

7. Do not cut the Sabbath short. The church of Rome has half holidays; God never appointed any such; it is one whole day. Alas! it is a sad thing to see how the Lord's day is so consumed, as if people would make up the loss of a day out of Saturday's night and Monday's morning, which they do by cutting short the Lord's day.

8. *Lastly*, Labour to be in a Sabbath-day's frame. Let the thoughts of worldly business, far more worldly words and works be far from you. To press this, consider,

(1.) It is God's command, whereby he tries your love to him. This day is as the forbidden fruit. Who does not condemn Adam and Eve for eating it? O do not profane it any manner of way!

(2.) Heaven will be an everlasting Sabbath, and our conversation should be heaven-like. If we grudge the Lord one day in seven, how will we relish eternity? We are ready to complain that we are toiled with the world: why then do we not enter into his rest?

(3.) The great advantage of sanctifying the Lord's day. He has made it a day of blessing. It is God's deal-day; and keeps up the heart of many through the week while they think of its approach.

(4.) *Lastly*, Ye will bring wrath on you if ye do not sanctify the Sabbath. God may plague you with temporal, spiritual, and eternal plagues. Many begin with this sin of profaning the Lord's day, and it brings upon them the wrath of God, both in this world and that which is to come.

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OF THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. XX. 12.—*Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

WE come now to the second table of the law, which teacheth us our duty to man, i. e. to ourselves and others. There are two parts of religion, piety towards God, comprehending our duty to God, immediately delivered in the four first commandments; righteousness, our duty to our neighbour, delivered in the last six. As God has set the four first commands to maintain his own worship and honour in the world; so he has covered man with the last six. The fifth command is a fence for him in his station, whatever it is; the sixth guards his life; the seventh is a fence to his chastity; the eighth, to his goods; the ninth, to his name; and the tenth, to all that is his. Over these hedges no man must break, under the pain of the Lawgiver's displeasure.

Religion must run through the whole course of our conversation, and mix itself with all our actions, those that respect men! as well as those that respect God immediately. Therefore in vain do they pretend to religion, that make no conscience of their duty to men. Religion makes not a man only a good man but a good neighbour. And it is observable, that these duties are ordinarily made the trying point to professors of religion. And if ye have got any good of the late solemn occasion, ye will not only love God more, but love your neighbour more; not only grow in duties of piety towards God, but of righteousness to men, giving every one their due, Micah vi. 6, 7, 8. Zech. viii. 16, 17. Matth. xix. 18, 19. Rom. xiii. 8, 9, 10.

In this passage there is a command, *Honour thy father and thy mother*; and the reason of it, *that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*. In the command two things are to be considered.

1. The object, *father and mother*. By these are meant not only our natural parents, but also all superiors, superiors in age, 1 Tim. v. 1, 2; such as are superior to us in gifts or grace, Gen. iv. 20. and xlv. 8; but especially such as are by God's ordinance over us in authority, whether in the family, as husbands, 2 Sam. xii. 3; masters, 2 Kings v. 13; in the church, as ministers and other church-officers, 2 Kings ii. 12. or in the state, as magistrates, supreme or subordinate, Isa. xlix. 23. These are more directly meant by father and mother who are to be honoured.

These are the objects of this command expressed. The objects implied are,

(1.) All inferiors; that is, not only children, but the younger, the weaker in gifts and grace, wives, servants, people, subjects. That these are also the objects of this command, is clear, if ye consider, that their superiors are called fathers and mothers to them in the command, and consequently it binds them to be as fathers unto them.

2. All equals; that is, brethren, sisters, friends, neighbours, and all amongst whom there is little difference as to age, gifts, grace, place, or dignity. That the command respects these also, is clear if we consider, that Christ sums up the whole second table in that general, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' Therefore our neighbour in the general must be the object of this command, as well as the rest of the second table.

3. The duty, *Honour*. All these must be honoured by their relatives. Giving honour does not imply the superiority of the person honoured; God himself will honour those that honour him; and all men must be honoured by us, whether they be our superiors, in-

feriors, or equals, 1 Pet. ii. 17. God has put some excellency of his in every person, for which they are to be honoured. The titles of father, husband, teacher, and ruler, are honourable, for they are God's titles. The station wherein God has set every one, though inferiors or equals, is honourable; for they shine most beautifully, that shine in their own sphere. And there is no person on whom God has not bestowed something of his own, for which that person is to be honoured even by his superiors; esteemed inwardly in the heart, which is to be vented by a respectful outward carriage to them.

For the further opening of these words take notice,

1. That this command, whose scope is the performance of relative duties, is the first of the second table. In which the wisdom of God is to be adored, this command having a general influence on all the rest, so that we cannot transgress the rest but we transgress this in the first place. And it is worthy of observation, that such as bring themselves to an ill end, by murder, adultery, theft, &c. ordinarily pitch on disobedience to their parents as the inlet to all these, Prov. xxx. 17.

2. That as the fourth commandment is particularly directed to superiors, so this is to inferiors; particularly because subjection and submission is that which goes worst down with the proud hearts of the children of men; and therefore God doth the more expressly require it.

3. That superiors are styled fathers and mothers. And that is, (1.) To teach superiors their duty towards their inferiors, that they owe them such tenderness and kindness as parents to their own children, Num. xi. 12. (2.) To make inferiors the more cheerfully and willingly to give due honour to them, 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15.

In discoursing from this subject I shall shew,

I. What is required in this fifth commandment.

II. What is forbidden in it.

III. The reason annexed to it.

IV. Make improvement, as I go along.

I. I am to shew, what is required in this command. According to our Catechism, it requires 'the preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations; as superiors, inferiors, or equals.'

In speaking to this I shall,

1. Take notice of God's appointment of several places and relations.

2. Consider the necessity of the performance of relative duties in general.

3. Shew the duties of the particular relations wherein we severally stand.

FIRST, I am to take notice of God's appointment of several places and relations. Observe, that a difference of places and relations amongst the children of men is of divine appointment. All are not alike. Some God will have to be superiors, others inferiors, others equals; yea, the same persons superiors in respect of some, and inferiors in respect of others. This command supposeth this, as the eighth doth a propriety of goods. God is a God of order, not of confusion: so that the levelling design is levelled against the divine will. It serves,

1. To manifest the sovereignty of God that invests one man more than another with dominion and honour, though all are of one blood; takes one piece of clay and sets it on a throne, and sets another piece of the same on a dunghill. He himself is the King of the world, and the fountain of honour.

2. To beautify the world, God, who has made the natural body of man not all one lump, but consisting of several members, some more, some less honourable, for the beauty of the whole, has so shewed his wisdom in the political body.

3. It is necessary in this state of sin, especially for the preserving of the world, which, without rules and government in families, churches, and states, would be like a ship without a pilot amongst dangerous rocks.

*Use.* Let every one then be content with his place assigned him by the Divine Providence. Are worse than yourselves set above you? God has done it; say you Amen to your own post. And do the duty of your place and relation; and that will be your greatest honour. The moon shining by night is very beautiful, but in the day there is little beauty with her. As little is there in those who, forsaking their own place and the duties thereof, thrust themselves into that of another, and act without their proper spheres.

SECONDLY, Let us consider the necessity of performance of relative duties in general. Observe that the conscientious performance of relative duties is a necessary piece of true religion. The fifth commandment requireth 'the preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations.' True religion consists of faith and holiness; and true holiness is made up of personal and relative holiness. Do not think that religion has no concern in thy domestic and civil affairs. All of us are in some relations, husbands, wives, children, servants, neighbours. Each of these has its own train of duties. Be thou master, servant, &c. here are thy instructions sent down from hea-

ven, how to carry in thy place and relation. Thou wilt say, Who is concerned how I carry to my relations? I tell you, God is concerned, and he will require it. His commands are like a man's shadow; wherever he goes, they follow him. The necessity thereof is apparent.

1. The conscientious performance of relative duties is necessary in respect of the command of God. The command for them is the first of the second table. God, who hath placed us in these relations, binds us by his sovereign authority to perform the duties of the same. The same stamp of divine authority is on these commands that is upon the command to pray, &c. And he will not be satisfied with our overlooking our duty.

2. It is necessary to evidence us to be Christians indeed, no man can justly pretend to be a new creature, that does not make conscience of relative duties, 2 Cor. v. 17. Saving grace goes through all relations, like leaven in a lump, and sets men right in them. It makes the man not only a good man, but a good neighbour, husband, servant, &c. the woman a good neighbour, wife, servant, &c. For,

(1.) Relative duties are an integral part of true godliness; they are a part of the new man, Eph. iv. 24, 25. A body that wants a leg or an arm is no complete body; and a man that wants relative holiness is no complete Christian, no evangelically complete Christian, 2 Pet. i. 7, 9.

(2.) Relative holiness is an essential part of true godliness; it cannot be without it, more than the body can live without the soul, 2 Pet. i. 7, 9. 'Shew me thy faith by thy works,' says the apostle; and so may we say, Shew me thy personal holiness by thy relative holiness, Eph. v. 9.

(3.) Relative duties are the great trying points of the work of Christianity, which, if any thing, will try what metal people are of. A man is that really which he is relatively. And if there be any defect in the professor of religion, search for it in his relations, and it will readily be found in one or all of them. The pride of men's hearts makes them often very difficult of access; superiors, through their pride of heart, are apt to tyrannise; inferiors, through theirs, think themselves as good, and cannot comport with subjection. Every man naturally loves to be master, and seeks himself; hence there is no dutifulness to equals.

3. It is necessary as a piece of conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not a complete Christian that has not received of Christ grace for grace. We must prove our union with him by our

conformity to him, 1 John ii. 6. He stood in various relations, and therein was a pattern to us. He is a loving husband to his church, Eph. v. 25. a faithful Servant to his Father; a kind and affectionate Master to his servants; a dutiful subject to the magistrate; and an obedient child, Luke ii. 51.

4. It is necessary to make a useful Christian. Cumber-grounds must be cut down, Luke xiii. 7. And a useless Christian is like the vine, which if it bear not fruit, is good for nothing but the fire, Ezek. xv. Now, shall we be useless in the world? And useful we cannot be but in our several places and relations, discharging the duties of the same; and useful we are, if we do the duties of the relations wherein we stand. How is the eye, the tongue, &c. useful? Why if they remain in their proper place, and do their proper office: whereas, if they either be removed out of their place, or in it do not their office, they are useless. Let us make a help meet for man, said God, when he brought the first relation into the world. So that relative duties, as we stand in relation to others, in family, church, or state, are the proper orb of usefulness. They that are useful there, are useful indeed; and they who are useless there, are useless altogether in the world.

5. It is necessary to make a straight Christian. If we will go straight in religion, we must go as it were with these two legs, personal duties and relative duties. If either of these be wanting, then our way is like 'the legs of the lame that are not equal,' Prov. xxvi. 7. An unequal pulse shews a distempered body. How many such crooked professors are there, saints abroad, but devils at home? But see Psal. cxxv. 5. 'As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.'

6. *Lastly*, It is necessary for personal holiness. These are like live coals; put them together, and they will burn: but put them asunder, and they will both go out, 1 Pet. iii. 7. A sad evidence of this is to be seen in many, who, while they were single, gave good hopes of themselves, and had fair blossoms of religion: but being married, and making no conscience of their duty to their relatives, all good goes from them, their spirits sour, their souls wither, and their spiritual case goes quite to wreck.

It is a common observation of such as slight relative duties, that their relatives are not in their duty to them. But though it be so, this tie is laid on them by divine authority, and so cannot be taken off that way. Must I go out of my duty, because another goes out of his duty to me? No. See 1 Pet. ii. 18, &c. It is the way to gain them to their duty, chap. iii. 1.

USE 1. Of information. This lets us see, that,

1. There is very little true religion in the world, there is so little relative holiness in it. There are two things that make this evident.

(1.) How few are there that make any conscience at all of their duty to their relatives? We may take up Micah's lamentation over the land at this day, Micah vii. 1,—6. If we look to the church, what confusions are there; with untender ministers, and unruly people? the stars losing their light, and trampled under foot with contempt. If we look to the state, magistrates abusing their authority, and people despising them and their authority too. If we look into families, what disorder is there? parents careless, children disobedient, husbands untender, wives stubborn, masters rigid, and servants unfaithful. A sad evidence of the decay of religion, that the world is so far out of course.

(2.) The relative duties that are done, how few of them are done in a right manner? To do the duty itself may please men; but God will never accept it if it is not done in a right manner. A good humour is all with many, who have no principle of a new nature. A natural affection prevails with some; love to peace makes others do their duty: and fear of their relatives puts on others to do their duty; while, in the mean time they are nowise stirred up thereto from the fear and love of God; nor have they any respect to the command of God in what they do. But is that religion? will God ever accept of that as obedience to him? No, no, Rom. xiii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 6.

2. This lets us see what need all of us have to be humbled for our defects in relative duties; what need we have of the blood of Christ to wash away our guilt in these; what need we have of the Spirit of Christ to help us unto these duties. Oh! they are not easy: nature will never comply with the work, or at best but bungle at it. We have much need to pray for the Divine assistance in this matter; as without him we can do nothing, even in these outward duties.

USE II. Of exhortation. Set yourselves to make conscience of relatives. For motives to press this, consider,

1. This will be a notable mean of good to yourselves. He that thus lays out himself, lays up for himself indeed what the world cannot take from him. (1.) It will be an evidence of the sincerity of your obedience, if to personal holiness ye join relative holiness too, Psal. cxix. 6. (2.) It will be a great promoter of personal holiness; for he that watereth, shall be watered also himself. (3.) It will waft you in within the compass of the promise in the text.

2. The conscientious performance of relative duties is the way to do good to others. Would ye be useful for God, or useful to your relatives? then do this? This would make you a blessing like

Abraham. There is nothing more convincing, and more likely to make others fall in love with religion, than this, 1 Pet. iii. 1.

3. If ye make no conscience of these duties, it will discover the rottenness and unsoundness of your hearts, Psal. cxix. 6. When God changeth the heart, he writes his laws on it, and these laws among others. And the want of this will bring in that dittay, notwithstanding all thy pretended religion, 'One thing thou lackest.'

4. The neglect of these duties, and unfaithfulness in them, does much ill to religion. The world will observe how people manage the duties of their relations; and a flaw there is a sad stumbling-block, that makes others dislike religion. That religion that tends not to the good of society, what does it avail? Suppose a professor to have a graceless neighbour, can he take a readier way to stumble him at religion, than to be an ill and unconscionable neighbour? That is a remarkable admonition, 1 Tim. vi. 1. 'Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour; that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed.' Many pride themselves in their contempt of magistrates and their authority; but I am convinced it has no small influence on the malignancy and atheism of the age, and scares many from the religion that we profess. The malicious Jews knew very well the influence that it would have; and therefore tempted our Lord with a question relative to paying tribute to Cæsar, Matth. xxii. 16, &c. But see our Lord's practice, Matth. xvii. 27.

