inabling-Principles, such Principles as are suitable to the command, and thing commanded.

2. Faith supplies a man with Soul-inabling-strength from Christ.

Wee have not only inherent, but assisting strength, not only operative, but cooperative, &c. from Christ, and Faith furnisheth us with it.

3. Faith doth furnish a man with Soul-inabling-considerations,

1. From God. 2. From the work. 3. From the rewards, &c.

1. It enables the soul to suffer.

2. It puts the soul into a suffering frame.

3. It doth furnish the soul with suffering resolutions; Faith cloatheth the soul with strong resolutions, as in the three Children, Dan. 3.


5. Faith lays in suffering strength, strength from God, from the Promise, &c.

5. It propounds to the soul suffering rewards, for these light afflictions which are but for a moment, work, &c. 2 Cor. 4. 17. All which I might unshift large upon, to shew you how Faith doth enable the soul, &c. So Unbelief it keeps the soul in an unmerciful condition. For that doth not yield obedience to the promise in way of believing, cannot yield subjection to the Precept in a way of obeying; men of a bad belief, can never bee men of a good life.

Hence wee read, that Faith and Obedience, and Unbelief, and Disobedience are expressed by the same name, Rom. 15. 31. which shews how near they are together. If you bee once believers, you will then bee obedient, and while you continue in Unbeliefe, you must needs bee disobedient.

It is observable, that God gave the Law four hundred and thir-
ty years after the Promise, as the Apostolic faith, Gal, 3. 17. which shews, that Faith in the Promise must bee the spring of all our obedience to the Precept.

When God gave the Law, see what a preface there is to obedience, *I am the Lord thy God.* As it hee had said, here is that which must incline you to obedience.

After *Adam* fall, God doth not then give him any new commands, hee puts him not to work again, but now to beleive; hee gave the Promise then, and not the Law, to shew that now hee must have a new *Principle of working*, before hee could work, hee must now beleive, that hee might be able to do. Many men think they can do God better service by doubting, than by beleevings, by standing out, than by comming in.

But alas! Satan deludes them, if hee get between thee and the Promise, if hee keep thee off from Christ, hee will either discourage thee from obedience, or hee will discourage and disable thee in thy obedience. Faith is the spring of action, the root of all obedience, without Christ wee can do nothing, and without Faith, wee must needs bee without Christ; for Faith gives the soul union and communion with him, it implants us into Christ, and then, and not till then, wee bring forth fruit.

It is said of Abraham, Heb. 11. 8. *That by Faith Abraham obeyed God,* and you know, it was a high act of obedience, the sacrificing of his Son, and so is the sacrificing of our sins. *It is Faith* alone that doth incline the soul to do, to suffer.

Wee now come to the Application, wherein I shall bee brief, because most of it I shall refer to the second Doctrin.

**Use 1.** If so, then see how Satan doth delude their souls, whom hee pervert and not to beleive is a vertue, is a thing pleasing unto God.

Are there not many who as *Jonah* said, *hee did well to bee angry.* So they say, they do well not to beleive, they do well to stand out, &c.

You shall hear some make it a matter of conscience not to beleive, they ought not to beleive; should such sinfull creatures, such vile wretches so polluted? &c.

Should they beleive, this were to presume, to sin against Gods Justice in the closets with his Mercy, this were to give holy things to dogs, &c. Satan presents sin.

And some there are so witty, as to object against all that can be brought, as if they took a pride to argue themselves into a condition of mifery, letting the pride of their own carnal reasonings, against the riches and freestals of the mercy of God, if you bring a promise to them, when cast down for sin, and endeavour to fasten a promise on them, they can tell you, that this is not the meaning of the Promise, or certainly this Promise doth not belong to mee.

Alas
Heart to Beleeve.

Alas will they say! all this is but lost labour; you might as well carry a cordial to a dead man, as bring a Promise to them; it is a fruitless thing, if upon examination wee shall discover some spots in a Child in them, some undoubted evidences of one whom God speaks mercy unto. Yet they will tell you all these are false, all are in Hypocrify. Its true, if these things were in truth so, I could then conceive some hopes of mercy, but I know they are all in Hypocrify, they are all unfound and counterfeit, &c. Ereg no Mercy.

Thus doth many a poor soul take pains to reason himself into misery, and slide with Satan, and take part with the corruptions, and unbelievings of his own heart against himself.

And what will bee the end of it? sure it will breed bitterness in the latter end; for the present, it is thy sin, and for the future, it will bee thy misery, either it will cause God to withdraw himself from thee, as bee tells them, Dec. 32. 20. Or cause thee to withdraw thyself from God. As the Apostle speaketh, Heb. 3. 12. Take heed lest there bee in you an evil heart of Unbelief in departing from the living God. Bee that withdrawing himself from the Promis, cannot long keep close to the Precept, bee that keeps at a distance from Mercy, will not long walk in the ways of duty.

When the workings of natural conscience are done, when fears are allayed, when troubles are blown over, then will all service bee done too; if not, yet the continuance of troubles, and fears, will make you cast of all, and say, there is no hope, or will discourage your hearts in your walking, that your life will bee little better than a martyr dome, with continual racks and troubles. It was before thy sin not to believe, but now it will bee thy misery, before thou wouldst not, now thou cant not. Thou foughtest arguments before to keep thee off from the Promise, and thou wilt now feel as many arguments, against such arguments which might bring thee over to the Promise. And this miserable unbelief, is the fruit of sinful unbelief. This disability to come to the Promise, is the punishment of thy former flounderings to come to the Promise. And this temper you shall see in many, who have reasoned themselves down, do finde it now a harder work to reason themselves up again.

Who have put themselves into a greater incapacity to close with the Promise by those ways which they have thought to bee helpful to them. It is eaily to give entertainment to carnal reasonings, to the suggestions of Satan, and the objections of our own fleshly hearts, then to get rid of them again.

Many have given willing entertainment to these at first, who would more gladly bee rid of them afterward if they could.

But the continuance of them is a fruit of your entertainment of them.

If you will entertain doubts and fears, and set up your own car-
The Slowness of

And reasonings against the Promise, then you shall have doubts, and fears, and carnal reasonings when you would not, to keep you from the Promise. As God said in another case, Hos. 8. 11. Because you have made many Altars to sin, therefore Altars shall be unto you to sin. So here, because you have set up your carnal reasonings: and your unbelieving thoughts against the Promise, to hinder you from closing with the Promise; therefore carnal reasonings, &c. shall bee a hinderance, &c.

Thus is miserable Unbeliefe, a fruit of sinful Unbeliefe, which the more miserable, the lese sinful; the more seen, the more forrowed for; the more lamented and mourned for, the lese sinful, while it was your sin it was not seen, it was not forrowed for, and now it is, &c. and the more misery, the lese your sin in God's account. Carnal reasonings were before your pride, now your grief; you sought them before, you would bee rid of them now; they were your delight before, now they are your trouble, your misery, which is something.

But they had not now continued to bee your misery, if they had not before been entertained as your sin, &c. This is the fruit of slowness of heart to beleive.

Use 2. Is of Exhortation. If so then, three things. 1. Bee convinced of the greatness of the sin. 2. Bee humbled for it. 3. Bee quickened to beleive.

1. Bee yee convinced of the greatness of the sin, it is a sin whereby you wrong God, gratifie Satan, wrong your own souls.

1. You wrong God in it, you obscure his glory, you limit his power, you contemn his widsom, you give a lyse to his truth, you abuse his love, you slight and reject all the precious, and peer-lesse thoughts of his Mercy and Grace.

I told you not long since, that God was more severe against Unbeliefe than any sin, because Unbeliefe was most sever to God. No sin was more cruel to God, God hath no greater enemy in the World than Unbeliefe. It is an enemy to whatever is most dear and precious unto God. Therefore is hee such an enemy to Unbeliefe, if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him, Heb. 10. 38.

2. You gratifie Satan. I beleive thou wouldst not willingly (if thou knew it) gratifie Satan for a World.

I tell thee in thy standing off, thou dost not only gratifie him, but thou canst do Satan no greater a pleasure, no greater a curtesy in the World.

In this Satan hath all his desire of thee, that which he desires is to make void all the great things of God, that which he desires, is to make the death of Christ in vain; to make the blood of Christ to bee shed in vain, to make the great countel of God, the great things of his widsome and mercy to no purpose in the World.
by this standing off thou dost what lies in thee to answer his desire, and therefore this must needs glad him.

Besides Satan knows full well, if he do not wound thy Faith, thy Faith will wound him, break the head of the Serpent, and therefore it is that which he laboureth after in all his temptations, if he cannot keep thee from believing, yet to wound and weaken thy Faith, that thou mayest not wound him.

If hee cannot make thee his friend, yet if hee can weaken his adversary. If hee cannot take away thy weapon, yet if hee can weaken thy arm, or blunt thy weapon, hee is content.

If hee cannot destroy thy Faith, yet if hee can weaken thy Faith, if he be not hurt thy Faith, yet if hee can keep thy Faith from hurting him, by weakening of it: for every act of Faith wounds Satan, bindes him in chains, &c.

And therefore if hee can prevail to keep thee from believing, or if hee can weaken and wound thy Faith, hee is well contented, this gratifieth him.

What can gratifieth him more, than to make a Pageant of all the great things of God, than to make all these great things like a dream?

What can gratifieth him more, than to keep thy soul at a distance from Christ and the Promise, what can pleasure him more, than to make a soul look upon God, as a God of terror and wrath?

What more, than to keep the soul upon racks, upon fears, discouragements and disquiets, this is some of his own spirit of darkness.

Nay, what can gratifieth him more, than to keep a soul in a dead unserviceable condition, make a man unfit to live, unfit to dye, unfit for any service to God and man?

Why, all this doth Satan do, if hee can but prevail to keep thy soul from Christ, at distance from the Promise, as I could shew you at large, &c. The way Satan doth it, is by letting out sin. Though I would bee willing to see sin, yet I am not willing to see sin in the Devils glass; I am not willing to see sin, when Satan discovers sin.

Satan hath two glasses, wherein he discovers sin.

1. Hee hath a lessening or extenuating glass, wherein he discovers sin to wicked men, which makes them appear less than they are; great sins, small sins, incontinencies, and lesser sins to bee no sins.

2. And Satan hath a multiplying or magnifying glass, wherein he discovers sin to them, when call down, and extends it, not only above the greatness of sin, but of mercy also.

As I would have my eyes broad and open, to see sin when God discovers it. So I would shut mine eyes when Satan discovers sin.

Quest. But how shall I know when God and when Satan discovers sin?

1. When
1. When God discovers sin, he keeps up the apprehensions of mercy above the greatness of sin.

But when Satan discovers sin, he heightens sin above the riches of mercy. As you see in Cain, יִתְנֶשׁ צִדְקֵי מִלְחָמָה my sin is greater than can be pardoned.

2. When God discovers sin, he doth not bleare, but rather clear the eye of Faith to the beholding of Christ, he makes the soul fitter to see Christ, doth not hinder, but helpeth the soul in fight of Christ.

But when Satan discovers sin, he doth ever bleare and blinde the eye of Faith, from the beholding of Mercy; either he discovers the malady, and conceals the remedy, or he holds the eye of Faith, that it cannot look upon Christ for mercy.

Hee puts the soul into a present incapacity to look up to God for mercy, hee slings, but holds not up the brazen Serpent.

3. When God discovers sin, it is to drive us out of our selves, and to draw us unto Christ and the Promise, makes the Law a Schoolmaster, &c. Gal. 3, 24, but Satans discoveries of sin, sets us further off from Christ.

4. When God discovers sin, it is to make the soul more in love with Christ, to prize Christ more, to advance him more, to love him, and desire him more. It is such a discovery that makes the soul to run to the remedy.

But when Satan discovers sin, it is to make us more affraid of Christ, to flye from Christ as Adam, never the more to desire him.

5. When God discovers sin, hee humbles the soul under the fight of it, hee makes a man to abhor himself, makes sin hateful to him.

But when Satan discovers sin, it is to discourage us, not to humble us: hee may make sin fearful, but never makes it hateful.

Besides, as you may know by the manner and the end of the discovery, whether Gods or no.

So by the time and temper wee are in.

Satan discovers sin, when hee hath gotten the soul at an advantage, he comes upon us as Simeon upon the Shechemites when they were sore, Gen. 34, when hee hath gotten the hill and the wind on us, when wee are in some sad condition, when in temptation, when in darkness, when in some distresses, when wee are drawn from our succours.

It is a passaige of one, that Satan, when hee discovers sin, and to hee openeth our wound, hee gets us into the wilderness, into the cold, from our friends, succours, &c. But when the Spirit of God openeth our wounds, it is by the fire, friends about us, cordials near us, &c.

But I think the difference is rather to bee taken from the manner of the discovery, than from the end and effects of it.
Well then, that is a sinfull looking on sin,
1. Which heighteneth sin above the riches of mercy.
2. Which bleareth and blindeth the eye of Faith from beholding Christ and the Promise.
3. Which sets the soul at a farther distance from Christ.
4. Which makes the soul afraid of Christ.
5. Which discourageth the soul under sight of it. And hee that looks upon sin in Satans glass, no marvel if hee bee slow to believe, and to come over to the Promise.
6. When Satan discovers sin, hee rather makes a malady, than discovers a malady, never discovereth one wound, but makes another; never discovereth a sin, but takes a course that that discovery shall bee sinfull.
7. Thirdly, as you wrong God, and gratifie Satan, so you injure your own souls.

1. You rob your selves of comfort, and keep your selves in unnecessary racks and troubles, and bondage. And this is a great evil. Nature cannot subsist without comfort; comfort is to the soul, what the soul is to the body; a man cannot live without it; and it puts grace to it too, though for a time Grace may live, and act strongly in the want of comfort; yet when troubles continue, and a man walks long without comfort, it will put Grace to it, to the utmost to subsist.

Oh what abundance of comfort, what floods of consolation, what peace, what joy, doth thou rob thy self of in thy standing off!

2. You hinder your souls of Grace. Grace keeps a proportion with Faith. So much Faith, so much Grace, &c. keep down Faith, and all Grace is kept down, and where Faith stirres, all the wheels move, its the spring of motion, the Master-wheel. Faith is the stomack which receives all for the nourishment of the whole. As all the members depend upon the stomack, so all the Graces upon Faith. It is a Mediatour to our Mediatour; it fetcheth in provision to the soul, all depends upon it. If Grace be weak, Faith goes over to Christ, &c, for the supply of strength.

3. You make your selves every way unserviceable to God, as I showed you; you make your selves unable to do, unable to suffer for him. You make your selves good for nothing, unserviceable to God, to the Church, to his cause, to your selves too, &c. Many there are that think they can do God better service in standing off, than in coming in, by Fear, than by Faith.

They think that in nourishing their doubts, and their fears, they do cherish their care, watchfulness, humility.

And on the contrary, they think, that if once they should come to beleeeve, then they should bee more loose and careless, and take more liberty to themselves. Indeed, you would have more liberty to serve, not to sin. You would not bee tyed to...
service with coards of fear, but with bands of love, your principle
of service, and your manner of service would bee changed, where
now you serve him out of fear; then out of love, now out of con-
victions of conscience, then out of propensions of a divine nature;
now you serve him as slaves involuntarily, then as sons with will-
ingness and delight, &c.

Now you do duty as a task, then as your trade. And you will
walk in the ways of duty, though you see no commings in.

As a man that loves his trade, that loves his calling, hee will
hold it up, and follow it, though hee get nothing by it, though no
gain or comming in by it. So the soul which hath a Principle bred
in him suitable to the things of God, which is wrought by Faith,
hee will hold up to pray and to do duty, though hee finde no commings in; there is a natural agreeableness between him and
duty, between his spirit and the work, and though hee never get
good by it, yet hee will hold up his spirit to the doing of it.

As it is with a man, whose nature is fenitalized, that hath fain
away the very common Principles, pluckt up the very senses of
nature, hee will drink, and bee drunk, though hee undo himself
by it, though hee hurt his body, impoverish his estate, yet hee
will drink, &c. As Solomon faith, &c. Where will bring a man to a morsel of bread, will undo a man, yet hee will go on in sin, hee
will not leave his sin, though undone by it; hee will sin, not only
though hee get nothing, but though hee get hurt, though hee
undo himself thereby, yet hee will go on in sin, and the reason is,
that universal futableness that is between his soul and sin.

So on the other side, a godly man hee will serve God, hee will
hold on in duty, in obedience, though hee finde no comming in
by it.

There is such a futableness between the spirit of a believer,
and the work, that though there is no commings in, though hee
finde no peace, no comfort in the ways of God, yet hee will hold
up to the work.

Where now an unbeliever, if hee do not by these things get
peace which is all hee looks after in the doing of it, if hee do not get
comfort, at last hee throws off all, because there was no Principle
of futableness to hold him to the duty.

Therefore you see how Satan deludes you. Faith alone is the
spring of action, that which fets us a work, and quicken us in work-
ing; if Faith bee up, all his Graces will bee so too, and if that bee
down, all other Graces are weak, and down with it.

As Paradisis faith, it is the virtue of a Christal, when the ver-
tues of other precious stones are extinct, to raise them, and revive
them again. So doth Faith with our Graces, when Davids heart
was down in Psa. 43, 5, you see hee recovers himself by his Faith,
he goon sooner did hee exercise his Faith, but his heart is raised.

That which quickeneth you to service, and inables you in ser-
vice,
vice, is Faith, and that which deads your spirit, and makes you unserviceable, is unbeliefe, and therefore bee convinced of your fin.

2. Bee humbled for it, this is the great fin, the womb of sin; the Mother and Nurfe of sin, as I have shewed.

That which holds up Satans Kingdome in you, is your unbeliefe; if this fort were once taken, all the rest would quickly yeeld up.

You see when Christ would conquer covetousnes, bee labours to conquer unbelieving, as you see, Mat. 6. 25. to the end.

That being overcome, all the rest yeeld up, and are vanquisht. Nay it is a fin which doth not only uphold particular sins, but the state of sin. It is called a state of unbeliefe, wee do not say, a state of drunkenesse, a state of swearing, &c. but a state of unbeliefe, others are but particular, this an universal fin. And is there not then cause to bee humbled for it? you see what a fin it is, how you wrong God, how you gratifie Satan, how you injure your selves, and is there not cause then to bee humbled for it?

Men are hard to bee humbled for this sin, because hard to bee convinced either that they are guilty of it, or that it is a sin.

Prophane and wicked men, worldly men, they will not bee convinced that they do not beleive. Though there bee nothing more plain, if the Devil did not delude them, for Faith and sin cannot stand together; you can no more separate Holines and Faith, than Light and the Sun.

And humbled men they are hard to bee convinced that it is a fin.

Though it is easy to convince them that they do not beleve, they are sensible enough of that; yet it is hard to perswade them that it is a sin, not to beleve, that it is their duty to beleve; they think they do well in keeping off from the Promise, they express their tenderness of Gods justice and holiness, and judge it a great wrong to both, that God should bee merciful to such sinners as they. But I must tell thee, it is a greater sin than all thy sins; a killing, a murthering, an undoing sin. It is a finning sin that seals thee up in a state of sin; and therefore you had need to bee convinced of it, and humbled for it.

3. Bee yee quickened to beleve.

What shall I do now to perswade with you, who are slow of heart to beleve, to come in and beleve? Alas! all that I can say is nothing, if God do not mightily work upon your hearts, and perswade with you.

Shall I tell you there is an inexhaustible fulness of mercy in God, and meric in Christ for the greatest sinner among you; and this is something. Shall I say that God is willing to forgive the greatest sinner of you, if you will now come in and beleve?
If you will go by Gods revealed will, and thou hast no other rule to go
go by, nor to bee judged by, there God tells thee that hee keeps
open house, hee invites, hee excites, hee interest, hee beseeches to
come; these were something to perswade with our hearts. But I
shall pass them, I will only name these two to perswade.

1. *Consider, God commands thee to beleave.*

2. *Consider, thou can do God no greater pleasure than to come in and
belieue.*

1. *Consider, God commands thee to beleave,* 1 John 3, 23. *This is his Commandement, that wee should beleave on the name of his Son
Jesus Christ.*

And what can thy heart now reason against this? will not this
bee enough to answer all thy fears and scruples: to bear down
all that thy unbelieving heart can fay against the Promise.

Why God doth not only invite thee, but hee commands thee
to beleave.

Gods command is a sufficient warrant to beleave, and will bee
sufficient security to all them that do beleave.

1. I say it is a sufficient warrant to beleave. Men may command
things, and tell us that our obedience to them shall bee sufficient
warrant to us; and yet they may want power enough to secure us
in our obedience to them, but it is not so with God, his command
will be a warrant sufficient to carry out any soul in his obedience to him.

Doth Satan say, wherefore dost thou beleave: thou art a Repro-
bate, thou art a cast away, thou haft no right to the Promise;
but thou must say then, thou art a Creature, and God commands
thee to beleave, and in obedience to Gods command, though thou
sees nothing but death for the present, yet thou wilt beleave.

Doth bee say, thou haft no right to a Promise, nor any title to
Mercy: yet mayest thou say, thou art bound to the Precept;
though I cannot clear my right to the Promise, yet I am sure I
am to obey the Precept; I am bound to the obedience of the
command, and God commands mee to beleave.

Yea, and thou mayest say thus much, if I am bound to beleave
(as I am) then I may bee able by my beleaving to clear my inter-
est in the Promise.

Thou mayest tell him here is a command for thee, none then for
him, hee is out of hope. It is an infinite mercy to stand under the
command of beleaving, the Devils do not, the damned do not, thou
doest, which is infinite mercy.

2. *As Gods command is a sufficient warrant to beleave, so it is
sufficient security if wee do beleave, there was never a soul that
perished in a way of obedience, in a way of beleaving.*

Doth Satan say, thou mayest venture thy soul if thou wilt, but
thou dost but cast away thy soul, for thou shalt never bee saved,
God will never own thee.

Thou mayest say again, Gods command is a sufficient warrant
for thee to belieue; men may fail us and bee men, but God can-
not fail us and bee God.
But put it to the worst, though thou do not know whether thou shalt bee faved, yet this thou knowest, that God commands thee to beleev.

Well then, bee peremptory, and resolve in beleeving, say, if I dye, I will dye in a way of beleaving, in a way of obedience to the command, not in a way of disobedience to it.

This I know, if I beleev not, I must perish; bee that beleeveth not is condemned, but if I do beleev, if I do go on in a way of obedience, who knows whether God will bee mercifull? nay, who knows not but that hee will? I must tell you, this resolution will put the Devil to it, hee knows not what to say to such a man, nay and it puts God to it too, for God cannot reject him, who will yet go on to serve him, though hee should never own him.

2. Consider, you can do God no greater pleasure than to come in and beleev, Thou honourest all-God, as I shall shew thee in the second Doctrin.

It is a great deal of ease and pleasure for a full and pained breast to bee fucked; the breast of Mercy and Promise is full, yea and in pain too, and thou shalt do God (let mee speak after the manner of men) the greatest pleasure thou canst do, to come and fuck, Job. 6. 28. when the people asked, what shall we do, that wee may work the works of God? Mark then how Chrift answers; why this is the work of God, that you beleev in him. As if hee had said, would you do that which would content God? would you do that which pleaseth him? why this is that which doth wonderfully content God, this is that doth admirably please God, to beleev, I tell thee by this thou makest God amends for all the wrong thou haft done him all thy life. Nothing else will, if thou shouldest go about to redeem every oath with an age of preciseness and exactness; every idle word and action with an eternity of praises and tears, all thy exactions and injustice with a treasury of alms; all this were nothing to the making of God amends. But here do but come over to the Promise, do but clefle with Chrift, and thou makest God amends for all. God will bee fully satisfied, not with thy Faith, but with Chrift, not with thy beleeving, but with Chrift, whom thy Faith holds up. Nay, not only satisfied, but ipse tibi velit & debitis. I would not only bee satisfied, but I would bee thy debtor, to give thee eternal life. Oh then that you who are slow of heart to beleev, that you would now come in. Clofe with Chrift, and then thou mayest let Chrift against all that the Law, Justice, Sin, Hell, Satan can say against thee. You see the Apostle did so; who is bee that condemneth it is Chrift that dyed: Hee makes a challenge of all; for the death of Chrift against whatevet can bee brought, to mayest thou. Let us weild this weapon, &c.

1. Doth Satan say thou haft sinned?

Why, but may the fowl fay, I have clofed with him who hath suffered for Sin, what can my debt of Sin bee, that the payment of
his sufferings hath not fully answered.

2. Doth he say thou hast sinned against the great God of Heaven, yea, but thou mayest say, I have an interest in him, whose Righteousness is the Righteousness of the great God of Heaven, wherein our Righteousness, and that is able to suffice for that.

3. Doth he say the glory of the great God is debased by thy sinning? Why, but thou mayest say, will not the emptying of his glory, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, answer for that?

4. Doth he say thou hast sinned against knowledge? Why but thou mayest say, all that Christ did, and all he suffered, he did with knowledge, John 18:4. Jesus knowing all things, etc.

5. Doth he say thou hast sinned with delight? Why, but thou mayest say, Christ hath suffered with greater delight, than I have sinned. He delighted to do the will of God, and this was the will of his Father, that he should give his life for men, Luke 12:50. And it was said of him, that he was straitened till the hour came, as men that delight in a work which they long to be upon.

6. Doth he say thy sins lie in thy spirit? Yea, but thou mayest say, the chiefest part of his sufferings did lie in his spirit; his soul was heavy to death, Matthew 26:38. When he sweats drops of blood, etc.

7. Doth he say thou art still full of corruptions? Why, but thou mayest say, Christ is full of holiness, and by him, though he be black, yet I am comely. As I look not to be justified by mine own inherent righteousnesses, so I shall not be condemned for this remaining corruption, so long as it is not reigning, so long as seen and sorrowed for. Though I desire to be acceptable to him in holiness, yet I do not desire that my holiness should be the ground of my acceptance.

Thus may a soul which hath closed with Christ be able to wield this, to set Christ against whatever justice, law, sin, Satan brings. Oh! then let us be stirred up, you that are bow of hearts to believe to come over; thou feelest thou canst do him no greater pleasure. Thou thinkst thou dost well in doubting, but thou dost exceedingly offend God; thou canst not do him a greater dishonour, etc.

Object. But doth God command every one to believe pardon?

Anf. God commands every one to do the act of faith, but not to believe a pardon till he have done that.

If any shall get hold of the horns of the Altar, and yet rest in sin, God will deal with him as Job, etc. 1 Kings 2:28, 29. etc.

God commands thee not to believe a pardon, so long as thou purposest to go on in sin, but yet he always commands thee to believe him, so as to give up thy self to Christ, etc. that thereby thou mayest have pardon, and assurance, and salvation.
A TREATISE
OF THE
Miserable Condition
OF
UNBELIEVERS.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D.D.
And Master of C.C.C.

LONDON:
Printed by Robert Ibbotson, for Thomas Parkhurst, and
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Conduit in Cheapside, 1656.
A TREATISE OF HYPOCRISY.

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A TREATISE OF HYPOCRISY.

Isaiah 58. 2.

Yet they seek mee daily, and delight to know my ways, as a Nation, that did Righteousness, and forsook not the ordnance of their God. They ask of mee the Ordinances of Justice; they delight in approaching to God.

TEXT, which I may tremble to read, and you to hear. Well may wee ask that question, -- Lord, who is it then that shall be saved? Is it possible to do thus much, and yet miss of Heaven? Lord, who is it then, that shall be saved?

The whole World may bee divided into four ranks of men.

1. Some, that are in the Church visible, but not of the Church invisible.
2. Some, that are of the Church, but not in the Church.
3. Some, that are both in the Church, and of the Church.
4. Some, neither in, nor of the Church.

Some, that have both right to, and possession of this great privilege.

Some, that have possession, but not right.

Some, that have right, but not possession.
Of Hypocrisy.

Some, neither polished, nor right,
But yet to come nearer. Those that are within the pale of the Church, and so within the bounds of God'scall, wee may rank into these three orders of men.
1. Some, who are Atheistical and profane. Such as will do nothing for Heaven: as Gallio. -- They care for none of these things, Act. 18. 17.
2. Some, who are Hypocritical and unsound. That will do something, but as good as nothing.
3. Some, who are sincere and upright. Who will come up to God's price, and walk thoroughly in all the ways of God.

But we shall yet draw them into a narrower compass, viz.
Those, who are pretenders to Heaven. Of which there are but two sorts of people in the World. For we will cast out the Atheist, the Worldling, the profane Person, the Drunkard, the Swearer. These are men, upon whose forehead yon may read, They are going to Hell. There are then but two sorts, which are pretenders for Heaven.
1. The first is, the Formal Christian.
2. The second is, the Upright and Sincere.

1. The first, Hee will do something for Heaven: hee will bid much for Heaven: hee will walk in the round of duty: hee looks to the matter, but neglects the manner.
2. The second, hee will come up to the price: hee will do all Gods commands, looking to the Manner, as well as to the Matter.

The one, hee will give God the carkaf's and body of duty. The other, hee will give God the life and spirit of duty.

Of the first sort wee have some in the Text, who went high, to fall short of Heaven at last. Surely, if wee but read the words, and if God had not said, they had been unfound, wee should have judged them of the best of men.

Do but cast your eyes upon the Text, and read over the particulars.
1. They seek God, and not for a time only, in a storm, in trouble; as many will do. Beleeve mee, they go further. They seek mee daily. They had their morning and evening Prayers.
2. They delight to know my ways.
1. They know the ways of God.
2. They delight to know his ways; which is equivalent to this; they did not only know the ways of God, but desired to know the ways of God; and for ought I know, might have some kind of delight in the knowledge of his ways.
3. As a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinances of their God.] That is, if you looked upon them, they would seem to bee as holy a people, as any I have in the World. There is none who would judge otherwise of them by any outward appearance, but that they were as holy, as sincere, as any in the
the World. Though they were not a Nation that did Righteousness, yet they appeared to bee to: They were as a Nation, that did Righteousness, not only as a Nation, who heard, who knew, who spake Righteousness, but as a Nation that did Righteousness. They appeared to the judgement of the World to bee as exact as the choicest Saints, which God had in the World.

4. They ask of God the Ordinances of Justice. They desire and pray that God would inform them in the ways of Justice, how they should bee governed and ruled in the World: a people which hath respect to their civil Laws and Government, pretending to desire Gods Warrant, Gods Direction, Gods Rule in all things; As if they would do nothing, even in their civil Affairs, without Gods special Warrant and Direction.

5. They take delight in approaching to God. Than which, how can wee have an higher expreffion? What? do they approach to God? and daily approach to God, as you fee in the beginning? And do they delight in approaching to God? do they delight in hearing? do they delight in praying? do they delight in approaching to God, in his Ordinances? Here was a stupendious height, What can wee say more! how can wee go any higher? Here wee may stand and tremble; stand and bee astonifh'd; stand and bee amazed. Lord, who is bee that shall bee saved!

May men do thus much, and yet fall short of Heaven: what will become of thee, that doth nothing? what will become of thee, thou Drunkard? what will become of thee, thou Swearer? thou prophan Person? Worldling? if it bee thus with the green Tree, what will become of the dry Tree? if it bee thus with them that appear to bee good, what will become of them that appear to bee evil?

Thus you see the astonifhing height, which yet an unsound spirit may reach unto. How much may bee done by a man, and yet bee unsound here, and fall short of Heaven hereafter!

So that now I shall trouble you, but with one Doctor. (And I beleive, before I have done it, it will trouble you.) And that shall bee from the general, the whole body of the Text together, and it is this.

Doctor. It is possible for a man, to do much in the ways of God; even to abound in all outward Performances, and yet bee false at the heart; and yet have an unsound spirit here, and miss of Heaven hereafter.

This Doctor you see the Text speaks plainly. To this I will add but one Instance more, which may prove the whole Doctor, and that you have, Matt. 19. 16. to 23. You read there of one comming to Christ. A young man, a rich man, one, who had great Possessions, and a Ruler too, as Luke expresseth it, Luk. 18. 18. All which was rare, A young man! a rich man! a Ruler to come to Christ! you shall read there his business also. Hee came, not to tempt him, to insnare him, others did: but to learn, and be instructed by him. And the

Non animo tenentes, sed voto dilectissi
the thing hee desires to bee instructed in, is not some frivolous trifling matter, which others came to Christ withall. But that which was the matter of his inquiry, was a matter of eternal concernment, viz. What hee might do, that hee might bee saved; that hee might inherit everlasting life. Here was something here in this. A young man, a rich man, a ruler, to come to Christ with desire to bee instructed, how hee should come to eternal life.

You shall now hear Christ's answer, vers. 17. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments. There was some special reason, why Christ makes him such an answer? for in Job. 6, 28, 29. Christ answers the same question in another manner.

But Christ did here consider the quality of the Person, who demanded. Hee was a work-monger, and Christ puts him to working. Christ gave him Physick fitable to his distemper. Christ puts him to the Commandments, that hee might convince him, in that, to be imperfect, whereon hee thought himselfe to bee perfect, and would make that his foil, which hee thought to bee his greatest glory.

Well, Christ having put him upon the Commandments, the young man demands, which of the Commandments, as if hee had said, There is none of them, but I have already done.

Christ you see puts him to the Moral Law. Seeing hee will have Heaven and bee justified by Moses, Moses shall bee his Judge, and there rehearsed diverse Precepts of the second Table.

The young man, you see makes answer in vers. 20. All these things have I kept from my youth; what lack I yet? Hast thou any more to command? Is there any more to bee done?

This was now much, hee said. If wee may beleive him.

1. Hee obeyed. Hee was not only one, who did know the Commandments, but one who kept the Commandments.

2. Hee obeyed universally, not some, but all. All these things have I kept.

3. Hee had obeyed constantly. All these things have I kept from my youth.

And such there was much of truth in what hee said. For it is said upon this - Christ looked upon him, and loved him, as Mark relates, Mark 10, 21.

No question hee had obeyed the letter of the command: there was none could detect him, but Christ, however, hee failed in the Spirit of the command.

Hee did not break them in the outward action, though hee did not keep them in the inward affection.

And yet for all this, this man was unsound, as hee discovers himselfe to bee afterward. For all this, this man fell short of Heaven.

And yet alas! How far doth this man exceed a thousand of us? So that you see, the Diuine plain in the gross, in the bulk, fail. That it is possible for a man to do much in the wayes of God, and yet to be unsound.
unfound at heart: to abound in all outward Performances; and yet to miss of Heaven in the end.

But we'll come to clear it to you, in the Particulars. And we will follow this Method, in these four Particulars.

1. We will clear it to you in diverse instances from the word, that it is possible so to do.

2. We will then shew how this may stand both
   1. With Gods ends.
   2. With Satan's ends.
   3. With men's own ends, To do much, to abound in duty, and yet not to bee sincere.

3. We will shew you the grounds, whence it ariseth, that a corrupt heart may abound in all outward Performances.

4. We'll shew you where the fault is; how it comes to pass, that all this may bee done, and yet the heart still remain unfound.

In which I shall desire, that they who are men and women of tender spirits, would not presently make conclusions against themselves; and by ascribing, gratifie Satan, discourage their own souls, grieve Gods Spirit, and wound and weaken themselves in the ways of Grace. But hear all, (for I cannot lay all at once) and then spare not, but come to conclusions with your selves.

I shall desire to cast down the unfound, as not to weaken the sincere. And to bring in those that are without, as not to cast down those that are within. So to help the one, as that will hurt not the other.

1. For the first then, We will clear it in some particulars, that it is possible for a man to do much, to go far in outward performances of duty, and yet to bee rotten at heart, &c.

1. It is possible for a man to hear the word; nay, and hear it often; nay, and abound in hearing, time after time, Sabbath after Sabbath. Nay, and yet more, to hear it with affections too, and yet not to bee sincere.

1. That he may hear the Word: This is plain, and needs no proof.

2. That he may hear it often, abound in hearing. This you see here in the Text; and Ezek. 33. 31. 32. where the people frequented to hear Ezekiel. They did not only sometimes, but they heard him often. They did abound in hearing.

3. They may not only hear, and hear often; but hear with affections. Wee read of these four Affections, which were shewed in the hearing of the Word, and that in such, who were unfound.

1. The affection of wonder, and astonishment, which indeed is the mover of all the affections, Mat. 7. 28. -- When the people heard him, they were astonished at his Doctrin. The like wee read, Mat. 13. 54. Mar. 1. 22. Mark. 11. 18. Luk. 4. 22. All bare him witnesses, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. -- All wondered, but All were not savingly wrought upon. That is the first.
2. They may bear it with affections of fear and trembling. Thus you know Felix heard Paul, Acts 24. 25. — When Paul preached of Temperance, and Righteousness, and Judgment to come, Felix trembled. It struck dread and fear into his heart. It set him on trembling.

3. They may bear the word with affections of delight, and some kind of love. You see in the Text — They did delight to know God's ways, and did delight in approaching to God. And Ezek. 33. 31, 32. — They come and sit before thee, as my people. They hear thy words, and thou art to them as a very lovely song. They hear thy words, but they do them not. With their mouth they shew much love, but their hearts go after their Covetousness.

4. They may bear the word, with affection of Joy. It is said of Herod, Mark 6. 20. That Herod feared, and observed John, and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. The like you have, Matt. 13. 20. — The slye ground heard the word, and anon with joy received it: yet wanting root in the time of Persecution, they fell away.

So you see the first particular cleared. A man may hear the word; hee may hear it often, abound in hearing: Hee may hear it with affections; and yet his heart may be unsound.

2. A man may not only hear, but pray too; nay, and make many prayers, abound in praying. Hee may pray in publick, pray in private, pray in the Church, pray in his family, pray in his closet, which last commeth nearer to sincerity. And may make strong cries. Hee may pray with affections, i.e. such affections as sense stirrs up, but not such affections as Faith stirrs up: such affections as are raised up by some present thing and matter, some trouble and pressure of conscience, though not with such affections as are raised up by Faith, quickned by Gods sanctifying Spirit. Affections of love and desir.

Nay, and they may joyn fasting to prayer: nay, further, add mourning to fasting. And yet their hearts may bee unsound.

I cannot stand to clear all the Particulars. The main I shall make to appear to you, in two or three places.

Read Isa. 1. 15. — When you stretch forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers; when you multiply prayer; add prayer to prayer, as the word imports. — Yet I will not hear, your hands are full of blood; i.e. you are unregenerate, you are unsound in your spirits.

So that you see a great deal cleared in this. A man may pray, abound in praying, multiply prayers, &c. And yet bee unsound.

And you may joyn fasting to prayer; as you see in the next verse to my Text, and in the example of the Scribes and Pharisees, who prayed often, and fasted often.

And you may joyn mourning to fasting, Zach. 7. 5. — When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month, even these seventy years,
did you at all fast to me? even to me? They served themselves, not God in that action all those seventy years together, 

Did not the Lord then say, Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the deeds of mischief, and to let loose the chains of the labourers? If ye will not hear, will ye not even clap your hands, and I will make the rivers dry, and the streams of water to be as the summer heat, and as the day when the exorcist is present. Did not the Lord then say, Is not this fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the deeds of mischief, and to let loose the chains of the labourers? If ye will not hear, will ye not even clap your hands, and I will make the rivers dry, and the streams of water to be as the summer heat, and as the day when the exorcist is present.

And they said, Go ye now, and shut the doors of every vineyard; for the hands of the Lord shall be against all the fruitful plants of Jacob.

And indeed the Lord saith, The fast of the 30th day of the second month, is to me a blemish, and I will despise it: for it is a blemish, and confusion, and desolation. Is it a fast that I have chosen? is it to do away the evil, and to make the face of the Lord to shine? Is it not to do away your iniquities, and your sins, that you may cry to the Lord, and he will hear you? and does he not say, A broken heart and a penitent spirit, the Lord will not despise? And will not he make good the path to you, and will he not make your ways straight? And the Lord will come down from his throne, and will spurn the altar, and his prist will strike the altar, and the Altar will be broken down. And he will say, Where is the Lord's burnt offering?

A man may seem to bee humbled, to mourn and weep for sin: and yet bee unsound. A man cannot morn for sin, as sin, but his heart is sincere: but a man may seem to mourn for sin, and yet his heart not bee sincere. Hee may morn for sin clad with wrath: for sin cloathed with Judgement and Displeasure: for sin, as it smelt of Hell, Fire, and Brimstone: for sin, as it appears in its dooms-day attire. So did Ahab, so Judas.

There are Crocodile-tears; There are false tears, as well as false prayers. As a broken heart doth not ever express it self in tears: So tears are not ever the expression of a broken heart.

There are

1. Lachrymae Indignationis, tears of Anger, as was Esaus.
2. Lachrymae Disperationis, tears of Desperation, such as of the damned in Hell.
3. Lachrymae Compassionis, tears of Compassion; such as were Christ's for Jerusalem.
4. Lachrymae Coanimationis, tears of godly sorrow and Compunction.

Such tears they may express as sense and smart stirs up; but not such as Faith and Love do raise up in the soul.

4. A man may seem to do much, walk in many ways of duty: go far in the outward show of obedience, the letter of command: and yet his Spirit be unsound. A man may do so much, spin a thread so finely, as they, who have the most discerning spirit, are not able to detect and discover him.

Hee may deceive the men of the world, hee may deceive the Saints, deceive the Devil, hee may deceive himself. Wee read of Zeuxes the Painter. Hee drew Grapes so to the life, that hee deceived the Birds; they would come flying to them, as though they had been real Grapes.

Dedalus, hee made an Image by art, that moved of it self: insomuch that men believed it had been alive. But Pignation made an Image so lively, that hee deceived himself, and taking the Picture for a Person, fell in love with his own Picture.

So there are some, who can spin so fine a thread, limb out the picture of godliness so to the life; that not only the men of the World, but even the Saints, who are of most discerning spirits, may, and themselves may bee deceived and deluded.

5. A man may cast up his vomit, disgorge himself of all his former wayes, his old lufts and sins, hee may bee washed, that is,
outwardly reformed in every thing, he may leave many sins, and yet be unsound.

You see this plain, in 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22. And there is nothing more plain, than that a man may leave sin, and yet not hate sin. Hee may leave sin either

1. Out of fear of evil.
2. Out of weariness of it.
3. Out of love of some contrary sin.
4. Out of want of its instrument and means, to compass his sin.

6. A man may accompany himself with the People of God, Saul may bee among the Prophets: Judas, Demas, Simon-Magas, among the Disciples and Apostles. A man may get on Sheeps-clotthing, accompany, gain and out with the Sheep; bee folded with the Sheep, and yet bee no better than a Ravenous Wolf.

There are Tares as well as Wheat in Gods Field; there is Chaff as well as Corn in Gods Floor, bad Fishes as well as good in Gods net. And unsound as well as sound Gospellers in the Church of God.

7. Nay, A man may not only do, but suffer too, and yet bee unsound. Hee may suffer in his Goods, Hee may suffer in his Good-name. Hee may bee nicknamed as others are, hee may suffer in his Body: An evil heart may suffer in a good cause. Every one that beareth Christ's Cross upon his shoulders, doth not consequently bear him in his heart. Wolves may suffer in Sheeps-clotthing. Sufferings may overtake them, that have nothing but the cloak of profession. As Jehoshaphat was taken for Ahab: So may an Ahab bee taken for a Jehoshaphat. Times may com, that it may cost a man as dearly for wearing the Livery of Christ, as for wearing Christ himself: for unsound profession of Christ, as for the sincere.

To summe up all, Though an unsound spirit bee not able to do any thing, which is essential to a Christian, as a Christian: Though he cannot do any of those works which are good proper first, in regard of the act, the goodness whereof doth adhere intrinsecally, and cleave to the thing done: as to Love God, fear God, trust in God: Yet all these works, the goodnes of which doth more consist in the Manner, than in the Matter, or thing done, viz. to pray, read, hear, &c. In all these they may abound.

And this seems to bee implied in the Apostles phrase, 2 Tim. 3.

5. Having a form of godliness, yet denying the power: From such turn away. Where, by the form of godliness, which the Apostle grants they may have; there are two things which are implied.

1. That an unsound spirit hath anything in it, which is essential to a Christian, as a Christian, or which makes a Christian, a Christian. As a Form and Picture hath nothing in it, which is de Essentia Hominis: nothing which is essential to a man. There is no Reason, no Understanding, no Life in it: So an Hypocrite, hee hath nothing that
Of Hypocrisy.

that is Essential to a Christian, as a Christian. He hath nothing which doth constitute and make a Christian a Christian.

As wee say of God, He hath his communicable and incommunicable Attributes, something which is in himself only, as his Infinity, his Omnipresence, &c. and something whereof there is a resemblance, some footsteps in the Creatures: so the Saints, they have something which is communicable, something whereof there is some resemblance in others, and which others do as well as they, though not in the same manner. And there is something incommunicable to any but to Saints, such things as are proper and Peculiar to the Saints only. And they are such things as are Essential to a Christian, as a Christian. And that is the first thing implied in the word (Form.)

2. A second thing, which is implied in it is, That a false Professor may have a compleat Resemblance of a Christian in all those things, which are not Essential to a Christian, as a Christian: Hee may have a form of godliness; that is, all the outward lineaments of godliness: Hee may bee a compleat Picture of a Christian from top to toe; in every member, every limb, every duty for the outwards of it. This is implied in the word (Form.)

As a Picture, if it were not perfect in every limb, if there wanted any member, as an Hand, an Eye, so but a Finger, it could not bee said to bee a compleat Picture: so is it here. If there bee a want in any thing, even in the least duty, for the outward part of Religion, if hee do not all for the Externals, which a Christian doth; hee cannot be said to bee a compleat Form, a compleat Picture of a godly man. And therefore these two things are implied in the word (Form.)

1. That no Hypocrite hath any thing in him essential to a Christian, no more than a Picture, that which is essential to a man.

2. That there is a compleat Resemblance of a Christian in all the outward lineaments of Godliness.

Hee may bee able to do all the outwards: every duty for the externals, which lies within the latitude and compass of a Christians walking with God.

