

And thus I have done with this eighth instance, whereby it doth appear that a good man hath no reason or cause to be discouraged in regard of his work or service, however it may fare with him therein.

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## SERMON XII.

### A LIFTING UP IN CASE OF DISCOURAGEMENTS DRAWN FROM THE CONDITION ITSELF.

“*Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou disquieted within me?*” &c.—Psalm xlii. 11.

IX. SOMETIMES the discouragements of God’s people are drawn from their condition, the condition itself.

Oh, saith one, my condition is exceeding sad, both for soul and body; there is no condition that is like to mine: my affliction and my condition are twisted and woven in together; my affliction, misery, and my calamity are seated in my very condition: they do not only grow upon my condition, but are in the condition itself, and therefore I am thus discouraged; have I not cause and reason for it?

No: I will grant and must confess, it is possible that a godly man’s condition in regard of outwards, may be very bad, *Cum bene sit malis, et male bonis*; when it goes well with those that are bad, and ill with those that are good, I am strongly solicited to believe there is no God, said the heathen: but we have learned better divinity than this. A man’s condition may be very bad, and yet the man himself may be very good, and God may be good to him. Yea,

respectu judæorum tum quod Christus omnium conversionem vere non intendit sed tantum eorum quos efficaciter convertere voluit qui principaliter sunt electi tum quod opus predicationis Christi apud eos qui non erant convertendi, usum suum tamen habuit vel quod erat futurum hoc illis in testimonium in die judicii vel quod ad consolationem nostram id fecit ut videlicet predicatorum non nimium dolerant et animum abjicerent si semen ab illis projectum aliquando viderent in animis audientium non fructificare. *Estius in Loc.*

Sensus igitur hoc loco sio esse poterit; consumpsi frustra vires, &c. quasi, dicat; non est quod quisquam existimet id circo me frustra laborasse, quod non missus venerim aut aliter atque oporteret rem tractarim in aliquove deliquerim conditio (sic enim significat מַשְׁפָּט) studia et actiones omnes me sic significat פְּלִעַם) imo omnia mea a Deo meo a patre omnium Deo disposita et ordinata fuere. *Forerius in Esai. cap. 49.*

It is possible that a godly man's condition in regard of the world, may be worsè than the condition of a wicked man ; for what else is the meaning of the parable of Dives and Lazarus ? Jacob was driven out of his father's house and lodged in the open fields, in the night, whilst wicked Esau, profane Esau, stayed at home, and lay in his warm bed : ye do not read that ever Esau did serve so hard a service in Laban's house as Jacob did, nor are ye able to parallel Esau's misery with Jacob's ; yet saith the Lord, " Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated." So that it is possible for a good and godly man's condition, in regard of the world, to be worsè than the condition of the wicked. Yea,

It is possible that a godly man's condition may be worsè in regard of outwards, after his conversion, worsè I say, than before his conversion. Grace is fain sometimes to wear sin's clothes ; and a gracious man, sometimes, doth wear the punishment of that sin which he hath committed before his conversion. What think you of Paul ? Do you read that ever Paul before his conversion was put into the stocks ; that he was whipped up and down the streets like a rogue ; that he was imprisoned ; that he was stoned by his countrymen ? But after his conversion he was so used. In the beginning of that xixth chapter of the Acts, he breathed out threatenings against the saints, and goes out to kill the people of God ; but no sooner is Paul converted, but the Jews sought to kill him : so that I say, possibly a gracious man's condition, in regard of outwards may be worsè, at least for a time, than it was before he was converted and drawn to God.

But now, take a godly man's condition, and though it be never so sad, yet there is no reason why he should be discouraged or cast down because of his condition, in itself considered. For,

1. By way of demonstration. If his condition be carved out unto him by the hand of his Father, who is of infinite wisdom and love ; then he hath no reason to complain, or to be disquieted. Now look into Psalm xvi, see what David saith of Christ, and Christ of the saints, at verse 6, " My lines are fallen unto me in a pleasant place ; yea, I have a fair heritage," or a goodly heritage ; Why ? (verse 5.) " The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup."

Three things are most considerable here. First, these words are plainly spoken of our Lord and Saviour Christ, and of his great sufferings, as appears by verse 10. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." "Men and brethren, (saith the apostle in Acts ii. 29.) let me speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day; therefore being a prophet and God had sworn unto him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;" he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ. At the 27th verse of the iind chapter ye have the same words that you have here in Psalm xvi, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." So that plainly the words of the Psalm are spoken of Christ, and of his great sufferings. But now in the second place; though his sufferings were very great and many, yet saith he, "My lines are fallen unto me in a pleasant place, and I have a goodly heritage;" but why so? The reason is, in the third place, in verse 5, "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup;" the Lord, my Father, saith he, hath drawn out my lines for me, he hath measured out my condition and the Lord himself is my portion and the portion of mine inheritance. Thus now, may every godly man say; my lines are fallen unto me in a pleasant place, yea, I have a goodly heritage. Why? for the Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: surely, therefore, he hath no reason to be discouraged, whatever his condition be. Again.

2. If a man do not live upon his condition itself, but upon his call into his condition; then he hath no reason to be discouraged in regard of his condition itself. Now as our Lord and Saviour Christ said, "Man lives not by bread but by every word of God;" so say I, man lives not upon his condition, but upon God's call into his condition; and if God call a man into a condition, he will maintain him in it: therefore you find these two go together, in Psalm xvi, "Thou maintainest my lot;" at the latter end of verse 5, "And my lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place." And thus it was with the children of Israel, when they went through the Red Sea; it is said, "The waters stood like a wall on each side

of them ;” ye never read before of a wall of water, and yet then the waters were as a wall unto them ; a strange kind of wall, made of waters : but saith the text, “ the waters were as a wall,” stood as a wall on each side of them. Beloved, God’s call is our wall, which will bear off, and bear up one’s heart under troubles and discouragements. Oh, saith a gracious soul, what abundance of opposition do I meet withal in my condition ; but yet the Lord hath called me into this condition, and therefore I am quiet, I am contented, I am satisfied ; I confess I did not think to have met with so much affliction in my condition as now I do ; but God hath called me into it, and therefore I have comfort. Thus it is with all the saints, they are led by God’s call into their condition, and they can shew their patent, they can say, Here is my call. Now, if a man do not live upon the condition itself, but upon God’s call into his condition ; and God doth call his people into whatsoever condition they are ; then they have no reason to be discouraged by reason of their condition. Again,

