



# THE CHRISTIANS CHARGE.

PROV. 4. 23.

*Keep thy heart with all diligence; (or as it is in the Originall, Above all keepings, keep thy heart) for out of it are the issues of life.*

**H**aving formerly shewed from *Zach.* 12. 10. and from *Acts* 2. 37. how wee might bring our hearts into a right frame; Now let me shew you how we may keepe them so.

These words are a part of the Catechisme, which *David* taught his sonne *Solomon*, when hee was yet tender and young, *ver.* 3. 4. of this Chapter, when in the third verse he saith, he was his Fathers son, hee meanes, his dearly beloved son, or darling; he had many other sons besides *Solomon*, but he his Fathers son; as if he should say, his *Fathers darling*, and *Mothers joy*; as if hee were the top and vigour of the affections of them both; And as they both did deeply affect him,

him, so they both taught him, and led him along in his whole course. Though some Divines cut off the coherence at the tenth verse, yet indeed the whole Chapter is but one instruction. And thus you see the occasion of the words.

The words divide themselves into two parts.

First, An exhortation to the keeping of our hearts, and that exhortation amplified by an Argument from the lesse, *above all keepings*, as if the heart must be kept above all keepings besides.

Secondly, A reason to perswade to this work, taken from a mans life, it is as much as the life is worth.

Now first to explaine the words, and then see the notes that follow. First, what is meant by the heart. Secondly, What is meant by keeping it. Thirdly, To whom this duty is directed. And then what are the issues of life.

For the first, By the heart is here understood, not as sometimes it is taken, for the mind and judgement, for they are no such faculties, as out of which spring the issues of life; A man lives not by his knowledge: And therefore by the heart in this place, is not meant the mind or understanding, no, nor the affections, for a man may have good affections, as *Iehu*, and *Felix*, and *Herod*, and yet not one of them live in Gods sight.

The heart therefore here spoken of, is such an heart, as out of which, being well kept, springs life; evill things come out of the heart ill kept, *But a good man out of the good treasure of his heart, brings forth good things*, Mat. 12. 34, 35. It is the

will

will of a man, in which his goodnesse lyes, and from the will it is communicated to the rest of the faculties; if the will be good, then is the understanding good, *Psalm. 111. ult.* then is the conscience good, the affections and speeches good; the workes of our hands, and the words of our mouths, come all from a well kept heart, that is a good will.

Now what heart is this, whether good or evill? I take it, he speakes of a good heart, because first, he speakes of such an heart, as out of which are the issues of life, and that must needs bee a good heart.

Secondly, Because I take these words, as spoken to *Solomon*, and hee was one of a good heart, from his tender yeares, *2 Sam. 12. 24, 25.* So that this being spoken to *Solomon*, 'tis signe that even a good heart is to be kept, even the will of a man when it is regenerate and gracious.

2. What is meant by keeping? In the Originall it is, *Above all keepings, keep thy heart*; but the word translated keeping, signifies two things usually in Scripture phrase; sometimes it signifies keeping a thing in custody, as it were in prison, so the word is taken, *Gen. 40. 3.* and that hath reference to an evill heart; keepe it as it were in prison, according to that, *Heb. 3. 12. Take heed lest there be in any of you an evill heart of unbelieve, to depart from the living God*; as if a prisoner be ready to breake loose, you will cause the Keeper to looke well to him; so looke well to thy heart; hold it in durance, or else it will deceive thee; yet thus

thus far it may have reference to a good heart, A man had need confine the evill of a good heart, and not to suffer it to breake out, otherwise it will, and so shall a man keepe himselfe upright, *Psal.* 18. 23.

But 2. sometimes it signifies the watch & charge a man hath over the holy things of the Sanctuary, *Ezek.* 44. 8, 16. it is the same word that is here used, and you may take them both; Keepe an evill heart as a prisoner, and so you shall mortifie it; Keepe a good heart holy and pure, and cleane, even as a Sanctuary, for the holy Spirit of God to dwell in; You will keepe a prisoner, but keep your hearts above a prisoner; You will keepe your gardens, but keep your hearts above your gardens; You will keep your Vineyards, *Esay* 27. 1, 2. but keep the heart above all keepings; keep your heart above your life: It is an ill kept life, that is kept with the losse of the heart.

