should want an appetite for it. The paschal lamb was to be wholly eaten, so appetite was necessary, and so it is also with us.

Again, who knows how far we may have to go upon this meal. But if we hunger not, we will not eat.

Consider also that it will readily fare with you according to your appetite. If you have an appetite, you shall be filled, for it is a sign of the new nature, which God will see to support. The appetite is of God's giving and he will satisfy it. His faithfulness is engaged in the cause. Amen.

Yarrow Communion, Sept. 9, 1722.

[Schabbath afternoon.]

CHRISTIANS STRONG IN THE GRACE THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.

SERMON XXII.

2 Timothy ii. 1.

Thou therefore my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

In his banqueting house, Christ displays his banner of love over his people. For those who are fed at his table must arise and fight their way to Immanuel's land, to which they have professed themselves to be travelling. And our text is an exhortation to animate them in their journey. "Thou therefore my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

These words are a practical inference drawn from the doctrine of the preceding chapter, namely, that God had already bestowed on Timothy, and the rest of the saints, great things, verses 7,—9. That the gospel was such a noble cause that none need to be ashamed of suffering on the account of it, ver. 10, 11, 12. That God is able to see to his people in all circumstances and make a good account of them at last, ver. 12. That there was a great falling away from the good ways of the Lord, ver. 15. From all which he exhorts Timothy to be strong. In the text we have,

1. The compellation my son. Paul was an aged man, Timothy was young. Elder Christians should excite and animate the younger sort to the vigorous pursuit of religion. In this case surely days should speak. It is a chief part of our generation work, to be concerned for a right turn to the rising generation. And the slackness
in this, owing partly to the untowardness of the younger sort, and partly to the elder, their falling from their first love, is a sad prognostic of worse days following our evil days, if sovereign grace do not interpose.

Paul had a peculiar respect to Timothy. If he had not begotten him to the faith, he had surely instructed him more fully in it, and had him often with him. If there be any to whom we bear a peculiar regard, we ought to show it in a peculiar concern for the welfare of their souls. And therefore as we ought to have a peculiar regard to our families, we should show it by a peculiar concern for the welfare of their souls, in instructing, and inciting them to the good ways of the Lord.

2. There is a necessary duty to which he incites him. **Be strong.** He supposes that both as a minister and as a Christian, he would meet with opposition in an evil world, and that he behaved not to be driven out of his Christian course by it, nor faint and give it over: but he wills him valiantly to stand his ground, and go on his way through all the difficulties with which he might meet.

3. He gives him true advice, what way he might do this. "**Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**" Some take this for the thing about which he was to be strong, As if he had said, be strong in preaching the grace that is in Christ Jesus. This, I doubt not, is the great thing ministers are called to aim at in their preaching; **even to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.** All other preaching without it will never make good Christians. In this grace only is discovered the way of justifying the guilty, and sanctifying the unholy. But yet I think the simple, plain, and native import of the words, which is always the preferable, is to direct Timothy to the grace treasured up in Christ, to be communicated to his members, in partaking of which, out of weakness, he might be made strong, Eph. vi. 10. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

**Doctrine.—** They who have a mind for heaven, must be strong, and that in the grace which is in Christ Jesus, if ever they would get there. In prosecute this doctrine, I shall,

I. Consider this duty incumbent on all who have a mind for heaven, namely, **to be strong.**

II. I shall consider the direction, namely, that those who would be strong, "**Must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**" I am then,

I. To consider this duty incumbent on all who have a mind for heaven, namely, **to be strong.**

Here I shall state and answer two questions.
Question 1st. What is it to be strong in the sense of the text? And,

1. It presupposeth one thing, namely, they must be spiritually alive. A sick man has some strength, but a dead man has none at all. A child of God has a little strength, when he is even weakest. But the ungodly are quite destitute of spiritual strength. "For when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." If you be not born again, and really united to the Lord Jesus by his quickening Spirit dwelling in you, your carcases will fall in the wilderness, though you have eaten at the Lord's table. "For except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. If a man, saith Jesus, abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." Why is it that many cannot resist a temptation, but are led captive by it, and cannot do one duty in a right manner? Why, but because their living lusts prey upon their souls without resistance; because their souls are spiritually dead. O communicants see to your state.

To be strong imports three things.

1. To be ready for action, according to the difficulties you may meet with in your way. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning." No person will get to heaven sleeping. Heaven is a rest, and that supposeth those who come there, not to be loiterers, but labourers. "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." The promise is to him that overcometh, though not for his, but Christ's overcoming, Rev. iii. 21. The wind will be in your face, if you set your face heavenward in good earnest; so you must be strong, and prepared to make your way against it, however hard it blow.