5. God takes special notice of the conscientious performance of relative duties; for indeed those that are most observant of them are most useful for God in the world. What a noble commendation is that of Enoch, that he walked with God? Gen. v. 22. of Abraham, of whom the Lord said, 'Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment,' Gen. xviii. 17, 19; and of Sarah, 1 Pet. iii. 6. who 'obeying Abraham, calling him lord.' Nay, at the great day of judgment, it is relative duties that are pitched upon as evidences for the saints; and the neglect of these is the ground of the condemnation of the wicked. It is not what passed or did not pass betwixt God and them, but what passed betwixt their neighbours and them, upon which the sentence of absolution or condemnation is founded.

6. Ere long all these relations will be taken away, and then ye will have no more access to do a duty to them. Ordinary emergencies may separate betwixt the servant and master, minister and people, one neighbour and another. Death comes and dissolves all relations,

Job iii. 17, 18, 19. This dissolves the relation betwixt husband and wife, parents and children. Should we not then take that warning? Gal. vi. 10. 'As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith?' When they are gone, many times the neglect stings terribly.

7. Thy undutifulness that way may ruin thy relative; for by such a stroke ordinarily it is not one, but two that fall together. And if God do keep them up, yet ye do what in you lies to ruin them. The rich man in hell desires not to see his brethren. Why, dreadful is the meeting that many relatives will have one with another at that place.

*Lastly*, The neglect of these duties will undoubtedly ruin you, if ye get not pardon and grace to reform that neglect, Heb. xii. 14. If ye have any love to your own souls, then endeavour after this.

I offer you the following directions.

1. Keep up a sense of your own inability for relative duties, and look to the Lord for strength to perform them. People look on these but as common things, and live not by faith with respect to them, and the Lord leaves them so as they mar all. Prayer and faith in the promises are necessary to the performance of these duties.

2. Watch. Satan bends his force against this particularly, because he is in a fair way to ruin two at least at once. So relatives should join forces to resist him, and carefully watch against this subtle enemy.

3. *Lastly*, Consider ye have to do with God in that matter, and not merely with another. It is he that has set you in your several relations, and has prescribed the laws whereby ye must walk with him in them. He is your witness, and will be your Judge with respect to your behaviour in that relation, according to these laws.

THIRDLY, I come now to consider the duties of the particular relations wherein we severally stand; and they are two in general; those of superiors and inferiors, and that of equals. The former is of two sorts. There are some relations where one of the relatives has power and authority over the other; and those that import a mere preference. The first of these we may consider with respect to the family, the church, the commonwealth.

In the family we find three relations, of superiors and inferiors, husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants, wherein one of the relatives has power and authority over the other.

I shall begin with the family-relations, and therein with the first relation that was in the world, and from which all others do proceed, viz. that of husband and wife, and so proceed to the rest in order. And we must be particular, that we may declare the whole

counsel of God. I shall show you the laws of heaven with respect to each of these relations, which if observed would make happy societies, families, &c. and when neglected keep the world in wild disorder; and these are laws by which we shall be judged.

FIRST, As for the relation betwixt husbands and wives, read Col. iii. 18, 19. 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.' The apostle here lays down the duty of married persons one to another. He begins with the duty of the wife, as that of the children and servants, because their duty, through the subjection that is in it, is the most difficult, and being conscientiously performed, is the stronger motive to the husband, to do his duty, as well as to the parent to do his. And here we have,

1. The sum of a wife's duty to her husband. Self-submission to him, subjecting herself to him, comprehending the duty she owes to him in her heart, words, and deeds. The qualification of this submission, the only restriction of it, is *in the Lord*; that is, so as it be consistent with her duty to God. That limitation observed, it extends to every thing, Eph. v. 24. (3.) The reasonableness of this, it should not be complained of; *it is fit*, just, and equitable in respect of God's ordinance enjoining it, the infirmity of the woman as the weaker sex, and the inconveniencies arising on the refusal of it.

2. The sum of the husband's duty is love to her. This comprehends in it the whole of his duty; for love will always be active, and spread itself into the several duties he owes her, yea, and will season all these duties, and tincture them with kindness to her. The apostle comprehends all in this, both to sweeten the wife's subjection on the one hand, and to temper his authority on the other. And therefore he cautions against bitterness, and that both in heart, that he hate her not, nor coldly love her, in words, and in deeds.

Husbands and wives may not carry to one another as they list, but must be dutiful to one another, according to the word of God, as they will be accountable to God.

Here I shall shew,

1. The duties common to both husband and wife.
2. Those more peculiar to each party.

*First*, I shall shew the duties common to both husband and wife.

1. Conjugal love, Tit. ii. 4. They must love one another with a special love, not communicable to another. God's ordinance has made them one flesh, and God's law obliges them to be one heart. They must love one another more than father or mother, yea, as their own flesh, Eph. v. 28, 31. And where that love is wanting, God is dishonoured, and the society is uncomfortable. And however

scarce they may be of lovely qualities, we must love them because they are ours.

2. Cohabitation, dwelling together; which comprehends the ordinary use of the same house, bed, and board, 1 Pet. iii. 7. 1 Cor. vii. 10. This is such a necessary duty, that an obstinate refusal in either party to dwell together dissolves the marriage, 1 Cor. vii. 15. that is wilful desertion. And if a man remove to another place for a long time, and upon no bad cause, his wife is obliged to go with him, if he desire, unless there be some imminent danger, either of her body or soul; and he is obliged to take her, if she desire. For though it belongs to the husband as the head to determine the place of their habitation, yet he cannot shake off his duty to his wife, 1 Cor. vii. 5. Gen. xii. 11.

3. Living together in peace, 1 Cor. vii. 15. We must follow peace with all men; but there are double ties on married persons to follow peace with one another, and to watch that it be not broken. No war is so unnatural as that which is betwixt them; and none so hopeless if they make it not up betwixt themselves. Did we see a man tearing his own flesh, or a woman beating her head against a wall, we would conclude they were mad. Yet thus it is in effect where there is no peace betwixt husband and wife. The ancient Pagan Greeks when they cut up the wedding-sacrifice, took the gall, and with eager loathing flung it behind the altar, to shew that in wedlock all bitterness must be put far away. There is none so hopeless if they take it not up between themselves; for there is none to judge betwixt them but God: therefore, if they cannot clear, they should bury their controversies, yielding for peace sake. And though certainly it is most natural that the woman should first yield, yet he is a foolish man that will not sacrifice of his own right to peace, and yield, though to the weaker vessel, as Moses did to Zipporah, Exod. iv. 25, 26. Certainly whoso first yields shews most respect to God, and stands fairest for the blessing, Matth. v. 9. 'Blessed are the peacemakers.'

4. Carefulness to please one another. The wife ought to suit herself to the will of her husband, so far as lawfully she may, 1 Cor. vii. 34. watching against what is displeasing, and doing in things lawful what she knows is pleasing, Gen. xxvii. 9. Yea, and the husband must be careful to please her too, ver. 33. It is a piece of that conjugal tenderness he owes her, not to do any thing that he knows may justly displease her, and even to humour her in things lawful and fit, for her greater comfort; for though he is the head, yet she is his own flesh. This would keep peace.

5. Living together not only in peace, but in love, delighting in

one another's company, Eccl. ix. 9. living cheerfully and familiarly together. A careless, morose, and unconvertible humour, is opposite to the end of the state of marriage, which is the mutual comfort of the parties.

6. Honouring one another. The woman ought to honour her husband, walking under a conscientious respect to that superiority God has granted him over her, 1 Cor. xi. 7. So that she may not trample upon his character as a husband. Yea, and she must labour to walk so with others, as she may bring no dishonour to him by her indiscreet carriage, but be a glory to him by her meek and quiet conversation, 1 Pet. iii. 4. So as he is her head, she becomes a crown to that head. 'A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband,' Prov. xii. 4. The husband must also honour his wife, 1 Pet. iii. 7. both in his words and actions, shewing his esteem of her virtues, praising her when she does well, Prov. xxxi. 28. reposing trust and confidence in her as to the management of his affairs, and not keeping up the knowledge of his business from her, but communicating counsels with her, Prov. xxxi. 11. This he must do when she is worthy; otherwise that must take place, Micah vii. 5. 'Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.' In a word, he ought to carry so respectfully to her, as to shew that he looks on her as his companion, and may gain respect to her from the rest of the family, Gen. xvi. 6. and this because she is the weaker vessel, both naturally and morally, in which respect she is more easily crushed and broken in spirit, especially by the austere and undutiful carriage of her husband.

7. Sympathising with one another in all their crosses, and griefs, and joys, whether of body or mind. Being one flesh they must shew it this way. It is a common duty we owe to all, 'to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice;' and so both their griefs and joys should be mutual, in a special manner; otherwise they will be as jarring strings in an instrument that mars the harmony, 1 Sam. i. 8. And they must bear with one another's infirmities, covering them with the mantle of love, Gal. vi. 2.

8. Faithfulness in respect of their bodies, communicating themselves one to another, according to the ends of marriage, with modesty and soberness, marriage putting the body of each in the other's power; and therefore the apostle in this case forbids them to defraud one another, 1 Cor. vii. 5. Another piece of that faithfulness is keeping by one another, and not embracing a stranger, which is that horrible breach that dissolves the bond of marriage.

9. *Lastly*, A due concern for one another's soul and eternal welfare, 1 Pet. iii. 7. They must be helpful to one another in the way

of the Lord, doing what they can to advance one another's eternal interest; watching over one another, joining together in holy duties; instructing and admonishing one another, lovingly and meekly, each one proposing to themselves the salvation of their relative, as well as their own, 1 Cor. vii. 16.

This is a weighty point, which few lay to heart. I shall lay before you these few things with respect to it.

(1.) Married persons, for this end, that they may be helpful to one another's soul's welfare, ought to walk so together as that they may have in each other's consciences a testimony of their integrity, 2 Kings iv. 1. They should take heed they lay not stumbling-blocks before one another, nor carry so as to engender hard thoughts of one another that way. The testimony of God is above all, the testimony of conscience next, but the testimony of a yoke-fellow's conscience after that.

(2.) They should labour to beget and advance the fear of God in one another, to bring them to and carry them on in the truth of religion, 1 Cor. vii. 16. They are not meet helps they are only helpful for the body and temporal concerns; for in that case the better part has no help of them. Interest as well as duty engageth to this; for the better a man be, the better husband will he be, &c. No wonder that those who fear not God, regard not man.

(3.) They should entertain communion in prayer and addresses to the throne of grace, praying for one another, and praying with one another, 1 Pet. iii. 7. The husband should hold up his wife's case to God with his own, and the wife the case of the husband; and help them by prayers with them and for them, which is true Christian help. They know one another's weaknesses, temptations, and difficulties, better than any one else, and therefore ought to be the more particular in this.

(4.) They should be acquainted with one another's case, and therefore inquire into the same, and observe it, that they may the better suit the help to the case, 1 Sam. i. 8. And O what a happiness is it for one to have one that is their own flesh to whom they may freely unbosom themselves! And what a sad thing is it where religious conference is not observed betwixt such parties?

(5.) They should watch over one another. This is living as being heirs together of the grace of life, 1 Pet. iii. 7. They should stir up one another to duties and good works; and happy are they who so prove monitors to one another, 2 Kings iv. 9, 10. They should warn one another of what appears sinful in their way, and so not suffer sin upon them, Eccl. iv. 9, 10. If men see a spot on their face, they will tell them of it; but spots in the conversation are most danger-

ous. But withal special care must be taken that there be no bitterness mixed with it, for that mars the operation; the season must be observed when it will take best, 1 Sam. xxv. 36, 37; and it should be mixed with love. Yea, sometimes entreaties should be used rather than rebukes, especially from the wife to the husband, as prudence itself may teach, and may be gathered from 1 Tim. v. 1. 'Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father.' And such warnings should be kindly taken, and readily complied with, as the best evidences of love.

(6.) *Lastly*, A joint care for the religious government of the family. The one ought not to devolve that entirely on the other, but each take his share; otherwise it cannot miss to be mismanaged. Each of them owes a duty to the souls of their children and servants; and therefore should watch over them, admonish and rebuke, and stir them up to duty; and see that God be worshipped in the family, that it be not neglected in the husband's absence, or any thing else; for though the wife be the weaker vessel, she is the head of the family under her husband.

*Secondly*, I come to shew the duties more peculiar to each party.

1. The duties of the husband of this sort may be reduced to this one, viz. that he carry himself towards her as a head for her good, ruling her in the fear of the Lord. It is not a name of power only, but of duty; for he must be such a head to her as Christ is to the church, Eph. v. 23. And whoso reckon upon the authority of that name without eyeing the duty of it, put asunder what God has joined in his grant, and will join when he calls men to an account.

2. The duties of the wife may be reduced to this one, viz. submitting herself to her husband as her head, Eph. v. 22, 23. She is not to lord it over him, but to be subject to him. And in this respect there is a reverence and fear of the husband enjoined in the wife, Eph. v. 33. 1 Pet. iii. 2. which is a due regard in the heart to his character as a husband, seeing in that God has put off his own name upon him, God himself being called our husband; a fear to offend him, flowing from love, venting itself in speaking and carrying respectfully to him, 1 Pet. iii. 6.

Now the husband as the head of the wife owes her,

1. Protection, so as she may be as safe and easy under the covert of his relation to her as he can make her. For this cause God has given the husband as head to the weaker vessel: and therefore it was an ancient ceremony in marriage for the husband to spread his skirt over his wife, Ruth iii. 9. He is to protect her to the utmost of his power from the injuries of others, 1 Sam. xxx. 18. and particularly from the insults, whether of children or servants in the

family, as well as neighbours, Gen. xvi. 6. And if so, surely he himself is not to bear hard upon her, but to shew her a peculiar tenderness as the weaker vessel, a tenderness to her body and spirit too; and not to suffer her, far less to oblige her, to distress herself above measure.

On the other hand, she owes him obedience, a submission to, and compliance with, his admonitions. It is observed of Job's wife, for as ill as she was, when he calls her a fool, she does not give him the same epithet again. Reason itself teaches, that whoso puts himself under the protection of another, must be ruled by that other, and not by himself.

