

brought against us, who are taught, that the frowns of our dearest Father are bitter as death. See more above.

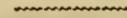
OBJECT. 7. Forgiveness of sin is a judicial act in God, as the contrary act of condemning is. Now, the judge neither condemns nor forgives offences which are not extant.

ANSWER. This objection is of a piece with the first, and does truly strike at the root of the doctrine of the gospel, and quite overturns the satisfaction of Christ; and is as unadvisedly objected here by the adversaries, as some do object that logical maxim, *Non-entis nulla sunt accidentia*. It is dangerous to endeavour to regulate the procedure of the omniscient judge, according to the order of human policy. It was a judicial act in God, "for sin to condemn sin in the flesh"* of Christ; but wo to us that live now, if it was only sin that was extant which was thus condemned.

OBJECT. 8. ult. The continual work of Christ in heaven as our intercessor, 1 John ii. 1. and the daily suing out of pardon in his name, seems to carry much in it for the acquiring of daily pardon.

ANSWER. It does so for pardon; that is, the taking off of temporary strokes. And that we might be sure of what we sue daily for, he left that comfortable word with his people before he ascended into heaven, "I go to your Father and my Father, to your God and my God." But of this before.

I conclude with that of the Apostle, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."



QUEST. III.

WHETHER OR NOT REPENTANCE BE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO THE OBTAINING OF THE PARDON OF SIN?

HAVING, in the former questions, had so frequent occasion to speak of repentance and its relation to the pardon of sin, I shall endeavour to clear what I have hinted at before in this matter. I do not now speak of the repentance that may be found in Cain and Judas, arising merely from the sense of God's wrath, which is called legal

* Rom. viii.

repentance; but of the true gospel repentance, which is a saving grace, and acceptable to God. Laying aside the Popish and Arminian necessity of it, and the conditional necessity thereof urged by others; not needing to consider them particularly, seeing *a fortiori* they will be overturned, if it can be proven, that the pardon of sin is prior to repentance; I shall lay down some concessions touching this matter, then our assertion confirmed with arguments, and objections answered.

CONCESS. 1. Repentance is necessary *necessitate præcepti*. It is a commanded duty, and ought to be preached by the ministers, and practised both by them and hearers of the gospel. And whoso make no conscience thereof, plainly appear to me to know neither Moses nor Christ, law nor gospel.

CONCESS. 2. It is necessary also *necessitate mediæ*. It is a holy mean appointed of God, or a means necessary to be gone through in order to the attaining of eternal life.

CONCESS. 3. Faith and repentance, as they are ordinarily linked together in preaching, so they cannot be separated in practice. And though we may, and must distinguish them, yet they must not be divided. And whatsoever precedency is here, it is rather in order of nature, than order of time. The graces of the Spirit being given together and at once, yet much depends on the distinct uptaking of the native order of those graces.

CONCESS. 4. As pardon denotes a relation to temporal strokes, as hath been above explained, repentance is a necessary mean in order to the obtaining of it; that is, the removal of temporal strokes. The reason of this is obvious: for the Lord's design in inflicting such strokes, is the believer's repentance, humiliation, and amendment, &c. So that when the Lord hath inflicted temporary strokes on a believer for his sins, they are not taken away till he repent and amend, and so answer the design of God in inflicting them.* It is true, they may be changed as to the species of them; and when one sort prevails not, the Lord brings on another. But still there is a continuance of them till they prove effectual. I do not say, that presently the sin is pardoned, or the stroke removed upon repentance. Scripture and experience tell us the contrary. David, though repenting, yet lies under the effects of God's fatherly displeasure; it is a while ere his broken bones be cured. The Lord will not, upon every repentance of a sinner, pass by the ordinary course of nature. Men may be cast into diseases for their sins, and repent while God's hand is upon them, and may recover, but by

* Is. xxvii. 9.

degrees. Besides, some temporary strokes of God upon believers, are of that nature that they cannot be taken off without a miracle; as the death of David's child, &c. And there is great reason for this: for God, in inflicting of temporary strokes on believers, has other designs besides that of the amendment of the party; as the vindication of his own honour, that others may fear, and the like.

CONCESS. 5. Repentance also is necessary in order to the attaining of the sense of the pardon of sin, as it relates to eternal wrath; as the tree must be known by its fruits. Repentance is a fruit of faith; and where there is no repentance, it cannot be supposed that assurance can be had. Yet this concession I understand so as, that although a clear discerning of repentance in a believer is necessary unto a firm assurance which fully quiets the heart, yet the believer may, without that, attain unto such an assurance, as is that of an adherence unto the truth of that proposition, "My sins are pardoned;" of which perhaps we may hear more afterwards. These things being yielded,

I assert, with Rutherford,* That in regard of our obligation to eternal wrath, and all the punishments of sin according to the order of justice by the law of God, faith in Christ is the only means and way to get out of our bondage and misery. And I wish this way of speaking of faith as a mean were more generally received. If it were so, it might be of good use to bury the debates about the conditionality of the covenant of grace, and the instrumentality of faith in our justification, and might tend to give us distinct uptakings of the true nature of the second covenant. "I had rather," says Durham,† "call it [faith,] the mean by which it, [Christ's righteousness,] is apprehended." So then repentance is not required as a mean in order to the obtaining of the pardon of sin, touching the obligation to eternal wrath. In a word, gospel repentance doth not go before, but comes after remission of sin, in the order of nature.

ARG. I. The first and immediate effect of saving faith, is union with the Lord Jesus Christ: for the formal act of faith as justifying, is the receiving of Christ, by which the soul is joined unto him.‡ The union betwixt Christ and believers may be considered, as with respect to us, actively and passively; as we are said to join ourselves, and to be joined to the Lord: in respect of the latter, the Spirit, on God's part, apprehending us; and in respect of the former, faith on our part apprehending him, makes up the blessed union, as the immediate result thereof.¶ Moreover, it is evident we can have no saving benefit from Christ by faith, without communion with

* Christ's Dying and Drawing, p. 593, 594.

† On Rev. p. 152. col. 2.

‡ 1 Cor. vi. 17.

