

A DISCOURSE OF MORTIFICATION.

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.—ROM. VIII. 13.

THE apostle having before spoken of justification by Christ, and shewed the necessity of sanctification, whereby we indeed resemble the holiness of God, which he shews to be wrought by the Spirit of God, which is the band of communion between saints and Christ, who raises them both from sin here and the grave hereafter; and that we are not debtors to the flesh, that we should follow the suggestions of that, but to the Spirit, to observe his inspirations; he then in the text backs his exhortations with a threatening and a promise: a threatening to excite our industry, and a promise to prevent our dejection. You must not imagine you shall be justified without being sanctified; for if you live after the flesh, you shall fall under that eternal death which is due to sin; but if you follow the motions of the Spirit, and endeavour to quench the first sparks of sin, the death of your bodies shall be an entrance into the happy life of your soul.

Flesh. Some, by flesh, understand the state under the law; others, more properly, corrupted nature. Ye shall die, without hopes of a better life. But if you mortify the deeds of the body: the deeds of the body of sin, which is elsewhere called the body of death; the first motions to sin and passionate compliances with sin, which are the springs of corrupt actions. Corrupt nature is called a body here, morally, not physically; it consisting of divers vices, as a body of divers members. 'Ye shall live;' ye shall live more spiritually and comfortably here, and eternally hereafter.

In the words we may observe,

1. A threatening: 'If ye live after the flesh, you shall die.'
2. A promise: 'If you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' In the promise there is, 1, the condition; 2, the reward.

In the condition,

1. The act: mortify.
2. The object: the deeds of the body. 1. The cause: the body. 2. The effects: the deeds.

3. The agents: ye and the Spirit. The principal, the Spirit; the less principal, ye; both conjoined in the work: ye cannot do it without the

Spirit, and the Spirit will not do it without your concurrence with him, and your industry in following his motions,

From the act we may observe,

1. Sin is active in the soul of an unregenerate man. His heart is sin's territory; it is there as in its throne before the Spirit comes. Mortification supposes life before in the part mortified. We call not a stone dead, because it never had life. Justification supposeth guilt, sanctification filth, mortification life, preceding those acts.

2. Nothing but the death of sin must content a renewed soul. The sentence is irreversible: die it must. No indulgence to be shewn to it, no lighter punishment than death; not the loss of a member, but the loss of its life. The axe must be laid to the root, and the knife must be held to the throat. The devils are restrained by the power of God from many sins, which cannot therefore be said to be mortified. As nothing but the death of Christ would satisfy the justice of God, so nothing but the death of sin must satisfy the justice of the soul.

3. 'Do mortify.' The time present. Whence observe, as sin must have no pardon, so it must have no reprieve. No such mercy must be extended to it, as to give it a moment's breathing. Dangerous enemies must be handled with a quick severity. If we do not presently kill sin, it may suddenly suck out the blood of our soul.

4. 'Do mortify.' It notes a continued act. It must be a quick and an uninterrupted severity. The knife must still stick in the throat of sin, till it fall down perfectly dead. Sin must be kept down though it will rage the more, as a beast with the pangs of death is more desperate.

From the object observe,

1. Mortification must be universal; not one deed, but deeds, little and great, must fall under the edge, the brats must be dashed against the wall. Though the main battle be routed, yet the wings of an army may get the victory. There are evil dispositions, depraved habits, corrupt affections; we should not spare a nest of vipers when we find them, being all equally injurious.

2. All actual sins are but the sproutings of original. The body signifies corrupt nature, deeds are the products of it; all the sparks issue from the furnace within; the body gives nourishment to the members, and the members bring supplies to the body. There are outward and inward deeds, acts of the mind, which though not acts of the natural body, yet are acts of the body of sin, Gal. v. 19, 20, hatred, envyings, acts which the soul may perform separate from the body.