Thirdly, To whom is this exhortation directed? It is spoken to *Solomon*, and he considered not onely as a good man, but as a young man, so that this is considerable in this case; Here is counsell given to young men, and those whom we love best, though never so deare to us, this is the best counsell wee can give them, Keepe your hearts.

Fourthly, What is that which he saith? *For thereouts are the issues of life*; It is as much as if he should say, For out of an heart well kept, doth spring and issue out such streames of good thoughts, and good affections, and conversations, and

and conferences, as expresse the life of grace, and prepare for the life of glory. Thus you see the meaning of the words. You see then *Solomon* here speakes of a good heart, of an heart given up to God, and set in a good frame: whence observe this Note.

*When a man hath given up his heart to God, and it is set in a good frame, it is then the best and most needfull worke in the world to keep it so.* Doctrine.

For it is to an heart set in a good frame, that this charge is here given, Above all keepings, keep this; It is the greatest businesse in the world, no such keeping to bee exprest in the keeping of a mans estate, or credit, or treasure, or prisoner, or life it selfe. This worke of keeping the heart, is a busier worke; then any in the world; Hast thou a shop, or an house, or a place, or a sanctuary to keepe? why, yet above all these keepings, keepe thy heart, and keepe it most carefully when it is in a good frame. Now *Solomon*, now that God hath given you wisdom, and you are now beloved of God and man, when your way is paved with the blessings of God, and his mercies compasse you about, now looke that you keep your heart.

For the opening of this point; First, see the Reasons; and then Secondly, wherein this keeping of the heart stands.

Taken from the *deceitfulness of our hearts*, it is *deceitfull above all things, and desperately wicked*, Jer. 17. 9, 10. No prisoner so slippery, no chapman so cunning and able to deceive us, as a mans heart is; And though that be spoken of a carnall heart;

Reas. 1.

human

heart, yet though the heart bee regenerate and sanctified by the Spirit of grace, yet it hath still in it a tang of its old haunts; wee shall tast of the old man, till death separate us, and therefore even *David*, a man after Gods owne heart, yet he had an heart, that could tell how to insnare him with his neighbours Wife, and afterwards to plot to cover his sin, which shews you, that there is nothing so deceitfull as the heart, and therefore even *David* had cause to speake this, out of the experience he had of his owne uncleane and deceitfull heart, he that had received a better heart, then yet had *Solomon*, and yet seeing it so bad, he had good reason to give *Solomon* this charge, Above all keepings, keepe thy heart. This deceitfulnesse of mans heart is mentioned, *Ier.* 5. 22, 23, 24. This people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone; Though you might thinke the sands would soone be fretted through by the boysterous waves, yet God by his word hath made the sand a perpetuall Bulwarke against the sea, that it cannot prevaile against it; but the heart of man is more unruly then the great sea, and more illimitable then the sea, *Hosea* 11, 7. Their heart is bent to backslidings, therefore they ought diligently to look to their soules, *Deut.* 4. 9. which shewes you, we are apt to lose all that good God hath wrought for us; we can tell how to slip from under the power of Gods grace to follow our owne foolishnesse.

Reas. 2.

From the *deceitfulnesse of sinne*, which will soone get within us; see your hearts be not unbelieving,

believing, *Heb. 3. 12.* Sin is deceitfull, and it easily besets us, *Heb. 12. 1.* It gets within us at every hand, and thereupon we are ready to take some contentment in it.

Taken from the *daylie warre* which we are called forth unto, no day, but God calls us to warre with some crosse, or some temptation or other; now this was a strait charge God gave unto his people, *Deut. 32. 9. Take heed there bee no wicked thing found in thee, when thou goest out to warre,* because, if there were but one *Achan* found among them, it were enough to discomfit an whole host; Take heed therefore there be no evil thing found in us, for out of a well kept heart, springs our preservation. Reas. 3.