¶ Jer. l. 5; 1 Cor. vi. 17.

him ; which communion supposeth, and is grounded upon union with him. So Parson,* speaking of the effects of faith, tells us, that first there is union with Christ. "What can," says he, "more necessarily and immediately follow upon the offer, on God's part, in the gospel, of Christ to be ours, and our receiving him by faith, than union to his person? This I take to be the fruit of the first consummate vital act of the quickened soul, and then is the marriage-knot tied." Now, if union with Christ be the immediate effect of faith, repentance must either go before faith, or it must come after remission of sins. The former cannot be said, seeing the repentance in question is pleasing to God ; but "without faith it is impossible to please God."† The Lord himself tells us, that without him we can do nothing:‡ *choris emu ; extra me*, says Grotius ; *scorsim a me*, says Beza. Now, we are still without Christ, till by faith we be united to him, Eph. iii. 17. Wherefore true repentance cannot go before faith. It remains then, that it comes after remission of sin. For how can it be conceived, that the soul is united to Christ, but that sin is also immediately pardoned? Seeing by virtue of this union the soul hath a perfect righteousness to present unto God, it cannot but *eo ipso* be justified and pardoned. If anything shall be supposed to intervene betwixt union with Christ and justification, we shall have a man righteous and unrighteous, condemned and not condemned at once ; condemned, because, *ex hypothesi*, he is not justified, nor his sins pardoned ; not condemned, because he is "in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1.

ARGUMENT II. We may clearly perceive this doctrine from the parable of the two debtors, Luke vii. where the conclusion of the whole is in ver. 47. "Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven ; for she loved much : but," &c. The occasion of this parable is told us, vers. 37, 38, 39. A woman who was a sinner comes to Christ, washes his feet with tears, wipes them with her hair, kisseth his feet, &c. The Pharisee having known what a profane wretch this woman was some time, but being ignorant of the change wrought on her, and the favour she had obtained with God, thinks with himself, that Christ cannot be a Prophet, in regard he admitted such a profane person to treat him so ; which he supposeth he would not have done, had he known what sort of a woman she was. The scope of the parable is, to convince the Pharisee, that this woman was not such a one as he took her to be ; but that she was a pardoned sinner, and one who, notwithstanding her former course of life, had now obtained favour with God ;

* Morning Exer. p. 468.

† Heb. xi. 6.

‡ John xv. 5.

and therefore there was no ground for the Pharisee's inference, that Christ was not a Prophet, and he was mistaken in thinking Christ knew not what she was. To prove that this woman was such a one as is said, he makes use of the parable of two debtors; the one whereof owed five hundred, the other fifty pence, both to the same creditor; and both are forgiven; then proposes the question, "Which of the two will love most?" Simon answers, "He to whom most is forgiven." Wherefore the conclusion of the point is, That seeing those love most to whom most is forgiven, and it is evident this woman loves most, which is manifest by those her expressions of love, and her tears, most is forgiven to her, she is a pardoned sinner. And thus our divines against the Papists unanimously understand this love as the effect or consequent of her forgiveness. See Calvin,* instead of all, handling this place at large against the patrons of the merit of works. Hence I argue thus: Our love to God follows upon, and is a fruit of remission of sin; but our repentance proceeds from love to God, and so in order of nature is posterior thereto: *Ergo*, Repentance follows remission of sin. Both the premises are evident from this parable, especially the proposition. To confirm the assumption, we are told, 1 John iv. 19. "We loved him, because he first loved us." God's love to us is always antecedent to ours towards him. Now, these presuppose remission: for how can God delight in those whom his law condemns? He hates those whose sins he hath not pardoned, as we heard before: or how can we love God while he is our enemy, which he is still so long as our sins are not pardoned? This is plainly taught us, Hos. xiv. 4. "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely." Upon which Zanchius thus comments: † "He says not, in the first place, I will love them, then I will heal their rebellions; but first I will heal; then, I will love." He teacheth then, that God loves none with that love whereof we speak, but after the forgiveness of their sins through Christ; and that those whose sins are not pardoned, are hated of God. For there can be no love, says Hemmingius, ‡ no obedience, except mercy and reconciliation, for the Mediator's sake, be first apprehended. We heard before Bayn telling us there can none love God, but those that are first loved of him, and have their sins covered with him.

A godly and learned divine hath an exception here; which is this. Repentance may be considered as it doth not only follow pardon, but also the intimation thereof; so it is a melting of heart,

* Instit. lib. 3. cap. section 37.

† Com. in loc.

‡ Com. in Jan. fol. 32.

and a self-loathing that floweth from felt love. This is the melting of heart spoken of in that woman. But repentance, as it is a work of sanctifying grace, arising from the sense of bypast sin, and hope of future mercy, goeth along with faith, for the attaining of the hoped-for remission.

Contra. 1. That it is granted, this woman's repentance followed her pardon, is well; but that it followed the intimation thereof, is not proven; yea the contrary seems pretty clear, if we consult the place: for after she had expressed her penitency, as the Evangelist tells us, her pardon is intimated, ver. 48. "And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven:" and adds, ver. ult, "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace;" which is a manifest check to her doubts and fears, creates a calm in her troubled soul; and tells us plainly, that she came to him in trouble, fear, and anxiety. So far was she from the intimation of pardon. And no wonder it was so; for it is but the Lord's ordinary way to use a hard wedge for knotty timber. She was a sinner, a harlot, says Piscator, and, it seems, but very lately converted; they who knew her before, not having as yet discerned the change. If it be said, that intimation was made, not so much for her who had the sense of pardon before, as for those who sat at meat with Christ; the contrary of that appears, in that the same was convincingly concluded as to them in the preceding verse. As for what is said of her repentance flowing from felt love, it is true in some sense. For God's love may be felt two ways; first, materially and objectively; secondly, formally or subjectively. The first way no doubt she felt it; for God's pardoning love was the effectual cause of her love to God, and repentance in her heart, according to that, "With loving-kindness have I drawn thee:"* for God's love worketh its like in our souls, independently on our knowledge thereof; as the wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the sound thereof, though we know not whence it cometh, nor whether it goeth.† Did not our hearts burn within us, (say the disciples),‡ while he talked with us, &c. ? and yet they knew not till afterwards who it was that spoke to them: so might she feel God's love, yet not formally and subjectively, as is clear from the necessity of the intimation spoken of before; for had she known that indeed, the power whereof she felt, it would have created peace, and quelled the storm of conscience in her.

2. That there is another kind of repentance, than this of that woman's, which goes along with faith for the attaining of

* Jer. xxxi. 3.

† John iii. 8.