2. Provision, 1 Tim. v. 8. The husband ought to provide for his wife, and cheerfully furnish her with what is needful and convenient according to his station and ability; and lay out himself by all lawful means for her comfortable through-bearing. And this he should have an eye to, not only for the time of his life, but even after his decease.

And on the other hand, the wife ought to be helpful to her husband by her frugal management, Prov. xxxi. 27. And God's word and frequent experiments plainly shew, that a man's thriving or not thriving has a great dependence on his wife's management, Prov. xiv. 1. While he, then, is busy without doors, she should be careful within; and therefore it is recommended to women to be much at home, Tit. ii. 5. Yet she may well go abroad when her business calls her, as Abigail did, 1 Sam. xxv.

3. *Lastly*, Direction, with calmness instructing her, how she should carry in every thing, both with respect to things of this life and of the other, Prov. ii. 17. He ought to be as eyes to her, which have their place in the head, and so should be capable to guide, 1 Pet. iii. 7.

On the other hand, the wife should be pliable and teachable, 1 Tim. ii. 11. yea, and be ready to seek instruction from her husband, 1 Cor. xiv. 35. She should be obedient to his commands and directions, ver. 34. for in every thing wherein the law of God has not bound her up, the husband's will ought to be complied with, Eph. v. 24. Gen. iii. 16.

The reasons of the husband's duties are these,

1. Because husbands are appointed to be such heads as Christ is to the church, Eph. v. 25. And if men would reflect on this, it would make them very dutiful, and bear with many things as Christ doth, else we would be ruined.

2. Because thy wife is thy own flesh, thy second self, ver. 28, 29; and so undutifulness is monstrous.

3. Because she is the weaker vessel, 1 Pet. iii. 7; for it hath pleased the Lord to exercise the woman with a special measure of infirmity, both natural and moral.

The reasons of the woman's duty are these.

1. Because the woman was created for the man, 1 Tim. ii. 13. compare 1 Cor. xi. 9.

2. Because the woman was the first that sinned, 1 Tim. ii. 14. compare Gen. iii. 16.

3. Because she is the weaker vessel.

*Use* 1. Let all such as have been, or are in that relation, be humbled under a sense of their sin in that point, and fly to the blood of Christ for pardon. And let every one look on that relation as a serious matter, in which people must walk with God, and under which they are bound to so many duties, of which they must give an account to the Lord.

Let husbands and wives study to make conscience of their duty one to another, and frame their life accordingly. For motives, consider,

(1.) God lays them on. Nature may storm at them, but they are God's commands; and whoso breaketh over the hedge, the serpent will bite.

(2.) Your marriage-vows and voluntary covenant engage to these. Though we forget them, God does not, and will not.

(3.) Your own comfort depends upon them; and so does the happiness in that relation.

*Lastly*, Death comes, and that will dissolve the relation. Therefore, before that awful event, let every one make conscience of performing their respective duties, that they may die in peace.

As to the relation betwixt parents and children, See Col. iii. 20, 21. 'Children obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.'

In the first of these, we have, 1. The duty that children owe to their parents; and that is obedience in all things lawful. The word rendered *obey*, points at obedience flowing from inward respect to them. 2. The reason of it; it is pleasing to God, who has enjoined it.

In the next place, we have the duty of parents to their children. Where, 1. There is something supposed, that they must use their parental power and authority over their children for their good. 2. Something expressed, that they use it moderately, not abuse it to the irritating of them, lest they crush them and make them heartless.

Parents and children must carry to one another as they will be answerable to God who has given them their orders. Here I shall shew,

1. The duties that children owe to their parents.

2. The duty of parents to their children.

*First*, I am to shew the duties which children owe to their parents.

1. Singular love to them as the parents ought to bear them. This is called natural affection, the want whereof is accounted among the most horrid abominations, Rom. i. 31. Such a natural affection did Joseph shew to his father, Gen. xlvi. 20. when 'he went to meet him, fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.'

2. Reverence and fear. Their fear is to be squared with love, and their love salted with fear, Lev. xix. 3. The mother is there particularly mentioned; and that, in the first place, because as people are ready to break over the hedge where it is lowest, so children are most apt to despise their mother; and they being much about her hand while young, lest familiarity breed contempt, God hath expressly provided against it. They must have a conscientious regard to that authority God has given them over them, and fear to offend them, as those who to them are in God's stead.

3. An outward reverent and respectful behaviour towards them. They ought not to be treated rudely by their children, as if they were their companions, Mal. i. 6; but they ought to speak respectfully to them, Gen. xxxi. 35; and carry respectfully to them, Prov. xxxi. 28. This was Solomon's practice even when a king, 1 Kings ii. 19; for as the candle if lighted, will shine through the lantern, so reverence in the heart will appear in the outward carriage.

4. A ready obedience to their lawful commands, Col. iii. 20. If it be not contrary to the command of God, they ought to obey. Subjection and obedience to parents is the honour as well as the duty of children. Joseph's ready obedience to his father is recorded to his commendation, Gen. xxxvii. 13. Yea, Christ himself was a pattern to children in this regard to the parental authority, Luke ii. 51.

5. Submission. They are to submit to their instructions and directions, readily receiving them, and complying with them, Prov. i. 8. Man being born like a wild ass's colt, has need to be taught. They are to submit to their reproofs and admonitions, to take them kindly, and amend what is amiss, Prov. xiii. 1. Yea, they are to submit to their corrections, for the folly bound up in their hearts makes the rod necessary, Heb. xii. 9. They are children of Belial, indeed, that will not bear this yoke of subjection.

6. Bearing with their infirmities, and covering them with the wings of love. Whether they be natural or moral infirmities, they would beware of despising or insulting them on that account, or any way exposing them, as some foolish youngsters are apt to do, Prov. xxiii. 22. Gen. ix. 22.

7. Following their reasonable advice, and taking along with them the authority of their parents, in order to their calling or marriage. That children ought not to dispose of themselves in marriage without the consent of parents, is the constant doctrine of the Protestant churches. And the reasons are these. (1.) The scripture gives the power of making marriages for children to the parents, Deut. vii. 3. Jer. xxix. 6. 1 Cor. vii. 37, 38. Yea, even after parties have consented, it is left to the parent, whether to give his abused daughter to him that has been guilty with her, Exod. xxii. 16, 17. (2.) The most approved examples of marriage in scripture go this way, Gen. xxiv. 3, 4. xxviii. 1, 2. and xxix. 19. Judg. xiv. 2. *Lastly*, The reason is plain; for the child cannot give away any thing, that is his parents' against their will. Now, the child himself is the parents, a part of their self-moving substance, in which they have a most undoubted property. So, when the devil was permitted to fall upon what was Job's, he fell upon his children, and killed them in the first place. Yet, upon the other hand, no parent can force a child to marry such and such a person; for consent makes marriage, and that which is forced is no consent. The child must be satisfied as well as the parent, Gen. xxiv. 57. So the short of it is, that the consent of both is necessary, and that the parent must neither force the child, nor the child rob the parent.

8. Readiness to requite their parents when they are in need of it; that as they did for them when young, so they must do for them when old, or reduced to poverty. This God requires of children, 1 Tim. v. 4. It is a piece of that honour to parents which the fifth command enjoins, Matt. xv. 4, 5, 6. So did Joseph, Gen. xlvii. 12. This was a piece of duty which the Lord performed to his mother while he hung on the cross, John xix. 27.

9. *Lastly*, In a word, children should so live as they may be an honour to their parents; for according as they are, their parents are either credited or ashamed. Yea, and when they are dead and gone, they should be reverently remembered, their wholesome advices religiously followed, and their debts satisfied, so as no body may get occasion to reproach them when they are away.

*Use 1.* This may serve for conviction and humiliation to us all, who either have had parents since we came to the years of discretion, or yet have them. Who can say in this, I have made my heart clean.

2. I exhort such as have parents, whether one or more, to be dutiful to them according to the word. There is indeed a great difference betwixt children in their father's family, and those who, by tacit or express consent, are left to their own disposal; but the duty of filial affection, reverence, and gratitude, abideth. For motives, consider,

(1.) That parents with respect to their children, do in an especial manner bear an image of God, as he is our Creator, Provisor, and Ruler. So are parents those from whom, under him, we had our being, by whose care and government God provided for us, when we could neither provide for nor rule ourselves.

(3.) Hence it is evident, that do what we can to them, or for them, we can never make a full recompense, but, after all, must die in their debt. But how little is this considered by many, who look on what they do for their parents in a magnifying glass, while they are blind to what their parents have done for them!

(3.) *Lastly*, Consider, that God takes special notice of your conduct towards your parents, Col. iii. 20. It is a piece of duty which God readily regardeth according to his promise; and the neglect thereof useth not to be overlooked, but as it disposeth to an ill life otherwise, so God readily pays it home, so as the sin may be read in the punishment.

*Secondly*, I come to consider the duty of parents to their children; and I may take this up under five heads, viz. while they are yet in the womb, while in their infancy, from the time they come to the use of reason, at all times, and when a-dying.

1. The duty which parents owe to their children while yet in the womb.

*1st*, Parents are obliged to use all care for the preservation of the child, to beware of any thing that may harm the child in the belly, and especially that may procure abortion, Judg. xiii. 4.

*2dly*, Dealing with God in behalf of the child, praying for its preservation, and for its soul, as soon as it is known to be a living soul. I think that no sooner should the mother or father know a living soul to be in the womb, but as soon with Rebekah, they should go to God for it, Gen. xxv. 21, 22. If Hannah could devote her child to God before it was conceived, 1 Sam. i. 11. Christian parents may and ought to devote their children to God when quickened in the womb. Whoso neglect this, consider not that then the child is a sinful creature under the wrath of God, and the curse of the law; that it is capable of sanctification, must live for ever in heaven or hell, and that possibly it may never see the light.

*Lastly*, Labouring by all means that it may be born within the

covenant; which is to be done by parents making sure their own being within the covenant; for so runs the promise, 'I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed.'

2. The duty they owe to them in their infancy.

*1st*, Parents should bless God for them when they are born, Luke i. 67. &c. Children are God's heritage; the key of the womb is in his hand; he gives them to some, and withholds them from others; and they should be received with thankfulness from the Lord's hand.

*2dly*, Giving them up to the Lord as soon as they are born, renewing the dedication of them to God, and accepting of the covenant for them; and procuring to them the seal of the covenant without any unnecessary delay. Under the Old Testament, infants were to receive the seal on the eighth day. Now there is no set time, but common equity bids take the first opportunity, and not delay it needlessly. The undue delay of circumcision was punished in Moses, Exod. iv. 24; and the delay of baptism cannot but be displeasing to God too, as a slighting of his ordinance.

*3dly*, Tender care of them, doing all things necessary for them, while they are not capable to do for themselves, Isa. xlix. 15. And here it is the duty of the mother to nurse the child herself, if she be able, Hos. ix. 14. And this care of infants, the burden of which lies most on the mothers is one great piece of their generation-work, wherein they are useful for God, and which they ought to look on as special service for their comfort in the trouble which therein they have.

3. The duties they owe to them from the time they come to the use of reason, and so forward.

*1st*, They are to provide for them, and that aye and until they be in a capacity to provide for themselves, 1 Tim. v. 8. This arises from the natural obligation and instinct that is common to men with beasts whereof the wildest will feed their young till they be able to do for themselves. Thus parents are, (1.) To provide suitable maintenance for their children for the present, and to lay out themselves for it, though with the sweat of their brows. (2.) And, as God prospers them, they are to lay up something for them, 2 Cor. xii. 14: for though the possession be their parents entirely, yet he is stinted to the use of a part according to what is necessary. Only no man is to take from present necessities for future provisions; but what God has given, let men take the comfortable use of it; and what remains, let them lay by for their children, Eccl. ii. 18, 19, 24. But for people to deny themselves things necessary and comely, that they may lay up for their children, is a curse; and if

their children should follow their example, to deny themselves the use thereof, to transmit them to theirs, the use of it should never be had: but ordinarily what the parents narrowly gather, and keep so as they cannot take the convenient use of it themselves, the children quickly run through.

*2dly*, Civil education, that they may be useful members of the commonwealth. This we may take up in these three things.

(1.) Parents should polish the rude natures of their children with good manners, so as they may carry comely and discreetly before themselves or others, Prov. xxxi. 28. It is the dishonour of parents to see children rude and altogether unpolished as young beasts; and religion is an enemy to rudeness and ill manners, 1 Pet. iii. 8.

(2.) They should give them learning according to their ability, and see that at least they be taught to read the Bible, 2 Tim. iii. 15. What is it that makes so many ignorant old people, but that their parents have neglected this? But where parents have neglected this, grace and good nature would make a shift to supply this defect.

(3.) They should train them up to do something in the way of some honest employment, whereby they may be useful to themselves or others. To nourish children in idleness is but to prepare them for prisons or correction-houses, or to be plagues to some one family or another, if Providence do not mercifully interpose, Prov. xxxi. 27. Christians should train up their daughters to do virtuously, ver. 29. For their own sakes, let them be capable to make their hands sufficient for them, seeing none knows what straits they may be brought to. And for the sake of others to whom they may be joined, let them be virtuously, frugally, and actively educated, otherwise what they bring with them will hardly quit the cost of the mischief that their unthriftiness and silliness will produce, Prov. xiv. 3. Whether ye can give them something or nothing, let them not want Ruth's portion, a good name, a good head, and good hands, Ruth iii. 11. Sons should be brought up to some honest employment, whereby they may be worth their room in the world, Gen. iv. 2. This is such a necessary piece of parents' duty to their children, that the Athenians had a law, That if a son was brought up to no calling at all, in case his father should come to poverty, he was not bound to maintain him, as otherwise he was.

*3dly*, Religious education, Eph. vi. 4. If parents provide not for their children, they are worse than beasts to their young; if they give them not civil education, they are worse than heathens; but if they add not religious education, what do they more than civilised heathens? When God gives thee a child, he says, as Pharaoh's daughter to Moses' mother, 'Take this child and nurse it for me.'

Exod. ii. 9. Though we be but fathers of their flesh we must be careful of their souls, otherwise we ruin them.

(1.) Parents ought to instruct their children in the principles of religion, and to sow the seeds of godliness in their hearts, as soon as they are able to speak, and have the use of reason, Deut. vi. 6, 7. Such early religious education is a blessed mean of grace, 1 Kings xviii. 12. compare ver. 3. Not only is this the duty of fathers, who should teach their children. Prov. iv. 3, 4. but of mothers, who, while the children are young about their hand, should be dropping something to them for their soul's good. Solomon had not only his father's lesson, but the prophecy his mother taught him, Prov. xxxi. 1. See chap. i. 8.