3. The greatest object of our revenge is within us. Our enemies are those of our own house, inbred, domestic adversaries; our anger is then a sanctified anger when set against our own sins. Our enemy has got possession of our souls, which makes the work more difficult. An enemy may better be kept out, than cast out when he has got possession. Sin is within us, and is always present with us, Rom. vii. 21; it lies in ambush for us in the best duties, and starts out upon every occasion when we would do good; it would cut off all correspondencies with heaven; it is in our reason, in our affections; it encamps in us, round about us, and easily besets us, Heb. xii. 1.

From the agents, *ye, the Spirit*, observe,

1. Man must be an agent in this work. We have brought this rebel into our souls, and God would have us make as it were some recompence by endeavouring to cast it out; as in the law, the father was to fling the first stone against a blasphemous son. We must not be neuters in this work,

nor lookers-on. It will not be done without, though it cannot be done simply by us : it will not be done without our concurrence, though it cannot be done without a supernatural operation.

2. *Ye, all of ye.* It is a universal duty for the subject, as well as the object.

(1.) *Ye carnal men,* there is no precept given to you to sin, and therefore it is not your duty to sin. The life of sin is your misery, and the mortification of sin is your happiness, as well as your duty.

(2.) *Ye renewed and justified persons,* regeneration doth not privilege sin, or exempt from the mortifying work. Election, and consequently the fruits of it, is to holiness, not from it, Ephes. ii. 4. Vocation and sanctification, whereof mortification is the first step, are perspective glasses to see to the top of election. Though ye have mortified, yet still do it.

3. *Through the Spirit.* (1.) Mortification is not the work of nature ; it is a spiritual work. Every man ought to be an agent in it, yet not by his own strength. We must engage in the duel, but it is the strength of the Spirit only can render us victorious. The duty is ours, but the success is from God. Every believer is *principium activum*, but the Spirit is *principium effectivum*. We can sin of ourselves, but not overcome sin by ourselves ; we know how to be slaves, but are unable of ourselves to be conquerors. As God made us first free, so he only can restore us to that freedom we have lost, and doth it by his Spirit, which is a Spirit of liberty.

(2.) The difficulty of this work is hereby declared. The difficulty is manifested by the necessity of the Spirit's efficacy. Not all the powers on earth, nor the strength of ordinances, can do it ; omnipotency must have the main share in the work. The implantation of grace in the heart is called creation, the perfection of grace is called a victory, both belonging to an almighty power.

From the promise, observe,

1. Heaven is a place for conquerors only : Rev. iii. 21, 'To him that overcomes, will I grant to sit with me on my throne.' He that will be sin's friend, cannot be God's favourite. The way to eternal life is through conflicts, inward with sin, outward with the world. There must be a combat before a victory, and a victory before a triumph.

2. The more perfect our mortification, the clearer our assurance of glory. The more sin dies, the more the soul lives. The sounder our lives are, the more sensible we are that we do live. The more the enemy flies, the more certainty of an approaching victory.

3. Mortification is a sure sign of saving grace. It is a sign of the Spirit's indwelling and powerful acting, a sign of an approach to heaven.

Doct. The doctrine to be hence insisted on is this : Mortification of sin is an universal duty, and the work of the Spirit in the soul of a believer, without which there can be no well-grounded expectations of eternal life and happiness.

I do not intend a full discourse of mortification, but in pursuance of a former exhortation of resemblance to the holiness of God, to which this work is necessary. We cannot resemble God till that which is the hindrance to this resemblance be taken away ; and as our deformity is pared off, we come nearer to our original pattern. And, therefore, I shall only shew, in short, what this mortification is, and how we may judge of ourselves, whether we are mortified or no, and that without it there can be no hope of heaven.