‡ Luke xxiv. 32.

remission, I must needs refuse till it be proven. I confess I can see no such repentance in the Scripture as is here described. The repentance we now treat of, respects the soul's union with Christ, at the first conversion of the soul to God; and so the worthy author tells us in these words: "We say, that repentance understood in the last sense, is simply necessary for the obtaining of the pardon of sin; so that without it no unreconciled sinner can expect peace with God." And yet this repentance is said to be a work of sanctifying grace. Now, that a work of sanctifying grace should, in order of nature, go before the pardon of sin, I think will be hard to reconcile to that which is generally the doctrine of orthodox divines, that justification goes before sanctification;* that the state of the soul must first be changed, and the tree be first made good, before it can bring forth good fruit, or a work of sanctifying grace; or that our persons must be first accepted, ere our works can be acceptable. But sure it is, while sin is unpardoned our persons are not accepted.

ARGUMENT III. Hence then it further appears, that true repentance follows the pardon of sin, and therefore cannot be a mean to attain it. For if good works do not go before, but follow our justification, as is generally maintained by Protestant divines, with whom you will seldom miss, on that head, the famous saying of Augustine, *Bona opera non precedunt justificandum, sed sequuntur justificatum*; repentance must needs follow the pardon of sin, or it must be denied to be a good work; the contrary whereof we have heard, in that it is said to be a work of sanctifying grace: and it surely implies good works, if it be such as our Catechism, according to the Scripture, describes it, viz. "a turning from sin unto God," &c. We cannot but take notice how much Socinus and his fellows labour for the precedency of repentance to the remission of sin, *hoc velut et magno mercentur*. But repentance and conversion (says Socinus)† go before the blotting out of sin, Acts iii. 19. For justification (says Schlichtingius) neither begins without faith and repentance, nor does it last without the fruits and effects of faith and repentance. I know, that the learned men who plead for repentance as necessary to the attaining of the pardon of sin, do with their souls abhor Socinus' design therein; but why should we yield anything to the common enemy without necessity? In his treatise of justification, he lays hold on this their

* Assem. Cat. Hoorbeek Socin. Conf. vol. 2. p. 679. Zanch. in Eph.

† *De fide et operibus*, p. 60. cit. Hoorbeek Socin. Conf. vol. 2. p. 680. p. 334. cit. eod. ib. p. 695.

doctrine to inveigle them in a contradiction: "There is another extreme (says he*) received commonly, not without the great undoing of souls, that is, that our good works do nothing at all pertain to our justification, but as they are effects of the same. (Here is the venom of the Anti-Socinian doctrine). Whence it follows, that seeing it is certain we are justified by faith, it must needs come to pass, that they be of opinion, that a man is justified even before he doth any good, though afterwards he shall do. Which is contrary to the whole Scripture; which, to pass other things, doth plainly testify, that the remission of our sins doth not consist nor exist without repentance; and seeing it is most true, and they themselves acknowledge that, and confess that our justification is no other indeed than remission of our sins," &c. Hoornbeek† answers to this: "We confess, says he, that our good works pertain not to justification antecedently and causally, but are the effects of justification itself." This is the very thing we plead. But as for that which the same learned man adds in answer to that of Socinus, viz. That repentance is required in the subject, which may be partaker of remission, but is not therefore requisite to God's justifying as it denotes his action absolving a man; but well indeed as it denotes its termination, and the sense of it passively in the faithful soul; it does indeed confirm me in the doctrine I plead for, while I see the miserable strait those are brought into by this objection, who hold the precedency of repentance to the remission of sin. For I think it is clear, Socinus is not speaking of justification as it is an action of God precisely, not terminated upon the creature; for thus justification goes before faith as well as repentance, it being in that sense from eternity; nor yet is he speaking of the sense of it in the soul; but of justification, properly so called, terminated on the creature. And unless we make the termination of justification in the faithful soul, and the sense of it, all one, I confess I cannot divine what is the difference betwixt justification as it denotes an action of God absolving a man, and as it denotes the termination of it on the soul; only they are different ways of conceiving one and the same thing;‡ even as calefaction, as it is referred to the fire, is termed an action, and as referred to the water, is called passion. For an action of God absolving a man, (unless you understand it of the decree of absolution, which is not in question), is a transient act; and it will be very hard to shew a difference betwixt a transient act, and an act terminated on an extrinsic object. I like much better what that learned author delivers afterwards. "So

* P. 51. cit. ib. p. 679.

† *Ibid.*‡ *Wend Syst. Theol. p. 571.*

justification (says he) is considered either on God's part, or on our part, terminated in us, and its subject. The first is in the eternal decree of God destined for us; in the promises from the first age of the world, and in the gospel, offered; by Christ, merited; by his resurrection, confirmed and ratified; hitherto actively. But it is considered passively, as applied to and terminated on the soul, by faith. And this way the grace of remission is more clearly seen, as it comes to men, not only having merited nothing of good, but yet being (*consistentibus*) in guilt and wickedness: In the meantime, with the grace of justification, endued also with that of sanctification, whereby, for the time to come, they from the heart do live, not unto wickedness, but unto God and Christ." This doth indeed dash Socinus' doctrine in the head and heart. The Assembly, in their Larger Catechism,* tells us, that in sanctification the seeds of repentance unto life are put into the heart. Whereby it is manifest, that repentance doth not go before justification, and consequently that it cannot be a mean to attain the pardon of sin.

If any shall say, that repentance is properly and solely an evangelic work, and therefore is not to be put in the same class with other works following justification, and commanded by the law: I answer, That according to the doctrine of the gospel, it is plain, that faith as it receives Christ, is opposed, in the matter of justification, to all works whatsoever: and so does not only exclude repentance, but itself as a work, as Protestant divines† teach against the patrons of the righteousness of works. But this is not to be yielded, that repentance is in such sort an evangelic work,‡ as if it were not at all commanded by the law; for the law of the Lord is perfect, and contains the whole duty of man. It is true as was said above, the law knows no place for repentance, how it may be accepted as the gospel doth; it promiseth no strength wherewith it may be performed, as the gospel does. But as, supposing the revelation of Christ, and the offer of him in the gospel, the law obligeth us to believe; so supposing the rational creature to have sinned, the law obligeth him to turn from sin unto God, that is, to repent; otherwise the impenitency of the devils were no sin; which I think none will adventure to say. So then it is true, that expressly and absolutely the law does not call for repentance,

* Q. What is Sanctification?

† Never a Protestant divine (Arminians and Socinians I disclaim, as no Protestants) made sanctification a cause of justification, but an effect. Christ's Dying and Drawing, p. 109.