Thus the first thing is cleared to you. Now wee come to the second thing propounded.

2. How it may stand with


2. Satans ends.

3. A mans own ends, to abound in duty, and yet not bee sincere?

1. It may stand with Gods ends, both

1. Towards the Good, and they are mercifull ends.

2. Towards the Bad, and they are partly mercifull, and partly judicial.

1. It may stand with Gods ends towards the good, and those are mercifull ends.
Of Hypocrisy.

ends. That God may serve his own Glory by them, for the bringing in, and building up of the godly.

God makes use of the parts and abilities of some, whose persons hee will not own, for the advancement of the work of grace, in the hearts of his people.

The Raven was an unclean Creature under the Law: yet God made use of the Raven, to bring flesh and food to Elijah. Though the Raven was not good meat, yet it was good meat which the Raven brought.

So God doth oftentimes make use of such, who are in themselves unclean, for the feeding and nourishing of his people. The food may bee good, though the person that brings it may bee naught.

This is that Christ told the people, Matt. 23. 2, 3. The Scribes and Pharisees, they sit in Moses chair: and therefore whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do ye not after their works: for they say, but do not. As if Christ had said. They are set up, and furnished with abilities, to do you good; though they are naught themselves: Therefore let their Doctorin build you up, for it is of God: and let not their practice throw you down, for that is of the Devil, and themselves.

The Pearl in the Toads head may bee useful and good, though the body bee poison. And the abilities of such men may bee serviceable to you, though their persons bee unclean.

Thus may it stand with Gods ends toward the good, that corrupt hearts should abound in all the ways of duty. And this is one end, for the advancement of the work of Grace, in the hearts of his people.

Though this bee not their aim; though it bee not their end, yet it is Gods end. They have theirs, and God hath his end.

As it is said of the King of Assyria, Isa. 10. 5, 6, 7. God used him for a rod and scourge to punish his people. God had his end, and hee had his. It was Gods end, that hee should spoil and punish them for their sin: but his, to inrich himself by the spoil, as the Text tells us. Howbeit, Though I send him, to punish them for their sins (saith God) yet hee, the King of Assyria, uncanth not so, nor doth his heart think so: it is in his heart to cut off, and destroy Nations, not a few. Though hee servf his own ends, yet Gods end went forward also.

The like of Jehu, hee served his own ends, in the destruction of Ahabs house. Though hee cries out, Come see my Zeal for the Lord. However Gods ends were brought about also, in the ruining of Ahabs posterity, as hee had threatened.

So here. Though it bee not the end of corrupt hearts, in the doing of holy actions, Prayer, Preachings, Exhortation, &c. to bring God any Glory, to do good to others: they have their own ends. Yet still Gods work goes forward in it. God hath his ends, as well
well as they theirs. God gets Glory, as well as they credit. God makes sin, the Devil himself, to serve his Glory. Otherwise hee would not suffer nor Devil, nor Sin, to bee in the World. So that hee makes them, in aiming at themselves, to bring about his Glory.

As an imsound spirit doth serve his turn of God: so God again serves his turn of them: hee is even with them.

God oftentimes useth such to bee instruments to do others good, who are bad themselves: to work upon others, though they themselves remain unwrought upon: to be a Bridge to help others over.

To hold out the Lanthorne to others, and go in the dark themselves. As it often fareth with them, who hold the Lanthorne; they go most in the dark themselves, they serve others, direct and guide others in the night with their light, not themselves. So if God do not bring light into their hearts: there are none, who are more in darkness, than such as hold out the light to others: yet another may receive good, by that Sermon, which the Preacher himself is never the better for: another, warmth by that prayer, whereby hee himself that prays, is never the hotter. And so in the rest. And therefore it may stand with Gods' ends, that corrupt hearts should abound in duties.

2. God suffers corrupt hearts to abound in duties, to maintain an holy jealousy and watchfulness in the hearts of his own people. Why (will they reason) if men may do thus much, and yet bee unsound, what need have we then to bee jealous over our own hearts, watchful over our spirits in the midst of our performances?

Oh! this will make a man jealous of himselfe, with a godly jealousie: not to trust too much to himself, when hee's at best, when hee doth most abound in duties. And this holy jealousie is of special use to keep us humble, to make us watchful, exact in our wayes, to sense our hearts against Hypocrifie. It was never known that a jealous heart was a false heart. An holy jealousie over a mans spirit was never accompanied with an unsound spirit.

3. A third End. It is, to make us see there is something in duty, more than duty, which sates a value upon duty, and makes it of worth.

If all were found, who did duty, wee should then think duty itself to bee all; whereas now it makes us look after something else, above duty.

This will make a man look to the Manner, as well as to the Matter, when wee see the Matter is nothing worth, without the right Manner do accompany it.

This will force a mans heart above duty. God never made Duty the end of Duty. If all were found that did Duty, wee should rest upon a bare performance of Duty, and look no higher.

But now, seeing it is possible for a man to abound in Duty, and yet
Of Hypocrisy.

Yet bee unsound; this will force a man's heart above the Duty.

4. To tell us, that there are other things to be done of a Christian; than merely to pray, hear, &c.

If a man may do all, and sink into Hell, when he hath done; then sure there is more required of those that must bee saved.

All Religion doth not lie in a few Prayers, Hearing of Sermons. Though this must bee done, they have not so much as a shew of good nefs, whoneglect these: yet there are other things to bee done too, if ever wee would come to Heaven.

5. God suffers corrupt hearts to abound in duty, so make his people more solicitous after sure, more stable, and proving evidences, than these are.

If these anchors should always hold, men would never labour to call out better. If all that did do, may, that did abound in duty had been sound, wee should never have sought out for better evidences than these are.

Whereas, this being discovered, that a man may abound in duty, and yet for all this bee unsound: this will make a man to look out for better evidences.

A man that is bent for Heaven indeed, will never suffer his soul to rest, till hee hath gotten some such evidences, as are incompatible to a man out of Christ.

Why, will he lay, May a man hear, and go to Hell? pray, and perishe? do duty, and yet bee dammed at last? Then these are not sufficient bottomes for me, to build the weight of my everlasting soul upon.

I must either get a better bottome, sure evidences than these, or loose and my prayers may sink together at last.

Whatever another man may do, or have, and yet bee unsound, will not bee sufficient to him, to clear, that hee doing, or having that, is sound.

And this now fires them out of their formalities; makes them look out for such evidences as do accompany salvation; As the Apostle saith, Heb. 6. 9.

2. As it may stand with Gods ends to the good: so it may stand with Gods ends to the bad.

1. His Merciful ends.

2. His Judicial ends.

His Merciful ends, to bring in those who belong to the Election of Grace: making them often serviceable to these purposes.

His Judicial ends, towards such as are Cast-awayes; and that for the further strengthening of the prejudice, and rooted distaste, that wicked men have against the ways of God.

Why, will wicked men say? others, who have been as forward in profession, as great Prayers, and as great Heaters as you are, they have proved unsound, discovered themselves to be Hypocrites, and so are you, and all the rest of you.

And
And thus you see it turns to them, as an occasion of offence, and further strengthening of their dislike of the ways and people of God. Men, whose hearts are set against the ways of God, shall be furnished with matter enough to bring them into further dislike daily.

If you desire to have arguments against God's ways, you shall have enough of them to your cost. You shall be furnished with them; but to your further hardening. If you will keep a rooted dislike of the ways of God, you shall find enough in the world to nourish it. If you bee willing to be offended, you shall have offences enough to your further hardening. If you bee willing to stumble at the ways of God, you shall have stumbling stones enough.

Christ himself, who was the Corner stone, Elect, Precious, yet in the Disobedient he was a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. A stone as well for the Fall, as for the rising of many in Israel, 1 Pet. 2. 8. 17. 14. Rom. 9. 33. Luk. 2. 34.

Men that are willing to take offences, shall have them. Those who will be blinde, shall bee blinded. They, who will be hardened, shall have hardening enough. If the Word do not teach you, works do blinde you. If the Word do not soften you, works do harden you. If you stumble at the Word, you will fall at works.

Indeed, Men first stumble at the Word, before they stumble at works: They first take offence at duties the Word commands, and then strengthen that offence, by the failings of those, who walk in those ways.

Works do but strengthen your dislike of things in the Word. The failings of persons, that walk in this way, do but further strengthen your dislike of the things commanded in the Word. This the Apostle shews, 1 Pet. 2. 8. Christ was a stone of stumbling. But to whom it should be to, who stumbled at the Word first. After they have stumbled at the Word, then they stumble at Christ. So when you have stumbled, and taken offence against these duties, which the Word commands, no marvel if you stumble here, and by the failings of those, who walk in the way of life, gather arguments to strengthen your dislike of the way it fell.

This is thy spirit, though thou see it not. Thy heart is opposite to the ways of God, praying, hearing, fasting, and thou furnishest thyself with instances of some, who have proved unfound in the way, that so thou mayest strengthen thy heart more with dislike against it.

And thus it proves an occasion of further blinding, of further hardening to them.

Thus you see the first, how it may stand with God's ends, that corrupt hearts should abound in duty.

2. It may stand also with Satan's ends.

1. It may stand with Satan's ends, towards the good.

2. 1.
2. It may stand with Satan's ends, towards the World.
3. It may stand with Satan's ends, towards themselves.
1. It may stand with Satan's ends, towards the good, and therefore hee will not disturb these men in their way, but lets them go on.

1. Hereby Satan doth labour to cause Gods People to throw off the work, to desist in their way. Why, will Satan say, what do you make an end and afflic your selves in a way, wherein is no more good? What can you do more than others have done? They have prayed, and they have prayed often, and made many Prayers. They have heard, and heard often, yea and heard with affection, with fear, with joy, and delight, &c. They have fasted, and have joyed mourning with fasting. They have taken their evil ways, wherein they have formerly walked, and have entered upon Gods ways, joyed themselves to the Ordinances, to the People of God. And yet, for all this, these people have come to nought. For all this, their hearts were unsound here, and they have perished after all. And therefore (will Satan say) if a man may pray, and perish, do duties, and be damned, hear, and get to hell at last, why dost thou then thus trouble thyself, and afflic thy self in this way? Thou keepest there is no hope of doing good in it. And therefore, why wilt thou abridge thyself of those pleasures, those comforts, which others have in the World? Why wilt thou go on to make an end and afflic thyself in these ways? were it not better for thee to throw off all, and betake thyself to the World, to profits, to pleasures, and enjoy thy hearts content as well as others?

Thus you see Satan is furnished with a dangerous argument against Gods People, which hee could not have had, if unsound hearts did not abound in duty, &c.

2. If hee cannot prevail with Gods People hereby, to throw off the work, but that notwithstanding all this, they are resolved to pray, though they perish, to believe, to obey, though God should never reward their obedience, yet hee hath a second End.

Hee labours to discourage Gods People hereby in the work, and to make them grow heavily in their way to Heaven. Satan knows well, that if their heart be discouraged in the work, their hands will be weakened for the work. And therefore hee labours, by such preachers as these are, who have done so much in the ways of God, and yet are unsound, to make men sit down discouraged, and despair of ever doing good in these ways.

Why, will Satan say, How canst thou do more, than such and such have done? Canst thou pray more Prayers? have more Sermons? do more Duties? keep more Days? engage thy selfe more deeply in the Cause of God, than others have done? who have yet come to nought.

It may bee he'll tell thee. Thou art weak, thou wantest those parts, those abilities, that strength, that power to do God that services
Of Hypocrisy.

...service, which others have done. And therefore, the cast off all, else despair of ever doing good in this way, wherein others have outstripped thee, and yet were unsound.

Thus doth Satan make use of this argument, if not to prevail with men to cast off the work, yet to discourage them in the work. And therefore it may stand with his ends, that unsound hearts may thus abound in performance of duties.

3. A third end which Satan hath towards the godly, is, that if he cannot prevail to make God's people throw off the work, nor yet discourage them in the work, yet he labours by these men to scandalize the godly, to bring evil reports upon all that walk in the way of life.

It is Satan's desire to make the persons that walk in the way of life, and the way of life itself as odious as he can, in the eyes of the World. And this is one way, whereby he labours to bring it about, and finds success in the hearts of many: even the failings of such as have made profession of the Truth.

Indeed the Cause of God, and the People of God have suffered much thereby.

You know how wicked men argue.

1. Either from Particulars to Generals: from the failings of some, they fall to confusing of all. There is one (say they) who hath made profession, and hath proved unmeet. Therefore all are so: all alike: none better than other.

Which yet is an uncharitable and false reasoning. If the Saints should argue so of you: There was one unregenerate man a Murderer, a Traitor, a Thief: Therefore all that are unregenerate are Traitors, Murderers, Thieves: you would think this to be uncharitable and false reasoning. Yet yours is the same.

2. Or secondly, By the failing of the Person, they take up arguments to charge and condemn the Cause: not only Professors, but Profession itself, casting filth and dirt upon the pure face of Religion, and the ways of God hereby.

And Satan knows well enough, that the Cause of God lootheth more by one man's unsoundness, than it can gain and recover again by the sincerity of many. It lootheth more in the hearts of wicked men, by the falls of some, than it can gain again by the standing of thousands.

David's fall, though he rose again, caused Religion, and the Ways of God to be blasphemed by wicked men. It opened the mouths of wicked men to blaspheme the ways of God, as the Prophet told him.

And indeed, God was more dishonoured by David's uncleanness, than hee was by all the filth of Sodome. And therefore seeing Satan gets such advantage both against the Persons, and against the Cause of God, by the unsoundness of men, that walk in the Ways of God: therefore may it stand with Satans' ends to suffer unsound
unfound hearts, to abound in duty, without disturbing of them. And as it may stand with Satans ends, in respect of the godly; so
2. It may stand with his ends, in respect of the world.
1. To keep them off, from entering upon the way of life.
Men will bee afraid to engage themselves in such a way, wherein there stand up such sad presidents, as these are. If men may do much, and yet fall off, bee unfound, and fall short of Heaven at last, this will discourage and dishearten them, from comming in.
Men are naturally afraid, when they are to run hazards and dangers: to take a great deal of pains in such a way, wherein there are so many hazards and dangers to bee run.
2. To strengthen the prejudice of wicked men against the ways and people of God.
Wicked men are naturally prejudiced against the ways and people of God. They think them all to bee no better than others, however they make a shew to bee better. And when they see this prejudice of theirs confirmed by the example of any one, who hath walked in the way, and yet hath been unfound: This is a matter laid up for ever, here they hugge themselves, and rejoice in such an example: and so their prejudice against Gods ways and people is hereby more strengthened.
3. A third End, which Satan hath towards wicked men, is, hereby to burden them, and confirm and strengthen them in a way of sin.
When they see no better fruit of so much praying, hearing, &c. They are hardened in their way of sin, and persuaded to go on in their old way, their common road still.
Thus you see, how it may stand with Satans ends towards the good, and towards the bad.
3. Now thirdly, How it may stand with Satans ends towards themselves, that thus abound in duty, and yet are unfound.
1. To aggravate their condemnation. Such mens sins they are great. Duty doubles sin. A duty upon the head of a sin makes sin exceeding hainous. And as the sin, so the condemnation is aggravated hereby.
The darkest and hottest places in Hell, are reserved for such, whose hearts are unfound in the ways of God. Such would with so change places with Turks and Heathens, all their duties are but so much fuel to make the fire of Hell the hotter for them.
By how much such men are lifted up higher than others in appearance; by so much they shall bee thrown down lower than others in truth and reality of torments.
2. Because such men are surest his, of any, upon two grounds.
1. If bee stand in that condition, hee thinks hee is sure enough his. What can rob him of such a man? can Prayer? can Hearing? Indeed these might deprive him of others; but this man he dares trust anywhere, upon any duty: Hee dares venture him anywhere: Hee knows his heart is Prayer-proof, Sermon-proof. All these are not strong enough to take him away from him.
Indeed, hee's afraid of others, though never so wicked. Hee
ers hee may looke him at every Sermon, hee may bee robbed of
him, at every prayer: And therefore labours all hee can to keep
such men off from the work.

But now this man hee dares adventure to the most powerfull
and prevailing ordinances: Hee hath long experience, his heart
hath stood firm to him in all.

Though sometimes hee hath had some stings and troubles of
conscience, as certainly it fares often with unfound hearts, who
have to do with duties: yet hee can let him alone; hee knows hee
will come to his old temper, and return to himself again.

As hot water will return to its own coldness, because there is a
quality in it, which refills heat, and inclines to cold: so if at any
time such a man bee troubled, Satan will let him alone, hee knows
there is a Principle in him, which will cause him to return to his
wonted temper.

2. If hee fall, hee thinks him sure enough his;

Such mens falls are for the most part desperate and unrecover-
able. You know, the greater the height, from which a man falls,
the more desperate and irrecoverable is his fall.

Now there can bee no greater an height in the World, from
which to fall, than for a man to fall from the Hills of duty, the
Mountains of Prayer, the top of profession. This may prove the
irrecoverable downfall.

All thy Duty, all thy Prayers, if thy heart bee unfound, are but
something laid in, to make that sin, All where do but ripen and
prepare for, and nimble thee, to commit that sin, if thy heart bee un-
found in them.

But if the fall bee not desperate, yet it is dangerous: though
not irrecoverable, yet hard to bee recovered.

There are many and fearful aggravations of your sins, all which
Satan now uteth, and lets on with all his might, to bring you to
despair. And great is the hazard, hard is the recovery.

It hath been often known, a sincere heart hath recovered and got-
ten ground and strength by his fall. But seldom or never that an
unfound heart got up again after his Fall; never came to his heights,
but rather wallows in mischief. David fell and recovered, but
Judas fell, and rose no more.

But however, the hazard is great, in regard there are so many
fearful aggravations of sin.

Their sins are sins against Knowledge, Light, Illumination, which
puts much weight to sin.

Sins of ignorance plead for a pardon, though great. What
greater than the killing of Christ? yet -- Father forgive them, for
they know not what they do. But sins against Knowledge do exceed-
ingly aggravate sin, and makes sin exceeding sinful.

There is more sin, more guilt formerly considered, in a sin-

full
full thought against Knowledge, than there is in an open gross sin of Ignorance. Why is their sins are sins against Knowledge, against Conscience, against Profession, Practice, Prayers, Duties; and therefore great.

All their Duties and Prayers that they have done should bee now comforts, but they are burdens, because they are done with unsearched hearts, and they come in as so many aggravations of sin against them.

Whilst a man holds up his head in the World, though hee bee but poor, it may bee his Creditors will let him alone; but if once a man bee arrested, every one then comes with his action upon him; may bee, those hee thought his best friends, come then, and lay greatest burdens upon him.

Whilst an unsearched man walks in way of duty, and doth not fall into the commission of some grosser sins, so long it may bee, he hath quiet. Satan, Conscience, nothing troubles him. But when once hee is down, then all comes upon him: may his very Duties themselves (which hee thought to have most good from, and to bee his best friends) they come in too, to lay more weight, more guilt, more burden on him. Every Prayer, every Duty, which he hath done with an unsearched heart, is now a burden, a weight, upon his spirit; yea, and weighs heavier than all the rest.

Here is trouble out of expected comfort, which is the greatest trouble. And take this with you, and remember it.

Whatever you do in the ways of God, if comfort flow not with it, trouble will day rise out of it. If it be not a bottome for Faith, Satan will use it as an argument for Despair, when time serves. I say, that duty that is done, and cannot minister comfort, by the sincerity of the heart, in doing of it, will one day create discouragement, and strengthen Despair. Despair ariseth from that, where comfort should, but doth not ariseth.

But I am too long upon this. This is the second ground, why Satan doth not disturb such men.

3. It may stand yet further with Satans ends, and therefore hee doth not disturb them, because hee hopes to have some further good of them another day. Hee knows full well, that they, who will serve God for their own ends, will serve the Devil for their own ends too, when hee once out-bids God, and exceeds him in his tenders. It is an easy thing to make him the Devils Priest, who is, Mammons Chaplain. You see Demas, hee was unsound, served God for By-ends, for worldly respects. And the Devil doth out bid God, tender more for his service; and hee presently forsakes God, and cleaves to the World. Hee forsook the Faith of Christ, and turned to bee an Idol-Priest at Thessalonica, as Dorotheus reports of him.

This is a sure Rule. Hee who serves God for the World, will serve the Devil for the World. Hee who serves God for little, will serve
Of Hypocrify.

...serve the Devil for more; he will easily be brought upon high er tenders, to change his Master.

I say, men, that have no minde to the Work, nor love to the Master, but the eye is only to the wages, such men will quickly be drawn upon greater offers, to forlase their Master, and their Work too, and to joyn themselves to any, where better wages may be found.

And you must know. There are no men, whose service the Devil doth more desire, than the service of such, who have made profession. And that upon diverse reasons.

1. Hee knows, They will bee the surest, and most truely servants to him of any. None are more truely foulders, than such, who have forlased the colours of the Lord, and fled over to the Tents of Satan. Such men hee never fears to loose again: their Ears are boared, in token of eternal subjection to this black Prince of darkness.

As wee say of the Angels, If once they turn, they never return. There is no possibility of their repenting. And this is one ground; because their will hath finned against such excellent, clear and eminente light, that they can never return again; if all that light would not keep their desperate hearts from finning, it shall never prevail with them for returning, when once they have finned. And God will never give a fuller, a greater light, and therefore they must needs bee fixed in their condition of sin.

So I may say of these in some degree: They have finned against so clear light, such manifest evidence, that if they turn, sin wilfully: Hardly do they return again. It is no more but what the Apostle faith, in that sixt and tenth to the Hebrews. And therefore these must needs bee truely servants to the Devil, they are sure his.

They are his by choice. And none surer his, than they, who are his by choice. Now such men, they have chosen him, ay and not only chosen him, but they have chosen him upon experience and dislike of their former Master.

If indeed a man should have chosen Satan, before ever hee had tried God, then were there some hopes that his mind might bee altered, hee might repent of his choice. But when a man hath had a tryal of God, and upon experience and dislike of God, and his ways, chulth Satan and the world; these are sure.

Besides, these men have soled themselves over to Satan. Now none are more sure his, than they, who fell themselves over to him.

Indeed, wee are all sold in Adam, as the Apostle faith. -- sold to sin. But now when a man shall come, and not only ratifie the bargain, but make a new sale of himself; This man is sure his. It is not so much what the Father hath done, but when the Son comes to age, and shall ratifie what the Father hath done, and make a new sale;
Sale: Nay, Satan doth not only know they are sure his, but hee knows they will bee most useful Instruments for him, and by these things are they strengthened and prepared for his service: and therefore hee will not disturb them. Hee knows they will by this, bee made better Engineers to work for him. They will bee active instruments, full of malice against God, and his cause.

Who of all the Emperors was more mischievous than Julian? who had once made profession of Christ. Such men as these are set on fire of Hell.

Wee have a Proverb. An Englishman Italianate, is a Devil Incarnate.

I may say the same; A Professor Apostate, Turns a Devil Incarnate.

There are none in the World have more of the Infernal Nature, than they. Their Head poisons, their Heart poisons. And the venom of Asps is under their Tongue. They are full of Hell.

There is some ingenuity in Nature fallen, though never so bad. But Nature once raised, and after Devilized: such men are all fury. These are Satans Adjutors, Satans Champions, the chiefest of that black band of Darkness: Such men as these, they have sinned away Light, Conscience, all natural remorse and tenderness. And what can bee expected from them? there is no man sword more sharp and keen than theirs, who have sharpened it upon the threshold of God. No mans pen writes so bitterly against God, his Cause and People, than theirs, who have dip’d their pen, in the Blood of Conscience. No man fails more desperately to Hell, than such a man, who hath made Shipwreck of Conscience.

And therefore, seeing such men are so furious, so sure, so active, so malicious instruments, when they are brought over to him, and it is so easy a thing to bring them about, no marvel if Satan will not disturb such men for a time, but lets them go on, till they bee fit for his work. It will stand with the designs of his own Kingdom.

Thus I have shewed two things, how it may stand, 1. With Gods, 2. With Satans ends.

3. Now thirdly, How it may stand with their own ends, who having corrupt hearts, yet should notwithstanding abound in duty.

1. To answer the calls of Conscience.

Every man hath a Conscience. And every mans Conscience doth call upon him for the performance of something. And the further conscience is inlightened, the further work it calls him out upon. A man inlightened cannot serve God so cheeply, with quiet of Conscience, as others, who are not, can.

Now there are some, who are far convinced, some, who are further inlightened than others. And conscience calls out upon them, for more work to be done. And to answer the meer calls of Conscience, a man for inlightened may do much in the ways of God;
God, and yet his spirit be unsound.

2. To pacifie the quarrels, to satisfy the gripes and gnawings of conscience.

It is usual with men under the pangs and stings of conscience, to run to the springs of duty, to the plasters of prayers, merely for this end, to get present ease, and quiet to their burdened Consciences. And they often compass their end by this means, and get some present ease, though not a settled and substantial Peace. Such is their disturbance is, such is their Peace. As their disturbance was not spiritual for sin: so their Peace, it is not spiritual arising from a cure. As conscience was wounded by walking to that common light, and natural Principles in it: So is it put in joint again, by walking answerable to the works which work, though but common and general, yet being all their light discovers, they may, by the performance of them, get some present ease, though not a found and settled Peace.

Wee read, The Heathens had stings of Conscience, when they sinned notoriously against the Light and Principles of Nature. And wee read, they had Peace and quiet, when they observed these things, which their light discovered to them.

As their Terrors did arise from Convictions of Conscience, upon the doing of such things as were contrary to the Principles of Nature: So their Peace did arise from the observance of such things as were agreeable to that common Light and Principles they had. So it is here. Their Conviction doth arise from some Common, not saving Light.

1. Because it discovers gross sins, not secret sins.
2. It discovers open sins, not spiritual sins.
3. It discovers no sin, as sin, in the Nature of it. Some sins it discovers not at all.

And so their Peace doth arise from some common Performances, some general works, not special and saving. And this is one end, why some may abound in outward Performances, to make themselves a Plaster of the ingredients of Prayers and Duties, to heal their wounded consciences.

I have sometimes thought that Conscience in this case, is something like to the disease which they call the Wolf in the body. If you feed not it, they are wont to say, it will feed upon you. And therefore in this case it is said, they used to give it flesh, that so, by feeding on that, it might not gnaw upon them: and by that means have some present ease, though the cure bee not wrought.

So it is with Conscience. When once the mouth of Conscience is opened, if a man do not feed it, it will devour him. And therefore men in this case do feed Conscience with duty, which for present, procures them ease, though the cure bee not wrought.

And indeed (to speak truth) such men do not desire the cure. They desire ease, but not the cure; Peace, not Purging; Quiet, not
Healing. They would willingly bee rid of the pain, but keep the tooth: of trouble, but keep the sin: of the evil caused, not of the evil causing. The cure would bee as deadly to them as the wound; to part with the sin, as to induce the smart.

And therefore, seeing there is a middle-way to bee gone, that they may procure their present peace, and yet keep their sin: They will go that way, and labour to still the clamours of conscience, by bribing it with duty, feeding it with prayers, that so they may procure peace, and yet keep their sins.

Other ends there are, which are more low than the former.

1. For ostentation and pride of gifts.

A corrupt heart may have the gift of prayer, though not the grace of prayer; yea, and bee more eminent therein, than they, who have the grace of prayer. They may exceed others in expressions, who yet do exceed them in affections. And for pride of ostentation in gifts, a corrupt heart may abound in duties and performances.

2. For affection, credit, esteem of the world. That they may bee accounted holy men; to have a name, they are living, when yet they are dead men.

3. For the advancement of their worldly designes. By this craft they have all their gain. It may bee this fills their shopes, fills their houses, &c. Godliness is great gain: and some make a gain of godliness.

Now there are vile wretches, who make God, Religion, holy duties, to serve their own base ends; who make them but a stalk ing-horse, the better to pursue their own game, their own gain. Like Water-men, who row one way, but look another. They row towards Heaven in outward works, with the Oar of Religion, but they look towards the world, their own ends, in heart. Their eyes are after their gain. -- Who will show them any good? Their feet are going toward Zoar, with Lot's wife; but their heart toward Sodome. They serve God with their bodies, but Mammon with their spirits.

4. That by this means, they might procure God's blessing on them in this life. Oh! think they, if I do not pray, God will not bless me in my shop to day, &c. And therefore do it, to procure Wealth.

Wee read the Sudduces, (who denied that there was any Angel, or Spirit, or Resurrection; and so by consequent, all reward of any service after this life) being thereupon demanded, why they did keep the Commandements, they answered. -- That it might go well with them in this life.

So there are some, whose thoughts go no higher, than that God would bless them, God would bestow upon them these belly-blessings. As they fell God for gain, so they serve God for gain.

With these, many other ends might bee laid down, why a corrupt
rupt heart may abound in outward performances. But thus much bee said for the second.

We have two other things to do more, before wee come to Application.

1. To shew you, what are the grounds, that a corrupt heart may so abound in outward performance.

2. Where the fault is. Or how it comes to pafs, that a man may do thus much in the ways of God, and yet bee unfound; yet miles of Heaven at last. Wee will begin with the first of these two, which is the third thing propounded.

3. What the grounds are, whence it ariseth, that a corrupt heart may abound in outward Performances.

1. The first ground is, Natural Conscience, or that Inbred Light, which is in the conscience of men by nature.

Every man hath a Conscience in him, and this Conscience doth acknowledge, that there is a God, one, who is Being of Beings, Cause of Causes; and not only so, but thereupon, that this God is to bee worshiped and served by the Creature.

Though Conscience cannot discover the True God, or the True Worship; yet it doth conclude, there is a God, and that this God is to bee worshiped.

Atheists in practice wee have many; every Pagan is full of them. Such as the Apostle speaks of, Tit. i. 16. — Who profest they know God, but yet in works they deny him. But Atheists in Judgement "none can bee. Hence Tully the Heathen could say. — I have "known men without King, Laws, Government, Cloaths; but none so "savage, but have a God."

Many have indeavour to blow out that light, but never could. Wee read of Caligula, who laboured all hee could to blow out this Candle, and to strengthen his Atheisme by Arguments and Reasons; yet when it thundered, hee ran under a Bed, his fears and guilty conscience telling him of some divine Power, which hee could not withstand.

Another, who laboured the like; and though hee had wrought out all Faith, yet hee had not wrought out all Fears. Hee still feared (as hee would say) that there was a God: — And, what if there should prove to bee a God, at last!

Now then, there being such light in Conscience, as to discove-

2. A second ground is, some present distress and trouble upon the P

End.
Of Hypocrisy.

Confidence, or upon the Bodies of men, upon the spirit or flesh of men.

1. Some present distress upon the spirit of a man. It may bee Confidence is now for present, upon the rack. God hath let in a beam of light into the conscience, by the Law, and discovered a mans sin. And with that light hath he a spark of his wrath due to sin, upon the conscience, which hath, for present, fill'd the soul of man with horrors and fears, with sad and black thoughts and apprehensions of death and Hell. Which may put a man upon Prayers, and Performances, upon doing much in the ways of God.

Wee read that Absalom satt for Joab to come to him, but hee came not. Hee satt again, yet hee comes not. At last Absalom sets fire upon Joabs corn, and then hee came again, but with no better heart: it is likely more unwillingly than before: so God doth often call upon men in the ministry of the Word; but men will not come. At last God sets fire upon the conscience, sets some spark of Hell fall upon them. And then they run to Duties, to Prayers, to do something. Though perhaps as unwillingly as before. All this doth force them, but yet not persuade them willingly to come in.

As the satisfying of conscience troubled, may bee an end of the performance of many duties: so the trouble it self may bee a ground to put them upon performance. As Peace is the end of the Plague, so the wound is the ground of it. As Peace is the end of undertaking of duties; so the wound is the ground wherefore they are undertaken.

2. Outward Presstures upon the bodies of men may bee another ground to prevail with unsound hearts, to do much in outward service. Psal. 78, 34, 35, 36. When the Lord saw them, then they fought him, and returned, and inquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the most High God their Redeemer. Here was much. They return to God; That is, in all outward appearance. They fought him, they inquired early after him. And the ground of this was Gods hand upon them; when the Lord saw them. Faith the Text.

And you see what was the frame of their spirit in all. Nevertheless they did but flatter him, their hearts were not upright with him: they were unsound.

The like wee read, Jer. 2, 27. They gave God their backs, and not their faces; yet in the time of their trouble, then who but God with them. — In the time of their trouble, then they cry, arise and save us.

This was like the Samaritanus Devotion. When the Lions flew them, then they inquired after the worship of God, when God sent Lions among them.

And many there are of their spirit. Good under the Rod. Whiles the
the Rod is on their backs, the Book is in their hands, then nothing but read and pray. But no sooner doth God slacken the cords, or take them off the rack, deliver them out of their present distress and trouble, but they return again to folly.

This is just Mather's Devotion. Whilst the Storm lasts, then they cry and pray, but no sooner is the storm blown over, but they are as vile as ever. They had not to many Prayers before, as Oathes now.

And do we not see it thus with many: who will not own God in a Calm. Then their hearts say—depart from me, wee desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Yet in a Storm they will flye to him—tho art our Father, our God. But this not for Love, but for shelter.

As many a man may bee glad of a place for shelter in a Storm, which they could never brook to live in after the Storm is over. So they will own God a Tower, a place of shelter in time of trouble, but not an habitation, a place of abode, in times of Peace. Thus you see the third thing. The grounds, that a corrupt heart may abound in outward Performance.

The fourth remains, which is

4. Where is the fault. Or how comes it to pass, that a man may do thus much in the ways of God, and yet bee unsoned, yet miss of Heaven. Where lies the fault?

I conceive, though the work it self bee faulty: (for how can a good work come from a bad heart?) Yet the great crack lies more in the Work-man, than in the work. Duties are good, Prayer is good, Hearing good. The fault doth mainly lye in the Person that doth thefe. Their spirits are unsoned in these holy ways.

I will lay down the main, the fault under these five or fix Heads.

1. Hee fails, or is faulty in the latitude and extent of his Obedience. His Obedience is a limited and stinted Obedience.

1. Either limited to some commands, which are most futable to him. Hee doth not apply himselfe to the Obedience of all the commands of God. There are some duties hee will not doe, and some corruptions he hath no heart to leave.

2. Or secondly, It is limited to the flesh, to the outer part of the Command, and doth not extend it felt to the Spirit, and extremities of the Command of God.

You must know, there is an Extra, and an Intra, an Outside, and an Inside in every Command of God: some part of it binding the Flesh, another part injoying the Spirit. Many keep the Letter of the Law, which yet never care for the Spirit of the Law.

Both these you shall see in the Scribes and Pharisees.

1. They did something, yea they did much. They fasted, they prayed, they paid Tithes of all that they had, &c. But they did not all. There were other Commands, which they gave liberty to themselves in. They could oppress, defraud, bee unjust. And they failed in the

P 2 Second
Second too, That their Obedience did not extend it fell to the spiritual nefs of any command. As you see Christ charge them, Matthew 5. 21. They did not Murder, they did not commit Adultery, but they gave way to unjust Anger, to Adulterous Thoughts, Unchaste Glances, Contemplative Wickedness, Speculative Unleanness, &c. And in all the rest. This is the first main in his Obedience.

2. Hee is faulty in the Manner of his obedience. Though for the Matter of his obedience, hee doth not fail; Hee doth Pray, Hear, do Duties which others do, yet hee is faulty in the Manner of his Obedience. Hee doth not pray in Faith, pray with affections. Hee confesseth sin, but a broken spirit doth not run through the confession of sin: His heart is never touched with sin. Hee prays for Grace, but his spirit is never touched with the Beauties of Grace, nor carried after it with desires for it. Hee looks perhaps to the Matter, but neglects the Manner. Hee looks after the Substance, but neglects the Circumstances.

This is the difference between the gross Hypocrite, and the close Hypocrite.

The gross Hypocrite looks after the Circumstance, not after the Substance. Though indeed they are not such Circumstances as these are: they are but outward, not inward.

The close Hypocrite, hee looks after the Substance, but neglects the Circumstances. Hee prays, but never mindes to pray in Faith.

If a man pray, and pray not fervently, if hee hear, and hear not faithfully; if hee obey, and obey not willingly, if hee do nothing any more, and not cheerfully; if hee keep the Sabbath, and not with delight; all his services are nothing worth.

3. Hee is faulty in his Aims and Ends: His Ends are corrupt. His Aims is as his own Ends, his own Profit, Gain, Pride. Ostentation. Himself is the end of his obedience, some way or other.

A man never wrought out of himself, must needs work to himself. And obedience which ariseth from a mans self, is terminated in a mans self again. It must bee a Principle from Christ, which carries the soul to Christ. A man can go no higher than his Principle. And therefore having Principles no higher than himself, his obedience must needs be terminated in himself.

As all Rivers, they run to the Sea. They came from the Sea, and therefore return back again to the Sea; to all those duties which arise from a mans self, must needs be finished in himself.

Such a man, hee is the God himself whom hee serves. Hee makes himself the end of all his service: though hee look as far as the end, even to Heaven in his service.

Here then is the third thing wherein hee is faulty. Hee makes himself the end of all his obedience. Hee hath not a single Eye to the Glory of God. His service is neither begun in God, nor wrought by God,
Of Hypocrisy.

God, nor finished to God. Neither begun by his Grace, nor finished to his Glory.

4. Hee is faulty in this, that hee rests upon what hee doth, and looks no higher. Hee looks upon all hee doth as upon so many bribes for a pardon, as so much good monies laid out for Heaven. Hee weaves a web of Righteousnes to cloathe himself withall. Hee never looks out for another Righteousnes, to bee justified by; but rests upon that which hee himself hath wrought. Which being not only imperfect, but impure, a rag, and a filthy rag: hee must needs militarily in it.

If this had been enough to have brought men to Heaven, God might have spared a great deal of labour, Christ a great deal of blood, by giving man ability to do duties, and then all had been done.

But there was an infinite wrath to bee born; an infinite justice to bee satisfied; which none but Christ can do.

And here you see the Scribes and Pharisees failed also. They did much, but they looked out for no other Righteousnes than their own; in this they rested for Life and Justification.

5. They make duty is self their Obedience, which should quicken their Obedience. They rest upon the bare performance of the duty, and never look to the end of Duty. So they rest upon the bridge, and never go over.

Duty serves an unfound spirit for Obedience. But Duty doth but quicken, and strengthen, and enable a godly man to Obedience.

6. But the sixth, and the main Crack is here. These spiritual Performances do not arise from spiritual Principles; from an heart principled from above, from an heart universally sanctified. Here is the Bank of all. Here are new works, but an old heart. New Pratifs, but a mans old Principles.

You see this, I. sa. 10. to 16. But I will now instance in the fifteenth only. - When you spread forth your hands to Heaven, I will hide my eyes; and when you make many Prayers, when you abound in duty, adding Prayer to Prayer (as the Word is) - I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. They were unregenerate, unsanctified. They were new pratifs, but the old heart still.

The like you see of the Scribes and Pharisees. They fasted, prayed, did much in the ways of God. But their hearts were not changed, they were unregenerate still, were not principled from above.

This you see plain, Joh. 3, where Nicodemus, one of the chief of the Pharisees knew not yet what Regeneration meane. Christ tells him of Regeneration, and hee replies, How is it possible that a man should be born again, when hee is old? Can hee enter into his Mothers womb again? By which you see, though hee did all those things reported of the Pharisees, as Fasting, Praying, Titheing, &c., yet hee was a stranger to this great work of Regeneration, change of Nature.
Nature; hee knew not what it meant.
So that you see, here is the great fault of all. A man walks in
new Practises with an old Heart; an Heart never truly, throughly,
spiritually changed.
There is a fourefold Change,
1. A change from good to evil. This is a fearfull change.
2. A change from evil to good. This is a blessed change.
3. A change from evil to evil, from one to another.
4. A change from some evil, to some good.
I will express it in these four words. There is
2. A Partial Change.
3. A Formal Change.
4. A Spiritual Change.
1. There is a meer Moral Change. When a man changeth from
sintfull notorious wayes, to Morality, Temperance, Justice, Equity,
Patience, Contention. And sticks there, and goes no further. And
here thousands, who lye in the boftome of the Church, stick and
perish.
2. There is a Partial Change, wherein men leave some particular
fins, and practice some particular duties. This is a particular
Conversion. When men were Drunkards, Swearers, unclean
persons, &c. And now are persuaded to leave these particular
fins, and betake themselves to some general and common duties
of a Christian.
And there are many men, who are mended thus. They will
hear a Sermon, and do some outward duties. But they are not
new made. And this is but like the putting of a new piece of cloath
into an old garment; the rent will bee made worse. Christ sets
this down in the parable. The unclean spirit is cast out for a time,
but afterward returneth with seven spirits worse than himself, and
so his last end proves worse than his beginning, Mat. 12. 43. &c.
3. There is a Formal Change, when men, in outward appearance do
seem to walk in all duties of holiness, and to forbear the commissi-
on of any gross sin. And yet never had their hearts wrought upon.
All this while it is but their practises, not their Principles that are
truly changed. And these are the men that do so much.
Of these St. Paul speaks, 2 Tim. 3. 5. Having a form of
godliness, yet denying the Power: From such turn away. By which
phrase, I told you, was implied, that though an Hypocrite hath
nothing in him, which is essential to a Christian, as a Christian; yet
may he be the compleat Resemblance of a Christian, in all those
things which are not essential to him. He may be the compleat
picture of a godly man, from top, to toe; in every member, every
limb, every duty, for the externals of it.
4. There is a Spiritual Change, wherein the frame and constitu-
tion of the inward man is changed; and all is made new.
1. Not
1. Not new, for substance of soul and body,
2. Not new, for faculties of soul and body.

As new understanding, new will, &c. Here a man's new Practises flow from new Principles. Here are not only new Ways, but here is a new Heart. Hee hath a new Life in him, a new Spirit in him, by which hee is moved, And the want of this is the great Crack, the great Fault, the Ground, why a man may do much in the ways of God, and yet militarily at last.

But there will bee one great Objection, which seems to throw down all this. The Objection is this.


So may it bee said of Nature: Nature cannot act above Nature; cannot act above her Principle.

But to doe these things is above the power of Nature. Therefore, hee who doth these duties, is above a state of Nature.

Answ. For answer of this. Wee say it is true in the Main. A man that hath no more than meer Nature in him, cannot act above meer Nature.

But Nature may bee strengthened from above. There may bee higher Principles set in Nature, which may enable a man to go higher than common Nature, though not yet above one in state of Nature.

A man may bee enabled to act above Nature: yet the Principle is not so high, as to enable a man to act above a man in the State of Nature.

For the better clearing of this. Wee may consider Nature in diverse forms or ranks.

1. There is meer Nature; with those relics (as some say) But rather (I say) restored Principles, which God gave to man, after hee had lost all, that hee might bee a Man, not a Devil. For when by fin, wee had lost all, if God had not, out of pitty to mankind, restored something, wee should have been as bad as Devils in the world, one devour, another, commit all outrages upon another. Now in this state, something may bee done, not much.

2. There is nature civilized, and moralized. Nature refined by moral Principles, which whether they bee in nature before, and so but husbanded and improved; or whether they were some common gifts of the Spirit, wee will not now dispute, but conclude this latter.

Now by these a man may bee enabled to do above the common sort of men, hee having higher Principles than meer nature fallen, and therefore is able to do more, in all the works of morality, works of Justice, Righteousness, Charity, &c.

This you see in the Heathens, who far excelled the common sort of men; their Principles being far higher.
3. There is Nature sublimated, and raised yet higher by implantation of higher Principles than these are, by the help of which, a man may be enabled to do above the purest natures of the Heathens; and yet but Nature.

The knowledge of God, of Christ, of Sin, of Grace, Heaven, Hell, together with the implantation of some general Principles, common gifts and graces of the Spirit may so sublimate a man, that by the help of these, a man may not only be wrought up to do more than mere Nature fallen, but more than Nature strengthened with moral Principles, is able to do.

You see this in Judas, Demas, Herod, &c., whose actions were above mere Nature, as coming from higher Principles, but yet not above men in the state of Nature.

This work upon men, though not so much as spiritual, yet it is more than mere moral. Though they have not so high a Principle as a spiritual man, yet is his Principle higher than a mere moral man. And by the help of that common Illumination, general workings of the Spirit, broken workings of humiliation, he may be enabled to pray, hear, read, confer, fast, profess, and what not, for all outwards and yet want the Sanctifying Spirit of Christ.

There may be a supernatural work of the Spirit, upon some men, whereby nature may be strengthened from above; and yet they may want the saving work of the Spirit.

You see then distinguished, Heb. 6. 4. There were some, who were in lightened, and had tasted of the Heavenly gift. This was a Supernatural work: but yet this was not a Saving work, ver. 9. -- I am persuaded better things of you, and such as accompany salvation, though I thus speak.

Thus you see the Objection cleared. And the fourth thing laid open (etc.) Where the fault is, that a man may do this much, and yet be unsound. I add but thus much to it more.

1. He is a man, who was never humbled for sins. And this is a sure Rule. The heart never broken, was yet never sound.

2. He is a man, that was never truly cast out of himself; and therefore can go no higher than himself, in all he doth.

3. He is a man, was never fully changed; hee walks in new ways, with an old heart.

4. He is a man, who is carried upon holy works with a slavish Spirit. Hee would sin, but dares not. Hee doth Duty, but hath no mind to do it.

What the Apostle faith of himself -- the good I would do, I do not; and the evil I would not do, that do I: Hee, on the contrary, must say, if hee speak truth. -- The good I would not do, I do, and the evil I would do, that I do not, I dare not.

He is a man, who hath no principle of spiritual life in him, Hee is moved, but doth not move; he is carried about with weights,
Of Hypocrisy.

as a Clock or Watch, hee hath no inward Principle of life to move him.

A Clock you know doth move (or rather is moved) but it is not from any Principle of Life. It is the weights which carry it about. Take off them, and the Clock stands still: so here. They are moved, but not by any Principle of Life within. There are two great weights which carry him about.