I. What mortification is.

1. It is a breaking the league we naturally hold with sin. Since we were upon ill terms with God, we have kept a constant correspondence with

his enemy; and the union between sin and the soul is as strait as that between the flesh and the bones, or the flesh and the blood, blood being in every part of the flesh, and sin in every part of the soul. In regard of this union, sin is called flesh, because of its incorporation with flesh. The union between sin and the soul is naturally as great as the union between Christ and a believer, and expressed by the similitudes of marriage, Rom. vii.; body and members, root and branches, as well as the other. It is political too, as between king and subjects. Sin is therefore said to have dominion, to make laws, whence we read of the law of the members. In regard of this, mortification is expressed by the term of having 'no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,' Ephes. v. 11; a breaking of the conjugal knot. The acquaintance and familiar correspondence with sin are broken off, the communion between sin and the soul is at an end, the common interest wherein they were linked together is divided; *Res tuas tibi habeto*, the form of the ancient divorce is all the welcome sin hath: Isa. xxx. 22, 'Thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence;' or with Ephraim, 'What have I to do any more with idols?' Hosea xiv. 8. It looks now upon its former favourite as an enemy. Sin's yoke, that was light, is now burdensome; nothing so much desired as the shaking it off; and that is the object of our antipathy, which before had been the object of the choicest favour. In this regard it is called a denying of lust, Titus ii. 12; a stopping the ears against the importunities of it, and refusing all commerce and cohabitation with it.

2. A declaration of open hostility. As leagues between princes are not broken but a war ensues, the ways of sin are rejected, the dominion of sin opposed, the throne of sin assaulted. The soul is in arms to chase out this usurper, and free itself from its tyranny; and sin up in arms to reduce its subject to its ancient obedience. And here behold that irreconcilable and tedious war, without a possibility of renewing the ancient friendship, and which ends not but with a total conquest of sin. This hostility begins in a bridling corrupt affections, laying a yoke upon anything that would take part with the enemy. It cuts off all the supplies of sin, stops all the avenues to it; which the apostle expresseth by 'making provision for the flesh,' Rom. xiii. 14, &c.; a turning the stream which fed sin another way. As anger is a degree of murder, and he that hates his brother is a manslayer, so he that hates sin, and proclaims a war against it, hath killed it *affectedu*, though not *actu*; he hath attained one degree of mortification when his anger against it is irreconcilable, like the anger of those that quarrel about a crown, which cannot be ended but by the death of one of the pretenders.

3. A strong and powerful resistance, by using all the spiritual weapons against sin which the Christian armoury will afford, the list of which magazine we have, Ephes. vi. 13, 14, &c.; at the hearing of the word, setting his sin in the front, that the arrows of God may pierce it to the heart, and the two-edged sword may cut the sinews of it asunder; improving baptism, which is a burial with Christ, to which end the apostle mentions it, Rom. vi. 2, 3; sending up strong cries for the assistance of heaven, as Paul did when he had that thorn in the flesh, 2 Cor. xii. 7; redoubling his messages to heaven for a quick supply.

The apostle expresseth this reluctancy against sin by two emphatical words: 1 Cor. ix. 27, 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection;' *ὑποπιμάζω, δουλαγωγέω*, 'I keep under.' The word signifies to take hold of or to grip an adversary, as wrestlers do when they would give their antagonist a fall, and lay him flat with the earth; or to beat and pound, as wrestlers anciently did with their plummets of lead; whence *ὑπόπια*, a word derived from this in the text, signifies putrified wounds. And the other word, *δουλαγωγέω*, sig-

nifies to lead captive ; to subject the body to serve God, not lusts ; to lead it as a slave, not to endure it as a master ; a bringing the affections into order, that they may not contradict and disobey the motions of the Spirit and sanctified reason.

4. A killing of sin, expressed in the text by mortifying or putting to death ; and, Col. iii. 5, by *νεκρώσατε*, mortify ; but the word signifies to reduce to a carcase ; that though, like a carcase, it may retain the shape, lineaments, and members that it had living, yet it hath not the life, strength, and motion it had before. And it is called a crucifying, Gal. v. 24, which comprehends all the acts which preceded the crucifying of Christ, which was done with the greatest spite, as much as could be. The same measures, the same proportions, the same eagerness of spirit are observed ; a total deafness to the cries and complaints of sin, as that of the Jews to the groans of the Lord of life ; a crucifying it, notwithstanding all it would give in exchange. It is called in Scripture by the name of revenge, which ends not without the destruction of the hated person, and sometimes not with it. Every day there is to be a driving a new nail into the body of death, a breaking some limb or other of it, till it doth expire.