‡ *Evangelium nulla habet formaliter ab operibus legis distincta.* Wend. Syst. Theol. p. 415.

yet virtually and hypothetically it doth. But why are any works called *evangelic*, but because they are done by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ manifested in the gospel, and under the influence of the covenant of grace? Whereas legal works are done by the power of nature, and under the influence of the covenant of works; and in this sense any work of sanctifying grace is as much an *evangelic* work, as repentance is. But, upon the whole, let the fore-mentioned author, in his confutation of Socinianism,* answer for me. “Now, (says he), in that he (viz. Socinus) placeth *evangelic* works before justification, in that he is contrary to Scripture and reason; to the scripture, Rom. iv. 5. and iii. 28; Gal. ii. 16; Rom. xi. 6. That opinion is contrary to reason; because, seeing faith is the beginning of all good works, without which no man can please God, or perform any thing acceptable to him, and by it as soon as it is present, we are justified, good works cannot go before justification, as they cannot go before faith, but only follow.” The like he hath again elsewhere,† telling us, that God absolves men *choris ergon*, without works, without previous piety. It ought not to be said, that, by this doctrine, faith itself as an *evangelic* work is to be cast behind justification likewise; for faith, being the principle of all, must needs be excepted, in regard it is that which unites the soul to Christ. The forecited author tells‡ us how we are to understand this. “A man (says he) is justified before he hath done any good, that is, good following on faith; who when he believes is justified.” But the description formerly given of an *evangelic* work, leaves no room at all for this exception; and truly the name of a work should be far from the matter of our justification before God. Though it should be said, that repentance is not considered here as a work, but as a quality, it will not take off the force of the argument, which concludes against the very being of repentance before pardon, in order of nature at least.

ARGUMENT IV. If we consider the promises of repentance in the covenant, we shall find they come in the same order that we plead for. Ezek. xxxvi. After the Lord had told them of remission of sin, ver. 25. “From all your idols will I cleanse you;” he promiseth repentance, ver. 31. “Then shall ye remember your own evil ways,” &c. So Ezek. xvi. 60, 61, 62, 63. “I will remember my covenant with thee—Then thou shalt remember thy ways—And I will establish my covenant with thee, that thou mayest remember, and be confounded,” &c. Hos. xiv. 4. “I will heal their backsliding.” Ver. 8. “Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more

* Vol. 2. p. 681.

† P. 696.

‡ P. 680.

with idols?" Is. xli. 22. "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." This is the native order of these things; and why should we strive to disturb and confound the same? for this doctrine of the precedency of repentance to pardon calls for the quite contrary order. If it be said, these promises respect a repentance they should be stirred up to after their pardon; but that does not hinder but that there may be a sort of repentance going before pardon: I answer, (besides what is already said on this head), That there is a sort of legal repentance that goes before pardon, I do not deny, which belongs to conviction, and may be in Judas and Cain, and was in those elect ones, Acts ii. 37. when they were "pricked at the heart;" whom yet the Apostle calls to true repentance, ver. 38. And this I judge to be necessary by God's appointment, at least in the ordinary way, in the course of God's ordinary dispensation: those persons being first killed by the law whom he minds to revive by the gospel. But this goes before faith; and cannot, but in a very large sense, be reckoned a mean in order to the attaining of remission of sins; seeing it is *toto genere* different from any special and saving work of the Spirit. But the question is of gospel repentance which is theologically good: and if there be any such different from that which is here promised, I would know where it is promised; for no other appears in those places, but what follows pardon. If it be not promised at all, it is not at all, otherwise the covenant is defective: which is absurd. If you say, it is included in the new heart; I shall on the same grounds infer the necessity of all the graces of the Spirit, as well as of repentance, patience, chastity, &c.; which no man holding justification by faith alone, ever said were necessary in order to the attaining of pardon. But let it be so; the new state of cleanness by way of pardon is set before; "I will cleanse you;" also, "I will give you a new heart." But we stand not on the order of words. The apostle plainly tells us, that the ungodly are the objects of justification, Rom. iv 5. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, &c. Is the repenting sinner the man who worketh not? is he the ungodly whom God justifieth? "Who can think (says Hoornbeek)* that the ungodly is said by Paul to be justified, because after justification he remains ungodly, and not because he had been ungodly; and in the very act of justification, he could no otherwise be considered than in himself ungodly? though with his justification he be endued with

* Socin. Conf. vol. 2. p. 696.

the grace of God, whereby he shall afterwards live godly : but this neither before nor in justification ; for God absolves a man even *choris ergon*, without previous piety.”

ARGUMENT. V. Though the patrons of the doctrine of the necessity of repentance in order to the obtaining of the pardon of sin, do not aim at any encroachment on the doctrine of free pardon ; yet, with all deference to those learned men, I conceive, that such doctrine is injurious to the grace of God, and doth much darken the free pardon offered in the gospel, in regard the pardon is promised immediately to those that believe,* Acts x. 43. “Through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins.” But they require, that believers bring something with them, if they would obtain it, even that they bring repentance along with them. I think Dr. Preston† says well, when he tells us, “It is a fault to think God’s pardons are not free, and that you must bring something in your hand. The very end (says he) of thy going to Christ, is to get thy hardness of heart and deadness of spirit removed, to be healed and enlivened.” And it is truly strange to think from what airth repentance should come to people, while as yet their sins are unpardoned, and God is their enemy. What need is their of those ways ? Why go we not by faith to a reconciled God, to get repentance ; but must seek repentance where-with we may go to an unreconciled God, who is a consuming fire ? If I mistake not, that is not the way of the gospel. It is a seasonable admonition that one gives us to this purpose,‡ “When you go to mourn for sin, begin aloft with Christ ; and do not always think to begin below with sin, and so to come up to Christ ; but begin aloft with Christ, and fall down upon your sin.” “Papists (says Dr. Preston||) tell of escaping damnation, and of getting into heaven. But Scripture gives other motives (to good works). Thou art in Christ, and Christ is thine ; consider what he hath done for thee, what thou hast by him, what thou hadst been without him, and thus stir up thyself to do for him what he requireth.” Let them that will, repent that Christ may do for them ; I shall desire always to believe what Christ hath done for me, that I may repent ; not doubting but that the being instructed therein is the plain way to smiting on the thigh, and saying, What have I done ? So says a godly writer,§ “First of all, God’s favour is apprehended, and remission of sin believed ; then upon that cometh alteration of life and conversation.” Upon the whole we may see ;

* Is. lv. 1. Acts. xvi. 31, Rev. xxii. 17.

† Bridges’ Good Man’s Peace, p. 17.

† Abridg. of his works, p. 294.

|| Ubi sup.

