

OF THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. XX. 8, 9, 10, 11.—*Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.*

THIS command respects the time of worship, and is the last of the first table, set to join both together, the Sabbath being the bond of all religion. In the words we have,

1. The command. It is delivered two ways.

1st, Positively, *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.* Sabbath signifies rest or cessation from labour. There is a threefold rest or Sabbath spoken of in scripture. (1.) Temporal. (2.) Spiritual, which is an internal soul-rest, in ceasing from sin, Heb. iv. 3. (3.) Eternal, Heb. iv. 9, 11. celebrated in heaven, where the saints rest from their labours. It is the first of these, the weekly Sabbath that is here meant. Observe here,

(1.) Our duty with respect to the Sabbath. *It is to keep it holy.* God has made it holy, set it apart for holy exercises, and we must keep it holy, spending it in holy exercises.

(2.) The quantity of time to be observed as a Sabbath of rest, a day, a whole day of twenty-four hours; and the one day in seven. They must observe a seventh day after six days' labour, wherein all our work must be done, put by hand, so as nothing of it may remain to be done on the Sabbath.

(3.) A note of remembrance put upon it; which imports, that this precept should be diligently observed, special regard paid to it, and due honour put upon this sacred day.

2dly, Negatively. Where observe, (1.) What is forbidden here; the doing of any work that may hinder the sanctifying of this day. (2.) To whom the command is directed, and who must observe it; magistrates, to whom belong the gates of the city; and masters of families, to whom belong the gates of the house. They must observe it themselves, and cause others to observe it.

2. The reasons annexed to this command. None of the commands are thus delivered, both positively and negatively, as this is. And that imports,

1st, God is in a special manner concerned for the keeping of the Sabbath, it being that on which all religion depends. Accordingly, as it is observed or disregarded, so it readily goes with the other parts of religion.

2dly, People are most ready to halve the service of this day, either to look on resting from labour as sufficient, or to look on the work of the day as over when the public work is over.

3dly, There is less light of nature for this command than the rest: for though it is naturally moral that there should be a Sabbath; yet it is but positively moral that this should be one day in seven, depending entirely on the will of God.

In discoursing from this subject, I shall shew,

I. What is required in the fourth commandment.

II. Which day of the seven God hath appointed to be the weekly Sabbath.

III. How the Sabbath is to be sanctified.

IV. What is forbidden in this command.

V. The reasons annexed to it.

VI. Make improvement.

I. I am to shew what is required in the fourth commandment.

This command according to our Catechism, requireth 'the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word; expressly one whole day in seven to be a holy Sabbath to himself.'

Here I shall shew,

1. That this command requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word.

2. That it requires one day in seven to be kept as a holy Sabbath to the Lord.

3. That the day to be kept holy is one whole day.

First, I am to shew, that this command requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word.

The Jews under the old Testament had several days beside the weekly Sabbath, that by divine appointment were to be kept as holy days, and by virtue of this command they were to observe them, even as by virtue of the second they were to observe the sacrifices and other parts of the Old Testament instituted worship. But these days are taken away under the gospel by the coming of Christ.

But that which this command in the first place requires, is the keeping holy of a Sabbath to God; whatever be the day God determines for it; whether the seventh in order from the creation, as under the Old Testament, or the first, as under the New. And so the command is, *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy*; not *Remember the seventh day*. Thus the keeping of a Sabbath is a moral duty binding all persons in all places of the world.

For it is a moral duty, and by the natural law required, that as God is to be worshipped, not only internally, but externally, not only privately, but publicly; so there must be some special time designed and set apart for this, without which it cannot be done. And so the very Pagans had their sabbaths and holidays. This is the first thing imported here, That a Sabbath is to be kept.

Another thing imported here is, That it belongs to God to determine the Sabbath, or what day or days he will have to be kept holy. He says not, Remember to keep holy a Sabbath-day, or a day of rest, leaving it to men what days should be holy, and what not; but, *Remember the Sabbath-day, &c.* supposing the day to be already determined by himself. So that we are bound to set time appointed in his word.

And this condemns men's taking on themselves, whether churches or states, to appoint holidays to be kept, which God has not appointed in his word. Consider,

1. This command puts a peculiar honour on the Sabbath above all other days *Remember the Sabbath-day, &c.* But when men make holidays of their own to be kept holy, the day appointed of God is spoiled of its peculiar honour, and there is no peculiar honour left to it, Ezek. xliii. 8. Yea, in practice they go before it; for men's holidays where they are regarded, are more regarded than God's day.