3. If there be no condition that a godly man can fall into, but there is some mercy that is mixed with it, and Jesus Christ hath paid for that too, then a man hath no reason to be discouraged, whatever his condition be. Now you know what Solomon saith : “ Shall a living man complain ? is not a living dog better than a dead lion ? ” Some mercy still that is mixed with misery, and Jesus Christ hath paid the reckoning ; godly men have nothing to pay, not anything to pay. Suppose you were invited to a great feast, and some of the dishes were not so well dressed or cooked up as you desire, would you find fault ; would you complain ? No ; why ? Because this feast doth cost me nothing. The master of the feast may find fault, but I am a guest and it cost me nothing, and therefore I have no reason to complain. Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ is the great master of the feast, and of all the comforts which you have, and he hath paid all your reckoning, there is nothing for you to pay ; and if you bring in your prayers, your tears, your obedience, as matter of payment, they will not be taken ; no, saith Christ, I have paid all myself, witness these empty purses, these empty veins of mine ; as for you, O my friends, ye are welcome, but you have nothing to pay, not a penny, not a farthing. I say there is no condition that a godly man can

fall into, but there is some mercy that is mixed withal, and Christ hath paid the reckoning for the mercy too; surely then, the people of God have no reason to be discouraged by reason of their condition.

But (will some say) I am in a poor, low, mean, base and despised condition, and therefore I am thus disquieted; as for those that are in a prosperous estate and condition, they may well bear up their heads and be of good comfort. Rich men indeed and those that are in a prosperous condition, have many opportunities of serving God, publicly and privately, which a poor man hath not; they have time to frequent the ordinances in the week, to converse much with God in private, whilst the poor man is fain to be at work for his living, and glad he can get his living too; there is no man knows the misery of a poor condition but those that are in it. And such is my condition, and therefore I am thus discouraged; have I not cause and reason for it?

No. For whosoever you are that speak or think thus, do you know what the burden of prosperity is? You see a town sometimes upon the side of a hill, and you say, what a fine town is there, what pleasant meadows are about it, what excellent woods, what clean ways unto it. Thus you speak at a distance. But when you draw near unto this town, and go through some of the lanes, you find them very dirty, and then you say, I did not think at a distance, that there had been such a dirty lane about this town; I saw nothing but fine and clean meadows when I was at a distance, I did not think there had been such dirty passages to it. So, when you look upon prosperity at a distance, you think there is no dirty lanes, no foul passages to it and from it; but when you come near unto it, then you find many a dirty passage, and you say, Oh, what dirty sloughs are here! The truth is, the more prosperous (I speak now of outward prosperity) a man's condition is, the more opportunities he hath of doing and receiving good. But if you look into Numbers iv., you shall find that every opportunity of service carries a burden with it; and therefore the service of the Levites, is often, and in many verses of the chapter called a burden; I will name but one, which is the last: "According to the commandment of the Lord, they were numbered by the hand of Moses, every one according to his service, and according to his

burden." Service and burden do here go together; burden and service, service and burden. And now poor soul, is it a burden to you, that you are freed from a burden; hath not our Lord and Saviour Christ said, and do you not find it in experience, "That the poor receive the gospel?" Is not a living sprig of a tree better than a dead arm? The poor hen, you know, so long as she lives is upon the dunghill, and there she is scraping, and picking up her living; but when she is dead, then she is brought unto the master's table. The hawk on the contrary, while he is living, is carried upon the fist, and upon the arm, and hath good flesh and provision made for him, and a house to sit in; but when the hawk dieth, then he is thrown out unto the dunghill. So in this case; so long as a poor, godly man is living here, it may be he is upon the dunghill and picking up his living, a little and a little; but when he dieth, then he is brought into his master's presence. But the rich, ungodly man when he dieth, though while he lived he had great provision, yet then he is thrown out unto the dunghill, and comes no more into his master's presence. Oh, you that are godly, though in a low condition, would you then change your condition with the wicked? The lower your condition is, the higher is your obedience; if you submit unto the work of your condition, this is angelical obedience; for the angels, though in order of nature they are above men, yet at the command of God, they are ministering spirits unto men, attend and look to men that are much below them in nature. And the lower the work is that they do in tending men, the higher is their obedience to God. So say I; the lower the work of your condition is, the higher and more angelical is your obedience in submitting unto your condition, and to the work thereof. Luther said: A poor woman knitting of a pair of stockings in a way of faith, doth a greater work than Alexander did in conquering the world. It was the speech of a good man that is now in heaven: The more riches the more debts. For if a man be not in Christ, all his present riches will be future debts; he will wish: Oh, that I had less of them, oh, that I had never a penny. And I pray tell me, who have most promises in scripture? The poor or the rich? The oppressed or the oppressor? The high or the low? He that is most exercised hath the most promises; and a

low condition is an excellent commentary upon those promises. When the sun shines, ye see not the stars; but in the night the stars appear. So, whilst prosperity shines upon us, we do not see the promises; but when the night comes, adversity comes, a dark and low condition comes, then we see those promises which we saw not before. But suppose that a father hath two children, and to one he gives a brave garment, saying unto him: Child, take and wear this garment; but there is all thy portion, I shall give thee no more. The other he gives a mean garment to, but saith he: Child, be contented, it is not thy portion; thy brother's garment is *his* portion, but though the garment be mean it is not *thy* portion, I have a good inheritance for thee. Will not this latter child be contented; will he be discouraged think you, because he hath not so brave a garment as the other hath? Why, take a wicked man, and though he have a braver garment, yet it is all his portion, his portion is in this life, there is all thou shalt have, saith God, there is thy portion. But now, as for a godly man, though he have a mean garment, yet it is not his portion. Oh, you that are godly, will you then be discouraged because you have not so brave and fine a garment as another hath? Consider that the Lord himself is your portion.\*

Oh, but, I praise the Lord, I am not in a poor and low and base condition, my condition is full enough; but I am in an unsettled condition, I am never settled in my condition, sometimes in one condition, and sometimes in another; could I be but settled, though I had the lesser, I should be contented; but my condition is never settled, and therefore I am thus disquieted and discouraged; have I not some reason now?