(2.) They should labour for that end to acquaint them with the scriptures. 2 Tim. iii. 15. to cause them to read them. Let the reading of their chapters be a piece of their daily task; and cause them read the scriptures in order, that they may be acquainted both with the precepts and histories of the Bible. Let them be obliged to learn their Catechism, and catechise them yourselves, according to your ability. For teaching by way of question and answer is most easy for them.

(3.) If they ask you any questions concerning these things do not discourage them, but take pains to answer all their questions, however weakly they may be proposed, Deut. vi. 20, 21. Children are often found to have very misshapen notions of divine things; but if they were duly encouraged to speak, they might vent their thoughts, which parents thus get occasion to rectify.

*4thly*, Labour to deter them from sin. The neglect of this was Eli's sin, for which God judged his house, 1 Sam. iii. 13. Endeavour to possess their hearts with an abhorrence of sinful practices, and a dread of them. Carefully check their lying, swearing, cursing, or banning, and Sabbath-breaking. If they learn these while young, they will be fair to accompany them to gray hairs. Let them not dare to meddle with what is another man's, if it were not worth a farthing. Encourage them in taking up little things, and they may come in time to bring themselves to an ill end, and you to disgrace.

*5thly*, Stir them up to the duties of holiness, and the practice of religion. Often inculcate on them the doctrine of their sinful miserable state by nature, and the remedy provided in Christ. Shew them the necessity of holiness, pointing out Christ to them as the fountain of sanctification. Commend religion to them, and press them to the study of it, as the main thing they have to do in the world, Prov. iv. 4, &c.

*6thly*, Pray with them, and teach them to pray. For this cause let not the worship of God be neglected in your families: but for your children's sake maintain it. No wonder that those children seek not God who never see their parents bow a knee. Ye should take them alone, and pray with them, and teach them to pray, laying the materials of prayer often before them; and let them learn the Lord's prayer, and use it as a form till such time as they can conceive a prayer by that directory. For though we do not think the Lord has bound us to that form, (if he has, the forms of the English liturgy are most impertinent, which intrude themselves on us, and do not leave us to it), yet that it may not be used as a prayer, or as a form, I know none that do affirm; though it is plain it is principally intended for a directory in prayer, Matth. vi. 9.

*Lastly*, They should often be put in mind of their baptismal vows: and I judge it advisable, that when ye have been at pains to instruct them in the principles of religion, and they have attained to a tolerable measure of knowledge, so that with judgment they may personally consent to the covenant, as a child religiously educated may be able to do betwixt nine and twelve years of age, if not before; it would be profitable to call them before you, and solemnly declare how ye have laboured to do your duty to them, as ye engaged in their baptism, and require them expressly to consent unto the covenant for themselves; taking them personally engaged to be the Lord's.

4. Correction, Eph. vi. 4. The Greek word there signifies both correction and instruction; and so does the English word *nurture*. They must go together; for instruction without correction will hardly succeed. Parents must keep their children in subjection; if they lose their authority over them, the children will be children of Belial indeed, without a yoke, the end of which will be sad, Prov. xxix. 15. They must not only be corrected by reproof, but, when need is, with stripes, Prov. xix. 18. Begin early, as soon as they are capable to be bettered by it; and let your love to them engage you to it; and not restrain you, Prov. xiii. 24. As ever ye would keep them out of hell, correct them, Prov. xxiii. 13, 14. I offer the following advices in this point.

(1.) Take heed that ye correct not your children just to satisfy your own passion; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. That is revenge, not correction. Let the end of your correction be the child's good. It were good that parents, if they find themselves in a passion, would first beat down their own disordered spirits before they beat the child.

(2.) Let them know well wherefore ye correct them: for if the

child know not what he has done amiss, he can never be bettered by the correction. And therefore pains should be taken to convince them of the evil of the thing; otherwise we deal not with them as rational creatures.

(3.) Consider well the disposition of the child. That severity may be necessary for one, that will quite crush another. A man will not take his staff to thresh his corn, nor yet his flail to beat out his kail-seed. Measure your correction, then, by the child's disposition.

(4.) Go about the work with an eye to the Lord for success. Correct thy child in faith of the promise; Prov. xxii. 15. 'Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him,' viz. as a mean appointed and blessed of God for that end. It is our belief, and not our blows, that will do the business. And no doubt the neglect of this is one main cause why correction oft-times does no good.

*Lastly*, Take heed ye correct not your children only for faults against yourselves, letting them pass with their sins against God. Many will give them a blow for a disrespectful word against themselves, who for lying, banning, Sabbath-breaking, will never touch them. Their children's crossing them must not go unpunished, but it will be long ere they correct them for their sins against God.

5. The casting them the copy of a good example, Psal. ci. 2. Children are apt to imitate their parents, but especially in evil. He that sins before a child, sins twice, for he may expect that his sin shall be acted over again. Let them, then, not see you do any thing ye would not have them to do, nor speak words ye would not have them to follow you in. Your good precept will not stick, if it be not fastened with a good example.

6. Encouraging them to do well; and when they do well, with kind looks, speeches, and actions, 1 Chron. xxviii. 20. Ingenuous spirits are but abused, when they are always driven by way of authority, and not drawn in the way of kindness. The name of a father and mother sounds of bowels of kindness; it is a pity it should ever degenerate into the nature of mere masterly authority.

7. *Lastly*, Seasonable disposing of them in marriage, if need be, Ruth iii. 1. 1 Cor. vii. 36. So did Abraham with his son Isaac, Gen. xxiv.; and Isaac with his son Jacob, Gen. xxviii.; always consulting their own inclinations, not forcing them to this or that marriage against their will, which is but either to oblige them to disobey their parents, or to make themselves miserable to please them. The neglect of this duty may prove a snare to the child, and bring grief and sorrow to both.

4. There is a duty they owe to them at all times; and that is

praying for them. Sometimes this is all they have access to do for them. But be they ever so far away, they should not be forgotten. Though they be out of your family, they should not be out of your prayers, as Job's children were not, Job i. 5. And parents should consider the several cases of their children, and be very particular before the Lord for them. It is marked of Job, that 'he offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all,' *ib.* And though in some cases this may not be convenient in family-prayers, yet, in secret, parents should have their particular petitions for their particular children, according to their particular cases.

5. *Lastly*, The duty that parents when a-dying owe to their children. We must all die, and leave our children, else they will leave us before. Lay up these few advices, then, for that time.

(1.) If providence surprise you not, call together your children, that you may do them good by your advice at your latter end, as Jacob did, Gen. xlix. 1. And do it timeously, lest, if you delay, you be not able to speak to them when you would. A word from a death-bed has usually more influence than ten words in a time of health; and words spoken with the dying breath of a parent are fair to stick.

(2.) Lay over your children whom ye are to leave, on the Lord himself; and whether ye have any thing to leave them or not, leave them on your covenanted God by faith, Jer. xlix. 11. Accept of the covenant now, renew it then, and lay the stress of their through-bearing on that God on whom ye have laid the stress of your own souls.

(3.) Give them your testimony for God, against sin, and concerning the vanity of the world. If ye have had any experience of religion, commend Christ and the way of the Lord, to them from your own experience, Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. If ye have had experience of the evil and bitterness of sin, shew them the ill of it. What courses you have found profitable for your soul, and what hurtful; mark these to them particularly. If experience fail, yet conscience may help you out, if awakened, to this testimony.

(4.) Give them your dying advice to make choice of Christ as their portion, and holiness as their way, to cleave to it, living and dying in it. And what faults ye know are in any of them, which ye could not before get reformed, let your dying lips again reprove, exhort, obtest, and testify against, if so be they may be persuaded to hearken at last.

(5.) Bless them, in praying for them to God, the fountain of blessing; declaring withal, that they shall be blessed, if they keep the way of the Lord.

(6.) Let your temporal affairs be so ordered, as that after your decease they may not be a snare to your children, a bone of contention, or an occasion of grudge, one of them against another, Isa. xxxviii. 1.

*Use 1.* This serves for conviction and humiliation to those that are in that relation. In these things we offend all, both in the matter and manner of duty; which may send us to the Father of mercies, through Christ, for grace to remove our guilt, and to fit us to reform.

2. I exhort parents to be dutiful to their children, according to the will of God laid before you in his word. For motives, consider,

(1.) The strong tie of natural affection laid upon you. Our children are parts of ourselves, and therefore our bowels should yearn towards them, moving us to do them all the good we can. There are three things that may make our affection work towards dutifulness to them.

[1.] They have sin conveyed to them by natural generation, Psal. li. 5. We may rejoice in them, indeed, as God's gifts; but, alas! we may mourn over them as bearing naturally our own sinful image. As they are our children, they are children of wrath; they have a corrupt sinful nature conveyed unto them. Did they derive some hereditary bodily disease from us, how would we pity them, and do what in us lies to help them? but they derive a hereditary soul disease from Adam by us, and should we not pity and pray for them?

[2.] Great is the danger they are in, if we do not our duty to them. They are in a world of snares; if we be not eyes to them, they may fall to their ruin. If the wild ass's colt be not tamed by education, they are in a fair way to be ruined in time by a sinful life, Prov. xxix. 15; and if mercy prevent it not, they are in a fair way to be ruined to eternity.

[3.] Education is a blessed mean of grace. So was it to good Obadiah, 1 Kings xviii. 12; and so it was to Timothy, 2 Tim. iii. 15; compare chap. i. 5; Why, because it is a mean appointed of God for that end, and therefore may be followed in faith of the promise, Prov. xxii. 6; 'Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' Chap. xxiii. 14; 'Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.' Augustine's mother was a good woman; but such was his life, that it cost her many prayers and tears; and weeping to one about his case, 'Go thy way (said he to her), for it cannot be that a son of these tears can perish;' and so it was.

(2.) This is a great part of our generation-work, the work that we have to do for the honour of God in the world, Psal. lxxviii. 3, 4. to

do our endeavour to hand down religion and honesty to the succeeding generation. And we must give an account of it to God. And as kings must account to God for what they have done for him in their kingdoms, and ministers in their congregations, so must parents account to him for what they have done in their families.

(3.) The vows of God are upon us for that cause. These are little minded by many, but God does not forget them. As Sarah was under the bond of the covenant by her husband's circumcision; so mothers are under the bond of the covenant by the vows taken on by their husbands; and are therefore obliged to use their utmost endeavours to fulfil these vows in the education of their children.

And the due consideration of this might engage children to be obedient and pliable to the commands, instructions, and directions of their parents, for their good.

I come now to the relation between masters and servants, for which you may read Col. iii. 22. and iv. 1. 'Servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven.'

The servant's duty is laid down, ver. 22. 'Servants obey in all things your master.' &c. Wherein consider, (1.) The duty enjoined them, 'obedience.' (2.) The extent of it, 'in all things,' in things religious and civil, in eager or harder pieces of service; nothing is excepted but what is sinful; and that is excepted in that clause, 'your masters according to the flesh;' that is, the outward man to distinguish them from the great Lord and master of the conscience; in which respect we are forbidden to be 'servants of men,' 1 Cor. vii. 23; and to 'call no man master,' Matth. xxiii. 8. Therefore Joseph is commended for refusing the solicitations of his mistress to uncleanness, and Saul's servants that they would not slay the Lord's priests. (3.) The manner of it; negatively, 'not with eye-service;' that is, when the master's eye is the measure of their work, busy before him; but if he turn his back, they slacken their hand; positively, 'in singleness of heart;' that is, faithfully, as under the eye of God, to whom they must give account.

The master's duty is laid down, Chap. iv. 1. Wherein (1.) We have the duty they owe to their servants. It is taken up in two general heads. [1.] They are to 'give them what is just;' that is, what they are obliged to give them by strict law or condition; give them what they owe them by strict justice. [2.] 'What is equal;' that is, what they are tied to by the law of charity and Christian meekness though not of strict justice. (2.) The reason enforcing it

is, because masters on earth 'have a Master in heaven,' to whom they must give an account, as of other things, so of how they do to their servants.

Before I come to the duties of servants and masters, two things are to be considered, viz. who are meant by servants, and who by masters.

1. Who are meant by servants. Not to speak of bond-servants or slaves, whose bodies are perpetually under the power of their masters, there being no such servitude among us; servants, who are mercenary, or hirelings, are of two sorts. (1.) Domestic servants, who live in their master's family. (2.) Extra-domestic servants, who, though they live not in their master's family, but by themselves, yet receive his wages, whether for a few days, as day-labourers, men or women; or for certain terms, as herds, hinds, &c. All these come under the name of servants, and owe a duty to their masters, according to the law of God.

2. Who are meant by masters. (1.) There is the principal master, the master of the family, who pays the wages. (2.) There are subordinate masters. Such are, [1.] The mistress of the family, Psal. cxxiii. 2. [2.] Fellow-servants, or others deputed by, and having power from the principal master to oversee others, Gen. xxiv. 2. These must be obeyed, as having the master's authority, unless it be known that they go cross to the will and interest of the principal master. And here I shall consider,

1. The duty servants owe to their masters.

2. The duty of masters with respect to their servants.

*First*, I am to shew the duty which servants owe to their masters. They owe,

1. Inward reverence towards them, and fear of them, 1 Pet. ii. 18. Mal. i. 6. They should have a hearty respect to the character of a master, with a conscientious regard to the superiority that God has given them over them, wherein they are, so far, to them in the place of God, Eph. vi. 5. 'as unto Christ.' They should fear to offend them, to displease them by doing or omitting any thing which they know will offend them, Eph. vi. 5.

2. Honour, Mal. i. 6. They ought outwardly to carry respectfully to them, whatever they be, if they be their masters, and that both in word and deed. An humbly submissive and respectful countenance and carriage towards a master, is an excellent ornament of a servant. Neither the badness of the master, nor his goodness and piety, leaves servants a latitude in this point. Though they be bad men, yet they are masters, 1 Tim. vi. 1. and if they be fellow-Christians, that takes not away the distance of stations, ver. 2.

3. Carefulness to maintain the credit of the family, not disclosing the secrets thereof, nor blazing abroad their infirmities. The king of Syria was troubled to think that any of his servants should be as spies upon him, 2 Kings vi. 11. And surely tale-bearing servants must be a great plague to a family. It is reckoned among the mischiefs of an evil time, when there is no trusting of any body that a man's enemies are those of his own house, Mich. vii. 6. It is a Judas-like treachery, when men or women are brought into a house to eat their bread and work their work, to go abroad among others and wound their reputation.