2. This command says, *Six days shalt thou labour.* Formalists say, There are many of these six days thou shalt not labour, for they are holy days. If these words contain a command, who can countermand it? if but a permission, who can take away that liberty which God has left us? As for fast-days or thanksgiving days occasionally appointed, that are not holy days; the worship is not made to wait on the days, as on Sabbaths and holidays, but the days on the worship which God by his providence requires; and consequently there must be a time for performing these exercises.

3. It belongs only to God to make a holy day; for who can sanctify a creature but the Creator, or time but the Lord of time; he only can give the blessing: why should they then sanctify a day that cannot bless it? The Lord abhors holy days devised out of men's own hearts, 2 Kings xii. 33.

4. *Lastly,* What reason is there to think that when God has taken away from the church's neck a great many holy days appointed by himself, he has left the gospel-church to be burdened with as many, nay, and more of men's invention than he himself had appointed?

Secondly, This command requires one day in seven to be kept as a

holy Sabbath unto the Lord: *Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.* Thus the Lord determines the quantity of time that is to be his own, in a peculiar manner, that is, the seventh part of our time. After six days working, a seventh is to be a Sabbath. This is moral, binding all persons in all ages, and not a ceremony abrogated by Christ.

1. This command of appointing one day in seven for a Sabbath is one of the commands of that law, consisting of ten commands, which cannot be made out without this was written on tables of stone, to shew the perpetuity of it; and of which Christ says, Matth. v. 17, 18, 19. 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.'

2. It was appointed and given of God to Adam in innocency, before there was any ceremony to be taken away by the coming of Christ, Gen. ii. 3.

3. All the reasons annexed to this command are moral, respecting all men, as well as the Jews, to whom the ceremonial law was given. And we find strangers obliged to the observation of it, as well as the Jews; but they were not so to ceremonial laws.

4. *Lastly*, Jesus Christ speaks of it as a thing perpetually to endure, even after the Jewish Sabbath was over and gone, Matth. xxiv. 20. And so, although the Sabbath of the seventh day in order from the creation was changed into the first day, yet still it was kept a seventh day.

Thirdly, The day to be kept holy, is one whole day. Not a few hours, while the public worship lasts, but a whole day. There is an artificial day betwixt sun-rising and sun-setting, John xi. 9. and a natural day of twenty-four hours, Gen. i. which is the day here meant. This day we begin in the morning immediately after midnight; and so does the Sabbath begin, and not in the evening; as is clear, if ye consider,

1. John. xx. 19. 'The same day at evening, being the first day of the week:' where ye see that the evening following, not going before this first day of the week, is called the evening of the first day.

2. Our Sabbath begins where the Jewish Sabbath ended; but the Jewish Sabbath did not end towards the evening, but towards the morning, Matth. xxviii. 1. 'In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week,' &c.

3. Our Sabbath is held in memory of Christ's resurrection, and it is certain that Christ rose early in the morning of the first day of the week.

Let us therefore take the utmost care to give God the whole day, spending it in the manner he has appointed, and not look on all the time, besides what is spent in public worship, as our own; which is too much the case in these degenerate times wherein we live.

II. I come now to shew which day of the seven God hath appointed to be the weekly Sabbath. According to our Catechism, 'From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.'

We have heard that this command requires a Sabbath to be kept, and that one whole day in seven; we are now to consider what day that is. The scripture teaches us, that there are two days which have by divine appointment had this honour, the seventh day, and the first day of the week.

First, As to the seventh day, it is acknowledged by all, that that was the Jewish Sabbath. And concerning it, consider,

1. Who appointed the seventh day to be the Sabbath. It was God himself that appointed the seventh, which is the last day of the week, by us called Saturday, to be the Sabbath; *The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God*. He that was the Lord of time made this designation of the time at first.

2 Wherefore did God at first appoint the seventh? The reason of this was, that as God rested that day from all his works of creation, men might, after his example, rest on that day from their own works, that they might remember his, and celebrate the praises of the Creator. *For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth,—and rested the seventh day*. The work of creation was performed in the six days, and nothing was made on the seventh day; so that the first new day that man saw was a holy day, a Sabbath, that he might know the great end of his creation was to serve the Lord.

3. How long did that appointment of the seventh day last? To the resurrection of Christ. This was its last period, at which time it was to give place to a new institution, as will afterwards appear. The day of Christ's resurrection was the day of the finishing of the new creation, the restoration of a marred world.