No: for I pray, what settlement would you have here in this world? The best estate of men is altogether vanity; is there any settlement in vanity? "Verily (saith the Psalmist)

\* Luc. 6.—Væ vobis divitibus quoniam accepistis hic consolationem vestram: non simpliciter dicit Christus quoniam consolationem recipitis in hac vita sed addit vestram quasi ista sit ipsorum portio, ultra quam nihil illis boni sit expectandum amplius unde in græco pulchre positum est *ὅτι απεχετε την παρακλησιν υμων*.—Musculus in Matth. 5. p. 67.

Non est simplex verbum *εχετε* sed compositum *απεχετε* significat autem *απεχειν* non tamen simpliciter recipere et habere, sed portionem solatii sui jam accepisse et jam habere, ut postea nullam aliam et nihil amplius vel, petere possit vel expectare debeat.—Chemmit. Harm. cap 50. p. 542.

the best estate of every man, (or every man in his best estate) is altogether vanity ;” so you read it : but in the Hebrew it is, every man standing, *Omnis homo stans*, as Montanus gives it, every man in his most settled estate, so the word signifies ; “ Verily every man in his most settled estate is altogether vanity.”\*

But suppose that your condition be more unsettled than any others ; if God hath no design but love upon you in your unsettlement, then surely you have no reason to be disquieted because of this. Now, I pray, why doth the Lord suffer the condition of his people to be so unsettled in the world, but that they may settle upon himself? Oh, saith a gracious heart, I see there is no abiding place here, therefore I look for one that is to come, that hath a foundation : had I been settled in the world, I should never have been fixed upon God himself ; but being unsettled in the world, I learn to settle upon God himself : God doth therefore carry his children from vessel to vessel, from condition to condition, that their filthy scent may not remain. Beloved, there is no condition here below, that is able to grasp, or hold the love of God to his children ; every condition is too narrow a vessel to hold the love of God in, and therefore God doth lead his people into several conditions, that so he may have the fuller vent for his love : so long as you are in one condition, you do not see or observe your own self and carriage therein, and therefore God leads you into a new condition, that you may see what you did in your former condition. For example : when a man is in health, he doth not then observe his own carriage in the days of health ; therefore God leads him into sickness, and when he is sick then he doth observe what his carriage was while he was in health ; then, saith he, how wanton was I, how worldly was I, how vain was I, when I was in health : but when a man is sick, then he doth not observe his carriage in that condition ; therefore God leads him into health again, and when he is in health then he seeth what his carriage was while he was sick ; and then, saith he, how froward was I, how impatient was I, when I was sick. I say, a man doth not observe the present carriage of his soul in his present condition, and therefore God leads him into a new condition, and then he sees what his carriage was

\* אַךְ כִּלְהַבֵּל כֹּל—*Sterit, constitit, constitutus fuit.* כֶּזֶב דַּעַב

in the old condition. Philosophy tells us, that if a sensible object be laid close to the organ of sense, there will be no sensation;\* as if a book be held close unto your eye, you will not be able to read a letter; but hold it at a convenient distance, and then you may read it all. So here; so long as a man is in a condition, and that is held close unto him, he doth not see his own carriage therein, but at a distance he doth; wherefore the Lord doth remove him to some distance from his former condition and so he sees and observeth what he was, and did therein. It is an easy thing for a man to sing when the Psalm is set, a child can do it; but it requires some skill to begin, it requires some singing skill to turn readily from one tune to another; but when the Psalm is begun, every one can go on then. A poor weak horse can go on in the road, so long as he keeps the same way; but when he comes to turn out of that way into another, then he stumbles; it requires some strength in a horse to go readily over the cart wracks, to go from one way into another, this requires strength. So every poor weak man, may go on in the same way, and in the same condition, this requires no great store of strength; but to carry the sameness of heart towards God in variety of conditions, this argues strength, this requires skill: what therefore if the Lord will lead you from one condition to another, and so draw out your skill and strength, and hath no design but of love upon you, will you then be discouraged? Thus it is with all the saints; surely therefore they have no reason to be cast down in this respect.

Oh, but I am not so much troubled about my outward condition, as about the condition of my soul, the Lord knows my soul's condition is very sad; for sometimes I am under the ordinances, and sometimes not; sometimes I can stir out to an ordinance, but sometimes oppositions keep me at home; I am not under a settled ordinance; and when I am under the ordinance, I get little good thereby; I hear and I do not remember, my heart is hard and dead and dull, and it is little that I profit, and therefore I am thus discouraged: have I not cause and reason now?

No, not yet. For as for your want of ordinances, if God

\* Sensibili positum juxta sensorium nulla sit sensatio.

lead you to the want of an ordinance, he will make the very want of an ordinance, to be an ordinance to you. When the children of Israel came into the land of Canaan, where there was ordinary food, then manna ceased; but when ordinary food could not be had, as in the wilderness, then they had manna, bread that was baked in the clouds; then they had angel's food immediately from God; and immediate mercies that come immediately out of the hand of God, are the sweetest mercies. God doth always give some opportunities of good unto his people; either of doing good, or receiving good; and the less opportunity they have of receiving good, usually the more opportunity they have of doing good: what though your hand be empty of receiving opportunities, yet if your hand be full of doing opportunities, have you any cause to be discouraged? God knows how to give the comfort of an ordinance in the want of an ordinance. When Jonah was in the whale's belly, he prayed, and in his prayer, he looked towards the temple, though he was absent from it, and the Lord heard his prayer. And beloved, if the Lord do remember your carriage, labour of love, longings, groanings, mournings after the ordinances, as much when you want them, as he remembers your enlargements under them; then you have no reason to be discouraged in this respect. Now look into Psalm cxxxii., and you shall see how David presseth the Lord to remember him, verse 1, "Lord remember David and all his afflictions;" he was in great afflictions, and he desired the Lord to remember him; but under what notion would he have the Lord remember him? why saith he, remember him? "How he sware unto the Lord (verse 2,) and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob; surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eye-lids, until I have found out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." He wanted the ordinance, and his heart was restless after it; and now he desires the Lord to remember him for this. So that I say, God will in a special manner remember your carriage, labour of love, longings and groanings after ordinances when you want them. Oh, but though the Lord do remember us in due time; yet what shall we do in the mean time? Mark what follows at verse 6, "Lo, we heard of it at Ephrata, we found it in the