II. The second thing is, how we may judge of our mortification.

1. Negatively.

(1.) All cessation from some particular sin is not a mortification. A non-commission of a particular sin is not an evidence of the mortification of the root of it. Indeed, a man cannot commit all kinds of sin at a time, nor in many years ; the commands of sin are contrary, and many masters commanding contrary things cannot be served at one and the same time. Pride commands to lavish, and covetousness to hoard. All sins have their times of reigning in a wicked man, as all graces have their particular seasons of acting according to the opportunities God gives. Hazael abhorred the thoughts of that cruelty the prophet foretold that he should act : 'What, am I a dog ?' 2 Kings viii. 12, 13. Yet that sin lay hid by him as Joash by Jehoiada, hoping for the time to play its part and act Hazael as a slave to it. The cessation of a member from motion at present, is no argument either of the death of the body or the mortification of that member.

[1.] A cessation from one sin may be but an exchange. It may be a divorce from a sin odious to the world, and an embracing another that hath more specious pretences ; as a man may forsake one harlot, and fall in league with another. Some sins do not so much affright the conscience, and those may be entertained when a frowning conscience scares a man from some more abominable. Lusts are divers, Titus iii. 3 ; a man may cast off the service of one master, and list himself in the service of another ; he changes his lord without changing his servility. A man cannot be said to be clean because he has risen out of one sink to drench himself in another.

[2.] This cessation may be from some outward gross acts only, not from a want of will to sin, did not some log lie in the way. There may be speculative pride, ambition, covetousness, uncleanness, when they are not externally acted ; which is more dangerous, as infectious diseases are when they are hindered by cold from a kindly eruption, and strike inward to the heart, and so prove mortal. The pollutions of the world may be escaped when the pollutions of the heart remain. A man may be a fine, garnished, and swept house, and yet an habitation for seven devils worse than reigned there before. The apostle's command for cleaning reaches to the filthiness of the spirit as well as that of the flesh, 2 Cor. vii. 1. We say of the soul, *Anima est ubi amat, non ubi animat* ; so we may of sin. The bias of the soul may run strongly to that sin in affection and pleasure, from the outward acts of which

it abstains. It is most dangerous for the house when the fire burns inward. A man may be sooner cured of an outward scald than an inward heat, which, when it comes to a hectic fever, is incurable.

[3.] It may be a cessation from a sin merely because of the alteration of the constitution. Every age hath particular sins which it inclines men to; some sins are more proper to young men, which the apostle calls therefore 'youthful lusts,' 2 Tim. ii. 22. Lust reigns in young men, but its empire decays in an old withered body; some plants which grow in hot countries will die in colder climates. Ambition decays in age when strength is wasted, but sprouts up in a young man, who hath hopes to live many years and make a flourish in the world. A present sickness may make an epicure nauseate the dainties which he would before rake even in the sea to procure. There is a cessation from acts of sin, not out of a sense of sin, but a change of the temper of his body.

[4.] A cessation from acts of sin may be forced by some forethoughts of death, some pang of conscience, apprehension of hell, present sense of some Scripture threatening, or some sharp and smarting affliction, some signal judgment of God inflicted upon one or other of the companions in sin, which are all of themselves but a kind of force, they being the scourges wherewith God sometimes lasheth a man from the present act of sin. As a present pain in one part of the body may take away a man's stomach to his food, but when the pain is removed, his appetite returns to him; so while a man is upon the rack, and God accusing him, he takes no pleasure, tastes no sweetness, in sin; but after these horrors are off, he feeds as heartily as before, nay, sometimes hath a greater stomach, as men after a fit of sickness eat more plentifully, to recover the strength which before they lost by the distemper.