4. When was the Sabbath of the seventh day appointed first? Some who detract from the honour of the Sabbath, contend that it was not appointed till the promulgating of the law on mount Sinai, and that its first institution was in the wilderness. We hold that it

was appointed from the beginning of the world. For proof whereof consider,

(1.) Moses tells us plainly, that God, immediately after perfecting the works of creation, blessed and hallowed the seventh day, Gen. ii. 2, 3. Now, how could it be blessed and hallowed but by an appointing of it to be the Sabbath, setting it apart from common works, to the work of God's solemn worship? The words run on in a continued history, without the least shadow of anticipating, upwards of two thousand years, as some would have it.

(2.) The Sabbath of the seventh day was observed before the promulgation of the law from Sinai, and is spoken of Exod. xvi. not as a new, but an ancient institution. So, ver. 5. preparation for the Sabbath is called for, before any mention of it is made, clearly importing that it was known before. See ver. 23. where the Sabbath is given for a reason why they should prepare the double quantity of manna on the sixth day; which says that solemn day had not its institution then first. And the breach of the Sabbath is, ver. 28. exposed as the violating of a law formerly given.

(3.) In the fourth command they are called to remember the Sabbath-day, as a day that was not then first appointed but had been appointed before, although it had gone out of use, and had been much forgotten when they were in Egypt. Besides, the reasons of this command, God's resting the seventh day, and blessing and hallowing it, being from the beginning of the world, say, that the law had then place when the reason of the law took place.

(4.) This is evident from Heb. iv. 3,—9. The apostle there proves, that there remains a Sabbath, or rest to the people of God, into which they are to enter by faith, from this, that the scripture speaks only of three sabbatisms or rests; one after the works of creation, another after the coming into Canaan; and David's words cannot be understood of the first, for that was over, ver. 3. and so was the other; therefore there remaineth a rest for the people of God, ver. 9.

Some allege against this, that the patriarchs did not observe the Sabbath, because there was no mention made of it in the scriptures. But this is no just prejudice; for at that rate we might as well conclude it was not observed all the time of the judges, Samuel and Saul; for it is no where recorded in that history that they did. Yea, though the patriarchs had not obeyed it, yet that could no more militate against the first institution, than polygamy against the first institution of marriage. But as from the patriarchs sacrificing, we infer the divine appointment of sacrifice, so from the institution of the Sabbath, we may infer their keeping it. And their counting by weeks, as Noah did, Gen. viii. 10, 12; and Laban with Jacob, Gen.

xix. 27, 28. doth not obscurely shew it; for to what end did they use this computation, but that the Sabbath might be distinguished from other days? And the piety of the patriarchs persuades us, that they observed that solemn day for worship; and if any day, what but that designed of God?

Secondly, As to the Sabbath of the first day of the week,

1 Consider the date of it, which was from the resurrection of Christ, to continue to the end of the world; for the days of the gospel are the last days.

2. How the Sabbath could be changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. The fourth command holds out a Sabbath to be kept, and that one in seven. As for the designation of the day, he that designed one, could design another; and the substituting of a new day is the repealing of the old.

3. Wherefore this change was made. Upon the account of the resurrection of Christ, wherein the work of man's redemption was completed.

4. By what authority it was changed into the first day. The Sabbath was by divine authority changed from the seventh to the first day of the week; so that the Lord's day is now by divine appointment the Christian Sabbath.

(1.) The Sabbath of the first day of the week is prophesied of under the Old Testament, Psal. cxviii. 24. 'This is the day which the Lord hath made,' viz. the day of Christ's resurrection, when the stone which the builders rejected was made the head of the corner. 'We will rejoice and be glad in it;' that is, we will celebrate it as a day of rejoicing and thankfulness for the work of redemption. Compare Acts iv. 10, 11. 'Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.' Hereto possibly may that passage be referred, Ezek. xliii. 27. 'And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the EIGHTH DAY, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt-offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord.' And it may be called the *eighth day*, because the first day of the week now is the eighth in order from the creation. As also Isa. xi. 10. 'His rest shall be glorious.' As the Father's rest from the work of the creation was glorious by the seven day's rest, so the rest of the Son from the work of redemption was glorious by the first day's rest. On this day it was that the light was formed; so on this

day did Christ the Sun of righteousness, the true light, arise from the dark mansions of the grave with resplendent glory.

(2.) This day is called 'the Lord's day,' Rev. i. 10. That this Lord's day is the first day of the week, is clear, if ye consider, that John speaks of this day as a known day among Christians by that name. It could not be the Jewish Sabbath, for that is always called the Sabbath, and the Jewish Sabbaths were then repealed, Col. ii. 16. Neither could it mean any other day of the week, wherein Christ specially manifested himself, for that would determine no day at all. And that this phrase infers a divine institution, is evident from the like phrase of the sacrament called *the Lord's supper*.