fields of the woods." What is that? "Lo we heard of it at Ephrata;" we heard of it, that is, we heard of the ark (which he had spoken of before) and the habitation of the mighty God of Jacob. We heard of it at Ephrata; as if he should say, it was commonly reported and thought that the Lord, would settle his ark, and his house and habitation at Ephrata, at Bethlehem, a plentiful place; but now we have found it in the fields of the wood. Now we find that the Lord would settle his house, and his ark at Jerusalem, which is compassed about with hills full of woods; in the fields of the forest have we found it. Beloved, our eye is all upon Ephrata, upon Bethlehem, upon the plentiful place; but the Lord doth so order things in his goodness, that when he brings his people into the woods, the fields, the forest, there they find his ark, his presence, and his habitation in the midst of it. And what godly man is there, whom God hath called at any time from the ordinance, but he may say thus; lo, we heard of it at Ephrata, but we have found it in the fields of the woods; and if you do not find the presence of God and the ark of God and his habitation at Ephrata; yet if ye find him in the fields of the woods, in the barren forests; have you any cause to complain? No, surely you have not. Oh, but I am in a plentiful place for the present, I am at Ephrata; I am not in the barren fields, I am under plentiful and precious ordinances; but I do not remember, I hear, and I remember not.

Therefore ye must know, that as for your want of memory, there is an head-memory, and there is an heart-memory: some have an head-memory, whereby they are able to give an account presently of all they have heard, in their due order; but they want an heart-memory to suggest the things to them when they should use the same. Some again have an heart-memory, so as they can remember the things when they should use them; but they have no head-memory. Now if you can remember the things as you are use to them, though you forget the words and method, have you any cause to complain? Though the words heard, do depart from you, yet your heart may be kept sweet by the hearing of them. Water is often poured into a vessel, and runs out presently, yet it keeps the vessel sweet. So now, though you hear, and hear, and hear again, and you cannot remem-

ber, and the things heard do not stay by you as you desire, yet your soul may be kept sweet thereby.

As for your deadness; it is some life to feel one's own deadness; for there is a death, and a deadness, as I may so speak. There is a life, and a liveliness; a man may be alive and yet not lively, as a sick person. So a man may be under some deadness, and yet not be dead unto death. There is a deadness that is opposite to liveliness; and there is a deadness that is opposite to life. Now you complain, Oh, my heart is dead, my heart is dead; this argues that it is but a deadness that is opposite to liveliness, else you could not feel your own deadness. A man that is stark dead, cannot feel that he is dead; I say therefore, in that you feel your own deadness, it argues, that it is but a deadness that is opposite to liveliness, and not that deadness that is opposite to life itself; and if you be alive in opposition to death, though you have a deadness in you that is opposite unto liveliness, have you any reason to be quite discouraged, and cast down? The tradesman complains that his trade is dead, and you complain that your heart is dead; this argues that your trade is there, and that your trade is in the matter of your heart.

As if your unprofitableness, and unfruitfulness under the means and ordinances, ye know that there is a difference between unfruitfulness and less fruitfulness; the good ground brings forth fruit, in some thirty, in some sixty, in some an hundred fold; thirty is less than sixty, yet this is not unfruitfulness; sixty is less fruit than an hundred fold, yet this is not barrenness. A good man may be less fruitful than another, or than he was formerly, yet he may be fruitful; and it may be thus with you. But suppose you cannot profit under the means, and be indeed unfruitful; yet there is a great deal of difference between the unfruitfulness of the good tree, and the barrenness of the barren fig-tree. Though a good man be unfruitful, yet he is very sensible of his unfruitfulness. Oh, saith he, there is not a more barren, vile, wretched, unprofitable heart in all the world than mine: it is not so with the barren soul. Though a good man may be too unfruitful, yet he doth not cumber the ground; the barren fig-tree doth, Luke xiii., that is, he doth eat out the heart of the soil from others and doth hinder others; he

is a cumberer to the place and family where he grows and lives: the good man is not so, but though he is unprofitable in his own eyes, yet in truth he is profitable to the souls of others. Though a good man doth not profit so much as he should and would, yet he is willing that any means should be used with him for his profit and growth, even to be digged about and dunged: "And I will dig about it and dung it." Luke xiii. Upon which words, saith Bernard: *Non refugit fœditatem mediæ, qui expectat fœcunditatem animæ*: dung is a means unsavory, and he that desires the growth of his grace, will not refuse the foulness of the means, that means which to flesh and blood is unsavory. Though a good man may be very unfruitful, yet God will not cut him down, he will prune him and cut him in such a time as he may grow thereby, but he will not cut him down. But the barren fig-tree, he will cut it down; cut it down, saith the owner, why should it cumber the ground any longer? But however it be, art thou unfruitful, unprofitable under the means? then have you cause to be humbled: humble yourself therefore before the Lord your God, yet be you not discouraged.

Oh, but yet this is not my case only; for I do not barely complain of my unprofitableness under the means and ordinances (though that is much) but I fear that my spiritual condition is not right; and if my spiritual condition be not good and right, after I have lived thus long under such searching means and ministry, I fear it will never be right. I do not read in all the scripture that ever an hypocrite was converted; publicans and sinners I read of, but I do not read of an hypocrite converted; and having lived under the means of grace thus long, if now my condition be unsound, then I am a hypocrite, and indeed this I fear, and therefore I am thus discouraged; have I not cause and reason for it?

No. For though you have lien long under the means of grace, and are not converted, yet there is hope, there is hope concerning this. When our Lord and Saviour Christ rose from the dead, the stone was rolled and removed away. And when the Lord Christ doth raise up a poor soul, he will roll away the stone, though it be as heavy as death, though it be as heavy as hypocrisy, though the stone be as heavy as hell itself; yea, Christ will roll away the stone though it hath

lien long upon you. And I pray, what think you of Paul? was not Paul a hypocrite before his conversion? "Woe to you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites," saith our Saviour; and saith Paul concerning himself, concerning the law, "I was a pharisee." Our Saviour saith that the scribes and pharisees were hypocrites; and Paul saith concerning himself, he was a pharisee and yet he was converted. There is one hypocrite then converted, and you may read of others.