4. Standing to the master's allowance, both in things determined by condition, and not determined. Some things, are determined by condition, that the servants may require; and when the master allows that, though the servant may think it too little, he ought not to take more at his own hand. So when servants are allowed to keep so many beasts, and no more, it is their sin to keep more; though they may think it is no fault if they can get it kept secret, it does no great wrong to the master. But that is injustice to the master, and our sin before God, in whose sight it will be reckoned theft, Gen. xxx. 23. And in things not determined by condition, as the measure of diet and liberty, certainly the master's allowance in that is to be stood to. As to their diet, it is observed of the virtuous woman, Prov. xxxi. 15. 'She giveth meat to her household:' they do not take it at their own hand. The secret waste that some make in the houses of others for their bellies, is oft-times, I believe punished with hungry bellies when they come to their own. As for their liberty and time, it is carved out by the masters, not by the servants, ver. 15, 18. And for servants to take their master's time to employ for themselves, without their master's allowance, is injustice.

5. Meek and patient submission to the checks and rebukes of the master, not answering again, Tit. ii. 9. The ears of servants are bored to hear, and their tongues not filed to speak. It is very good reason, will ye say, when we are in a fault; though many will not take a word in that case, without giving the master as good as he brings. But if they have done no fault, they think they are not obliged to bear a rebuke. But the spirit of God does not teach so, 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, 20. 'Servants, be subject to your masters, with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently; this is acceptable with God.' It may be the master's sin to chide unreasonably, but it

is the servant's sin not to bear it meekly. Sarah dealt hardly with her maid, which was her sin; yet the angel will not allow Hagar to take her heels for it, but obliges her to turn and submit, Gen. xvi. 9

9. *Lastly*, Serving them conscientiously and honestly. If servants expect their wages, they owe their master service; and God will have them make conscience of their service. If we look to the word of God there is much that goes to this.

(1.) Servants must be obedient and pliable to the commands of the master in all lawful things, Tit. ii. 9. Though the service required may be painful and hard yet they ought not to refuse it. Thus Jacob served Laban, Gen. xxxi. 40, 41. without considering, that he was as good a man as his master was. They that put their necks under the yoke, should resolve to bear it.

(2.) Ye should follow the master's direction in the management of the work, not only doing what you are bidden, but as ye are bidden, Psal. cxxiii. 2. The master is the eye to direct, and the servant the hand to do what is directed. That the servant may calmly advise the master, there is no doubt; but they that will do nothing pleasantly, if they get not their own way of it, forget themselves and their duty.

(3.) Ye should do your business cheerfully, Col. iii. 23. Such a servant was Jacob to his uncle Laban, Gen. xxix. 20. Sullenness and going about business grudgingly, makes it unacceptable, though otherwise well done.

(4.) Ye should do your business singly. This a servant does when he does not consult his own ease and humour, but his master's true interest, truly aiming at the thriving of his affairs, carefully avoiding every thing that may tend to his loss; and therefore pursuing his interest when the master is absent as well as when present, aiming at his duty, as under the eye of God.

(5.) Ye should do your business faithfully. Faithfulness is a necessary qualification in a good servant, Matth. xxiv. 45. Servants having their master's substance among their hands, had need to be faithful, they having occasion to wrong him easily, if they have no respect to conscience. But the fear of God will make people faithful to men in little and in great things. They must not take of their master's goods to their own use, without his allowance, Tit. ii. 10. They must be faithful in their accounts, and not give up false accounts, as the unjust steward did, Luke xvi. 6; nor allege false commissions from their master, as Gehazi did, 2 Kings v. 22. Jacob's faithfulness was his comfort, that though he had his master's flocks among his hands, he was free of them, Gen. xxxi. 38.

6. Diligence and carefulness about their master's business, Prov.

xxii. ult. Negligence and carelessness is a piece of injustice, whereby servants defraud their masters, Prov. xviii. 9; for the loss may be all one to the master, whether it be procured wilfully or through carelessness.

7. *Lastly*, Readiness and quickness in the dispatch of business. A slothful lazy servant is most uneasy, Prov. x. 26. Such a one, quick and ready, was Abraham's servant, Gen. xxiv. 33. 56. It is an apostolical precept, Rom. xii. 11. 'Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit;' for servants should ply their work, and honestly employ their strength for their master's behoof, Gen. xxxi. 6.

SECONDLY, I come now to shew the duty of masters with respect to their servants, 1. In the choice of them; and, 2. When they have got them.

*First*, In the choice of servants, two things are to be noticed.

1. Christian masters should look to the conversation of those whom they take to be their servants, that they be piously inclined, as David did, Psal. ci. 6. lest they bring an Achan into their camp. A pious servant may bring a blessing to the master, as in Joseph's case. It is observable, that Potiphar saw that God was with Joseph, ere he entrusted him with his business, Gen. xxxix. 3, 4. When Jonah came to the shipmaster, he took him into his ship without asking questions, but ere all was done he was made to do it, Jonah i. 8.

2. They should look to their fitness and ability for their service, Psal. cxii. 5. So Laban had knowledge of what Jacob could do before he engaged with him; for he staid with him a month, Gen. xxix. 14, 15.

*Secondly*, When they have got them. There are two things in the general that they owe unto them.

1. That which is just. Just things must be done to all, and particularly to those that are under us. God takes special notice of injustice done by superiors to inferiors, who cannot so well get themselves righted. And by the law of strict justice masters are,

(1.) To allow their servants sufficient maintenance, whether within or without the house, Prov. xxvii. 27. If masters get their work, it is just they should allow them food convenient, whereby they may be fitted for their work. The mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn was not to be muzzled; for our sakes doubtless God saith it, that those who work should eat sufficiently.

(2.) To give them payment of their wages, the keeping back whereof is a great oppression and crying sin, Jam. v. 4. Masters should beware of all fraud and deceit in this. It stands as a blot on Laban's memory, that he did not keep conditions with Jacob, but

changed his wages ten times, Gen. xxxi. 41. for which he might make some plausible pretence as well as others. To pay them what is insufficient, putting them off with any thing that may make up account, is unjust, Amos viii. 6. Nay, the keeping it up, and delaying to pay them, when it is in the power of our hand, is contrary to justice, Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.

(3.) They should require no more of them than they are able to do. Servants should not be kept idle, Prov. xxix. 21; neither should they be rigorously pressed above their power, but allowed convenient time for rest and refreshment, Lev. xxv. 43. It is just not only because they are fellow-creatures, but fellow Christians.

(4.) Oversight and direction in what they should do, Prov. xxxi. 27. Thus Boaz is found in the field with his reapers. It is very unjust to find fault with what servants do, while men will not be at pains to tell them how they would have their business done.

2. They owe them that which is equal by the law of Christian meekness and charity. Now, thus they owe unto them these things.

(1.) Masters ought to rule their servants gently and meekly, as being of the same blood with themselves, Eph. vi. 9. A proud and imperious carriage does not become Christianity. They should moderate or relax threatening, not do all with them with boasting and terror, but by meekness draw them on.

(2.) They should be ready to hear them in what they have to say. It is the character of a Nabal, that 'he was such a son of Belial, that a man could not speak to him,' 1 Sam. xxv. 17. Job declares himself to have been of another temper, Job xxxi. 13. The advice of a servant modestly proposed, is not to be slighted, 2 Kings v. 13. 14. and if there be any thing they have to complain of, masters should hearken thereto, and do them right, as they would have God to hearken to themselves.

(3.) They should be wary of hearkening to ill tales concerning them, Prov. xxix. 12. An easiness to believe every tale makes an uneasy life, especially ill tales concerning those in whom people are particularly concerned.

(4.) They ought to take care of them when they are sick, especially when they have none other to care for them. It is highly reasonable that they should be cared for in their sickness by those in whose service they have spent their strength, Matth. viii. 6. It is noted as a piece of the cruelty of an Amalekite, that he left his servant when sickness overtook him, 1 Sam. xxx. 13.

(5.) They should encourage and shew special favour, even by letting something beyond condition fall to faithful and diligent servants. This is very equal; reason, interest, and religion, call for

it, Prov. xiv. ult. For a faithful servant is one of the best of friends.

(6.) *Lastly*, They should be concerned for the good of the souls of their servants. For in this case masters are instead of parents to them. They should instruct them in the principles of religion, and labour to train them up in the ways of godliness, setting them on and stirring them up to duty, Gen. xviii. 19. They should daily pray with them and for them, by keeping up religious duties in their family, Jer. x. 25. And they should labour to bring them to the public ordinances, Josh. xxiv. 15. restrain them by their authority from scandalous and sinful words or deeds, as from profaning the Sabbath, &c. and reprove them for their sins against God, as well as faults against themselves; and if they will not refrain they ought to turn them out of their family, Psal. ci. 7.

*Use 1.* This may serve to convince and humble both masters and servants.

*Use.* I exhort servants to be dutiful to their masters. For motives, consider,

1. That in your service ye have two masters, one on earth, and another in heaven, Col. iii. 23. Your master on earth says, Do this so or so; and your Master in heaven says, 'Whatsoever he saith unto you do it,' John ii. 5. And here know, (1.) That your Master in heaven has given you his orders how ye must carry in service to men, as well as in praying, &c. to himself. (2.) He sees how ye obey these orders. His eye is always on you. (3.) He will call you to an account how ye obey these. (4.) He will account the service faithfully done, service to himself; and, on the other hand, undutifulness to men, undutifulness to himself.

2. God himself will be your paymaster, according as ye carry yourselves in your station. (1.) God will reward dutiful servants. There is a temporal reward that God ordinarily bestows on such, Prov. xvii. 2. 'A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.' And that is what Providence lays to the hands of honest servants, that are not sincere Christians. But true Christian servants shall get the reward of the heavenly inheritance, Col. iii. 24. (2.) God will reward undutiful servants too, ver. 25. Ordinarily God writes his indignation against their undutifulness in their lot in the world; but if they repent not, the quarrel is pursued to another world. That is a sad word, Luke xvi. 11. 'If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?'

Let masters be dutiful to their servants according to the will of God. For motives, consider,

1. Ye are as fathers to them. The fifth command supposeth this; and so the scripture elsewhere teacheth, 2 Kings v. 13. Ye are civil fathers, and instead of natural fathers to them. They are committed to your charge, as under your roof and power. God would have all superiors to put on fatherly bowels towards their inferiors, as he who is supreme Lord calls himself 'Our father which is in heaven.' If masters would thus look on themselves, it would engage them to their duty towards their servants. When God brings a servant into a house, especially those of the younger sort, either wanting parents, or leaving them to serve you, he says, as John xix. 26, 27. 'Man, behold thy son;' and to the servant, 'Behold thy father.'

2. Ye have a master which is over you and your servants too, to whom ye must give account, Col. iv. 1. And there is no respect of persons with him. He has given a law to the master as well as to the servant; and in judging them he will not favour the master more than the servant. Pride makes men imperious and oppressive. Here is a sovereign remedy to curb it. Let us remember that we have a Master in heaven, Job xxxi. 13, 14. And so much for family-relations.

I come now to consider the relation betwixt ecclesiastical fathers and their children. These fathers are preaching and ruling elders. Here I shall consider, 1. The duties of ministers and people; and, 2. Those of ruling elders and people.

FIRST, I shall shew the duties of ministers and people.

*First*, I shall shew the duty people owe to their ministers.

1. They owe them singular reverence, and that because of that honourable station wherein Christ has placed them, sending them to deal with sinners in his own stead, 1 Cor. iv. 1. 2 Cor. v. 20. This founds that debt of reverence, Rom. x. 15. and should be expressed in word and deed. They are the stars whom Christ holds in his right hand; and though they shine not so clear as ye would wish, people would beware of treading them under foot, seeing Christ holds them in his right hand, Rev. i. 20. compare chap. ii. 4, 14, 20, &c.

2. Endeared love to them for their work's sake, 1 Thess. v. 13. Gal. iv. 14, 15. The gospel is the greatest benefit that men can partake of; and it is very natural to love those who are the instruments by whom the Lord conveys great benefits to us. And as ministers must lay their account with the hatred of those that hate the light, so those that get good of ordinances will as naturally love them as the child does the father and mother. But as there are unnatural children in the family, who little regard the father that be-

gat them, or the mother that bare them; so it is not to be wondered that there are unnatural children in the church, that reject those by whose means they have got any acquaintance with religion that they have, and cast reproaches on the breasts of ordinances, in sucking which they grow up.

3. Diligent attendance on ordinances of all sorts dispensed by them, as word, sacraments, catechising, &c. Heb. x. 25. Luke x. 16. In vain do these stars shine, if there be none to receive their light. The same word that obliges ministers to dispense ordinances, must needs oblige people to attend them; and that even though they may lie at a considerable distance from them, 2 Kings iv. 22, 23. The woman there mentioned had sixteen miles to go to the man of God.

4. Submission to them in things pertaining to their office, Heb. xiii. 17. submitting to discipline exercised by them in the name of Christ; to their instructions, cordially receiving them from the word, to their reproofs, whether public or private; to their exhortations and charges, wherein they hold forth to you the will of God, ib. Jam. i. 21. They who do otherwise, sin against their own souls, as well as discourage ministers by their untractableness, and do but lay up witnesses against themselves, to be led against them at the great day. It is not the hearers of the word, but the doers thereof, that are justified. It will be no advantage to you to have heard, but never complied.

5. Praying for them, 1 Thess. v. 25. The work in which they are engaged is a great work. Who is sufficient for it? They have need of prayers for them. Your own interest may engage you to it. They may do their work, but the success of it must be fetched from heaven by prayer, 1 Cor. x. 4. We have the sword, but how shall we get the arm? We may compass Jericho, and give the shout; but it is the power of God that must make the walls to fall. Like Gideon's three hundred men, we may bear the lamps in our empty pitchers, blow with the trumpet, and the earthen pitchers may be broken in the cause, but God only can do the work, Judges vii.

6. People should be very tender of the reputation of ministers; it being a tender thing, so much interwoven with the success of the gospel. The Spirit of God, seeing that the devil would be very ready to mark at their reputation in a special manner, by a wicked world and false brethren, has set a double hedge about it, 1 Tim. v. 19. 'Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.' So that ye ought not only to slander them, but to be loath to receive those slanders vented by others against them, believing nothing therein without proof.

7. *Lastly*, Maintenance. This by divine right is due from people to their ministers, 1 Cor. ix. 14.

*Secondly*, I shall shew the duty of ministers to their people,

1. They owe tender love to the souls of their people.—They should be full of bowels towards them, 1 Thess. ii. 7, 8. which should appear in their preaching, and all parts of their work.

2. Diligent and faithful dispensing of all gospel-ordinances to them, word, sacraments, &c. It is a labour, and they must take it so, willing to spend and be spent in the service of their Lord, and of precious souls. And indeed they are as lighted candles, which while they shine waste, 2 Tim. iv. 2; 1 Thess. ii. 3, 4.