(3.) It is evident there ought to be a Sabbath, and that from the creation till Christ's resurrection the seventh day in order was appointed by God himself. It is no less evident, that the Sabbath is changed to the first day of the week, and that lawfully, because the Jewish Sabbath is repealed. Now, who could lawfully make this change but one who had divine authority? who therefore is called Lord of the Sabbath? Mark ii. 28.

(4.) It was the practice of the apostles and primitive Christians to observe the first day of the week for the Sabbath, John xx. 19. Acts xx. 1. On this day the collection for the poor was made, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. and you know the apostles had from Christ what they delivered to the churches as to ordinances, 1 Cor. xi. 23.

5. *Lastly*, The Lord, by glorious displays of his grace and Spirit, has remarkably honoured this day, in all ages of the church; and by signal strokes from heaven has vindicated the honour of this day on the profaners of it. Of this, remarkable instances may be seen in history both at home and abroad.

Let us therefore sanctify this day, as the day which God hath appointed, and blessed as a day of sacred rest in the Christian church.

III. I come now to show you how the Sabbath is to be sanctified. The Catechism tells us, "It is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

Here I shall shew, what it is to sanctify the Sabbath, and what are the parts of the sanctification of it.

FIRST, I am to shew, what it is to sanctify the Sabbath. The Sabbath-day is not capable of any sanctity or holiness, but what is relative; that is, in respect of its use for holy rest or exercise. So, (1.) God has sanctified that day, by setting it apart for holy uses, designing and appointing it in a special manner for his own worship and

service. (2.) Men must sanctify it by keeping it holy, spending that day in God's worship and service for which God has set it apart; using it only for the uses that God has consecrated it unto.

SECONDLY, I come to shew what are the parts of the sanctification of the Sabbath. They are two; holy rest, and holy exercise.

First, The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy rest. Therefore it is called *a sabbath*, i. e. a rest.

1. What are we to rest from? On the Sabbath we must rest.

1st, From our worldly employments. God has given us six days for these; but his day must be kept free from them: *In it thou shalt not do any work*. The works of our worldly calling have six days, those of our heavenly calling but one. We must rest from the former, that we may apply ourselves to the latter. Now, such works are to be accounted,

(1.) All handy-labour or servile employments tending to our worldly gain, as on other days of the week, as ploughing and sowing, bearing of burdens, &c. Neh. xiii. 15. driving of beasts to market, or exercising any part of one's calling.

(2.) All study of liberal arts and sciences. The Sabbath is not a day for such exercises, as the reading of history, the studying of sciences, &c. Isa. lviii. 13.

(3.) All civil works, such as making bargains, unnecessary journeying travelling to Monday markets on the Lord's day, though people wait on sermons, or take them by the way. It is indeed the sin of those that do not change their market days when they so fall out, and a sin in the government to suffer it: but that will not justify those who comply with the temptation, seeing God hath given us other days of the week. If they cannot overtake their market after the Sabbath, they should go away before, that they may rest on the Sabbath, wherever they are, Exod. xvi. 29.

2dly, From all worldly recreations, though lawful on other days. It is not a day for carnal pleasures of any sort, more than for worldly employments. Our delights should be heavenly this day, not to please the flesh but the spirit; and sports, plays, and pastimes, are a gross profanation of the Sabbath, Isa. lvii. 13, 14.

Now, this rest of the Sabbath from these must be,

(1.) A rest of the hands from them. The hands must rest, that the heart may be duly exercised.

(2.) A rest of the tongue. People should not give their orders for the week's work on the Lord's day, nor converse about their worldly business.

(3.) A rest of the head from thinking of it, and forming plans and contrivances about worldly affairs.

But here are excepted works of two sorts.

1. Works of necessity, as to quench a house on fire, &c. 2. Works of mercy, as to save the life of a beast; see Matth. xii. Under which may be comprehended, (1.) Good works, such as visiting the sick, relieving the poor, &c. (2.) Works of decency, such as dressing the body with comely attire. (3.) Works of common honesty and humanity, as saluting one another, 1 Pet. iii. 8. (4.) Works of necessary refreshment, as dressing and taking of meat. (5.) Works having a necessary connection with and tendency to the worship of God, as travelling on the Lord's day to sermons, 2 Kings iv. 23.