[5.] A cessation from acts of sin may be for want of an occasion, for want of time, place, and materials. A man's will is not against sin, but he wants an opportunity. This is not from mortifying grace within, but from a providential operation of God, in withholding the materials necessary for the commission of sin. Who will say the sins of drunkenness, gluttony, and oppression, committed by men on earth, are mortified in them when they are in hell? They want materials, not a nature nor an affection, to commit the same, were they again upon earth. Grace lies idle many times for want of objects to exercise itself about; so doth lust in the heart, like a snake starved with cold, till heated by a temptation. A man's condition in the world is not a sign of this mortification; there may be grasping and ambitious thoughts in a cottage. Prodigality may be in a poor man's wishes, though not in his power; yea, and sometimes there is more prodigality in a poor man's unnecessary expense of a penny, than in another's throwing away a pound.

(2.) Restraints from sin are not mortification of it. Men may be curbed when they are not changed; and there is no man in the world but God doth restrain him from more sins, which he hath a nature to commit, than what he doth actually commit. He often hedgeth up the way with thorns, when he doth not alter the heart by grace, and doth by his providence hinder the execution of the sinful motions, when he doth not root out the wickedness that lies secretly in the nature. It was an act of God's providence to restrain Abimelech: Gen. xx. 6, 'I withheld thee from sinning against me.' These restraints are mercies God would have us bless him for, but not evidences of mortifying grace.

[1.] Mortification is always from an inward principle in the heart, restraints from an outward. A restraint is merely a pull back, as a man is hindered from doing a mischief by a stronger power. But mortification is from a

strength given, a new mettle put into the soul, both a courage and strength to resist it; there is a 'strength in the inward man,' Eph. iii. 16. In a renewed man, there is something beside bare considerations to withhold him, something of antipathy which heightens and improves those considerations, whereby the soul is glad of them, because the edge and dint of them is against sin; whereas a man barely restrained would fain stop the entrance of such thoughts, or when they are entered, would turn them out of doors again. They are things merely put into him, that have no welcome, neither do they change the will, but put a little stop, to alter the method of proceedings. Mortifying grace finds something in the nature, as there is in the nature of a fountain, to work out the mud when dirt is cast in to infect it.

[2.] True mortification proceeds from an anger with, and a hatred of, sin, whereas restraints are from a fear of the consequents of sin; as a man may love the wine, which is as yet too hot for his lips. But mortification proceeds from an anger, a desire of revenge. Hence sin is called an abomination to a good man as well as to God; which signifies an intense and well-heated anger. It is not only a passionateness, which upon some disappointment in sin, or a tasting the bitterness of it, may be vented against it, which is short-lived, and quickly allayed, as the sea after a storm; but it is a rooted revenge, which is the sweetest passion, and accomplished by many projects and contrivances. A man tastes a sweetness in giving blow after blow to sin, as before he took a pleasure in, and had friendship with it.

[3.] Mortification is a voluntary, rational work of the soul; restraints are not so. The devil hath nothing of his nature altered, but hath as strong an inclination to sin as ever, though the act he intends is often hindered by God. As in the case of Job, his malice was as great before to do him a mischief; but God puts a bar upon him, and refuses him a licence, Job i. 10. Now if that grace which hinders be no more than what a devil hath, it no more argues a man mortified than the devil's forbearance of sin argues him mortified, and recovering his angelical state.