But is not this usual with God's own children; do they not speak it sometimes out, that they are but hypocrites? I am but an hypocrite. Ye read of that blessed martyr, Mr. John Bradford, that being in prison, and writing to a friend, he subscribes his letter thus; Your's in Christ, a most unprofitable, hard-hearted, miserable sinner. And another letter he subscribes thus; Your's in Christ, a very painted hypocrite, John Bradford. Some there are, that think their souls are sincere, and yet they are most unsound. Some again think they are unsound, and yet they are most sincere.

But to come a little nearer, and yet I must but touch upon it; did ever hypocrite long and mourn after the presence of God in Christ, as the best thing in all the world; did ever hypocrite dwell, and abide in the work of private examination of his own soul; did ever hypocrite love grace better or more than gifts; or that most, which is the most spiritual, most savory; did ever hypocrite desire peace, and comfort for grace sake, and not rather grace for peace sake; do hypocrites ordinarily think they are hypocrites; where do you find that in the scripture, that hypocrites ordinarily think they are hypocrites? If hypocrisy be a man's burden, it is not his condition. Did ever any hypocrite walk contrary to himself, to his former self? When men were truly converted they did. So you read of Zaccheus, before he was converted, he was a great oppressor and a covetous man; but being once converted, saith he, "Lord, behold, the half of my goods I give unto the poor; and if I have wronged any man, I will restore four-fold;" here he walks contrary to himself. So the jailor, before he was converted, he imprisoned the apostles, and whipped them till the blood ran down upon their backs; but being converted, he hath them into his house, sets meat before them, and washeth their

wounds; he walks contrary to his own former self. So Paul, before he was converted, he persecuted the saints and the gospel; after converted, then he did preach the gospel, which before he persecuted: thus he walked contrary to his former self. I have read, or heard of a young man that was given much to jeering and scoffing; and his mother being godly he would frequently jeer and scoff at his own mother; it pleased God at the last to work savingly upon him, and then he would never come into the presence of his mother, but he would fall down upon his knees, not in the morning and evening for a blessing, but whenever he came into the presence of his mother, he would fall down in a reverential way upon his knees, till she bid him stand up. I do not commend the action, but I speak this to shew, that when a man is converted, and turned to God, then he will walk contrary to himself. Now, whoever you be, that make this objection, have you not found it thus in your own souls? I appeal unto you, cannot you say thus? Indeed it is little I enjoy of God here; but the Lord knows, I do long and mourn for the presence of God in Christ, as the best thing in all the world; and I am much in the examination of mine own heart in private, when no eye doth see me; and I do desire those things most that are the most spiritual, and the most savory, those my soul closeth most with; and I do not desire grace for comfort, but I desire comfort for grace: and ah, Lord thou knowest I have gone up and down fearing for many years together, that I have been an hypocrite; I have sat down weeping and said, Oh, I am an hypocrite, I am an hypocrite, hypocrisy hath been my burden indeed. And Lord, thou knowest, I do now walk contrary to my former self; before the Lord was pleased to work upon me, so and so I lived; but now through grace, I do walk contrary to my former self: then, soul, be of good comfort; for though there may be many failings, for which you should be humbled, yet do not say that thou art an hypocrite; thy condition is, or may be very good: wherefore go in peace and the Lord comfort thee.

Oh, but will some say, this is not my case yet; for I do not only fear that my condition is unsound, but I am afraid that I am concluded under it, and it will never be otherwise; for there are but some few elect and chosen ones that shall be

saved to all eternity, it may be one of a hundred, or one of a thousand; and things are now cast in time according to God's decree before time. Indeed, if this were true, That Christ died for all, for all particular men, and that Christ intendeth to save every particular man, as the doctrine of some is, then I should have hope; but I have heard that this doctrine is not true, and that Christ did not die for all men, with intention to save every particular man, and therefore seeing that few are under election, one of a hundred, or two of a thousand, I fear that I am none of them; and therefore I am thus discouraged, have I not cause and reason now?

No: for though this doctrine be true, that there is a certain number of elect persons, who are but few comparatively, and that there is no such thing as general redemption; yet this is in no way prejudicial to there is or growth of your comfort.

As for election; it is true indeed that there is a certain number of elect persons, whom God hath chosen to grace and eternal glory, before the foundation of the world was laid; for the apostle Paul saith expressly, Eph. i. 3, "That we are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world;" he doth not say, blessed be God who hath decreed to choose us, but "who hath chosen us;" nor doth he say, who hath chosen all, but *us*; where some are chosen, others are left; nor doth he say, who hath chosen us upon foresight of our faith or holiness, but, "that we may be holy," holiness being the fruit of Election; and if ye look into Matt. xxv. ye shall find that those who stand at Christ's right hand at the day of judgment, unto whom he saith, "Come ye blessed, inherit the kingdom," are such for whom the kingdom was prepared before the foundation of the world.\*

Now this number of elect persons is certain and unalterable; for the foundation of God standeth sure. And as the schoolmen observe, If a man that is predestinated to life, could be damned, then the will of God might be altered; for when he doth predestinate a man to life, he wills his salva-

\* Non qui futuri eramus sed ut essemus, nempe certum est, nempe manifestum est, ideo quippe tales eramus futuri quos elegit ipse predestinans ut per gratiam ejus tales essemus. Austin, L. Predestin. Cap. 8.

tion; and when he damns a man, he wills his damnation; and therefore if those that are predestinated to life can be damned, then the will of God may be altered, which is impossible; for his will is like himself, unchangeable.

As the number of elect persons is certain, and cannot be diminished, nor augmented; so the Lord doth certainly know all those persons, for their names are written in the book of life, and the Lord knows who are his, that is, saith Mr. Bayne God only knows his collectively; no man or creature doth in this sense know who are God's.

But though God only knows by himself, who those are that are approved for his, yet a man may know that he is one of those elect; for if I see myself set apart from the world in time, then may I know that God hath separated me from others before time; and if I have chosen God for my portion, then may I know that God hath chosen me, for we choose him because he hath chosen us first: and if I love God in time and believe on Christ, then I may know that he hath loved me, and given himself for me: for all our grace is but a reflection of his grace. If you see the prints and characters of the seal upon the wax, you know the seal hath been set upon it, though you did not see when it was done. Of this mind was that blessed martyr, Mr. John Bradford, with whom Mr. Fox doth join, in his annotations upon Mr. Bradford's faith.\* Thus do I wade, saith he, in predestination, in such sort as God hath opened; I begin with creation, from thence I come to redemption, so to justification, and so to election: we must judge of election, by that which cometh after,\* that is by our faith, and belief in Christ; not that faith is the efficient cause of our election, but the effect rather, and the cause certificatory, or the cause of our certification, whereby we are brought to the knowledge of our election; and to this purpose doth the apostle exhort us to make our calling and election sure; "Give all diligence (saith he) to make your calling and election sure:" it seems then that there are some who are elected. That a man may know, and be assured of his own election. That the way to know this, is not to begin aloft, but to begin below with our vocation; and therefore the apostle puts election

\* Vol. 3. p 354. Acts and Monuments.