But in all these things it should be regarded, that the necessity be real, and not pretended: for it is not enough that the work cannot be done to such advantage on another day; for that might let out people on the Sabbath, if it be a windy day or so, to cut down their corn, whom yet God has in a special manner provided against, Exod. xxxiv. 21; and that would have justified the sellers of fish, whom Nehemiah discharged, Neh. xiii. 16, 17. And therefore I cannot think that the making of cheese on the Lord's day can be counted a work of necessity, lawful on that day: for as much might be said in the other cases as can be said in this, viz. that the corn may shake, the fishes spoil, &c. Besides, people should take heed that they bring not that necessity on themselves, by timeously providing against it. And when works of real necessity and mercy are to be done, they should be done, not with a work day's, but Sabbath-day's frame.

2. Who are to rest? The command is very particular. (1.) Men. [1.] The heads of the family, the heads of the state, master and mistress, are to give example to others. [2.] The children, *son*, *daughter*; they must not have their liberty to profane the Sabbath by playing more than working. [3.] Servants, whose toil all the week may tempt them to misspend the Lord's day; they must not be bidden profane the Sabbath; and if they be, they must obey God rather than man. [4.] The stranger must not be allowed his liberty: we must not compliment away the honour of the Sabbath. (2.) Beasts; they must rest; not that the law reaches them for themselves, but for their owners; either because they require attendance at work, or put the case they did not, yet it is the work which must not be done. This lets us see, that where even their work may be carried on, on the Lord's day without attendance on them, yet it is not to be done.

3. What makes the rest holy? Respect to the command of God. *Secondly*, The Sabbath is to be sanctified by holy exercise.

1. Public exercise; of God's worship, Isa. lxvi. 23; as hearing sermons, Luke iv. 16; prayer, Acts xvi. 13, 14; receiving of the

sacraments, where there is occasion, Acts xx. 7; singing of Psalms, Psal. xcii. title.

2. Private exercises of worship, alone and in our families, Lev. xxiii. 3. Neither of these must jumble out the other. God has joined them; let us not put them asunder.

And these duties are to be done with a special elevation of heart on the Sabbath-day; they ought to be performed with a frame suiting the Sabbath, Isa. lvii. 13.

1st, Grace must be stirred up to exercise, otherwise the Sabbath will be a burden. Grace will be at its height in heaven, and the Sabbath is an emblem of heaven, Rev. i. 10.

2dly, The heart should be withdrawn from all earthly things, and intent upon the duty of the day. We must leave the ass at the foot of the mount, that we may converse with God.

3dly, Love and admiration are special ingredients here. The two great works of creation and redemption, which we are particularly called to mind on the Lord's day, are calculated to excite our love and admiration.

4thly, We should have a peculiar delight in the day, and the duties of it, exchanging our lawful pleasures on other days with spiritual pleasures on this.

The rest without holy exercise is not sufficient.

1. The Sabbath-rest resembles that of heaven, which is a rest without a rest, wherein the soul is most busy and active, serving the Lord without weariness.

2. If it were enough, we were obliged to sanctify the Sabbath no more than beasts, who only rest that day.

3. The rest enjoined is not commanded for itself, but for the holy exercises of the day.

Now, it is the whole day that is thus to be spent, i. e. the natural day. Not that people are bound to be in these exercises without intermission all the twenty-four hours; for God has not made the Sabbath to be a burden to man, but that we should continue God's work as we do our own on other days, where we are allowed necessary rest and refreshment by sleep in the night.

Use. Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. This note is put upon it.

1. Because of the great weight of the thing, the Sabbath being the bond of all religion. It is God's deal-day, wherein his people may expect furniture for all the week.

2. Because we are very apt to forget it, Ezek. xxii. 26. There is less light of nature for this than other commands. It restrains our liberty in those things that we do all the week. And Satan, know-

ing the importance of it for our souls, that it is a day of blessing, sets on us to forget it. If ye would then sanctify the Sabbath,

(1.) Remember it before it come; on the last day of the week, on the Saturday's evening, laying by work timeously to prepare for it, Luke xxiii. 54.

(2.) Remember it when it is come; rise early on the Sabbath-morning, Psal. xcii. 2. The morning hath enough ado: worship God secretly and privately: prepare yourselves for ordinances, wrestle with God for his presence thereto, that he may graciously assist the minister in preaching, and you in hearing, and may bless the word to you. Remember it while it is going on, that it is God's day, a day of blessing, and ply diligently the work of the day, not only in time of the public work, but after, till the day be finished.

(3.) Remember it when it is over, to see what good you have got by it; to bless him for any smiles of his face, or manifestations of his grace; and to mourn over your failures, and apply to the blood of Christ for pardon and cleansing.

IV. I proceed to shew, what is forbidden in the fourth commandment. We are told in the Catechism, that it 'forbiddeth the omission or careless performance of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations.'

There are five ways how this commandment is broken.

