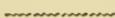


guished by special marks of favour in a day of public calamity; but if you also go away, your sin will afterwards find you out.

Remember, now you have heard your duty; it is the duty of communicants, and also of others. Remember that it is not enough to set fair off. It is only he that follows fully who will be brought safely to the promised land. It is only he that endureth to the end who will be saved. Be not, therefore, "weary in this well-doing, for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not."



THE CHRISTIAN DESCRIBED, THE HYPOCRITE DETECTED.*

SERMON XXXI.

ROM. ii. 28, 29,

For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.

THESE words are a reason why no man ought to value himself on the externals of religion, for they will go but short way. However they please men, they will never please God. The scope of them is, to show who are the people of God. The Jews of old were the people of God; the Christians are so now, being come in their room. The apostle here distinguishes the people of God into nominal and real ones, calling them Jews, because he was speaking to Jews; the case is the same as to Christians.—In these words, he shews two things.

1. Who are not true Jews, real Christians, or saints indeed, ver. 28; for these are they whom he means by Jews, saying, "He is not a Jew." Not those who are Jews outwardly, Christians and saints by profession, that is, who are only so, and no more; for God requires externals of religion as well as internals, though the former, separate from the latter, avail nothing. But those who have no more religion than what is outward, viz. what men see or may see, they have nothing of the reality of it.

The Jews valued themselves on circumcision, as Christians on

* Delivered in March and April, 1719.

baptism ; but true circumcision is not what is outward in the flesh, nor baptism what is by water ; that is only so. These external rites signify an inward grace, without which they signify nothing before God. Circumcision was in a hidden part of the body, yet it was on the body, and what might be seen ; so religion might be in saints ; yet being only what may be seen, will not constitute a person truly religious.—He shows,

2. Who are true Jews, real Christians, or saints indeed ? There are two characters of these, which distinguished them from the other. They are,

(1.) Those who are so inwardly, or in the hidden part, which is open to God alone, as well as in the outward part, which appears to the world. These who have the hidden part of religion, which being hid from the world's view, they cannot certainly judge of. Those who have the true circumcision, the spiritual baptism, that is, the circumcision of the heart, Deut. x. 16, by which corrupt lusts are cut off, and the body of sin put off, Col. ii. 11. This is the spiritual, not fleshly circumcision only. It touches on, reforms, and renews our spirit, our soul, the hidden, but most valuable part of a man. The carnal is but the cutting off a bit of the flesh of the body, which might be done while the spirit remained overgrown with unmortified lusts, and the soul quite defiled. The spirit is here opposed to the letter, which last cannot be well understood of the body, but of circumcision, and therefore the spirit also ; q. d. and circumcision of the heart, which is circumcision in the spirit or grace of it, (not in the letter, or external rite of circumcision), is the true circumcision. So they have the spirituality of it, which is as the soul thereof, as well as the letter, which is as the body thereof. The spirit of circumcision is the invisible grace signified by it, and joined with it, when it is effectual ; the letter of it is the sensible sign or external rite.

(2.) They are such as have God's approbation, commendation, and praise, whether they have men's or not. There is an allusion here to the word Judah, from whom that people, now called Jews, had their name ; it signifies praised, Gen. xlviii. 8. These are the true Judahs, whom not only their brethren, but their Father, even God, praises. Outward religion may gain praise of men, who cannot discern what is within ; but the true Jew the real Christian, is one approved even by the heart-searching God, according to the reality, and not the appearance.—From this subject I take this

DOCTRINE, That he is not a true Christian, who only in the outward part, and in the letter of religion, approves himself to men ;

but he who, by the inner part of religion, and the spirituality thereof, also approves himself to the heart-searching God.

In illustrating this important truth, I shall,

I. Speak to this point generally.

II. Consider it more particularly.—I shall,

I. Speak to this point more generally.—Here I propose,

I. To shew that there is such a difference in the visible church, that there are some who are only Christians outwardly, and that there are others who are also Christians inwardly.

II. To inquire what are the causes of this difference ?

III. To point out what is the outside and letter of religion, which only makes an outside Christian, and what the inside and spirit of religion is which makes a genuine Christian.

IV. To confirm the doctrine.—I am,

I. To shew that there is such a difference in the visible church, that there are some who are only Christians outwardly, and that there are others who are also Christians inwardly.

This difference appears many ways. It appears,

1. In the very different characters given those who profess the same faith and true religion. The preachers of the gospel are fishers of men, but they are not all good that come by profession into the net, Matth. xiii. 47, 48. The tares and the wheat grow together in the field of the church, the goats and the sheep go together all the day, till the great Shepherd separate them. And as to virgin-professors, some are wise, and have oil in their vessels, with their lamps; others are foolish, Matth. xxv. who mock God with fair promises, befool even the godly, who looked well upon them, and, worst of all, befool themselves in the latter end, when the Bridegroom cometh.—This appears,

2. In the very different effects religion has on the lives of those who are called Christians. There are some whose religion has a powerful efficacy on their hearts and lives to make them holy, others who have nothing but an idle form, having no more sanctifying power with it, than a painted fire has to burn: 2 Tim. iii. 5, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. The knowledge of some is confined to their heads, it never gets down to their hearts: Tit. i. 16, "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him." Others, by reason of their light, dare not venture on an ill thing, more than on a precipice. Religion makes some persons godly, sober, and righteous, binds powerfully on them their duty to God, to themselves, and to their neighbour. The pretended religion of others, leaves them loose as to all those things. It never

checks them when neglecting secret prayers, or prayers in the family, or when disposed to swear, drink, lie, defraud, &c.—This appears,

3. In the very different acceptance with God which persons' prayers get. There are some whose duties are very pleasing to God, they have a sweet savour in his nostrils: their words are registered before him, their tears are bottled, their sighs and groans are regarded, their will is accepted for the deed. But there are others whom God abhors, and also their duties. The word is preached to them, but it never reforms them; yet they hold on with their attendance on ordinances, and it may be also with their prayers. What says the Lord of all such? "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination." "For all these things hath my hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's flesh; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations." "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? saith the Lord; I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats," Prov. xxviii. 9; Isa. lxvi. 2, 3, and i. 11.—This appears,

4. From the very different sense and feeling which those have of the advantage of religion, the ordinances and duties thereof. Some are acquainted with the gain of religion, and, from their own experience, can give a solid reason why they follow it: 1 Tim. vi. 6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain." They have tasted of communion with God in duties, and of access to him, of the sanctifying influences of the Spirit in ordinances: Mic. ii. 7, "O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the Lord straitened? are these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?" But unto others all these things are in very deed but as empty husks: Prox. xiv. 10, "The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." They abide in the outer court of religion all their days; they see not its intrinsic glory, nor taste of its kernel or marrow. They keep up a form of duties from custom, and an unenlightened conscience; but they feel nothing in them kindly to draw their hearts towards God.—This appears,

5. In the very different effects of the religion which those profess.

Grace is of a growing nature, and it will grow, though not visible at all times : Prov. iv. 18, " But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." And the longer that saints have a standing in religion, they will be the more firmly rooted ; though perhaps their affections be not always so vigorous, yet solid tenderness will display itself with them : Psalm xcii. 13, 14, " Those that are planted in the house of the Lord, shall grow up and flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age : they shall be fat and flourishing." And if they fall, they will not lie still, but recover again : Psalm xxxvii. 24, " Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down ; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." But what are the effects which the religion of many has ? Some grow up to their false pitch, and there they stand without motion : Prov. xxvi. 14, " As the door turneth on his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed." They think they are right, and they seek no farther. Some, instead of growing better, grow worse and worse ; the longer they live, they are the more unholy, more untender in the substantial of moral duties ; and some throw aside the mask altogether, and, in sight of the world, desert to the devil's camp, by falling into some profane course, apostatising upon some temptation or other, and so, as they were before loathsome before God, they become also loathsome before his people : Rev. iii. 16, " So, then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." This appears,