\* De Electione judicandum est a posteriori.

last, saying, not make your election and your vocation sure ; but “ make your calling and your election sure.”

As for universal redemption, ye must know that Christ did indeed die for all men ; but it is no where said, that he died for all the particular men of the world with intention to save them, which is the thing in question : bnt that he died for all, that is, both Jew and gentile, is very true ; and if ye look into Scripture, and observe how, when, and upon what occasion this speech came in, you will easily see this is the meaning of it. In the times of the Old Testament, Christ is not said to die for all, but, “ he bare the sins of many,” Isa. liii. ; not of all, but of many. And so whilst Christ lived, preaching only to the Jews, and commanding his disciples not to go into the way of the gentiles, it is said, “ He gave himself a ransom for many ;” not for all, but for many : but when the apostles preached to the gentiles, then it is said indeed and not before, that Christ died for all. Why ? Because they held forth Christ to the gentile as well as to the Jew. And therefore if ye look into 1 Tim. ii., you shall find, that whereas the apostle had said, verse 4, “ Who would have all men to be saved ;” and verse 5, 6, “ For there is one Mediator, who gave himself a ransom for all :” he explains this in regard of the gentiles, verse 7, “ Whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle ;” a teacher of the gentiles : and thus it is a reason why they should pray for all, even for the heathen magistrates, verse 1. And to the same purpose doth the apostle John speak, in his first epistle, ii. 2 : “ And he (speaking of Christ) is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for our’s only, but for the whole world ;” not for *the sins* of the whole world, as our translation gives it, but, as the Greek and the ancient Syriac renders it, for the whole world. But why, and how is Christ the propitiation for the whole world ? What, is Christ the propitiation for every particular man in the world ? No, but, “ the whole world,” is opposed to the Jews, unto whom he wrote ; for to the believing scattered Jews did he now write, as appears by the title of this epistle, called an epistle general ; which title, only those epistles of James, Jude and Peter have, which were written to the scattered Jews, 1 Peter i. 1 ; James i. 1. So that in this sense, it is true, Christ died for all, that is, for the Jew and gentile ; but

that he died for every particular man in the world, with intention to save him, is no where to be found in the Scripture.\*

As for the comfortableness of that doctrine of universal redemption; whereas it is said, that it is conducive to the comfort of such as are afflicted and troubled in spirit. If this doctrine of universal redemption be indeed an enemy to the comfort of a poor, doubting, afflicted soul, then you have no reason to be discouraged in regard of this objection, or of your own condition in this respect.

Now to clear that, take these four or five arguments :

1. That doctrine which doth enervate or make void the satisfaction of Christ for actual sins cannot be a friend, but a great enemy to the faith and comfort of a poor, doubting, and afflicted soul; for he is especially troubled for his actual sins; and the great comfort that he hath, lieth in this, that Christ hath satisfied for them. Now what saith the doctrine of universal redemption, to the satisfaction of Christ for actual sins? It plainly tells us that a man may be, and thousands are damned for those very sins which Christ hath satisfied for, and it must needs say so; for if Christ died for all the particular men in the world, then all the particular men in the world may be saved; and if they may be saved, then Christ did bear their actual sins on the cross, or else a man's sins may be pardoned, which Christ did not bear on the cross; and if Christ did bear the actual sins of all the particular men in the world, then those that are damned, must be damned for those very sins which Christ did bear and satisfy for, or else they are not damned for them. But men are not only damned for their final unbelief, but for sins against the law; for the law is made for the ungodly. And Rom. ii. 12: "As many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law." "And because of these things" (saith the apostle, speaking of actual sins against the law)

\* Trem. et Bodet non pro nostris tantum sed etiam pro totius mundi; nequaquam hanc interpretationem fert phrasis; verito ergo et non pro nobis tantum sed etiam pro toto mundo sic et Arabs, &c. porro usitatum est Hebræis totum mundum dicere pro certa universitate quorundam de quibus in subjecta materia agitur &c. Ludov. de Dieu. in Joan. i. 2.

Johannes qui natione Judæus erat ne existimaretur docuisse pro Judæis tantum Christum propitiationem esse quando dixit est propitiatio pro peccatis nostris, adjecit pro totius etiam mundi peccatis ut etiam Gentes significares.—Cyril. L. 11. cap. 19.

“the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.” Now if men be damned for their actual sins against the law, and Christ have borne them on the cross and satisfied for them, then men are damned for those very sins which Christ hath satisfied for; and if so, then what is this but to enervate, and make void the satisfaction of Christ? If you pay a debt, and afterwards be thrown into prison for the same debt, doth not the imprisonment make void the satisfaction of your payment. Yet thus now it is according to the principles of this doctrine of universal redemption: surely therefore that doctrine is no friend, but a great enemy to the faith and comfort of a poor, doubting and afflicted soul.

2. The intercession of Christ, in conjunction with the death of Christ, is a great pillar of our christian consolation, Rom. viii. 33, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” Verse 34, “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us: who shall separate us from the love of God? &c.” So that our comfort is not only laid on the death of Christ, nor on the intercession of Christ alone, but upon the connection of these two together. And indeed, what comfort would the Jews have in the bare sacrifice, if the high priest did not take the blood thereof and carry it into the holy place, sprinkling the mercy-seat for them, whom the sacrifice was offered for? But according to this doctrine of universal redemption, the intercession of Christ is parted from his death; for though it tells you that Christ died for all, yet it tells you, that he doth not intercede for all; and it must needs say so, for Christ said, “Father, I thank thee that thou hearest me always;” therefore if Christ should pray for the conversion of all the particular men in the world, then all the particular men in the world should be converted and so saved; but all are not saved or converted, therefore this doctrine must needs divide between the intercession and the death of Christ, and so pull down that great pillar of our christian comfort, which stands in the conjunction of Christ’s death and intercession.