1. Fear of Hell.

2. A Hope of Heaven. Which weights if you take off, then hee stands still.

Thus I have at last done with the Doctrinal part. That it is possible for a man to do much in the ways of God, and yet have an unsound spirit, and fall short of Heaven at last.

I come now to Application.

V...: 5. 

If a man may do thus much, and yet fall short of Heaven. What then shall become of them, who do nothing? If a man may pray and perish, hear, and go to Hell, do duty, and bee damned, then what shall become of them, who swear, and blaspheme?

I know it is the ordinary vaunt of carnal and unregenerate men, who have no taste nor favour of the things of God. They will lay,

I think God, though I pray not so many Prayers, nor hear so many Sermons, as others do; yet my heart is as sincere as the best of them all.

Alas! poor man! Though it bee possible for a man to do all this, and yet not bee sincere, yet it is impossible a man should bee sincere, if bee do them not. These things may bee done without sincerity, but sincerity cannot bee without these.

Sincerity lies in labouring, not in littering, in working, not in lazing. Where the heart is sincere, it will put a man upon working, and will make a man to work with all his Strength, to abound in the work of the Lord; to eye the Manner, as well as the Matter; the Circumstance, as well as the Substance. It will put a man upon Prayer, and make a man pray fervently, faithfully, humbly. It will put a man upon hearing, &c.

And therefore thou art mistaken. Though a man may do these duties, and not bee sincere; yet thou canst not bee sincere, if thou doft them not. Though bee may do these things and perishes, yet thou must pray, hear, do duty: Otherwise thou shalt perish. These things are Necessary.

1. Necessitate Precepti; God hath commanded them.

2. Necessitate Media; they are the way to life.

You must not look to come to the end, if you do not walk in the way.
Of Hypocrisy.

Object. But you will say, This discourageth us. If a man may do this much, and yet fall short of Heaven, then it is as good to sit still, and do nothing.

Ans. I must tell you: this is a sign of a low spirit, to argue after this manner. We should argue thus: --- Because I may do all this, and yet not bee sincere: Therefore I will labour to bee sincere in the doing of them. These things must bee done, though all that did them fell short of Heaven. God commands these things to bee done, and his will must stand out against all. If all that hear, read, pray, &c. do fall short of Heaven, yet thou must hear, read, pray, upon account of obedience to God.

The fault, it lies in the Persons, not in the Duties, in the Workmen, not in the Work. The fault is not in the Matter, but in the Men, and the Manner of performance. And mans fault must not cause us to neglect our duty.

Wee have an expreffion, Micah 1. 7. ---Is the Spirit of the Lord freighted? do not my words doe good to them, who walk uprightly? " As if the Prophet had said --- The fault is not in the Word, but in you, who are the hearers of it. You hear, and hear, and yet get no good by hearing. And will you charge God with that? will you blame the Word? Others get good, and God's Spirit is not freighted to you more than to others. You should finde good as well as others, if you came with honest hearts. --- Do not my words do good to them, who walk uprightly?

And what we say of this, wee say of other Ordinances. The fault is not in Prayer, nor in Fasting: but it is in you. You walk with corrupt hearts in God's ways: And therefore you get no good by them.

You have a sad place, but full for this purpose, Hof. 14. verse last, the last words of the book, hee shuts up the Prophecy with it. --- Whoso is wise shall know these things, for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein. A good heart shall stand, and walk in holy ways; but a bad heart, a corrupt heart, shall fall and perish in them. An unsound spirit shall fall in the ways of duty, in the ways of prayer, in the ways of profession.

--- Use.

If it bee possible for a man to do much in the ways of God, and yet be unsound, yet miss of Heaven: Then this may discover to us the sandiness and unsoundness of these bottomes, to refresh a mans soul upon.

How many thousands, who have no better evidences for Heaven, than the bare performance of duties? They come to Church, they hear the Word, they pray, &c. And therefore they hope all is well.
My Brethren, it is true, if the bare performance of duties were sufficient evidences to conclude our good condition: then whoever did abound most in these things: they had the surest bottomes to rest upon.

But (alas!) you see it is possible for a man to abound in duties; and yet his heart bee unfound. And therefore the doing of these things will not bee sufficient to evidence to your selves, that your condition is good.

If these Anchors should ever hold, you need not to beat out any better Anchors for your souls. But seeing these do not hold; ever, you had need seek out for better. Else you maymiscarry at last.

These may hold in a Calm, when they are put to no stresses; but will be sure to break in a storm. You see the house built upon the Sand, it stood well enough, and the structure was fair, the foundines of the foundation was not discovered, whiles there was a Calm. But (as Christ) When the Rain fell, and the Winds blew, and the Waves did beat; when the Storm arose, then was the foundines of the foundation discovered -- the house fell, for it was built upon the Sand.

So here. While you have a Calm, while you are in health, enjoy peace, &c. These bottomes seem firm enough, you do not discover the foundines of these foundations. But a Storm doth arise, when you come upon your sick-beds, when you come to the day of death; then you shall see the unfoundenes of your bottomes. All your buildings, your fair structures, all your works and workings upon this foundation will bee surely blown down; they will never abide the trial.

And therefore let mee flay you up; you, who are resolved for God; you, who are bound for Heaven, that you would get better evidences, than the bare and naked performance of duties, will afford you. All which may bee done; and thou sink into Hell at the last. Nay, get better evidences than duty itself performed at the best, is able to afford unto you.

1. Because evidences of this kinde are obscure, full of ambiguity, full of intricate disputes and controversies. There will bee Objection upon Objection, and controversy upon controversy will arise. And all must bee cleared, and all Objections answered, before ever wee can conclude our estates by them.

I say, Evidences of this kinde, they must bee put in suits, and pass along scrutiny and trial, where there must bee Evidences upon Evidences, and no end of them, before ever wee can have any comfort in them.

You will finde, that the clearing of the truth of these Evidences will bee as difficult, it not more, than the compassing of these Evidences themselves.

2. Wee are to seek out for better Evidences than duty performed at the best can afford us, because these kinds of Evidences Q q 2 are
are not only obscure, full of ambiguity, and to uncertain: But because these kinds of Evidences, they are unconstant, they are
instable, they may appear to day, and vanish to morrow.

You know, my Brethren, that a man is not always in the same temper of spirit: his spirit is subject to varying and alteration, in the
performance of duties. And therefore though a man may fetch an
Evidence out of the Court of duty, at this time, yet it may bee
at another time, the Court will not afford it. A man may bee clea-
red to day by duty, and condemned to morrow: This day hee may
thence have an evidence, and hee may bee caft in the same Court
to morrow. Our comforts fetched hence are lyable to change: They
vary, as wee vary, change as wee change.

This is certain, That the Peace which is wrought out of our
selves, is again lost by our selves. And the comfort gotten by du-
ty at one time, is lost by duty at another time. Well then, I call
you out, to seek out for better evidences, Such as will afford you
more fulness of peace, and will minifter to you more stability
of comfort, than these can do.

Fetch your Evidences from your Justification, your interest in
Christ, in the Covenant. You will finde an empiress in all, only a
fulness here. Draw your waters of comfort from the highest springs,
the springs of Justification. These are

1. The clearest.
2. The purest.
3. The most satisfying.
4. The most constant Evidences.

These are the clearest Evidences. They are fetched from the
Spring. Other waters are muddy and disturbed: but Spring-
waters are clear. So Evidences taken from other things often run mudd-
ly, and are disturbed: but those from Justification are the clearest,
and run the clearest.

Though these kinds of Evidences are hardest to clear: It will cost
a man something before he reach to these Evidences, before he can
make out these Evidences to himself: yet they are the most per-
spicuous, being cleared.

The Testimony of blood is the hardest and darkest: Testimony to make
out: but none is more clear than that, when once you have made it
out to your souls. So that it is worth all your labour and pains
you take in the clearing of it.

Other Evidences are liable to dispute. But what can Satan dis-
pute against this? Doth hee say, Thou art a sinner? Yea, but maift
thou say, God justifies sinners, hee justifies the ungodly. Though
sin hath weakened the Law, and made that unable to doo good: yet
it hath not weakened Christ, and Free Grace; nor should it weaken
our Faith, if now wee bee returning sinners.

If Sin self were a just Obstacle, then there could never bee
any, who could bee Justified, or fetch comfort from their Justifi-
cation:
cation: because all were sinners. I am a sinner, so was Abraham, the
Father of the Faithful: so the best of God's worthies.
Both hee say, our sins are great: Yet wee may say, they are not
greater than God can pardon. They are not greater than
1. The Mercy of God, to pardon them, or
2. The Righteousness of Christ, to cover them.
1. For the Mercy of God: The Apostle tells us, there was more
than enough to pardon him, who was the greatest of sinners; 1 Tim. 1.
13, 14, 15, 16. — The Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant.
The word in the Original is παραπληρωμα. Did superabound; was
more than enough; more than might serve the turn for him, who was
the greatest of sinners.
2. And for the Righteousness of Christ, it is said to be an ever-
lasting Righteousness: more than eternity of sinning is able to expend,
and draw drye. It is a Righteousness, which as it cannot be over-
clased by our Faith, So can it not bee pos'd, non-plust by any sin.
You see, Rom. 1. 17. It is a Righteousness revealed from Faith;
to Faith. The more Faith, not the lees, but the more Righteous-
ness is discovered. And as it cannot be over-clased by any Faith;
so it cannot bee exceeded by any sin.
Thus you see Evidences from our Justification, they are the
clearest Evidences, the freshest from disputes: and if any Objections
do arise, they may bee the more quickly laid.
But now it is not so with other kinde of Evidences. If a man
take an Evidence from Duty, there will bee controversys: Objection
upon Objection will arise: and there must bee Evidence upon that
Evidence, before ever a man can make out the truth of them. Nay,
though Evidences bee taken from Graces themselves, yet you will
scarcely finde a bottom without much search.
Suppose a man come to bring in his Love to Christ for an Evi-
dence; yet this is liable to dispute. You know, there is a False-
Love, as well as a True, a counterfeit, as well as a found. And there-
fore this must bee examined by the Nature of your Love, the work-
ings of your Love towards Christ, the expressions of your Love in all
the ways of Obedience.
And I must tell you of great latitude and extent in this tryal.
There will bee long debates, before you come to the utmost. And
the like I may say of any Grace besides. Therefore these from
Justification are the clearest Evidences from disputes and contro-
versies.
2. These are the purest Evidences. Spring-taters are the purest
waters: so these Evidences fetched from the Spring, seil, from
your Justification, and interest in Christ, these are the purest. I say,
these kinde of Evidences are the purest, and most unmixed Evi-
dences.
You shall see, all other kinde of Evidences, they are not so pure;
they have mixtures in them.

x. Are
1. Are they taken from Prayer? yea, and Prayer at the best: yet these are not pure; they have mixtures in them. Our best Duties are mingled with imperfections. They have a tang and taste of the flesh in them.

You know, there is much deadness with our chiefest Life, much formality in our best Power, much coldness with our heats: much of the flesh in all the employments of the Spirit.


3. Nay yet further. Are your evidences taken from Graces themselves? yet these are not pure. There is much mixture in them. Our Graces themselves are full of imperfections. You know, there is much blindness with your Light; much coldness with your Love; much hardness of heart with your mourning for sin, yea, and much more, much worldly sorrow, in your purest tears, much Pride with your humility; much murmuring with your patience; As we might show at large, if need were.

But now these Evidences which are taken from our Justification, they are pure, without mixture. Though the Faith which justifies us is imperfect, yet the Grace which justifies us is perfect.

I say, these Evidences are pure, without mixture, because they are such as have nothing of our own in them: had they any thing of ours, they would be imperfect and impure: but having nothing of ours, but all Christ's, they are altogether perfect and pure. Christ is all fair, all perfect, all pure.

Our sanctifying righteousness is stained, imperfect, impure; but our Justifying righteousness is pure and perfect. If there were any stain or any imperfection in that, it could not justify, it could not save us; we should be undone for ever. But that is pure, that is perfect, and we in it. As the Apostle faith, Col. 2. 10. -- In him are complete. Complete in him, though imperfect in ourselves.

3. These are the most satisfying Evidences. Other Evidences admit of much questioning. Though taken from Duties, yet Graces themselves; yet they admit of long disputes, sharp encounters and afflicts. And, when all is done, yet they bring not such fulness of satisfaction to the soul. But now Evidences taken from our Justification, these are soul satisfying Evidences, because the satisfaction of Christ is in them. These Evidences are not fetched from any thing in us, or any thing done by us; but from the satisfaction which Christ himself hath wrought for us. And if there be any dispute against this, then may we see much more dispute against the other.
If Christ bee not a compleat Satisfier of God's Wrath and Justice for our sins, then these Evidences from the Satisfaction of Christ would do mee no good. As the Apostle saide of the Resurrection of Christ, which was the declaration of that full satisfaction Christ had wrought. -- If Christ bee not risen, then our Faith is in vain; our hope in vain: so here: -- If Christ have not fully satisfied God's Justice, if bee hath not paid all the Debts, answered all the Indemnities against mee; then my Faith is in vain; then those Evidences can do nothing but good. But if Christ hath fully satisfied God's Justice, then am I sure, for this satisfaction is mine.

So that you see, these are such Evidences, as do not only quiet, but satisfy conscience to the full. Such as silence all doubts, answer all scruples and objections, that do arise.

Other Evidences, they are not so full, not so satisfactory. They may afford a man some obvious Refreshment, for a time, to hold up the head from sinking; but they bring not fulness of satisfaction into the soul.

But now this doth; because you see it is taken from such things wherein God himself is satisfied; and therefore no reason but wee should be satisfied. If the Creditor say enough, shall not the Debtor bee satisfied?

4. These are the most constant Evidences. Floods and Rivers may fail, but Springs are constant. Such Evidences as are taken from any thing within us, or any thing done by us, may (at least, as to evidence) fail us,

But such Evidences as are taken from without us, as, &c.

These are permanent and constant. In the greatest drought here will bee Water enough, Jer. 17. 7, 8. -- Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is; for bee shall bee as a Tree planted by the Rivers of Waters, and that spreadeth out her roots, and shall not see when heat cometh; but her leaf shall bee green, and shall not be carefull in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Other Evidences are unconstant; they may bee clear to day, and bee cloued to morrow: the heart is not ever in the same frame. But now these are permanent, abiding Evidences: they are as sure as the Oathes, Promises, Covenant of God, though not ever to see, yet they are ever sure to Faith, though not ever to apprehension, yet ever in truth. Wee may ever conclude them, though wee cannot ever see them. Conclude them wee may by Faith, though wee cannot see them to see.

I might indarce my self, and go yet further to tell you these are the sweetest, the most refreshing and comforting evidences.

But to conclude this use, If every one would have strong consolation, if ever you would have a full and settled peace and comfort, then hence draw your Evidences, fetch your Evidences from Justification.

I know
Of Hypocrisy.

I know that which keeps you upon the racks of tears, that which continues you in doubts and jealousies, is this. You take your Evidences too low, either from something in you, or something done by you, and so you are forced to answer a multitude of objections and reasons, before ever you can finde a bottome to rest upon.

That which doth raise up new doubts and objections in your spirits, and which causeth a fresh return of fears upon you, is because you do not take your Evidences high enough.

You take them from Duties, Prayers, Dispositions, present Affections. And so upon every failing you are cast, and all thrown down again, new fears arise, as if you never had any Evidence.

Were an Evidence sealed in the higher Court, what Court shall dispute against it, what can overthrow it?

But now if all this will not perverde you to fetch your Evidences higher, but that you will still lye by these waters for comfort, you will still fetch your Comforts and Evidences from Duties, yet let me thus far perverde with you, that you would labour to clear the sincerety of your heart in these duties. Otherwise all this something will be nothing to you, no bottome of Comfort.

They are but uncertain bottomes at the best, but without sincerety to accompany them they will be no bottomes, an house not built on the Sand, but built in the Air, no foundation.

And this is the next use wee will come unto.

3. Use

If it bee possible for a man to do thus much, and yet be unsound, then what care ought there to bee to clear the soundness of our spirits in our performances.

You pray, you hear, you do much, but ask the question to your selves. Is my heart found in all these performances? is it found in prayer? in hearing? if not, all this something is nothing.

If you break the string that goes through a set of Beads, they all fall to the ground. Sincerity is the string which goes through all our Prayers, our Duties and Graces: if that bee broken, all is broken.

Sincerity is the Evidence of all our Evidences taken from below.

It is that which makes every duty glorious, every breathing of the spirit sweet, every groan weighty, every drop of tears a pearl, and precious in God’s esteem.

Sincerity is all in all. It is all, in all our Prayers, all, in all our tears, all, in all our services. It is all to God; that which God accounts all. Sincerity is Gospel perfection. And perfection is all.

Let
Of Hypocrisy.

Let us then examine our hearts; you that abound most in all outward performances, clear the soundness and sincerity of your hearts in them.

1. Clear the sincerity of your hearts in your obedience in general.

2. Clear the sincerity of your hearts, in your performances in particular.

Wee shall now insist upon the last first; and that is, clear the sincerity of your hearts in your performances in particular.

We will instance in these three especially which wee single out.

First in your Hearing.
Secondly in your Praying.
Thirdly in your Mourning for Sin.

1. Clear the sincerity of your hearts in hearing the Word.

Wee will give you these characters of a sincere heart in hearing the Word.

1. A sincere heart desires sincere preaching. Such preaching wherein his heart is ripped up, his corruptions discovered; the most quickening, and soul-searching ministrv, such a ministry as doth most unravel his heart, and rip up his soul.

You may say, 1 Pet. 2. 2. as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, the preaching of the Word, and the sincere preaching of the Word, not the Word as it is sophisicated, poisoned, adulterated by man’s invention. As the Apostles phrase it, but the Word as it comes sincerely from the Fountain.

Such a man hee desires killing, as well as comforting truths, searching, as well as healing truths, breaking, as well as binding. And indeed, hee desires no comforting, but in killing; no comforting of his soul, but in killing of his sins; no healing, but in searching, no binding, but in breaking.

An unfound heart, if hee desire to hear, yet it should see such as would preach placetius, speak peace, daube with untempered Morter.

And if a Minister do once preach to the quick. If hee once enter upon the discovery of them, their hearts rise against the truth; they rebel against the Word, and such are no Ministers for them. They will finde out one that they can live in sin, and yet live in peace under his Ministry.

We read in the 42. of Jer. read it throughout, (the Chapter is worth your taking notice of,) Let mee intreat you to read it when you come home, you shall see there the depth of a self-deceiving spirit.

You shall read there, the Children of Israel desired Jeremias to inquire of the Lord what they should do, and they would assuredly do it, but their hearts deceived them. You see there that they thought Jeremias would have brought them an answer from God.
God agreeable to their own spirits.

They did not think that their will must have come up to God's will, but that God's will would have come down to their will.

Well, Jimly goes to God, and he brings them a message from God which was clean crost to their lufts. And then the venome of their spirits which before lay hid, appeared, they brake out into open rebellion against the Word of the Lord, and spake plain. Wee will not hear the Word of the Lord which thou hast told us.

So it is with many unfound spirits, self-deceiving spirits, before a Minister come into a Parish. Oh then say they! let us have a good Minister, one that may do our souls good, one that may bring a message to us from the Lord, discover to us God's will. And few there are but do thus far agree, but if once a Minister rip up their sins, search their wounds, that they may bee healed of them: if once hee come to discover their corruptions, and in endeavour to take them off their unfound bottomes, whereon if they live and dye, they will perish. Then they flye out against the light, and him that holds it forth to them. Away with such a man from the earth. Wee will not hear the Word of the Lord spoken.

Whereas a sincere heart doth hide with the Word, with light, to fight against and destroy his corruptions.

These men they hide with their corruptions and lufts, to fight against the truth, to blow out the light, and oppose the preaching of the Word.

A sincere heart doth hold up the Law against his luft. Let my lufts perish, rather than thy Law bee destroyed. But a corrupt heart doth hold up his luft against the Law. And faith in his heart. Let the Law rather than my luft bee destroyed.

There is not one corruption which thou keepest with love and liking, but thou wiltcast in thy heart, that there were no such Law against it. The Drunkard willeth there were no such Law against his Drunkeness. The unclean person would bee glad there were no Law against his uncleanness, rather part with so much of God's Nature, which the Law is a beam of, than part with his luft.

Hence it is truly said, peccatum est Dei Cedunt, sin is God's slaughterer, because sin strikes against the very being of God; the purity and holines of God.

Hee that would not bee as God is, would bee glad if God were as hee is. That is a certaine rule, that hee that will favour himself in any corruption, would bee glad if God would favour him too. That there were no Law against it, or that there were a Law to countenance it, or no Law to punish it. That God were not against it, that God were of his mind, or that there were no God, or no God to punish it, &c.

2. A sincere
2. A sincere heart in hearing the Word.

1. Is willing to receive the truth of God.

2. Is willing to receive every truth of God.

3. Is willing to receive it as the truth of God.

1. Hee receives the truth not into his head only, his understanding to know it, but into his heart, his affections to love it.

Hee doth not imprison it in the head, but lets it go down into the heart. And the whole soul is made the residence and place of truth. Lord how I love thy Law contrary hereto is that, 2 Thes. 2. 10.

2. Hee is willing to receive every truth: Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth. Hee looks upon every word of God as good, every truth of God, as comming in the image of God, and comming with the authority of God, and there is ready entertainment for all, as well those which make against him, as those which make for him, though a truth appear never so formidable that the receiving may cost a man death.

2. Hee is willing to receive truth, as the truth, that is, in the Power, Majesty and Authority of Truth. And lets it up as King in his spirit. To which hee defers to yeeld subjection and obedience in all.

Hee lets it come in, in its enlightening, in its convincing power, in its humbling and awakening power, as well as in its quickening and comforting power.

Every truth shall bee received as the truth of God.

But now an unsound spirit

Hee is not willing to receive the truth; some truth hee dare not own, least they should disturb him in a way of sin. As the Apostle, 2 Pet. 3. 5. Of this they are willingly ignorant, they have no desire to know this. They desire to shut out the light, that their corruptions may not bee disquieted, Matt. 13. 15. They wink with their eyes, that they might not understand.

2. They receive not every Truth. It may bee such as are notional they will, or such as may stand with their lusts and present advantages, not such as are practical, and cross them in their corrupt ends and practices.

They look upon some truths, as an ignis fatuus, that if they should entertain them, and follow them, they would lead them into danger.

It was the speech of a King of France, that hee would lanch no further into the deep, than hee might come safely to shore. That is, hee would follow Truth no further, than hee may preserve himself and his own. If those bee hazarded, hee will forlacke the Truth.

3. They receive it not as Truth.

1. Not for it self. 2. Not to bee King over them.

1. Not for it self; but for other private and personal respects. Either for their gain, their advantage, or for fear and danger, or...
out of respect to the greatness, or quality of the persons, who do entertain Truth.

Whereas a godly man doth love the person for the Truths sake. As St. John writing to the Elect Lady, whom he said he loved for the Truths sake, 2 Joh. 1. 2.

They that love the Truth for the persons sake, may say they love the Truth for the Ladies sake. The one the person for the Truths sake, the other the truth for the persons sake.

So you see they receive it not as Truth for it self.

2. They receive it not as Truth to bee Lord and King over them. To which they yeeld obedience and subjection in all things.

Many men would govern Truth, but they will not suffer Truth to govern them. They would keep Truth, though but in prison, for all their keeping is but imprisoning, but they will not suffer Truth to keep them, though the Truth would make them free. Corrupt spirits they receive Truth as a Servant, not as a King. And before they receive it, they will ask what it can do for them; what service, what advantage can it bring them? If none, Truth shall not bee entertained of them.

3. A sincere heart in hearing the Word, is an honest heart: and there is the summe of all.

This Christ expresseth in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed, Luk. 8. 15. the sincere spirit received the Word with an honest and good heart.

Now the honesty of a mans spirit in hearing, or an honest heart in hearing, is such as

1. Hears the Word, as Gods Word, bee the instrument never so weak and despicable, yet it shall prevail with an honest heart, because it is Gods Word. You have an expression in Isa. 11. 6. A little Child shall lead him.

Whoever comes with a message from God, whoever brings a word, hee shall prevail and persuade with him.

An honest servant will take notice of his Masters mind, though a Child bee the messenger, hee looks not on the person that brings it, but on the message brought. So though the person bee never so weak, if hee bring a word from God, an honest heart will vail to it.

2. An honest heart sides with the Word of God against himself, hee takes part with a truth against himself.

Whereas an unfound heart sides with his corruption against the Word, fights against that which fights against it; but an honest heart sides with the Word against his corruption.

3. An honest heart desires to profit by the Word, 1 Pet. 2. 2.

As new born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby. Hee is a man that is resolved to practice whatever God reveals. Hee hath no exceptions or reservations to himself,
Of Hypocrify.

self, but is bent to practice every Truth God reveals to him. He asketh the way to Sion with his face thitherward, as one resolved to go the way that God shall reveal.

This was that which Paul said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? They were not verba expostulantis, but verba submissentis. He was not only desirous to know, but resolved to do whatever God did reveal to him.

An honest heart desires every Truth to be made his own. And that there may be Principles bred in the spirit, liable to the Truths revealed to him. He is desirous that every degree of illumination may be a further degree of sanctification. That his heart may be transformed into the nature of truths revealed.

It doth not content him to have truths in the head, and a lye in the heart: Truth in the head, and error in the spirit: Light in the head, and darkness in the heart, but he desires the whole man may be digested into the nature of truths. Truth formed in his soul.

4. An honest heart, he hears the word with reflection. As in reading the word, he reads himself with it. So in hearing the word, he doth peruse himself with it. Hee hears with reflection, hee hears with application, charging and clearing his heart, according to the evidence which confidence gives in upon hearing of the Word.

2. Clear the sincerity of your hearts in matter of praying. I told you in the beginning that it was possible for a man to pray, say and make many prayers, to abound in praying; hee may pray in publick, pray in private, pray in the Church, and pray in his closet, hee may multiply to pray, as the word importeth, Jsa. 1. 15. And yet his heart be unfound. And therefore, you, who do abound much in prayer, labour to clear the sincerity of your hearts in this duty.

Wee will give you these Characters of an heart sincere in Prayer.

1. Character.

Where the heart is sincere in Prayer, there is a doing of the duty with all our strength. There will be a laying out of all the strength and powers within us. The strength of our Judgement, the strength of our will, and our affections, the strength of the whole soul in the work. Prayer when sincere, is a wrestling work. 

Jacob wrestled with God, that is, hee wept and prayed. Hos. 12. 4. Prayer is the soul's contention, the souls struggling with God.

It is a sweating work. It is the sweat and blood of the soul. A sincere heart lays out its strength in prayer.

Though a mans strength bee but weakness, yet if a mans strength bee in the work, it is sufficient to evidence a mans sincerity. Indeed if a man had a Male in his flock, and should offer to the
Of Hypocrisy.

the Lord a female. If hee had a better, and should give God a worse, if hee had strength, and yet served the Lord with weaknesses, this would declare the heart to bee unfound.

But when a mans strength is in the work, though that strength bee but weaknesses, yet it will evidence the sincerity of the heart. And there is no reason that you should look upon those Prayers as cast, as lost Prayers, where your strength is in them.

When thou hast been with God, and performed a duty, although but weakly, many imperfections in it, much unbelief, much hardness, much deadness and coldness, yet if your strength have been in the duty, you may rise up without confusion and shame, upon this ground, your strength hath been in it, your heart doth not condemn you, you are able to clear this to your spirit; your strength hath been in the work.

But now such are here condemned, and cast, who have a Male in their flock, and offer to the Lord a Female. God curseth such. Curseth, &c. Mal. 1. 14. When you have strength, and serve God with weaknesses, when you will turn off God with your cold, your lazy, sleepy, and formal devotions, and will not take any pains with your own hearts in these holy works. This discovers your spirits to bee unfound, and false to God.

2. Character.

Where the heart is sincere in Prayer, there is no rest or content: in the soul, till the heart be wrought into the work.

A sincere heart in Prayer, is an heart-sincerity in Prayer, not a tongue in Prayer, nor an head in Prayer, but an heart in Prayer. Prayer is not lip-work, or head-work, but heart work. And where the heart is sincere, hee is not content till the heart bee in the work. Hee is not content to bee down on his knees, if his heart bee not up. To have an hand in the work, if his heart bee not also in it.

A sincere heart labours to get his heart into the work. Hee prays in prayer, 1 Sam. 5. 17. There is an affective collation with the duty. If hee confesseth sins, hee desireth to get affections fruitful to the confession of sin. An heart wounded and broken under the sight and sense of sin.

If hee prays for pardon, hee labours to get an heart apprehensive of the want, and also of the worth of mercy; and seeks a mercy, as a condemned man a pardon.

If hee pray for Grace, or the subduing of lufts, still hee labours to get an heart fruitful to the things hee wants, and that which hee doth desire.

It was the speech of Bradford, that hee would never leave a duty till hee had brought his heart into the frame of the duty. Hee would not leave confession of sin, till his heart was broken for sin. Hee would not leave petitioning for Grace, till his heart was quickened.
en in desire. He would not leave gratulation, till his heart was
in the return of praise.
But now an unfound heart, if he can but post over a duty, if
his prayers, though he have never laboured to get his
heart into them, yet he is well enough.
This is to draw near with our lips, when our hearts are far
from God, this is to offer God a bulk and carkass of duty, with-
out the life and spirit of duty, and so it is abominable to God.
A body without a soul, thinks, so here, your Confessions of
sins, are Confessions of sins, Iterations of sins, when your hearts
are not sensible and affected with the sin you confess. He
who remembers sin with delight, doth commit the sin again.
He that remembers sin without sorrow, doth but revive his
former guilt, he removes it not: A man may displease a man
as much with the Confession of a fault, as in the Commission of
the fault.
If a man had offended you, and should come in a loving way to
confess his fault, you would be more offended at him for his con-
fusion, than for his fault.
So when you shall come before God and confess your sins, with-
out any compassion for your sin, without any token of sin, or
sorrow for it, you do aggravate your sins and increase guilt, in-
stead of removing guilt from your souls.
An hard heart, and a dry eye in the confession of sin, is an aggra-
vation of your sins.

3. Character.
An heart sincere in Prayer, doth thirst after Communion with God in
Prayer.
If a duty leaves the soul on this side God, unless it have carri-
ed the soul over to God, and brought a man to some further
Communion with him, with his mercy, his love, his grace, his
Spirit, the soul is not content with duty.
Others they make duty the end of duty, the end of prayer, and therefore if they can but rid their hands of a duty,
though they had no communion with God in it, yet they are well
enough.
But now a sincere heart, see looks above a duty, he looks up
on duty but as a bridge to convey him over to God, as a means
to bring God and his soul into nearer communion, and if yee have
not seen God, and found God in a duty, if his spirit hath not con-
verted with God as a Father, as a friend, as a child with his father,
as a man with his friend, he hath no content in duty.
Obj. But you will say, how shall a man know when he hath Com-
munion with God in duty?

Ans.
Of Hypocrisy.

Answ. For the answer of this, I must first tell you, that there is a great mistake among men and women, of a tender spirit about this point, that they think they have no communion with God, unless they have met with God in an heart-cheering, and an heart-comforting way, when God comes in with joy, with comfort, with cheerings and enlargements. Then they are willing to grant you, they have had communion with God.

But if God have come in, in an heart breaking, humbling, and casting down their souls in the sight and sense of their, and imperfections, they do not think they have communion with God.

And therefore I must tell you first in the general, That you may have communion with God, as well in an heart humbling, as an heart reviving, an heart Comforting way.

In the life to come in heaven, all our Communion with God is with Comfort, with fulness of joy, At his right hand is fulness, &c. Psal. 16. 11. with thee there is a fountain of joy. Then all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes.

But in this life on earth, we have mixed communion; and have communion with God, as well in humblings, as in comfortings.

You go upon a duty, and you think to meet God one way, and hee comes in another way.

Sometimes you expect God in a comforting, and God comes in, in a quickening way,

Sometimes thou expects God in an heart breaking way, and God comes in, in a comforting way.

As the wind, sometimes it blows up rain, sometimes it blows away rain.

So the Spirit of God, which bloweth where, and when, and how it listeth, sometimes blows up rain, comes into the soul in an heart humbling and breaking way, And sometimes it blows away rain, and comes into the soul in a cheering, and heart comforting way.

In both these the soul hath communion with God, in joys, and tears, in mourning, as well as comfortings.

And that in the general to answer the mistake of weaker Christians.

Quest. And now to the answer of the question, How a man shall know when he hath had communion with God in a duty?

1 I Answer, 1 In general, then thou meetest with God, and hast communion with God in duty, when God hath enabled thee to act grace in a duty.

An regenerate man may act parts, and gifts in a duty, but he cannot act grace, hee hath none to act.

If then God do enable thee to act grace in a duty, to act thy faith to close with promises, to act thy repentance for sinne, to act love
love to God; All or any of these graces, thy soul hath then communion with God in duty.

2 Again, When the performance of a duty doth lead the soul in better frame, a more humble frame, or in a more watchful frame, when the heart is more quickened, or more broken.

When the heart is farther set against sin, more resolved to walk with God, and obey him, when the frame of a man's spirit is changed, or bettered in any of these ways, it is a sign that thou hast had communion with God in duty, though God hath not come in with fulness of comfort, with cheerings or joys.

In this life, most of our communion lyes in quickning grace.

In the life to come, our communion is risen up to full comfort, our life then is all joy.

And so much shall serve for the third Character, and the answer to the Objection.

4. Character.

A heart sincere in Prayer, doth rise up praying from Prayer, hee goes away with the affections of, and affections to prayer, after the Prayer is done.

The Duties of an unsound heart, they come but from a cistern, his devotion is a stinted devotion; When the Prayer is done, his affections are done also, the water is all run out, his affections are then done also, perhaps before.

But the Duties of a godly man, they arise from a spring, a fountain, and his heart is not runne out with his Prayers, he hath affections of Prayer when the Prayer is done, hee riseth up praying from Prayer. The much hee hath done, is but a little of that which his soul defires to do.

An unsound mans actions are as big as his heart, perhaps larger; but for a sincere spirit, the heart is still bigger then the action, all he doth is but a little of that hee defires to do. I say where there is sincerity, there is a desire of more, all is but a little of that abundance that is in his heart. When hee hath mourned for sinne, hee witheth still hee could mourn more. Hee hath an affection of sorrow within him, larger than any expression of sorrow hee can shew. So you see David, Rivers of tears runne down mine eyes because men keep not thy law. Not that David had so much moisture within him as to swell a river, poor man! hee had not so much moisture in him, but he had such an affection of sorrow, that if hee had had as many tears as would have swelled a River, made a Sea, they should all have been laid out for sin.

And indeed if a man had wept a sea of tears, and his affections of mourning did end with his expressions of sorrow, hee had not yet wept at all, nor shed one true tear of godly sorrow for sin.
So again, when he hath prayed, still his heart is above his action, and he riseth up praying from prayer, with a praying spirit, affections, when the Prayer is done.

This was that which made Christ commend the poor Widows charity, she gave but two mites, and yet she faith, she had given more than all the rest. Her heart was bigger than her action, her affections, than her expressions of charity. Others they gave, but their purses were larger than their hearts, they emptied their hearts, but not their purses. She, her heart was bigger than her purse, she emptied her purse, but not her heart, thus she gave more.

So this is the fourth; a sincere heart is larger than his duty, he riseth up praying from prayer, all he doth is but a little of that hee desires to do, but a little of that abundance that is in his heart. Others, their actions are as large, nay larger than their hearts, they have little heart to the duty, and their heart is gone, hath done, before the duty be done. A wicked man doth sin out of the abundance of his heart, as Christ faith, out of the abundance of the heart, come, &c. Mat. 12. 34. Hee is never weary of sinning, hee hath a fountain for that, but though he doth sin out of the abundance of his heart, yet hee doth not pray out of the abundance of his heart, his heart is done, before his prayer is done, if not, they end together. Well, think of it, hee who yet hath not this principle which I speak of, hath not yet a gospel principle, though hee do never so much, hee is yet under the conditions of grace and mercy. These are the lowest terms of the gospel.

5. Character.

A heart sincere in prayer doth eye itself in prayer, it is a heart that diligently observes itself in the duty, views all the workings of the soul, and takes notice of all the imperfections of the spirit in duty. As to gather comfort, and praise God, if right, so to be humbled and afflicted, if amiss.

And indeed our sincerity is as much discovered in lamenting the imperfections of a work, as in the most perfect performance of it. Where then the heart is sincere, the soul takes notice of the imperfections that do accompany it, and when the duty is done, falls a lamenting the imperfections of its faith, of its sorrows, the deadness of its desires. Ah! it now laments that hee hath beheld so much sin with no more sorrow, looked upon so many abominations with no more mourning. That hee hath had no more faith to close with the promises of pardon, of grace, of purging. That hee hath had so barren, so shallow, so slight thoughts of Gods love. That hee hath been so cold in his affections again towards God. That hee hath had so slight conceptions of sin, and so more sorrow for it. That his heart hath been so more affected with the mile-
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miferies of others, nor no more enlarged to seek God for them. That there hath been so much earth in Heaven, so many carnal thoughts, so much distractions in his spiritual implioment. Ah! my Brethren, a good heart sits down when duty is done, and goes and mourns over all his Prayers, weeps over all his tears, confesseth all his confessions, and prays over all his Prayers. And he makes up the want of a duty with sighs, the imperfection of a duty with tears.

Assure you selves, God is as much honoured in your mourning for imperfections of a duty, as hee is by your most perfect performance of it. Blushing in Gods account is perfect beauty. When a soul can blush and bee ashamed for the blemishes which are in its spiritual beauty, God looks upon this soul as beautiful. This is all wee can do, to desire and mourn, to aime at the heightst in our desires, and to mourn when wee fall short of what wee desire. A Christian is made up of these two things, desires, and mournings. Desires, Oh that my heart were directed! Oh that I could believe more, love more, pray more! Oh that I were more agreeable to Gods Nature and Will, &c. and then comes in mournings, o miserable man that I am! &c. Oh that my heart should bee so hard, my spirit so dead, my soul so cold in holy exercises! And here is sincerity, yea and here is the utmost we can reach, when wee come unto the utmost wee can attain in this life; here wee are but travellers towards our home, not yet at home, in our way, nor come to our rest. And wee may well say it with our fellow travellers, while Augustine cries out, I hate that which I am, and love and desire that which I am not, oh wretched man that I am! in whom the Cross of Christ hath not yet eaten out the poisonous and bite-taste of the first tree: Another bee faith, Lord, I see, and yet am blind, I will, and yet rebel, I hate, and yet I love, I follow, and yet I fall, I press forward, yet I faint, I wrestle, yet I hate.

Well then, let us make up the want of our beauty with a blush, the imperfections of our duties with sighs and tears, and then cast them all into the arms of Christ for acceptance.

If you convey a duty to him with tears, hee will present it to his Father with blood, hee will sprinkle it with his own blood, mingle it with his own merits, perfume it with his own odors, as you read, Revel. 8, 4. Whatever is offered by the spirit of Christ, shall bee presented with the merits of Christ, and though never so weak, in him it shall finde acceptance: he hath made us accepted in the beloved. Hee hath life enough to mingle with a dead Prayre, hee hath warmth enough to adde to a cold Prayre, hee hath holines sufficient to adde to a duty full of sin. Though as they come from us, our duties smell rank of the flesh of sin and corruption, yet being mingled with his odours, with his incense, they shall smell sweet in the nostrils of God. This is one part of Christ's mediation, to put life to dead Prayers, to purchase acceptance for per-
romances, which are but mean. If we and our duties were perfect, we did not stand in need of a Mediator, Christ would lose one part of his office. And therefore when the duty is done, shew the sincerity of your hearts in mourning for the imperfections, and cast all into the arms of Christ, and live by faith in confidence of acceptance. Who hath made us accepted in the beloved, not our persons only, but our prayers too.

6. Character.

A heart sincere in prayer, is a praying heart. That is, a heart carried out with desire of the thing it prays for. Prayer is nothing else but an exposition of the soul, or the soul in paraphrase, the soul expressed, the inside of the soul turned outward.

It is said of Hanna’s Prayer, 1 Sam. i. 15. that she poured forth her soul, she expressed what her soul desired, sheewed the desires of her soul.

True prayer is an earnest and enlarged desire for the obtaining and enjoying of the things wee pray for.

Object. But you will say then, all our hearts are sincere, for what is that doth not desire the things, hee prays for?

Ans. But my Brethren, give me leave a little, and I shall shew you this is not to strange a thing as you seem to make it. I shall shew you, that it is possible for a man to pray, and not desire the things hee prays for. I will evidence this unto you in these three great requets. 1. In the desire of grace. 2. In the desire of subalterning lusts. 3. In the desire of Heaven.

1. Thou prayest for grace, but thou dost not desire grace in the beauty and extent of it. Thou mayest desire common graces, as many parents for their children: God give them grace, say they but by that they mean no more than common graces, that they may be honest, no whores, no theives, &c. for it once God change them, and work grace indeed in them, there is none more hateful to them of all their children, than such are. I have heard of a desperate wretch, that when he came to dye, he gave good portions to all his children save one, and to him he would give no more but twelve pence; and being demanded what was the reason, he made answer he was a puritan, I have heard him say, faith this wretch, that hee had a promise to live on, let us now see whether a promise will maintain him.

Thus you may desire grace common, and general grace, as many desire for their children, but spiritual and saving grace thou canst not desire, thou hast no heart to that.

You shall hear what St. Augustin said of himself in his confessions after his conversion. I prayed faith hee in my unregeneracy that God would give mee grace. Lord, faith hee, give mee chastity, but faith hee, my heart faiid not yet, Lord, not yet. For I feared lest God would too quickly hear mee, and cure mee of my inclin-
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incontinency, which I would rather have fulfilled than extin-
guished.

And by this you may take the measure of your own spirits,
your selves, read your own hearts, the next time you go

to prayer. You Pray for grace, but see if you bee willing to
have grace, first in the extent of grace, all grace, would the co-

venious man bee liberal? would the Drunkard bee sober?
would the unclean person bee chast? would the Proud man
bee humble, the Contentious man bee peaceable? otherwise
thou dost not grace in the extent. 2 Would you have grace
In the power of grace, to live precisely and exactly before
God, What not to yield to a word, to a thought of sinne? alas!
this they account damnable preciencel, this they cannot close
withall. Go thy way, Pray as often as thou wilt for grace, af-
fure thy self, thou dost not desire grace in the extent and power
of it, if thou favourest any one corruption, if thou wilt not live
exactly and precisely in the world. Thou wouldst think it no
mercy; if God should grant thee what thou prayest for. Thou
prayest for Faith, but wouldst thou have it? no such matter,
why faith purifies the heart, faith sanctifies the soul, it will not
suffer one corruption, one lust to bee in thy heart, and now dost
thou desire faith? no such matter. Assyst your selves, if at
any time you desire grace, it is not grace, under a right notion of
grace. It is not grace in the extent of grace, nor grace in the power
of grace.

It is again, not a spiritual, but a natural desire of grace, thou
desires it but in some pretense distresss, it may be when thou lyest
on thy death bed, and feest there is no comming to heaven with
out it. Thou cannot desire it for it self.

2 Thou prayest for the subduing of thy lusts, and corrupti-
ons, but dost thou desire what thou prayest for? wouldst thou
think it, if God should answer thee, to be a mercy? I am con-
fident, that till thy heart bee changed, thou wouldst think
the answer of such a request no mercy? Would the Drunkard
think it a mercy to bee rid of his cup? The Covetous man,
would hee think it a mercy, to be rid of his Mammon of unrighte-
ousnesse? No, there is no such matter. I dare be bold to say, there is
not that lust which a wicked man would think it a mercy to be rid
of. Alas! Thou dost not desire to be rid of thy lusts, thou canst not
live without them, thou canst not subsist without them, when thou
dost pray against them, thou dost but difference with God, there is
no such matter, thou dost not desire it. If at any time thou dost de-
sire it, it is when thou hast done with it, or it is in a storm only, and
then not because thou hatest it, but because thou desirest not
keep it, as you know the Merchant casts away his goods, not
because hee judgeth them evil in themselves, but because hee
keeps them, he cannot preserve a greater good, his life. Hee
doeth
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do not part with them out of hatred to them, for he even throws
over his heart with them, but because he sees the keeping of
them cannot stand with his present safety; for after the storm and
danger is over, he would be glad to get them again, if he could.
There are many who thus part with their finnes, as the Merchant
with his wares, only in a storm, when they lie on their sick
beds, or under some wrack of Conscience, for fear of hell, or
as Jacob parted with Benjamin, because otherwise he would
starve, necessity drove him to it, or as Phileuel parted with Mi-
chal, because otherwise he should loose his head, he did not
part with her out of hatred, but out of fear, the King sent for
her, and if he had detained her, it might have cost him his
head; therefore (out of fear) he parted with her, though he
wept after her.

3. You Pray for heaven, and one would think you did desire
this, wee say, the end of a Christian is desirable, though not
the beginning, the rest, though not the labour; you see Balaam
the prophet might die the death of the righteous, though he had
no heart to live their lives. So that one would think they did
desire heaven.

But indeed as long as thy heart is corrupt and unregenerate,
you do not desire heaven, if you knowest what heaven is. If
a man should ask thee, thou who sayest, thou desirerst heaven,
what doest thou think heaven is, it would I think, pose thee. But
it may bee thou wilt say, thou conceives heaven to bee a place
of pleasure and delight, a place free from all miseries and trou-
bles, and the like. For this is the utmost heaven thou canst desire.
Thou lookest on it and desires it, as a place of peace and rest, not
of grace and holiness. If I should now tell thee, that heaven is to be
rid of all thy lusts and corruptions, I beleive heaven would not
be so desirable to thee. Thou desirest heaven, but is under a
false notion, a heaven suitable to thy self, and thats the least of
heaven. I have told you not long agoe, of a man, a heaven, what a corrupt heart doth fee, and think to bee hea-
ven, and that's heaven indeed to a godly man. To what I have
said of another subject, I will now adde this. That didst thou
know the company of heaven, the imployments of heaven, the
joynings of heaven, thou canst never desire heaven, thy heart
being corrupt.