§ Stock.

that the gospel teaches us to come empty-handed to the market of free grace, for remission of sin and God's favour. But he comes not empty, who brings repentance along with him. If any shall say, that if we screw up matters so high in this point, we must cast faith as well as repentance, in the matter of attaining pardon; for that is still something we bring with us. I shall answer; For the safety of God's grace, let the work faith, the inherent quality faith, go, and be made to stand aback, while the sinner stands before God's tribunal to be justified; that the empty-handed, taking faith, may alone have place. Hath not the Lord made it to be only of faith, that it might be of grace, while faith comes with an empty hand, and receives all? There is a vast difference betwixt faith and repentance in this matter, even as much as betwixt giving and receiving: for there is no grace of the Spirit that hath more of the nature of giving than repentance, in so far as it is a turning of the whole man from sin unto God; and upon that head it ought to be banished far from the soul's justification, and to have no part nor lot in the matter of attaining free pardon. And seeing this doctrine doth so well agree with the natural religion that is in all men, whereby they, when they come to God to obtain a favour, would always be sure of some qualification in themselves fitting them for the receipt of it; let us take heed, that it turn not the covenant of grace into a bastard covenant of works. The covenant of works says, Do this; the covenant of grace says so too. Where is the difference then? Why, the covenant of works says, Do this, and thou shalt live, viz. in God's favour, wherein life lies.* But the covenant of grace saith, Live thou, and do this.† Now, this doctrine says, Repent, and thy sins shall be pardoned; which is indeed, Do this, and thou shalt live. It requires not perfect obedience indeed; but if we resolve it, we find it to be this, Turn from sin sincerely unto God, though thou canst not perfectly, and thou shalt live in God's favour. Now, we know *magis et minus non variant speciem*. I have almost lost sight of faith its relation to the pardon of sin: and no great wonder; seeing another thing is set betwixt them, which seems to take the right hand of faith; for they will not say repentance goes before faith, and yet they will not allow it to come after remission of sin. So then it must go betwixt them, and therefore is the nearest mean: and whichsoever of two means be in themselves the more noble, yet, in relation to the common end, it is highly reasonable to prefer the immediate and nearest mean to the mediate and remote; whereby it comes to pass, that, in the matter of the pardon of sin,

* Psal. xxx. 5.

† Ezek. xvi. 6, 7.

repentance must be the more noble mean. Again, I say, I believe and desire to go immediately to Christ for pardon: but dost thou repent of thy sins, thy faith cannot obtain pardon without repentance? Well then, still repentance is preferable to faith here: for without it faith can do nothing; but with it, it proves effectual; now, *Propter quod unumquodque est tale, illud ipsum est magis tale.* But this I am confident is not the doctrine of the gospel. Let us take a watchword from holy and learned Rutherford: "We would beware (says he) of Mr. Baxter's* order of setting repentance and works of new obedience before justification; which is indeed a new covenant of works."

ARGUMENT VI. ult. If repentance be a mean necessary in order to the obtaining of pardon, then unless a man be assured of the truth and reality of his repentance, he cannot without sin embrace the offered pardon; the very embracing of it is a sin unto him; which is very absurd. I prove the connection: for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin: that is, says acute Beza,† all that is done in doubt of conscience, whether it please God or not, and so consequently whether God commanded it or not, is but sin. And the context makes it plain, that the apostle means it of the faith of God's command. Now, how can that be of faith, and how can that be but sin, when the person doubts of God's command obliging him in particular to believe and lay hold upon the offered pardon? He is persuaded, that he dare not embrace the pardon or believe it, unless he be a true penitent; for God offers it to none immediately, but to true penitents, *ex hypothesi*; and yet no wonder that he very much doubts whether he be such a one or not, and is most ready to conclude he is not. So that till he be persuaded of the truth of his repentance, he cannot in faith embrace the offered pardon. When God makes his offers of pardon only to such as are so and so qualified, how can he be excused from presumption that adventures on the embracing of them, not discerning himself to be thus qualified? When the Lord covers his table in the gospel, but invites none but such as are qualified with true repentance, he that doubteth, is damned if he eat. But the gospel requires no such thing, as that a man must know his repentance to be true before he embrace the offered pardon; but simply calls all that will come, to come and take of the water of life freely. We may easily perceive how injurious this is to souls under exercise, how it natively tends to keep them long in the place of the breaking forth of children. For although the person appre-

* Influences of the Life, &c. p. 346.

† Conf. point 4. art. 15.

hends God's anger gone out against him, and hears of the free pardon offered in the gospel; yet still it appears to him forbidden fruit, unless he be conscious to himself of the truth of his repentance; seeing true repentance is a mean absolutely necessary in order to the obtaining of the pardon of sin. And while they cannot see the truth of their repentance, the offers of the gospel and promises of pardon, while they hear them, do but torment them the more, while they persuade themselves, that none but true penitents can have access unto them; which ere they can lay hold on, they must redden the marches betwixt legal and gospel repentance, and must have it made out to their consciences, that their repentance hath all the discriminating characters that distinguish it from the repentance of Judas, and from that sorrow for sin which proceeds merely from the force of an enlightened conscience. And seeing true repentance proceeds from love to God, as we heard before, they must love God, not only while they apprehend him their enemy, but even while he is their enemy in very deed; being a judge to them, under whose condemnatory sentence they lie, their sins being unpardoned. Whatever the soul in this case actually does, it is plain from what is said, that, acting according to this principle, they are obliged to suspend the embracing of pardon till they know they repent. But I suppose, that when a sinner is sufficiently made to see his absolute need of Christ, and of gospel grace, he does then embrace Christ by faith, which makes up a happy union betwixt Christ and him; whereupon follows the absolvitory sentence; and that independently on his consciousness either of his own acts towards God, or of God's actions towards him. In the meantime, this false persuasion, while stuck to, mars their peace and comfort. The plain gospel way, so far as I understand it, is, That a soul being by the law, brought to a sense of the absolute and indispensable need of Christ, (for till then a soul will never be content with the gospel way of salvation,) hath an offer of Christ, and of the pardon of sin freely made unto it, without any respect to any inherent qualification; and thereupon cordially takes both according to the offer, embraceth Christ and his pardoning grace; or consents to take Christ, by which he becomes his: whereupon he is immediately justified and pardoned, without any more ado: and hence natively flows true repentance; which being discerned by them, confirms to them the pardon of sin more and more. I said more and more; in regard that this truth we now plead for being believed, supposing the soul conscious of its own act of reception, it is even then, at the soul's first embracing of Christ, sufficient *in suo genere* to assure him of the pardon of his sins. And no farther goes the