Taken from the approach that we are dayly making towards God, we are to resort unto God to call upon his name, and to heare his word, and nothing so much hinders us, from finding God in an Ordinance, as an unkept heart, *Psal. 66. 18.* which shews you, that if there bee any evil in a mans heart, it disappoints him of all the hopes and fruits of his prayers. So when we come to heare the word, if God see any Idol in our heart, he will answer us according to that Idol; wee shall finde something in that Ordinance, to feed and nourish that corruption in us. Reas. 4.

And that is especially intended in the text; it is taken from the great command, which the heart bath over the whole man; Keepe the heart well, and you keepe all in a good frame: all the senses behold not an object so much as the heart doth; Reas. 5.

doth; Set before a man any pleasant prospect, and if his mind be on another thing, all his senses take no notice of it; if the heart be not taken up with a thing, the eye minds it not; present the ear with any sweet melodious sound, and it heares and minds it not, because the heart was otherwise taken up; but upon whatsoever the heart is set, to that the eye looks, and the ear attends, every thing acts towards it, all goes freely that way, the mind, the judgement, the invention, the affection, and what ever a man hath, it all works that way, and therefore it is well said, *Out of it are the issues of life*; if you have the whole man, and not the heart, you have but a dead man, get the heart and you have all; as they say in nature, the heart is *Primum vivens, & ultimum moriens*, It is the first that lives, and the last that dies; according to the temper of the heart, such is the temper of the whole man; if the heart be good, though the affections should be disordered, and the eyes wanton, if the will be right, all is right; *If I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me*, Rom. 7.20. If my heart be for God, it is not I that sin: If there be a Covenant made betweene two States, as suppose betweene France and England, if the Princes of both States keepe Covenant, it is not some lawlesse Subject or Pirat on either side that breaks the League, so long as the Princes doe their best endeavours to punish it; so is it in the League made between God and my heart, it is not any disordered affection that breaks the league, but the sin that dwells within us.

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Now wherein stands this keeping of the heart, or what is it? There be three things implied in it.

First, that wee keepe our hearts *cleane*; God is truly good to them that are of a cleane heart, *Psal. 73. 1. Psal. 18. 23. I kept my selfe from mine iniquity*; wee must keepe our selves from sinfull defilements; *O Ierusalem wash thy heart from thy filthinesse*, Jer. 4. 14. Keepe thy heart from old and new iniquities, *Psal. 4. 16.*

Secondly, we must keepe our hearts *prepared* or *fixed*, the word signifies both, *Psal. 57. 7.* that is, we must have our hearts fraught with all good things, fixed and set upon God, our hearts must not bee like the heart of a wicked man, little worth, *Prov. 10. 20.* But keepe hearts of worth within you, I meane prepared for the presence of the Lord, as the Church saith, *Cant. 7. 13.* In our gates is all manner of pleasant fruits; The gates of a Commonwealth, are the gates of Judicature, but the gates of a Christian is his heart, *Psal. 24. 7.* So that when the Church saith, our gates are full, she meanes, there are no graces of God, but she hath stored her heart therewith, faith, and love, and humility, and ~~whatever grace esse~~ <sup>whatever other graces</sup> *esse*.

Thirdly, to keepe the heart, implies, to keepe the heart in *good order*, that is, ever to have right ends, to use right meanes to attain those ends, to have a right measure and degree of every thing. We may indeed set our hearts on the blessings of this life, yet so, as therein we doe Gods will, build up his kingdome, honour the name of his grace, otherwise it will not be lawfull for us to set our hearts upon

upon them, no not upon lawfull things, *Pfal.* 62.10. meaning not principally, for if you set your hearts on things for themselves, you will lose your hearts, and the comfort of them together.

*Vse* 1.