1. The company of heaven, shall I tell you? there's none o
your mind there. And it is no great happiness to bee in such a
place, where they are all of different minds from you. Two
cannot walk together, faith the Prophet (they cannot live to-
gether, take delight together) unless they bee agreed. Now
there is no agreement between the company of Heaven and th
spirit, as it is corrupt. See what the company of Heaven is, enquir
what they are.

First,
First, There is God, and do you think there is any agreement betwixt God and you; why, he is holy, and thou art unholy; he is pure, thou art impure, &c. and without holiness, no man can see God.

Secondly, There is Christ, there are the glorious Angels, all these are thine enemies, as thou art in a natural condition.

Thirdly, There are the blessed Saints, and those are such as thou hast despised, such as thou hast persecuted here in the World, such as thou couldst never indu re upon Earth, but flye from and avoid, is this company desirable in Heaven? no such matter. If they bee now hateful to thee, while they have something of thy self in them, (they have corruptions in them, as well as thou, though not under the power of them as thou) Oh how hateful would they be, when these corruptions are removed, when they are better, and thou worse! But what's this to torment thee, in comparison of the presence of God in them is but the spark of holiness, in God those eternal fires of holiness, and if the spark bee a torment, what is the fire? As the Prophet speaks, Who shall dwell with everlasting fires.

2. Look upon the imployments of Heaven, and see if those bee desireable to thee in thy natural estate.

There is keeping of an eternal Sabbath, there is praising and glorifying God to all eternity, and would not this bee a tedious thing to thee? canst thou endure to praise God for ever, when now a rack of a Psalm is burdensome, to keep an eternal Sabbath, when a duty is tedious to thee?

3. Add to this the enjoyments of Heaven, and here I can name nothing which thou wouldst think it a mercy to enjoy;

Them wee branch into four participatches.

1. Shall I say you shall enjoy God there, who though happiness to a gracious heart, yet a torment to a corrupt spirit. I have read of the Irish Earth, that no venemous creature can endure to live upon it, that if a man should make a circle of Irish Earth, and put a little English Earth in the midst of it for a center, if a Toad, or any venemous creature were upon the English Earth, it would dye there, rather than come upon the Irish ground. I tell thee, the Irish Earth will better brook a Toad, than Heaven a sinner, or a sinner Heaven.

2. You shall enjoy freedome from sin, never sin more. Not to sin is here our Law, hereafter it shall be our Nature. And is this a mercy to bee rid of sin, which is meat and drink now? what, can the Drunkard be willing to bee rid of his cups? the unclean person of his Da blab the covetous man of his bags? can he think an eternal divorce from such things, hee loves so dear, a mercy?

3. You shall enjoy perfection of Grace, to bee swallowed up with holiness.

4. An eternal Sabbath.

And these are things which certainly a corrupt heart doth not desire.
And to you lee, it is possible for a man to pray for those things which he hath no desire, were granted.

Therefore the Character is firm, that it is the sign of a sincere heart in prayer, when he doth truly desire the thing prayed for.

And thus much for the sixth Character.

7. Character.

The seventh and last. A sincere heart in Prayer doth not only desire, but truly intend the compassing of the thing prayed for. As the wife Mariner, hee hath not only an eye to the Star, but his hand also upon the Helm, or as the Plow-men of Sparta, they had one hand up to Ceres, whom they feigned the Goddess of Corn, and the other upon the wheels of the Plow, they joyned plowing with praying. So here, a sincere heart, hee doth not only pray, lift up his heart to Heaven, but he puts also his hand to the work, to compass what hee prays for; doth hee pray for pardon of sin? hee labour to get his Faith more strengthened in assurance of pardon. Desires hee subduing of corruption: hee makes use of Christ, &c. Desires hee grace? hee is careful in the use of all means, &c. Psalm 5. I will direct my Prayer, and look up, and men in array. The words are very emphatical, there are two military words used in that place, the first to set or put an Army in array. So hee would order his Prayers, and then hee would look up, and stand sentinel.

Gods power and grace must not exempt us from the use of the means, but make us more diligent in the use of all means to have our desires accomplished.

Wee read that Joshua's sword, and Moses prayer were to go together; if the sword had gone out without Prayer, if they had fought, and had not prayed, they had not prevailed, for God will not be neglected, if the Prayer had gone up, and the Sword had not gone out, had they prayed, and not fought, they had not had success, for God will not be tempted, but both these went together, and then Gods blessing was on them.

So here, should wee intend and not pray, wee can look for no good, wee go out in our own strength, and cannot prevail, and should wee pray, and not intend, wee may expect the same success, God will neither be tempted nor neglected; But if wee join them both together, if the hand back the heart, intendours second our desires, wee may expect Gods blessing on us.

This is the last Character. A sincere heart is conscionable in the use of all means, for the accomplishing the things prayed for.

There is yet a third Particular, wherein to clear the sincerity of your hearts, and that is in matter or mourning. I told you, that it was possible for a man, not only to pray, but to seem to mourn too, and yet his heart be unsound. You read of the Israelites, they did not only pray, but they joyned fasting to prayer, as you see in the
Of Hypocrisy.

the next words to my Text, but more plainly, Zach. 7. 5. When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth Month, did you at all fast to me, faith the Lord? There was fasting, and mourning joyed to fasting, yet hearts unfound. There is false mournings, as well as true; Crocodile tears, false tears, as well as false prayers. And therefore it behoves us to try the sincerity of our hearts, in mourning for sin.

Wee will lay downthese Characters of it.

1. Character.

A sincere mourning, is a deep mourning, a sad and serious sorrow for sin. Such a sorrow as doth deeply affect the heart, with the thoughts and apprehensions of the burthen and bitterness of sin.

A sincere mourner hath had and deep apprehensions of the nature, demerit and filthiness of sin, he looks upon sin as an offence against a just, a pure, a holy God, as the breach of a pure, a holy, and an eternal Law, as a wounding and crucifying of Christ, as a grieving and saddening of the spirit of Grace, as a wounding and undoing his own soul for ever. Which deep and inward thoughts of the nature of sin, work deep, and inward mourning for sin. The heart is wounded, the soul humbled and grieved, his spirit melted and peeced within him for sin, which he hath committed against God. It is not his tongue only that repents in expressing and confessing, his eyes in weeping, but his heart in deep and inward mournings for sin. Another may make more noise, more cryings, roarings, howlings, but his sorrow is more inward, more secret, more still, and yet more deep. As you know the deepest waters run the stilldest, so the deepest sorrow makes least noise. So that is the first, a sincere mourning, is a deep mourning. An Hypocrite, his mournings are but shallow mournings, hee hath but shallow and fleeting thoughts of the nature and demerit of sin; hee may say with Pharaoh, I have sinned, or cry out in a strait, Lord have mercy upon mee, or hang down his head like a bulrush for a day, or roar upon the present rack of trouble for a time, but he never hath any deep and serious thoughts of sin, as sin. His prayers are howlings, and his mournings are roarings. Gods people they mourn like Doves, wicked men they bellow like Bulls under the apprehension of sin.

2. Character.

A sincere mourning, is an universal mourning, hee mourns for all sins.

As hee hates all, small and great, so hee mourns for all, yet for such sins is his heart affected, which another man slight doth not discover to bee sins. An unfound heart may mourn for some greater sins, such as have made great wounds and gashes in his conscience: but for sins, quotidiana incursions, for

Peccatia variatum conci- cetiam.

omif-
omissions and common frailties, wantings of thoughts, imperfections in duty, deadness, coldness, unbelief, these gnats can hee swallow, his light doth not discover these to be sins.

Nay, yet further, A sincere mourning is not only an universal mourning, that hee mourns for all sins of his own, but hee mourns for other mens sins as well as his own, he hath a fountain within him, which runnes over to the good of others. Wee have read of some who have mourned for their own sins, and yet have been unfound. You see Pharaoh, Ahab, Judas. But wee never read of any who were grieved with, and have mourned for the sins of others as well as his own, but their hearts were found. Lot his righteous soul was grieved for the sins of Sodom, and yee know his heart was found, hees called Righteous Lot. David hee mourned for the sins of others, yea such as were his enemies, as hee faith, Rivers of tears runne down mine eyes, because mine enemies keep not thy law: And you know David was sincere, God tells us hee was a man after his own heart, and the heart of David was single and sincere with God. The like I might tell you of Moses, of Samuel, of David, Nebuchad, and others; hee that mourns only in relation to guilt and hell, that man corrupts runnes out only for his own house. Hee mourns for sinne no farther than it doth reflect upon himself, and do not for sin as sin, but sinnes it is evil to him, as it binds him over to the wrath of God, and eternal damnation.

But hee that mourns for sinne, in his own nature, as an offence to an holy, pure, gracious God, his fountain runs over to the life of others, hee goes and mourns over other mens sins as well as his own. Wee read the Angels, they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner. What is the ground? do they receive any further addition of good thereby? no they are full, but therefore do they rejoice, because God is further glorified. And if joys were capable of sorrows, heaven of tears, they would upon the same ground mourn for the sins of mee, because thereby God is dishonoured. And if wee could see God as they do, our hearts would be filled with grief, our eyes with tears, to see, the God so great, so gracious, so holy, to be abused and wronged by wicked men, though wee no way guilty of their sinne. Thus a sincere heart hee mourns for other mens sinnes as well as his own; he is grieved when his enemys do break Gods laws, not so much because they hurt or wound him, but because they dishonour God and wound their own souls. It troubles him to see men swear and lye, to jyn hearts & hands together against God, his cause, his Church, his people, his Ministers, not because they hurt him, but strike against God, and so but beat themselves against a rock, and break themselves, do that which will turn to their own shame, and frowrrow at the last, which is the best end that can bee expected of sin.
3. Character.

3. Sincere mourning is a mourning for sin, a sorrow for sin. Sorrow is like Mercutius influence, good if joyned with a good Planer, bad if it bee joyned with a bad, Planet. It was good in Peter, it was naught in Judas, good in David, naught in Abish. In the one it was worldly, in the other it was a godly sorrow, the one was a sorrow for the evil of punishment, the other for the evil of sinne; the one roared under present lashes, the judgement and punishment of sinne, as Augustine saith, 'Reposa vocant melius,' the other the evil caused, not the evil causing, the evil of punishment, the present lashes, not the evil of sinne. You shall see the difference of it in Pharaoh and David. God you see punished Pharaoh for sinne, plague upon plague, judgement upon judgement, and hee cries under the lashes, the present judgement. Oh! take away this plague, take away this death also, take away these lice, these Caterpillars, &c. but there was not a word of sin.

But I have sinn'd, faith David, I beseech thee take away the iniquity of thy servant. One would have thought hee should have prayed to have the plague removed, which was then on the people. But hee faith take away this sinne, not this plague, nay, in the 17th ver. Continue the plague if thou pleasest, against me and my fathers house, only pardon mine iniquity. Why thus, because hee law sinne a greater evil than the plague, and therefore desires rather to be rid of the sin, than the punishment of it. Here was now a vast difference between the sorrows of the one and the other. Take away this plague, faith Pharaoh, but continue the sinne; Take away the sinne, faith David, though thou continue the plague. The one hee mourned under the present lashes, the other under sinne. Sincere mourning is a mourning for sinne, and not for sinne as clad with wrath, but for sinne abstractly, sinne in its own nature, not for sin in its damning, but for sin in its defining nature.

4. Character.

4. Sincere mourning is a proportional mourning, there are two proportions of sin: First, of the measure. Secondly, of the merit of sin. Where the heart is sincere it is proportionable.

1. To the measure of sin. Great sins must have great sorrows, thou hast abounded in sinning, thou must abound in sorrowing. Thus you see it was with Manasse, he was a great sinner, and a great sorrower, he was humbled greatly faith the Text. So Mary Magdalene, a great sinner, and she is a great sorrower.

Its true, I grant, That sincerity doth not lose so much in the measure, as the truth of mourning, there may be godly sorrow in a drop.
Of Hypocrisy.

a drop, in one tear, when there is not godly sorrow in a Sea of Teares: But this I say withall, that sincere hearts doe ever labour to carry a proportion between their finnings and their sorrowings, between their repentings and their revoltings, and though a man may bee justified in heaven, without such a measure of sorrow, yet hee will scarce bee justified, or get peace in the court of his own Conscience without it. Thats the first.

2 The second Proportion is, To the merit of Sin. Sincere mourning is proportionable to the merit of sinnes, as the demerit of sin is infinite, so sorrow for it must bee an infinite sorrow, infinite I say, not in the act and expression, yet in the affection of the soul. As it is said of a wicked man, if hee should live for ever hee would sinne for ever, in respect of his desire and will to sinne, and therefore because hee sins in sano jure, hee is punished in e-terno Dei.

So I may say of a godly man, if hee should live for ever, hee would sorrow for ever. His sorrow is infinite in degree and affection, though finite in the act and expression of it. And indeed a bounded, a stunted sorrow is no sorrow. Hee whose heart and eyes do dry up together, whose expression in tears and affections of sorrow do end together, though hee had wept a sea of tears, hee hath not yet mourned for sin. As I told you last day, that a Sincere heart doth rise up praying from Prayer, so hee goes away weeping from weeping, with a weeping heart when his eyes are dry. Godly sorrow hath affections of mourning, when the expressions of mourning ceaseth, because every drop of tears doth arise from a sea of tears within. As every act of faith doth arise from a believing disposition, a habit of faith within; so every expression of sorrow from an affection of sorrow in the spirit; every drop of tears from a spring and fountain of tears within the soul. Hence wee read, 1 Sam. cap. 7, ver. 6, where their sorrow is expressed by this phrase, They drew water as out of a well, as out of a spring, and poured out before the Lord. Their eyes did not empty so fast as their heart filled. Their eyes could not pour it forth so fast, as their hearts did yield it up. All their expressions of mourning were less, than their affections of mourning. And shall I now tell you, though your sorrow may bee sincere, and yet not proportionable to the measure of sin, yet your sorrow cannot bee sincere, if not proportionable to the merit of Sin; if it be not infinite sorrow, infinite I say, in the desire and affection, though not in the act and expression.

And alas how few there are Sincere mourners! you that are sturdy Sinners, you dry eyed Sinners, you hard hearted Sinners, when was the time you have thus mourned for sin, wee see your finnings every day, but who hears of your repentings? wee hear of your drunkenesse, your swearing, your lying, your gaming, your dicing, and revelling, even till the morning watch upon
the Lords day, but wee hear not of your repentings; In stead of that we hear of your new finning; you add Sin to Sin, not repenting to finning. As it was said of Ier., that hee added this to all his wickednes, that hee shut up John in Prison, this was the great aggravation of his sin, this kill'd his measure, hee added this to all. So there are some who will add this to all their sins, that add this to all their drunkenness, their swearing, gaming, reveling, to persecute and evilly intreat those who are Gods messengers to them.

Take heed of thus adding drunkenness to thirst, and malice, and rage to drunkenness, lest Gods wrath and jealously smok against such excesses. Deut. 29. 19, 20.

5 Character.
Sincere mourning is a faithful mourning.

So much faith, so much sincere mourning, so much godly sorrow; They are like the fountain and the flood, the one arises no higher than the other. In respect of donation, faith and repentance are infused at the same instant of time; though in respect of manifestation, repentance goes before faith. Faith being like the sap, which is hid in the root, more secret in the heart, and repentance like the bud, which is sooner discerned than faith, both to a man's own self and others. Yet in respect of the order of nature, faith doth necessarily goe before repentance. As a legal faith, before a legall sorrow, so an evangelical faith, before an evangelical sorrow. No man can truely repent, but hee who hath some hopes of pardon.

Well then, sincere Repentance, is a faithful Repentance, such a Repentance as doth arise from Faith, by which I mean not, a legal Faith, whereby a man beleeves the threatnings of the Law to bee true, and hee guilty. This is too low. This may breed a vexing, tumultuous, turbulent, flaviush sorrow, but not a godly, sweet, evangelical mourning. But I mean here an evangelical Faith, and yet not the Faith of assurance, or the Faith of evidence; this is too high. There may bee godly sorrow, sincere mourning in that soul, which yet for the present wants the evidence and assurance of Gods love in Christ. But such a Faith I mean which is the lowest spring of godly sorrow. Whereby the soul is persuaded

1. Of the all-sufficiency of Gods Mercy, and Christs Merits for the pardoning of sin.
2. Of the freeness and willingnes of God to pardon sin.
3. And then throws it self upon the Mercy of God, the grace of Christ, for pardon and forgivenes. Which though it appear to bee small, yet it will cost you something before ever you reach this.

But now the mourning of an Hypocrite doth not arise from Faith;
Of Hypocrisy.

Faith, but from lenity, either from some present thing, or trouble of conscience, or from some outward pressures upon the body. And hence it comes to pass that his sorrow is not a constant sorrow, while the trouble lasts, the weight is upon him, so long he howles and cries: but if once the trouble be blown over, the Sky clears, his mourning is done. As Job's faith and praying, will he pray always? Hee will not. So I may say of his mourning, will hee mourn always? Hee will not. When conscience wrings him, when the heart is overwhelmed with trouble, then hee falls a howling, and crying, but when the trouble is over, hee wipes his eyes, and mourns no more. But now again, hee, whose sorrow doth arise from Faith, hee doth not only mourn when conscience is troubled, but when conscience is at peace. Nay, when the heart is fullest of peace and joy, the eyes are biggest with tears; when the pearl of joy is in the heart, the dew of tears is in the eyes. I say, when the soul hath most assurance of God's love, then will Faith produce child-like arguments to raise up the springs of sorrow in us, to open all the fountains of tears in the soul. Oh will the soul say! Hath God been so merciful? and am I so sinfull? Hath he been so good to mee? and I so evil to him? As the frowns of God do break the heart, so the smiles of God do melt and dissolve it.

6. Character.

A sincere mourning is a vital mourning.

There are the mournings of a son, and the mournings of a slave; the one doth arise from fear, the other from love; love to the soul. 1. Of God to the soul. 2. Of the soul to God.

1. From the consideration of God's love to the soul. When the soul sits down, and reckons the immensity, greatness of God's love to it; when it takes all view of what God might have done with it; and what God hath done with it; how justly hee might have damned the soul; and how mercifully God hath saved the soul, what cost, what care, what pains, what stake, what blood hee hath laid out to save us, and how easily hee might have damned us. Oh! this melts and dissolves the soul; the soul even crumbles into dust, and dissolves into water, under the thoughts of it. You see this set down in Ezek. 36. 21. Then shall you remember your doings. Then, when shall God express love, as you see 1 Cor. 25, 26. why then will the soul say to itself, as Absalom to Hushai, is this thy kindness to thy friends? art thou so cruel to him, who hath been so kind to thee? So evil to him, who hath been so good to thee? Oh these thoughts do lay a man in the dust. God hath taken such a way to justify and save men, that if wee bee but men, it will break our hearts that wee have offended him. Who is it that can read over that place without tears? Isa. 43. 24-25. Thou hast bought mee no sweet Cane with money, neither hast thou filled
mee with the fat of thy sacrifices, but thou hast wearied mee
with thine iniquities; and hast made mee serve with thy sins, thou
hast made my mercy to serve, my patience to serve, with thy
sinas, even to look on while thou abusest mee. And what
would a man imagine now would follow after this, Therefore I
will plague thee, I will punish thee. But read and wonder, and
read; withhold from tears if thou canst, if any spark of ingenuity
be in thee, I, even I, am he who blotteth out thine iniquities
for my own names sake, and will not remember thy sins. Here was the
wonder of mercy.

2. It ariseth from the love of thy soul to God. The love of
the person offended doth cause a godly man to mourn, that hee
hath offended him. You see David, Psal. 51. Against thee, against
thee, have I sinned, godly sorrow, sincere mourning is an ingenious
mourning, i.e. a thought of Hell and damnation comes into the
mind, if they do; alas! these do not trouble him so much as his sin;
that he hath grieved and offended so good a God by Sin. Hence
Zachary hath this expression. They shall look upon him whom they
have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c. In which there is nothing
but pure love, the expession is observable, the Prophet doth
not say, they shall mourn as a son for a Father, there may be self-love in that, a child may see himself undone in the loss of a
father; but hee faith, they shall mourn as a father for a son, in which
there is pure love. But now with Hypocrites, it is neither the consideration of Gods love to them, nor any love or good will which
they bear to God, that makes them mourn, but indeed love to
themselves, they have Sinned and are afraid God will damn them
for Sin, therefore it is terror, no principle of love to God, which
draws them to mourn for Sin. As they hate Sin only in reference
to hell, so they mourn for Sin only in reference to hell.

What St. Augustine faith of fear of Sin, I may lay of sorrow
for Sin. He that fears Sin for Hell, fears not to Sinne, but to burn,
but he hates Sinne indeed, who so hates Sin as hell is self. So he who
forgets for Sin for fear of hell and wrath, hee is not sorry for
sin, but howles for fear of hell: but he forswears truly who is more
grieved for Sinning, than he is afraid of burning.
Of Hypocrisy.

Row, this is a sorrow to joy, as Christ expresseth it under the
parable of a woman in traveall. Sincere mourning is a fruitfull
mournings, for repentance is like the waters of jealousy, which ei-
ther rot or make fruitful.

And first it is a heart humbling sorrow.

2 It is a soul fattening sorrow, by the sadness of the countenance,
the heart is made better.

3 It is a grace strengthening, a grace increasing sorrow. And there-
fore doth God preserve such springs as these in the hearts of his
people, on purpose to water the seed of holinesse, the garden of
graces in the hearts of his people. Every grace within us doth look
fresh, every disposition within us buds, shoots forth after a showe
of repentant tears, that man who hath such springs as these within
him, his graces must needs flourish, they cannot wither nor decay.

Observe it, A mourning Christian is evermore a thriving,
and growing Christian.

4 It is a divorcning sorrow, it breaks the league and union be-
tween heart and Sin. There is a league between the heart and
Sin, they are as near together as the skin to the flesh, as the
flesh to the bones, the bark to the tree: Godly sorrow doth di-
%vorce between a man's heart and Sin, separates between them,
it sets the soul at a distance with Sin. Unfound hearts may mourn,
may lament Sin, but leave not Sin, they Sin and Repent, and
Repent and Sin, as if their Sinning did but make matter for re-
pening, &c.

This is like the Drunken mans round, his drink goes out in
tears, and then to drink again. Pharaoh could say hee had sinned,
but hee left not his Sinne, Saul could say hee had Sinned
too, yet hee retained his Sinne, Judas said the like, yet if he had
lived, he had been the same, if God had not changed his heart.
No, if a man should have lain as long in flames as Cain hath, and
should come out of hell, red hot out of flames, hee would bee
the same man still. All the terrors of God, all the horrors in the
World, all the flames of hell cannot change the heart. These
may dare a man, make a man afraid to sin, but not hate Sin, this
must come from a principle of Grace, a Gospel work. The justice
of God may terrify the heart, the power of God may awe the heart,
but it must be the love and mercy of God, which must thaw the
heart, must change the heart. Now godly sorrow doth work a
change in the soul; such a man faith with Job, if I have done inequity
I will do it no more, hee lamenteth Sin and leaveth Sin, he con-
frfeth and forfaketh Sin, God forgives, and he also foregoes sin.

Beside these fruits I might name many more, which are the
fruits of sincere mourning. It worketh peace, our tears end in
joy, it worketh spiritual tranquillity of Confidence, as it work-
eth a change.

And besides these you have seven special and particular fruits,
let down (2 Cor. 7. 11.) of godly sorrow, on which I want time to insist. But now an hypocrites sorrow is a sorrow to sorrow, a penal not a fruitfull sorrow, hee is never the better for all his howling, his heart never the more humble, his spirit never the more broken, his soul never the more set against Sin. These tears they leave him as they found him, they are not changing and transforming tears, hee is never the more watchful, never the more careful to please God, hee rather grows more secure, takes more heart to sin against God, hee thinks hee hath done penance and satisfied the Law, hee hath discharged the former score by his present sorrows, and therefore may beginne a new reckoning, a new score, and sin more freely against God; whereas true mourning makes us watchfull, and so our falls make us secure.

To sum up all in a little,

1 The unbound heart, hee mourns for Sin either as clad with punishment, or as it bringeth the evil of punishment after it, the first you see in Pharaoh, the second in Ahab. The other laments Sin as Sin, sin abstracted and separated from wrath and punishment.

2 The one howls under the present latches, the evil of punishment, the other under the evil of sin.

3 Sence doth provoke the one to mourning, faith and love do caule the other to mourn.

4 The ground of the one is self-love, the ground of the other, love to God.

5 The one is fleshly, the other childish.

6 The end of the one is peace and joy, of the other, it is discouragement and dispair, as in Cain and Judas, &c.

7 The one breeds a bitterness and turbulency of spirit, the other humility, mildness, self-denial. Thus I have shewed you these three things, and cleared them.

I beleive there's many of you, who do not pray at all, many who are yet to shed one tear for Sin, Alas! when was the time, thou hast entered thy Chamber, thy closet, and broken thy heart for Sin, humbled thy soul for Sin? Let mee tell thee thus much, thou hast sinned, this sinne will have sorrow one time or other, if not here in fruitful mourning, hereafter in penal mourning, in weeping and gnashing of teeth. If thou wilt not sorrow for a time thou shalt howl for ever, It may bee thou thinkest no such matter, conscience is now at peace, it is like a book bound up, if once opened your peace shall end in a storm, your joy in sorrow, happy thou, if God wound thee, that hee may heal thee, break thee, that hee may bind thee, humble thee, that hee may comfort thee. It is better bee broken here, than to go whole to hell, better bee wounded here, than to go found to hell, better to bee a sad Saint, than a merry Devil.
What David prayed for his enemies, may we pray for our best friends. Send them down quick to Hell. Send them down here by humiliation, that they may avoid eternal damnation hereafter.

We began with the last first, viz. clear your sincerity in your performances in particular, we named three particulars, in Hearing. Praying. Mourning.

Wee come now to the end, which is the first in order of nature, though we have made it last in time.

2. Clear the sincerity of your hearts in Obedience in general, Now to this as to the former. I will give you some Characters of a sincere Obedience. Sincere Obedience is 1. A faithful, 2. An universal. 3. A fruitful. 4. A filial Obedience. Wee shall only single out some of them, because we are willing to finish this Doctrin.

1. Character.

A sincere Obedience is a full Obedience, an universal Obedience.

It is universal, in respect of the subject, the whole man; it is universal, in respect of the object, the whole Law; it is universal, in respect of duration, the whole life. Hee who obeyes sincerely, obeyes universally, his obedience is not only suitable to the rule, in respect of the nature and quality of it, but it is proportionable also to the rule, in respect of the latitude and extent of his obedience. There is no man that serves God truly, who does not endeavour to serve God fully. Sincerity turns upon the hinges of universality. It is said of David, that hee had respect to all the Commandments of God, and that hee hated every false way. Hee had not obeyed any, if hee had not respected all, Nay which is yet more, Act. 13. 22. hee fulfilled all the will of God, the words are in the plural number, ἐκ τῶν ἄλλων αὐτοῦ, all the wills and Commandments of God; and of Zachary and Elizabeth, Luk. 1. 6. that they walked in all the Commandments of God blameless, hee who obeyes sincerely, endeavours to obey thoroughly. Wee will instance in these branches,

First, Hee will obey God in suffering Commands, as well as doing, in losing, as well as gaining Commands. An unfound spirit may follow God, while hee can follow his own game too, while they can serve God without cost, without pain or love, &c. such men love cheap obedience. But when Obedience comes to bee chargeable, when his Obedience to God, may cost him his liberty, his riches, his estate, then they retire, while Religion and the World do walk in the same path, there are many who will tread the paths of Religion, but when there comes a turning, that they must shake hands and part, riches one way, Christ another; God one way, the World another, then they will forsake Christ. You see it was so with the young man, hee was willing to follow Christ
Of Hypocrisy.

Chrift so far as hee might bee no losser, to far as to keep his wealth too. But when Christ told him, if hee would follow him, hee must fell all, when it comes to this, that either hee must part with his Ritches or with Christ, then hee falls off, and went away forrowing. But hee who obeys sincerely serves God for himself, such a man will obey God, though to the hazard and los of all, hee will obey God in costly, as well as cheap, losing, as well as gaining duties. Such a man prizeth more of one act of Obedience, than hee doth of all his enjoyments, and will take up naked Obedience, though with the los of all. As hee will not commit a sin, though hee might gain the World for it, so hee will not neglect a duty, though hee lose a World for it. You see this in the three Children, in Daniel, and in Queen Maries days, those go in Sheep-skins, who might have gone in Silks, &c.

Secondly, hee will obey God in relative Commands, as well as absolute.

Sincerity doth not only lye in absolute Commands towards God, but in relative Commands one towards another. And where the heart is sincere, hee will not only hear, and pray, and obey God, but hee will walk in all duties of Righteousness, and charity towards his Brother. Hee is such a one as makes conscience of every Command, great or final. Every one comes from the same authority, James 2. 11. For hee that faith the one, faith also the other. And whatsoever hath the stamp of God, the authority of Heaven upon it, though it seem never so small, hee dare not disobey it, where there is a beam of Gods Majesty setting upon the face of a command, hee will submit to it. Men you know will not refuse the Kings Coin, though the piece bee never so small, if the Kings impresssion bee on a penny, it calls for acceptance, as well as a piece; so if the authority of God bee stamped upon the least command, a sincere heart will yeild subjection to it, as well as the greatest, Mat. 5. 19. Hee who breaketh the least of these Commands, shall bee the least, &c. Hee who stands with God for small things, when hee will not forbear an Oath, a cup, a rag for Christ, how should you yeild to the greater. A man may do the smaller, and yet neglect the greater. As the Pharisees, who tithed Mint and Cumin, but the great things of the Law, the love of God, fear of God, these are not regarded. But hee who doth the greater, will not neglect the smaller.

Thirdly, hee will obey God in affirmative Commands, as well as negative Commands.

Hee doth not only look upon what God would not have him do, but hee examines what God would have him do. Dives was cast into Hell, not for oppressing Lazarus, but for not showing mercy upon Lazarus, not because hee took any thing from, but because hee gave nothing to him. There is many a mans Religion lies meerly upon negatives. Hee is no Souter, no drunkard, no
unclean person, as the Pharisdee, hee oppreteth no man, detrauns no man. But if you ask him for the affirmative commands, there hee is nothing, art thou holy? art thou humble? art thou a believer? art thou a sanctifier of Gods day? lovest thou God? fearest thou God? Alas! thes fins, because they are minoris infamie, not so scandalous as the other are, therefore hee makes them nullius culpa, no fins at all, these gnats hee can swallowe, without any straining at them, &c.

4. Hee will obey God in the Spirit of the Command, as well as in the letter of the Command.

There is an intra and an extra in every Command of God. One part of the Law binding the flesh, the other part enjoying the spirit. You see how Christ sets it down, Matthew 5. 21. Thou shalt do no murder, there’s the letter of the Command. Thou shalt not be angry with thy Brother without a cause, there is the Spirit of the Command. Thou shalt not commit Adultery, there is the letter of the Command. Thou shalt not look on a woman to lust after her, there is the Spirit of the Command. An unbound spirit looks no further than the bare letter of the Command, that part which bindes the flesh or outward man only, and if hee do but observe that in the gros, hee thinks hee hath done well; but now a sincere heart, hee looks to the spirit of the Command, and if hee do not observe that, hee hath no peace; if you keep the whole Law in the letter, and give way to your selves to fail in any, do not sincerely endeavour to obey all according to the spirit, your spirits are unbound. Hee that will see God with comfort, must not only obey the letter of the Command, but must bring his heart to the sincere Obedience of the spirit of the Command.

5. Hee will not only obey God only in the Matter, but in the Manner, not only in the substance, but in the circumstance of the Command.

Hee is not only confectionsble to obey God in what hee commands, but his heart is wrought to a confectionsbleness in the Obedience. An unbound heart looks no further than the substance of the Command, if hee have but prayed, if been at Church, hee thinks all is well, hee looks no further. But now a sound spirit, hee looks to the circumstance, as well as the substance, themanner, as well as the matter of the command. When hee prays, hee labours to pray fervently, faithfully. When hee hears, hee will hear humbly, fruitfully, when hee obeys, hee desires to obey willingly, cheerfully, &c. Wee say, bonum est ex integra causa, but malum ex quotlibet defectu. Take any action, if either the Principle whence it doth arise bee not good, that the action arise from corrupt Principles, self-love, carnal fears, or the purposes bee not good, that the aims and ends bee carnal, or if the circumstances bee not good, it spoils the action. If wee pray, and pray not fervently, if wee hear, and hear not fruitfully, if wee obey, and obey not willingly, if wee shew mercy, and do it not cheerfully, if you
you sanctifie the Sabbath, and not with delight, all is worth no-
thing.

There are some circumstances accessory, some necessary, some
wherein the being, and some wherein but the well-being of a
duty doth consist. And if you abstract these from them, the duty it
is worth nothing. Take away fervency, and humility from prayer,
take away faithfulness and fruitfulness from hearing, take away
willings and delight from obedience, all is nothing worth. So
much for the first Character of sincere Obedience. Universal-
ity.

2. Character.

Sincere Obedience is such an Obedience, which doth 1. Come from a
right spring. 2. Is wrought by a right Rule. 3. In a right manner.
4. To a right end. I put all together, that I may not multiply
too much.

1. Sincere Obedience ariseth from a right spring, a sound Obedience
ariseth from sound Principles. A soul renewed, a soul universally
sanctified, and principled from above. Such as the Principle
is, such is a mans Obedience, dead Principles, and but
dead Obedience, unsound Principles, and unsound Obe-
dience. A mans actions can go no higher than his Principles.
There must bee a good tree, before good fruit, the person must
be good, before the actions can bee good, if there bee a crack in
the person, all is naught. Now this sincere Principle which is the
spirit of all our Obedience, it is nothing else but an entire and spir-

It is called 1. A sound heart, in opposition to an unsound, a
false spirit. 2. A perfect heart, in opposition to a Hypocritical
spirit. 3. A single heart, in opposition to a doubleness of spi-
rit. 4. An honest heart, in opposition to a deceitful heart. 5. A
whole heart, in opposition to a half, a divided spirit which God
dares. And where Obedience is sincere, it ariseth from such a spi-
rit. A sound, perfect, etc. spirit.

2. As it comes from a right rife, so hee walks by a right Rule in his
obedience, and that's the whole will of God revealed in his Word;
if God faith, do, hee doth; if God faith, do not, hee will not do.
If hee have no command from Heaven, hee stands still like a ship
becalmed, and wanting a wind, hee will not stir.

Those things which are motives to others move not him. But
when acommand comes, his fells are filled, he is carried on with
strength in obedience to it. Col. 4. 12. Wee have the same
me-
metaphor; bee filled with all the will of the Lord, let the will of God, his command, bee the only motive, that carries you on in the service of God. Thus you see it was with David; he had respect to the Commandments, he had not respect to the world, to men, to his own ends, advantages, which are the spring of others obedience, but hee hath respect to the Command, he eyes that, hee will obey if there be a Command.

A Sincere heart doth not only do things good in themselves, and such as God hath commanded, but hee doth them because God hath Commanded them; Gods precepts are the ground of his practice, Psa. 119. 4, 5. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy Precepts. Oh that my ways were direct, &c.

3. He obeys after a right manner, &c.

4. He levels his actions to right ends.

As nothing below God is the spring of his obedience, so nothing below God is the end of his obedience. Gods grace is the spring, Gods glory is the end of all his obedience. An unsound heart hath bale and unfound ends, credit, repute, profit, esteem or the like. Hee now makes not the world his end, no not the world to come; the salvation of his soul, the end of all his obedience. Indeed this is a secondary, a sublervient, a subordinate end, but not the ultimate end, the primary, the universal end; Gods glory is the Sea, to which all his actions like so many rivers move and bend. It is true I grant, that other ends may creep into the performance of good actions, and that not only lower, but bafer ends than this.

But wee are to distinguish between a mans settled, and his suggested end, a mans settled end may bee one thing, yet his suggested end bee contrary, God reckons according to the settled end, the universal purpose and frame of his Spirit, and not according to suggested ends. It is in this case as it may bee with a man that shoots at a mark, hee aims aright at the mark, but there may come a jog upon the elbow, which may carry the arrow another way, than hee intended. Or as it is with a man that sets out to go to such a haven, he sets out aright, and steers aright by his compasse, but the winds blow contrary and carry him whether hee would not. But then as the Apostle, If I do the thing I would not, it is no more I, but sinne. It was Bernard's case, hee had set upon a good work, and levels his action to the glory of God, that was his aim, his end, but there were other ends suggested, pride, ostentation, vain-gloriy, which hee observing, encounters them in this manner, &c. get hence, avoid, you were not the ground of my beginning this work, nor will I for you conclude this work. And it would bee our wildome, when a man hath set his heart aright in the beginning, when hee hath set out aright, if any other ends bee suggested, to reject them in the like manner, being neither the spring of the action, nor the end of the action.
Of Hypocrisy.

Obj. Has you will say further, Is it requisite for the clearing of the sincerity of our hearts, that we have a continual eye to the glory of God in every action we do? Is there required, such an actual intention of the Spirit in every particular action, &c. that he should aim at God's glory?

Ans. For the Answer of this, I must lay down this distinction.

There is first an actual.

Secondly, An habitual aim and intention.

For the first of these, An actual intention of the Spirit in every particular action that a man doth to the glory of God. It is utterly impossible in the state and condition of this life, it is possible for Angels and glorified Saints to do it, for they are in God's vision, and it is all their work in heaven, but it is impossible for us to do it here below, nor was it possible for Adam in his innocency to do it.

But now secondly, There is an habitual inclination in us in every action we do, to aim at God's glory, though there be not the actual intention of the Spirit in every action we do. It is with us as with a man travelling towards a town, he thinks in the morning to go to such a town, such a place he aims to be at, at night, and therefore sets out towards it, and though he doth not think of this every step he takes, yet is his purpose in his journey to rest there at night. Or as it is with a man who comes to Church, his end is to hear the word of God, yet in every word he hears spoken, he hath not the thought of his end upon his spirit, but he is there by virtue of his first intention. So here though in every particular, there be not an intention of Spirit to level this or that to this end, yet is it the drift and habitual scope of the Spirit, that God's glory may be the end of his actions.

Nay, Thirdly, Though we are not able to do it in the actual intention, yet it must be our care to renew our habitual intention, and as far as we can, to draw up these habitual purposes, into actual levellings of these and these particular actions to the glory of God. There are some go further in this than others.

Assure your selves, the nearer you come to an actual intention of spirit for God's glory in particular acts, the nearer you are the life of heaven. How ever let us so renew our first thoughts, habitual intentions, as that we may thereby keep in the right path, the right way, till we come to our journeys end at night. So much intention a Traveller holds up as to keep him in the right way, to keep him from going into by paths, although not so much as shall make him in every step he takes to think of his first intention, the end of his journey. So much for the second Character.
3. Character.

Sincere obedience is a fruitful obedience.

It is a growing obedience, hee contents not himself with the measures hee hath, but labours after perfection. Phil. 3. ver. 12. to the 15. I have not yet attained, nor am already perfect, &c. A sincere heart hee aims at the top of all, hee looks at the work it self, hee propounds not to himself a shorter end than God would have him reach unto, Gods end is his, and that's perfection; hee desires conformity to the pattern in the mount, to bee holy as God is holy, perfect as &c. An unfound heart hee bounds and fits himself, at these and these measures, and desires to go no further; holiness of holiness and perfection of grace, is not his aim nor desire. Hee may desire so much, as may serve his own turns, and ends, no more, so much as may serve his own advantages, hee desires; but cares for no more than hee can make use of in the way. As the Physician who doth not desire excellency in the Science, yet he will take in so much skill, as may serve his turn and practice, but hee cares not for more. The like I might say of any other Artift, whole spirit is not taken with the beauty of the things themselves, yet he desires so much as may serve ends.

Even to an unfound spirit, whole heart is nothing taken with the beauties of holiness, yet hee may desire so much as may serve his turns, his secular advantages, but hee will have no more. A Trade- man will take in somewhat, it may bee hee will not swear bloody oaths in the face of his customers, this were to drive men away, this could not stand with his ends, if hee were such a one, men would avoid him; and therefore hee will take in so much as will serve his trade, and no more: these men desire the Talent, not for the masters use, but for their own use, So in any other. But now it is otherwise with a sincere heart, his desire is to abound in holiness, hee seeks so much beauty in God, that he cannot be at rest till hee be swallowed up with God, made all like him, hee seeks so much excellency in Grace, that nothing but perfection will satisfy him. Nay, and he doth not only make perfection his utmost end, but hee labours after perfection with his utmost strength and endeavours. And the ground of all this, is, because a sincere heart looks singly to God, and therefore serves him with all his might, while a mans heart is divided, his strength is also divided. That mans strength is not whole for God whole heart is not so. But when God is made the one of a mans desires, the one of a mans affections, the one of a mans life and comfort, then will hee bee the one of a mans endeavours too, and a mans desires to serve God with all his might. Such men, again, give up themselves to the service of God. Lord I am thine, faith David, and therefore will do his work with all their
their strength. As there are none more strong in the Devil's work, than such as have fold themselves to it, as it was said of Abaa, hee fold himself, hee gave over his whole heart to sin. So there is none more industrious in God's work, than such as give themselves up to God, such as pass over themselves by deed of gift to him. When a man can once say truly with them in Isa. 44. 5. One shall say, I am the Lords, &c. Then is his whole might laid out in the service of God. Thus a sincere Obedience is a fruitful Obedience, an abounding Obedience, as God doth not flint his mercy to him, so hee doth not his service to God. If indeed mercy had been bounded to us, wee had been undone, if hee had said, I will pardon some sins, but not all, or if hee had said, I will pardon all, I will justifie, but not sanctifie, or if hee had said, I will do this, &c. but not, &c. Well, there is the third Character.

4. Character.

A sincere Obedience is a filial obedience, it is the obedience of a son, not of a slave, it is voluntary, evangelical, free, willing Obedience, not a legal, servile, and forced Obedience.

It is set down as the Character in Psal. 110. 3. Thy people are a willing people, devoted to his laws and service, they are willing to hear. Speak Lord, for thy servans hearest; they are willing to do; Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Hence those breathings and aspirations of soul. Oh! that my ways, &c. There is no task too hard, no imployement too great. They are willing to suffer too, to go through good reports, and bad reports, through a Sea, and through a Wilderness, through the hottest services, and strongest opposotions for Christ, it is a chearful Obedience, hee delights in the Law of God. As it was said of Christ, so it may bee laid of him in some measure. It was meat and drink to him to do his Fathers will, duties they are medicines to unsound spirits, but meat to him. Hence David lets down this for a Character of a godly man, Psal. 1. 2. His delight is in the Law of God, and Paul speaks of himself, that his delight was in the Law of God, as concerning the inner man. And David hath it up and down, Psal. 119. Lord, how I love thy Law! eccho like, in Psal. 40. 8. I delight to do thy will, thy Law is in my heart. There was a Principle within him agreeable to the Precept without him. As the eye delights in seeng, the ear in hearing, so the heart in obeying. Actions of nature, you know they are actions of delight. So of the new nature. But this must bee understood, when the Principle within, which should yeeld Obedience, is not disturbed, for as it is in nature, though it bee a natural act, and full of delight for the eye to see, yet if the eye bee offended or hurt, it will breed a tendoueness in the eye to do its natural act, and that in which formerly it did take so much delight. So here, though to obey and walk in Gods ways, bee acts most suitable to the new nature, yet if the spiritual Principles
within bee wounded and hurt, it may breed some kinde of weari-
somenes and unwillingnes in the soul to obey for the time, which
could be the dearest of Gods Children in diverse cases, in these 7.
1. They may bee damped with carnal affections.
2. They may bee tyred with the difficulty of the work.
3. They may bee pulled back with the prevail of corruption.
4. They may drive heavily under some vexing and lusting
   temptation.
5. In case of the spirits withdrawment of himself, which is ei-
   ther probational or penal.
6. Or in the case of neglects of duty and communion with God.
7. In case of some dangerous relapse into former sins.
   Any of which, may breed a kinde of weariness and unwillingnes
   upon the soul, yet at that time there is some willingness of the
   spirit, when there is a reluctance of the flesh. And the soul will
do its former works, though not with so much heartiness as for-
merly, yet with as much Obedience, and serves God when he
hides himself.

And thus much shall now serve for this use of Trypt.
Wee will adde another use, and conclude,

Use of Exhortation. Which hath four Branches.

1. Branch.

Get a sincere heart.