2. We may judge of our mortification positively.

(1.) When upon a temptation that did usually excite the beloved lust, it doth not stir, it is a sign of a mortified state; as it is a sign of the clearness of a fountain, when after the stirring of the water the mud doth not appear. Peter's sin seems to be self-confidence, but it was a sign of a greater mortification of it, that when Christ pressed him to declare his love in that demand, John xxi. 15, 'Lovest thou me more than these?' he would not vaunt his love to Christ to be greater than the rest of his brethren's. His answer goes no further than, 'Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee,' without adding 'more than these.' As it is with a man that is sick, set the most savoury meat before him, which before he had a value for, if he cannot taste it, and his appetite be not provoked by the sight, it is an argument of the strength of his distemper, and where it is lasting, of his approaching death; so when a man hath a temptation to sin, decked and garnished with all the allurements the devil can dress it with, and he hath no stomach to close with it, it is a sign of a mortified frame. It is a sign of the power of sin, when upon the fair offer it makes, and the alluring baits it lays, the affections to it are presently stirred; it is an evidence of a co-naturality and a mighty agreement between that sin and the heart, when upon every spark it takes fire; it is a sign a man was filled with all unrighteousness, and had not only a few loose corns about him; so on the contrary, when upon the least motion of temptation, that was wont to have the gates open for it, the affections rise against it, and upon the least alarm all run to the walls to defend them and forbid the entrance;

it is an evidence of the weakness of that lust that kept before a correspondence with such temptations, and the greater evidence it is when the temptation is high and yet vigorously resisted; as when a spring-tide is high and blown in with the wind, it is an argument of the strength and firmness of the bank to keep it out from entering upon the ground; whereas when a man is carried away by every temptation, as marsh ground is drowned at every tide, it is a sign that there is no mortifying grace at all, but a great friendliness between sin and the heart. None will question the deadness of that tree at the root which doth not bud upon the return of the spring sun; nor need we question the weakness of that corruption which doth not stir upon the presenting a suitable temptation.

(2.) When we meet with few interruptions in duties of worship. The multitude of such diversions, and an easiness to comply with them, is a sign of an unmortified frame; as it is the sign of much weakness in a person, and the strength of his distemper, when he is not able to hold fast anything, or when the least blow or jog makes him let go his hold. In duty we are to lay fast hold on God, Heb. vi. 18, and join ourselves to the Lord, Isa. lvi. 3; it is a weak union when every puff of wind is able to separate us. When the starting of sin in us doth easily turn us from our course, it argues either our credulity to believe its enticements, or our affection to love its allurements; and also the force and strength of sin; as the frequent starting of an enemy from woods and fastnesses to obstruct our passage, is a sign of some strength remaining, and of more than some few scattered troops, rather some well-bodied army. The more there is of a man's self, flesh, unspiritualness in any service, the more there is of an unmortified temper. The sprouting up of such fruits argues much juice and sap at the root, especially when the eruptions of sins are more numerous and vigorous than the resistances of them. But when the heart can run its race in a service with some freedom, and the interruptions from the flesh are few and languishing, it is a sign it hath met with a weakening wound; they are rather gasps of corruption than any strong attempts.

(3.) When we bring forth the fruits of the contrary graces, it is a sign sin is mortified. It is to this end that sin is killed by the Spirit, that fruit may be brought forth to God; the more sweet and full fruit a tree bears, the more evidence there is of the weakness of those suckers which are about the root to hinder its generous productions. Believers are called vines, and olives planted in a fair soil, and God the husbandman, who waters and dresseth, prunes, and cuts off the luxuriant branches that he may have fruit, and 'fruit meet for him,' John xv. 1, 2. The more fruit is brought forth, the greater sign that the soul is purged, and whatsoever is an enemy to that fruit is cut off and weakened. The more nature doth rise to the exercise of acts proper to it, the more the strength of the disease that oppresses it is wasted. Every exercise of grace is both a discovery of the weakness of sin, and a fresh blow given to it for the wounding of it.