It is first a just reproofe to many a soule, that is more watchfull in keeping any blessing in the world then ~~his~~ <sup>their</sup> owne hearts, and so a transgressor of this gracious exhortation of the holy Ghost; You have many men that can tell how to keepe their purses, their credits, and estates, and it is commendable; there are men that can tell how to keep their friends, others can tell how to keepe good tables, good servants, and good horses, but did we know how to keepe all these and not our hearts, wee shall fall short of this charge here given us; you had better lose your purses, your friends, yea which is more, your lives, then your hearts; it is but a poore thing, to be skilfull in keeping all these, and to bungle at keeping the heart, which stands most need of best keeping; It was a word that *Ahab* sometimes spake against himselfe, *1 King.* 20.39. A man brought a man unto me and said, Keepe this man, if he be missing, thy life shall goe for his life: and as thy servant was busie here and there, the man was gone. Why, saith the King, so shall thy judgement be. Truly God hath put this charge upon us all; God hath given thee thy heart to keepe, and hath bid thee; Above all keepings, to looke well unto it; upon the keeping whereof depends thy life, and without it nothing but death; and if we shall now  
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come and say to God, whilst wee had this and that businesse to do, (as they said *Luke 14.*) our hearts are lost and gone; then call in any rather then those, who for the comforts of this life, have lost their hearts. I do not know what men are more careless of, then of keeping their hearts, most will teach their children to keep any thing rather then their hearts; you will bid them keep their books, keep their learning, keep their hats, gloves, and points, and I blame it not in you; but I pray you consider, Do not you think, that the very pins and points of your children will not one day rise up in judgement against you, when you so carefully teach them how to keep these, and not at all how to keep their hearts, for want of which, they are exposed to the ruine & destruction of their souls. And in this particular, I cannot excuse Gods own servants; whence come (think you) our manifold complaints in this kind? I now speak to them, that know what it is to have the heart in a good frame: Though the heart be now in a good frame, ere long they will complaine, and confesse their heart is lost in a day or two's businesse, so as, when that they should come to the Ordinances againe, in the midst of the week, or that day seven night, their hearts are gone, and they know not in the world where to have them; whence is that we complain, No body hath such dead and cold, heavy, and unprofitable an heart as I have? Why, doth it not come from hence, we have been negligent to keep our hearts: have you kept your friends, and purses, and estates, and every thing from losing, and only

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your hearts lost? what a shame is it, we can say we have lost nothing but our hearts this weeke? that which especially should have been kept, is the only thing we have lost, all is well, save only the heart, and that is lost, and what a shame is this? and this only through want of diligence; what a poore case was *David* in, Ps. 51. 10. *Renew a right spirit within me*; Time was when God had said of him, that he was *a man after his own heart*, 1 Sam. 13. 14. He had an heart that was carefull and watchfull, but now his heart is lost; *David* could tell how his heart had given him the slip, his heart was soon gone after his lust, before he was aware, and so far, that when he should seek it up again, it is lost, and had not *Nathan* helped him, it may be he had never found it; not that his grace was, or could be wholly lost for ever; in his worst, there was something of the holy Spirit of grace in him; but it was so far lost, as he intreats the Lord not to peece it, but to create a new and right spirit within him; he had been much defiled, and now he desires a new spirit; though he had done very wickedly, yet he was senselesse and hard hearted, and therefore is it not a shame to Gods people, that we can tell how so easily to lose our hearts, that unlesse God extraordinarily help us to gather them up againe, we should die dead hearted? and therefore let it cast a just reproofe upon us, in that we have kept every thing better then our hearts; we have lived it may be 20. 30. or 40. yeares, and have not lost one friend, nor lost any thing that could be saved by keeping, onely our hearts we have lost, and

and many times wee know not how.

Let it therefore teach us all, to set home this charge upon our hearts, and upon all with whom we have occasion to deale. There are many good lessons in this Chapter, but above all learne this, it would not be lost labour to teach your children to learne such a Chapter, but learne first to keep your owne hearts; you have beene taught, that no member you have is so deceitfull as the heart, it will soonest give you the slip, it is bent to back-sliding, you had need keep your hearts cleane, that God might preserve you in all your temptations, you wil then profit by any Ordinance you partake in, and therefore let it be carefully kept. And for a Motive, if you shall thus doe, it will honour you before God and man, and by keeping your hearts, you will find favour in the eyes of such friends whom you feared, by so doing, you should have lost; First, God will put honour upon you, *1 Sam. 13. 14.* and man will put honour upon thee, *Prov. 22. 11.* the King shall be thy friend; a man shall never want great friends that keeps his heart pure and undefiled, an unbelieving heart is apt to think the more pure he is, the more danger he is in; but though great men should bee displeased, yet it would be no small help to my spirituall estate, their checks and frownes would doe us much good. But how shall this be done? First, trust not in your own keeping of your hearts, *Prov. 28. 26.* In the feare of God therefore resigne up your hearts into Gods hands, be sensible of your owne insufficiency to keep them, *2 Cor. 3. 5.* and *2 Tim.*