Otherwise all you do is worth nothing: I speak unto you, who
do abound most in duties, in performances; you, who pray, who
hear. Oh! do you labour to get a sincere heart in the midst of your per-
formances? When you do any publick work, look to your hearts,
beware of base ends, base aims, least they creep in, and poison all
your works. Beware of a double eye, an eye towards God, and
an eye toward your selves, when in opposition. Let it bee said
of all you, who put your hand to any publick works in these pub-
lick times, as it was said of a Royal Commander, that in all his ac-
ions bee placed ostentation behinde, and conscience before him,
and sought not the reward of a good deed from fame, but thought
the deed itself done a sufficient reward. Oh do you! And
when you have to do with more private duties, look to your
hearts, let your tongue and heart answer one another, beware least
your heart give your tongue the lye, in speaking that your heart
doeth not advise. I have shewed, this may bee done. Do you go la-
bour, that your heart may go with your tongue, your affections
may go hand in hand with all your expresssions? Nay, rather let
your expressions bee but as so many breathings from the like af-
fections within, so many streams issuing from a fountain and spring
of affections within. My Brethren, this is the great thing I would
press upon you. The power of his Word, and light of his Truth
hath brought you I suppose to a form. I hope few are among you,
but will seem to carry the outward face of Religion. Few but will pray, will hear, will do duty. Many favour Religion, who have no favour of it. It is my desire to exhort you who do much, that you would not lose what you do, do much, and yet perish at last. I tell thee, if thou couldst heap up mountains of prayers, if weep a Sea of tears, if thou couldst macerate thy self with fasting, and humbling thy self, as many thousand years as the World hath flood minutes, from the Creation, yet without sincerity, all this is nothing. What the Apostle hath of charity, I may lay of sincerity, if I speak with the tongues, &c. Wee read there shall many come to Christ at the last day, and say, have we not seen preaching; have we not seen praying, and in prayers &c. They thought they had great wrong done them, why should not Christ have them as well as any others? why not accept of their works as well as of others; and meaner than these too. Why here was the ground and reason, there was a want of sincerity, they had but served themselves in serving him, and therefore he doth not own them. Oh! then let mee exhort you all, who are much in duties, labour to get sincerity to accompany all. You hear, you pray, &c. get sincere hearts in hearing, in praying, &c. The rather,

1. Motive.

1. Because sincerity sets a value and price upon the meanest work, it makes the meanest action acceptable unto God. Wee read, Cant. 5. Christ is laid to drink of the Milk as well as the Wine, to eat of the Honey, &c. That is, to accept of the meanest work and performance, when there is sincerity to accompany it, Milk, &c. A sigh, a groan, a tear, a breathing of the spirit shall finde acceptance where the heart is upright, which I told you cannot bee, if there bee the love and liking of the least sin. God delights more in the imperfect breathings of a sincere heart, when there is not strength to bring forth an expression, than hee doth in all the flourishes and glorious expressions of an unsound heart. Sincerity makes the meanest works mighty with God, it puts weight and value to all. A work doth not make up the want of sincerity, but sincerity will make up the want in a work, as in 1. King. 15. 14. Hee will own the weakest duty, if sincerity bee in it; Hee will not refuse our works, as vvee do gold, not because it vvee goodnes, but greatness; hee will not reject them for want of grains, if the gold bee good. Hee hath a mercifull allowance for such works, where the heart is sincere in the doing of them, though the things done bee attended vwith many imperfections. And that’s the first Motive.

2. Motive.

2. Because sincerity distinguishes all our works from the works of others. The day is coming, when the persons and vworks of men shall bee distinguished one from another. And as you vwould
have your persons distinguished from others at the great day, when Christ shall come to separate the precious and the vile, the Sheep from the Goats, the good from the bad: you would then bee glad to have your works distinguished, when all the works of men are to bee tried and burned with fire, to see whether they will endure trial, yea or no; you would be glad then to have something in your works, to distinguish them from others that are to perish. Why then, if ever you would have that, labour now to get Sincerity. Sincerity will do this, it will set such a stamp, such a Character upon them, as no false coin, no work of any Hypocrite can have, and therefore labour for it.

3. Motive.

3. Because otherwise all thy prayers, thy tears, thy duties, all is lost, and that is a sad case. If a man had laid out much pains and cost about a work, he would be sorry to lose all he had done for want of a little more. You have done much, it may bee, suffered much in the ways of God, would you not now lose all your former labours, all your prayers, your tears, your many sad hours spent in the ways of godliness, would you not lose all in conclusion; Oh! labour to get a sincere heart: if not, you will assuredly lose the things you have wrought, God will never own them. Though the things bee materially good in themselves, as what better than praying, hearing: &c. yet if the heart bee not sincere in them, God will never own them. You see it in the first of Isaiah: the works were good, and such as God had commanded, such as his soul delighted in, yet wanting this sincerity, all was nothing, &c.

4. Motive.

4. Because sincerity is the chiefest thing God eyes in men, the main thing which God now desires under the Gospel. God looks not for a legal perfection from you, in respect of legal, actual, universal, personal Obedience, hee desires sincerity, and that under the Gospel, is perfection.

5. Motive.

5. Sincerity will afford us comfort in the saddest times, of our soul or body, in our spiritual and temporal sorrows, &c. when other things cannot minister comfort, when duties and prayers must stand as far off, and are not able to reach forth any comfort to us, yet sincerity can. In the greatest darkness of the soul, when the soul is compassed with thick darkness, sincerity will open a Casement, and thereby let light into the soul, Psal. 112. 4. Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness, in the darkest, whereas Hypocrisy is like painted windows, keeps out light; Sincerity will be like windows of Glass, transparent, let in light.
Of Hypocrisy.

6 Motive.

Sincerity doth fence the heart against apostacy, Partial and Total.

Wee will now come to the means to get a sincere heart, Cure Hypocrite in which I shall endeavour to apply my self to the cure of an hypocrite.

But before I come to lay down the means of cure, I must tell you this,

1. It is a difficult cure.
2. A painful cure.

1. A difficult cure. It is one of the hardest cures are wrought hard to cure upon the souls of men. A cure seldom wrought. Wee have heard of a bloody and Idolatrous Manasseh, an unclean Mary, an oppressing Publican, a persecuting Paul, and many other fearful, and great, open, and notorious sinners wrought upon, brought to life. But where have we read of the return of a Judas, of a Simon Magus? Where do we read of one example of such as have been grosse hypocrites, who have afterward been savagely wrought upon?

I confess it is all one with God, to do the one, as the other, it is as easy, with him to change the heart of an hypocrite, as any other, for infinite power and grace knows no difference, but it is a thing not so usually done: And though as easy in respect of God, yet more difficult quoad nos. And so I would have you understand me, that the difficulty is in respect of us.

2. It is hard to convince such a man, that hee needs a cure, you Hard to see it in Rev. 3. ver. 16, 17. God tells them they were luke-warm, neither hot nor cold, there was their distemper, and yet you see what thoughts they had of themselves, in the 17. ver. Thou sayest, thou art rich, and increased in goods, and hast need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. So you see it is hard to convince such a man. Another man is easily convinced, the very lives of them who are holy, are convictions to his Conscience, and if the word be held out, he is ready to fall down, as not able to stand up under the light and evidence of it. In such men we have a friend within them, even their own natural consciences are on our side, and ready to take part with us against themselves, and fly in their own faces, telling them such and such things ought not to be done. But now in the other, neither the examples of holy men, nor precepts of the word, do convince them; for in outward appearance, they walk as blameless as the best. Nay and natural Conscience is also for them, and being satisfied with some general performances of duty, is ready to take part with them, and to withstand any conviction that can be alleged. You see this in the Scribes and Pharisees, they walked blame-
blameless in the general to the eyes of the world, as you hear his confession in opposition to the Publicans; and they fasted and prayed, and did much, and by that the mouth of conscience was stopped, the quarrels of conscience were answered, and you finde how hard it was for Christ himself to convince them. They were so far from being convinced by his example, that they thought themselves more strict than he; he did, but they would not accompany themselves with sinners, and therefore they gave out the was a wine bibber, a glutton, a friend of Publicans; and for his doctrine, this was so far from convincing them, that they thought their lives more strict than his precepts, they were followers of the Law, exact and rigid in legal observances, and thought his doctrine too licentious, too full of liberty for them. So that is the first, it is hard to convince them.

2 It is hard to humble them. Humiliation follows conviction, if hard to convince, hard to humble. Do wee denounce threatening against sinners? alas! they are none of them, these threatenings do not concern them but others, for their parts they walk unblameably in the world. It is not the mercies, nor the judgements, the promises, nor the threatenings, the word, nor the works of God which humble them. In others there may be some natural tenderneess, some remorse of spirit when they hear of Gods judgements against sin. But for this man, it is not all the terror of the Lord, not all the humiliating breaking discoveries of sin, or judgement which fasten upon him to humble him. No mans heart so hard as the Hypocrites, hee hath not only a natural hardness, but a contracted hardness, nay a fortified and strengthened hardness, his heart is fortified against all reproof, against all the denunciations of wrath and judgement. You have a taste of it in the Scribes and Pharisaes. You know they were Hypocrites, hee who knew their hearts, better than they knew their own, tells them so. And it was not all the miracles he did in his life, nor all the wonders which he shewed at his death, which could break and humble their hard hearts; you see the Sun was darkened, the earth quakes and trembles, the wall of the Temple was rent, the graves open, the rocks cleave asunder, yet all this doth not move their hard hearts.

3 It is hard to reclaim them, for

1 The Devil hath got greater power in them than in others.
2 The Forts of Sinne and Satan are more strengthened in them.
3 The means of reclaiming leff ineffectual. Hee is able to set out Sermons and duties without any manner of working upon his spirit at all, that which moves others, moves not him, which works upon the hearts of others, doth leave his heart unwrought upon. He is a man, as I told you, prayer-proof, Sermon-proof, and
and Ordinance-proof, no Mercy, no judgement, no promise; no threatening, no word, no works, no prayer, no Sacraments, no physick, no salve, no counsell, no advice, no light of nature, no light of example, no private help, no publick exhortation prevails with his heart; he’s a man in the fore-born hope; his condition neer despearet. Custome in the use of things, doth take away the power of working. You see in your bodies a little thing works upon the humors, when you are not used to it, whereas if accustomed to it, a much greater will not stir the humors.

I have read that esthrideres by customing himself to eat Poyson, at last durst venture upon poyson as meat, nothing did hurt him. The customeable use of things, takes away the power of working. So it is here, the custome of Ordinances in a formal way, doth take away the power of working by them. You see it in the Sacrament; may bee, when you came first to the Sacrament, then Conscience had some natural tenderness in it, and you came trembling to this Ordinance, fearing lest you should profane it, and by that eat and drink your own Condamnation. But now the custome of profanation, hath taken away the terror of profaning this Ordinance, now you come and tremble not. So for the word, time was, when Conscience was green and tender, that the word came with more majesty, more authority on your spirits. Every command came with power, every threat came with trembling, but now you can sit under the most powerful, quickening, convincing, awaking, dispensations of it, and your souls never moved. And hence is it, that your custome with the Ordinances in a customary way, takes off the life, and power, and workings of Ordinances. As custome in sin doth harden the heart, and makes the heart more difficult to be wrought upon: so custome in duty if it be done in a formal customable way. I would rather deal, and should have move hopes of doing good to him who is openly profane, notoriously wicked, than such a man who lyes soaking under Ordinances, and goes on in a formal and customable performance of these duties, without any spirit or life in the doing of them. Thus you see the first, ’tis a difficult cure.

2 It is a painful cure. It will cost thee much pain, many gripes and grieffs, many Prayers and tears, much humiliation and forrow before it can be wrought. Nay, ’tis a cure wrought by undoing all that thou hast done, that must unravel all, unpray thy prayers undo thy services. Thou must not go forward in the way wherein thou art, but must come back all the way thou hast gone, and go another way, if ever thou come to heaven, And this will cost a man some pain. Suppose a man were going to some place, and had gone much of his journey, were now come, (as hee thought) near his journeys end, and one should come to him,
Of Hypocrisy.

him, and tell him, Sir you are clean out of the way; you must go back again, unride all this way you have come, &c. Of how irksome, how hardly would this down with a man at the end of his journey is especially the way being pleasant wherein he was, and full of delight, but the other rough and foul in which he was to go. Alas! would he say, is there no way but turning back? is it not possible to strike over this is irksome. Why so is it with a man here, it may be thou hast set out for heaven, and thou hast gone all thy life in a fair smooth way, and art now come, as thou thoughtst, even to the end of thy journey. And will it not be a hard thing for a man to turn back, to begin in another way, and that a straiter, a rougher, and a deeper way? Why I tell thee, this must bee done before ever thou come to heaven.

It is with a sound Christian and an Hypocrite, as it is with two men, at the top of two houles in a narrow street, one would think that they could easily come to one another, easily reach, but the truth is, hee must come down the height where hee is, before hee can go up to him: A groffe and open sinner, is nearer to him, than a formal hypocrite. As Christ faith, Easier for Publicans and Harlots, &c.

And now judge, is it not a very hard thing and difficult, for a man to undo all hee hath done, to give up all for lost, to come down from the height to which hee hath attained, not without much pains. To turn back that way, wherein hee hath ridden with much difficulty. This is a hard thing, &c. what flesh and blood can bear this.

So that it is not only a difficult, but a painful cure.

1 In respect of the medicines that are to bee applied, hard physick, humbling, lancing, cutting, dismembering, cutting off right hands, &c.

2 In respect of the distemper wherewith these medicines are to encounter.

3 In respect of the pains, gripes, griets, you must endure in the cure.

But this I cannot insist upon. The truth is, the cure is so painf ull, that your spirits would rather continue the disease, than submit to the plaster. But now though the cure be difficult, 'tis possible, 'tis easy with God, though hard to us. And if God have given thee a heart to desire a cure, and a spirit willing to submit to any means may bee used, it is a fair way towards the cure. Well then to come to the cure it self. Having searched thy spirit, and upon diligent search discovered Hypocrisy.

1. Labour to convince thy heart of the evil and mischief of an unshamed spirit. It is a thing which makes thy person, thy performance odious unto God, hee hates thy person, hee hates thy

Prayers
prayers, as you see, 1 Sa. 1. 14. Your new Moons, and your Sabbaths, and your appointed feasts, my soul hates them, which yet were high extraordinary services. And now judge what a fearful thing it is to stand under the hatred of the great God of Heaven and Earth. What dost thou think will be the end of thee? why thou shalt see, Matt. 24, and the last. Thou shalt be cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, and not only cast in, but into the hottest place, where there shall not bee a drop of water to a lake of fire. For it is said of all other sinners, that they shall have their portion with Hypocrites. The Hypocrite shall have the largest portion, hee is the top of that black crew of damned souls. For the present thou lovest all the good in Earth which others do enjoy, and for the future thou lovest all the good in Heaven, which others shall enjoy. Nay, and thou gainest sorer, sharper, more unendurable damnation, than others shall have. Thy duties, thy prayers, thy hearings which would have ministered comfort to thee, if they had been right, do now aggravate and increase thy torment, being unfound. Every Sermon, Prayer, Duty, is but as another stick carried to that structure of fire, to make it hotter, and greater for thee, because done with an unfound spirit.

2. Consider there is a God. Atheism is a great ground of Hypocrisy, and there is no man more an Atheist, than an Hypocrite. Well then, think there is a God. I tell thee, the very belief of this would strike down many base ends, which thou hast in thy service of him. And think him to bee such a God as hee is. That this God is an all-seeing God, one who searcheth the heart, who tryeth the reins. One who knows the secret turnings and windings of thy deceitful soul. Though thou mayest dissemble it with men, bee one thing upon the stage, another thing in the tyring house, one thing in action, another thing in heart and affection. Yet thou canst not dissemble with God, before whom thou liest open, cut up to the back bone, anatomized, all thy internals are seen, as the Word signifies in Heb. 4, 13.

This thought brought home, and suffered to lye upon thy spirit in serious consideration, would e'ne half work the cure, it would cure all gross Hypocrisy, strike down all by-ends, and base ends, which thy spirit aims at in the doing of holy duties, and would do much in the cure of close Hypocrites, in the mending of false Principles, an honest heart vvould not bee false to God, though God should not see him, hee loves God, hee is the friend of God, and you know a friend will bee true to his friend, as well absent from him as present with him, when hee sees him not, as well as when his eyes are on him. But I am not now to deal with a true sincere heart. I am laying down means for the cure of a false heart, and a great one this is. Think and beleive there is a God, and this God an all-seeing God, who knowes thy heart

Y y
Of Hypocrisy.

and spirit. And as hee is all eye to see, to see is all hand to punish thee, if thy heart be not found with him.

3. Means of cure is, Thou must bee new made, the way to mend thee, is to new make thee; thou must bee all undone again, taken in peeces, and made up again, before ever thou canst be better. Some peecing and patching up will not serve the turn, but thou must have a new making, before thou bee better. There is no mending the stream, till there bee an healing of the fountain. The fountain and spring within thee is infected and corrupted, the heart is unsound, and what can bee expected from an unclean heart, but unclean acts? from an unfound spirit, but unfound services? and therefore this must bee made new before ever you bee cured. Thou must have a new Judgement, for thou seest by a little light. Thou must have a new will, for this is corrupt. Thou must have a new heart, for this is desperately wicked. I tell thee, there is no mending thee, but by new making thee. You may go and patch up your selves, but it is but like the putting of a new piece of cloth into an old garment, it breaks out again, and the rent will bee made worse.

4. Is Prayer, which is infar omnium. Oh! desire God with David, to make thy heart found in his Statutes, found in Prayer, found in hearing, found in obedience. That all thou dost may arise from right Principles, have a right rife, go by a right rule, and bee directed to a right end. Pray that God would give thee found Principles, and found purposes. That that little measure of Grace bee implanteth in thee, may bee accompanied with abundance of sincerity and truth of heart.

And having gotten a sincere heart, let it bee your care to fence and guard your heart against Hypocrisy.

I will give you but one preservative which is this,

1. Before you go upon any duty, clear the sincerity of your hearts, make your end as high as may bee. Set out right, loose off well, begin in God, in Gods strength, in Gods grace, in Gods assistance. A good beginning, will make as good a close.

2. When thou art upon the duty, then look to thy heart, suffer no base, no by-ends to steal in, to poison all thou doest. Keep thine eye steady upon God in the doing of the duty. Do the duty as if there were no men, no hopes, no fears, no rewards in the World, as if none but God and thou were in the World.

3. Afterwards when the duty is done, if there hath been any thing, if God have quickened, enlarged, inflamed, humbled thy heart, give God all the glory. Beware leave it bee with thee, as it was with Paul, and his company, that when a fire is kindled, a viper come out of the heat. Hath God kindled a fire in thy heart, warmed, inflamed thy spirit? Oh! beware that a viper come not out of the heat, a viper of pride, of vain glory. Know this, they that seek Gods glory in the work, will give God the glory, when the work is done. If then there have been any good,
Of Hypocry.

... And now this Rule will bee of special use. There are four

1. This will fence thy heart, guard and strengthen thy
   heart against Hypocrisy, this will keep out Hypocrisy, there is no
   place of entrance for it.

2. It will keep down Hypocrisy, for Hypocrisy gets no ground
   so long as it is seen and mourned for.

3. This clears the heart in the main, that thou art no Hypo-
   crite, though there may bee Hypocrisy in thee, yet being seen,
   fought against, mourned for, resisted, it reigns not, it shall not
denominate thee an Hypocrite.

4. It will clear thee of the sin of Hypocrisy, God will never
   charge thee for that which thou chargest thy self withal, hee
   will not impute that to thee which thou imputest to thy self.
   That which is thy misery, God will never impute to thee as sin.
Hypocrisy seen, mourned for, sighed under, resisted, fought
and prayed against, shall never bee a condemning Hypocrisy,
And to much shall now serve for the first branch of the exhorta-
tion, with the motives to get sincerity, with the remedies to cure
Hypocrisy, and preservatives against it.

Second Branch of the Exhortation is. Having gotten, labour to
clear this to your own souls, that your hearts are sincere. It is
a thing possible to be cleared, a man may come to evidence to
himself the sincerity of his own graces and gracious performances.
And it is a thing necessary to be known, in respect of your
peace, of your comfort. So necessary, that you can neither live
with comfort, nor dye with comfort, unless you bee able in
some measure to clear the sincerity of your hearts, the integri-
ty of your spirits. And being a thing so necessary, I will
here lay down some Rules and directions, for the better enabling
of you to this present duty.

1. Rule.

1. Make a thorough and sound search, deccets the low, Hypocrisy is
spun of a fine thread, and is not discerned without diligent search. A
false evidence is the fruit of a superficial search. Though grofs
Hypocrisy is seen without search, yet close Hypocrisy must bee
narrowly searcht into, otherwise you shall not bee able to disco-
very it. Here you must not only read over your selves in your
actions, but in your affections, not only in your practices, but al-
so in your Principles. Hypocrisy lyes low, it is a root sin, The
heart of man is deceitful above measure, faith the Lord, who knows
it? Jer. 17. 9. like a crested picture, on the one side an Angel,
on the other a Devil. And I must tell you, that sin lyes at the
Y y 2...
bottome of a deceitful heart, and therefore it will ask some pains to discover it. It was a faire speech of the Children of Israel, Deut. 5. 29. Whatever the Lord shall say unto us, wee will do, And it may bee they meant as they spake for the time, they were not aware of deceit in their hearts. But bee that saw further into them, than they into themselves, discovered deceit to lye at the bottome, below, which they were not aware of, and therefore it follows, O that there were such an heart in my people! alas! it is but a present pang of conscience, there is no such heart in them. So it was well spoken of Hazael, 2 King. 8. 12, 13, when Elisha told him what bloody cruelties hee should exercise towards Israel. Is thy servant a Dog, faith hee, hee thought the Prophet did him great deal of wrong, what, should ever hee exercise such basely cruelty? but hee saw not the bottome of his heart, as was seen after in the next Chapter. So it was well spoken by them in Jer. 42. 6, 7, 20, 21. When the Princes defined Jeremy to inquire of the Lord, whether they should go, and bound themselves with an oath to obey, whithersoever God bade them go, they would go. But there was a deceit lay low, they had a secret resolution to go into Egypt, and thought God would have sent them thither, and then they would have been taken for an obedient people. But when the message came contrary, they showed the fallenes of and hollownesse of their spirit, and fell into flat contradiction against the word of the Lord. The word that thou hast spoken wee will not do. And therefore seeing the heart is so exceedingly deceitfull, there is great need of thorough search and tryal of our spirits. If you take the first verdict the heart gives up, you are like to be deceived, and therefore we are to observe the Apostles Rule, 2 Cor. 13. 5, to examine and prove; that is, not only to examine, and to take the first Evidence the heart gives up, but prove the Evidence, whether it bee true or no. Deceit lye low. As for example.

Enquiry is made whether I have Faith, &c.

2. Rule.

2. Labour to acquaint thy self with the most sure and clearing Evidences of sincerity, and try thy heart by them. It may bee, thou hearest the Word, and perhaps with joy, thou bewailedst sin, and perhaps with tears, thou avoidedst gross sins with care, thou opposedst common corruptions with zeal. All these are comfortable signes, but they are not infallible evidences of Grace. For what is in all this which Ahab, which Saul, which Herod, which Judas had not? It is a great deal of witcombe in the tryal of our selves, to bee acquainted with those sorts of evidences, which are of a clearing nature, of which I will give you two properties.

1. Those Evidences which are clearing, are such as the
Of Hypocrisy.

Word doth countenance: What ever evidences the Word doth not countenance, they are but the presumptions of our own heart, and never give us comfort in life or death. It is the book must call us, or clear us, at the last day.

A second property of clearing evidences. They must bee such as are universally reciprocal, distinctive evidences. That is, such evidences as are incompatible with any whole hearts are not sincere, and concomitant with them whole hearts are sincere. They must bee such as are essential to a Christian as a Christian. If there bee any who hath them, and is not a Christian, is not sincere, or any, who is a Christian sincere, and hath them not, they are not right. They must bee such as do manifest every person in whom they are to bee sincere, and do discover, where ever they are not, what ever shews they have, they are not sincere.

I have told you formerly on another subject, that what ever another man may do, or have, and yet not bee in Christ, yet not bee sincere, will never bee a sufficient evidence to mee, that having or doing that, I am sincere. And by these two properties there will bee a great deal cast down from being clearing evidences, if I had time to insist on them. Thou prayes, thou hears, thou doest much in the ways of God, but this will not bee enough to clear thy sincerity, for I have shewed you that a man may do all this, and more too, yet not sincere, and therefore these will bee no clearing evidences. And therefore let us go by this rule, examine what are these clearing evidences of your sincerity, and examine your selves by them.

Obj. But how shall I know what are those heart-clearing evidences, that so I may examine my self by them?

Ans. I have shewed you some properties, you see of evidences of this nature. I have also cast down many from being sufficient to clear your sincerity. Wee will now give you some which are clearing evidences.

1 Some taken from the disposition of mourning,

1 An Hypocrite cannot mourn for all sin, it may be he may mourn for general, for common, and sensiball sinnes, but not for close, spiritual and secret sinnes, his unbeliefe, his hypocrisy, pride.

2 An hypocrite cannot mourn for sin as sin, for sin in its own nature, but as clad with wrath and punishment. Now then, if God have given thee a heart to mourn for all sins, and for sin as sin, it is an evidence of thy sincerity.

3 An hypocrite cannot mourn for the want of fulness of ordinances. 2 Nor can hee mourn for want of any Ordinance, out of discovery of the beauty and excellency in them. Now then, if God give thee a heart to mourn for, &c.

3 An Hypocrite cannot mourn for sins of others, nor for the want of growth in himself. If therefore God hath given thee such a heart,
a heart &c. thou must conclude thine own sincerity.

Sincerity of

1. For matter of desires.
   1. He cannot desire the death of all sin, he hath some damning, &c.
   2. He cannot desire the death of any sin, as sin, but for other
      respects. If therefore God hath given thee a heart desirous to
      be purged, as well as pardoned, that desires the death of all, and
      of sins, sin, &c.

      Again in point of desire of grace. 1. An Hypocrite doth not
      desire all grace; there are some he would not own, he loveth not
      universal excellency. 2. He desireth not any grace as grace, in its
      own native beauty and excellency, but at times, death, &c. and
      then as a flattering hope. If therefore God hath given thee a heart
      to desire and think after all grace, exact conformity to God in all
      things, and to desire grace, &c.

2. For matters of affection.
   1. To God.
      1. An Hypocrite cannot love God for himself, 2. He cannot love God as God, as in his own
      manner, so contrary. If therefore God hath given thee a heart to love
      him for himself, &c.

   2. To Saints.
      1. An Hypocrite he loves not all the Saints, some he may, not all, 2. He loves not the Saints as the Saints, but for other
      respects. If therefore God hath given thee a heart to love all
      Saints, poor godliness, as well as rich, grace in ruffet and gray,
      as well as grace in Silks, &c. And to love them as Saints, as having
      the image of Christ on them. To have communion with them,
      to love brotherly communion, to love them most, where you see
      most grace, &c.

      So for hatred.
      1. He hates not all sin, 2. He hates no sin, as sin, if any at all. Now
      at God hath given thee a heart, &c.

      So again. 1. He loves not all the Ordinances. 2. He loves not
      any Ordinance as an Ordinance. Hee hath no favour in an
      Ordinance, he hath no prizing of an Ordinance, he hath no hunger
      after an Ordinance, no rejoicing in an Ordinance, no care to walk
      answerable to the Ordinances. It then God hath given thee a heart
      to do all this, these are special evidences.

      Thus you see in brief I have shewed you a taste of clear, evidences,
      by which you may examine your own spirits, &c.


   3. If you would clear your sincerity, then remember this Rule.
   Take not up your evidences from the carriage of your spirits, either
   when they are at best, or when they are at worst, but in a
   middle way, wherein thou art most thyself, this will best clear
   your sincerity. If thou seek for an evidence when thy spirit is
at the worst, thou may sometime finde it too low to afford thee any thing; if at the best, thou may find it too high to be a continuing evidence; and so in the one thou maist bee discouraged, in the other deceived, many have flashes of affection in some present heat, who yet have not foundness of spirit in them. Herod heard the Word with joy, here was a heat, but all his joy would not enable him to part with his Herodias, no foundness. Let it be your wildome to take up your evidences in a middle way, neither when at best, nor when at worst; that is thy most constant frame, and that temper is most thy self, in the other we are carried above our selves in comforts, or cast below our selves in temptations, and there is no wise judging, or the best judging of the frame.

4 Rule.

4 Judge not of the sincerity of thy spirit by some particular acts. But let the constant frame of your spirits and general conversation discover it. If particular actions might determine the case, we should sometime conclude those unfound, who are sincere, and them sincere, who are yet unfound. You may look upon a child of God, and see him sometimes to have his planetical and extravagant motions, though the constant course and bent of his spirit be Godward. We read of David murtering, and committing adultery, fearful sins! Wee read of Joseph swearing, Job cursing the day of his Nativity, falling out with his stars, Jonah vexing, Peter denying, Thomas not believing. And if you judge by the particular Acts, though exceeding bad, you will condemn the generation of the just.

On the Contrary, you shall see Pharaoh desiring the prayer of Moses, Balaam in a good mood, desiring to dye the death of the righteous, Saul condemning of himself, Abag humbling of himself, Ninevy repenting, Felix trembling, Herod hearing John Baptist joyfully. And if we now judge by these particular actions, though seemingly good, we shall justify those whom God condemns.

Wee have a maxime in Logick, that no general Rule can bee stablished upon a particular instance, and another, that no particular instance can overthrow a general rule. So here, as no man can safely conclude from no better premises, than from some few actions, though in themselves materially and substantially good, that the heart is therefore sincere. So on the contrary, no man ought to conclude, because of some planetical and extravagant motions, that a mans heart is unfound. We are not to judge of sincerity, by some particular actions good or evil, but wee are to take up our judgement of our selves by the general frame, bent and disposition of a mans heart, together with his general and constant conversation in the ways of God, and this will best discover our selves to our selves. So much for the fourth Rule.
5. Rule.

The fifth Rule whereby we shall be enabled to clear the sincerity of our hearts, is, be careful to read your spirits, and take exact notice of your hearts at times especially. God in the wisdom of his Providence doth single out some special times, wherein he discovers the hypocrisy of the unformed, and declares the sincerity of his own. It is very seldom that God doth suffer a man to end his days, before he hath tried him, and so discovered him one way or another. The young man in the Gospel went on fairly for a long time, and it is like, thought his condition good enough, but at last you see, Christ put him to the tryall, and by that discovered him the unformedness of his heart. Herod he went on fairly for a time, he heard John, he heard him, he heard him often, he heard him gladly, nay, and reformed too in many things, but at last God discovered his unformedness, God unsealed him, and made known the deceit of his heart. So Saul went on for a while, but at last God discovered him, so Simon Magus and Rabban. And as God hath times for the discovery of Hypocrisy in the wicked, so he hath some special times and occasions, wherein he doth discover the sincerity of his own people. Moses was a holy man, but he had the time of his tryall; he might have been esteemed the son of Pharaoh's Daughter, have enjoyed all the plenty and honour of the Court, but he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, declined all that honour, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, here was the discovery of his sincerity, Heb. 11. 24, 25.

Abraham he was a holy man, but yet he passed through times of tryall too. And they were great ones. To name but one, God commanded him to offer up his son in sacrifice, here was a trial, a great trial, Gen. 22. 2.

1 Had he been only to have parted with a dutiful Servant, it had been something, but to part with a Son, that is more.
2 If with a Son, yet but an adopted son, the tryall had not been so great, but this was a natural son.
3 If with a natural son, yet if he had been but one of many, that tryall had not been so great, but this was not only his own, but his only son.
4 If with his own Son, if with his only Son, yet if Abraham had been young, and so probable to have had more, the tryall had not been so great. But it was with his own, his only Son, and the Son of his old age, he was never like to have more.
5 Nay yet further, though he had been, &c., yet if he had been an Israel, and not an Israel, the trial had not been so great, but it was to part with his Israel, a Child of many prayers, and of many promises, and in whom his heart delighted.

6. And
6. And again, if hee had beene to part with him in the ordinary way of nature, by natural death, the tryal not so great; but hee was to part with him in a Sacrifice, wherein hee was to bee mangled and cut in pieces.

7. But yet had another beene the executioner of his child, it had beene some mitigation: But Abraham himselfe must bee his executioner, hee must do this sad act.

And not to do it among his friends, who perhaps might have stept in, and comforted him in this tryal; but hee was to go three dayes journey to an unknown place, and there hee was to take away the life of him hee loved so dearly. Yet herein Abraham obeyed Gods command, and therein sheowed his sincerity. When the Precept of tryal might seem to contradif the Precept of Obedience, when his dutiful Obedience to the one, might seem to speak his undutifulness to the other, yet herein hee declared his sincerity. Whereupon God tells him, now I know thou loves mee, when now thou hast made it known, now thou hast discoverd thy sincerity, seeing thou hast not with-held thy only son, Gen. 22. 12. here was sincerity, now I know thou fearst God. The like I might instance in Job, in David, in Mordecai, they had their discovering times, times of tryal. So that God doth still singled out some special times wherein hee discovers the sincerety of his own people. And if you would bee ever able to clear your sincereties, read the carriage of your hearts at these special times. One quarter of an hour may give a man surer evidence of his sincerety or hypocriacy, than all the time of his life besides.

There are five special times, wherein you may have the advantage, if you bee careful, to read your own spirits, to clear the sincerety of your hearts.

1. In times of darkness and temptation. Read the actings and goings out of your spirits at such times, an unfound spirit will now fall from God, defied in his duty, strike fail. But the found spirit, hee will hold closer to God, and follow him when hee seems to forfake him. Hee will go on to love him, although hee bee not able to clear whether ever hee shall bee beloved of him. Hee will repent of sin, though hee bee not able to evidence whether ever God will pardon sin. Hee will go on to obey and serve God, though hee bee not able to determine whether ever God will reward his obedience or no. Such like dispositions do now break forth in a sincere heart, in the times of greatest darkness, which in times of clearer manifestation have no occasion to shew themselves. And these are the most undoubted evidences of your sincerety, which perhaps you shall ever meet withall in your lives. As wicked men do discover their greatest corruptions in their highest advancements, so Gods people do discover, and exert, and put forth the highest acts of grace in their lowest and meanest conditions. As the Sun shews
Of Hypocrisy.

As Christ set out the greatest acts of divinity in his lowest abasements, then hee sealed up the beams of the Sun, rent rocks, graves open, the earth trembles, &c. So the Saints, &c. This is that the Psalmist faith, unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness. Where the heart is unfound, it is dark in the greatest light; so on the contrary, there is light in the greatest darkness. Hypocrisy is like painted windows which let in no light; sincerity is like windows of Glass.

2. See how your hearts and spirits work towards God, and towards sin in times of light, and clearer manifestations of God. Where the heart is unfound, comfort doth him no good, hee will do something in a storm, then perhaps pray, &c. but hee will do nothing in a calm. Comforts make him more careless, more loose, more remiss in his Christian way. Where on the contrary, hee who hath a found spirit, as he is carried strongly towards God, when hee with-holds his manifestations: so if God do but let in a beam of his Countenance into his soul, hee rejoiceth more in it, than in a World. Nay, and these comforts do quicken him to further duty, hee cannot lye at anchor, but hee must launch out into the deep, and lay out himself, his parts, his abilities, &c. I have sometimes told you that quickness and comfort may bee separated, a man may have comfort without quickness, hee may have joy without life. But quickening was never separated from comfort. A man cannot have joy, but there will bee life, &c. Affections are like tinder, and Comfort like sparks, not a spark of comfort can fall upon the heart, but the whole soul is set a fire, and carried strongly on after God. Comforts from God ever lead the soul to communion with God.

3. See how your spirits do work towards God, in times of outward distresses and calamities upon you. 1 An unfound spirit, hee is for the most part proud and impatient under Gods hand, and ready to think God doth him wrong in afflicting him. But where the spirit is sincere, hee is humble, hee is patient, hee layes his mouth in the dust, kisseth the rod, and accepteth of the punishment of his iniquity, as you see the phrase, Lev. 26. 41. Example in Aaron. 2 Again, an unfound spirit, hee roars under the lashes, cryes under the affliction, never complains of the sin. As you see, Jer. 30. 15. Why cryest thou, &c. But where the heart is sincere, no evil troubles him, so much as the evil of sin. You see it in David, when plagued. 3 Again, an unfound spirit, hee desires to have the stroke removed, not to have his heart amended. The other desires rather the amending of his heart, than the removal of the stroke. Sayth Bernard, I had rather God should better my heart, than remove his hand, rather continue my strokes, than my sins. You see this in Job, when Gods hand was on him, Job 34. 32. That which I see not, teach thou me.
Of Hypocrisy.

Of Hypocrisy.

I will do it no more, as if he had said. Lord I know not the particular cause of this distress, what it is thou aimst at, what I see not, teach thou, &c.

4. A fourth time, wherein to read your hearts is in times of prosperity. An unfound spirit grows worse by mercy, mercy, delicateness, that as his heart, Isa. 35. 10 let favour be shewed, &c. He had professed much when he was low, but no sooner advanced, but mark then how he acted against God, his Church and people, interwring to make his raising their ruin, So Saul. Where now on the contrary, where the heart is found all their raisings, raise God, God is advanced in all their advance,ments.

And the higher God sets up them, the higher will they endeavour to raise and set up God, his glory, his cause, his people. Mercies on an enemy strengthen him to sin, but on a friend strengthen to service, he is but a man of greater ability to serve God. Many think if they were but so rich, so great, Oh, how would they advance God and his cause! how make all to serve him, but thy heart may deceive thee, if thy heart be not found, the higher God sets thee, the lower thou wilt lay him, the more good God doth for thee, the more evil thou wilt do to him. It is a special time to read your spirits, to see to your sincerity, in time of prosperity. There is no tryal in afflictions alone, they have something in them may make men humble, meek, &c. but look to them in times of prosperity of a Church, Religion, cause of God. Many men have stood firm in the times of affliction of a Church, which stagger, fall back in times of redemption of a Church. That is the fadest. It is no strange thing for men to stagger, to fall in the times of a declining in the Church, for fear, &c. But that is a corrupt heart indeed, corrupt with a wains that falls away in prosperity. That is the fourth time.

5. See how your spirits work in time of difficulty of danger. An unfound heart thinks how he may avoid the danger; a sincere spirit, how he may avoid the sin, Heb. 12. 4. striving against sin, not against danger, trouble, but against sin; to keep their consciences pure and undefiled. An unfound spirit thinks how he may save hisCarl's, a found Christian how he may keep his conscience. As Epaminondas who resolved to keep his buckler, or dye for it, being wounded to death.

Cries out, num salus eipens mens? intimating he was not hurt, if his buckler were gone. What hee of his buckler, a sincere heart cries out of his conscience, num salus conscientia? An unfound spirit hee sees and judgeth his safety sometimes to lye in the neglect of duty, and therefore in times of danger hee will bank and decline his duty, for fear of man. But a found spirit, hee sees his safety to lye in the doing of his duty, and his danger.
ger in the neglect of it. An unfound spirit will rather choose sin than affliction, Job 36. 21. But where the spirit is sincere, he will rather chuse the greatest evil, than the least sin, as Daniel, and the three children. Ambrose saith, will you cast me into prison, will you take away my life, all this is desirable rather than sin. And when Eudoxia the Empresse, threatened Chrysoftome with banishment, go tell her, saith he, I fear nothing in the world, but sin. And the reason is, because they look on sin as the grand and universal evil, the womb of evil, and all other evils, but the births of sin, it hath been the founder of hell, for before sin no hell, was that which laid the corner stone in that dark vault, nae it is that which hath filled hell with those treasures of wrath and still added to it, and increafeth the jewel, Rom. 2. 5. Nay, they look not only upon sin as an evil universal, but as universally evil, no good in sin. And therefore when the Apostle would speak the worst of sin, he could find no name worse, than in its own to set it out by, sinful.

These may be the special times wherein you may read your own spirits, and bee able to gather evidences of your sincerity.


You that have cleared your sincerity, do you labour to maintain the evidences of it, &c.

4. Branch of Exhortation.

To exhort them whose hearts are sincere, that they would declare the sincerity of their hearts on all occasions. I have told you, that God hath special times for the trial and discovery of the sincerity of his own people. And it should be our wisdom to take notice of those times and seasons, and our care at those times to declare our sincerity. Balaam had once a time to declare his sincerity, when he was hired with wealth and honor, to curse the People of God, but not approving himself at that time, he was branded for an hypocrite for ever. Saul had once a time to discover his sincerity, when he was commanded to go and slay all but missing that time of declaring sincerity, he is branded, &c. The young man had a time too, when Christ propounded to him, to put with all and follow him, but missing that, not taking time to declare sincerity, &c. Solomon had a time too, but he was too neglectful, and what follows he is questioned whether ever saved or no, he is pictured between heaven and hell, as if men knew not where to fix him. These had all special times afforded to them of declaring their sincerity, and like vile wretches, they make them times of discovering Hypocrisy. And there is not a man of you, but God doth afford you some or special other occasions in your lives of declaring the sincerity of your hearts, which if God give wisdom to discern of, and a heart to close with you will bee happy; but if not, you will smart for it. God may suffer you to lye and roar upon your death-bed, for want of an evidence of sinc
Of Hypocrisy.

Sincerity, because you are neglective of declaring your Sincerity, when God affords you an occasion of it. Oh what sad thoughts will these be, when thou shalt look upon thy life, and think with thy self, Such a time I was in such a place, in such an office, had such an opportunity to shew my self for God, to advance his glory, to do good to his Church, his people, his cause; and yet vile wretch I neglected it, I bawked it, I was unserviceable, or I used my power, my strength, my authority, as an Engine against God, against his people, against his cause; this will be trouble with a witness.

Well then, if you would prevent this, let every one in their several places and stations declare the Sincerity of their hearts. Make your places, your power, your parts, your riches, your friends, serviceable to God, to his Church, to his Cause. As Christ made all his Assemblies for the good of his Church, so do you. Think it not much to adventure and hazard any thing for the glory of God, the good of the Church. Pray for the Church, act for the Church, do for God, suffer for God, run this brave adventure to hazard all for the good of the Church of God. Hee who raiseth up God's glory, though by the ruins of himself; hee who advancement God's cause, though himself lyce low for it, shall never be looser by it, hath bargain good enough. You know those places, hee who proizeth father and mother, riches, lands, before mee, is not worthy of mee. Again, There is no man forakesh father, or mother, riches, or lands, for my sake, &c. but shall have a hundred fold, &c. So, Who saves his life, shall loose it, but hee who loseth his life, &c. So, Hee who denies me before men, him will I deny. It is now a time wherein wicked men do shew their corruptions, do you make use of it, as a time to shew your graces; when they discover their hypocrisy, do you declare your sincerity. I have looked and wondered to see those men who have stood firm in the times of affliction of a Church, should stagger and fall back in the times of redemption of a Church. It is not so strange for a man to fall in the times of the declining of a Church. Then fear may make men stagger, as in Peter. But that is a corrupt heart indeed, corrupt with a witness, who falls back, and flies off, in the times of reforming of a Church, to see men to fall back not in the times of persecution, but in the times of reformation, this is a sad thing. It may be weakness of grace, which occasions a man to decline and fall back in the times of persecution, but it is a wickedness, and height of wickedness, it shews a spirit opposite to God and goodness, to bee worse in times of reformation. Wee see it so in many in our times, and seeing unsound spirits to discover their corruptions, let Gods people now discover their graces. When Israel halted between God and Baal, making a mixture of divine worship and idolatrous together, one to bee let off by the other, that poison might bee swallowed down without scrupling, then did Eliah take occasion
Of Hypocrisy.

to declare his sincerity, when hee cryed, how long do you hate... &c. When Haman had plotted the death of all the Jews, and had gotten the Kings warrant for the doing of it, then was it a special occasion for Mordecai and Uzza to declare their sincerity, which they did, Esther 4. 15, 16. When Israel had joined themselves to Baal Peor, then was it a special occasion for Moses to declare his sincerity, which he did, Numbers 25. 5. You see what honour Phineas wonne by taking that special occasion of declaring his sincerity. The like of Levi in Deut. 33. 9. So of Abraham, Gen. 22. consider, 1. God calls on you to declare your sincerity.

2. The Church calls on you.

1. Those abroad, our poor distressed brethren in Ireland, they cry in the language of the Psalmist, Psal. 94. 16. Who will risse up for mee against the evil doers, or who will stand up for mee against the workers of iniquity? Do you declare your sincerity by helping them with your purses, with your prayers, and with your perfrons, so far as you are called out to it.

2. Our own Church and Nation calls upon us to declare our sincerities, the singleness and honfrnes of our hearts in these double times. To help forward with our prayers, the good of the Church, the great work which concerns Gods glory, his ceste now on the wheels, the great work of reformation.

3. Your conscience, that calls on you to discover your sincerity; and conscience is either a mans best friend, or worst enemy. If you would not have conscience shew it fell an enemy at that time, when you design it to appear your friend, then make use of the reasons to declare the sincerity of your hearts to God. And then will conscience bee thy friend in health, thy friend in sicknes, thy friend in life, thy friend in death, when all other friends must leave thee. The testimonie of Hezekiah's conscience to him when hee lay on his sick-bed, which gave in evidence of his sincerity, brought more comfort than all the World. Lord, remember how I have walked before thee, &c. Would you have conscience to give in the like testimonie for your, then declare the sincerity of your hearts, when God calls you out. There is a story, the moral whereof is good: that a man who had three friends which hee loved well, and being sent for to the King, asked which of his friends would go with him; one tells him, hee could not go, nor flit, another told him, hee would go at little way with him, but could not go out with him; the third, hee tells him, hee will not only go with him, but answer all for him, bring him off. God is the King, the World, kindred, and conscience are the three friends, the arrest, death, and the perfit sent for, the soul. The World, that will leave you, kindred bring you a little way, to the grave, there leave you, but it is a good conscience which carries a man thorough, and makes a man stand blameles before the tribunal. If you would have conscience bee your friend, then labour to discover sincerity now.
A TREATISE
OF THE
Wonderfull Workings
OF
G O D
FOR HIS
Church and People.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D. D.
And MASTER of C.C.C.

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EXODUS 15. 11.

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the Gods! who is like thee, glorious in Holiness! fearful in Praises! --- Doing wonders!

When troubles are threatened, God doth charge us with two things, and undertakes to discharge us of all the rest.

1. The first thing in God's charge is Faith. Psal. 55. 22. Cast thy burden upon the Lord. The burden of fears, of cares, of troubles. There is the charge; and the discharge followeth. He shall sustain thee.

2. The second thing God doth charge us withall is Prayer, Psal. 50. 15. Call upon thee. But if you will take the charge and the discharge together. See Phil. 4. 6. Be careful for nothing. There
is the discharge. But in all things make your request known to God.
There is the charge.
And there are two things which God doth charge us withall,
when our fears are blown over, and they are
1. Thankfulness.
2. Obedience.