3. That doctrine which is contrary or repugnant to the free grace of God, cannot be a true friend to the comfort of a poor, doubting soul; for what is our great comfort on this

side heaven, but the free grace of God? Now, what is free grace, but the special favour of God shewn to some more than to others? And therefore if you look into Rom. ix. ye shall find, that when the apostle would set out the free grace of God, saying, "Whom he will, he shews mercy to; and whom he will, he hardens;" he first shews that Jacob and Esau were alike, alike in regard of their parentage, for both were of Isaac and Rebecca; alike in regard of their work, "For the children being not yet born, and having done neither good or evil, &c.," yet God did love the one and hate the other, shewing mercy to the one and not to the other. Why? Because "God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom he will have compassion." ver. 15. So that it is the work of free grace to shew mercy to some and not to others, who are alike unworthy. So again, Ephes. ii., the apostle proving that by grace we are saved; first he shews that the Ephesians by nature were as unworthy as any other, being all by nature the children of wrath, ver. 1, 2, yet those Ephesians did obtain mercy and not others. Why? Because by grace they were saved. So that free grace is that distinguishing mercy of God, whereby he doth shew mercy to some and not to others, who are alike miserable and unworthy. But now this doctrine of universal redemption tells us, that as Christ died for all, so he doth give a sufficiency of grace unto all, and therefore that which distinguisheth one man from another, must be the free will of man and not the free grace of God; for *commune quæ tenus, commune non distinguit*; that which is common, as common, cannot distinguish. As suppose now that a father doth bestow an equal sum of money upon two children, to purchase house or land with; one doth purchase and the other not; the reason why the one purchases and the other not, is, because the one wills it and the other not. Indeed he that purchaseth doth it by his father's help, assistance and money; but what reason is there why he doth make a purchase and the other not, but because he wills it and the other not? So, if God give a sufficiency of grace unto all; that one man doth believe, you will say, is by the grace of God; but the reason why one believes and the other not, is only the will of man, that this man wills it and the other not. Now where free-will hath the casting vote,

there the free grace of God doth not reign. But according to the doctrine of universal redemption, free-will is that which doth make the difference between man and man, it is that which hath the casting voice; surely therefore, it is no friend, but a real enemy to the free grace of God, and so an enemy to the comfort of a poor, doubting soul.

4. That doctrine which is opposite to the assurance of my salvation, cannot be a friend to my comfort in time of temptation. For what comfort can I have in my soul, so long as I doubt of my eternal welfare? Now this doctrine of universal redemption, doth destroy the assurance of our salvation; for who doth not know that according to that doctrine, a man may fall from grace as long as he lives? Else (it will tell you) that he should not act freely, but be under a necessity, and necessity and freedom cannot stand together. But if a man may fall from grace as long as he lives, then he can have no assurance of his salvation till he be dead. And if a godly man cannot have assurance of his perseverance in grace, then he cannot have assurance of his salvation. But according to that doctrine a godly man cannot have assurance of his perseverance in grace; for I can have no assurance of any mercy without God's promise. But this doctrine will tell you that God hath nowhere promised to any man, that he shall certainly persevere in grace. Surely therefore it is no friend to our assurance of salvation, and therefore is a real enemy to the faith and comfort of a poor, doubting soul.

5. The more any doctrine doth hang the mercy of God upon conditions to be performed by us, the less comfortable it is and the more it leaves a poor doubting soul in his fears. Now according to this doctrine of universal redemption, the whole mercy of God is made to depend and hang upon performance of our conditions, yea, upon the performance of the condition of nature. For, say we, if Christ died for all particular men, and so God doth will the salvation of all the particular men in the world, then he doth will this, either absolutely or conditionally; if absolutely, then it must needs come to pass; conditionally therefore, saith this doctrine, God doth will the salvation of all men, upon condition that they repent, believe, and obey; if so, say we, then either God doth will this condition, viz. that all particular men

should repent and believe or not; if not, then God doth not will the salvation of all; for he that doth not will the means, doth not will the end; *Qui vult finem, vult media ad finem*. If God do will this condition, viz. the faith and repentance of all the men in the world; then, say we, he doth will this either absolutely or conditionally; if absolutely, then it must needs come to pass that all men should repent and believe, which they do not. Conditionally therefore, say the maintainers of this doctrine, and what condition is their precedent to faith and repentance, but nature and the work thereof? Yea, what grace or mercy is there in the gospel, but they do tie it up unto our conditions? Will ye instance in the purchase and benefits of the death of Christ? These, say they, are to be given out upon condition. Will ye instance in the grace of the new covenant? All that, say they, is to be given out and is promised upon condition. There is no absolute promise of grace, say they, in all the scripture. Now look what that doctrine is which doth make all grace conditional, that must needs be very obstructive to the hope and comfort of a poor, doubting soul. Such is this doctrine of universal redemption; surely therefore it can be no true friend, but is a real enemy to the consolation of a poor, doubting and afflicted soul.

But if Christ did not die for all and every particular man, how can I conclude that he did die for me; can I raise a conclusion of faith unless the proposition be universal?

Although I need not answer this objection because those that make it do themselves answer it, from their own principles and experience, saying, that faith is an assent to the truth of the gospel; and that they were converted unto God and did believe before they held this doctrine of universal redemption. Yet for further answer you must know,

There is a faith of reliance, and there is a faith of assurance. As the faith of assurance hath a *shall be* of mercy for its bottom; so a *may be* of mercy is a sufficient ground and bottom for the faith of reliance. Jonathan and his armour-bearer had but a *may be* of mercy, when they went against their enemies; "It may be the Lord will work for us," 1 Sam. xiv. 6: yet they relied on God. Now, though Christ did not die for all particular men, yet if he died for sinners indefinitely, there is a *may be* of mercy for me. But so it is,

that Christ did die for sinners indefinitely, though not for sinners universally; and therefore there is a sufficient ground for me to believe, and rely on him.