Lastly, In the very different passage which those have out of time into eternity. True, all must die, that is the point in which we all meet ; but as true is it, that it is the point where outside and inside Christians part for ever : Psalm xxxvii. 37, 38, " Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the latter end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together ; the end of the wicked shall be cut off." Though they have lived in the same church together, under the same ordinances, gone to prayers together, to one communion-table, when they come to that step where their ways part, they separate never to meet more. The one goes to the society of God, angels, and saints ; and their unseen religion terminates in a glorious open reward, their grace in glory, their inward beauty in shining as stars in the firmament. The other gets his portion with reprobates, and those who had as little of the shew, as of the reality of religion : Psalm cxxv. 5, " As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity."—I shall point out,

II. What are the causes of this difference which obtains betwixt Christians and others.—Among others, there is,

1. The very different way that persons come by their religion; if we examine outside and inside Christians, how they came by the religion they severally have, it will be found, that the religion which they have is answerable to the way they came by it.—Thus,

(1.) There is a difference in the weight which their entering on their religion had on their spirits. Some come very lightly by their religion; hence it sits lightly upon them, and often goes as lightly from them. They venture upon building a tower, without deliberately counting the cost. To others it is not so easy, but they are brought to the utmost seriousness in the matter, Luke xiv. 28, 29; hence they go to the bottom of the matter, while others satisfy themselves with superficial work.

(2.) There is a difference in the depth of their conviction and humiliation: Luke vi. 48, 49, “He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock, and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that, without a foundation, built an house on the earth, against which the stream beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.” The plough of conviction lightly going over the fallow ground of the heart, is sufficient to make an outside Christian: Matth. xiii. 5, 20, “Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth, and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it.” If he have as much of it as to let him see the evil and danger of a life quite profane, without so much as the form of godliness, it is sufficient to make him put on the form. But it must be carried deeper, to make an inside Christian, even to the root of the most inward beloved lust, to the sin of one’s nature, and to the discovery of Christ for sanctification, as well as justification.

(3.) There is a vast difference in their light and illumination in the knowledge of Christ: John iv. 10, “Jesus answered, and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.” This is plainly intimated in the wise and foolish builders and virgins; so that an outside Christian has never been right in the head. All their insight into the excellency of Christ and religion, has left them fools, while others have been made really wise, their judgment rectified, their taste purified, so as to be capable to discern things concerning their souls in their native colours. Hence that glory in Christ has been

seen by the one, which has darkened all created glory, made them content to part with all for him, while the other has always some lust or other more dear to them than Christ and religion.—There is,

(4.) A difference in the issue of their exercises about their soul's case. In the one they have issued in the change of their nature, the taking away of the heart of stone, Ezek. xxxvi. 26, the making of them new creatures, putting off the old man, and putting on the new. But in the other, whatever stir has been made in the affections, whatever griefs or joys they have had, the stony heart has remained untaken away, Matth. xiii. 5; so, though they have become other men than they were before, yet not new men.—Another cause of difference is,

2. The different ways in which professors follow religion. This, if attended to, cannot fail to make a mighty difference.

(1.) Some make religion their business, their main business, in the world: Gen. v. 24, "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." Religion is their all. They see nothing they have to do in the world, but it is either their salvation-work or their generation-work, so that they must observe God in all things. And this makes an inside Christian: Psalm cxix. 6, "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." Others make religion but a bye-work; their main business is of another kind, how to please themselves, how to advance their temporal interest; and this makes an outside Christian. In regard to the one, all things else about him bow to his religion, he cuts and carves them as may best suit God's honour, and his soul's welfare; whereas, as to the other, he makes his religion bow to his other designs, takes so much of it, and no more, as may leave him in quiet possession of some lust or other.

(2.) They follow religion from different principles, motives and ends.

[1.] Some follow it from natural principles and motives; that which moves them to it is a natural conscience, in some sort enlightened by the word and providence, which will give them no rest in the utter neglect of religion. Fear of punishment, or hope of reward, are powerful enough to make an outward Christian. But an inside Christian has a gracious principle of love to God and holiness implanted in him, the law is written in his heart, he has a new nature, which inclines him unto universal holiness, and thereby he is kindly drawn to follow religion, upon a view of its inward beauty; and thus he fills up his character.

[2.] Some aim at approving themselves to men in their religion. They seek a name by it, they desire thus to advance their credit and reputation among the sober part of the world, Matth. vi. 2; and

seeming to be religious will satisfy, because men can judge no farther than the outward appearance. But others study to approve themselves to God: 2 Cor. v. 9, "Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." Now, since God cannot be deceived with outward appearances, this engages them to be careful of the hidden man of the heart, and to value no approbation of any, if the Master approve them not.—From what has been observed, we may learn,

That there is something in religion above nature's reach. O study to attain it! The mystery of godliness is a great mystery. It is no easy thing to be a Christian. The difference betwixt the godly and others lies not in externals, but in internals, things removed out of the view of the world, and open to God only. O labour to study internal religion, and to approve yourselves to God who searcheth the hearts!—Try yourselves. Consider to which of the two sorts you belong, whether you be real Christians or not. Never value yourselves on the outward part or letter of religion, for you may have that and be stript of all by apostacy to which you lie open, and will be turned out with the workers of iniquity at last, though you still keep on the mask. We must all appear before the tribunal of Christ. Study that religion which will be approved by him there.—I now proceed to consider,

III. What is the outside and letter of religion, which only makes an outside Christian, and what is the inside and spirit of it, which makes a Christian?—Here I observe,

1. That the outside of religion is that part of it which lies open to the view of the world, by which men form their estimate, not God: 1 Sam. xvi. 7, "But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." It comprehends all church privileges, duties, whether of doing or suffering, and attainments lying open to the view of men. Men may come a great length in this, and yet be nought in God's esteem.—I observe

2. That the letter of religion is that part of it which is agreeable to the letter of the law, whether in externals or internals. And it comprehends not only the outside, which is open to man's view, but also internal dispositions, exercises and attainments, as to the matter of them; for example, Judas's sorrow for sin, the stony ground's joy at receiving the seed of the word, and the hypocrite's delight in approaching to God, Isa. lviii. which have the matter, but not the form and manner, and so is like a body without the soul.—I observe,

3. That the inside of religion is that part of it which is open to

the all-seeing eye of God, Matth. vi. 4, "That thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly." What persons go about, out of mere conscience towards God, as knowing that the world either is not, or cannot be witness to it, and though it was a witness, it does not know right or wrong; but such setting themselves in the presence of God, are carried to their duty as if the eyes of all the world were upon them, Acts xxiv. 16. But this is not all.—I observe,

Lastly, That the spirit or spirituality of religion is the internal grace, joined to the external performance; it is the right manner, joined to the right matter of religion: John iv. 24, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." 1 Tim. i. 5, "Now, the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," as when heart-humiliation is joined with bending of the knees to God in prayer, and the duty is gone about from right principles, and directed to a right end.—It remains that,

IV. I confirm the doctrine,

That not the former, but the latter sort of religion, marks a true Christian, is evident, if we consider,

1. That there is nothing in the outside or letter of religion, but what one may reach in an unregenerate state, in which no man can ever please God, Rom. iii. 8. The hypocrite's mask may take in the whole outward man, and the devil's goats may resemble Christ's sheep, in all but the hidden man of the heart. All these are but acts of moral discipline, not requiring a new nature from whence to spring, but may arise from the old corrupt nature, assisted by external revelation, and the common influences of the Spirit.—It will be farther evident, if we consider,

2. That the outside and letter of religion may be without any true love to God in the heart, which yet is the substance of practical holiness, and the comprehensive duty of the whole law: Ezek. xxxiii. 31, "And they come unto me, as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." Love to God makes all duties run in a right channel; but how can this be found, when the natural enmity is not overcome by regenerating grace? Self-love may supply its place, so far as the outside and letter of religion go, and that upon this principle, Job iii. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life."—This will also be evident, if we consider,