3. Behaving so as they may be examples of holiness and tenderness, Tit. ii. 7. for precept, without example, will have little influence.

4. Watching over their flocks, that being ready to be acquainted with their state and case, they may be in capacity to instruct, comfort, and admonish them, &c. as the case requires, Heb. xiii. 7.

5. *Lastly*, Praying for them, Eph. i. 15, 16.

SECONDLY, I come to shew the duties of ruling elders and the people over whom they are appointed overseers. And as we are this day to ordain some to that office, I shall discourse of this subject a little more fully than I would otherwise have done in a catechetical exercise. I propose to discourse on this occasion, from that text,

1 TIM. v. 17.—*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*

THE church is the kingdom of Christ, and the holy scriptures are the book of the manner of the kingdom. There the institution of church officers, their work, and the duties owing them by others, are only to be found. And whatever officers of the church men pretend to be, if their office be not found there, they have no due call to their work, but are usurpers and intruders.

In the words read, the apostle gives us the work assigned by Jesus Christ to elders of the church, and what is due for it unto them from the church: *Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour.* Here he distinguishes two sorts of elders of the church.

1. Ruling elders. The word *elder* originally is a name of age; but here, and in many other places of scripture, it is evident, that it is the name of an office, being the name of ruling church-officers, because usually taken out of the elder sort, or that, though of the

younger, yet they ought to be men of gravity and authority. Here consider,

(1.) The work of these elders, from whence their designation is taken. It is *to rule*, and govern the church, as those who are set over it by the Lord. For the Lord has not left his church in a state of anarchy and confusion, but appointed some to rule, and others to be ruled.

(2.) How they ought to manage their work, *well*; *i. e.* rightly, worthily, according to the rules prescribed them by Christ, the chief bishop.

(3.) What is due from the church to those who so manage it *double, i. e.* abundant *honour*. This honour implies two things, *viz.*

(1.) Maintenance. This is evident from ver. 18. (2.) Esteem and reputation, Phil. ii. 29.

Episcopalians, as they have given us the prelate, an officer whom Christ never appointed, so they rob us of the ruling elder, which the text so plainly discovers to be a church-officer of divine institution. To evite the force of which, they turn this elder into various shapes; but in vain. For by the elders that rule well, cannot be understood superannuated ministers, as some say; for it is evident that the preaching elder is to have more honour than this elder. But it is shocking to the common sense of the people of God, to honour and esteem a young laborious minister more than an old one, who has spent his strength in the work. Nor by them are to be understood magistrates as others say; for at this time they were not so much as members of the church. Nor are deacons meant hereby, as others say; for their work is not to rule the church, but to serve tables, Acts vi. 2. Nor are we to understand by them the fixed pastors of flocks, in opposition to those that travelled up and down to visit and confirm the churches, whom they understand by those that labour, namely, to weariness in the last part of the verse. For the work of the fixed pastor is such a labour too, 1 Thess. v. 12. Nor yet such as were unfit for preaching yet administered the sacraments, prayed with the church, and privately admonished the unruly. But such an officer, I am sure, is unknown to the Bible. It remains, then, that they are those whom we call ruling elders, whose work is, as in the text, to govern the church, but not to preach the word; and therefore they are distinguished from preaching elders, as is plain from the particle *especially*; as Phil. iv. 24. 'All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household.' Chiefly is the same word in the Greek that is here rendered especially; and it plainly implies, that there were some saints at Rome not of Cæsar's household. So here are described some elders that rule well, and do not labour in word and doctrine.

2. Preaching elders: Their work is to preach the gospel; to labour in the word and doctrine. To them in a special manner, by the text, *double honour* is due, *i. e.* maintenance and respect, forasmuch as their office is greater and more honourable, not only in ruling the church, as the others do, but preaching the gospel besides. Where, by the by we may see, that if Paul's doctrine had place in the world, the preaching parish-minister would have more honour than the non-preaching bishop, who contents himself with ruling but puts not his shoulders to the labour in the word and doctrine. Maintenance, we see, is due to both sort of elders, by divine right. But it is no sin for either to quit their right in certain circumstances. And with us the ruling elders are allowed no maintenance, but the preaching elders are. The reason of this is the poverty of the church that cannot bear it; and that our ruling elders are not taken off their secular employments, as ministers are.

The doctrine deducible from the text is,

Doct. 'Ruling elders rightly discharging their duty, are worthy of abundant honour.'

Having sufficiently cleared the divine institution of ruling elders from the text, which is clear also from Rom. xii. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 28. I shall, in prosecution of the doctrine, shew,

- I. What is the duty of these officers.
- II. What it is to discharge the duties of that office well.
- III. What is the honour that people owe to their ruling elders.
- IV. Apply.

I. I am to shew what is the duty of these officers.

The apostle tells us in the general, that their work as ruling elders is to rule the church. The keys of jurisdiction and government are not given to one, but to the unity of church-officers acting together; so, together with the pastor, they are to rule the congregation. God setting a minister in a congregation, says to him, It is not meet the man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him.—And a society of diligent and faithful elders are a meet help indeed. And without that the weight of a congregation is too heavy for the shoulders of one, as Exod. xviii. 18. But more particularly,

1. They are to be careful overseers of the manners of the people. Hence the apostle says to the elders of Ephesus, Acts xx. 28. 'Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God.' And as ministers are a mouth to the church, so they are to be instead of eyes. And therefore it is necessary, for the good of a congregation, that there be of them in every corner. For they are

truly watchmen, whom the Holy Ghost has set over the flock, as well as ministers are. And they ought to acquaint themselves with the way of the people, that so they may encourage those that do well, and warn those that do evil. And unless elders do so, and communicate their help in that matter to the pastor, he may be long in a congregation, and yet be a stranger to many under his charge; and so ministerial visitations may be very useless.

2. Though they are not to preach the word, yet they are to apply the word privately to people by virtue of their office. They are to have a mouth to speak, as well as eyes to take heed to the flock of God, 1 Tim. iii. 2.—‘Apt to teach.’ There is a word pat to this purpose, 1 Thess. v. 12.—‘Are over you, and admonish you.’ It is the same word in our text. The word *admonish* there used, is far from expressing the full meaning of the word the Holy Ghost useth here, used also, Eph. vi. 4. It properly signifies ‘to put into the mind.’ And so it implies a fivefold duty.

(1.) Exciting people to their duty. Observing negligence, they ought to stir up people to their duty; e. g. those that neglect family-prayer, secret prayer, attending regularly on ordinances, or are negligent of their soul’s state any way, they should drop a word to stir them up.

(2.) Rebuking sin. Reproofs of wisdom are as necessary for church-members as salt is to keep meat from corrupting. It is necessary to discourage sin and wickedness in the church, which should be a holy society. And there wants not occasion for this, in swearing, lying, profaning the Sabbath, drunkenness, strife, variance, and whatsoever is contrary to the rules of the gospel.

(3.) Warning such as they see in hazard of sin; to tell them of the snare, their hazard and danger, and so to prevent people’s falling in to it, as far as lies in their power. Sometimes people may be discerned staggering, and a word then duly put into their mind may, by the blessing of God, keep them from falling.

(4.) Comforting those that are cast down, and strengthening the weak. It was the practice of holy Job, chap. iv. 4. ‘Thy words have upheld him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.’ And church-rulers ought always to have a special eye upon those that are the weak and distressed in Christ’s flock, to labour to support them in the Lord.

(5.) Instructing and informing them privately. And indeed rule without instruction is dumb, and not agreeable to the way of our Lord’s governing his house; and excitations, rebukes, &c. can never be rightly managed without information of the mind. For if we would gain our end in dealing with people, we must not think it

enough to tell them their duty or their sin, but by reasoning with them to convince their consciences.

These things are the duty of all church-members, however little it is laid to heart. Only what others are bound to by the common band of Christianity, we are bound to by our office, Lev. xix. 17: 1 Thess. v. 14.

3. They are to visit the sick, and should be sent for, for that end, James v. 14, 15. But otherwise discretion and christian love may engage them to go even when they are not sent for. They ought to pray with them and for them. And, by the same reason, they are to counsel, instruct, and comfort them, according to the grace bestowed on them, and as they see the party's case does require. This would be a means to render the office more esteemed than, alas! it is with many. And it needs not hinder the pastor's visits.

4. They are to concur with the pastor in the exercise of discipline, according to the word of God, and the constitutions of the church agreeable thereto. For ministers and elders make up that church, having the power of censures, Matth. xviii. 17. And thus they are to delate scandalous persons to the judicatory, either when their private admonitions will not do, or where the offence is in its own nature public, and cannot be passed with private admonition. And in the managing of matters in the judicatory, they are not only to give their opinion and vote according to their light, but to reason the matter calmly, for the finding out of the best expedient. Admission to, and debarring from, the sacrament of the Lord's supper, is a weighty piece of this work, belonging to the kirk-session, wherein all tenderness, caution, and wisdom should be used, to separate as far as we can betwixt the precious and the vile, that holy things be not cast to dogs.

As for the collecting and distributing of the church's money, it is so far from being the main work of ruling elders, that it is no part of their work as elders at all, but belongs to the deacons, which is an inferior office. But the superior offices of the church including the inferior ones, the elders may do it, and must do it, where there are not deacons.

II. I come now to show, what it is to discharge the duties of that office well.

1. It is to discharge it faithfully, 1 Cor. iv. 2. It is a great trust the master puts us in, and we must act in it with that faithfulness to our own souls, and to the souls of those who are under our charge, as our conscience may not have wherewith to reproach us.

2. Diligently, Rom. xii. 8. The slothful servant that closeth his eyes, and gives up his watch, will never be approved of God. Be diligent in your duty, and it will not want its reward.

3. Zealously, Psal. lxxix. 9. Zeal for the master's honour, and advancing the kingdom of Christ in real holiness, and suppressing the devil's kingdom in sin and wickedness, in the congregation, and otherwise as we have access, is well becoming church-officers especially.

4. Prudently, Matth. xxiv. 45. Church-officers had need to join the wisdom of the serpent with the simplicity of the dove. And they will find it necessary many a time to sweeten with prudent management the bitter pills they must give, Gal. vi. 1.

III. I proceed to shew, what is that honour that people owe to their ruling elders.

1. They ought to esteem and respect them for their work's sake, 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Their work is honourable, their Master whom they serve in that work is great, and the advantage of their work redounds to the church. People's esteem of them is but a necessary encouragement to them in the work they have undertaken, without any prospect of worldly advantage. And if people esteemed the Lord's work, they would even esteem the workers too.

2. Obedience and submission to them in their doing the work of their office, Heb. xiii. 17. If it be their duty to watch over you, excite and admonish you, &c. ye ought not to account them meddling in what belongs not to them, when they inquire into your way. Ye ought to fall in with the duties they excite you to; meekly to receive their rebukes, admonitions, and warnings; honourably to receive their consolations, as those that have a commission from the Lord; and heartily to receive their good admonition and counsel; and subjecting yourselves as Christ's subjects to the discipline of his house.

3. They ought to pray to God for them, 1 Thess. v. 15. It is a great work we have in hand, and your interest is concerned in our right discharge of it; which therefore should make you to give us a share in your prayers.

4. Shutting your ears against reproaches cast on them, and being backward to receive ill reports of them, staving them off, unless there be sufficient evidence, 1 Tim. v. 19. Church-officers are those whom Satan mainly aims to discredit, and therefore stirs up rotten-hearted hypocrites, false brethren, and a profane generation, to cast reproach upon them, that so their work may be marred in their hands, religion despised, and sinners hardened.

*Use 1.* As to you that are already in this honourable office, and you that are now to be ordained to it, I exhort you to labour rightly to discharge your duty. To press this exhortation, I offer the following motives.

*Mot.* 1. Consider it is a sacred office in the house of God, to which God has called you; and therefore let us together take that exhortation, Acts xx. 23. 'Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.' The office is honourable in itself, however the world may esteem it. David though a king, would have thought it no disparagement to him, when he said, 'A day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness,' Psal. lxxxiv. 10. But it has work annexed to it; and being sacred, it is not to play with. Labour to approve yourselves to your Lord and Master.

*Mot.* 2. Ye have thereby a fair occasion to be serviceable to God and to advance Christ's kingdom, and suppress that of the devil, in the congregation. And O what should we not do to do good to souls? Jam. v. 20. 'Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' I think that now, of a considerable time, I and my brethren of the eldership might have said, 'The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall,' Neh. iv. 10; and it has gone near to the sinking of some of our spirits. But now that God has inclined the hearts of so many to come over and help us; if we take courage in our Master's work, to ply it faithfully, diligently, zealously, and prudently, and the Lord bless us with unity among ourselves, and real zeal for his honour, to put to our shoulders jointly to the work, we may hope, by the blessing of God, to see a more promising face on this congregation, sin more discouraged, and piety more increased.

*Mot.* ult. You and I must give an account to our great Master, how we have carried ourselves in this work, Heb. xiii. 17. If we be faithful we shall not want our reward from the chief Shepherd, who will give us a crown of life. If we be unfaithful, woe will be unto us for betraying our trust.

I give you a few advices.

1. Remember always that it is God whom ye have to do with. This will make you little to regard men's feud or favour, if ye do your work agreeable to God's will.

2. Study to act in dependence on the Lord; for he sends none a-warfare on his own charges. Eye his promised assistance, when ye set about your work.

3. Labour to believe, that the way of uprightness and faithfulness is the sure way. 'When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh

even his enemies to be at peace with him,' Prov. xvi. 7. 'He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth him,' Prov. xxviii. 23. Let men's corruptions say what they will, their consciences will speak in favour of faithful dealing.

4. Watch over your own persons, that in your personal walk ye be blameless and exemplary, 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 3. If ye be untender in your walk, ye will do more hurt than ye can do good. Being honoured to be governors in the house of a holy God, ye must be holy as the master is holy; tender in your words, circumspect in your actions, and therefore watchful over your hearts.

5. Watch over your families. Every one that has a family is obliged to this, and you in a special manner, 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5. The sinful practices of those of your family will reflect a peculiar dishonour on you, and by you on your Lord and Master. Therefore your families should be a church wherein God is to be duly worshipped morning and evening; and good discipline kept up by admonition, reproof, and watchfulness.

6. Ye must watch over one another, each over his fellow-elders, knowing, that any thing scandalous in one of the society reflects a dishonour on the whole, and by them on the Lord himself. And if ye be not careful on that side, there will be little good of your watching over the flock. And therefore strict discipline among yourselves is absolutely necessary.

USE II. As to you the people, I would exhort you to make conscience of your duty towards your officers. Alas! for the little conscience that is made of that among us. I am sure we may find matter of mourning this day in that matter.