The former you may read, Psal. 50. 15.
The latter, 1 Sam. 12. 24. And this hath been the practice of
the Saints, when calamities and troubles hath been either felt or
feared, they have betaken themselves to those weapons to in-
counter them with,

Faith and
Prayer.

You see in Heber's time. And when God hath bestowed de-

liverances, then they have betaken themselves to praises. You
see in the same story of Esther, the Primitive Christians had their
Stationary-days, their days of Prayer, wherein they assembled
themselves together for the removal of the Churches pressures
lying upon them.

And no doubt, but they had their solemn Prases, and times of
Prases, when God had wrought his deliverances.

The want of Mercy sends us to Prayer, the enjoyment of Mercy
sends us to Prases.

But what need we seek further for an instance? you see here it
was the practice of Esther.

The former Chapter tells you of his Dangers and Fears: The
Egyptians pursued him, ver. 8, 9, 10. Together with Moses be-

haviour and demeanour, in these straits, ver. 13, 14, 15.
Where first you see his Faith, ver. 13, 14. And the 15th,
verse implies his Prayer. Though wee read of none expressed, yet
there is one implied. The Lord said unto Moses, wherefore cryest
thou unto mee? speak unto the Children of Israel, that they go for-
ward. By which is implied, that Moses his spirit did mightily
wrestle with God in Prayer, although wee read not of any words
hee there uttered.

And in this Chapter you may read of his praises for that great
deliverance which God had wrought for them. No sooner was
hee come to hioar, but hee singeth forth the praises of God, both
for their own deliverance, and the enimies destruction.

So that these words that I have read unto you, they are a part of
a Psalm of Thanksgiving, for the glorious and wonderful deliv-
erance of the Children of Israel from the host of Pharaoh.
The summe of all you shall see in the 9, 10, 11. verses, where
you may read these three things,
1. Mans purpose.
2. Gods disposing.
3. The Churches retribution.

1. Mans pursing.
2. Gods disposeing.
3. The Churches retribution.
his Church and People.

1. Man's purposing, in ver. 9, which was bloody enough.
   1. The Enemy said, I will pursue.
   2. I will overtake.
   3. I will divide the spoil.
   4. My lust shall be satisfied upon them.
   5. I will draw my sword.
   6. My hand shall destroy them. Here was a bloody purpose; and all was done in their thoughts.

2. Wee have God disposing in the next vers. Thou didst blow with thy wind: the sea covered them: and they sank as lead in the mighty waters. And then

3. Here is The Church's Retribution, set down in a way of Admiration of God excellencies; Who is like unto thee, O Lord among the Gods! Who is like unto thee, glorious in Holiness! fearful in Praises! Doing wonders!

Here is the Church Riding in Triumph, in a majestick solemnity, admiring of God, and triumphing in him; as she doth fill in all her songs of praises for Deliverances. See Judg. 5. and 1 Sam. 2. at the beginning, and most elegantly in Isa. 23. 9. Lo, this is our God: we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him, and we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.

Wee will hold you no longer in the Preface, that which I shall commend unto you, from the words, is this

Doct. The Wonderfull God, doth do wonderfull things for his Church and people.

Hee doth not only do wonders simply: but great wonders, Psal. 136. 4. nay, mighty wonders, Dan. 4. 3. Amaz.ing, astonishing wonders, for his Church and people.

In the prosecution of this doctrin, wee will go through these five things. We will shew you,

1. The truth of it, That God doth do wonders.
2. The ground and reason, why God doth such wonders.
3. What those wonders are, which God doth.
4. When is the time, that God doth these wonders.
5. Whether God will do a wonder for us.

I. Quee.

1. For the first of these, That God doth do great wonders for his Church, even such things as are above our thoughts, above our hopes, above our expectations, above our reason to conceive, above our faith to beleive.

The whole Scriptures are but the Annals, or the records of the wonders which God hath done for his Church and people. You can all tell me, what wonders God did for his people in Egypt. The Psalmist tells you so, Psal. 78. 12. Marvelous things did he for them, in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt. And you
you know what wonders he did for them at the Red-sea, when there was nothing but death before them, death behind them, they were surrounded with death. Yet then God unbared his arm, and caused the Red-sea to divide it self, which became a passage to the one, and a grave to the other.

And wonders he did for them in the wilderness. Not a day without a wonder. Every day was the Birth of a wonder. He gave them bread from heaven, he gave them water out of the rock. Read the 78 Psalm at your pleasure, and the 9 chap. of Nehemiah, and in them you shall see a little Chronicle of the great wonders, which God hath done for his Church and people.

But to the Doctrin, That God doth do wonders for his Church and people.

1 God hath wonderfully disappointed great plots, and desperate counsels, and designs against them.

Wee will give you an instance of this in Hamans time. Haman had a desperate plot for the ruin of the Church and people of God, you may read it in the 3d. of Esther 8, 9, 1o. to the end. In brief, it was this: To overthrow and put to death all the Jews, upon presence, that they kept not the Kings laws. Here was their plot.

The disappointment of it you shall read in the 6, 7, 8. Chapters. The means whereby this design was broken, was but small, and therefore the greater was the wonder, the more visible was the hand of God. The breaking of the Kings sleep, was the breaking of this design, as you read, Esth. 6. beginning -- The King could not sleep well, what then? Could hee not lye still in his bed? No, he must have a book, and that book, the book of Chronicles: and that book must bee opened, where accidentally, (though surely guided by Providence) hee opens and reads that passage recorded concerning Mordecai, where was registred his faithfullnesse in discovering and disappointing of a murther intended against the King. Wherupon God let this act of faithfulness to close upon the Kings heart, that hee could not rest till Mordecai was rewarded for it. And this reward must be Hamans ruine, his advancement, Hamans abasement. And this was the rise of Hamans disappointment.

The like you have, Dan. 6. 4, 5. There was a great design the Nobles had against Daniel. They saw Daniel was faithfull to the King, and they could find no way to insnare him, unlese it were in something that concerned the law of his God. And therein, if they could find any thing in his obedience to God, that might render him disobedient to the King, they should then have their desire of him.

And therefore their Plot was this, To make a Decree, that who ever should ask any Petition either of God, or man, for the space of thirty days, save only of the King, he was to be thrown into the den of Lyon.

Well, the Plot took according to the Desire of their hearts: for notwithstanding this decree, Daniel made his Prayers and supplications
plications to his God, three times a day, as you see in the 10, 11. verses.

Upon this they go and tell the King: Hast not thou, O King, made a Decree, that none should ask any Petition of God or man, save of thee? &c. Here is one Daniel of the Captivity, who regards not thee. O King, nor the decree thou hast signed: But makes his Supplication three times a day, ver. 13.

And what was this now, but to render him to the King, factious, seditious, a Rebel, a Traytor, One who cared not for King, nor Law? Though indeed Daniel was a better subject than the best of them; though they would have rendered him rebellious to the King, because he was obedient to his God.

But mark the issue of it. God disappointed them in their design, and brought their own plot upon their own heads. Daniel was preserved by the Lyons that should have destroy'd him, as they did afterward them. The like of the three Children,

I might go down to our days, The Powder-plot: Eighty-Eight: and God knows how many since.

2 God hath wrought wonderful deliverance for his Church. Deliverances wonderful, and the way he hath wrought them was,

1 Sometimes by small means. For weaknesse and strenght is all one with God, as Asa confessed, when that Great Army came against him, 2 Chron. 14, 11. It is all one with thee, to help with many or with few. Infinite wisdom and power knows no difference. As the Mariner turns about the greatest ship with a small rudder.

No means can bee so contemptible; but he can make it successfull to his own purposes.

As the greatest means will bee no priviledge, without God's concurrence: to the smallest means shall be no prejudice, if God will concur.

Wee read, God hath sometimes armed natural Causes, Sunne, Moon, Stars, Hail, Wind: All which, were wonders, against the enemies of the Church.

The Stars in their course were said to fight against Sisera. The Lord flew the enemies of Sisera with Hail, and the Hoolites with the Sun shining upon the water.

And wee read in the Ecclesiastical History, that the Christians, being to fight against the Barbarians, were in a great distresse for water: And upon their Prayer, God sent them abundance of rain, to refresh their Army; But encountered their enemies with Thunder and fire from heaven. In remembrance of which, the Romans called the Christian Legion ἑρμοσεμρος: Fulminatrix, The thundering Legion.

And sometimes God hath armed other causes, putting strength into weak and contemptible means, for the deliverance of his Church. God hath oftentimes delivered his Church by
such instruments, as the enemies before would have looked upon
with scorn, as upon cast and despicable Creatures.

As God hath weakened and infatuated them, he hath intended
to destroy: so hath he strengthened and guided with a spirit of
wit and wisdom, such as he hath intended for the deliverance of a
Church.

You see Cyrus comparatively a weak prince; yet God made
him an instrument to overthrow the most strong and puissant peo-
ple in the World, the Babylonians; and by him to deliver his
Church.

Deborah a Woman; and yet God raised her up for the deliverance
of his Church.

So you see God doth it by small means.

2. Sometimes God works the deliverance of his Church without
means. And this is more wonderful.

When God looks about and sees there is no man, then doth his
right hand bring salvation. When the Channel of creature-helps
is dry, then the stream of second causes doth not run: Then
doeth God himself stand up for the defence and deliverance of
his Church and People, and creates deliverance out of noth-
ing.

What God doth by means, he can do alone. What he doth
mediately, he doth sometimes immediately from himself. The
Angel slew an hundred fourscore and five thousand, 2 King. 19. 35.

We read, when Julian went to war against the Persians, he
vowed to his Idol-Gods, that when he returned, he would give
them a sacrifice of all the Christians in the Empire.

Here was now no means for the deliverance of the Church.
But God undertaketh the work himself, smiting him from Hea-
ven with an unknown blow, and by that delivered his Church.

The like also of Maximus, and of Herod, Act. 12. 23. Though
there be weakness below, yet there is strength above: Though
means be wanting, yet he can create means, or he can work
without. God and Faith, work best alone.

3. Sometimes God works the deliverance of his Church by contrary
means. And this is yet a more wonderful way.

God doth often work his works by Contraries, he brings good
out of evil, Life out of Death, etc. As the Physician doth order
poisons and destructive ingredients to physical, useful, and health-
ful purposes: So those things which in themselves are against us,
God in singular wisdom and mercy, turns them for us. That
which hath been used as the means of ruin, hath God often turned
to the means of raising a Church and People.

This is like the opening of the blind man's eyes with Clay. One
would think it should rather put out the eyes of a seeing man, than
give sight to a blind man. But if Christ do undertake the work,
though the means be never so contrary, it shall be effectual.

Thus
his Church and People.

Thus you see that God doth often do wonders for the good of his Church and People.

2. _Quere._

2. Wee come now to the second thing. The Grounds and Reasons.

1. The first is, _because hee is a wonderful God._ Wonderful things becom a Wonderful God. His Name is Wonderful, Is. 9, 6. And therefore his works are Wonderful. This is the inference, Ps. 85, 10. Then are great, and doth wonderful things. Every one delights to do actions suitable to themselves; suitable to their own greatness.

When Alexander met with a great difficulty, his spirit thus encounters it, _fatericulum per animo Alexandri._ Now here is a danger, here is a difficulty fit for the spirit of Alexander to encounter withal: here is a work suitable for Alexander to do. Great enterprises, great difficulties, great things befit Great Spirits. Magna magna decent. And wonderful things befit a wonderful God.

And upon this ground Gods reliefs come not in, until cases are desperate, because then hee may discover his great Power. And such deliverances are most suitable to the great God. Hee could as well have saved Lazarus from sickness, as have raised him from the grave: but hee sufferers him to dye, bee buried, and liee three days in the grave, that hee might magnifie his power, in the raising of him again. Hee lets the difficulty go beyond the help of man, that you might the better know what the Power of God is.

2. The second Reason. God doth wonderful things for his people, to get himself a wonderful Name, that God might bee known in the World.

Therefore did God execute such fearful Judgements on Pharaoh, and wrought so great deliverances for his people, that hee might get himself a Name, and publish himself to the World, Is. 63, 12.

Special cures win more glory to the Physician, than a thousand ordinary cures: so special victories win more honour to a General, than a thousand ordinary skirmishes: so here, special deliverances to God.

If God should only walk in the ordinary ways of his Providence in the World, his glory would not bee so much seen and advanced: And therefore God doth often step out of his ordinary paths of Providence, and goes in Extrasodium, that hee might discover his Glory and Power, and advance his own Name.

This know, that it is Gods great design in the World, to advance his own Name, and make it glorious to the ends of the Earth. This is one way God doth it by: even doing wonderful things for his
God's Wonderfull Workings for his church. Hereby God wins a great deal of honour and praise from the Saints, and dread and terror from the wicked, as the Scriptures speak.

You know how terrible was the Name of the God of Israel to all the Earth, by those great wonders God had done for Israel in Egypt.

And therefore this was the argument which David used, why God should destroy such as were his enemies, and work deliverances for such as were his people; That men might know, that thou, whose Name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the Earth, Psal. 83. 18.

Great Mercies and wonderful deliverances, publish and set forth God, when smaller cannot do it.

Great Deliverances publish great Power, great Mercy, great Wisdom, and great Truth. God is left in smaller deliverances, but visible in greater. They who are unwilling to acknowledge God in lesser, are forced to acknowledge him in greater deliverances, and to say with them, who without doubt were loath enough to acknowledge it, DIGITUS DEI EST HIC, The finger of God is here.

None, but a God could have disappointed such Counsels.

None, but a God could have discovered such Plots.

None, but a God could have removed such Evils.

None, but a God could have wrought such Deliverances.

3. The third Reason, why God doth wonderful things for his Church, is, as togeth, so to uphold his great Name.

You have an excellent place for this in Deut. 32. 27. God was highly displeased with Israel, for their provocations of him; and hee threatened to destroy them: yet after all this, hee faith, --- I said, I would scatter them into corners, and would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy: left their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and left they should say, our high hand, and not the Lord, hath done all this.

The like you have in 2 King. 18. 35. Who are these among the Gods of the Countries, that can deliver out of my hand? lo hee vaunted, and God suffered him to foare so high, that hee might have the greater praise, and his Glory be higher advanced by the greater downfall of such a Lucifer.

And this was the Argument which Moses urged God withal, when hee threatened to destroy the Children of Israel, Numbr. 14. 15. Now if thou kill this people, then the Nations which have heard the fame of thee, will speak, saying: Because the Lord was not able to bring this People into the Land, which hee swore unto them, therefore hath hee flain them in the Wilderness. As if hee had said, --- Thou hast gotten thy self a Name, by the mighty wonders, which thou hast done for thy people: but if thou shouldest leave now, and do no more, thou wouldest lose thy glory, which thou hast go-

4.
and the Nations would be ready to charge thee with weakness and impotency, that thou wert not able to do what thou hast promised, and purposed to do for thy People.

The like you have in Deut. 9. 28. And in Exod. 32. 12. And the same Argument you have in Joel 8. 9. When God went not forth with the armies of Israel, but suffered them to be slain by their enemies. O Lord, (as Job saith) what shall I say, when Israel turn their backs upon their enemies! If it be thus, what will become of thy great Name!

Arguing by this, that there was a necessity for God to do great things for his People, still to uphold that great Name he had gotten, which otherwise would fall to the ground. Psal. 79. 9. Help us, for the glory of thy Name, and deliver us for thy Names sake.

And an excellent place you have for this, in Isa. 45. 9. 10. 11. For my Name sake will I defer my wrath, and for my praise will I restrain it from thee, that I cut thee not off.

4. Read. God doth wonderful things for his People, that hee might inherit wonderful praises from his People. Therefore doth God work wonderful deliverances for his Church, that his Church might return suitable praises to God again, -- Psal. 111. 4. He hath done his wonderful works, to be remembered. As if hee had said, it was for this end, that God did those wonderful works, wrought those great deliverances, that they might be remembered, that they might be kept upon the imagination of the thoughts of the heart for ever. As in 1 Chron. 29. 18. That wee might bee so many living Memorials of thankfulness, so many Trumpets to sound forth the praise of his Greatness and Goodness, from Generation to Generation. And hee that forgets Thankfulness, forgets the end of Gods bestowing of Mercy, and rolls himself of the fruit and effect of the present Mercy, and hinderers himself of future.

5. Read. God doth wonderful things for his Church, to adde torture to the Devil, and his Children.

Gods mercies and deliverances to the Saints, must needs in rage the Devil, and wicked men.

When Haman had prevailed so far as to get a bloody decree against the Jews, hee joyed exceedingly, as one that promised to himself the utter ruine of them all. Now God stepping in, as I said, and shewing a wonder to disappoint him in his design, No man can conceive, much less express how much this added to Hamans torture and vexation. Hee goeth home, and weseth himself, and weneth in his bed, and could have no rest.

Achitophel was so tortured, that his design did not take, that hee was impatient of his Life. Hee could not ease himself, but by destroying himself.

The like you have of Balak. God hath his wayes to make wicked men gnash their teeth before they come to Hell, and this is one way, to put them in a kinde of hope of having their will upon
the godly, as they had in the verse before the Text, I will pursue, I will destroy, I will divide the spoil. — And then on a sudden overturning all, blowing upon their projects, bringing all their enterprises to nought: Oh! this doth make them vex, and torture their own souls.

6 Reason: God doth wonderful things for his Church and People, That both our selves and the Generations to come might be quickned and stirred up to trust in him, obey him.

1. That we our selves might be quickned to trust in him. And this you see was the fruit of that great deliverance in the text, Exod. 14.31. And Israel saw that great work, which the Lord had done upon the Egyptians: And the People feared the Lord, and believed the Lord.

And this use David made: That God that hath delivered me from the Lyon and the Bear, hee will also deliver me from this circumcised Philistine: So Psa. 63.7. Because thou hast been my helper, therefore under the shadow of thy wings I will rejoice, That is, because thou hast been my Help: I have had experience of thy goodness to me in such and such straits. Therefore under the shadow of thy wings I will rejoice, Not onely, Trust in thee, but Rejoice, as being assured thou wilt help me in time to come.

Men unmindful of former experiences, are still to seek in every fresh difficulty.

Where Experiences are the Premise, Assurance may be the Conclusion.

David was a man of many choice experiences of Gods goodness to him; and hee was a man that was choice of them: hee laid them up, and made use of them at every need. Hee did not only make use of the Experiences themselves, but of every thing, that came in to it, or was a Trophee of it.

It is a passage not to bee neglected, that when hee was forced to fly from Saul, comming to Ahimelech the Priest, hee desired a weapon of him, for his defence and safeguard. Hee told him, that there was none, save onely The Sword of Goliash, whom hee had slain; and David said, there is none like that, give it mee, 1 Sam. 21.9. This was a Trophee of Gods goodness to him: It was an Ensign of a former Experience of Gods love to him: And there was no better weapon for his defence, than such a one, as was both an experience and a weapon. In carrying this, he carried an Experience with him, which might Comfort him, and encourage him too.

2 Corin. 1.10. Saith the Apostle: hee hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: In whom we trust he will yet deliver us. Thus from the former Experiences of Gods goodness to him, hee makes out an argument of future deliverances.

And, if we were but thus wise, to treasure up former Experiences, the former parts of our lives would come in to help the latter.
And the longer we live, the richer in faith we should be.

Wee ought indeed to trust God, though wee had never tried him: but, when hee helps our faith by former experiences, this should strengthen our confidence, and make us to go unto God, as unto a tried friend.

If wee were well read in the history of our lives, wee might have a Bible of our own, drawn out of the experiences of God's dealings with us, and wee should be able to say, in any difficulty and distress, I dare trust God in this difficulty; I dare adventure on him, in this present distress. I have tried him, and found him true. Hee never failed mee. And because hee hath been my help, therefore under the shadow of his wings will I rejoice. This is the first part of this reason, God doth wonders, to quicken and encourage his Church and People, to trust in him and obey him.

2 God doth it, that the very generations to come might be encouraged to trust in the same God, in the like distresses.

This use the Church made of former experiences, Psal. 22. 4.

3. Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them: they cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. And from hence the Church gathers an argument, that that God, that had delivered others, would also deliver them.

The like you have, Isa. 51. 9, 11. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord: Awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou hee, that woundeth the dragon, that dried up the sea, and made the depths a way for the ransomed to pass over? As if he had said, All those former experiences of thy gracious dealings, and wonderfull deliverances of thy Church, they are as so many encouragements to us, to believe thy goodness to us.

And therefore the Psalmist tells us, Psal. 9. 10. They that know thy name will trust in thee. And hee gives the reason. For thou Lord hast not forsaken them that seek thee. Hee doth not say, Thou Lord will not, but, thou Lord hast not. God's hath not, is his will not too.

The argument were not good, would not hold in men. They have not, therefore they will not: Men may change, men may alter,

1. Either they may repent of former curtailles.

2. Or they may resolve to do no more. Men, wee see, shut their hands, because they have opened them, and their former curtailles are reasons of future denials.

But the argument is good here. Hee hath not, therefore hee will not for sake his people.

Hee will be gracious, because hee hath been gracious. Gods former dealings towards his Church and people, do but publish to the world, and inform us, what his future behaviour shall be to his Church and people. Hee Hath not, therefore hee will not.

God blames the Israelites, because hee had done so great...
works for them, And yet they believed not.

7. Read. God will do wonderful things for his Church, because His love and engagements do move him unto it.

There are four loving engagements of God, which move him to do wonderful things for his Church,

1. They are his.
2. He hath promised.
3. His people trust in him.
4. They seek unto him.

1. God is engaged to do wonderful things for us, Because we are his. We are his people, he is our God; we are his Spouse, hee our husband: wee are his children, hee our father: wee his Members, hee our head: wee are his portion, his inheritance, &c.

And this is a great engagement for God to do great things for us; what will not a loving father do for his child? what will not a loving Husband do for his wife? &c. wee stand in the same relations with God.

He thought nothing too great to suffer for us. Hee suffered great things; and hee suffered cheerfully: hee was in pain till the hour came. And do you think hee will think any thing too much to do for you?

God doth what ever is done in the world. And there is nothing that he doth, that I may say his heart is more in, that he doth with more complacency and delight, than those things he doth for his Church and People. His whole heart is in them; and therefore doth them cheerfully, and doth them fully. As you know, whatever your heart is in, that you do willingly, that you do thoroughly, &c.

Indeed, there was Nothing to ingage him. To make us his People, before hee made us his People, as Moses faith, God chose you, not because of thy righteousness, the uprightness of thy heart, for thou art a stiff-necked People. But because the Lord Loved you, &c.

But there is something to ingage him. To do for us now, hee hath made us his People, because wee are his People, this is that, that Samuel did comfort the Israelites withall, 1 Sam. 12. 22. The Lord will not forsake his people, for his great Names sake. And why? what is the reason? what is the engagement? why faith hee, Because he hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.

2. A second loving engagement, which causeth God to do wonders for his People is, because he hath ingaged himself to us, by many great and precious Promises. Gods Promises are engagements upon him. God hath made himself our Debter, Not by receiving any thing from us, but by promising all things to us. God hath made many precious promises to us.

1. Promises of Preservation, Isa. 33. 16. He shall dwell on high;
his Church and People.

his place of defence shall bee the munition of rocks; bread shall bee given to him; his waters shall bee sure.

A Promise, than which I know none more full in the Book of God, wherein all Objections, that a fearful heart might raise, are answered and taken away. Let us view it over.

1 Hee shall dwell on high. If hee were among his enemies, hee might bee in danger: But hee shall dwell on high, nay, on heights, as the Word is: many Ascents, many Heights, above the reach of danger, out of Gun-shot.

2 But suppose they could raise up Mounts, and come as high as hee, yet they shall not hurt him. Hee is in a place of defence.

3 But what then? His defence is not so strong, but it may bee broken thorough. No faith the Text, that is impossible, for his place of defence shall bee the Munitions of Rocks, many Rocks, and many Munitions of Rocks (and therefore impregnable) to guard him.

4 Why? but hee may bee starved out; his supply will not alway last. There is no plowing and sowing upon Rocks, hee may bee famished out. No faith the Text. Bread shall bee given him; Hee shall bee provided for.

5 But what shall wee do for Water? There is no Water to be had out of Rocks. You see it was that which posed the Faith of Moses: to fetch Water out of a Rock. But faith the Text, hee shall have Water too.

6 Yea but his Water may be spent. It will not alway last. No faith the Text. His Waters shall bee sure, never failing Waters, sure Waters.

Again, in the same Chapter, ver 21. The Lord will bee to us a place of broad Rivers and streams, wherein shall go no Gallie with Oares, nor shall gallant ship pass thereby. Shewing the defence God would bee to his People. Hee shall bee a Stream, may a River between us and our enemies, And a broad River, a River that cannot bee passed over. Why but they may use Oares. No faith the Lord, Hee will bee a River, wherein no Gallie with Oares shall pass. But a Ship may. No, nor gallant ship shall pass thereby, for the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King; hee will save us. But what if any ship should attempt? You shall see, ver 22. God will unsuckle them. Thy sailings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their Masts; they could not spread the sail.

2. And as hee hath made promises of Preservation from, So hee hath made promises of Deliverance out of trouble. Psal. 34. 19, 20. Many are the troubles of the Righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. So Psal. 50. 15. Call upon mee in the time of trouble, I will deliver thee. So Psal. 91. 15. I will bee with him in trouble, and will deliver him. So Is. 54. 17. No weapon formed against thee shall prosper. And an excellent promis wee have, Is. 43. 3, 4. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. God speaks
speaks here as the Lord and Possessor of the whole Earth, Egypt was his, and Ethiopia was his, and both these he gave for to redeem his Church.

The Church was in bondage and captivity, you know, in Egypt. And God gave Egypt for her ransom. And how: because she could not be ransomed and delivered without the loss of Egypt. Therefore God gave Egypt for her: That is, he would rather lose all the Land of Egypt, than his people should not be ransomed: he would sink the whole Kingdom of Egypt, if it stood betwixt his People and Deliverance. And so it follows in the 4. ver. I have loved thee, therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. As if he had said, I love thee, thou art more dear to me than all the World; and I do not stick to give the lives of thousands to uphold thine. Multitudes shall be destroyed, rather than thou shalt not be preferred. I love thee, and therefore I will give men for thee.

Thus you see God is engaged to do wonderful things for his Church, because of his Promise.

That love which hath moved him to make these precious promises to us, will never give him rest, till it hath caused him to make good those promises which he hath made.

3. A third loving engagement, which causes God to do wonders for his People, is, because they trust in him. Trust is a kind of engagement upon a man, although he had made no promise. A man will not deceive another, who reposeth his whole trust in him, though he were not engaged by promise. There is a kind of engagement in Trust it itself. And shall we then think that God will, when he hath made so many precious promises to us? This were the greatest deceits in the World, a Soul-deceits. If God should call us off from all other succours, from all other shelters, and tell us, that if we will trust in him, he will be our succour, our security. And should God fail the soul, this were an undoing-deceits, the greatest deceits in the World.

No, my Brethren, there was never man who laid up his confidence in God, but he found God to be that to him, which he expected.

Faith ingageth all the Power, all the Wisdom, all the Mercy, and Truth of God to help us. And if the Power, Wisdom, &c. of God can do wonders for thee: God will then do wonders for thee, if thou believe in him. Believe (faith Christ) and thou shalt see the wondrous works of God.

4. A fourth engagement, which causeth God to do wonders for his People is, because they seek him. He doth not say to the seed of Jacob, seek, see me, in vain. Hee hath filled himself: The God hearing prayers, and bids us call upon him in the day of trouble, and hee will hear. The Prayers of Gods People, they are as so many Engagements upon God, to move him to do for them.
Faith and Prayer will set All-God a work. It will set the Power; Wisdome, Mercy of God a work, for you. Faith and Prayer will remove Mountains. Nothing shall bee too hard for that people to do, whose hearts and spirits God holds up to believe, and to pray. Bee it to thee, even as thou willeth.

Luther having been in his study, and earnest with the Lord about the business of the Church, receiving a gracious answer, hee comes downe and cryes, Wee have overcome, the day is ours. And so it fell out, faith the story: For the Church prevailed.

There is a kind of Omnipotence in Faith and Prayer, because these two set the Omnipotent God, and the Omnipotence of the Power of the Omnipotent God, to work for us.

And I beleive, The great work of Reformation hath gone so slowly forward, because Gods People are not so strongly carried on in seeking.

3 The third thing wee have to doe, is to shew you

3. Quere.

What are these wonders which God doth for his Church and People?

1 God doth wonders for the soules of his People.

2 God doth wonders for the body, and outward man.

3 For the soul. And wee will give you a glance of these. The first Wonder, and indeed the Wonder of Wonders, which God hath done for his Church and People is;

1 The giving of Christ for us, and to us.

All wonders are fainted up in this wonder. Nothing is wonderful, if compared to this. God manifested in the flesh. Hence the Apostle, 1 Tim. 3. 16. Great is the Mystery of Godliness. God manifested in the flesh. That such greatness, and such meanness, such finiteness, and such infiniteness, such riches, and such poverty, such strength, and such weakness, Tantus Deus, tantillus Homo. So great a God, and so mean a Man, all in one: Here is a Wonder.

There is four great Wonders conspicuous in this.

1 Here is a Wonder of Humility, which will appear, if you consider,

1 Who hee was.

2 What hee became.

1 Who hee was. Hee was the Son of God, The express Image of his Fathers person one equal with God, and thought it no robbery to bee equal with God, hee was God blessed for ever, As the Apostle saith him.

2 What hee became. Hee took not upon him the Nature of Angels which yet had been a greater discent, than all the Angels in Heaven had been turned into Worms. But hee took not the Nature of Angels, but hee took upon him the Nature of Man, and that not at the best, but of Man fallen, subject to infirmities, Penal,
And what a wonder of Humility was this? There is not the meanest Angel in heaven, but would have thought it a wrong above amends, to have been so low abased. Here was a wonder of Humility, Fallor terras, fallis in terra. The maker of the earth, to be made of earth.

2. Here was a wonder of wisdome.
That God should find out such a way to recover us, when we were lost: If all the united Consultations of men and Angels had been laid together, they could never have found out a way to reconcile Gods mercy in the salvation of man, and yet his Justice in the damnation of sin.

If God should have helped us thus farre, You are miserable Creatures; But I am a mercifull God. The demands of my justice I must not deny: neither will I deny the intertreaties of my mercy. Find me then but one, that can satisfy my justice, and I will show my mercy to you. Ah! where should we have found one, who was strong enough to bear sinne, and to satisfy the wrath of God for us? No, it was his own wisdome, that found out the way. Here was a wonder of wisdome, which we adore and admire.

3. Here was a wonder of Love.
An Height, a depth, a length, a breadth, a Love beyond all dimensions. Hence said to be a Love passing knowledge, a Love that was apprehended by faith, not comprehended by reason, it was an infinite love. And this is more than if we could gather all the bowels of the Creation together. Hence faith Christ, who knew the greatnesse of it, John 3. 16. i.e. So God loved the world—so infinitely, so incomprehensibly, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

4. Here was a wonder of mercy, which will bee more conspicuous if we consider,

1. The Person.

2. The Time.

1. The Person, who undertook this: It was the second Person in the glorious Trinity: the Person against whom the first Sinne was in some special respect committed. Hee is the wisdome of the father, and called wisdome, Prov. 8. And this Sinne was an affectation of wisdome, to bee like to God. As the falling-sin is now the sinne against the Third Person, Sinne against the Holy Ghost; so the sin which did occasion the fall, was in some special respects against the second Person, And therefore the greater is the wonder of mercy, That he, against whom the first sinne was so committed, should undertake the expiation of it.

2. Consider the time, when hee took our nature. And that was

When
when we were brought to a desperate life: when it was made evident that nothing else could help us, Heb. 10. 6, 7. Sacrifice and burnt-offerings, thou wouldst not have. Then said I, Lor. I come. When Legal washings were declared unable to pacify God, or to work our peace; then Christ comes into the world. Christ came not into the world till it was made evident, That without him, God could not be satisfied, nor man be saved. And this is the first wonder, The sending of Christ, in whom all is wonderfull. His incarnation, the Hypostatical union of two natures in one Person. His Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Session, Intercession. They are a chain of holy wonders. Hence, Isa. 9. 6. Christ is called wonderfull because all in Christ is wonderfull.

1 He is wonderfull in his person and natures: God-man, and mortal-immortal, finite and infinite, so great, and yet so mean: so rich and yet so poor. Here is a wonder.

2 He is wonderfull in his Offices. A King, Priest, and Prophet.

3 He is wonderfull in his government.
That he should bring us to life, by death, to glory by misery; to honor by shame; All wonders. This is the first wonder, and the root of all the rest.

2 Another wonder God deh for the souls of his People, is,

1 The work of Conversion and regeneration, that a man should partake of another begotten, of another birth, of another nature, than others have in the world. Nay, than hee himself had. This is a wonder. That a man should bee the same, and not the same. The same man for body, yet as different in qualities, as if another soul did dwell in the same body. That hee should live by another life, bee fed by other food, refreshed by other comforts, than others are. Here is a wonder, that of a Lyon should become a LAMB, of a Wolf, a SHEEP, of a Saul, a Paul, a persecutor, become a preacher. Here is a wonder.

And the greater is the wonder, if you look upon the weakness and contemptible ness of the means, God works this by. The ministry of a weak man.

It had been no great wonder, if the Walls of Jericho had fallen down by the battery of a cannon. But this made it the wonder, that the blast of Rams-horns should bring down the walls of Jericho. And this is that, which makes this work more wonderful, that by such weak and contemptible means and men, in the eyes of carnal men, this great work should be effected.

When a man shall come to the Church, with full tide and stream of lust, lifting up his head, pouting at God, glorying in his fin and shame, Nay perhaps, Come with purpose to contend, to scorn the Dispenser. And to see this man return home, by the Ministry of a weak man, wounded, slain, laid upon his back, crying out with the Publican, God have mercy on me, a sinner: or with Paul,
Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? I am willing to do any thing, to suffer any thing, &c. Here is a wonder, well may we see say in the voice of the Prophet, What ails thee, thou Jordan, that thou art driven back! Thou sea, that thou fleddest!

And as the birth of a Christian, so

2. The life of a Christian in grace, is wonderful. It is a mysterious life: A life hid from the world: for

1. The seat of this life is hid and secret.
2. The principle and spring of this life is secret and mysterious.
3. The Nourishment mysterious.
4. The conveyance of nourishment.
5. The comforts of this life. All wonders. Nothing in Grace, but wonders.

3. When God shall hold up a mans heart to fear him, to seek him, to believe in him, in times of darkness, and temptations. Here is a wonder.

All the workings of Faith are wonders: but especially in temptations, and Defections.

1. That a man by Faith should conquer a troop of fears, silence an Army of doubts, answer a throng of disputes, and carnal-reasonings, overcome all the powers of darkness, to chase ten thousands Devils before him, which all the power of earth cannot do. Here is a wonder.

2. That a man by Faith should hold up his head, under the burden and guilt of many thousand sins, the left of which would sink the soul, if Faith did not cast all this upon the Lord.

3. That a man by faith, should be a rock in the midst of a storm, and stand immovable when the winds blow, and the billows rage; when heaven and earth seem to come together, as you see David did, Psal. 27. 1, 2, 3. and Psal. 46. 1, 2, 3. I will not fear, though the earth be removed, though the mountains be hurled into the midst of the Sea.

4. When God shall keep alive a little spark of grace in the midst of a sea of corruptions, hold up his own work in the midst of all Counter-workings, and oppositions of sinne and Satan. Here is a wonder.

5. When God shall make a man willing to sacrifice his goods, liberty, life, rather than to wound his Conscience, and offend his God. This is a wonder, which, without the power of God, could not be wrought.

6. When God shall bear up the spirits of the Saints with joy and comfort, in the absence of all created comforts, as you see, Hab. 3.

17. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, nor shall fruit be in the vine, &c; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Nay, in the presence of all created discomforts, to stand up, and rejoice under the frowns, menaces, scorns, scourges, prisons, persecutions
tions of men, embrace the stake, kis the chains, smile on the terrors of death, rejoice with Stephen under a shower of stones. Here are Wonders.

7 When God doth turn all the afflications, nay, all the sins of his Church and People, to the good of his People, to humble them more, cast them out of themselves, cast them upon the hold of Faith, the exercise of Prayer, make them more watchful, more careful, more exact. Here's a wonder.

Secondly, God works wonders for the Body, for the outward condition of the Church; for the good of his people, in regard of the outward man.

1 God doth often restrain the wickedness and malice of men against his Church, that though they bee never so full of Hell and fury, yet they shall not bee able to vent it, against the Church and People of God. Thus you see it was with Rabshakeh, when he came with purpose to destroy Jerusalem, and God put his hook into his nose, and his bridle into his lips. He restrained him, as you see in 2 King. 19. 28, 32, 33. And this made David to say, when the Princes took counsel together, to take away his life, My times are in thy hands, Psal. 31. 15. Though they bee never so full of malice, their designs bee never so bloody, yet my times are in thy hands; they shall not bee able to hurt mee: though they consulted, yet hee knew they could not act: God could restrain them.

God hath the Devil, much more wicked men, in a chain; and they cannot go a jot further than hee gives them chain, and that shall bee no further than for his own Glory, and the good of his Church, as hee tells us, Psal. 76. 10. Surely the wrath of man shall turn to thy Praise, and the remainder of wrath shall thou restrain.

Though wicked men bee never so full of wrath and fury against the Church, yet they shall vent no more than what shall turn to the Glory of God, nay, the Praise of God; so much as his People shall have cause to praise him for. The remainder of wrath, (though never so full) hee shall restrain. They shall burst before they shall vent any of it, to the hurt of his People. And this is a great wonder. His letting bounds to the fury of men, as hee doth to the raging of the Sea. Hitherto shall thou go, and no further: restraining the malice of men against the Church, is as great a wonder, as to see a Milstone hang in the Air, and not fall down.

2 God doth often calm, and still the raging fury of wicked men against his Church and People. Hee doth not only bound them, but still them.

And thus you see it was with Esau. Hee came forth with rage, and bloody purposes against Jacob, to bee revenged on him for all. But you see how God calmed him. In stead of killing him, hee falls upon his neck, and kisst him. It was God that did it. And therefore it is said, Gen. 33. 10. That Jacob saw the face of Esau, as the face of God. It was not Esau, but God that hee saw...
in Esan's face. He saw God appearing in the wonderful changings and calming of his spirit, who came with such fury against him. And this was the fruit of his wrestling and praying the night before.

3. When God doth carry on great purposes with weak and contemptible Power: makes weak means successful to do great purposes and effects. This is a wonder, and a wonder God often doth, as you see in Isa. 2 Chron. 14, 11. It is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no Power. As the Mariner can turn about the greatest ship with the smallest Rudder: So God, who ever sits at the Helm, and steers and governs all, can bring about his own purposes by weakest means.

As he brought Jeremy out of the dungeon with old rotten rags, good for nothing: So he makes use of such means in straits, for the deliverance of his Church, as the enemies thereof do look upon with scorn, as upon cast and despicable Creatures.

As God doth weaken and infatuate them, he intends not to prosper, to he makes strengths and guides with a spirit of wildness, those he intends for the deliverance of his Church. You see this in Deborah, in Cyrus, who though he were a weak Prince, yet God made him an instrument for the overthrow of the most strong and puissant people in the World.

4. When he makes the Afflictions and persecutions of his Church, a means of growth and increase of his Church.

As it was said of the Israelites, Exod. 1, 12. The more they were afflicted, the more they grew: So hath God still done for his Church. The primitive times tell us of thousands, who were brought in, not by Sermons, but by the sufferings of the Saints. The blood of those Martyrs being the seed of the Church.

And Julian knew this so well, that he left off to persecute the Church, as his Predecessor had done. No ex misericordia, sed ex invidiis; not out of mercy, but envy, faith the Historian; because he saw, The more they were afflicted, the more they grew: The more they were oppressed, the more they increased: And therefore he left off that course. But the Church lost more by Sun-shine, than by Storms; more by Peace, than by Troubles; by Smiles, than by Frowns.

5. When God shall bring about the Peace of his People, by the trouble of his People, by their healing, by their woundings, their comforts by their fears. When God shall work his work by contraries, bring joy out of sorrow, life out of death, comfort out of discomforts: This is a wonder, and a wonder which God hath frequently showed for the good of his Church.

How often hath God made the Juifs of men, even the malice and rage of his enemies, to bee a means for the good of his Church and People? making those things which in their own nature were for the ruine, a means for the raising of his Church and People.
The stories of Pharaoh, of Haman, and others, afford you plentiful proof of it. Thus, out of the Eater comes sweetness: out of those things destructive in themselves, comfort and deliverance. This is to turn poison into food, evil into good. As God doth turn the evil of sin, so much more the evil of trouble, to the good of his Church. He makes all troubles subservient to deliverance, as pangs and throes are to the birth.

As it was in the waters of Bethesda: the waters were troubled before the diseased were healed; God made the trouble of the water subservient to the cure in the water: So hee often makes the troubles of his People, subservient to the growth and increase of his People.

As the whale which swallowed up Jonah, hee made a means to bring him to the floor: So that trouble which wee think will swallow us up, God makes to advance their peace here, till hee set them on the floor of eternity.

Woe our selves have had the experience of it. But this is the Lords doing, and it is wonderful in our eyes.

6 When there are nothing but thoughts and preparations for war and destruction: And God shall please to compose our differences, heal our breaches, change the sad face of things, beat our swords into plow-shares, and our spears into pruning-books. This is a wonder.

And this is a wonder which God can do, a wonder which hee hath done; a wonder which wee have had experience of; and such an one as wee are now in expecta-tions of, which God of his mercy grant.

It will bee more destructive to our enemies than our wars. In the mean time, there must bee our prays and in deavours for it.

4. Quere.

4 When is the time which God takes to do these wonders for his Church?

1 When God shall get himself most glory of the enemies of his Church and People: Then is the time God takes to do wonders.

If God had disappointed Haman, at the beginning of his design, hee might thereby have delivered his Church: but hee had not then gotten so much glory out of him, and therefore hee suffers him to go on with his design, and bring it up to ripeness, that now it is ready to bee put in execution: and then God stepping in, in a wonderful and unexpected way, hee got himself a great deal of glory upon him.

Therefore doth God oftentimes stay till the enemies bee ripe, till they have digged graves to bury themselves in, twisted cords to binde themselves withall: that thereby their confusion might be greater, and Gods glory more visible.

2 When God shall get most praise from his own people. God is ve
ry desirous of the praines of his Saints. As hee doth Beho him-
sell in their tears, so hee doth delight himself in their joyes. Hee
loves to hear their Praises, as well as their Prayers.

And you know the greater the Straits out of which God doth
help and deliver, the more are the hearts of the Saints enlarged
with praises to him. And therefore God doth take such a time
for the declaration of his deliverances, as thereby the hearts
of his People may bee mightily enlarged and affected with the
mercy.

3 When God can do the Church most good, and work the compleatst
deliverance for them: Then is the time for God to do wonders for his
Church.

You see this in the story of Pharaoh. God could have wrought
a deliverance for them, had hee but unwheeld his Chariots, as
soon as hee came out of Egypt. But it had not then been so com-
plete a deliverance as they afterward had.

Though God had delivered them from that present trouble,
yet their enemies had been alive, and they should have heard
of them again. And therefore God he lets them go on, and follow
them unto, nay into the Red-sea, and then to work a compleat deliv-
erance for them, he fells a wonder upon them.

The like you have, Mich. 4. II, 12, 13. Many Nations are
gathered together against thee, who say, let her bee defiled, and let
our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord,
or understand they his Counsell: for hee shall gather them as sheaves
into the floor. Arise and thresh, O Daughter of Zion: for I will
make thy horns iron, and thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt break in pieces,
many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their
substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.

Where observe, God suffers Nations, and many Nations, to gather
themselves together against Zion. And why did God do so? certainly
they thought they should have the day of Zion: and for they say, Let
her bee defiled, let our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the
thoughts of the Lord, they understand not the Counsell of God. For
God suffers them to gather themselves together, but for this end,
for the compleatst ruine of the enemies, and by that, for the com-
pleater deliverance of the Church. So it follows, They know not
the thoughts of the Lord: for hee shall gather them: They gather them-
selves together; and yet faith the Text, God gathers them. They
gathered themselves to ruine the Church: and God gathers them,
to ruine themselves. Hee shall gather them as sheaves into the floor,
and the fuller the load, the more welcome to the Husbandman.
And then Arise and thresh.

4. A fourth time, wherein God doth wonderful things for his
Church, is,

When the enemies of the Church are carried on with most rage, and
promise themselves most success against the Church and people of
God.

You
his Church and People.

You see that in the verses before the Text, 9, 10. when the enemy said in his heart, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my lust shall bee satisfied on them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. -- Here they express their fury and rage, and promise themselves good success in all.

And this was the time for God to do Wonders, you see in the next verses. Then didst blow with thy wind, the Sea covered them, they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

It was so in the Powder-Plot: A Plot never to be forgotten. When they had intended to have blown up King, People, Nobles, Commons, Senators, Senate, Laws, and Law-makers, nay, three kingdoms at a blast: They could have buried all in one grave, and consumed all in one Bonfire. Here was their rage, their fury. And did they not also promise to themselves as good success in their way: Had they not then in their purposes disposed of Crown and kingdom, and all the Chief Offices, and Revenues in the Land? And now was the time for God to shew a wonder for the deliverance of His Church, which you know he did. A wonder of wisdom in the discovery of the Plot, and a wonder of mercy, in disappointing of it.

5. When God's People are brought low, when all humane helps fail; when the Arme of flesh is weak, when the Stream of second Causes is dry. Then is God's time to shew a wonder for their relief; when wee cannot be relieved without a wonder, then God works wonders for our relief.

You see this Deut. 32. 35, 36. The Lord shall judge his People, and repent himself concerning his servants: when bee seeth, that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, nor left.