3. That the outside and letter of religion may consist with the

reign of sin in the heart: 2 Tim. iii. 5, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it." Such in themselves are weak, and can never turn sin off the throne in the soul. Hence it is that every hypocrite is a slave to some lust or other; whatever be his attainments, this always remains true of him, Mark x. 21. This kind of religion is ever like the legs of the lame, unequal.—This will be evident, if we consider,

4. That men are in religion only what they are before God, not what they are before men. When God directs Abraham to a holy walk, he says, "Walk before me," Gen. xvii. 1. If God did not observe the hearts, the insides of men, the principles of their actions, an outside religion would be sufficient. But what does it avail before the all-seeing God, to cleanse the outside of the platter, while the inside is full of ravening, while that is wanting which God chiefly requires and delights in? Psalm li. 6, how is it possible that the man should be approved of God?—This will be evident, if we consider,

Lastly, That the great difference of accepted and unaccepted performances, dispositions, &c., does not lie in the letter but in something else. Cain and Abel both offered, the one acceptably, the other not. Gen. iv. 3, 4, 5, where lay the difference? The apostle shows it, Heb. xi. 4, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness, that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Peter and Judas both mourned, and we need not hesitate to say, that the mourning of the latter in itself was fully as hearty as that of the former, but they differed in their kind, the one was godly sorrow, the other was the sorrow of the world. The trial of men's works is not only by *what* they have wrought, but *how* they have wrought: John iii. 21, "But he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

V. I now come to make some brief improvement.—We infer,

1. What are those Christians, who do not so much as approve themselves to men, by the outside, and letter of religion. Those surely have nothing of God, and shall never see heaven, if they change not their course of life: Matth. v. 20, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." How many are there among us this day, whose way of life is a scandal to Christianity, who are in the church, as boils, botches, and sores, are in the body, serving for nothing but to grieve the spirits of others who have any concern in them? What sort of Christians are

prayerless persons, liars, Sabbath-breakers who loiter away whole Sabbaths, unclean persons? &c. 1 Pet. iv. 18, "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?" The day will come, when such will see that it had been their happiness to have lived and died among Pagans.—We infer,

2. That those also are a sad sort of Christians, who, if they can approve themselves to men, make it none of their business to approve themselves to God: Rev. iii. 1, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." How many are there, with whom their credit goes farther than their conscience! And therefore, if they can carry their wickedness, so as none but God may see it, they value not his eye on them: Numb. xxxii. 23, "But if you will not do so, behold you have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out." This practical atheism will be bitterness in the end, when the day comes, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to the gospel, Rom. xi. 16. Ah! how many cast a fair cloak of profession over reigning lusts; but behold their end: Psalm cxxv. 5, "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace shall be upon Israel."

II. I shall consider this point more particularly, and shew, in some particulars, how far one may go, and yet be an outside Christian, and in what respects the inside Christian goes beyond him, and these jointly, in the following propositions.

I. That he is not a true Christian who only bears the visible badges of Christianity, but he who, with the visible badges, also partakes of the invisible grace.

II. That he is not a true Christian, whose outward man is only cleansed from the gross pollutions of the world, but he whose inward man is also cleansed.

III. That he is not a true Christian who only performs the duties of external obedience, but he who, with them, joins the duties of internal obedience.

IV. That he is not a true Christian, who has inside religion only in the letter, but he who has it also in its spirituality.—These I shall illustrate in their order.—I observe,

I. That he is not a true Christian, who only bears the visible badges of Christianity, but he who, with the visible badges, also partakes of the invisible grace.—Mark xvi. 16, "He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." The visible badges of Christianity are the sacraments, baptism, and the Lord's Supper; by partaking of these, we are distinguished from Pagans; but there is an invisible grace, without which these avail nothing to salvation.—For,

1. One may be baptised in the name of Christ, and yet be no true Christian, but even at the last only an outside one; as in our text, "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh." We find some have been bred Jews or pagans, and, by their own free choice, have turned Christians, and received the seal of the covenant, and after all been naught: Acts viii. 13, 21, "Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptised, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs that were done. But Peter said to him, Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God!" How much more may persons amongst us be such, who were baptised in their infancy with water, which was not their choice, but a benefit they had by their parents' care, and from Christianity's being the religion of our country! And how little it avails many, and what good they make of it, may be learnt from this, that the impressions of their baptismal engagements are so slight on them that they never mind them, many baptised persons pass year after year, without preparing themselves for the Lord's table. But he is a true Christian, who has the invisible grace signified by baptism. See the difference betwixt outside and inside Christians in this, Matth. iii. 11, "I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is greater than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." 1 Pet. iii. 21, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The outside Christian may be baptised with water, but the inside is baptised with the Holy Ghost, working like fire, burning up the lusts of the flesh. He is born of water, and the Spirit, working like water, to the washing away of the natural filthiness of the spirit with which he was born, on whose conscience Christ's blood is sprinkled, on whose soul Christ's spirit has savingly operated to his spiritual cleansing. In this the inside goes beyond the outside Christian.

2. In like manner, persons may be admitted to the Lord's table, and yet not be true Christians. Though this be only the privilege of saints, yet a person may be a communicant, who is nothing more than an outside Christian. While others are debarred, they may be admitted to an external partaking of the children's bread, and yet be but dogs in the sight of the heart-searching God: Luke xii. 26, "Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and have drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets." Matth. xxii. 13, "And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having

a wedding-garment? and he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." A competency of knowledge, with an appearance of seriousness of an holy life, will entitle persons to this privilege before the church, who can judge only by the outward appearance; but he is a true Christian who is admitted to communion with God in that ordinance: Cant. v. 1, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse, I have gathered my myrrh with my spice, I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey. Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." In this matter, the inside Christian goes beyond the outside one. The outside Christian gets the token from men, the inside Christian has also the Lord's token. The one only eats the bread of the Lord, the other, with it, eats that bread which is the Lord: John vi. 57, "He that eateth me, he shall live by me;" he feeds by faith on a crucified Christ, unites with him, as partaking of his Spirit, of all the benefits of his purchase, to his spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace. The one is held in the outer court, the other is admitted into the inner, and is there feasted in greater or lesser measures. The lusts of the former are strengthened by the abuse of that ordinance, those of the latter are weakened by the holy use of it.—I observe,

II. That he is not a true Christian, whose outward man only is cleansed from the gross pollutions of the world, but he whose inward man is also cleansed. Saving grace penetrates to the inside, and stays not in the outside only: Psalm xxiv. 34, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." A person may be clean from gross pollutions of the outward man, and yet be but an outward Christian; no swearer, liar, Sabbath-breaker, fornicator, &c., and yet no Christian, Luke xxviii. 11. Negative holiness and outside religion, though the want of it will damn the profane, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, yet the having it will not keep the outside Christian from ruin. A blameless life in the world, though good in itself, yet comes not the length of true Christianity. There are several things beside saving grace, that may in some measure cleanse the conversation from gross pollutions.—Among others, there is,

1. Good education, and good company, as in the case of Joash under the tutorage of Jehoiada. This may chain men's lusts, though it cannot change their nature; their heart is of an apish nature, apt to follow example. Though readily the worst example is the most taking, yet good example has a mighty influence, especially when persons are brought up with it from their childhood.—There is,

2. A good natural temper and disposition. Many a person is more indebted to his natural temper, than to the tenderness of his conscience, for his cleanness from gross pollutions. It is evident, that several persons who have no real religion, nay, nor even the form of it, may be sober, as it would be a pain and a torment to them to go to the extravagant courses in which others indulge themselves. But no man is born a true Christian, as he is with his natural temper; religion in reality is a supernatural temper: 2 Pet. i. 4, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."—There is,

3. Their being kept out of the way of temptation. It is a mercy to be so kept; but while people's corruptions are not tried with a suitable bait, they cannot so well know what influence the commandment has or has not upon them. The cleanness of the outward conversation of many is owing more to those circumstances in which they were placed in the world, than to any gracious disposition; as may appear from the case of some who kept right as long as they were not tried, but so soon as the trial of their corruptions comes they give way.—There is,

4. The workings of a natural conscience under the common influences and convictions of the Spirit, and a rousing ministry: Mark vi. 20, "For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and an holy, and observed him: and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly." The preaching of the word sometimes serves to embalm dead souls, who are never by it quickened. It also sets the natural conscience a-working to purify the outward man, while the inner is never renewed. It brings on many so far, as that they are not far from the kingdom of God, who yet never have power to go forward to it.