consciousness of true repentance : for, in respect of both, the super-venient testimony of the Spirit is necessary to remove all doubts, and to set the soul in perfect peace. For let the medium be, either the receiving of Christ and the pardon offered, or repentance, the illustration of both premises and conclusion by the Spirit is necessary, in order to the full quiet of the heart. And I think I may add, that faith is a more firm and steady ground of assurance of the pardon of sin, *quad nos*, than repentance; in regard it is easier known. And hence it is, that divines use to give advice to Christians perplexed with doubts and fears as to their state, when they can discern no evidences of grace in themselves, to lay by the inquiry, and, as if they had never believed in Christ, repented of their sins, &c.* to exercise a direct act of accepting of Christ offered in the gospel, and then to reflect on that act in order to their quietness.† If any shall endeavour to retort this argument, and say, that if it hold, then as to faith, which is a necessary mean to pardon, we must in like manner be assured of the reality thereof, or it is sin for us to embrace the pardon: I answer, It follows by no means. There are two ways of embracing a pardon. *First*, A pardon may be embraced in the way of presumption; which overleaps Christ himself, and grasps at his benefits, and particularly remission of sin. This no doubt is a sin; for God offers no pardon in that way. *Secondly*, A pardon is embraced by faith; which receives Christ, and in him and with him the pardon of sin. This cannot be sin, whether we be conscious of the reality and uprightness of our act or not; though it is not so in regard of repentance. The reason is, There is a vast difference betwixt faith and repentance in this matter. The last of these is required as a qualification in the party distinct from the receiving of the pardon; or it is required as a mids, through which a soul must go before it can win at the pardon: and therefore, if faith should lay hold on pardon, not knowing it hath come by this mids *quad nos*, we come not at it in God's way, and consequently it is sin to embrace it so, viz. not having known, antecedently to our taking it, that we do repent. But faith is not a qualification previously required to the embracing of the pardon; but, as it is considered here, is the very act of receiving it, Acts xxvi. 18, "That they may receive forgiveness of sins." Wherefore the previous knowledge thereof in us cannot be necessary in order to the embracing of the pardon; unless you say, that a man must know he receives forgiveness before he receive it; which is absurd. To conclude, I suppose, that the way to deal with souls in order to their salvation, is, to labour by all means to conclude

* Perkins' Alicubi.

† Craighhead on the Sac. p. 31.

them under the law; that is, to hold out unto them their miserable state by nature, so as they may clearly see themselves lying under the curse, no ways able to help themselves; whence they shall feel an absolute need of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, when they are brought that length by the blessing of God, to propose unto them Christ with his free pardon: which he is to be commanded in God's name to accept, without any more ado about any thing to qualify him for a pardon. "Wherefore," says Luther,* "when I see a man sufficiently broken, to be oppressed with the law, terrified with sin, and to thirst after comfort; then is it time that I remove out of his sight the law and active righteousness, and propose, by the gospel, passive righteousness; which, Moses with his law being excluded, does exhibit the promise concerning Christ, who came for the afflicted and sinners."

OBJECT. 1. The command of repentance is prefixed to the obtaining of pardon, and preventing of wrath, and that by way of certification, that if it be not, remission is not to be expected, Acts iii. 19. "Repent, that your sins may be blotted out;" which doth imply, that without this the blotting out of sin is not to be expected. See also Acts ii. 38. and viii. 22.

ANSWER. How little weight is to be laid upon the prefixing of the command to the obtaining of pardon, will appear in the examination of the places of Scripture adduced. As for that of preventing wrath, I cheerfully yield, we cannot be saved unless we repent and obey, as we cannot be pardoned unless we believe. For the better understanding of the Scriptures alleged, I am content to borrow light from the learned man that hath this objection; who, while he defends faith alone to be the condition of the covenant of grace. proposeth an objection against himself, viz. As these places (which he had adduced for confirmation of that assertion, that faith alone is the condition of the covenant) do propose faith, so other places do propose repentance, as Acts ii. 38. &c. He answers to this, That if that objection hold, repentance and works would be equalled with it. "We therefore" says he, "take it thus: Where repentance is proposed, there the whole way of turning to God more generally is proposed." And herein he follows Calvin, who speaks thus: "And truly I am not ignorant,† that under the name of repentance, is comprehended, the whole turning to God, whereof faith is not the least part." I presume, that in these places alleged, faith is not once named, but repentance is proposed: *Ergo*, The whole way of turning to God more generally is proposed. And if the prefixing

* Arg in epist. ad. Gal.

† Instit. lib. 3. cap. 3. Sect. 5.

thereof to the promise of pardon do sufficiently evince, that it is previously required to forgiveness, then faith, repentance, and works are in the same balance, or repentance and works are equalled with faith: for who can deny, that new obedience is comprehended under the whole turning unto God? So Hemmingius citing that of Jeremiah,* “Let every man return from his evil ways, and I will forgive your iniquity and your sins,” tells us, “That here is a commandment, and a promise. The commandment is, that the ungodly do return: the promise is of reconciliation. Hereupon it is gathered, that repentance is a conversion of man unto God; in the which conversion he doth depart from evil, believe the promise, and studieth to lead a new life according to the will of God.” Now, unless that our whole turning to God more generally be a mean of remission of sin, which I hope will not be said by the objector, these Scriptures alleged prove nothing to the purpose. But let us take a particular view of them. As to that Acts iii. 19. “Repent,—that your sins may be blotted out;” though I should grant, that the repentance here exhorted to is repentance strictly so called, and that God offers pardon here, and requires repentance; it will not therefore follow, that it is required antecedently to the obtaining of pardon. “Wherefore, when God offereth forgiveness of sins,” says Calvin,† “he likewise useth to require repentance on our part; secretly declaring, that his mercy ought to be to men a cause of their repentance. Again, “repent ye, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,” Acts iii. 19. where yet it is to be noted, that this condition is not so annexed, as though our repentance were a foundation to deserve pardon; but rather (because the Lord hath determined to have mercy upon men, *to this end that they should repent*) he teacheth men whether they shall travail if they will obtain grace.” But indeed I very much doubt, if the repentance here spoken of, be meant, either in whole or in part, of true gospel repentance; in regard we find conversion is also exhorted unto in the very next word, which I suppose may take in true repentance. Wherefore I rather incline to expound it simply of a change of the mind from one opinion to another, from worse to better. It is well known, that the people of the Jews had very unsound notions concerning their Messiah, his nature and offices; they looked for one who should make a great figure in the world, restore the kingdom to Israel, and deliver them from the Roman yoke. This prejudicated opinion remaining with them, the doctrine of the gospel could have no access unto their hearts: for the preach-