*Vse 2.*

1. 2. so *Iude* 24. Commend your hearts to God in prayer, and trust him with all your affaires, *Phil.* 4. 7. Allow not your selves in the out coming of any unsubjected thoughts, check your selves for unnurtured affections; there is not a vaine thought passeth without a check, but it makes a rife in our hearts, *Iob* 31. 1. The Courts of the Lord are exceeding broad, there is liberty enough in Gods wayes to do well, but not to doe evill.

Againe, be carefull to treasure up those graces to which God hath made promise of keeping the heart.

The first is faith, that purifieth the heart, *Acts* 15. 9. Faith ever hath the word for its warrant, *Psal.* 19. 9. and also wil derive all its daily strength from Christ, *Esay* 40. 2. ult.

The second is the feare of the Lord, *Pro.* 16. 6. When a mans heart is kept in the holy feare of God, it preserves him from evill.

Lastly, if this be done in love, it will keepe all the affections and graces of the Spirit in good order, and you should labour to keep them alive, so shall you keep your hearts as they should be.

PROV.



PROV. 4. 23.

*Keepe thy heart with all diligence ; (or as it is in the Originall , Above all keepings, keep thy heart) for out of it are the issues of life.*



EE now come to speak of the reason of this charge , *For out of it are the issues of life ;* whence observe :

*That the heart kept in a good frame, Doctrin. keepe life in all our performances.*

When the heart is kept above all keepings, then out of it are the issues of life, otherwise, out of an heart ill kept, are the issues of death ; but being well kept, whatever proceeds from us, whether it be thoughts of the minde , or affections of the heart, or words of our lips, or wayes of our whole man, they are all lively and spirituall. Out of it are the issues : a borrowed speech of the issues that flow from fountaines, from fountaines well kept, flow streames of wholsome, cleare, and sweet water ; so the heart, it being the fontaine of our thoughts, and words, and waies, out of it well kept, flowes forth such things as have life in them ; it is meant of spirituall life, *Prov. 12. 28. In the way of righteousness is life , and in the path way thereof there is no death,* that is, no deadning of present grace, nor destruction hereafter, *Pro. 14. 12*

There is a way of sin that seemes good to a man, but the issues thereof are death; but on the contrary, when a man keeps his heart in a gracious frame, whatever comes from him is lively, if a word, or an affection, there is life in it; the thoughts of the righteous are right, *Prov. 12. 5.* All is right when the heart is right, for the heart denominates the whole man, *Prov. 11. 23.* The desire of the righteous is onely good: this affection carries an end all the rest, for as a man desires to be, so he is, there is nothing but good in a righteous mans desire, it is good to all, onely good, and as is the tree, such is the fruit, as is the heart, such are the issues thereof, *Mat. 12. 34.* See what our Saviour saith, hee that ponders our hearts, and waighes, as in a ballance, how can you, (meaning, having evill hearts) take the best words that a carnall heart can utter, and they are vanity; they alwaies want righteous and right rules, and right circumstances, for time and place, what ever they want else, but sure they want life, the heart is dead: so that our Saviour makes it a point of impossibilitie, that a man should come out with a good word, that hath an ill heart; there is no life in his words, if no life in his heart; and so for actions, *Mat. 12. 35.* *A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, brings forth good things;* the word in the Originall is *ἐκβάλλει*, casts forth, or bubbles up, good things come from the good heart that lyes within, and all the good thoughts, and affections, and duties that come from him are good, because the heart is good, and that makes all good;