5. Self-love may do it, in so far as a regard to their soul or body, credit or reputation, may move men to all this. Fear of punishment, and hope of reward, are powerful incentives, where God's authority is but little valued; nay, some reigning lust, as covetousness, pride, or ambition: Matth. vi. 2, "Therefore, when thou dost thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward." But what avails all this to salvation, while the hidden man of the heart is sunk in pollutions before the all-seeing God, while the man is as a painted sepulchre, fair without, but within full of rottenness: Ezek. viii. 12, "Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what

the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, the Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth." It is a weak evidence to lean to outward religion. But the true Christian has this cleanness of the outward conversation, and besides goes farther than the outward Christian in that point, in two particulars.

(1.) The inside Christian joins internal purity to external: Psalm xxiv. 4, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." Matth. v. 8, "Blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God." He does not sit down contented with outside purity, as the other does, but his chief concern is the heart, the fountain of all impurity of life. And though the world cannot charge him with any gross pollutions, he finds he has work enough to do with the blind mind, the rebellious will, and the carnal corrupt affections. He accordingly strives to get them mortified: Gal. v. 24, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts." Though the world sees not, yet, since God sees the disorder of his heart, that is enough to humble him, and give him new errands to Christ for his blood and Spirit.

(2.) Even his external purity is from religious motives, springs, and principles. Thus Joseph, Gen. xxxix. 9, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" In this he serves God, while in it the outward Christian does but serve himself. It is God's authority that sways him to it; though his natural inclinations be to break out, yet the fear of God in his heart does restrain him. And if he be surprised into temptations, the offence and dishonour to God weighs more with him than all the shame and loss in the world which he incurs.

From all which we may learn, that certainly they are not true Christians, who are profane in their walk, whose conversation is not so much as cleansed from gross pollutions, such as cursers and swearers, drunkards, mockers at religion, obscene speakers, unclean persons, &c. Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. These bear the devil's mark on their foreheads, Isa. iii. 19; and have not so much as the rude draughts of the form of godliness.—Hence,

Let no man value himself on the cleansing of the outward man from those pollutions, for a person may go all that length, and much farther, and yet be a cast-away. Religion is much deeper than this is, and is more inward. What the world observes least, God looks most to. Therefore study the inwards of religion, truth and purity in the inward parts.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

SERMON XXXII.

ROM. ii. 28, 29,

For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.

HAVING, in the preceding discourse, considered the two first propositions which I laid down for illustrating the second doctrinal point, I go on to the

III. That he is not the true Christian who only performs the duties of external obedience, but he who also with them joins the duties of internal obedience. It is not the outward duties of obedience, but those which are inward, which constitute a true Christian. A hypocrite may go the whole round of outward duties, and thus have a form of godliness, so as, to the view of the world, he appears nothing short of the true Christian.—Thus, for instance,

1. A man may perform the external duties of righteousness and morality towards his neighbour, and yet be no more than an outward Christian. He may be just in his dealings with men: Luke xviii. 11, “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.” He may be liberal and abundant in mercy towards the needy, 1 Cor. xiii. 3, and yet after all no true Christian. True Christianity makes a good neighbour, makes him abhor every unjust and dishonest thing, it renders him true to his word, and upright in his dealings in the world; but when a man has this and no more, he has but one half, and hardly the half, of what is necessary to make a true Christian.—Besides this,

2. A man may perform the outward duties of piety towards God, yet after all be but an outside Christian. For pointing out the hypocrite’s attainments in this respect, I would have you consider,

(1.) That persons may attend public ordinances, and not only so, but they may be very punctual in their attendance; they may be far from loitering away Sabbaths at home, or from satisfying themselves with a partial attendance, as in Isa. lviii. 2, “Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of our God.” They may behave themselves gravely and attentively, and neither be sleepers

nor gazers, far less laughers at ordinances, and yet after all nought in God's esteem: Ezek. xxxiii. 31, "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." They may be at much pains in following ordinances from place to place: John vi. 24, 26, "When the people, therefore, saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.—Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." They may talk well of what they hear, and after all be but outside Christians: 1 Cor. xiii. 1, "Though I speak with the tongues of men or of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."—Consider,

(2.) That they may be praying persons, and so carry religion into their families, and into their closets: Jer. xii. 2, "Thou hast planted, yea, they have taken root; they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit; thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins." Even secret prayers, where no eye but the Lord's doth see, is a piece of bodily exercise, not beyond the walk of a hypocrite, which an awakened conscience may put a person upon at first, and other selfish principles may keep them at it. They may be persons of many prayers, not like those who pray some, but who indeed pray much: Heb. xii. 17, "For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."—Consider,

(3.) That they may not only do much, but they also may be sufferers for religion, suffering not only to the spoiling of their goods, but even unto death, and yet be naught in God's esteem; 1 Cor. xiii. 3, "And though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Hypocrisy is such a salamandar, as can live in the fire of persecution, of which there have been many instances; namely, of such whom the violent wind of persecution has not been able to drive off the Lord's way, but the warm sun of prosperity has done their business, to their undoing.

3. They may join both the outward of the first and second tables, and yet be but outside Christians. There are some who are very upright in their dealings with men, yet have not so much as a form in regard to the duties of piety. Others who do not neglect duties of piety towards God, but they make no conscience of their duty to their neighbour, but where they apprehend their worldly interest will drive to it, right or wrong. Persons may even join

both together, and yet be naught in God's esteem. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican; I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess," Luke xviii. 12, "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless," Phil. iii. 6.—All this may be, and yet not beyond the boundaries of Pharasaical righteousness: Matth. v. 20, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." The reason of this is manifest, namely, that all these things being but bodily exercises, are within the compass of nature, and do not require any supernatural grace to the bare performance of them; if the conscience be in any measure awakened, persons may thus be influenced to perform them; and custom may so habituate them, that the performance may be consistent enough with the reign of sin in the heart. But he only is a true Christian who joins internal to external obedience: spiritual exercise to bodily exercise in religion. The inside exceeds the outside Christian in various particulars.—As,

(1.) The inside Christian performs the duties of evangelical obedience, in subjecting his whole heart and soul to the Lord, as well as the outward man. This is the spiritual service which declares a man to be a true Christian: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John iv. 23, "For we are the circumcision, that worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," Phil. iii. 3. The bulk of the hypocrite's religion lies in externals, but that of the true Christian's lies in internals, in faith, love, resignation, and other parts of unseen religion. Their chief labour is with the heart, to notice the risings of corruptions, their bewailing the defects which the world cannot perceive, and mourning over the sin of their nature, the spring of all evil: Gal. v. 24, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts."

(2.) The inside Christian is unreserved and universal in his obedience, which the outside Christian never is. They have still some lusts with which they can never part, they reign in them.—Enmity against the power of godliness: 1 John iii. 12, "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother; and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."—Self-seeking: John v. 44, "How can ye believe, who seek honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"—Bitterness of spirit, which cannot digest the gospel command, of doing good for evil: Tit. iii. 3, "For

we also ourselves were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.”—Reigning love to the pleasures of this world, and covetousness: Ezek. xxxiii. 31, “And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.” But the gracious soul’s obedience is universal; all such in so far sincerely aim at every known duty, approve the holy law in every point; desiring their spirits to be conformed to it, not it to be brought down to them; lamenting from the heart their shortcoming in all points.