* Com. on Jam. digress. concern. Repentance. fol. 27. † Instit. lib. 3. cap. 3. Sect. 29.

ing of the cross was to the Jews a stumbling-block; they expected far other things of their Messiah than that he should be crucified, &c. The apostle therefore calls them to lay aside this prejudice, and be converted. This very well agrees with the context: for Peter having told them how they had crucified him whom God now had glorified, he shews them, how it came to pass they did so, ver. 17; Through ignorance ye did it. For (as Paul says) had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Wherefore, ver. 18. he removes their mistake, telling them, that, by the writings of the prophets, the Messiah was to suffer the very things that they had inflicted on Jesus of Nazareth. Whence he brings in that exhortation, ver. 19. Repent therefore, &c. "Then be no more under the power of that dangerous mistake, but change your mind, and turn to the Lord," &c. But understand repentance here what way you please, this Scripture makes nothing for what it is alleged: for it is evident that the blotting out of sin here respecteth, not the time of repentance, but the time of refreshment. Wherefore, as Mr. Rutherford answers, "The words should bear, that sins were not pardoned until the time of refreshment,* that is, till the day of eternal happiness, and rest from our labours of this life; in which day sins are only blotted out declaratively, saith Diodati." The world to come, says Tainovius, whose beginning is at the last judgment, is called by Luke very elegantly, as his manner is, *Anapsuxis*,† because it denotes refreshment, which is done, and comes to them who are weakened by heat, through refrigeration; as ye may see in some who are in a swoon, when ye pour cold water on them. So Calvin, Beza, Piscator, and Aretius, understand it. Wherefore the remission here spoken of is not the formal forgiveness that is in question; but is an open declaration of the same at the day of judgment. And herenunto the emphasis of the Greek word rendered blotting out doth best agree: for it signifies (says Zanchius‡) so perfectly to blot out a thing, that there remains behind no vestige of it. As little does that place, Acts ii. 38, Repent, and be baptized—for the remission of sins, help their cause: for who sees not, that the command of being baptized is prefixed to the promise, as well as the command to repent? Must it then follow, that baptism is a necessary mean in order to the obtaining of the remission of sin? The argument is of alike force for both. But, moreover, where is there a promise here? Mention is indeed made of remission, but not by way of promise. Nay, there is nothing here of a formal

* Influences of the Life, &c. p. 348.

† Leigh's Crit.

‡ Com. on Col. ii.

reception of forgiveness. For, as Piscator* well observes, these words, for the remission of sins, do not depend upon the word repent, but upon that be baptized. And the plain sense of the words is, that they should be baptized in testimony of remission of sin, not to obtain remission of sin through this mean or instrument, because faith alone is the mean or instrument whereby we apprehend remission of sins in the gospel. If you say, Is there no promise of the pardon of sin to be found here? I answer, The formal forgiveness of sin is comprehended in ver. 39. The promise is to you, &c. Now, what promise? the promise of the Spirit, ver. 17. And of salvation, ver. 21. Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved first of all; which pre-supposeth faith; for how can they call on him on whom they have not believed? Now, it is plain, that the apostle exhorts them to repent, from this ground, that the promise is to them, as the particle *for* imports. And though the 39th verse comes last, yet, in order of nature, it is first, as the premises go before the conclusion. And thus I think, we have the plain meaning of the apostle in these words, *q. d.*:—"Ye are pricked at the heart; but do not despond, in regard the saving and special gifts of God are in your offer, and promised to you upon your acceptance thereof: therefore do ye wholly turn to God by faith, repentance, and new obedience; and, for your confirmation in the remission of your sins, receive baptism as the seal of the covenant." As to that Acts viii. 22. we say, that the command to pray is prefixed to what he says of remission, as well as the command to repent; yet must it not be hence concluded, that prayer must needs go before forgiveness. But here, as before, we say repentance is put for the whole turning to God.

OBJECTION 2. The connection betwixt repentance and pardon is peremptorily enforced, Luke xiii. 2, 3. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Prov. xxviii. 13. "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy."

ANSWER. All this is what we deny not. There is no doubt a connection betwixt repentance and pardon. But the question is rather about the annexing of the one to the other, Whether repentance be annexed to pardon, or pardon to repentance? We say, the former is true, and there is nothing here to prove the contrary. Yea, the first of these Scriptures cited, doth not so much as hold out a connection betwixt repentance and pardon, but only betwixt non-repenting and perishing. And there is a vast difference betwixt these two; for the former cannot be lawfully inferred from the latter; as

* *Schol. in loc.*

will appear, if duly considered. Let the argument be this, "Except ye repent, ye shall perish;" *Ergo*, if ye do repent, ye shall live. The consequent is true; but the consequence is naught.* It is as that, Our ill works will damn us, *Ergo*, Our good works will save us; or as if we should say, If ye do not pray to God, ye shall perish, *Ergo*, If ye do, ye shall live. We see here the consequent is false, and so is the consequence: for *bonum non nisi ex integra causa, malum ex quolibet defectu*. Non-repentance simply, and of itself, is sufficient to make us perish; but who will say, that simple repentance of itself is sufficient to save us, even in the way of means? As to that other Scripture, Prov. xxviii. 13. I say with Mr. Rutherford,† that the Holy Ghost there is not upon order, as if penitent confession, forsaking all sin, must go before forgiveness; but the Lord designs the persons pardoned, that they must be such as forsake their sins. Now, there is great reason for this; because men who hide their sins, and forsake them not, will yet pretend to share of pardon; who therefore have great need to be undeceived. And truly, seeing, as the apostle speaks, "Confession is made with the mouth unto salvation," Rom. x. 10. and, with respect to open and scandalous sins, it must be understood of confession before men; I see not how the necessary precedence of it unto pardon can be avouched: for who will say, that a formal pardon cannot be had, but these things must be before it?

OBJECTION 3. The Scripture grounds the causes of people's ruin on their not repenting, as in Lev. xxvi. Amos iv. Ezek. xviii. Rev. xvi. and many such places; where this, They repented not, is given as the cause of God's continued quarrel with them.