First, By omission of the duties required on this day, whether in whole or in part. Many of the Sabbath-duties are the duties of every day; but the omission of them, which is always criminal, is more so on this day, because on it we are specially called to them. We sin against this command, then, when we neglect the public or private exercises of God's worship.

1. Not remembering the Sabbath, before it come, to prepare for it; entertaining a carnal worldly frame of spirit on the night before, not laying aside work betimes, and composing our hearts for the approaching Sabbath; far more when people continue at their work later that night than ordinary, getting as near the borders of the Sabbath as they can.

2. Neglecting the duties of the Sabbath-morning; particularly,

1. The duty of meditation. Those that are in the spirit on the Lord's day, their spirits will be busy, elevated to heavenly things, and conversing with heaven. The two great works of creation and redemption require our thoughts particularly on that day, Psal. xcii. 5; and we must needs be guilty, when, while God has set these great marks before us, we do not aim to hit them. Has not God

made it a day of blessing? should not we then consider our wants, miseries, and needs, and sharpen our appetites after that food that is set before us in ordinances on that day?

(2.) Secret prayer. The Sabbath-morning is a special time for wrestling with God, confessing, petitioning, and giving thanks. Then should there be wrestling for the blessing on the day of blessing. And the neglect of it is a very bad beginning for that good day. When will they come to God's door that will not come then? Psal. xci. 1, 2.

(3.) Family-exercise. This command has a special respect to family-religion. As God will have the family to mind and see to their own work on the six days, so he calls them to mind his together on the Sabbath. Every family is to be at church, especially on the Lord's day. And if people came with their hearts warmed from family-duties to the public, they would speed.

3. Neglect of the public exercises of God's worship, Heb. x. 25. By this neglect the Sabbath is profaned. The public ordinances on the Lord's day, whatever they do else, they keep up a standard for Christ in the world; and to slight them is to fill the world with atheism and profaneness. As it would be the sin of ministers not to administer them, so it is the sin of people not to attend on them. But O how does this profanation abound, by unnecessary absenting from public ordinances! It is not enough to spend the time in private. God requires both; and the one must not juggle out the other. Nothing should be admitted as an excuse in this, but what will bear weight when the conscience is sisted before God.

4. Neglecting the duties of the day when the public work is over. The Sabbath is not over when the public work is over. When we go home to our houses, we must keep the Sabbath there too, Lev. xxiii. 3. It ought not to be an idle time. Ye ought to retire by yourselves, and meditate on what ye have heard, on your behaviour at the public ordinances, and be humbled for your failings; confer together about the word, renew your calling on God in secret, and in your families, and with variety of holy exercises spend what remains of the day.

Secondly, The Sabbath is profaned by a careless performance of the duties required. Though we perform the duties themselves, we may profane the Sabbath by the way of managing them. Now, it is a careless performance to perform them,

1. Hypocritically, Matth. xv. 7. while the body is exercised in Sabbath's work, but the heart goes not along with it.

2. Carnally, in an earthly frame of spirit, the heart nothing savouring of heaven, but still of the world. Hence are so many dis-

tracting thoughts about worldly things, that the heart cannot be intent on the duty of the day, Amos viii. 5.

2. Heartlessly and coldly. The Sabbath should be called a delight; a special vigour and alacrity is required to Sabbath-duties. But O how flat, heartless, dead, and dull are we for the most part! so that many are quite out of their element on the Lord's day, and never come to themselves, or any alacrity of spirit, till the Sabbath be over, and they return to their business.

4. To perform them with a weariness of them, or in them, Mal. i. 13. Alas! is not the Sabbath the most wearisome day of all the week to many? The rest of the Sabbath is more burdensome than the toil of other days. How will such take with heaven, where there is an eternal rest, an everlasting Sabbath? This is a contempt of God and of his day.

Thirdly, The Sabbath is profaned by idleness. God has made the Sabbath a rest, but not a mere rest. He never allows idleness: on the week-days we must not be idle, or we misspend our own time. On the Lord's day we must not be idle, or we misspend and profane God's time. Thus the Sabbath is idled away and profaned.

1. By unnecessary, unseasonable sleeping in that day; lying long in the Sabbath-morning, going soon to bed that night, to cut God's day as short as may be; and much more sleeping in any other time of the day, to put off the time.

2. By vain gadding abroad on the Lord's day, through the fields, or gathering together about the doors, to idle away the time in company. It is very necessary that people keep within doors on the Lord's day as much as may be; and if necessity or conveniency call them forth, that they carry their Sabbath's work with them.

3. By vain and idle discourse or thoughts. We must give an account of every idle word spoken on any day, far more for those spoken on the Lord's day, which are doubly sinful.