3. The inside Christian’s obedience is son-like obedience, the other is servile and slavish. The highest principle with the hypocrite is fear of punishment, and hope of reward, Hos. x. 11; their highest end is themselves, Hos. x. 1. Jehu professed zeal for the Lord, but in effect it was but zeal for a kingdom. The inside Christian serves God as a son does his father.—Prompted by love to him, next to his command: 1 Tim. i. 5, “Now, the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.”—Leaning on him for strength to perform his duty: Col. iii. 17, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”—Aiming at his honour: 1 Cor. x. 31, “Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

From this learn, that those are inevitably exposed to death, who come not the length of the outward duties of religion, of mercy towards their neighbours, or of piety towards God. Lay this to heart, ye unrighteous, ye slights of religion, prayerless persons, &c. Ye come not even the length of some who will fall short, and never see heaven. O! if those who do all these things be lost, what will become of you?—Ye that even come that length, lay no stress upon it, it will be but a broken reed to trust to. Duties are by no means sufficient confidences: nor in themselves, without internals joined to them, can they even be evidences of your safety. Examine not only what ye do, but how ye do it, for this last is that to which God chiefly looks.—I now come to the

IV. And last proposition, That he is not a true Christian, who has inside religion only in the letter of it, but he who also has it in its spirituality. We have pursued the nominal Christian through his outside religion, but we may not leave him here; for, as an hypocrite may go farther than mere externals, so the text pursues him for discovery, even in internals in the letter.—For explaining which, I observe,

1. That a man may carry his religion into internals, and yet be but a Christian in the letter. He may do and have that in religion which no eye but God sees or can see, and yet be no true Christian: Jer. xvii. 9, 10, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." A person may form such a fine thread of hypocrisy, as to beguile every eye but the all-seeing eye: Jer. iii. 10, "And yet for all this, her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord." Do not think that all hypocrisy is gross dissimulation, or yet that all a hypocrite's religion lies only in his outside, and in nothing within.—For,

(1.) A natural conscience may check for heart-sins, and sins that no eye sees but God's, Rom. ii. 15, "Which shew the work of the law written on their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean time accusing, or else excusing, one another;" and consequently must press to inward duties, according to the light. Hence there may be sorrow and grief for what is hid from all the world; since the conscience perceives that God sees it, and that he will write his indignation on it. This fire has burned in many an unsanctified breast, yet it behoved it to have a vent, though to their own shame and loss.

(2.) An unsanctified desire of salvation, in the way of the covenant of works, may carry a man to internals in religion: Rom. x. 3, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."—The covenant of works is engraved on man's heart naturally, and under the influence of it a man may do his utmost to conform to the letter of the law, in the inward as well as outward duties of it. Observe the case of the young man in Matth. xix. 16—20. It is no rare thing to see men eager to purchase heaven by their works.

(3.) Light may be strong, and kept strong by the common operations of the Holy Spirit, in an unholy heart. Thus, Balaam durst not entertain a thought of cursing Israel; though he would fain have gained the wages of unrighteousness, if his light would have suffered him. Our Lord Christ breaks up the outer door of our understanding often while the inner remains shut. This cannot miss to have some bond on the heart, as well as on the outer man.

(4.) Even in the internals of religion, there is a letter and a spirit; there is the body or matter of the thing, and the soul and spirit of it lying in the right manner of doing it. The former is not

beyond the power of nature, but the latter is; and therefore a hypocrite may come the length of the letter of internals of religion. He may have desires of good; Prov. xiii. 4, "The soul of the sluggard desireth," &c., though not holy desires; so in other cases.

2. The true Christian has inside religion, not in the letter only, but in the spirituality thereof: Phil. iii. 3, "We—worship God in the spirit, and—have no confidence in the flesh." He does not satisfy himself with the thing itself, but labours to get it, and maintain it as of the right stamp, such as God will approve. Here lies sincerity, that ornament of all religion, or rather the spirit and life of all, John i. 47. Now, this spirituality consists in two things.

(1.) In the graciousness of the principle, 1 Tim. i. 5. Their inward religion is the fruit of their new nature influenced by the Lord the Spirit; it is natural, and not violent or forced out by terrors, or from necessity, as screening them from the wrath of God. The new nature makes it their absolute choice, in whatever circumstances they may be: whereas it is the choice of others, only because they cannot otherwise act safely.—It consists,

(2.) In the holiness of their aim: their chief aim is to please the Lord, Col. i. 10. The stress of their salvation is laid on the obedience of Christ, not their own, whether outward or inward; and hence their aim in all their duties, is not to please themselves, but him who has called them to be partakers of his glory. The hypocrite is servile in his aims to please God, as he is mercenary for his own profit, so that himself, and not God, is his chief end; but the sincere soul acts like a son, by virtue of the spirit of adoption.—From all this we may learn,

That this shews they are not true Christians, whose religion lies all in externals, and have no concern about their hearts, Matth. xxiii. 25. A whited sepulchre is the emblem of a hypocrite, not of a true Christian. Persons also may be at much pains inwardly, who yet never come the length of the spirit of religion. What, then, will become of these, whose case is entirely confined to the outward man?—Let those who carry religion inwardly also examine well, what are the principles and ends they act from, lest their inside religion be found a spiritless, lifeless corpse of religion, the mere product of their own exertions. Such may perceive whether or not they have the spirit of religion, by,

1. Their endeavouring to approve themselves to the Lord, as an all-seeing holy God, not in some things only, but in all things, Col. i. 10. Being content to know the whole word of God as to duty, and what they know not to be discovered to them, in order to their setting about it, Job xxxiv. 32; Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24. They will know it by,

2. Their endeavouring to purge their inward, as well as their outward religion, of all carnal and selfish motives, principles, and ends, John iii. 21. Self is an insinuating thing, and much of our spirituality lies in persons endeavouring to be spiritual in what they do. So short length do most come, we must be concerned to be purged from hypocrisy; it is a good sign with those who are unsatisfied with their performance of duty, and are lamenting that they are not spiritual in it, Rom. vii. 22, 23.—They will know it,

3. By being denied to their outward, and also their inward religion, Phil. iii. Though they endeavour to do all as if they were to gain heaven by doing, yet they renounce all in point of confidence before the Lord, as naked and bare. This is a good sign, Matth v. 3.

In pursuance of this point touching inside religion, I shall offer the following observations touching the hypocrite's attainments in this respect, and at the same time shew wherein the true Christian goes beyond him.

1. A person may be under heavy exercise of soul after the commission of some sin, especially a gross sin, and yet be but a Christian in the letter. This is manifest in the case of Judas. Though there are some sins, which every unsanctified heart makes no bones of yet there are some which may stick in the throat even of a person void of the grace of God; nay, more, in this exercise of soul there may be, (1.) Great restlessness and anxiety of mind, which the person cannot divert, as he was wont to do. (2.) Indignation at himself, for doing as he has done. (3.) A taking shame to himself before men, by a plain and open confession of guilt, Matth. xxvii. 3, 4. Lastly, Strong resolutions to guard against that sin in all time to come. Thus, Exod. ix. 27, in which Pharaoh was morally serious, speaking as he thought in the time.—But here there are four things wanting, which are to be found in the exercises of true Christians after their falls into sin.—There is,

(1.) Kindly humiliation of soul before the Lord. The Christian in spirit sees not only an evil in sin which affrights him, but a loathsomeness in it which turns his stomach at it, as being contrary to God's holy nature and will: Job xlii. 5, 6, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. He owns himself unworthy of God's grace, and casts himself down at the Lord's feet, stopping his mouth from quarrelling with God, however he dispose of him, Psalm. li. 4.

(2.) The dishonour done to God, and the grieving his Spirit, is what does most touch the heart of the true Christian: Psalm li. 4, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil

in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." The consideration of God's glorious majesty, his loving-kindness and gracious benefits towards the person, furnish a quiver of arrows to pierce his heart, and he calls himself beast and fool for thus requiting the Lord.