ANSWER. If we will understand this according to what was said above, that by repenting in such places where it is simply proposed without faith, is meant the whole turning to God, the argument is of no weight. But it seems here to be urged as taken for repentance strictly so called. And let it be so, the consequence is naught. Every thing that people's ruin is grounded on, the contrary is not therefore a previous mean to pardon; as is evident to any that will consider, Hos. iv. Swearing, lying, &c. are made the grounds of that people's ruin; yet I hope the reverend use of God's name, and speaking truth, must not therefore be reckoned the means of pardon. Many such places might be alleged. But perhaps it will be said, none of these things had been their ruin, if they had repented. But what is that to say, but that none of these things would have been their ruin, if they had turned from them unto God, embracing

* *Ean me metanoete.*

† *Influences of the Life, &c.* p. 348.

the contrary virtues? So it is still the same thing as before these contrary virtues are made by this way the means of pardon. But if the argument be good, it is believing that is the mean: for the Scripture expressly tells us, that men are condemned because they have not believed, John iii. 18. and Christ calls believing the work of God, John vi. 29. and John calls it his command (1 John iii. 23.) by way of eminency.

OBJECTION 4. ult. In the promises of the covenant, remission of sin is subjoined to the exercise of repentance, as necessarily antecedent; so that without it there is no access to any promise of pardon. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41, 42. "If they confess their iniquity, then will I remember my covenant:" which doth pre-suppose confession, and the exercise of repentance, and the humbling of the heart, to go before the application of the covenant. And lest it should be thought a legal covenant, it is expressly said to be the covenant with Abraham, which cannot be denied to be of grace. 1 Kings viii. 47. Solomon expressly covenanteth for pardon on these terms; and 2 Chron. vii. 13, 14. the Lord doth expressly assent to these articles. It may be confirmed from 1 John i. 9. which supposeth that there is no engagement, to speak so, upon God's faithfulness to pardon any sinner, but him who repenteth.

ANSWER. I have already proven the contrary of this in the fourth argument; having produced several promises where there is no vestige of any such order, but of the contrary. If there be no access to the promise of pardon without repentance, it is we ourselves that bolt the door; and therefore let us blame ourselves, and those who advise us to find any good qualification in ourselves, before we embrace the free pardon. But if God's hand be at the work, the pardon shall find access to us, and our hearts shall be opened to receive it; and being received, it shall, by its supernatural efficacy, melt and thaw the heart into true repentance, though we know not whence it comes, nor whither it goes; but are busy in preparing the room for it, while we neglect to open the door to let it in. As for the covenant itself, it is our consent that brings us within the bond of it. The Lord offers to be our God in Christ; we by faith consent to take him so. Call it the condition, mids, or what you please; I hope you will not say, I dare not give this consent until I repent; for this consenting or believing is my necessary and indispensable duty, whatever state I be in. But you will say, I dare not embrace the pardon till I repent. If you mean *de facto*, it is my weakness; if *de jure*, how strange is this? I may not embrace what is lesser; and yet may, and must what is infinitely greater and better; for God himself is better than ten thousand pardons. But I am per-

snaded, that when I find my soul content to take God in Christ to be my God, and do actually consent to that gracious offer, that the promise of pardon is absolute to me, Ezek. xxxvi. 25: for *eo ipso* that God is my God, his free pardon is mine, and it can be no presumption in me to embrace what is mine own. God holds it forth to me in the covenant, I by faith lay hold on it; there is nothing here that intervenes, so that it is still absolute; and if absolute, how can it be said there is no access to it without repentance? As for these Scriptures, Lev. xxvi. 40. &c.; 1 Kings viii. 47; 2 Chron. vii. 13; I grant they pre-suppose repentance, &c.; but they touch not the point in hand, in regard they respect the pardon of sin, as it is the removal of temporary strokes, as I have already shown, and will be manifest to such as view the places: for who sees not, that the multitude of those things there required, is very unlike the simplicity of the gospel offer—Believe, and thou shalt be saved? It is clear, that the people are considered there in a national capacity, and under national strokes for national sins; for removal, repentance of the same kind is required. And though, in such a general repentance of a people, they that believe are spiritually and theologically serious, and, with a removal of common calamity from off the society whereof they are members, get God's countenance to shine on their souls; yet the generality are never evangelically penitent. But moral seriousness in such a case, according to the Lord's way of dealing with nations, is a mean to get these temporal strokes removed; as may be seen in the case of the Ninevites, and many a time in the case of the Jews. What though this covenant be a covenant of grace? the covenant of grace has undeniably temporary strokes threatened in it; and it is generally allowed, that there is a twofold being in this covenant; the one external, the other internal. The one gives people to share of the outward blessings of the covenant, the other makes them partakers of special and saving blessings. And thus one and the same person may be under the covenant of works and the covenant of grace; in the former, in respect of his soul's state, with God's curse upon him; under the latter, externally partaking of the external privileges, protections, deliverances, &c. given to the visible church. So then we may plainly see what it is for God to remember his covenant. When the captive, broken, and afflicted Israelites confess their sins, humble themselves, &c. God removes the temporary strokes they lie under. And this is applicable to particular persons, in respect of the spiritual and saving federal relation to God; for so it is in the inward and special administration of the covenant: but then it respects such as are justified and sanctified, but none other, as these

promises and prayers concern Israel separated from among all other people, 1 Kings viii. 53. As to that Scripture, 1 John i. 9. "If we confess," &c. the author himself tells us afterwards, that John is there writing to believers, and puts himself in the roll. And there is no doubt but it is so: for he writes to his children, and that their joy might be full; and speaks of God as faithful, in respect of his promises to them; and just to forgive, in respect of the merits of Christ imputed to them. And, as Case tells us,* he asserts the doctrine of actual sin in the justified against the Simonians, Gnostics, and other heretics of that age; of whom he shews, out of Augustine, that they taught, that there was no sin but unbelief; that to the justified all things were clean, however they live; that a just man does not so much as commit a small sin; and upon this they could not but teach, that the justified were not to confess sins. Against these then the apostle sets himself here, and teacheth the justified to confess their sins. Whence it appears, that this doth not at all concern the point in hand; the question being of the means necessary in order to justification, and the pardon of sin at first; betwixt which and the subsequent pardons, I have proven above that there is a vast difference.

QUEST. IV.

WHERE HATH SIN ITS LODGING-PLACE IN THE REGENERATE?

"God made man upright, but he found out many inventions." He was a glorious creature, as he dropt from the forming finger of God, all whose works are perfect. It was man's glory, that he was created after the image of God. It was God's will he should be created mutably so. Of his mutability there can be no controversy. Sad experience teacheth us, that man is not now perfect; but, on the contrary, a mass of sin, and lump of hell, the noble kind being affected with diabolic contagion, which he voluntarily received. Whereby it comes to pass, that all is infected. The understanding, which formerly was a sun of light in this little world, is not only overclouded, but utterly darkened, as to any saving uptaking of spiritual things. The will, which before

* Morning Exer. p. 14.