When Israel was brought to those straits, the Red-sea before them, the Egyptians behind them, and mountains on each side them: then faith Moses, fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, Exod. 14. 13. As if he had said, you are now in straits: your extremities are great: and now is the time for God to help: now is God's time to do wonders for you. There are two times,

1. Man's Time.
2. God's Time.

Man's time is, when ever we are in need, when ever we are in trouble: but God's time is, only when all helps fail, when no relief is in the arm of flesh, then all is in God.

God is ever ready to put forth himself in desperate cases, because then his mercy and power will bee most conspicuous, his People most thankful, and deliverance most glorious.

It is an old experienced Truth, Man's extremity is God's opportunity. The depth of Man's misery calls in for the depth of God's mercy.

It may bee observed in all Ecclesiastical Histories, that when de-
Liverance approached, then was persecution the hottest. The Scribes and Pharisees blasphemed most, when their Kingdom was nearest to ruine. In this, like the Devil, who roars most, when his time is shortest.

The greatest darkness is before the morning watch, when the morning is darkest, then comes the day, when trouble is greatest, then comes deliverance.

You know, when the task of bricks was doubled, then was Moses sent to deliver.

The Ancient Tragedians, when things were brought to that height, that there could be no possibility of humane help imagined, they used to bring down some of their Gods out of the Clouds, and thence was the phrase, ὄρθες ἡμῶν ἔρχεται, which was not much differing from that among the Jews, -- In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

God's promises are never nearer fulfilling, than when to sense and reason they seem furthest off from fulfilling. This was Abraham's case, when at God's command he was about to sacrifice his Isaac.

6. The time when God doth wonders for his Church, is,

When God doth give and hold up a mighty spirit of Prayer in his People to seek.

You see this in the deliverance of the Church out of the Babylonish captivity. In which deliverance God expressed many wonders of mercy to his Church. At which time God raised up a mighty Spirit of Prayer in them to seek. As you see in Dan. 9. 2, 3. And this was prophesied in Psal. 102. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. Thou shalt raise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, the set time is come. Why? how shall we know, that Now is the time? he thaws in the 14th verse. For thy Servants take pleasure in the stones, and favour the dust thereof, that is, they mourn, and they Pray. And therefore it is time for thee to help and deliver, as you see in the 15th verse. Thou shalt regard the Prayer of the desolate, and not despise their Prayer.

As when the Lord hath an intent to destroy a People, he doth either expressly charge them, not to pray for them, as hee did Jer. chap. 14. 11. Pray thou not for this people, and chap. 7. 16. Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry, nor Prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: For I will not hear thee.

Or hee doth secretly dead and straiten their spirits, that they cannot Pray.

So, when hee doth stirre up the hearts of his People to seek him: It is an evident demonstration, that God will do great things for that People.

Hee hath told us, that hee will not forsake them, that seek him, when the eyes and hearts of Gods People are big with sorrow, then is Gods mercy big with deliverance, ready to be delivered.
Wicked men have a measure of sin to fill; as God said of the Amorites. The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And Christ to the Scribes and Pharisees. Fill you up the measure of your Fathers, Mat. 23. 22.

When the Harvest is ripe; then will God put in his Sickle, Joel 3. 13. put in the Sickle, for the Harvest is ripe; for the wickedness is great.

In a word, God hath a bag for the sins of the wicked, Job 14. 17. And God hath a bottle for the tears of his servants, Phil. 56. 8. Hee bags up sins, and hee bottles up tears. And when once his bag is full of the transgressions of the wicked: and his bottle is full of the tears of the Saints: Then shall salvation come to Zion, then will God stir up himself, for the relieving and succouring of his Church.

When wicked men are ripe for Destruction, the Church ripe for Deliverance, then will God perform his whole work upon Zion, and will punish the fruit of the proud Doer.

7. When the glory of God is mightily concerned. His worship, his Truth, his Cause; Then is the time, God will do wonders. Though God will not do it for us, yet hee will do it for his own Name sake. Hee will not suffer his glory to bee polluted.

And this was the Argument Joshua had, Josh. 7. 8, 9. When Israel had finned, and God had delivered them up to their enemies, hee pleads with God. Lord, what will become of thy great Name! Though Israel deserve not that thou shouldst stand out for them, yet let not thy glory suffer for their sin; but let thy Name, which is so much concerned, draw thee out to relieve and help.

The like you have, Isa. 48. 9, 10, 11. For my Name sake I will defer my anger; and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. For my own sake, even for my own sake will I do it: For how should my Name bee polluted? And I will not give my glory to another, 2 King. 18. 35. Who are there among the Gods of the Countries, that have delivered their Country out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? Here you see now was Gods Glory concerned, and therefore to preserve his own Glory, hee shews a wonder to help them.

And happy are they, whose deliverance is joyned with Gods Glory. Though God will not alway deliver for our sake, yet will hee deliver for his Glory, for his own Name sake. As hee tells them in Ezek. 36. 32. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, bee it known unto you, bee ashamed and confounded for your own ways, Oh house of Israel! But though hee would not do it for their sakes; yet hee did it for his own sake, even for the Glory of his own Mercy, as you see in that place.
5. Quere.

5. How shall we know, that God will work a wonder for us?

We are now in sad and distressed conditions, and a wonder must be wrought for the helping and relieving of us. But whether God will work a wonder for us, or no: There is the great question. This I am sure of, If God do not work a wonder for us, we shall be made a wonder. Nay, three Wonders to all Nations.

1. We shall bee made a wonder of folly, a wonder of madness. Who, because none else could, therefore we would with our own hands ruin our selves. Which should wee effect, it would bee the grief of our friends, the joy of our enemies, the Popes Holy-day, Germanies tears, Irelands ruine, Scotland's hazard, and our own overthrow.

2. Wee shall bee made a wonder of scorn, a hissing, and a by-word to all Nations: That England, (that was Compendium Mundi: Of which I may say, as did the Historian of Ormus, that in the whole World were a Ring, England were the Diamond) that England should ruin her self, and with the foolish Woman in the Proverbs, pull down her house with her own hands.

3. And a wonder of misery. For all the World were not able to bring that misery upon us, that we shall bring upon our selves. In which combustion, if wee preferve our Jewels, though we lose the rest, it's well. But wee may fear all will bee indangered, if these, (who were the first movers of our trouble: such, whose Viper-like would eat out the heart of their common Parent) bee not taken away.

Well then. The case is so with us, As a wonder must bee done, or wee shall bee made a wonder: a wonder of folly, scorn, misery: But whether or no, God will now do wonders for us, Here is the Question.

And I must confess, there are many sad presages of evil amongst us: many things which speak, that God will rather make us a wonder, than do a wonder for us.

I will first give you the grounds of my Fears, and then give you the grounds of my Hopes, that God will not desert us at this time.

The Grounds of Fear are

1. Either Spiritual
2. Or Natural.

1. Spiritual grounds of Fear.

Spiritual, and they are

1. The Univeresality of sin
2. The Impudence
3. The obstinacy of sin amongst us.

1. Universality of sin. All persons, all places are fill'd with all kinds of sins. The Land is full of Adulteries, full of Oathes, full of Oppression, full of Injustice, of Pride, Prophanation of the Sabbath, contempt of the Ordinances, full of Drunkenness,
kennets; the whole land is defiled with blood: Prince, and People; Magistrates and Ministers, great and small, poor and rich: We are all defiled with sin. Wee may take up the complaint of the Prophet, Isa. 1. 6, from the sole of the foot, even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, and purifying sores: they have not been closed, nor bound up, nor mollified with ointment.

But there are four sins especially that threaten evil to us, and those are such, as do more immediately concern God and his worship.

1. Idolatry.
2. Prophanation of his Ordinances.
3. Prophanation of his Sabbath.
4. Contempt and abuse of his Ministers.

Any of which are enough to sink a Nation, though guilty of no more.

2. But secondly, Add unto this, The impudency of sin. Sin is impudent, hath gotten a where-forehead, without modesty, or restraint. Men are not ashamed to publish sin as Sodom, and their iniquities like unto Gomorrah. Not ashamed to swear, to drink, to prophan the Sabbath, to contemn Ordinances. Many are more ashamed to pray, than others are to swear.

3. And thirdly, Add to this, The obstinacy of sin. Sin is not only universal and impudent, but it is grown obstinate, stubborn and incorrigible. Insomuch, that neither Mercy, nor Judgement, Word, nor Works, Promises, nor Threats will bee powerful to persuade with men. Then indeed may sin bee said to bee incorrigible, when it is grown too strong for that means God hath set up, to keep it down. When sin is too strong for the Ordinances, and Offices God hath set up for the suppressing and keeping down of sin: Then it is incorrigible, Jer. 6. ult. The Bellows are burnt. The Prophets lungs consumed.

Besides these, diverse others might bee named.

1. Too much selfish confidence.
2. Our unanswerable walking to the means and mercies wee injoy.

2. Natural grounds of Fear.

1. The great opposition of wicked men, and unsound spirits, against the endeavors of Reformation.

Too many there are, who hate to bee reformed. Old bottles will never brook with new Wine. Nor will old hearts close with a spiritual way.

It is now with us as the Lord complained of Ephraim. Hof.
7. 1. When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered. All the while before their corruptions did lye a sleep, they little thought there were any such spirits in them: But when the Physician comes, then they appear.

D d d 2 2. The
Gods Wonderfull Workings for

2 The schismes and Divisions among us: which threaten evil upon us. If wee had joyned our mutual strength against the common adversaries, and not turned the heat of contention upon our selves, wee had not now been so weak, nor our adversaries so strong.

But I hope we shall bee like sheep, that though a fair day hath scattered us all over the field, one from another; yet a storm will drive us together again; seeing herein our concerns are mutual and reciprocal.

3 The wilful blindness and security among us. That men will not see how much their Religion, their Liberties, and Priviledges are concerned. Or, if they do, yet (with Gallio) they care for none of these things. At least, not so much as to hazard and adventure any thing for the securing and upholding of them.

4 Missing of Opportunities. O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Hadst thou known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. Lk. 19.41, 42. There are some special times when God doth put advantages into the hands of his people; the loss whereof is never recovered again.

It is not here as with Tides, that if wee miss this, wee may go with the next; but if wee miss this, perhaps wee shall never have another.

And these are the chief grounds of my fear, that cause crosses thoughts in mee, and give way to fulpition, that God will not do wonders for us.

Yet to these let mee add the grounds of my hope. That even at this time, God will do wonders for England.

Now then the Arguments that may persuade us, and the Reasons, which may induce us to believe, that God will do wonders, are these five:

1 From God.

1 Such as are taken from God, and that

1 From the goodness of his Nature, Hee is gracious and mercifull. Gracious in himself, and exceeding gracious to his Saints.

Though wee have never a Promise for a particular deliverance at this time, yet wee may venture our selves upon the good nature of God, That hee will not deliver us up into the hands of cruel, merciless, and bloody men, who seek our ruin.

Though our sins bee many, and God might scourge us sharply, as wee deserve; yet hee loves his People so well, as not to put them into the hands of such cruel men to bee punished.

You have some ground for this suggestion in Deut. 32.27. When God was highly displeased with Israel, and threatened to destroy them, yet hee feared the wrath of the enemy. Hee feared they would deal too hardly, that they would destroy them rather
his Church and People.

thine that scorneth them. He knew not how to put them into their hands. Though Israel had sinned, yet he was loath to make use of sinners to punish sin. He knew the Mercies of the wicked were cruel merces.

2. A second Argument from God is, Because Gods glory is now much concerned. It is not alone our good, but his own glory, that is concerned: and hee will have a care of that. Though hee will not do it for us, yet hee will do it for his own Names sake.

There are many things, which hee will not do for our sakes: yet will hee do for his own sake. You see in Ezek. 36. 32. Not for your sakes, do I this, 0 house of Israel. But though hee would not do it for their sakes, yet he would do it, because his glory was concerned; Hee would do it for his own Names sake, you have the like expressions, Exod. 32. 12. Deut. 9. 28. Isa. 48. 9. 10, 11. Though Israel had provoked God, yet for his own Glory sake he would deliver them.

And if wee do not look with two partiall eyes, I cannot see, that Ever the glory of God was more nearly and closely concerned, in all the stories, I have read, than it is at this time.

Gods Glory in his Truth, in his worships, in his Saints, in his Ordinances, they are all nearly concerned at this time.

And how would wicked men triumph, how would our enemies insult and glory? What pious heart could indure to hear those Blasphemies, they would cast up against heaven, and those contempts cast upon the People of God.

2. Arguments from the Church.

2. There are some Arguments taken from the Church of God in general. And that is, that

The good of most of the reformed Churches in the Christian world, doth depend upon the welfare of England. And in a great measure, Upon the good success of this present Parliament.

If it should not go well with us, Scotland would be hazarded, Ireland ruined, Germany irrecovered, And all the reformed Churches in the Christian world would feel the smart of our stripes.

And therefore, seeing the preservation and deliverance of England, is of such publick concernment, it may much persuade with us, That God will rather do a wonder, than England shall not be preserved.

3. Arguments from ourselves.

3. There may be some Arguments taken from ourselves, to induce us to hope, that God will do a wonder for us.

1. Though it be true, wee have many fearful sins and abominations among us; And those are publick too; such as have overspread the whole land; yet these sins are not national; they have not yet been countenanced by a Law, There is Prophanation of the Sab-
bath. But there are good Laws against it, and for the strict observing of it. There hath been Idolatry among us, But there have been Laws against it; Swearing, yet Laws for the punishing of them.

Which affords mee this comfort: 1. That, though these sins bee in our Nation, and do abound among us: yet they are not the Sins of our Nation. There have been Laws against them: and so long they are not national.

And it hath been

1. Either the Corruption.

2. Or the cowardise of our Magistrates,

That sin hath not been punished. I say, the corruption of many, who have strengthened the hands of evil doers, either conniving at them, siding with them, or abetting of them in their way. And to those, who should have been the bolts to have kept out sin, have been the Latches to draw in sin, let in sin.

Or it hath been the Cowardise of them, that they durst not appear for the punishing of sinne, Ezek. 22. 30. I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before mee, for the land: that I should not destroy it: I sought for a Phineas, that might stand up to execute Judgement, and what was there none? Certainly there were many: but they were Cowards and durst not appear against sin.

2. Though these sins were in a kind National; as indeed the Corruption and connivance of them in Authority gives too much largenesse to them, increaseth the latitude of them, makes them of greater extent and guilt: yet now wee are about reforming them.

And wee never read, that ever God did ruine a Nation, when a Nation was in a way of reforming.

Indeed, that which comes nearest to it, and that, which is the faddest piece in all the Scriptures, is in that example of Josiah: Hee let upon the work of Reformation, yet God held up his purpose of destroying that people, You shall read it 2 King. 23. 26, 27. Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fiercenesse of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, &c. Notwithstanding all that Reformation, as you may fee in that Chapter: Yet the anger of the Lord was not turned back, but his hand was stretched out still: First, to cut off that godly King, and afterwards to cut down that ungodly people.

1. But first I must tell you, That Gods decree was then past against them. And God had pronounced it long before, as you see in his message to Hecakiah, 2 King. 20. 17, and I hope there is yet no Decree gone out against England.

2. And secondly, Though he would not revoke, what he had Decreed: yet this good act of Josiah procureth the Deferring of Gods
his Church and People.

God's Judgements, all his days, 2 King, 22, 18, 19, 20. But to the King of Judah, thus shall ye say to him, Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil that I will bring upon this place.

So that this is yet strong. God did never destroy a Nation at any time, when his People were about the Reforming of that Nation.

And it hath pleased God at this time, to set us up a choice Assembly. An Assembly chosen by Prayer, brought together by Prayer, and held together, and preferred to this day, by the might of Prayer.

And their spirits have been held up amidst many difficulties and strong oppositions, to Hazard themselves, their lives, and estates, for the good of our souls, our bodies, and estates.

And I say, it was never heard of, nor read of: It is an untractable cause, that God should destroy a Nation, whilst they are such, whom he hath himself singled out, and set up for the Reforming of a Nation.

If hee would have destroyed us, hee would never have been at the pains to Reform us. One cannot stand with the other.

3 A third Argument from ourselves. And that is taken from the beginnings of mercy.

You know what our Condition hath been before, the remembrance of it is fresh. God at that time did hear the cry of our souls, and put us in our low estate, and did go forth in the beginnings of mercy to us. And may we not Reason, if God would have destroyed us, he would never have done thus much for us.

That which God hath done, is an earnest unto us, and an engagement upon God, To go on in the finishing of what he hath begun to do for us already.

Shall wee think, hee hath brought us out of Egypt, to destroy us in the Wilderness? Shall wee think, the Sun of Mercy hath shined on us, but only to warm our heads against a Storm? Shall wee think, hee hath exalted us thus high, that hee might lay us the lower in the end?

Indeed thus God hath done with the wicked. But wee never read that hee hath so done with his own people.

Shall we think hee hath delivered us from leffer, to reserve us to greater Judgements? Freed us from Rods, to whip us with Scorpions? Delivered us from leffer evils, to ruin us at once? This cannot bee I think, though the appearances were greater against us than they are.

Thus God may do with wicked men; but thus God did never do with his own.
A fourth Argument taken from our selves, to induce us to Hope, that God will do a wonder for us, is, There is a flock of Prayers going outward, and laid up for the good of this Church and Nation. Many Prayers have been made. And I tell you, all the praying spirits in the World are now at work for England. Who hath a tongue, and doth not speak? who hath a hand, and doth not stretch it out? and I tell you, this is something considerable.

If the Prayers of one Moses could do so much, what will the prayers of so many thousands? What? hath God heard England for Scotland? and England for Ireland? and will hee not hear England for itself? that were strange. Shall they fave all others, but their own souls?

Indeed wee sometimes read, that praying spirits could not prevail to save others; but yet they saved their own souls. As God said, Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in Jerusalem, they should not deliver Sinner Daughter; they should only bee delivered themselves, Ezek. 14. 20. But wee never read, that they should prevail to save others, and yet not bee able to save their own souls. Will God then hear us for others, not for our selves? would a friend grant you a request for another? and deny the same to your self? No certainly. Nor will God.

A fifth Argument is; This hath been a time, wherein God hath drawn out the Graces of his People, which perhaps had they been suppress and not discovered, wee had been in no hazard.

And do you think that God will draw out the graces of his People, for the destruction of his people? Indeed nothing is more ordinary, than to draw out the sins and corruptions of wicked men, for their own ruin, to bee Cart-ropes to bind themselves. But wee never heard God did draw out the graces of his people for their ruin. Wee read, hee hath hardened wicked men to destruction, but never made the heart tender, sensible to destruction. Men have perished by their fear, deferring the cause of God: but never any who perished by their courage and standing to it.

Did Esther lose any thing by her Obedience? did Daniel? did the three children? It brought them into the fire, but preserved them in the fire: nothing was consumed but their bands: not one hair was singed. Though God do draw out the sins of wicked men, to their destruction, as Pharaoh, Haman, &c. yet hee never draws out the graces of his People to their destruction.

I say no more butt this. If God should not preserve us, if hee should not do a wonder for us at this time, it is an undated piece of Providence: wee have not a presidet of the like, since God had a Church: Hee doth with us fo, as hee never did with any of his people since the beginning of the World.

4. Arguments from our enemies.
his Church and People.

which may induce us to Hope, that God will do a wonder for us.

Consider then,

1. Their former wickedness, which shall hunt them, and finde them out.

2. Their present sinfulness, such as these
   1. Their Pride.
   2. Their Prophaneness.
   3. Their scorn and contempt of God and his ways.
   4. Their Cruelty.
   5. Their Blasphemies and Bloody-hell-born-Oathes.

All which induce mee to hope, That God will never give a blessing to the means, nor yet to the men. They have but escaped the hand of man, that they may fall into the hand of God: The Justice of men, that the Justice of God, who is a punisher of sin, a consuming fire, might at once bee revenged of them. But I shall only give you two things to consider of. Consider then

1. The Persons against whom they are.
2. The Persons, who are against us.

1. The Persons against whom they set themselves. And that is, against his Church, his People, his Saints, his Mourners, his Sighers, his Prayers, his Members, his Treasures, his Jewels: Such as are as dear to him as the apple of his eye: such as he hath said, hee will give men for, and people for their life. — Yea, and therefore are they enemies to these, because they are friends to God; because they run not out with them in the same excess of Riot, as the Apostle faith.

2. Look upon the persons who are against us. They are such as are declared to bee Papists, Atheists, scorners and contermers of God and his waies: such as are proud, prophan, cruel, and bloody-minded-men: haters of God, blasphemers of his Name, by new and hel-born oathes, such as have made themselves obnoxious to the stroke of Justice. Many of whom have escaped the hand of man, that they may, I hope, fall into the hand of God, and the justice of man, that the justice of God might discover them, and finde them out, who will bee a sad avenger of these things.

Thus doth the wickedness of the enemy speak deliverance to the Church of God: when the Devil drives his servants so furiously, it is a sign they will quickly bee at their journies end. 

When Satan strenue is violent, it is not long; Rev. 12. 12. Woe bee to the Inhabitants of the Earth (that is, to the wicked, and the ungodly,) But rejoice ye Heavens: (that is, ye Saints and People of God) why? For the Devil is come down, having great wrath. But can this bee a matter of rejoicing? Yea faith the Text, Because bee hath but a short time. 

When the Devil comes down with great wrath, it prognosticates his time is not long. 

When men are grown so hellish in their malice, their oathes and Blasphemies,
nues, that they are become an abhorrning and abomination to men: Then will God certainly ease himself, and unbear the Nation of them. You have something to this, 9 Tim. 3. 8, 9. when their wickedness, of whom the Apostle speaks there, was abhorred of all men, Then (saith he) they shall proceed no further.

Object. But you will tell me, that this will not bee enough to perswade with us, that God will do a wonder for us: For we sometimes read, that God hath given up the guilty into the bands of wicked men, to bee punished: as you read ordinarily in Scripture. And Habakkuk complains of the like, Hab. 1. 17. Thou art of purer eyes, than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity? Wherefore lookst thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue, when the wicked devour the man, that is more righteous than himself?

Ans. It is true. God hath sometimes given up a people to others, who have been greater sinners than themselves. Hee hath given up one wicked Nation, to another that was more wicked than they. But wee do not read that God hath given up the good of one to the evil and wicked of the same Nation. But then

2. When God hath done this, it hath been, when hee was highly displeased with his people, after hee hath sent Prophets to warn them, to humble and reform them, and yet they would continue obstinate in their evil ways, and would not bee reformed: as hee tells us at large, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16.

3. When God hath done this, it hath been, when his own people have been so involved, and unwrapped with them, that there was no separating between them. And thus oftentimes the Saints may bee involved in the same general calamities with the bad, because of that politic union and conjunction that is between the Members of a State and Common-wealth. So in a Common-wealth universally sinful, a few righteous men may as parts of that sinful society, bee justly subject to those temporary evils, which the sins of that society have contracted upon them.

4. When God hath done this, it hath been, when his own people have had communion with the sins of them, with whom they live. When there is a communion with the evil of sin, wee must look for a communion with the evil of punishment. One mens of sin brings One mens of sufferings. But none of these are our case. For

1. Wee are not to bee delivered up to another Nation, but to those, who are Vipers in our own: and the good to the bad.

2. Though wee were involved together, yet they have separated themselves from us, which if it had not been done, wee might suspect, that such Foma's would raise storms.

Indeed, the way for wicked men to bee preserved, is, to body them-
his Church and People.

themselves with the Saints, is to abide by them, whiles the Wheat and Tares grew together, the Tares were preferred. The Tares had not been preferred, if they had not been in the field with the Wheat: But being there, God would not pluck up the Tare, left the Wheat also should be destroyed. But when the Wheat is gathered in, or if the Tares shall separate themselves from the Wheat, bundle themselves together against the Saints: it is the ready way to their own destruction, that is the way to have no mercy, when God may deal with them single, and there be none with them to bear off the blow.

4. Gods People have not communion with them in their sins.

1. They do not approve of them in their judgements.
2. They do not consent to them in their wills.
3. They do not all them in their lives. This is to have Communion.

No, but further,

1. They are grievous with them, as Lot was, his soul was grieved with the sins of Sodom.
2. They are grievous for them, not only with them, but for them. They are matter of their mourning. Thus David shed rivers of tears, because the wicked kept not Gods law, Ezek. 9. 4. A mark was to be set on the foreheads of them, who were Sighers and mourners for the sins of Jerusalem.
3. They are not only grieved with, and grieved for; but they pray down, mourn down, live down, the sins of this sinful Common-wealth, which may be an argument to us, that God will preserve us from that overflowing scourge, that devouring deluge, which he may bring upon wicked men.

5. Argument.

The fifth Argument to induce us to hope, that God will now to a wonder for us, is taken from the Consideration of those great things, which God hath promised to do for his Church and People, in this latter end of the world.

Indeed God hath done much for his People in all ages of the World, you may see his Wonders upon record, But all these are nothing in comparison of those, which he hath ingaged himself to do for them hereafter.

The World is the stage, on which God will act all his Wonders, and it cannot be long before this frame bee dissolved, and this stage bee taken down. If Saint Johns time were the last hour, surely ours are the last minute.

But yet God will not take down the stage, till all hath been acted, which he hath ingaged himself to do for his Church.

Now, I say, God hath ingaged himself to destroy that man of note, to make his Church glorious.

Bee 2

Read.
God's Wonderfull Workings for

Read at your leisure, how much God hath promised to do for his Church, in Isa. 60. throughout, Glorious Promises, which though they had a gradual accomplishment in the first Preaching of the Gospel, yet not so fully as the Words there hold out, which yet must bee made good, and therefore it is yet to be expected.

Hitherto the Church hath been buried up under reproach, scorn, and persecution: hitherto sufferings, Prisons, Fires, stakes, they have been the Portion of the Church.

As yet (though we have had our Lucida intervalla, our Restitses, and Breathings) The Church of God hath been, like Noahs Ark, toling, and fluctuating upon the Billows, and devouring waves of troubles and Persecutions. And the Saints under the Altar, the blood of the slain, cries, How long, Lord, holy and true! though they say, How long, yet they say, Holy and true: They give God the glory of his truth and faithfulness. Though hee defer the accomplishment, of what he hath promised, yet hee is true of his promise.

And hath God ingaged himself to make his Churches glorious, and that before the end of all things? And is the day so neer to an End? And is God faithful, is hee true of his Promise? why this may something persuade with us, that notwithstanding the present oppositions, and troubles, God is now comming in with mercy and deliverance to his Church and People.

And God hath not left us without hom hopes, that the work is begun -- That mighty Spirit of Prayer, which God hath poured out upon his People; That increase of light and knowledge, the weakening of the man of sinne, in those two Limbs, whereon hee hath stood fo strongly; Germany and Spain: that numerous increase of converts, within these few years: All which are fore-running signs of the Rising Condition of the Church. God doth not use to beget Children to the Murderers; nor to increase the number of his People, to fatten the sword of the enemy.

Indeed, when God hath intended to bring judgements upon a People, Hee hath taken his People away: hee hath lesseñed the number, as hee tells us Isa. 57. 1. Hee takes them away from the evil to come: but hee never increaseth them against judgements. As the lessening presupageth judgement: so, when he increaseth them, it is a preface of mercy.

Every one, that is now brought in, every Convert we have, is a Pledge to this Nation, that God will not destroy this Nation. Nay, it is an evidence, that God will do great things for us.

And 7. 17: It is said, When the time of Promise drew nigh, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt. Their growing was a sign of their rising: their increase discovered the promised mercy was not far off.
And these are the hopeful signs, that the day of the Churches redemption draws nigh, and is even at the doors. As Christ said of the fig-tree, when you see the Fig-tree bud, and put forth her leaves; know that Summer is nigh; So when you see these things, you may know, that the Churches Redemption is at hand. God is risen upon his throne, and will not sit down (if our sins do not make him repent) till hee have made his Church glorious in the earth.

And now having told you my thoughts, and that which persuades with me to hope, that God will do a wonder for us, yet I must tell you again (that you may not be discouraged with the sad appearance of things) that we may suffer many thows, many pangs, much opposition, and perhaps some blood, before these things. God will save us, from trouble, by trouble: He will bring us through a Sea, and through the wilderness unto Canaan. Yet I will say as Joseph did, Numb. xiv. 8. If the Lord hath any delights in us, he will bring us into this Land.

God seldom doth great things, without great commotions. Paul and Silas were not delivered out of Prison, but by an Earthquake. Though it bee grievous to see; yet it is that wee see. And we must not forsake a good cause, because of opposition. This were to leap out of the Ship, because the winds blow: to bee impatient of the Ark, because the billows rise: to seek our safety in the midst of Danger.

This assure your selves: Though Earth and hell should fight against you: your safety lies on Gods side, in Gods cause: and there is no safety elsewhere.

These things I suggest to you, by way of Cautional advise: that when you see these things, you may not be troubled. As Christ said to his Disciples. These things I tell you before, that when you do come to pass, your hearts may not be troubled: So these things I tell you before, that, though God will deliver us from trouble, ye it will bee by trouble: though hee save us, yet it shall bee by fire; that, when you see these things you may not be troubled; when you see storms to fall, oppositions and troubles to arise, you may not bee moved from your own steadfastnes.

I tell you, this is necessary advice, a reasonable admonition to you: left the oppositions and seeming contrarieties of Gods proceedings should weaken your faith, and move you from your own steadfastnesse.

The best of us are too apt to live by sense, and not by faith; by works, and not by the Word; by Gods outward appearances, and proceedings of Providence, and not by Promises. And therefore out Faith, doth wane, or increae according as God doth let out, or restrain himself in the ways of his Providence, when God doth let out himself to succour and releave his Church; when we see deliverance in the Promise, and deliverance in his outward proceedings too, then wee can believe: but, if God do any
way restrain himself, or his outward Proceedings do seem to walk contrary to his own Promises: Though perhaps that bee the next way for the performance of his Promises: As you see it was with Joseph, with Israel in Egypt, where the Promise spake one thing, and Gods outward proceedings seemed to speak another.

In this case wee are ready to give up all, and thus did David: I shall one time or other perish by the hand of Saul, and therefore wee should learn this lesson in some kind, to shut our eyes to the works of God, and look upon the Word of God: Not only to look upon the outward proceedings of Providence: but upon the stability and truth of the Promise: and see the Word say Yea, when the Works seem to say Nay: and conclude, because the Promise faith, it shall bee, though all secondary means, whereby the Promise should bee performed, say: It shall not bee.

Wee read that Ulysses, when hee was to pass the Coast of the Syrens, hee caused his men to stop their ears, that they might not bee enchanted by their musick, to destroy themselves: But for himselfe, hee would only bee bound to the mast, that though hee should heare, yet their musick might not bee so strong as to allure him to destroy himself, and leap into the sea.

There are some of Gods people who are weak in Faith: And when they see Gods outward proceedings of Providence seemingly contrary to his Promises, they are apt to bee charmed from their own steadfastness. Now as for these, it were good for them to stop their ears, and to shut their eyes to the works, and look altogether upon the VWord of God: But there are some that are stronger, and therefore may look upon the outward proceedings of God: But withall let them bind themselves fast to the mast, the VWord of God, lest, when they see the seeming contrariety of his proceedings to the Promise, they bee charmed from their own steadfastness, to the wounding of their own souls.

God hath promised, that Antichrist shall fall: Hee hath promised to make his Church glorious. And though in outward proceedings hee should seem to uphold the one, and evil intereat the other, yet let not this weaken our Faith, in believing the truth of what God hath promised.

If you put a straight stick into the water, yet sense will render it to bee crooked; it will appear so to the eye: but reason corrects it, and tells you, though it appear to bee so, yet it is not so, you put it in straight, and so it is.

Doth reason prevail against sense? and why should not Faith prevail against Reason? when to outward appearance, God seems to bee against us, why should not wee by Faith conclude, that God is for us; even for us, when hee seems to bee against us? 

The
The outward face of things may be such as may poise the Church with fear, when God hath a purpose to do great things for his Church. So you read in Joel 2:21. Fear not, O Lord, be glad, and rejoice, for the Lord will do great things for you. It was a time of joy, irrespective of God's purpose; and yet a time of fear, in respect of their present apprehensions. God had a purpose to do great things for them; and yet the face and outward appearance of things were such, as did at that time poise the Church with fear. It was so; but it should not have been so.

You see what Christ faith, in Luke 21:25. There shall be signs in the Sun, in the Moon, in the Stars; and upon the earth distress of Nations; the Sea and Waters roaring, mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after the things that shall come upon the Earth, for the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken. Could there be a sadder appearance? And yet faith Christ, when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.

Here you see Christ doth turn the saddest and most perplexing, that ever the world shall see, into a Doctrin of Comfort to his Church; because all these things were but a preparatory to the redemption of the Church.

One would think this to be a strange consequent deduced from such an Antecedent: A Consequent so comfortable, from an Antecedent so terrible: that so terrible a Doctrin should afford us an use of Consolation. Yet so it is. Beethe premises what they will, the conclusion is good. Bee his Providences what they will, his Promise is good, and these promises shall turn all those Providences to good.

And this is the admonition I give you, that whatever oppositions, whatever troubles, whatever evils we meet withal in the way of deliverance; Bee not troubled, let not your hearts be discouraged: for this is the way whereby God will do you good, making all your evil and trouble subservient to good.

What the Apostle faith of his Bonds, I may say of all oppositions, Phil. 1:12. The things which have happened to me, have fallen out to the furtherance of the Gospel. His prision was the Gospels liberty; his straits and bonds, the Gospels enlargement; his abasements, the Gospels advancements.

As we say, the choicelest blessings come out of the fire of afflictions: so the greatest deliverances come out of the greatest oppositions. And thus much for that.

Wee will now come to Application.

Uses

First of Information, and that of diverse particulars. 1 It informs us of the greatness of our God.
Gods Wonderfull Workings for

1. Of his Power.
2. Of his Wisdome.
3. Of his Mercy.
4. Of his faithfulness, toward his people.

For all these Attributes are visibly declared in every wonder God doth for his Church.

1 His Power.
1. God discovers the greatness of his Power in every wonder hee doth for them. If a man were able to do it, it were no wonder. Hence hee is said to make bare his arm, to reveal his Power. And it is attributed to his right hand, to his out-stretched arm, &c.

2 His Wisdome.
2. God discovers the greatness of his Wisdome.
1. Wisdome in the Manner. In relieving in such a way as could not bee conceived.
2. Wisdome in the Time. In helping in such a time, when things are desperate, or in such a time, when hee gets himself most glory, and doth us most good.
3. Wisdome in the means, by relieving us.
1. By such means as wee never thought of, or
2. By such, as if wee had thought of, would have been judged too small to have wrought so great a deliverance.
3. Or by such, which wee should rather have judged a means of ruine, than of raising us: yet Gods wisdome feeth more than wee can.

3 God's Mercy.
3. God discovers abundance of Mercy, yea and Free Mercy. Every deliverance of his Church being wrought out of his own bowels and compassion, Psalm 136. (which is a Psalm of praises for wonders.) You see at the foot of every verse, a declaration of Mercy -- Hee brought his People out of Egypt, for his Mercy endures for ever. Hee divided the Red-Sea, for his Mercy endures for ever. Hee overthrew Pharaoh and his Host, for his Mercy endures for ever.

4 Gods Truth.
4. God discovers his Truth and Faithfulness to his Church. God hath engaged himself by many precious promises to do wonders for them. And all the deliverances of God, they are performances of promises. They may bee all subscribed at the foot of the promise, as so many particular instances and experiences to prove the truth of the promise, and to discover the faithfulness of the Promiter to us. They are so many witnessses to both. By the mouth of two or three witnessses every word shall be established, faith the Apostle. It is true, it is spoken of the word of man, not of the Word of God. God is Truth it self. You may beleive him without a witness. But yet God hath not left himself without witness, As the Apostle faith. Nor hath God left any word without witness.

There is never a truth, never a promise in the Word, but it hath been made good by a thousand experiences; wee have a Book of Experiences, to annex to the book of Promises, of the
many wonders, which God hath in all ages wrought for his people: all which doth discover the faithfulness and truth of God, and the Promise to us.

2. Information. This may inform us of the blessed and happy condition of the Saints, who have interest in such a God, as can do wonders for them: Propriety in all-sufficiency doth make the injoyer happy. And what a blessed condition is this, to have interest in such a God, who can do wonders, for the relieving of us.

Though your troubles may be too big for man, yet not for God: your miseries and extremities may bee above the supply of creatures: but they cannot bee above the Power of God; Hee can do wonders: hee can do that, which man cannot do.

Though you have no ordinary means of help, yet you have interest in a God, who can do extraordinary things: yea, and extraordinary things in an ordinary way: nay, by ordinary means, if hee undertake the work. I may say concerning such, as the Psalmist — Blessed are the people that are in such a case. Blessed are the people, whose God is the Lord, P sal. 144. 15.

3. Information. This may inform us, How precious the Saints are in the esteem of God, what love bee bears to his Church, that hee will do wonders for them. Wonders for their preservation from trouble, and wonders for their deliverance out of trouble.

Men may do smaller curesseis for ordinary and common friends: and they may give their dole to them, they do not care for. But, if they will lay on the utmost of their power, of their strength, and estates, to hold up, or to do good to, or to relieve one: wee must needs conclude, they love such intirely.

Gods Dole, his common blessings of this life, will not bee enough to evidence his love: Hee causeth his Sunne to shine, and his rain to fall upon the good and bad promiscuously. But when God doth exercise the greatness of his Power, Wisdom, Truth, Mercy, as he doth in the wonders hee doth for his Church: this is an evident sign of that love he bears thereto.

Wicked men may bee subjects on whom he doth exercise the Wonders of his Justice, and of his Power. As Pharaoh. But the Saints are they, for whom hee doth exercise the wonders of his mercy, in mercy. Gods wonders are for the good, or for them in a good way.

4. Information. This may inform us, that the condition of the Church is oftentimes, very sad, very dark, very evil: because a wonder must bee expressed for relieving of them.

Ordinary reliefs may help ordinary distempers. But when extraordinary must bee used, it declares the conditions are exceeding sad.

The very doing of a wonder for relief, implyes a condition to
bee such, as is beyond the helps and succours of humane and created Power. If men could help, it means could relieve; it were no wonder to help. Therefore this implies, that the Condition of the Church, in respect of things below, may be oftentimes very sad, very miserable, yet

5. This informs us again, that the Conditions of Gods People, come never to bee so sad and uncomfortable, as thereby to despair of help and relief: seeing we have a God who doth wonders for us. Our Condition is not so low, but a Wonder may raise us up again.

Wee may bee hopeless and helpless in respect of Creature Supplyes and Reliefs: but wee can never be hopeful, never helpless in respect of Gods; when Creature-helps fail, God doth but turn us from sense, to faith, from reasoning, to believing, from Creatures, to himself. Hee bids us shut our eyes, to the things below, and look altogether above, as Job his God did. Lord, wee knew not what to do, but our eyes are up unto thee. And David too, when hee encouraged himselfe in the Lord his God. In the most hopeless condition there is a door of hope; because deliverance is nearest, when help seemes furthest off.

And Oh! that wee could learn, at such a time as this, to live by Faith, and not by sense; to shut our eyes to works, and look upon the word of God: we should then bee strong in God, and find encouragement from him, when we see nothing, but discouragements from below.

Wee are too apt to live by sense, and not by faith; and therefore accordingly as God doth let out, or restrain himself, in the wayses of his providence; so our faith doth wane, or increase.

Wee are too like Hagar, when the Bottle is dry, sit down, and Cry. Whereas, on the Contrary, wee should trust in God.

1. In the weakness of means. Though there bee weaknesse below, there's strength above, weakens and strength are all one with God. Nay

2. In the want of means. Though means bee wanting, yet God can create means; nay, do his work without means. Nay

3. In the Opposition of means. When the Word faith, Yea; though works say, Nay: when the Promise faith, It shalbe. Though all Secondary means, whereby this Promishe should bee effected, faith, It shall not bee: yet are wee to rest upon God, and the Promise.

God doth often speak one thing to sense; and another thing to Faith. Hee is not ever that in Appearance, which hee is in Truth. Hee may speak death to sense, as you see hee did to the Children of Israel, at the Red Sea. Had they consulted with
with sense and Reason, they could see nothing, but death: when yet hee speaks life and deliverance to faith. As you see Moses faith -- Fear ye not: stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. God may, in outward appearance speak evil, when yet, in the purposes of his heart, he speaks good.

As God may seem to heal, when he means to destroy: to speak Peace in his Providence, when hee speaks terror in his word: so God may seem to kill, when he intends to cure: to destroy, when hee intends to save, Jer. 29. 11. -- I know the thoughts, I have thought toward you, faith the Lord, the thoughts of Peace, and not of trouble: even to give you a desired end. Though my proceedings seem to bee evil, yet my thoughts are good; though my wayes are war, yet my purposes are peace, to give you at the last, an expected end.

6. Information. This may inform us, That there is no ground for wicked men, to insult and glory, in any probable advantages, which they may have against the Church and People of God; God can work wonders for his Church and People.

You see in the verse before the Text, the Egyptians had many advantages against the People of God: and they promised to themselves certain and infullible success. They said, they would -- Pursue, they would overtake, they would divide the spoil, their Lust should bee satisfied on them, &c. But God shews a Wonder, and lays all their Pride, and all their hopes in the dust: what began in pride, did end in shame.

It was the best speech, that Ahab ever spake, when Benhadad made such a vain boast, that the dust of Samaria should not serve for handfuls of them, who followed him. -- I tell him, ( faith Ahab ) Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself, as hee that putteth it off. -- God shews a wonder, and all is turned about. 1 King. 20. 11. And forward Benhadad, and his thirty two Kings, who came to help him, fled before the face of seven thousand of Israel, as there you may read.

7. Information. This may inform us, What ingagements of duty and obedience do by upon such a People, for whom God shall do wonders.

1. What ingagements of Love, Love is the Loadstone to butter Love. And God having express his love to us, how should this ingage us to love him again.

2. What ingagements of thankfulness, Psal. 118. 4. Hee hath done his wondrous works to be remembred. As if hee had said. This is the end, I did these wondrous works for, that you should remember them. If you would not have remembred them, I would not have done them.

It is the speech of Seneca. This is the rule of good turns, that the giver must soon forget hee gave: but the receiver must never forget, he hath received.

Indeed
Indeed God hath done wonders for this Nation, many wonders, wherein he hath expressed his Wisdom, his Power, his mercy, his Justice; And yet God hath forgotten he hath given, he goes on as freely in mercy, as if every mercy were the first mercy he hath bestowed.

But have we not forgotten what we have received? If so, God will remember, that he hath given.

God doth remember he hath given, when his People forget they have received. As you see he did to David: I have done this and this, and if that had been too little, I would have given thee such and such things more: so upbraiding him with his forgetfulness.

If you would not have God remember against you, what he hath given: do you then remember what you have received from God. This will quicken you to thankfulness.

8. Information. If God do wonders for his Church, then let this discover unto us, what ground, and what encouragement there is for us at this time,

1. To trust in God.
2. To pray to him.
3. To hope in him.
4. To wait upon him, that he would do wonders for us. You have encouragements,

1. From the experience of God: he hath done wonders, read the 78. Psalm, and the 9th of Nehemiah, and you shall see a little Chronicle of the great Wonders, which God hath done for his Church and People. And this is a mighty encouragement, the experience of what God hath done for his People heretofore.

As we may lay of the Experience of God's judgements on the wicked. Lege exemplum, ne exemplum fas: read the example, lest thou thy self bee made an Example: read the example of Sodom, of Pharaoh, of Jerusalem. All these were set up, to deter you from their sins. As the judgements of God upon the wicked men, are set down to deter us from sin: so the mercies and deliverances of the Church are recorded, to encourage us to believe, to trust in him, in the like difficulties.

Can our condition bee fudder than Israel was at the Red-Sea, than David was: than Gehovah was: than the Churches in Hamans time? And God did then deliver them, that we might be encouraged to trust in him, in the like straits and difficulties.

And as we have encouragement from the experience of Gods wonderfull deliverance of others: so we have encouragement from the wonderful deliverance of ourselves.

Revolve in your thoughts those great deliverances in Eighty-Eight, in the Powder-Treason: and that late deliverance which follows up all the rest: when the Heavens were black, the Clouds were gathered, and threatened to come down in a storm of blood: when two Armies
Armies were in the field, and ready to make our Land an Academy, a field of blood; yet how wonderfully God did then step in, to compose the differences, and to settle a peace, when there was nothing but expectations of war and ruine?

This our God hath done, and besides this many fresh and later experiences of his goodness: All which should now come in to encourage us to believe, and trust in the same God, to do great things for us.

Indeed, wee ought to trust God, though wee had never tyed him; though we had never experience from him. But when wee helps our Faith, by former experiences, this should strengthen our confidence, and make us to go unto God, as to a tyed friend.

Were we but well read in the story of our lives, wee might have a Bible of our own, drawn out of the experiences of God's dealings with our selves; and wee should bee able to say in any difficulty and distresse, I dare trust God in this difficulty; I dare venture on him in this present distresse. I have tyed him, and have found him true, hee never failed mee. And because hee hath been my help, therefore under the shadow of his wings will I rejoice, as faith the Prophet.

2. A second incouragement is, From the Power of God. Hee can do wonders. Hee not only hath, but hee can do wonders full. -- The Arm of the Lord is not shortened, that hee cannot save. What hee hath done, hee can do. Hee is still as wise, as powerful, as faithfull, as merciful as ever hee was. There is no shadow of change in him. There is nothing above his skill, nor above his power, if not above your Faith to believe.

It is our sin only, which hinders the current of Mercy, that stops the stream of Mercy: our unbelief, our neglect of duty, our unthankfulness, our pride, &c. Let us remove these, and Mercy comes again. You have a full place for it, [1 Sam 10, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, &c]. You see there, that God had oftentimes delivered them, hee had wrought many wonders for them, as hee tells them there. And they were now again in a new distresse, and therefore cry to God. But God tells them they had walked unworthy of former deliverances, and therefore hee would deliver them no more; whereupon they go and confess their sins before God, they humble themselves, and reform their evil ways. And (faith the Text) His soul was then grieved for the misery of Israel. -- God delivers them.