2. That you be resolved. Thus David exhorts Solomon, "Take heed now, said he, for the Lord hath chosen thee, to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong and do it." That is, be fully resolved and peremptory, so as not to be diverted by any emerging difficulties. O Christians, communicants, put on a resoluteness of spirit to be forward in your way to heaven, come what will. "Have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and cleave unto the Lord, with purpose of heart." If this resolute purpose be not formed in your hearts by grace, you will never get safe to your journey's end. For if you be of those that may be broken, you will be broken; in regard you will be tried to the utmost, to cause you to give it over.

3. It imports that you be of good courage. Say to them that are
of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not. Put on holy courage to face the difficulties you may meet with in your Christian course. When the heart fails in such encounters, the hands must needs hang down; and therefore unbelief is a worm at the root of all Christian endeavours. But faith animates a Christian, inspires his soul with holy courage, and so causes him to go through the most difficult steps of his way.

Quest. 2nd. What need is there to be strong? If you have no mind for heaven, you may fold your hands and lie at your ease; the flood runs strong enough to carry you of itself to destruction, where there is no rowing against the stream. But if you mind for heaven, you have need to be strong. For,

1. You have much work before you. The work of your own salvation is upon your hand, Phil. ii. 12. You have also to serve your generation, by the will of God. You have much work laid to your hand. Though it is not doing and working, but believing that is required of you to enter you into the covenant personally, and to interest you savingly in Jesus Christ, and his salvation; yet being in the covenant in Christ, by faith, you have as much to do, as the broad law of the ten commandments carries out to you in first and second table duties. And if you habitually and knowingly neglect any of them, you will thereby evidence, that you are yet lying in your natural state, quite without strength, and without Christ. You will not want suffering work also. “For we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” We may assure you of private sufferings. For every follower of Christ, must take up his own cross. And you have need to lay your account with public sufferings also; for they are so usual in the cause of religion, that all Christ’s disciples are martyrs, though not in action, yet in affection and resolution. So you need to be strong.

2. You will meet with much opposition in your work. Satan is a strong enemy, and he will be at your right hand to resist you. The world also will oppose you in your work. The men of the world will be agents for the devil against you. You will have the weight of their example to strive against, and perhaps their tongues and hands will both be employed to divert you from your work. The things of the world, the cares of it, the smiles and frowns of it will be of a malignant tendency in this case. And above all your own corrupt hearts will be your most dangerous opposers. This made Paul complain, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.” All these will work against you; so that in your Christian course, you will find yourselves obliged to work as the builders of the walls of Jerusalem did, with the trowel
in the one hand, and the sword in the other. So you have need to be strong. I now proceed.

II. To consider the direction, namely, that those who would be strong, must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Here I shall state and answer three questions.

Quest. 1st. What is the grace that is in Christ Jesus? It is twofold.

1. Relative grace, that is the free favour of God to poor sinners, by which they are embraced in the arms of his love unto salvation. "But we believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they." This is only to be found in Christ, and no ways in our works and doings. He alone is the mercy-seat, where a guilty creature can meet with God comfortably. Every the least gracious smile given by a holy God, to any of fallen Adam's race, is and will be for ever through the wounds of a crucified Redeemer. And a guilty creature can never draw strength for obedience from an absolute God, a God out of Christ. But on the contrary a broad view of him as such, is enough to loose every joint of his soul and body, and leave him weak as water. But in Christ the believer has that grace, by which the curse is taken away, his person justified, and his works accepted. And this is a foundation upon which we may be strong. It is a spring of holy strength, resolution and courage.

2. Real grace, that is the fulness of the Spirit, and his graces, lodged in Jesus Christ, as the fountain and head of influences, from which they are to be derived, into all his members. "For it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell. And out of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." The unholy creature could never have had immediate access to God, no, not for sanctification. The curse lay upon him, which in point of justice, barred the emanation of sanctifying influences. But the fulness of the Spirit of holiness, the purchase of Christ's death and satisfaction, is lodged in Christ to be communicated; so the union between Christ and the soul, being once constituted, and the curse removed, the soul hath access to the continual supply of the Spirit of holiness. In Christ then there is a fulness of grace, of light, life, strength, and whatsoever is necessary to nourish the new creature, to carry it on to perfection, and continue it for ever in that perfection. So the believer has all in Christ, that is necessary, to carry on and complete his begun salvation, "and so is complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power."