(3.) No peace will that person have, but that which God himself speaks, and what flows from the application of the Redeemer's blood, Rom. i. 5. Others may be for peace at any rate, build up their peace on their sorrows, repentance, and confession; but no peace for the true Christian, till he get it under the covert of the blood of Christ, Heb. ix. 14.

(4.) Their exercises under their trials drive them out of themselves to Christ for sanctification: Psalm li. 10, 11, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me;" whereas trials drive others into themselves, as resolved, that if God, for Christ's sake, will but pardon their sin, they will see to their own holiness of life; after which, in some, they issue in faithless blind vows against such and such sins, not sensible of their own weakness, and not fleeing to Christ under a sense of it. But the true Christian will be equally concerned for sanctification of his spirit, as justification of his person by blood, knowing he equally needs both.—In like manner,

2. A person may have a great struggle in himself against sin, and against temptation to it, and yet be but only a Christian in the letter. It is a dangerous mistake to think, that every inward struggle against sin is the combat between the flesh and the spirit. Herod had no small struggle with himself, before he could yield to the beheading of John, Matth. xiv. 9. Pilate also, before he could yield to the condemning of Christ. Nay, a hypocrite may not only have this struggle, but may carry the day against the temptation, in so much that he will not yield to it. This is clear in the case of Balaam, when all Balak's entreaties and rewards could not engage him to curse Israel.—There are five things wherein the true Christian goes beyond the hypocrite in this respect.—As,

(1.) His struggle arises from the new nature, with which he is endowed; he has an habitual bent to holiness, and an aversion to evil: Gal. v. 17, "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The hypocrite's struggle does arise only from a slavish fear, or at best from a civil disposition, which is easily overcome, as being but a part of the old nature, and so reaches but to some things.—Which brings me to observe,

(2.) That a true Christian's struggle is against all sin, every thing which is discovered by him to be sin, of whatever sort it be, whether it be of those which are more gross or more subtile, those that are brought to the light by some external action, or those that are in the soul or spirit only: thus the psalmist: Psalm cxix. 128, "Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way." Hence the struggle of the true Christian is against unbelief, the actings and workings of self in the various shapes which it assumes, and against predominant idols. But the struggle of others is confined to the grosser kinds of sin, and is never taken up against all known sin, but only against some one lust or other, which has often at length a respite given to, or rather league concluded with it. A hypocrite gives evidence that the cause of this war is not a natural antipathy, as in the true Christian, but an accidental quarrel.

(3.) The Christian's struggle tends to the mortification and extirpation of sin, the plucking up of it by the roots, the destroying of the tree with its fruit, Gal. v. 24. It tends to no less than the perfection of sanctification, and the utter abolition of sin as the cause of this war. This the new nature lusteth and longeth after, and cannot be satisfied to lay down the sword while there is a Canaanite in the land; and since it is not obtained in this life, the war is continued till death make the sword drop, and victory is obtained: Phil. iii. 13, 14, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The other is not so violent, but strives only to repress certain lusts which are troublesome or dishonourable.

(4.) The Christian's struggle prevails, to the constituting of the habitual course of his life, a holy course. This is the chief strain in which he runs on, although mixed with many slips, John iii. 9, 10; so that he has that noble testimony with the apostle, "that with simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world," 2 Cor. i. 12. But the other still lives a life habitually unholy.

(5.) The Christian's struggle is betwixt a new and gracious quality in the will, and the old corrupt inclinations, its neighbours there, whose reign is broken, though their molestation still continue; Gal. v. 17, "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." But the struggle of the hypocrite is betwixt his will and his partially enlightened con-

science, which takes up the cudgels against the corrupt will, and fights against it with the fire and terror of a holy law ; or, at most, between a slight inclination of the will, and the reigning corrupt inclinations.—There is farther to be considered,

3. That a person may be in great concern about his state, and yet be but a Christian only in the letter. How is it possible that men living under the clear light of the gospel, can but have some touches of this ? Felix was so troubled with it, that he trembled, Acts xxiv. 25. Simon Magus, Acts viii. 24. Conversion begins here in the work of conviction ; but oftentimes it stops here, and goes no farther, Hos. xiii. 13. But I will say more than this : a person may have such an exercise on his spirit about his state, and it may be carried on from one step to another, in so much that, in his own eyes, and the eyes of others, it may be taken for the work of conversion, and yet after all he be a Christian only in the letter, and not in the spirit.—Thus, for instance,

(1.) He may have a law-work on his spirit, and yet may be no true Christian. Had not Pharaoh and Felix deep conviction ? and was not Judas stung and pricked at the heart under the sense of his guilt ? Legal qualms of conscience may fill a man with terrors, sorrow, and anxiety, on account of sin, who notwithstanding is never brought to Christ. The apostle tells us, Gal. iv. 24, that “the law gendereth to bondage.” The covenant of works bringeth forth children ; but they are only bond-children, that is, slaves, not sons, in their obedience to God. There are many pangs of conscience in the world, which, though they may be taken for pangs of the new birth, are nothing other than pangs of the second death. The matter lies here : either the wound which the hypocrite gets, is over deep, as is the case when it drives the person to utter despair, as it did Judas, so that he neither closed, nor pretended to close, with Christ ; or else it is not deep enough, so that the work is marred, being but superficial ; and he is like the person who, without a foundation, built his house upon the sand, and the storm, whenever it arose, swept it away, Luke vi. 48. Betwixt these two extremes, in the middle way, the work is carried on for making a Christian in spirit, and not in the letter only. The case of utter despair is manifest ; but to shew that deepness of the soul’s wound, which issues in conversion, which is wanting in that which only issues in a person’s becoming a Christian in the letter, consider the nature of that wound which is given in the work of grace.

[1.] It brings the soul to be content to part with all sin, and to take Christ on any terms : Hos. xiv. 2, “Take with you words, and turn to the Lord ; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive

us graciously ; so will we render the calves of our lips." Acts ix. 6, " Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?" said Paul, trembling and astonished. The man is content to expose the right-eye sin, that the Lord may pluck it out, and the right hand, that it may be cut off. But the hypocrite, with all his soul-exercise, is never brought this length. There is still some one bias of the heart or other he is never content to have corrected. There is always some idol of jealousy to be spared, some particular or other in Christ's terms of salvation to which he cannot submit, Mark x. 21.

[2.] The wound goes to the root of sin in the soul, namely, the sin of our nature ; Jer. iv. 3, 4, " For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem." He that is only humbled for the sins of a wicked life, and some particular lusts in the heart, which is the utmost of the hypocrite's attainment, in him the serpent's heel may be bruised, but not his head. The sin of our nature is the great reigning sin, and in the work of grace the Lord strikes at that particularly, and makes the soul feel the intolerable weight of it : Rom. vii. 24, " O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?" But as long as heart-corruption is untouched, as the man recovers his peace, his sin will recover its strength.

(3.) The wound brings the soul to a sense of its absolute need of Christ, and his whole salvation, for justification and also for sanctification. This is the issue of kindly soul-exercise, namely, that thus a person becomes poor in spirit, which the exercise of the hypocrite never brings him to : Matth. v. 3, " Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Right soul-exercise carries a man out of himself to Christ for righteousness, roots up his confidence in himself, in his best duties and dispositions, &c., breaks the marriage between him and the law, that he may be married to Christ, without anything whatever to recommend him : Gal. ii. 19, 20, " For I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ 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." He also depends on Christ for sanctification, being persuaded of his utter inability to do any good : Rom. vii. 18, " For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." And under the sense of this, the soul lies down at the Lord's feet, as in Jer. xxxi. 18, " Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke ; turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God."

(2.) A person may have a common illumination in the knowledge of Christ, and yet be but a Christian only in the letter: Heb. vi. 4, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, &c., if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance." They may have such knowledge of Christ in his natures, person and offices, as may enable them even to teach others, and edify them in the knowledge of Christ, and yet be no true Christians themselves. Such were Judas, Demas, and thousands of others in other ages of the Church. Great gifts may be without grace; and there may be much heat, where there is no sanctified warmth.—But there is a saving illumination, communicated to all true converts, of which others never partake: John iv. 10, "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." And it has these three characters.