Fourthly, The Sabbath is profaned by doing that which is in itself sinful. To do those things on the Lord's day that ought not to be done any day, is a sin highly aggravated. Thus the Sabbath is profaned by people's discouraging others from attending ordinances, instead of attending themselves; swearing or cursing on that day, instead of praising God. The better the day, the worse is the deed. How fearful must their doom be who wait that time for their wicked pranks, as some dishonest servants, and other naughty persons, who chuse the time that others are at church for their hidden works of dishonesty; because then they get most secrecy? And indeed the devil is very busy that way, and has brought some on to commit such things on the Sabbath-day as have brought them to an ill end.

„*Lastly*, By unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations. The Sabbath is profaned,

1. By carnal recreations, nowise necessary nor suitable to the work of the Sabbath; such as, all carnal pleasures, sports, plays, and pastimes, Isa. lviii. 13.

2. By following worldly employments on that day, working or going about ordinary business, except in cases of necessity and mercy, Matth. xxiv. 20. Though, where real necessity or mercy is, it is an abuse of that day to forbear such things, as sometimes the Jews did, who being attacked on the Lord's day, would not defend themselves.

3. By unnecessary thoughts or discourse about them; for that day is a day of rest for them every way; and we should never think of nor talk about them.

O let us be deeply humbled before the Lord under the sense of our profanations of the Sabbath! for who can plead innocent here? We are all guilty in some shape or other, and had need to flee to the atoning blood of Jesus for the expiation of this and all our other sins.

V. I come now to consider the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment. And these, according to the Catechism, are, 'God's allowing us six days in the week for our own employments; his challenging a special propriety in the seventh; his own example; and his blessing the Sabbath-day.'

This command God has enforced by four reasons,

1. The first reason is taken from the equity of this command. God has allowed us six days of seven for our own business, and has reserved but one for himself. In dividing our time betwixt himself and us, he has made our share great, six for one. Consider the force of this reason.

1st, We have time enough to serve ourselves in the six days, and shall we not serve God on the seventh? They that will not be satisfied with six, would as little be satisfied with sixteen. But carnal-hearts are like a sand-bed to devour that which is holy. Nay,

2dly, We have time enough to tire ourselves on the six days in our own employments; it is a kindness that we are obliged to rest on the Lord's day. Our interest is our duty, and our duty is our interest. It is a kindness to our bodies, and souls too. And shall we not be engaged by it to sanctify the Sabbath?

3dly, There is time enough to raise the appetite for the Sabbath. It comes so seldom, though so sweet to the exercised soul, that we may long for it, and rejoice at the return of it. It is sad if six days' interval cannot beget in us spiritual appetite.

4thly, God might have allowed us one day, and taken six to himself. Who could have quarrelled the Lord of time? Has he reserved but one for six, and shall we grudge it him? The sentence of David in the parable against the rich man that took away the poor man's ewe lamb, is applicable here: 'The man that hath done this thing shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold,' &c. 2 Sam. xii.

2. The second reason is taken from God's challenging a special propriety in the Sabbath-day; *But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.* All days are his; but this is his in a peculiar manner, Rev. i. 10. He has set a mark on it for himself to be reserved to himself. Consider the force of this reason.

1st, If we have a God, it is reasonable that God should have a time set apart for his service, *the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.* The heathen had days set apart for the honour of their idols; though the dumb idols could not demand them, yet they gave them. Papists have days set apart for saints, who are to them a sort of gods, though some of them, as Paul has forbidden it. And wilt thou not keep holy the Sabbath of the Lord thy God?

2dly, It is sacrilege, the worst of theft, to profane the Sabbath-day. It is a robbing of God, a stealing of time from him that is consecrated to him, and that is dangerous, Prov. xx. 25. We justly blame the churches of Rome and England, for robbing people of a great many days which God has given us; but how may we blame ourselves for robbing God of the day he has kept from us, and taken to himself? Alas! our zeal for God is far below our zeal for ourselves. They stick to their saints' days, but how weary are we of God's days? Mal. iii. 8.

3. The third reason is taken from God's example, who, though he could have perfected the world in a moment, yet, spent six days in it, and but six days, resting the seventh, taking a complacency in the work of his own hand; and this is an example to be imitated by us. Consider the force of this reason.

1st, God's example proposed for imitation is a most binding rule, Eph. v. 1. 'Be ye followers of God.' What God does is best done, and we must labour to write after his copy.