good ; if he goe about any duty, there is life in it more or lesse, there is a treasure of goodnesse there, & from thence steams out many good things; as if you walke in a garden well stored with sweet and fragrant flowers, all the savour that comes from them is sweet and savoury, it is stored with sweet and odoriferous flowers, and therefore gives a fragrant sent, but if the garden be not well kept, but here and there lyes an unfavoury dunghill, out of that garden so ill kept, issues out loathsome and unfavoury stench; an evill man hath an evill treasure in his heart, a treasure of pride, prophaness, covetousnesse, and evill treasures of wrath, and they heaped up against the day of wrath, and such a treasure in the heart, causeth it to steame forth loathsome & unfavoury actions, affections, and speeches; but blessed are such as keepe a good treasure within them, *Their hearts shall live for ever*, Psal. 22. 26. He being desirous to live such a life, as in which he might live for ever; he earnestly intreats God, that he would set his heart right, and then his wayes would be wayes of eternitie; Psal. 139. 23, 24. that is, purge my heart from drosse, as a man would prove and try gold in the fire, refine it and make it pure mettle, now doe thus with my heart Lord, as if he should say, A man shall never walke in a constant way of eternitie, unlesse in a good measure his heart be cleansed from a way of sin. It is a strange speech, that in Psal. 66. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare my prayer, &c.* From whence he shewes you, that cleanness of heart kept life

in his prayer; If wee keep our hearts cleane, they will keep our performances lively, if in his heart he had had any affection or inclination to any wickednesse, then God would not have heard his prayer, but he regarding no iniquity in his heart, that put life in his prayer, so as he never prayes in vain; and as much is held forth in *Psal.* 19, 13, 14, 15. Let but the heart be kept clean, that in his heart he doth not close with any wickednesse, and desires to be kept clean even from secret faults; then shall the *words of his mouth, and the thoughts of his heart be acceptable in the sight of God*; there will ever be life in such a mans works and words; when is a man fit to have his desires granted him, but when his heart is cleane? and when he hath exprest to God his desire that he might be cleansed, and that not onely from great and scandalous crimes, but from secret faults, then God is wont to shew himselfe strong with a clean heart, *2 Chron.* 16. 9.

The Redeemed of the Lord finde favour, for as they are redeemed from the bondage of sin, so they are now acceptable in the sight of God, as children are acceptable to their Parents, when they speak with judgement and understanding; when we allow not our selves in pride, and are not given up to worldlinesse, when we desire to be stored with the treasures of grace, and they are treasured up in us as if it were knots of hearbs in a garden, being thus furnished with every grace, all that issues from it are *issues of life*. And besides, the heart being thus kept cleane, it keeps sweet and lively

lively in us, those foure radicall graces we spake of before, and from them spring the issues of life.

First for faith; *The just man lives by his faith, Hab. 2. 4. Gal. 2. 20.* so that if faith be the root of our thoughts, and words; that is to say, if we look at the word, for the rule of our words and actions, and depend on Christ for strength of our performances, and ayme at the glory of God, if by faith we have principally respect unto these; this puts life into all our performances: it is the nature of faith to beleeve, that God is, and diligently to seek him, *Heb. 11. 6.*

This farre exceeds the most lively and heroi-call performances of the best of the Heathens that ever was; what ever they did, it was from the strength of their own parts, and not from Christ, and so not from the rules of the word; but the Laws of their own Nations, and the common applause of men. *Brutus* slew his two sons out of love to his Country, because they conspired Treason against the State; and whence was it? why, *Vicit amor Patria laudumq; immensa cupido*, That he might ride on the wings of Fame; But these are not living actions, have no life in them, because they want faith in the bottome.

And so, secondly, for the fear of the Lord, *Pro. 14. 27.* it is called the Fountain of life; if a man walk in Gods feare, he is kept in an holy frame, *Jer. 32. 40.* He that feares God walks humbly, and humility hath the promise of living grace to be conveyed into all our actions; *God will revive*

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*the spirit of the humble, Esay 57.15. And will looke to him, Esay 66.2.* This puts life and sweet savour in our prayers and conferences, and in every thing we doe.

And so for patience, that possesseth our soules in life, *Luke 21.19.* and so patience makes us perfect, *Iames 1.4.* there will be no complaining of the want of any thing, but patience will helpe all.

And so for the love of God: Though I did much, and not in love, it would be profitable for nothing, *1 Cor. 13.1,2,3.* Love to God and man keeps our hearts and carriage towards them lively.