III. The reasons why there can be no expectation of eternal life without mortification, are,

1. An unmortified frame is unsuitable to a state of glory. There must be a meetness for a state of glory before there be an entrance into it, Col. i. 12. Vessels of glory must be first seasoned with grace. Conformity to Christ is to fit us for heaven. He descended to the grave, and there laid his infirmities, before he ascended into heaven; so our sins must die before our souls can mount. It is very unsuitable for sin's drudges to have a saint's portion. A fleshly state is unfit for a spiritual life. All men are under the power of the devil or under the power of Christ. The world lies *ἐν τῷ*

πονηρῶν, under the power of the devil, 1 John v. 19.* He that hath the wicked spirit ruling in him, and not cast out, with all his accomplices, by the Spirit of God, cannot hope to have a friend's privilege, but an enemy's punishment. A fleshly palate cannot relish an heavenly life: Mat. xvi. 23, 'Thou savourest not the things that be of God.' Where there is no savour of God in this world, but only of what is contrary to God, there cannot be a savour of him in another world. Every vessel must be emptied of its foul water before it can receive that which is clean. No man pours rich wine into old casks.

2. God cannot in any wise delight in an unmortified soul. To delight in such would be to have no delight in himself and his own nature; the less the degrees of our mortification, the less God doth delight in us. He hath no pleasure in wickedness; the more maims, diseases, rottenness any have, the less pleasure there is. Sin is a mire; the more miry we are, the less can God embrace us, Ps. v. 4. It is a plague; the more it spreads, the less will he be conversant with us. The more of a swinish, viperous, serpentine nature, the less of God's affections. Sin represents us more monstrous in God's eyes than the filthiest things in the world can do in man's. To keep sin alive is to defend it against the will of God, and to challenge the combat with our Maker.

3. Unmortified sin is against the whole design of the gospel and death of Christ, as though the death of Christ were intended to indulge us in sin, and not to redeem us from it. That sin should die, was the end of Christ's death; rather than sin should not die, Christ would die himself. It is an high disesteem of Christ to preserve the life of sin in spite of the death of the Redeemer, and if we defend what he died to conquer, how can we expect to enjoy what he died to purchase? It is a contempt of his death not to look after that mortifying grace, which was the purchase of so deep a passion. The grace of the gospel of God doth more especially teach this lesson, Tit. ii. 4, 'to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.' Grace in God was the motive to him not to account the blood of Christ too dear for us, and therefore should teach us not to account the blood of our sins too dear for him. The tenor of the gospel is, that a man without mortification has no interest in Christ, and therefore no right to glory, Ps. v. 4. It is an inseparable character of them that are Christ's, that 'they have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts,' *i. e.* they are Christ's that are under the power of his death, not they that only hold the opinion of his death, or they are Christ's that are truly planted into the likeness of his death, Rom. vi. 5.

IV. The use; of exhortation.

'Let us labour to mortify sin. If we will not be the death of sin, sin will be the death of our souls. Though the allurements of sin may be pleasant, the propositions seemingly fair, yet the end of all is death, Rom. v. 21. Death was threatened by God and executed upon Adam; death must be executed upon our sins, in order to the restoration of the eternal life of our souls. Love to everlasting life should provoke us, fear of everlasting death should excite us to this, the two most solemn and fundamental passions that put us upon action. 'Why will you die?' was God's expostulation, Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Why should thou, O my soul, for a short vanishing pleasure, venture an eternal death? should be our expostulation with ourselves. This would be a curing our disease, bringing our soul into that order in part which was broken by the fall; by this the power of that tyrant that first headed and maintained the faction against God would be removed, and the soul recover that liberty and life it lost by disobeying of God. This would conduce to our

* Camero.

peace. We have then a sprouting assurance when we are most victorious over our lusts: after every victory, God gives us a taste of the hidden manna, Rev. ii. 17. Unmortified lusts do only raise storms and tempests in the soul; less pains are required to the mortification of them than to the satisfaction of them. Sin is a hard taskmaster; there must be a pleasure in destroying so cruel an inmate. Gratitude engages us; God's holiness and justice bruised Christ for us, and shall not we kill sin for him? An infinite love parted with a dear Son, and shall not our shallow finite love part with destroying lusts? We cannot love our sins so much as God loved his Son: he loved him infinitely. If God parted with him for us, shall not we part with our sins for him? He would have us kill it because it hurts us; the very command discovers affection as well as sovereignty, and minds us of it as our privilege as well as our duty. And to engage us to it, he hath sent as great a person to help us as to redeem us, viz. his Spirit; he sent one to merit it, and the other to assist us in it and work it in us, who is to bring back the creature to God by conquering that in it which hath so long detained it captive. And therefore to this purpose,