Quest. 2nd. What is it to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus?
1. It is to be animated to duty by the faith of that grace that is in Christ Jesus for us, both relative and real. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us, in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." The same mind, that is the believing consideration of it. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The faith of strength and grace in Jesus Christ, by which we may be enabled to perform duty; and of favour and grace in him by which our work when done may be accepted, cannot fail of exciting and strengthening to duty, according to the measure of it, and of making men resolute and courageous in their Christian course. "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." And according as the faith of either of these do fail, the Christian's heart will faint and his hands hang down, as unfit for work.

2. It is to be strengthened to duty by supplies of grace, derived from Christ Jesus by faith. "He that eateth me, saith Jesus, even he shall live by me." And saith Paul, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." There is a real communication between a full Christ and an empty soul in the way of believing, by which the dark soul is enlightened, the weak strengthened, and the unholy sanctified; however mysterious it is to the world. Hence it is the saints have done such great things, and suffered such great things, and all through faith as the apostle shows, Heb. xi. Why is it that the goodness of many is like the morning cloud and the early dew, but that their pretended faith is like a pipe laid short of the fountain? The little water that is in it runs out, and there is no more comes in because it communicates not with the spring. And why are believers so often in a withered condition, but because they are not in the exercise of faith, the pipe is stopped.

Quest. 3d. Why must those that would be strong, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus?

1. Because all those that would be strong, must be strong as members of Christ, as branches of the vine. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." Now it is evident that the strongest limb will fail if the communication betwixt it and the head and heart do fail: and so will the branch wither, if the communication betwixt it and the stock be stopped.

2. Because the grace that is in Christ Jesus, is only sufficient to
bear us through. "My grace, says he is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." There is nothing in us to which we may safely trust, and place confidence upon it, either for justification or sanctification. "My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence, I shall not be moved." Hence the saints are described, "as being the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

Use 1. Of information. This shows us,

1. That such whose spirits are so softened with the love of their lusts, and world's ease, that they have no heart to face and combat the enemies of their souls, the devil, the world, and the flesh, will never get through safely to the other side. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Either you must be the ruin of your lusts, or they will be your ruin. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

2. That those who are strangers to the life of faith and the way of making use of Christ for sanctification, will never get through safely. Men may be at much pains this way, and go the round of external duties, and yet fall short of heaven at length. "The labour of the foolish wearyeth every one of them; because he knoweth not how to go to the city." Some of these are filled with self-confidence, not doubting but that they are able to do the work in which they have engaged. Others are afraid that they will never get it done, but resolve to do as well as they can, and to look to Christ for pardon wherein they come short. But I would advise both as ever they would see heaven, to go out of themselves for all, and be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Use 2. Of exhortation. O Christians and communicants as ever ye would see heaven, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Strong and resolute against difficulties you must be, else you will never get there; and you can never be wrong indeed but in that grace.

Question. How may you be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, for the work of the Christian life, whether doing or suffering? Answer 1. You must be in Christ, in the first place by faith, accepting and embracing him, fleeing out of yourselves, confiding and trusting in him for all his salvation, on the gospel offer to you. The branch cannot partake of the sap of the stock till it be united with it. John xv. 1—6.

2. Be sure the work for which you would be strengthened be
called for by God at your hand. "The way of the Lord is strength
to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity." One's call to a work must first be cleared, before he can justly look
to the Lord, to be with him in it. The communication of grace is
not to be expected out of the way of duty.

3. When your duty is cleared be emptied of yourselves; and
make nothing in you your confidence. Look upon yourselves as
empty vessels that must be filled from heaven, else nothing to pur-
pose can be done by them. Amen.

Etrick, July 7, 1717.

MAN, SINFUL MAN IS A COMPLAINING CREATURE.

SERMON XXIII.

LAMENTATIONS iii. 39.

Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment
of his sins?

This world is like an hospital, where every one is groaning under
some uneasiness or other. It is so filled with complaints, that from
the king to the beggar, nobody is free; the melancholy sound of
them is to be heard in the lowest cottage, and the most stately pa-
lace is not free of them. Sin is that which brings on the ground of
complaints and sin brings them out; and therefore religion checks
them in the text. The prophet himself had been complaining in
the former part of the chapter, he seemed to have represented God
as unkind and severe. Here he checks himself, and chides himself
for doing so, declaring that neither he nor others, had any good
reason for any such fretting disposition. "Wherefore doth a living
man complain," &c.

In these words it is supposed, that man is apt to complain under
afflicting dispensations. It is expressed that he ought not to com-
plain, but patiently to submit himself under the hand of God.

Observe here 1. The fault taxed, complaining, so the word is used
of murmurers, Num. xi. 1. "And when the people complained, it
displeased the Lord." It denotes an action that passeth on a man's
self, and intimates fretting, whereby one torments himself increas-
ing his own grief and sorrow, for his affliction.

2. The unjustifiableness of this before the Lord, why doth a liv-