2dly, The profaning of the Sabbath is a most eminent and signal contempt of God and of his works. Did God rest on the Sabbath, taking a complacency in the six days' works? Our not doing so is an undervaluing of what God so highly esteemed, slighting of what he so much prized, and consequently a contempt of himself and his works too.

4. The fourth reason is taken from his blessing the Sabbath-day.

His blessing that day is his blessing it as a mean of blessing us in the keeping of it. It imports,

1st, The Lord's putting a peculiar honour on it beyond all other days. It is the 'holy of the Lord and honourable.' The King of heaven has made it the queen of days. Therefore it should be our question, What shall be done to that day the King delighteth to honour? Let us beware of levelling that with common things which God hath so far advanced above them.

2dly, That the Lord has set it apart for a spiritual blessing to his people, so that in the sanctification of that day we may look for a blessing, Isa. lvi. 6, 7; nay, that the Lord will multiply his blessings on that day more on his people than any other days wherein they seek it. So that, as the Lord requires more on that day than on any other days, he also gives more.

3dly, That the Lord will make it even a spring of temporal blessings. He will not let the day of blessing be a curse to people in their temporal affairs. They shall be at no loss in their worldly things by the Sabbath rest, Lev. xxv. 20, 22. Conscientious keepers of the Sabbath will be found to thrive as well otherwise as those who are not. The force of this reason is,

(1.) God's honour by keeping that day, that we may get his blessings on it showered down upon us. So that the profanation of the Sabbath is like profane Esau's rejecting the blessing.

(2.) Our own interest. Is it a special day for blessing, and shall we not observe it? It is an unworthy mistake to look upon the Sabbath as so much lost time. No time is so gainful as a Sabbath holly observed. And indeed the great reason of the profaning of the Sabbath may be found to lie,

[1.] In carnality and worldly mindedness. The Sabbath is no delight to many. Why? Because heaven would be none to them, for they savour not the things of God. The heart that is drowned in the cares or pleasures of the world, all the week over, is as hard to get into a Sabbath-frame, as wet wood to take fire.

[2.] Insensibleness of their need of spiritual blessings. They are not sensible of their wants, and hence they despise the blessing. He that has nothing to buy or sell can stay at home on the market-day, and the full soul cares not for God's day.

[3.] The not believing of the blessing of that day. They that think they may come as good speed any day in the duties of the day as on the Lord's day, no wonder they count God's day, and the duties of the day, as common.

USE. Let me exhort you then to beware of profaning the Sabbath. Learn to keep it holy. And therefore I would call you here to several duties.

1. Remember the Sabbath-day, before it come, to prepare for it, and let your eye be on it before the week be done. Timeously lay by your worldly employment, and go not near the borders of the Lord's day, and strive to get your hearts in a frame suitable to the exercises of this holy day.

2. Make conscience of attending the public ordinances, and waiting on God in his own house on his own day. Loiter not away the Lord's day at home unnecessarily, seeing the Lord trusts to meet his people there. This will bring leanness to your own souls, and grief of heart to him that bears the Lord's message to you.

3. Before you come to the public, spend the morning in secret and private exercises, particularly in prayer, reading, and meditation; remembering how much your success depends upon suitable preparation. Put off your shoes before ye tread the holy ground.

4. Make not your attendance on the public ordinances a by-hand work, and a mean for carrying on your worldly affairs. If ye come to the church to meet with some body, and to discourse or make appointments about your worldly business, it will be a wonder if ye meet with the Lord. If ye travel on the Lord's day, and take a preaching by the way, it may well cheat your blinded consciences; it will not be pleasing to God, for it makes his service to stand but in the second room, while your main end is what concerns your temporal affairs. Among the Jews no man might make the mountain of the house, or a synagogue, a thoroughfare. And beware of common discourse between sermons, which is too much practised among professors.

5. When ye come home from the public ordinances, let it be your care, both by the way and at home, to meditate or converse about spiritual things, and what ye have heard. Retire and examine yourselves as to what ye have gained, and be not as the unclean beasts, who chew not the cud. Let masters of families take account of their children and servants how they have profited, catechise and instruct them in the principles of religion, and exhort them to piety.

6. When ye are necessarily detained from the public ordinances, let your hearts be there, Psal. lxxiii. 1, 2; and do not turn that to sin which in itself is not your sin. And strive to spend the Lord's day in private and secret worship, looking to the Lord for the up-making of your wants. As for those that tie themselves to men's service, without a due regard to their having opportunities to hear the Lord's word, their wages are dear bought, and they have little respect to God or their own souls; and I think tender Christians will be loath to engage so. But, alas! few masters or servants look further than the work or wages in their engaging together! A sad argument that religion is at a low ebb.

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.

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.