Well, this may bee our condition. God hath wrought many deliverances for us: wee are now in new straits; but wee have walked unworthy, and our sins may stand as an obstacle to hinder Gods proceedings of mercy. Let us now then humble our selves, and reform, and God will bee grieved for our misery, as hee was for theirs.
3 A third encouragement that we have to these duties, is, from the consideration of God's love to His Church, and many precious engagements to them in promises. The Church is dear to Him, we are His Spouse, His Members, such as He dyed for, &c.

We are His,
1. By Choice.
2. By Purchase.
4. By Covenant.

And being His, He will do great things for us also.

God's love to His Church is that, into which we may resolve all the mercies He doth for His Church, and is the only ground of our Faith and hope, to expect mercies from Him. It is the Sea, the spring. Well then, having so strong encouragements to these duties, I would now have spent a little time to have pressed these duties on you; but I forbear.

9 Information. This may inform us, what is the reason that God suffers wicked men to conceive, and to hatch mischief against the Church: Nay, and to bring up their designs to ripeness, that they are ready for execution; why God doth not disturb them all their way. Here is the Reason. Because He can do wonders. Though He lets them go on, yet they can never get the advantage of God, nor can they make it past God's help. It is but shewing a wonder at last, and all is daft.

Men, when they see an adversary, whom they can easily master, when they please, they will let them go on, counsel, advise, lay their heads and power together, and seem to take no notice of them. They know, the further they let them go, the fuller and completer will be their overthrow at last.

So doth God here. He suffers wicked men to go on, but is, because He knoweth He can overtake them, though they think they have got the start, before they come to the goal, or get the prize.

When men see, there would be some hazard at last, when they had brought their design to ripeness, or did fear, that the adversary would be too strong for them: then they will labour to hinder the beginnings and gatherings; they will endeavour to crush the birth of their counsels, or they will let themselves against their power, as soon as they can. And this is the wisest way among men.

But now God, He can let them go on; He can let them bring their designs to ripeness; they can never swell so big, as to be too great for His power to conquer them; can never make their design so strong, as to non-plus His wisdom, and skill to help.

And therefore He will let them go on, because He can dash them in their Man-hood, as well as in their infancy, in their strength,
strength, as well as in their weakness. It is but shewing a wonder, and all is done.

And this was the Reason why God suffered the five Kings of Canaan to lay all their strength together, that they might be able to do that joyfully, which they were never able to do singly. Yet it is said, -- The Lord hardened their hearts to join together, to come against Israel. Though they thought by this means to overthrow Israel: yet God's end was to make the quicker dispatch, the fuller overthrow of them.

And therefore hee let Pharaoh also to go on; did not stop him in his preparations, nor hinder him in his setting forth, but let him follow them to the utmost. God knew hee could have him at the last, hee could shew a wonder, and break all in pieces.

The like of Haman. God could, if hee would, have daishd his bloody counsel in the beginning, hee could have set the King against it. But hee lets him go on, and brings his design to ripen itself; and then declares a wonder, and ruineth him and his counsel too.

And this is the reason why God suffers wicked men to go on, gather themselves together, bring their designs to the utmost: because hee can break them in the end, as well as in the beginning. It is but doing a wonder at last, which is familiar with God, and all is broken in pieces. And therefore Melanthon saith, Non est indicandum de operibus dei ante quantum attinum.

2. Uf.

Let it bee an use of cautional advice to wicked men. Let them beware of designing or attempting any thing against the Church and People of God, seeing they have such a one on their side, as can, and will do wonders for the relieving of them.

It was a truth, which Zerish Haman's wife told him, Esther 6. 17. -- If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him. It seems it was a known truth of those days, even among Heathens, that there should be no power, nor counsel against the Church of God. God would do wonders for them.

God's people are dear to God; they are all the riches he hath in the World: Hee calls them so: His Inheritance, his Portion, his Jewels, his Treasure. Hee hath a great deal of lumber in the world besides: but these are his Jewels only, and it cost him dear to make them Jewels. It was no lesser than the price of his own blood. As the Apostle saith -- You were not redeemed with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, 1 Pet. 1. 19. Gods people are all the Income Christ had for his blood and sufferings: all
that Christ desired: all that God promised, and all he enjoys. As
you see, I sa. 53.11, 12. He shall see of the travail of his Soul and
shall be satisfied, &c.

And do you think then, that God will not preserve his Peo-
ples? yes certainly, and will not stand to do wonders to preserve
them. Assure your selves, God will never desert his cause, his
Church, his People; when things are brought up to their ripe-
ness, that God is, as it were, drawn out to discover to the
world, in what cause he will stand, for what persons he will
fight: Then he will declare it to the comfort of his Saints, and
to the cost of all those, who are enemies to the Church of
God.

God hath promised, That hee will never leave us, nor forsake us:
Hee hath said -- Hee will bee with us, as hee was with Joseph, in
Prison. And that not onely as a Spectator, but as an Actor: not
as one to look on, and take notice onely: but as one to reliefe
and help us. His power shall bee with us, his Wieldome with us,
&c.

And as hee is with his Church: so is hee against the ene-
mies of it. His Power is against them, before whom All the Na-
tions of the Earth are but as the drop of a bucket: And his wil-
dome against them; his justice and truth against them. And Woe
bee to them whom God is against. Thou maist stand out a-
gainst the power of men: but not of God, if he once prove thine
enemy.

Hee hath a rod of Iron, a Scepter of power, an arm of strength
to crush in pieces all his adversaries. And therefore as Pilate's
Wife said to her Husband: -- Have nothing to do with that Jef-
man: so I say to you, Have nothing to do, by way of offence, agai-
the Church, and People of God, you will but ruine your selves, in
seeking their ruine. God's Church is but too heavy, and too hot for
you, fee them both, Zech. 12, 3. There God faith of his Church,
That he would make it a burdensome stone: who ever lifteth it up,
bbee crushes in pieces, though all the Nations of the world be gathered
together against her, yet all will be to no purpose.

For God will make his Church a burdensome stone, that who-
soever lifteth at her shall be crushed in pieces. Hee doth not say,
whoeuer lifteth it up, for that cannot bee, but, whoever lifteth it as
is, whoever seeks to burst it, shall crush themselves. Their very attempt
shall bee their destruction.

Haman lifteth so long at this stone, that it fell on him at last, and
crushed him to pieces.

Pharaoh followed the Children of Israel so long, that there
was no return at the last: he was buried in the waters.

Julian attempted evil against the Church so long, till at last
God from heaven struck him, slew him. The Church, God makes
too heavy for his enemies, and too hot too. As you see in the
6. verse
δ. verfe of that 12th Chapter of Zach. In that day will I make the Governor's of Judah, like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf: and they shall devour all the people round about.

All the encounters of wicked men against the Church, is but like a sheaf of straw encountering with a torch of fire, that burns themselves.

While the iron is in its own nature you may handle it, and deal with it: but if once the nature of Fire be put to it, then were your fingers, if you prove so bold and hardy as to touch it.

Woe lay, He that shooteth in a peecce overcharged strikes down himself, not that he aimed at. There was never man, who levelled peecce against the Church, but hee shoots in a peecce overcharged, and shall be sure at last to be struck down with its own recoil.

They shall but lay shares, to take themselves; dig graves to bury themselves in, make rods for their own backs, and pave a way for their own destruction at last, Isa. 54. 15, 16, 17. Behold, the enemy shall gather himself, but without mee: whatsoever shall gather himself in thee against thee, shall fall. Behold, I have created the Smith, that bloweth the coals in the fire, and him that bringeth forth an Instrument for his work, and I have created the devourer to destroy. No weapon made against thee shall prosper: every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement, shall be thou condemn. This is the herituge of the Lords servants, &c.

God will work wonders for the deliverance of his Church, and for the destruction of the wicked at last. Let this bee for caution therefore to the wicked persecutors.

3. Use.

Let this bee for incouragement of Gods People, in these Times of danger and trouble. Though our condition bee very sad at this time, Our enemies strong, we weak; they full of rage and bitterness against us: yet there is no cause of fears, nor of discouragement.

1 There is no cause of fear, seeing we have a God on our side, and such a God, as is able to do wonders for us. You may fee God against all the strength, and provisions of the Arm of flesh. Thus you fee David did, Psal. 20.7. Some trust in Charriour, and some in Horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. He fee God against all.

Alas! what are Castles and Forts? what are multitudes of men? what are riches? what is Provision of Horse? the Psalmist tells you, Psal. 33. 17. A Horse is but a vain thing to save a man, Isa. 31. 3. Their Horses are flesh, and not Spirit. -- Prov. 21. 31.
The Horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the Lord.

All this, and whatever an adversary may have to glory in, is but an arm of flesh: but you have a God, and a God that can do wonders for you. I will boast in God (Faith the Prophet) all the day long.

Give not way then to sinkings of Spirit: you have no cause of fears, if you look above, as well as below: if you converse with Heaven as well as with Earth. Indeed, if we look below, God for the relief of (the weakness of our Faith) hath stirred up the hearts of our worthys and People to afford so willing a concurrence in the service of the King and Kingdom at this time. But this is not our Strength. Look above, and you have a God, who can, who will do wonders for you.

Fear is utterly unbecoming

1. A Christian, who is the foole of Christ.
2. Religion, which is the Cause of Christ.

1. It is unbecitting a Christian. For the Righteous should be bold as a Lyon. Let the Sinners in Zion be afraid: not you, who have to great a God as can do wonders for you.

Luther's spirit doth well befit a Christian (especially in these days) who, when he was diffused from going to Worms: (about some extraordinary businesse of the Church) because of some Plots laid against him, he makes reply -- Instigati ius, est justum corde Diabolo Wortamne, quod sunt tegula in adum rbis. I am called to it, and though every one in the City were a devil, I would go. This was Resolution and courage befitting a Christian, who is a foole of Christ. And

2. Fear is unbecitting Religion, which is the cause of Christ.
A good cause should have a good courage. It was the speech of Luther to Melanchton, who was an holy, though a fearful man, when Melanchton had discovered his fears to him. -- If our cause be not good, let us desist, and leave it. If it bee good, let us go on courageously: Christ's cause, and a Coward's heart are ill coupled together.

God's People are too apt to this: And therefore doth Christ steel the heart of his Disciples against it. -- Fear not little flock.

Though a little flock: yet there is no cause to fear, having so strong a Shepherd. -- And, fear not worm Jacob, though a worm and weak, apt to bee trod upon: yet fear not. Isa. 41. 13, 14. -- I will help thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy-one of Israel. -- And, Who art thou, that art afraid of a man, that shall die, and forgets the Lord, thy Maker? Arguing, if they had not forgotten God, they would not have feared man.

What though they bee carried on with all head-strong violence, to seek our mine? what though their purposes be cruel God can,
his Church and People.

1. Calm them, still them, as he did the Sea. Peace and be still, as he did Esau, when he came against Jacob.

2. Stop them in their way. Hee, that sets bounds to the Sea, and saith hitherto shalt thou come, and here shalt thou stop thy proud waves: canst thou set them at a full stand.

So you see, hee did Sennacherib. -- I will put my bride into his lips, and my book into his nose. And I will bring thee back the same way thou cam'st, &c. 2 King. 19. 23.

3. Hee can turn them, and change their hearts: as hee did Pauls, when hee went out breathing threatenings, and slaughter against the Church of Christ, Acts. 9.

4. Hee can over-turn them, over-power them, even wherein they deal proudly he will be above them, Exod. 18. 11. bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place, even the heat with the shadow of a cloud, &c. Isay. 25. 5.

2. As there is no cause of fear, so there is much lesse any cause of discouragement, in these days of evil, God can do wonders.

You shall never know what God can do, nor what God will do, till you stand in need. God loves to appear in time of extremity, he loves to put forth himself in desperate cases.

As the shipmans harrow never appears, but before death: so Gods Power never discovers it self, till a dissolution and death of secondary means.

When wee have the sentence of death passed upon us, in respect of created helps and means: then is Gods time, to step in, to recover and relieve us.

You see this in the Apostle, 2 Cor. 1. 9. We received the sentence of death in our selves, that we might not trust in our selves, but in God, who raiseth the dead.

VVe see should not know, what God can do, if it did not appear, what man cannot do: we should not know the power of God, if we did not see the weakness of man.

It was Bernards rapture upon the meditation of Adams fin.

Felix culpa! qua salem meruit redemptorem! Happy fault! which occasioned us a Redeemer! I may better say, Happy necessity! which occasioned the reliefe, of such a God, which engageth God to help us, and relieveus.

Were it not for the greatness of our misery, wee should not have experiences of Gods mercy. And how many would say, I would not loose the Experiences of Gods goodness, in such a sad condition I was in, for a thousand worlds! I would rather go through a thousand such bad conditions, than want one of those experiences of his mercy in it.

At these times you shall have Experience of Gods Power, wisdom, mercy, faithfulness, more than all your life. All which are drawn out to help in need.

As I never knew confident strength to prosper, so I never read...
of trusting weakness to miscarry. If you peruse the word, you shall often read, that God's people have miscarried in the strength of means, but never read, they miscarried in weakness. And the reason is, because they trusted God in the one, and were self-confident in the other.

This is our spirit, when means are weak and wanting, then we flye to God; but when means are strong to bring purposes to passe, we are apt to rest upon them.

You see it was so with Asa: Once he was weak, and then he trusted: another time he was strong, and then he was self-confident. And the issue in the one, was, he prospered; in the other, he miscarried. Weak means were successful, because the strong God was in them, his Faith brought God into them: and strong means were unfruitful, because he made God of them, he trusted in them.

As God thinks himself neglected, when wee will not trust in him, in the presence of means: so hee thinks his power disparaged, when wee will not trust in him, in the absence of means. Not to trust in God in strength of means, is to neglect God. Not to trust in him in weakness of means, is to limit God.

God loves then to appear, when none else will, when none else can. It was the Argument which David had, Psal. 22. 11. — Be not far from mee, for trouble is near: for there is none to help. This was that whereby hee would ingage God to help: because there was none else to help him.

As it was said of the Redemption of the Church from sin: so it may bee said of her deliverance from trouble. — When hee looks about, and sees no man, then his right hand shall bring salvation. Hee will do a wonder to save you.

Though there bee Mountains of Oppositions in the way, yet hee can encounter with them; and there are four ways God deals with Mountains, with strong Oppositions.

1. Hee either melts the Mountains, hee dissolves them as water, Isa. 64. 3. — When thou didst terrible things, which wee looked not for, thou camst down, and the Mountains melted at thy presence. — In the former verse, they trembled at his presence; hee unhearter them, took away their courage: and here they flowed down at his presence. Not flowed up, or grew stronger: but flowed down, were melted and dissolved at his presence; hee took away their strength.

Or

2. Hee layes them into plains. That is, Hee makes those Mountains, which were before unpassable for greatness, now to bee no Opposition at all, in the ways of his people: Hee levels and liues even the hearts of the enemies, that they shall not bee any hinderance to the passage of his people. And thus, Zach. 4. 7. — Who art thou, O great Mountain, before Zerubbabel? thou shalt bee a plain. Or

3. Hee
3. Hee travaileth the Mountains: Hee destroyes those, who stand to oppose Gods Church and People. So you have it, Isa. 41. 14, 15. -- Fear not, thou Worm Jacob, I will help thee, faith the Lord thy Redeemer. Why, how will hee help? -- Behold, I will make thee a sharp Iron instrument with teeth, and thou shalt trample the Mountains, and beat them small, and make the Hills as chaff, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: And thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and glory in the holy one of Israel. -- Pharaoh was such a Mountain, and such an one was Senacherib; but hee travailed them both.

4. Hee passeth over them. Hee steps over the head of all Oppositions, which are in the way to the deliverance of his Church, Cant. 2. 8. Christ is there described to -- come leaping over the Mountains, and skipping over the Hills. And as hee did, when hee came to deliver his People from sin, so hee doth often, when hee comes to redeem his Church from trouble, -- Hee comes skipping over the Mountains, passeth over the head of all opposition, when hee comes to deliver them.

And therefore trouble not your selves for the greatness of Opposition: Though there should bee never so many Mountains of Opposition, yet God can melt them, or hee can level them, or travaile them, or skip over them. And one way or other God will do, for the deliverance of his Church.

Wee look and pray for this last. That God would overlook all Oppositions, and come and help us.

4. Use.

Is God able to do wonders for his people? then if wee have been a people, whom God hath wrought wonders for: such things as none but God alone could work: as indeed hee hath: let us hereby bee taught three lessons.

1. Of Thankfulness.
2. Of Obedience.
3. Of Dependence.

x. Here is a lesson of thankfulness to bee learned. Wee, even thankful.

Wee stand before God this day, the subjects of abundance of mercies. Many mercies God hath bestowed on us, and long continued to us: Many evils hee hath kept from us, and many evils hee hath freed us from. Wee stand before God this day, thebrands of many glorious deliverances, which God hath wrought for us. Wee have received more mercy, and have had experience of more goodness, preventing, delivering mercy, within these three years, than others have had in three Generations.

God hath discovered the wonders of his wisdome, the wonders of his power, the wonders of his mercy and love, in many a glorious deliverance, which hee hath wrought for us. And how ought
wee to bee carried out with praises under the enjoyments of so many mercies; how should our souls, being warmed with the sense and consideration of these mercies, burst forth into a flame of praises to God?

But alas! It is with us, as with the Children of Israel. Wee are very solicitous wanters, but wee are forgetful injoysers. And that which should bee a means of drawing us nearer to God, is a means of farther distance from him.

I must tell you, that your unthankfulness under all these receipts of mercy, is a great and a provoking sin, and might justly make a stop of mercy now.

1. It is an inhumane sin, against the very principles of Humanity. A beastly sin, nay, worse, for the Ox knoweth his owner, and the Afe his Master's crib. Its a devilish sin.

2. It is a sinning sin: a productive sin, a womb of sin: it brings forth many more sins.

3. It is the abuse of a good God. Who can leas of all indulge to bee abused in his mercies.

4. It is the grave of Mercy. Where all Gods mercies are buryed and lost, a very land of forgetfulness.

5. It is the destruction of mercy, Hos. 2. 8, 9. -- Shee knew that I gave her Cornes, and Wine, and Oil, and that I multiplied her silver and gold, &c. Therefore will I return, and take away my Corn in the season thereof, and my Wine in its season, and I will recover my Wool, and my Flax.

That which gives birth to mercy, is Prayer; and that which gives breath to mercy is, Thankfulness. Mercy is but short breathed, short lived, when men are unthankful: Unthankfulness cuts the throat of Mercies. Unthankful persons are never long injoysers of mercies.

2. Learn a Lesson of Obedience. Let the Mercy of God quicken you to duty. Look upon every mercy as a further engagement to you to walk more holily and more exactly with God.

As all the spiritual mercies of God, Election, Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, promises of Glorification, were all bestowed as engagements to obedience: So all the temporal mercies also, 1 Sam. 12. 24. Therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in truth, with all your hearts, and consider what great things he hath done for you.

When mercies are spurs to duties, when mercies make the least addition to graces, God is well pleased with the bestowing of mercy; and where God sees such ground, he delights to sow the seed of mercy.

3. Learn a Lesson of Dependence upon God. It is a flame that wee should bee afreth to seek in every new difficulty. It was that which God blamed the Children of Israel for: That notwithstanding the great and wonderful works, hee had done in their sight and eyes,
his Church and People.

eyes; yet they did distrust him, all was not enough to work up their hearts to believe God, and trust in him. And David blames them for the same, Psal. 78. 19, 20. — They spake against God, can God furnish a Table in the wilderness? Indeed he smote the Rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed: But — can he give bread also? Can he provide flesh for his people? One would think this a senseless reasoning. But Unbeliev is a senseless sin. One would think that they did sufficiently answer themselves. That what went before, had been answer sufficient to what followed after. The same power was required for the doing of the one, that was for the other; and when they had seen the power of God to work the greater, 'twas strange they should doubt of the lesser, but here is the baseness of our spirit: Though God have given us never so many experiences: yet we are still to seek in every new act of dependence on him. And without further grace we cannot do it.

Wee think, when wee are in straits and difficulties, if God would but help us through this strait, if hee would but relieve us in this difficulty, wee should never distrust God, whilstt wee lived; wee should depend on him in the saddest conditions, whiles wee have a being.

But these are but our present thoughts, and without future assistances and supplies, wee are as far to seek in another, as wee were in the first.

Well, My Brethren: God hath wrought many great things for us: every one of them should bee a Life-mercy, a standing-mercy, a mercy to bee set up to encourage us to depend on him for ever: Mercies, that wee should live on in straits, and feed upon in difficulties; mercies that should bee for store to feed upon for a long time.

You have an expression, Psal. 74. 14. — Thou brakest the head of the Leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to bee meat to thy people in the Wilderness. — By Leviathan is meant Pharaoh: and God gave him to bee meat to his people in the wilderness. That is, Hee wrought that deliverance for them, before they entred into the wilderness, that this might bee meat for them to feed upon, and strengthen their Faith in dependence upon God in the wilderness, where they were put to it, by so many difficulties. This mercy was to bee a standing-dish, not for a meal only, but for store: meat laid in to feed on, to strengthen their dependence.

Faith is called Feeding, John 6. And the experience of Gods goodness is Pabulum Fidel: the meat of Faith. That mercy is never well digested, that is not fed upon. Hee that doth not feed upon a mercy, gets no nourishment by a mercy, no good. You take the Name of God in vain (that is, his works, his experiences, which are part of his Name) you take them in vain. All this is but
but God call away upon you, if thereby you are not strengthened for the fuller dependence upon God.

And now my brethren, we have had many glorious experiences of God's goodness to us: and all these are meat to feed upon. You are now in new straits and difficulties: bring out your standing dikes, the former mercies and experiences to feed upon; to refresh your Faith, to enable you to depend upon God afresh.

Hee that is not a good Treasurer, a good Storer of mercies, hee is never out of straits; hee is still to seek in every difficulty, and gone in every new strait: whereas hee who lyes up Experiences, and can make use of them, feed upon them; hee shall be enabled thereby to depend upon God in any strait and difficulty whatsoever.

Thus you see David -- God delivered me out of the Paw of the Lyon, and out of the paw of the Bear: and hee will deliver mee out of the hand of this Philisim. David feeds on the Lyon -- And, because hee hath been my helper, therefore under the shadow of his wings will I rejoice.

Now, in the passing of this duty of dependence upon you, I find two things to bee great enemies to it, which be you aware of.

1. Beware of Obliterating the Notions of God.
2. Beware of burying the remembrance of his works.

1. Beware of Obliterating the Notions of God. Had Moses seen God, and had the same Notions and apprehensions of God at the Rock, that he had at the Red sea, which was a far greater difficulty, then to fetch water out of the rock: he could have trusted in God for that, as well as for the former. But those thoughts and conceptions of God, were, for the present darkened, and over-shadowed with Passion, and therefore hee could not trust God then.

So, if David had had the same apprehensions of God, when he counterfeited himself Mad, for fear of Abimelech, the King of Gath; or when he was pursued by Saul, and burst forth into these words:-- I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul, which he had at other times, as when he faith, Ps. 27. 1, 2, 3. --The Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? when the wicked mine enemies, and my foes came upon me, to eat up my flesh, they stumble and falle. Though an hawk pitched against me, my heart should not be afraid: though war bee raised against mee, in this will I be confident. Or when hee faith, to Saul concerning Goliath: -- God, that delivered mee out of the Paw of the Lyon, &c, hee will deliver mee from this uncumcized Philisim. Or when hee faith, -- God is our hope and strength, a help in trouble ready to bee found: therefore will not wee fear, though the Earth bee moved, though the mountains bee hurled into the depth of the Sea: -- Hee would not have so fainted in these like, or like exigences.

So,
So, had Abraham had the same apprehensions of God, when hee seignied his wife to bee his Sister, which hee had; when God made him the Promise of a Sonne; or when hee went to sacrifice his Son; hee could have trusted and depended on God in this case as well as in the former: this difficulty being far short of the other.

So, did Gods people see God at all times, as they do at some times, they would then be able to depend on God, and trust in him, in any cases though never so difficult: but if they lose the apprehensions and conceptions of God, and suffer Passion and fear, to raise up a cloud to overshadow and darken their understandings, they shall never bee able to beleive and depend upon God in any difficulty: and therefore first hold up the Notions of God, of his power, wisdom, mercy, and the like.

2. Beware of burying the remembrance of his former works, Psal. 78. 6, 7. They were commanded to tell the wondrous works of God to their children, that the generations to come might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God. Intimating that the best way to keep up their hope and dependance on God, was to hold up the remembrance of what hee had done. Hee, that forgets the one, will not be able to do the other.

And therefore you see it set down as a reason of the Disciples distrust. -- Their hearts were hardened. They forgot the miracles of the Loaves. Mark. 6. 52. Intimating, that if they had remembred that, they had not now been to seek in this present difficulty.

And indeed the want of the remembrance of former mercies doth cause us to distrust, and hinder us in our dependence on God for present and future affairs: whereas on the contrary, holding up the remembrance of former, will enable us to hold out in present and future distresses.

You cannot think his arm is shortened: you cannot think God cannot: nor can you think God will not: that he hath helped before, and will help no more: for mercy is tied to the Church by covenant.

Wicked men may enjoy a mercy to day: but they can have no assurance to have another to morrow: because mercy is not tied to them by Promise, or by Covenant. But now mercy is tied to the Church by Covenant, by Promise. Hee hath tyed his mercy to us by his Truth. Psal. 25. -- All his ways are mercy and truth, not only mercy, but truth.

All God doth is but Performance of Promises; we hold his mercy by Tenor of truth, and may challenge mercy by vertue of his truth. And therefore David could say, Psal. 23. 6. -- Surely mercy and goodness shall follow me all the days of my life.

Wicked men cannot, but the Saints may say, Mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. Not in this, or that particular,
But in every passage of Providence, as the water followed the
children of Israel, the rock followed them, 1 Cor. x. 4. from one
station to another, as long as they wandered in that dry and thirsty
wilderness.

5. Use.

Doth God do wonders for his Church? Then it is good being on the
Churches side. They have a God with them, that can do won-
ders for them: what though our enemies have skill, power, strength,
and multitude; yet we have a God, who is stronger, than the stron-
gest, wiser then the wisest, who can over-power, and overplot our
enemies, who alone can do wonders for us.

As Plutarch said of the Scythians, that though they had no music,
nor vines: yet they had God among them. So whatever is want-
ing to a people, if they have God with them, there is a plenifull
supply of all. You may let God against all, and hee can weigh
down all advantages.

When Charles the Fifth, Emperor of Germany, sent his Herald
with challenge against Francis the First, King of France; Hee com-
manded the Herald to proclaim him with all his Titles. Styling
him, --- Emperor of Germany, King of Castile, King of Aragon, of
Naples, and of Sicile.

Francis commanded his Herald to proclaim as often King of
France, as the other had titles of honor by all his Countries. Im-
plying, that France alone was more worth, than all the Countrys,
the other had.

So, when our adversaries do glory in their strength, in their skill,
in their power, and multitudes: let us oppose God against them,
whom they oppose, and there is enough to weigh down what ever
advantage the arm of flesh can have against us; we have a God
with us, whereas we are with him, with his cause, with his truth;
And hee can do wonders for us.

6. Use.

Doth God do wonders for his Church? Then let us fall down and a-
dore this God, who can do wonders for us. -- Who would not fear
thee O King of Nations! saith the Prophet, Jer. 10. 7.

It was the speech of an Heathen King, when hee had seen the
Wonders that God had done: -- Let all men fear and tremble before
the God of Daniel, Dan. 6. 26.

When Christ had done that great wonder in calming the rage
of the sea, the Text tells us, -- They all fell down at the feet of Jesus,
and worshipped him. Gods wonders for us, call out for our Worship of
him.

Fall down then, at the feet of this God, and Worship him.  

Fall
Fall down at the feet of his Power, and dread it.
Fall down at the feet of his Mercy, and adore it.
Fall down at the feet of his Wisdom, and admire it.
Admiration is suitable to Wonders.

It is said — Hee shall be admired in his Saints. When wicked men tremble, do you fall down and admire, and blest be God. adore that God, who alone doth wonders.

7. Life.

Doth God do wonders for his Church? and are we now in a sad condition? A people that shall bee made a wonder, unless God do a wonder for us? Oh! then let us carry our selves in such a deportment and demeanour, as is suitable to such, who are expectants that God should do wonders for us. Oh! that we could put our selves in a posture fit for mercy and deliverance! Seeing you look for a new Heaven, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness (faith the Apostle) what manner of persons ought you to bee? So, seeing you look, you expect that God should do wonders for you: Oh! what manner of persons ought you to bee? in Holiness of Life! how holy, how humble, how spiritual ought you to bee in all manner of conversation! Oh! take heed of sinning in the face of mercy, in the face of deliverance. Lye not, swear not, &c. It was a sad aggravation of Israel's sin; They provoked God at the Red-Sea, even at the Red-Sea; it is doubled, to put a greater emphasis on it, Psal. 106. 7.

It is nothing but our sins, which hinders the current and stream of Mercy: if these were removed, mercy would come again. Whereas on the contrary, sin will not only make our, but even the good purposes of God to become abortive to us.

You see in Jer. 18. 9, 10. At what time I shall speak, saying, a Nation, or a Kingdom, to build and to plant it: if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice; then I will repent of the good whereof with I said, I would benefit them.

Many buds, and many blossoms of future deliverance have appeared. Oh! it were a sad thing if our sins should blot all these, and rob us of the fruit of our hopes, of our prayers, and tears. Our sins put obstructions to all God's proceedings of Mercy.

And therefore you see, when the Temple was to bee built, and great things were to bee done for them: The Prophet, by way of necessary preparation, exhorts the people to repentance, to cast away their sins, Hag. 1. 6. knowing this, that though God had begun, yet if they continued their sins, they would quickly make a stop of God's mercy. God would have no repentance of his mercy to them.

God had brought Israel out of Egypt, and brought them Hh h z

D. 1. 2. Caana
God's Wonderfull Workings for Canaan; yet their sins comming betwixt them and Canaan, turned them back again into the Wilderness, and there they walk in a Round forty years, before they could finde admission into Canaan.

God is gone out before us, triumphing in the greatnesse of his strength, preparing a way, having down difficulties, levelling mountains, turning all our oppositions into good. But if you do not leave your sins, you will make God quickly to leave you, so to work your own confusion.

Well then. You are all expectants of Mercy; let every one of you labour to put himself into a posture fit to receive mercy. Let every one walk and demean himself, as such as looks for great things from God. And then that God that hath begun will assuredly make an end: Hee that hath laid the foundation, and is laying stone after stone upon it every day, will not desist till the building be perfected.

8. Use.

Is it so, that God doth wonders for his Church? Then learn;

1. To trust in God. You see, Hee is a God doing wonders. And (as Christ said, Mark. 9. 23.) If thou canst but believe: All things are possible to him that believeth: Wonders are possible.

There is nothing too hard for God to do; if there be nothing too hard for you to believe. There is nothing difficult, but to believe. Hee that hath conquered and overcome his own unbelief hath done all. All things are possible to the Believer. Do not you stick at believing; and God will not stick at doing wonders for you. Heb. 11. 33-34. By Faith they subdued Kingdomes, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, etc.

As Unbelief doth imprison God's power, mercy, and goodness; It is said: He could not do much, because of their unbelief. And they limited the blessing of Israel.

So Faith lets God at liberty, sets the power of God at liberty. Nay, it puts on the power and mercy of God. Therefore exercise Faith. The time of our trouble, should be the time of our trust.

As Mordecai said to Esther: God set her up for such a time as this. So I may lay of Faith. God set up Faith for such a time as this.

Who means to fail, when there is nothing but weakness below, when sense and reason are put to it, then is it Faiths work to come in. And therefore exercise Faith.

Let not the difficulty undermine Faith: Let not any seeming discouragement come between your souls and the promise.

Things marvelous to you, are familiar with God. Things wonderful to God, are easy to God. You have Bibles. Oh that you
you had Faith to make use of them: you would there finde, all things are possible with God; and therefore nothing impossible to Faith.

2. Be encouraged to Prayer. This is the great work of our times. To pray to God. Faith and Prayer will do wonders. Faith and Prayer have had an hand in most of the wonders that ever were done in the Earth. There will fen the great God on doing wonders for us. A Prayer made up of promises, and put up by Faith, will shew wonders in Heaven and in Earth.

You read what wonders Gods people have wrought by Prayer. They have -- dried up the Sea, Exod. 14. 21. -- brought fire from Heaven, 2 King. 1. 10. -- Caused the Sun to stand still, Jos. 10. 13. -- Vanquished the enemy, Exod. 17. 12. Praying-Moses did more than fighting-Joshua.

The day would fail to tell you of all. See what wonders followed upon Davids Prayer, Psal. 18. 6. -- In my distress I called upon the Lord, I cried to my God; hee heard my voice out of his Temple, my cry came unto his ears. -- See what follows, ver. 7, 8, 13, 14. -- Then the Earth shook and trembled: The Lord hundred in the Heavens, and the highest gave his voice. Halitones, and coals of fire. Hee sent out his arrows, and scattered them, hee shot out his lightnings, and discomfited them.

And an excellent place you have, Isa. 54. 15. -- When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. -- That is, shall both defend from his violence, and put him to flight. And it is an observable phrase: The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard, That is, faith one, The Spirit of Prayer is lift up.

When trouble and evil are threatened, the enemy comes like a flood irresistibly, then the Spirit of the Lord stirring up Prayer in his peoples hearts, shall lift up a standard against them, bee your defence, and chase them away.

When God doth intend to bestow great things on his People, first hee gives them the Spirit of Prayer, the Harbingers and Forerunner of mercy, Jer. 3. 19. -- But I said, How shall I put thee among the Children, and give thee a pleasant land? As if hee had said, I have purposes of mercy to thee; I have thoughts of deliverance. I think to bring thee into thy own land again, and do wonders for thee. But what way shall I go to effect, and bring about this? -- And I said, thou shalt call mee, my Father. As if hee had said, I have now be brought mee of a way, I will pour a spirit of Prayer upon thee, and thou shalt call mee Father, and so I will put thee among my Children.

3. Be encouraged to hope, as well as to pray. Hope, Heb. 6. 19. -- It is called the anchor of the soul, sure, and stedfast, that takes sure hold, and then breaks not, in the greatest tempests, as such an anchor wee may ride in the most overgrown storms. They say,
God’s Wonderful Workings for

1. Cast into the Sea with an anchor fastened to him, and could not drown: we shall not in the deepest Waters, if we be fastened to this anchor, for God delights in them, who hope in his Mercy, (Ps. 147. 11.) and whom God delights in, enemies shall not delight over, his mercy shall prevent their utterly undoing misery. Hope is the Daughter of Faith, therefore when Faith hath brought forth the birth of Prayer, let it bring forth the other Twin also of Hope: And then also

4. Be encouraged to wait. For as long as we hope we will wait, and no longer, as long as you expect, and hope your Friend will come to you, so long you will stay and wait for him, but give over hoping once, and then you will together give over waiting: Hope hath two acts: it expects that a Mercy will come, and then it waits till it do come, as it is confident of God’s goodness and truth, that in his due time he will shew mercy, so it is conscious to its own duty, and therefore humbly and patiently waits God’s leisure, till that time come; and this although many crost Providences, and greatest dangers should come between, yea in the way of thy Judgements. O Lord, have we waited for thee, faith the Church, (Isa. 26. 8.) and well they may, seeing by experience they ever finde that the Lord is good unto them that wait for him, so the soul that seeketh him: (Lam. 3. 25.)

And then, when you have learned these lessons of trusting in God, praying, hoping, and waiting on him: Then you shall say with the Church, (Isa. 25. 9.) Lec, this is our God, we have waited for him, and hee will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him, wee will rejoice and bee joyful in his salvation.

There are many glorious wonders which God is now to do, at the latter end of the World for his Church. This time is reserved for a time of Wonders. And who knows but this may be one of the Wonders which God now doth for his Church at this time?

Could we but remove

1. Our Unbelief.
2. Our Unthankfulness.
4. Our Unworthy Walking.

Could we but

1. Believe more Strongly.
2. Pray more Fervently.
3. Live more Holy.

And God would do Wonders for us.

I tell you, the way to ingage God to do Wonders for England,

1. To Believe more.
2. To Pray more.
3. To Reform more.

I would
1 Would you engage God to do wonders for England? Believe.
   Set Faith on work, and you will work in the bowels of a Promise
   nay, in the bowels of God, pitch Faith upon God. Let Faith have
   her full and perfect work. And there is
   No Temptation so strong, but Faith will conquer,
   No Affliction so great, but Faith will master,
   No Prison so strait, but Faith will open,
   No Danger so great, but Faith relieves us in,
   No Misery so unsufferable, but Faith will deliver us out.
   Do but believe, (faith Christ) and thou shalt see the wondrous
   works of God. As if he had said: God will do no wonders, if you
   will not believe: Indeed God can do wonders, as Christ said,
   He could not do much because of their unbelief.
   Though unbelief take no Power, no Wildomne, from God: For
   as the Apostle faith -- God is faithful, whether men believe or no,
   So I may lay -- God is Powerfull, God is mercifull, God is Wise, &c.
   though wee believe not: But, though our unbelief do not weaken
   the Power of God, yet it straitens and limits it. Though it rob
   God of no mercy, yet it robs us of all. Though he hath mercy, yet
   hath he none for us.
   Well then, that is the first, Beleeve: You have to deal with
   a God, and this God is a God of Power, and this God, and this
   power is yours in Covenant: And, by vertue of that, all for your
   good. Let Faith now flower, Mark. 9. 23. If you can but believe,
   all things are possible: wonders are possible.
   To Beleeve is difficult; but to him, that Beleeueth, nothing is
   impossible -- if you had but faith, as a grain of mustard-seed, say to
   this mountain bee thou removed hence; and bee cast into the sea, and
   it shall be done. Though Faith bee but weak, though but small,
   A grain, yet if it bee but lively, if a grain of Mustard-seed, Acris,
   &c. Feroida: if it have Acrimonie and Vivacity in it, as Mustard-
   seed hath, one grain shall bee able to remove a mountain. That
   is, whatever may bee to the glory of God, and the good of his
   Church, be it never so difficult: the least Faith, if true Faith, will
   effect it, and bring it about.
   You shall read in Heb. 11. 33. what wonders Faith hath wrought.
   It hath the same Power, and the same God of power to deal with
   still.
   Incouragements to Faith, I have given you diverse, in the
   former discourse, from the Power, from the love of God, from
   all those former experiences, that both ourselves, and generati-
   ons before have had of Gods goodness. As I have shewed
   at large;

2 Would you engage God to pray to him, we have had
many praying days. They began for Ireland, but may bee con-
tinued for England. And oh! That this day might be more succesful
than former days!

You
You that carry Ireland's miseries, England's breaches and distractions in your bodies, lend out armies of Prayers, let your closets, and the Churches bear witness of your sense of, and sighs for the miseries.

And resolve to give God no rest, till he hath established Zion, the joy and praise of the whole earth. Ask and desire largely of God for his Church. God hath a larger heart to give, than you to begge. Hee will suffer no creature to equall him, in his love to his Church. You shall not ask more, than hee is willing to bestow, Eph. 3:20. Hee is able to do exceeding-abundantly, above all that we are able to ask or think, and Jer. 33:3. Call unto mee, and I will answer thee, and show thee mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Well then, let no difficulty undermine your Faith: no, nor Discouragement put you off from seeking.

Jacob held up to pray, notwithstanding all his discouragements: Though hee wrestled in the night, though hee was all alone, though God told him, hee would leave him, though hee fled to his lost, and God smote him in his thigh, yet he held out to wrestle with God.

Hee that would prevail with God, must not only Pray, but continue in Praying. Jacob prayed all night, David day and night, for as three days and three nights, Daniel 21 days, and 21 nights, Moses forty days, and forty nights. Though God delay, though God defer, though God deny, yet hold out. Break in upon Gods retirements, urge God with his own Promises, with his glory, with his name, with his truth, with his worship, &c. All which are more precious to him than a world.

I have told you, that there shall be nothing too hard for that people to do, whose hearts and spirits God doth mightily hold up to seek him.

You know what wonders Prayer hath done. It dryed up the sea, &c. And wee have had experience of the fruit of Prayer more than any. God did never honor Prayer more in any age, than in our Generation. It hath been the great Engine, that hath carried all Gods purposes about. Nothing hath been done without, and nothing hath been done against prayer.

You may revolve in your thoughts, the wonders God hath wrought, within these three, or four years, for this Church, and our Neighbouring Nations.

Wee have prayed dead, and prayed alive, breathed life and death by prayer, we have prayed into bonds, and prayed out of bonds, as Peter was.

When Sin had drawn the Sword, prayer sheathed it again, when Sin had overspread us, and covered us with a cloud of Blood, Prayer dispelled and scattered this. To God give the glory.

And you, who have had experience of this before, bee you quickned
quickned and encouraged to it again. Be mighty will God, Faith and Prayer will work wonders.

3 Would you ingage God to do wonders for your adile a third ingagement, and that is.

Reformation. Supplication is nothing without Reformation.

The Arm of the Lord is not shortened, that hee cannot see; nor is his ear heavy, that hee cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that hee will not hear. As if the Prophet had said, God is as powerfull, and as mercifull as ever hee was: hee is as able to do wonders, and as willing as ever he was.

And the reason, why hee doth them not, is, because your sines do separate betwixt you and your God, your sins rob you of all the good.

You look upward, to see whether God will help.
You look downward, to see whether man can help.

But what is all this, if you do not look inward to find out your sins, and call them away, which hinder help? for, you have that the reason: God had oftentimes delivered them, as hee tells them there, and they were now again in new difficulties, and therefore cry to God. But God tells them, they had walked unworthy of former deliverances, and therefore he would deliver them no more: whereupon they go and confess their sins before God, they humble themselves, and reform their evil wayses: and then, faith the Text. His soul was grieved for the misery they were in; God did then deliver them.

Well, this is our case, we have been a people, who have enjoyed many great mercies and deliverances, but now we are in new straits.

Let us go and humble our selves, but reform too, else Gods soul may not be grieved for our miseries, if we still grieve him with our sins, but

When God sees us to be cruel to our sins, hee will then bee mercifull to our souls, when he sees us to be grieved for our sins, he will then be grieved for our miseries.

Reform your Familys, your Famine, your person, good and bade, set ye upon the work of Reformation, and God will not stick to do a wonder for us.

God is driving on the great design of his own glory. It is our wisdom to take notice of it, and in this way to further it, and not to hinder it.

Oh then! Reform. Twere a fearful thing, that the Nation should perish, because thou wilt not reform.

God will never bee mercifull to that man, who is mercifull to his sins. You read what the Prophet said to Ahab, because thou hast spared the man, that was reserved to destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life.

Welf
Well then. Hear the Nation, Hear Religion, hear all calling
out upon you, reform.
1 Let the wicked reform.
2 Let the Saints reform.
1 You wicked ones, do you reform, Your profaneness, oaths, blasphemies, uncleanness, your contempt and hatred of God's Truth,
Ordinances, ways, servants, &c. for else one sinner, as Achan, may
make an halt in Israel's march into Canaan, and how much rather, if
the whole Camp be full of such.
2 You Saints, bee reformed
1 Of your Pride.
2 Of your Lukewarmness.
3 Of your Formality.
4 Of your Courtesies.
5 Of your Vanity in your Speeches.
6 Of your Unthankfulness for God's mercies.
7 Of your Unfruitfulness under means of Grace.
8 Of your Censuriosity of your Brethren.

And this Land-Reformation would prevent a Land-Desola-
tion; when God sees us a repenting People, hee will be a repent-
ting God; when hee sees us in a Posture of Reformation, hee will
be in the way of Preservation.
Books Printed, and are to be sold by Thomas Parkhurst, who Prints and sells this Book of Dr. Samuel Bolton, at the Sign of the Three Crowns, over against the Great Conduit, at the lower end of Cheapside.

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Sion in the House of Mourning, because of Sin and Suffering, being
an exposition on the third Chapter of the Lamentation by D. S. Pastor of
Uppingham in the County of Rutland.

Gorns of the Spirit, or the Trial of the Truth of Prayer, handling
these particulars: what Prayer is: How a man may know when he pray-
er in the Spirit: How the sense of the Spirit in Prayer may be at-
tained: How a man should hold on in the Duty without the sense of
the Spirit: How they that want the Spirit of Prayer, should labour
for it.

A Hymn to the Father for Parents' Wee-eyes, upon the death of their Chil-
dren or Friends.

Errata.

In Simplicity of Life, pag. 2, line 45, read nor, p. 274. 41. after grace, for grace.
In the Love of Christ, p. 46. 1. 39. r. John 17. p. 32. 1. 42. r. orward, for uttered.
In the Peace, p. 33. 1. 42. r. Mal. 3. 17. p. 27. 1. 17. r. Exod. 18. 11. 13. r. Phil. 2. 5. p. 70. 1. 45. add
or, p. 7. s. marg. r. 13. 3.
In the Royalties of Faith, p. 83. 1. 9. r. fountain, p. 1. 46. r. more, p. 66. 1. 19. r. inquiris, p. 135. 3.
marg. vide, p. 174. 1. 10. the ministry.
In the Slowness of heart to believe, p. 26. 1. 19. r. vers. 45. 1. 31. r. discover, p. 200. 1. 6. r. into
p. 110. r. quickens, p. 211. 1. 11. 44. r. thou.
In the Trestile of Hypotheze, p. 163. 1. 13. r. as others, p. 177. 1. 11. r. formally, p. 316.

Directions to the Book-binder.

Take notice that the Treatise of The Loves of Christ to his Spouse,
must come next after, Sin the greatest Evil. The Sheets are marked
thus, (G) (H) (I) (K) (L) (M) (N). And before the Treatise of
The Nature and Royalties of Faith, Next after F of the second
Alphabet, follows M of the second Alphabet. There is nothing
wanting.