Instead of honouring them, many despise and pour contempt on them, more than otherwise they would do; thus vilely treating their sacred office.

Instead of submission and obedience, what refractoriness and spurning of discipline for scandalous offences! Some cannot endure to be told of their faults; but if we admonish or reprove them, even privately, they are made worse instead of better; and rather than take a reproof, they will give up with ordinances.

Instead of being careful of their reputation, some will bawl out upon them, and abuse them on every occasion. And there is nothing with many more readily received, than the vomit of malicious and spiteful spirits against ministers and elders, which is greedily licked up, 1 Cor. iv. 13.

Hence it is, that men's hands are weakened, and they are discouraged in their work, while they see the people of that temper, Hos. iv. 4. And hence it is, that it is so very hard to get men to under-

take the office of elders; for they see that if they engage therein, they must be the very butt of the malice and spite of bitter spirits; and that if they will be faithful, they engage themselves in a fighting life, and that the stream will go against them. But allow me to put you in mind of three things.

1. Whose part you act in that matter. It is the part of Satan against these men and yourselves too. Can you fall upon a more expedite way to advance the kingdom of the devil in the congregation, than to discourage and weaken the hands of those that are set over you in the Lord? Is there a fairer way to rout the army, than to make their leaders useless?

2. Whose servants they are. They are clothed with a commission from the King of the church; and the contempt poured on them reaches to their Master; 'He that despiseth you (says he), despiseth me,' Luke x. 16. Will the laws of the land avenge the affronts done to a petty officer, who comes to execute the sentence of a civil court? did David severely avenge on the Ammonites the maltreating of his servants, whom he sent on a congratulatory message to them as ye find in 2 Sam. x. ? and will not the Lord Jesus resent in his wrath the maltreatment of those that are clothed with his commission?

3. *Lastly*, Are ye not the professed subjects of the kingdom of Christ? Why then will ye not submit yourselves to the laws of his house? Why will ye not be obedient in the Lord to those whom he sets over you, complying with their exhortations, admonitions, and rebukes? Luke xix. 27. Why do not ye strengthen their hands in the Lord's work? If ye have any interest in Zion's King, it is the work of our common Lord, which you are obliged to in a private way, as well as they by virtue of their office; and therefore ye are bound to co-operate with them in what serves to promote the interest of that King, whose servants ye profess to be.

I proceed now to consider the relation between political fathers and their children; that is, magistrates and subjects.

*First*, I shall shew the duty of subjects to magistrates.

1. They owe them singular respect and honour, 1 Pet. ii. 17. They are to be honoured by us in our hearts, thinking of and esteeming them reverently and carrying a reverent fear and awe of them within our breasts, 1 Sam. xxvi. 16, 17. Prov. xxiv. 21. And this is to be expressed in a respectable behaviour towards them in word and deed.

The grounds of this are specially two. (1.) The ordinance of God, whereby they are set above us in the way of power and authority, Rom. xiii: and subjects ought to walk in a conscientious re-

gard to the superiority that God has given their rulers over them. (2.) The image of God that shines in their dominion and eminency above their subjects, Psal. lxxxii. 6. They are God's vicegerents on earth, whose office bears a representation of God's dominion.

2. Subjects owe them the charity to construct the best of their actions that they will bear, and to beware of passing a rash judgment of their administrations. Notable is the instance of it in David, 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 'Now therefore, I pray thee, let my Lord the king hear the words of his servant: if the Lord have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go serve other gods.' The liberty that many take in speaking of magistrates, and wresting their actions still to the worst side, is what proceeds not from the spirit of the gospel, but is contrary to the word, an effect of their own pride and presumption, Exod. xxii. 28. Eccl. x. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude, 8. This is also highly reasonable, and hath these grounds. (1.) That candour and charity we owe to all men, but in a special manner to our superiors, requires it, 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7. (2.) Our unacquaintedness with the springs of public business, secrets of government, and reasons of state, Prov. xxv. 3. And natural modesty, as well as religion, teaches men not to answer a matter before they hear it, Prov. xviii. 13. This dutiful children will allow to their parents, wives to their husbands, servants to their masters, and inferiors to their superiors; and why should not magistrates have it too?

3. Subjection, loyalty, and obedience to their just laws and commands. It is bad religion where loyalty to the magistrate must stand in place of all religion towards God, but it is also bad religion where people's pretended religion towards God justles out their loyalty to the magistrate, Rom. xiii. 5. This duty Papists exempt churchmen from; and no wonder, for it is a part of the character of Antichrist, 2 Thess. ii. 4; but the scripture subjects ministers to the magistrates, as having souls as well as others, Rom. xiii. 1. 'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.'

4. The payment of their tribute, Rom. xiii. 6, 7. This is a debt of thankfulness, and justice too, for the benefits of government which the subjects enjoy, without which the government cannot be supported, but all would go into confusion.

5. Defending them in danger, each one according to his station, 2 Sam. xviii. 3. 1 Sam. xxvi. 15.

6. *Lastly*, Prayer to God for them; supplications for supply of wants, prayers for good things to them, intercessions for turning

away of evil from them, and thanksgivings for mercies bestowed on them, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. There is a reason for it too; for the welfare of subjects is wrapt up in theirs, *ib.* Much depends on their management, God's honour, our own good; and their high place has many dangers, difficulties, snares, and temptations.

USE. Let me therefore exhort you in the words of the apostle, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. 'Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.' Let us honour and dutifully subject ourselves, according to the will of God, to our gracious Sovereign King George, our rightful and lawful King by virtue of the laws of Scotland, pointed at in the claim of right, and upon which was founded the late happy Revolution. Let us adore that bountiful providence, by which his grandfather [Frederick Elector Palatine of the Rhine], having lost one kingdom [that of Bohemia], besides his private estate, in the cause of the Protestant religion, three kingdoms are now conferred on the grandson. Let us thank our God, who did so seasonably bring him to the throne, and that in peace, to the surprise of all parties, so as we were like men that dreamed. Let us suppose that the Popish Pretender had effectuated his purpose, what a case had we been in this day! Yet rejoice with trembling; it is hard to say that Heaven and these sinful nations are become friends yet. Let us be dutiful to subordinate magistrates under him, and honour those whom God has honoured by their office, saying to them, *Ye are gods.* Let us not stumble at heathens, Jacobites, and malignants, against our holy religion, by contempt of the magistrate. We read the Bible, where subjection is commanded to subjects oft and again, even to magistrates that were enemies to Christianity. We are the followers of that Jesus who paid his tribute, and taught the people of the Jews, who were more solemnly covenanted with God, and more strictly bound up in the choice of their kings, than any nation under heaven, yet not to deny their tribute to Cæsar, the Heathen Roman emperor, who then was their chief magistrate, Matth. xxii. 19,—21.

*Secondly*, I shall shew the duty of magistrates to their subjects, which I shall only name.

1. They ought to establish good laws among their subjects, and to see them duly executed, Zech. viii. 16. 2 Chron. xix. 5, 6, 7.

2. To govern them with wisdom, justice, and clemency, 2 Chron. i. 10.

3. To punish evil-doers, and encourage them that do well, Rom. xiii. 3.

4. To protect them, and provide for their common safety, 1 Tim. ii. 2; to see to their prosperity, and not to oppress them, Prov. xxviii. 16.

5. *Lastly*, They ought to promote true religion, and advance the interest of Christ's kingdom among their subjects, Isa. xlix. 23. Some will have the magistrate to be the fountain of church-power. Others leave him nothing to do in religion but to defend the church, and execute her acts. Thus go the Papists. Truth goes the middle way, allowing the magistrate a cumulative, though not a primitive, power in church-matters; and though he ought not to exercise a spiritual function, yet he can command and obligé ministers and other church-officers to do their duty, authoritatively call them to do it. And this is no more to usurp church-power, than a minister's charging magistrates from the word, is to usurp civil power. See Confession of Faith.

There are other relations that import a mere preference; as, betwixt the aged and the younger, the weaker in gifts and the stronger, and between equals.

*First*, As to the relation betwixt the aged and the younger,

1. I shall consider very briefly the duties of the younger to the aged, for these are fathers and mothers in scripture-language, 1 Tim. v. 1.

(1.) They ought to submit to them, so as to follow their wise advice, and not to stand upon points with them, but be ready to yield to them, where lawfully it may be done, 1 Pet. v. 5.

(2.) They ought to honour them, and carry respectfully to them. The Ancient of days, commands us to honour old age, Lev. xix. 32.

2. The aged ought, (1.) To be ready to profit the younger sort by their good advice, to tutor them, as Eli did young Samuel, 1 Sam. iii. 9. (2.) To give them the example of a virtuous and holy life, Tit. ii. 2.

*Secondly*, The duties of the weaker in gifts to the stronger are,

(1.) To reverence and respect them for the gifts of God in them, Gen. xlv. 8. (2.) To be willing and ready to learn of them. (3.) To beware of judging harshly of them in things wherein they have a greater liberty than they, Rev. xiv. 3.

The duties of the stronger in gifts are, (1.) To communicate cheerfully to them what God has given them, and so to help them by their gifts. (2.) To encourage them, and bear with their infirmities, Rom. xv. 1.

*Lastly*, The duties of equals are, (1.) To regard the dignity and worth of each other, and carry respectfully to them, 1 Pet. ii. 17. (2.) To carry modestly towards one another, preferring in honour

each other, Rom. xii. 10. (3.) To endeavour after and rejoice in one another's welfare as their own, ver. 15, 16.

II. I proceed now to shew, what is forbidden in the fifth commandment. According to our Catechism, it forbids 'the neglecting of, or doing any thing against the honour and duty which belongeth to every one in their several places and relations.

This question is a field as large, or rather larger than the former, in so far as to one duty several sins are opposed: but fearing that ye cannot bear enlargement, having heard so much already on these relations, I shall contract my discourse on this into a very narrow compass.

This command is broken, (1.) By neglect of the duties we owe to our relations, which ye have heard. (2.) By doing any thing against and contrary to these duties.

*First*, Husbands and wives break this command, and sin against one another, many ways. As particularly,

1. Against that tender conjugal love they owe to one another, is all unkindness, whereby, laying aside, and divesting themselves of natural affection, they are surly to, careless of, and unconcerned for their relatives, or their comfort. Of this sort are their bitter speeches, reproaching and reviling one another. That selfishness, whereby they are at no pains to please one another in lawful things, and void of sympathy in one another's joys and griefs; unreasonable suspicions and jealousies, whatever be done to please them; blazing abroad their own shame, in speaking to the discredit of their relatives; contempt of and despising one another. All these are quite opposite to conjugal love.

2. Against that faithfulness they owe to one another, in respect of their bodies, is infidelity in the gross breach of the marriage-contract, deserting and leaving one another, and defrauding one another. In respect of their means, is all idleness, mismanagement, and wastery; and in respect of their souls, is unconcernedness about them, being at no pains to instruct, admonish, and watch over one another; and if at any time they tell them of their faults, it is to their reproach, being before others, or in their passion, so that it can do no good. And much more when they become snares and hinderances to one another, instead of meet helps, leading and provoking their relatives to sin against God, and ruin their own souls.

Wives particularly sin against their husbands, by casting off all reverence to them, carrying themselves imperiously towards them, being disobedient, wilful, and untractable, and, like Vashti, Esth. i. 10, 11, 12. who would not come to the king, when sent for by him, will not go an inch by their own will to please them. It is

not their honour to command, whose province God has made it to obey, Ezek. xvi. 30. Eph. v. ult.

Husbands sin against their wives in dealing untenderly with them, tyrannizing and domineering over them in a masterful way, not protecting them from the insults of others, nor providing for them; giving them that are their wives no trust, but making them, like Nabal, accountable to the utmost farthing; nor encouraging and praising them when they do well; most of all in beating them, a thing in use only with furions or mad men, Eph. v. 25, 29.

*Secondly,* As to parents and children:

1. Children sin against their parents by disobedience to them. Such are in the midst of the black roll, Rom. i. 30. and are in a near way to ruin, Prov. xxx. 17. So do they by all irreverence to them, and slighting and dishonouring them in word and deed, Deut. xxvii. 16. and much more by cursing them, Exod. xxi. 17. Many, again, sin against God and their parents, being unteachable, and will not hearken to their instruction, Prov. v. 7. they will not take a sharp word from them, but their hearts rise against them and it too, Prov. xiii. 18. and others, though they will bear with words, yet they are stubborn, and will not submit to correction, Deut. xxi. 18, 19. And what will we say of those that, like cursed Ham, make a jest of their parents' infirmities, waste their substance, and prove unnatural and hard-hearted to them when they are old and in distress? Prov. xix. 26. Finally, they sin by disposing of themselves to callings, or in marriage, without consent of their parents, Gen. xxvi. 34, 35.

2. Parents sin against their children many ways, while they are not concerned for them while infants; but many are careless as to the bringing up of their children to some honest employment, but, by encouraging them in idleness, prove a snare to them. Most men, if they bring their children to be able to shift for a livelihood to themselves, think they have done enough, while they have not been at pains to bring them up for God. Many will learn them to work that will not learn them to read, pray, &c. What shall we say of those that will learn them to ban, swear, lie, pick, and steal, and encourage them in such things? Some kill their children by coddling them; they indulge them fondly to their ruin. And how indiscreetly will parents dote on one child by another, where it is not grace but mere fancy, that makes the difference? Gen. xxv. 28. Some, on the other hand, are woefully harsh to their children, and break their spirits, by holding them so short by the head that they are driven to extremities, using them as drudges rather than as children, immoderately beating them when they are in a fault, and

inveighing against them with bitter words, Col. iii. 21. indiscreet and untender dealing with them with respect to their callings or marriages.

*Thirdly,* As to masters and servants ;

1. Servants sin against their masters by irreverent, disrespectful, and saucy carriage towards them, without any respect to the honour which God calls them to give to their masters. Many are disobedient, and will plainly tell, that they will not do what they are bidden ; or if they do it, they will do it in such a manner, as shall vent their pride and passion. Though the scripture commands not to answer again, they will answer, and have the last word too, and by no means will submit to reproofs. Many are unfaithful to their masters, their service is eye-service, unfaithful service, either by their negligence and sloth bringing their master to loss, or by dishonesty in that which is under their hands. Some professing servants are by their way a scandal to religion in families where they are. Others are a plague to the family by the aversion they shew to every good thing or religious duty, as if their masters were no more concerned in them, if they work their work, Eph. v. 5, 6.