(1.) Saving illumination discovers to the soul such a suitableness in the mystery of Christ to the divine perfections and the sinner's case, that the soul heartily falls in with, and acquiesces in the glorious device of salvation by infinite wisdom: 1 Cor. i. 24, "But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." They see that there is nothing wanting in it, which is necessary to promote God's honour, or to answer their own miserable case, but that it has a perfect suitableness to both; so that their awakened consciences may find complete rest there; and hence they lay themselves wholly for rest upon it, while the consciences of others, being awakened, and their minds being still blinded, they never go to him only for rest, but at best mix their own righteousness with his, and dare not trust to his righteousness alone.—Saving illumination,

(2.) Discovers such a transcendent glory and excellence in him, as that the soul is made content and determined to part with all for him: Phil. iii. 8, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellence of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." It is a sad, but common question in the hearts, though, it may be, not in the mouths, of unrenewed sinners, Song v. 9, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?" Certain it is, that the most refined hypocrite has always something that to him is dearer than Christ, and which has more of his heart than He has. But the soul enlightened with the light of life, beholds that in him which

darkens all created excellence, as the rising sun makes the stars hide their heads ; so that they will part with all lawful, as well as unlawful enjoyments, to win him, Luke xiv. 26.

[3.] Saving illumination discovers such a fulness in him, that the heart takes up its everlasting rest in him : Psal. lxxiii. 25, " Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." The returning prodigal sees bread enough and to spare in his father's house ; and the true convert sees a rest to his heart, as well as for his conscience, in Christ, so that he is brought to be content with him alone, as seeing him to be all in all. But this the hypocrite never comes to ; the divided heart must have Christ, and also some lust or other, or else no contentment.

(3.) A person may give a consent to the covenant, and in some sort close with the Lord in his covenant, while, after all, he may be only a Christian in the letter ; and thus the work of conversion may seem to be completed, as it would really be if they were sincere in so doing. A hypocrite may expressly and solemnly covenant with God, by word or by writ, and thus engage to be the Lord's. This is evident from the practice of the Israelites : Exod. xiv. 8, " And all the people answered and said, All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord."—Here we may observe, how full they are in their consent and engagement, " All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do." See also Exod. xx. 19. But mark the Lord's own verdict on this covenanting ; Deut. v. 29, " O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and their children for ever !" Not only may all this be classed among the externals of religion, but I shall add, for illustration, that persons may be morally serious in their consent to the covenant, that is, thinking and resolving in the time to do as they say. Moral seriousness is opposed to gross dissimulation, which there was no place for here, Deut. v. 24. Yet it may be where there is no sincerity, Psal. lxxviii. 37. Of the same people it is said, " For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant." Hypocrites, in this case, are like those who, out of mere simplicity, and ignorance of the worth of a thing, offer to buy it ; but if they really knew what it could not be sold under, they would never once bid for it.—They may also consent to the covenant out of a real sense of their sin and misery, and a conviction of their need of a Mediator, as in Exod. xx. 19, " And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear ; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." There was the mountain on fire, a tribunal ; the voice of a trumpet, summoning the criminals ;

terrible thunders, to pronounce the sentence of death against them. This filled them with horror and fear of death, and shewed them the need of a Mediator. But there are three things in which the Christian in spirit goes beyond the Christian in the letter, in this point,

[1.] He engages freely and heartily to the Lord in his whole covenant. The hypocrite is but dragged and forced into it, when the matter is seriously considered. They are not a willing people: Psalm. lxxviii. 34, 36, 37, "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant." I doubt not but a hypocrite may be very hearty in his consent to receive the comforts of the covenant: Matth. xiii. 20, 21, "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it. Yet he hath not root in himself, but dureth for a while." But if he consider the duties of the covenant, there he sticks, and can come no other way to the whole covenant, but as he is dragged: Rom. viii. 7, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

When the Spirit enters into a person's heart, he takes such hold of it, that the person is overcome by grace into willingness. Thus it is said, Jer. xxxi. 3, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Then the person pours out his heart like water: Psalm lxii. 8, "Pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us." Terror may begin the work, but love crowns it: Hos. ii. 14, "Therefore, behold I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her."

(2.) While the person's heart consents to the covenant with the Lord, it is divorced from sin; but the hypocrite consents to the covenant with a heart glued to his lusts: Psalm xlv. 10, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father's house." It is an ill-made second marriage, where there is neither death nor divorce from the first husband; and this is the cause of apostacy, men going back to their lusts, because they never freely parted with them. What makes a man and his lusts one, is, the greedy hold the heart takes of them; the heart cleaves to them: Jer. viii. 5, "Why, then, is the people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return." But the bond is loosed by divine grace, and their liking is turned to loathing; though sin cleaves to them, they cleave not to it: Rom. vii. 21, 22, "I find then a law, that when I

would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." In which case, it is not only put out of the life, but out of the heart.

(3.) In covenanting with God, the person resigns himself absolutely to the Lord, the hypocrite never without reserves. The sincere soul absolutely gives up itself, (1.) To the yoke of his commandments, Psalm cxix. 128, "Therefore, I esteem all thy commandments, concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way." But there is some one duty or other the hypocrite's heart cannot digest, as in Mark x. 21. (2.) The soul gives up itself to the providential will of God, Luke xiv. 26. He is content to bear his cross, as well as to wear his crown; but there is always something in the cross to which the hypocrite cannot submit.

(4.) And *lastly*, A person may be in the exercise of religious duties, may be much enlarged and affected, and yet only a Christian in the letter, Heb. vi. 4. Many get a taste of gospel-benefits, who never digest them, this taste arising only from common operations of the Spirit on an unrenewed heart; and a person may, at a time, get another heart, who never gets a new heart. Thus it was with Saul, 1 Sam. x. 9.—As to this, I would observe,

1. In the general, that a hypocrite may have a mighty enlargement in duties, and be much affected in them. That there may be a great stir and motion among the affections, while the stony heart does yet remain, is plain from the case of the stony-ground hearers, Matth. xiii. 20, and the many instances of joys and sorrows raised in unrenewed hearts by the word. Many lay a great deal of weight on this, that they are not always alike in duties: Sometimes they are bound up, sometimes enlarged; sometimes they drive heavily in them, sometimes they have a great deal of comfort and pleasure in them. But, do not such swallow down this as an evidence of the grace of God without examination?—To understand this, consider, that there is an enlargement in the exercise of a gift, as well as in the exercise of a grace; and the one may be mistaken for the other, 2 Cor. ii. 13—15. Thus also God both enlarged and straitened king Saul in gifts: And as the gifts of others, well exercised in holy things, may greatly delight a man, as in Ezek. xxxiii. 32, "And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument;" so much more may the exercise of one's own gift with ease and readiness, delight the person's self.—Consider also, that the power of a deluded fancy may produce this, as in the stony ground hearers, Matth. xiii. 20. As a man may have a great deal of pleasure in a dream, or in a misconception, so a deceived heart may make a person feed very sweetly

upon ashes, and never suspect that there is a lie in his right hand, Isa. xlv. 20. Do we not read of a fire of men's own kindling, which, though it may mightily comfort them for a time, yet ends in sorrow and darkness, Isa. i. 11.—Consider, in a word, that there are common influences of the Spirit which are not sanctifying, which may produce a mighty commotion among the affections, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. Even signal providences will have this effect on unrenewed hearts, whether they be in mercy or in judgment: Psalm lxxviii. 34. When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God." These things come like a summer-shower, which wets the surface of the earth, and makes every channel run for a while, but is quickly again dried up.—Now, the difference between the Christian in the spirit in his gracious enlargement in duties, and the Christian in the letter in his delusive enlargements in duty, may be seen in these two particulars:—

(1.) Gracious enlargements tend always to the killing and mortifying of self, that grand competitor with Christ: 1 Chron. xxix. 14, "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." The hypocrite's enlargements feed and nourish it, swelling the heart with pride and self-conceit: Isa. lviii. 3, "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast, ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours." The more a person is graciously enlarged in duties, the more his sinfulness, weakness, wants, and nothingness appear, notwithstanding all his meltings, mournings, humiliations, &c. But the hypocrite, the more he is enlarged, appears to himself the more worthy that Christ should do great things for him; and he becomes the less self-denied.