*Reas. 1.*

Taken from the mixture of graces and corruption in every mans heart, and the strong power corruption hath to deaden grace; it will deaden our liveliest performances, in case the heart be not well kept, and so kept under, that grace may be kept lively. This is to keep the heart well: To keep under those corruptions that abound in our hearts, to keep them subdued, and as much as in us lies mortified; and so will the strength of them be broken: And withall to keep in exercise the graces of the spirit; if we doe not keep the heart well, then the corruptions of our hearts, which are elder then the graces of God in us, and therefore more subtle and strong then grace is, in regard of the body of them; it will come to passe, that the waight of corruption will presse downe the life of grace in us, I doe not say kill it, but dull and dead it; for though grace be eternall, yet it may

may be cast into such loathings, and swooundings, as you may truly say, your heart is dead within you, *Rom. 8. 13.* *If you walk after the flesh, you shall die*; You to whom there is no condemnation, *ver. 1.* yet if you walk after the flesh, you shall die; that is, Your best graces & works will be but dead; but if by the spirit, you mortifie your corruptions, you shall live in grace and in every dury, you performe to God and man. So that from an heart well kept, spring the issues of life, because it keeps under corruption, for corruption unsubdued will choake grace much; worldly cares, sensuall lusts, proud affections, these either not being espied, or winked at, will dull the sweetest graces in any spirit; but if a man by the spirit mortifie these, then all our performances would be fruitfull, our buyings and sellings lovely, it would not relish of oppression and deceit: Keep we the beds of graces well and cleane, and our whole life and conversation will be sweet and savoury. But if we suffer a spirit of pride, or worldlinesse, or emulation in us, or if we bring them not lower, and take care to weed and root them out, our walkes will be unfavoury, and our best duties yeeld us little, or no comfort.

Taken from the proportion which is between *Reas. 2.* a good heart, and spirituall life, as is between the bodily heart, and naturall life; If the bodily heart be kept free from such kind of malignant vapours as cause loathing and swoounding, and be well stored with vitall spirits, then there is life enough in the body: so is it with a good heart in regard of spirituall

spirituall life. The good will of a man, if that bee kept free from malignant vapours of noysome corruptions, and the graces of Gods Spirit thrive in us, all will be kept in a lively frame; an honest heart will not care by what meanes it weeds out its corruption, that they do not nestle in the heart; and then the whole man will be savoury. It is a notable speech, that in *Prov. 23. 7. As a man thinks in his heart, so is he*; as the mans heart is, so is the man; if the desire of the soul betowards God, why as he thinks in his heart, so is he; there is life in the whole man, if there be life in the heart. *Rehobo*: did evill in the sight of the Lord, because *he prepared not his heart to seeke God*, 2 Chron. 12. 14. the endeavour of his heart was not that way: 2 Chron. 25. 2, 16. *Amaziah* did that which was good in the sight of the Lord, but *not with a perfect heart*, and therefore the Lord determined to destroy him, ver. 16. Many good things he did, publique Idolatry he allowed not; yet when he came to tryall, wanting a perfect heart, the Lord therefore threatned to destroy him: Let a man doe never so many good actions, and take the *Summa totalis* of it all, and wanting a perfect heart, it will all be evill in the sight of the Lord; and while a man so continues, he may know that the Lord hath determined to destroy him.

And let another man doe many things very weakly, and yet hath some care of his heart, God knowes how to pardon it; Though *Asa* had many failings, 2 Chron. 15. 17. yet *his spirit was upright with God all his dayes*, and that covered a multi-

multitude of failings that else were in him.