2. Masters sin against their servants, not allowing them sufficient maintenance, but niggardly pinching them, keeping back their wages from them in whole or in part, and so oppressing the hireling ; rigorously keeping them at work, not allowing them convenient time for rest, nor worshipping of God in secret, or attending on public ordinances. And so they sin against them by continual chiding, and uneasiness to them, and carelessness with respect to their soul's good, Eph. vi. 9.

*Fourthly,* As to ministers and people :

1. People sin against their ministers by their slighting and despising them, and nowise treating them as the messengers of Christ ; going on in their evil ways over the belly of all warnings and reproofs, being stubborn, and refusing subjection to discipline ; slandering them, creating them trouble, by forsaking ordinances, &c. or any wise making their work burdensome, or them to drive heavily in it ; and restraining prayer for them.

Ministers sin against people by an unconcernedness about their souls' case, laziness, and unfaithfulness in discharge of their duty, proving stumbling-blocks to their people by a loose walk, and not being earnest in prayer for them, for the blessing of God on them and their message.

As to ruling elders and people, I have nothing to add to what I said before.

*Fifthly,* As to magistrates and subjects :

1. Subjects sin against magistrates by carrying disrespectfully to them, rebelling against them, and disobeying their just laws, reviling and speaking despitefully of them, denying them subjection and their just dues, and not praying for them.

2. Magistrates sin against subjects by using their power to satisfy their lusts, and giving bad example to others, by tyranny and oppression, unjust laws, and discountenancing piety and virtue, and opposing themselves to the kingdom of Christ.

*Sixthly*, As to the aged and younger: How little respect do the younger shew to the aged! Instead of that honour due to age, people are ready to befool them, if not to count them witches or wizards, forgetting that either they must come to their age themselves, or die by the way. On the other hand, few old people carry so to the younger, as to command respect by their exemplary piety and holiness; but, on the contrary, grey hairs are often found in the way of wickedness.

*Seventhly*, As to the weaker and stronger in gifts: It is often the sin of the weaker to envy the stronger, and if they can to misrepresent them. The weak judge the strong, and the strong despise and stumble the weak.

*Lastly*, Equals sin against one another, undervaluing the worth, envying and grieving at the good of one another, and usurping pre-eminence over one another.

The spring and source of all this is, (1.) Want of love to and fear of God; for while people are not in their duty to God, how should they be in their duty to man? (2.) Pride and selfishness, while every one seeks himself, and not the good of others.

These things may be very humbling to all of us. Who can say his life is clean in any of these relations? But even those who are very dutiful in their several relations as to the matter, may be guilty of the breach of this command, in so far as what they do in these things does not proceed from gracious principles; for indeed the first command must be carried along in all the rest.

III. We come now to the reason annexed to this command; which is, 'A promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.'

This is a promise to encourage the conscientious performance of the duties here required. The apostle tells us, that it is 'the first command with promise,' Eph. v. 2.

*Quest.* 1. How is this command the first with promise, seeing the second is a promise also?

*Ans.* It is the first command of the second table: for it is the

most weighty of them all, as comprehending all the rest in it; so that we cannot sin against the rest, but we must first break over the hedge of this, which encompasseth all the rest. For one cannot violate another's life, chastity, &c. but he first violates the honour due to him by this command. And it is the only command that has a special promise of a particular mercy annexed to it. The promise annexed to the second command is but a promise of mercy in the general, and that not particularly to those that keep that command, but all the commandments.

*Quest. 2.* But does the law promise any thing but to perfect keeping of its commands? and if so, what are we the better?

*Ans.* We must distinguish betwixt the law as a covenant of works, and the law as in the hand of Christ for a rule of life to believers. As it is a covenant of works, nothing less than perfect obedience can interest men in the promise; for the least failure knocks off the man's fingers from the promise, by virtue of the curse, Gal. iii. 10. 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.' So that we can be nothing the better of this promise. But Christ being the Surety of the better covenant, having made a new covenant of grace in his blood, he takes the same law in his hands, and gives out the commands of it as a rule of life to his covenanted people, and renews the promises of it to their sincere obedience of them, 1 Tim. iv. 8. 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' As for the curse of it they hear of it no more, he having borne it away himself. And so he crowns the fruits of his own grace in them with blessed rewards. And as all these promises are yea and amen in him; so for his sake, through faith in his blood, they are obtained.

In the words we may consider these three things; the blessing promised, the place where it is to be enjoyed, and the regard the Lord allows his people to have to that blessing to further them in obedience.

FIRST, The blessing promised; that is, long life, *that thy days may be long*. It is a temporal mercy, a mercy much desired ordinarily by all men, and promised to them that keep this commandment. There are four things here to be considered.

*First,* What is meant by men's days being long. It denotes two things.

1. Long life, Prov. iv. 10. 'The years of thy life shall be many.' Death in its best colours has something frightful about it. It is a dissolution of soul and body, which nature shivers at. But there is no eviting of it; all must die; they must go through that dark

valley to their eternal state. But the best that can be made of it is promised here, viz. that such shall be full of days, and not be taken away till they be ripe for the sickle.

2. Prosperity to accompany that life; for *non vivere, sed valere, vita est*. Long life in miseries is a continued death, rather than life. So that the nature of the thing teaches us, that a prosperous long life is here promised. It is a good old age, Gen. xv. 15. And thus the apostle explains it, Eph. vi. 3. 'That it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth.'

*Secondly*, That long life is in itself a mercy, and therefore is promised. There are many things that may mortify men's desires of long life. Old age is ordinarily accompanied with a train of miseries; and the longer the godly live, they are the longer kept out of heaven. Yet there are four things that make this long and prosperous life here promised to the godly's keeping of this commandment, a great mercy.

1. A good old age is an honourable thing, Prov. vi. 31. 'The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.' God commands a particular reverence to be given to old men, Lev. xix. 32. 'Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man.' It is true, sin and wickedness spoils the greatest glory, and no man is more like the devil than a wicked old man, Isa. lxv. 20. 'The sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed. But it is an honourable character which the Spirit of God puts on Mnason, Acts xxi. 16. 'An old disciple.' And old godly men are most like God, Dan. vii. 9. Rev. i. 14.

2. It is profitable for the exercise of godliness, in so far as it makes them proof against many temptations which youth often carries men headlong unto, 2 Tim. ii. 22. The frothiness and fire of youth dying out through time, their grace is the better it wants them. Young people's grace may be more bulky, but old people's grace, though of less bulk, is more worth, because it is more solid. Though new liquor may work and swell up more, the old is better. John was the oldest of the apostles, and last of them who wrote. In his younger years he could have burnt whole towns for Christ, Luke ix. 54. but if ye will look to his epistles written in his older days, they breathe nothing but love, meekness, and solid godliness.

3. Long life makes way for the more proofs and experiences of the goodness of God on the earth, 1 John ii. 13. The young soldier may be more mettled and venturous; but the old soldier is more to be trusted, because of his experience and skill. It is no small advantage to have been an eye-witness of the several appearances God has made for his church, and of several storms that have gone over her head.

4. *Lastly*, They have the better opportunity of glorifying God here, and being serviceable in their generation, the longer they live on the earth; and therefore shall have a larger measure of glory hereafter, as they have been more serviceable for God than others, 2 Cor. ix. 6; How many are cut off in their early days, while they were just budding for the honour of God and the service of the church! It is better for themselves that they are soon taken away; but the church is less the better of them, Phil. i. 23, 24. The Spirit of God takes notice of this in the old men that outlived Joshua, how useful their age was for God and his church, Josh. xxiv. 31. 'And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that over-lived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord that he had done for Israel.' And though glory is not the merit of good works, yet according to the sowing, so shall the harvest be.

*Thirdly*, A holy walk, particularly in the conscientious performance of relative duties, is the way to a long and prosperous life. Holiness, and particularly relative holiness, is the way to a long and happy life in the world.

1. As to holiness in general, it is clear from two things.

(1.) From the promise of God in his life-giving word. 'Man lives by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' The unbelieving world may think a scripture-promise but a poor fence for a man's life. Give them good entertainment, ease, medicine, they will lay more weight on these than on a cluster of promises; but yet a promise from the Lord is better than all these, Dan. i. 15; for 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,' Matth. iv. 4. Now, it has the promise, 1 Tim. iv. 8. It has the promise of health, wealth, and long life, Prov. iii. 7.—10, and 16.

(2.) From the nature of the thing. A holy walk keeps us back from those things that hurt and ruin the body. And no man's body is so little abused to its hurt as his whose soul has respect to walk within the hedge of God's precepts. Drunkenness and gluttony devours more than the sword doth. Covetous care and anxiety wastes the body. Inordinate affections are the consuming of the constitution. Holiness, that represses these things, must then be as health to the flesh, Prov. iv. 22.

2. As for dutifulness to our relatives: Consider,

(1.) It hath God's promise for it in the text, which hath been made out to many in their sweet experience, as in the case of Ruth, and that of the Recabites, Jer. xxxv. 19. And so the contrary is threatened, Prov. xxx. 17. 'The eye that mocketh at his father, and

despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it;’ and has been fulfilled in many to the full extent.

(2.) Dutifulness of that sort procures the blessing of relatives; it natively draws out their hearts in thankfulness to God for them, and in prayers to God for them, which under God is a mean to bring down a blessing upon them. The blessing of them that were ready to perish was not in vain to Job; it sprung up in a liberal increase.

(3.) Such persons are of a meek disposition, and such have a peculiar promise to inherit the earth, Matth. v. 6. It is the want of the spirit of meekness, and pride and selfishness in the room of it, that mars relative dutifulness.

4. *Lastly*, The nature of the thing leads to it; for that is the ready way to make relations comfortable; and the comfort that people find in their relatives does good like a medicine, while the contrary is as rottenness in the bones.

There are two objections that lie against this doctrine.

*Object.* 1. Have not wicked men, that cast off all personal and relative holiness, oft-times a long and prosperous life?

*Ans.* It is so indeed. Job observed it long ago, ch. xxi. 7. ‘Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?’ But there is one thing that makes the difference wide enough; i. e. they have it not by promise. What of that? will ye say. There is very much in it. (1.) He cannot have the comfort of it as a godly man can have, no more than he can have the comfort of a well-furnished house, that knows not but every day he may be turned out of it, while he knows no where else to go, in comparison of one that has a tack of it, and is to move to a better when the tack expires. (2.) There is a secret curse in it that destroys and ruins him; so that the morsel may be fair, but there is a bone in it that will stick in his throat, Prov. i. 32, 33. (3.) *Lastly*, The last dish spoils the feast. No man can be said to live a long and happy life, that dies a miserable unhappy death, as all wicked men do. Can that life be prosperous and happy that has such a black hinder end? Does not death soon catch that man, that catches him ere his salvation be secured.

*Object.* 2. Are there not many godly people whose life in the world is neither long nor prosperous, and have neither much health, wealth, nor long life? The answer to this brings us,

*Fourthly*, To shew how this promise is to be understood. It is to be understood, as all other temporal promises are, not absolutely, as if in no case it could be otherwise; but with these two limitations:

(1.) As far as it shall serve for God's glory; and God may be more glorified in their early death than their long life. The honour of God is the immoveable rule by which these things must be all measured. (2.) As far as it shall serve for their good; and so it may be a greater mercy to them to be hid in the grave, than to be left on earth; and surely it is no breach of promise to give one what is better than what was promised. And these two are not to be separated, but joined together; for whatever is most for God's honour, is most for the godly man's good. Now, upon this we may lay down these conclusions.

1. Upon this promise the godly, walking in the way of personal and relative holiness, may confidently expect from God as much long life and prosperity in the world as shall be for the honour of God, and their good to enjoy. And to have any more would be no favour.

2. A short and afflicted life would be more for their good than a long and prosperous one, Psal. cxix. 71. Isa. lvii. 1. And why should men quarrel with their blessings, or cast at their mercies? Good Josiah was soon taken away, because the Lord would not have him to see the evil that was coming on.

3. Many of the children of God may be guilty of such breaches of this command in the mismanagement of their relative duties, that they may, by their own fault, fall short of the mercy promised here in the latter, Psal. xcix. 8; and so need not wonder if they reap that correction which themselves have sowed. And though others, that have managed worse than they, may escape, no wonder either; for God will let that pass in another, because of an after-reckoning, when he will correct his own children for less, because, that is to put an end to the quarrel.

4. *Lastly*, Whatever they want of this, it shall be made up by what is better. The afflictions of the body shall be health to their souls; their crosses shall not be curses, but blessings; and if they be deprived of the residue of their years here, they shall get them made up in heaven.

SECONDLY, The place where that blessing is to be enjoyed; *in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*; that is, the land of Canaan. So it respects the Jews. But as it respects Christians, it refers to any place of God's earth; and so the apostle turns it, Eph. vi. 3. 'That thou mayst live long on the earth.'

LASTLY, That regard which the Lord allows his people to have to that blessing, to further them in obedience: *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*. Though the chief motive to duty should be the ho-

nour and command of God, yet God allows us to eye the promised reward, even in temporal things, as a secondary motive and encouragement to duty.

USE. Let this recommend to us the living in dutifulness to our relatives. This is physic of God's appointment for the sick; it is the way to wealth of God's appointment for them that have little; it is the prolonger of life appointed by the Lord of life to those that would see many days, and these good. And there is no sure way to these where the appointment of God lies cross. Religion is the way to make the world happy. God has linked our duty and our interest together, so as there is no separating them. Relations are the joints of society; sin has disjoined the world, and so no wonder it be miserable; a relative holiness would set the disjoined world right again.

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OF THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. XX. 13.—*Thou shalt not kill.*

THE scope of this command is the preservation of that life which God hath given unto man, which is man's greatest concern. No man is lord of his own or his neighbour's life; it belongs to him alone who gave it, to take it away. It is observable, that this and the three following commands are proposed in a word, not because they are of small moment, but because there is more light of nature for them than those proposed at greater length.

This command respects both our own life and the life of our neighbour. That it respects our neighbour, there can be no doubt; and as little needs there to be of its respecting our own. The words are general, agreeing to both; and so the sense of them is, *Thou shalt not kill thyself, nor any other.* He that said to the jailor, 'Do thyself no harm,' taught no other thing than what Moses and the prophets did say. Man is no more lord of his own life than his neighbour's; and he is in hazard of encroaching upon it, as well as that of another; and it is no where guarded, if not here. Nay, the sum of the second table being, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' whereby love to our neighbour is made the measure of love to ourselves, it is evident that it respects our own life in the first place.

As every positive command implies a negative, so every negative implies a positive. Therefore, in so far as God says *Thou shalt not kill*, viz. thyself or others, he thereby obliges men to preserve their own life and that of others. And seeing all the commands agree to-