Ye know, or may know, that the act of reliance, is before the act of assurance. I must indeed be assured that Christ is able to save me, before I rely on him, but I must first rely on him, before I can be assured that he will save me; and by this act of reliance, we grow up into assurance; I know that he will shew mercy to me, by my coming to him, and relying on him; for he hath said, "Whoever comes unto me, I will in nowise cast out." Now if my assurance be raised from the act of reliance, then the first ground and bottom of the conclusion of my faith, is not this general proposition; Christ died for all; but this indefinite proposition, Christ died for sinners. And if the conclusion of faith must arise from a general proposition, then take it thus; Whoever comes to Christ, and relieth on him, shall be saved: or thus; Christ died for all those that do come to him, and rely on him. But I come to him, and rely on him, therefore Christ died for me, and I shall be saved by him. So that thus now, ye see the want of that general proposition, Christ died for all men, is no hindrance to the conclusion, or assurance of our faith; and therefore you have no reason to be discouraged in reference to this objection.

Yet there is one thing more that sticks with me, even that old objection which I cannot be rid of: when I look into my condition, the condition of my soul or body, I find my condition is such as never any one's condition was; I have conversed with many a godly man and woman, but I do not find that ever he or she was in such a condition as I am; and I have read the Scripture, but I do not find there that ever any godly man was in such a condition as I am: could I be but persuaded that ever any gracious man was in the like condition, I should have hope and comfort; but I am persuaded that never any godly soul was in such a condition as I am; therefore I am thus discouraged, have I not cause and reason now?

No: for if it be usual with the saints and people of God to think thus, then you have no reason to be discouraged in this respect. Now I pray look what the church saith in Lam. i. 1, 2: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold,

and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow ;” if there be any condition like unto my condition : and it seems that such were the thoughts of God’s people whom Peter did write unto in his first epistle, iv. 12 : “ Beloved (saith he) think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you :” you will think that no body’s condition is like unto your’s, some strange thing is happened unto you. And so in 1 Peter v. 9, “ Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world :” you think that you meet with such afflictions as never were in the world before ; be not deceived, saith he.

But suppose that your condition be as never any body’s was, hath not the Lord said, “ Behold I work a new thing ?” Is not the name of Christ, “ Wonderful,” and are wonders wrought ordinarily ? If your condition be as never any body’s condition was, then have you an opportunity of glorifying God more than ever any man or woman had ; then you have an opportunity of glorifying God, either in doing or in suffering, more than ever any man or woman had. And then, oh, what grace is here, what mercy is here, what love is here to overcome thy soul withal, that thou shouldest have such an opportunity as never man or woman had before ! And therefore, what I said unto you often, I must now conclude with : God’s people have no reason for their discouragements whatever their condition be.

Thus now I have done with this last instance, and with all the instances. Give me leave to speak something by way of application, in reference to the whole, and so I will shut up this exercise.

If all these things be so, if this be true, that the children of God have no reason for their discouragements, whatever their condition be : then what a mighty necessity is there upon us all, to look into our conditions, and to consider whether we be in Christ or no ; whether we be godly, yea, or nay ; whether we have made our peace with God, aye, or not : and whether we have faith, aye, or no ? All men have not faith, saith the apostle. Indeed all men say they have faith ; and should I go from seat to seat, and from bosom to bosom, and knock at every breast in the congregation, asking, whether doth faith dwell here or no ? unless it were some

few troubled ones, afflicted in conscience, every one of you would say, I do believe, I praise God I do believe, I have faith here within: but all men have not faith, and few there be that do believe. Children, young men and women, faith is not a thing that is born with you; it is a harder thing to believe than to keep the ten commandments. When once you come to know what it is to believe, you will say, Oh, it is a harder thing to believe than to do any thing; I do not know any thing in all the world that is so hard as to believe. But if you do believe, be in Christ, are godly, and have made your peace with God, blessed are you of the Lord, nothing shall offend you, nothing shall discourage you. But if not godly, if not in Christ, if not believing, every thing shall offend thee and discourage thee, and thou hast no reason to be encouraged, whatever thy condition be. Shall we not then, my beloved, all of us, as in the presence of the Lord, seriously look into our condition and consider whether we be in Christ, aye, or not?

But suppose I be in Christ, or I be not in Christ; believe, or not believe; what then? If yet you do not believe, if yet you be not in Christ, if yet you be not godly; this doctrine doth here from the Lord hold forth an invitation to you to come unto Jesus Christ: for if a man be in Christ, and be godly, then he hath no reason to be discouraged, whatever his condition be. If a man be not godly, he hath no reason to be encouraged, whatever his condition be. On the one hand there lies all encouragements, on the other hand there lies all discouragements. Now, therefore, in the name of the Lord, do I here, this morning, lay before this congregation life and death; encouragement on the one hand, and discouragement on the other hand: and if there be an adulterer, a swearer, a lying child, or a stealing servant; if there be ever a poor wanton, a sabbath breaker, an opposer of God here; I beseech you, in the Lord, come unto Jesus Christ; by all these encouragements that I have been speaking of, by all the mercies of the new covenant, and by the salvation of thine own soul, man, or woman, I beseech you come unto Jesus Christ. Oh, that men and women would give no rest unto themselves, till they have made their peace with God, and till they have gotten into Jesus Christ.

And in case that you be in Christ, and that you do believe,

that you be godly, and have made your peace with God; then see that ye walk up unto all these encouragements, see that you walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. Oh, you that are godly, (if these things be as ye have heard,) why hang you down your heads; why are you cast down and disquieted; why do you not walk in the comforts of this truth declared, and in the strength of these encouragements? You see what a venture we have run to speak comfort to you that want comfort. You have heard in several exercises, that a godly man hath no reason for his discouragements, whatever his condition be: not in regard of sin; not in regard of failings and successlessness in duties; not in regard of want of assurance; not in regard of temptation; not in regard of affliction; not in regard of desertion; and now, not in regard of his condition, in itself considered. Now, after all this, I appeal to you, you that are without comfort, do you not think that there are some wicked men in this congregation, that have presumed, when they have heard these things preached, and have said, These things belong to me; and so have endangered their own souls by presumption, comforting themselves when they should not be comforted? I appeal to you, whether you do not think that there are some wicked men in the congregation, that have thus endangered their souls by misapplication of these consolations: and if so, that there hath been this hazard run, and all to comfort you; then will you now refuse this comfort? Oh, you that have refused comfort all this while, receive it in the Lord; and you that were never comforted before, now comfort yourselves, and walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. And you that have gone up and down fearing, trembling, doubting, and much discouraged; yet now at the last say, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God, wait on God, trust in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." How you should so hope, and wait, and trust in God, as to bear up your hearts against all discouragements, I shall yet speak to in the next exercise.

So much for the ninth and last instance.