1. Implore the help of the Spirit. Whenever we set seriously upon this work at any time, let us apply ourselves to the Spirit of God, as one in office to this end, as being a Spirit of holiness not only in his nature but in his operations, Eph. i. 13, Rom. i. 4. The Father and the Son are not so often called holy as the Spirit, who is called the Holy Spirit and the Holy Ghost, not that he is more holy than the other persons, but in regard of his office to work holiness in the hearts of men. As Jehoshaphat upon the assault from the enemy cried unto God for deliverance, so upon any arming of our corruptions we should cry to the Spirit for assistance; he doth as much delight to be our auxiliary on earth, as Christ doth to be our advocate in heaven. The neglects of application to him are the cause of our miscarriages; we are half persuaded to a sin before we beg strength against it.

2. Listen to the convictions of the Holy Spirit. The work of the Spirit is to convince, by shaking the soul out of its carnal lethargy. As the Spirit gives a strong alarm at the first conversion, whereby the soul sees the strength of its enemy, and the greatness of its danger, its own impotency and inability to contest with it, so upon carrying on the degrees of mortification, there are various alarms to put us upon a holy watchfulness against the projects of sin. Listen to these convictions which come in by the word, which is the ministration of the Spirit, and in respect to the spiritual energy of it is called spirit, John vi. 53.

3. Plead the death of Christ. The end of his death was to triumph over sin. As to take away the guilt of sin, he was the righteousness of God; so to take away the dominion of sin, he is the power of God: his expiation of sin, and his condemnation of it, were twisted together in his sacrifice, Rom. viii. 3. 'For sin,' or a sacrifice for sin, 'condemned sin in the flesh': and the consideration of his death, and the end of it, would inflame us to desire not to be under the power of a condemned malefactor. A consideration of his death, and that sin had its hands imbrued in his blood, would awaken our love to him, and an indignation against his enemy.

4. Let us often think of divine precepts. The frequent meditation on the law of God would excite our endeavours after a principle more conformable to the purity of that law. God's commands establish not men's humours, neither do they gratify men's lusts, but are suited to the holy nature of God, a conformity to which ought to be our aim in mortification.

5. Let us be jealous of our own hearts. Venture not to breathe in corrupt air, for fear of infection. There is a principle in the heart naturally dis-

posed to take fire upon the spark of a temptation. A strict watch in a city hinders foreign correspondence and intestine treachery.

6. Let us often think deeply of the corruption of our natures, how loathsome it is to God, and this will make it loathsome to us. The more it is abominated, the more it is mortified; the supplies of it are cut off, its attempts discovered. When Paul considered his misery by the body of death, it strengthened his resolution of serving God with the law of his mind, Rom. vii. 24, 25, which must needs be accompanied with a strong resistance of the law of his members.

7. Let us bless God for whatsoever mortifying grace we have received, though never so little. When we pay him in praise what we receive of him, it is the way to have more from him. David grew hot against Nabal after he had received his churlish answer, 1 Sam. xxv., and resolved the murder of the whole family, which he had no authority to do; but God prevents him by Abigail's intercession; he blesses God for the success of it, in hindering his intentions. And as God prevented his sin, so, after his thanksgiving, he took away the occasion of his evil resolution, by calling Nabal, ten days after, into another world, ver. 38; and gives him further occasion of praise, ver. 39. A little strength, owned as the gift of God, shall be backed with more. Praising God for what we receive, as well as praying for what we want, is a means to promote the mortification of our sins in order to eternal life.