(2.) Gracious enlargements are sanctifying; they promote holiness in heart and life: Zech. xii. 10, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." They are a burning, as well as a shining light, and make persons more tender in all moral duties to God and man. If one has been taken into the temple of God in duties, it will appear about him in the substantial of morality. He will fear sin more, and be more exercised to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. But delusive enlargements

have not this effect. On the contrary, they readily leave people more proud, peevish, and selfish, often making them such sons of Belial, that a person cannot speak to them; and never strike at inward beloved lusts to mortify them.

2. But to be more particular,

(1.) A hypocrite may be much affected with sorrow for sin in his duties. All mourners are not true mourners, Zecl. vii. 3. One may hear the word, or pour out a prayer with wet cheeks, and yet have a whole heart, a heart far from being broken for sin. Esau was in a flood of tears, seeking the blessing. Many times, where water goes out in their case, wind enters in. It is not always humbling grace that produces tears. Some are of soft dispositions, and easily wrought upon by a melancholy object, without any efficacy of grace, like the daughters of Jerusalem, Luke xxiii. 27, and downwards. Some, of most rugged dispositions, because their affections are vehement in any case, may be thus touched and affected, and yet there be nothing more than the product of nature. Thus, when David shewed him mercy, even Saul lifted up his voice, and wept, 1 Sam. xxiv. 16. But the difference betwixt the Christian and the hypocrite lies here, (1.) That the chief ground of the true Christian's sorrow for sin is, the offence and dishonour done to a holy gracious God, as an ingenuous child is moved with his father's displeasure and dishonour: Psalm li. 4, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." But the hypocrite's chief ground is selfish, because of the evils to which he has thereby exposed himself, whether in time or eternity.

(2.) The hypocrite's sorrow is soon over; it is but a flash, and away: and he goes back again, if not to the same sins, yet to others no less offensive to God. His sorrow never goes the length to loose the bonds of wickedness; Isa. lviii. 5, 6, "Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" It is not so with the godly: Lam. iii. 49, 50, "Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission: till the Lord look down, and behold from heaven." Their sorrow for sin is habitual, because the body of sin still remains, and this sorrow influences them to war against all sin.

(2.) A hypocrite may have a kind of love to God and Christ, and a desire after grace and good things. Hence Paul prays for grace

to "them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," Eph. vi. 24. The Christian in the letter may say, "Lord, evermore give us this bread," John vi. 34, and join the foolish virgins in their desire to partake of the oil of the wise. But the difference betwixt the Christian and the hypocrite here lies:—

[1.] That a hypocrite may love God as his benefactor, as one who does him good every day, and from whose hands he looks for good in time coming, either for time or for eternity, Mal. iii. 1. This is to love God for one's self. But the true Christian loves him, not only because of his benefits, but because of his lovely nature, his perfect holiness, truth, hatred of sin, &c. This is to love God for himself: Psalm xxx. 4, "Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." And this the unholy heart can never do, Rom. viii. 7, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God." Now, they that love God thus, they love his image, wherever it appears, and particularly in the holy law even where it strikes against that sin which most easily besets them: Rom. vii. 22, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man."—The difference lies,

[2.] That they may desire grace, for its necessity in order to save them, but not for its intrinsic beauty and likeness to the Lord: Matth. v. 7, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." It is the chief thing the true Christian desires, grace to be holy, as well as grace to be justified and pardoned: Psalm xxvii. 4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."—The difference lies,

Lastly, That a hypocrite may have much joy and delight in the duties of religion; so had the stony ground hearers, Matth. xiii. 20.—Isa. lviii. 2, "Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God." There may be delusive raptures of joy, as well as unsound floods of sorrow. I shewed very lately the difference betwixt genuine joy and these delusive raptures. True joy riseth orderly, after a preceding rending effect on the heart, &c.; delusive joy more quickly, &c.*—I now come,

III. To make some short improvement.—I have endeavoured to lay before you the differences betwixt the hypocrite and the sincere Christian; and from the whole, I think you may carry away these lessons.—We may hence see,

* See Catechetical Sermons on Rom. v. 2.

1. That it is no easy thing to be a Christian. A parcel of external performances do not make a Christian, nay nor even internal things also, without the genuine spirit of duties, performances, and attainments: that the great thing which makes the difference is, not so much what is done, as how it is done, the principles, ends, manner, &c. of doing it.—We may learn,

2. That a man may go a very great length in religion, and notwithstanding be naught in God's esteem. A person may look so like a true Christian, that he may deceive both saints and sinners like him who is said to have made an image with such motion, that others thought it had life. Nay, I know not but he may deceive the devil himself: Jer. xvii. 9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" like him who is said to have painted grapes so lively, that the birds came and picked at them. He may deceive himself like the Laodiceans, and go to death with the delusion, like the foolish virgins.—We may learn,

3. That however far the hypocrite goes, the true Christian goes beyond him; and therefore we must not, we ought not, to satisfy ourselves as to the point of sincerity, unless there be something in us which is not to be found in hypocrites. And therefore I exhort you to put yourselves to the trial. Try yourselves whether you be in Christ or not, whether you be sincere Christians or not.—Consider,

(1.) True religion is very rare at all times: Matth. vii. 14, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." The miserable decay and untenderness among all sorts of persons, shew it to be especially rare at this time, in which we may say, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men," Psalm xii. 1. —Consider,

(2.) That we are like to see trying times, in which the Lord will set his furnace in Zion. God has appeared often seasonably and wonderfully for our deliverance; but the generation is not bettered, but rather growing worse and worse in all points. This is a fore-runner of a fearful stroke. Now, Sirs, a shew of religion may do in a time of ease and peace, but when that trial comes, it will be hard to bear up without the reality.—Consider,

(3.) That death and judgment will try us all. We may put off the trial as we will for a time, there is however no shifting of it altogether. God will not be mocked.—Consider,

Lastly, That it will be a terrible disappointment to be awakened out of dreams of heaven, by falling into hell. It will be no time to seek oil, when the Bridegroom is come, and hath shut the door.

We have in view an ordinance that calls to self-examination : 1 Cor. xi. 28, "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." Therefore bestir yourselves, and consider your state. Study the spirituality of religion, that you may thus approve yourselves to the heart-searching God. Amen.

THE STATUTE-LAW OF DISCIPLESHIP.*

SERMON XXXIII.

LUKE xiv. 26,

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

He is a fool who joins himself to any society, before he has weighed with himself how he can comply with the laws and rules of that society. In vain do we propose to be a disciple to any person, if we are not disposed, to submit to his discipline. Man is born like a wild ass's colt, naturally untractable and unteachable; the Son of God has set up his school amongst us; many who externally belong to it stand at a distance from him, as rude and unpolished by grace as when they first came to it. There is a solemn and awful entry into the school of Christ before us, and it cannot be unsuitable, especially on such a season as this, to stand and hear, out of the mouth of the great Master, the necessary qualifications of all such as will be reckoned his disciples indeed. This we have in the text.—In which there is observable,

1. A case supposed; and there are two things in it. For this case, though the case of many, is like the legs of the lame, which are not equal.—In it, first, there is a fair profession. The man cometh to Christ, not in the way of believing on him, as this word is often used, the expression here can by no means be thus explained; but in the way of an outward profession, joining himself with his followers, taking on him the name of his party. The occasion of the words clears this. Multitudes went with him, and they were ready to value themselves because they kept good com-

* Delivered at Selkirk, Saturday, Oct. 11, 1712.