From the good pleasure that God takes in the heart above all the rest of the faculties of soule and body; 1 Chron. 29. 17. I know thou hast pleasure in uprightnesse; famous is that, 2 Cor. 8. 12. If there be *first a willing mind, it is accepted*; and he speakes upon occasion of giving almes, if a man have a willing mind to give, though hee have but little to give, yet it is accepted, and if they had it, they would performe it. That there is a willing mind, that is Gods worke, but that there wants a larger hand, that is Gods providence; if it be but two Mites which make a farthing, yet being with a willing mind, it is accepted. Suppose a man have a willing minde, to pray in the power of Gods Spirit, to confer fruitfully, &c. that hee might build up his soule in his holy faith, now all that comes from him is a lively fruit of grace, bee it otherwise never so weake, Psal. 103. 14. *God knows whereof we are made, he remembers we are but dust*, he knows we have many impediments to wrastle with; Now, if he see we doe what we can to make riddance of our worke, and meane while looke well to what we have, God accepts such a willing mind; so that the keeping of the heart well, breeds Gods acceptance, and *his favour is better then life*, Ps. 63. 3. Psal. 7. 4. & 80. 4. As the heat of the Sunne is the life of the world, so the gracious shining of Gods favour upon our hearts puts life into all that we doe.

To teach us what to judge of the fruite of *vs 1.*  
an ill kept heart, the issues of it, what they  
are.

are, you heare : if the heart bee well kept, it will keepe life in all our performances ; but what if the heart be ill kept ? Then the issues of it are the issues of death, dead thoughts, dead affections, dead actions, all dead that such a man doth ; the heart of such a man is like the *Field of the sluggard*, *Prov. 24. 30, 31.* all overgrowne with bryers and thornes ; so take a survey of a mans speeches and actions whose heart is naturall, and his heart hee keeps not, what may you say of him ? His best graces are but dead, a dead heart brings forth slothfull desires and works, good thoughts hee may have to turne to God, good speeches on his sick bed ; if God would but restore him, what a man would he be ? Well, God restores him, but hee is as bad as ever, it was a dead heart from whence it sprung ; if the *heart* be *dead*, how can the *hand* be but *withered* ? Well therefore doth the Apostle call such, *dead works*, *Heb. 9. 14.* the conscience must be *purged from dead works*, if we intend to *serve the living God*, this is a reasonable service of God ; all such workes of nature are dead works ; the most heroicall works of the best Heathen, *Aristides*, *Fabrizius*, and *Socrates*, all were but dead works, they wanted a spirit of living grace, without the feare of God, wanted love of God, and patience under his hand ; what ever good things they did, yet they were not done with a perfect heart, and God will destroy them all ; all such mens best duties, they are but so many dead works, because the heart is dead, all for want of first having a willing mind: but let us  
first

first give God our hearts, *Prov.* 23. 26. and then what ever we doe will be pleasing in his sight, this then would be a living Sabbath to us, our whole worke would have life in it. But how is it, that men are so dead and sleepe in these assemblies? is it not because their hearts are first dead? and then how can their bodies but grow drowsie, and then all is of a dead savour, *2 Cor.* 2. 14, 15. Nay, let mee say this more, even to Gods owne servants, if you be loose-hearted, if you keepe not your hearts above all keepings, there will issue out one of these two evils, either you will bring forth many fruits to the flesh, or else, the fruits you bring forth to the Spirit, will bee dead and livelesse, and that is the misery of most of Gods people, at one time or other; if you keepe not grace cleane from the weeds of your owne corruptions, you will find many unsavoury fruits that choake you; so *Dauids* adultery and murder, and carelesnesse of soul therein, were not all these fruits of the flesh? what thinke you of *Abraham* his dissembling, of *Lots* Incest, of *Nash* his drunkennesse, *Aarons* making the golden Calfe? Are not all these workes of the flesh, and doe they not deaden much? if *Peter* deny his Master and forswear himselfe, is not this a fearefull dead work? And suppose we keepe them better then so, that it breaks not forth into such evils, but we pray, and heare, and are diligent in our callings, partake with God in his Ordinances, and yet the spirit unprofitable all this while; Now then aske your soules, how have you kept your hearts? I tell you,

you, you may pray at home, and come to Church, and heare the word, though delivered with never so much life and power, yet its but a dead favour to us, though it never so much concernes us, yet it works not upon us, and what is the matter? why, this it is, we have not kept our hearts above all keepings, and thence it was that all our performances had no life in them.

*Vse 2.*

To exhort us all in the feare of God, above all keepings, to keep our hearts; yea, now I say more then I said before, above all duties keepe your hearts; you keepe your duties constantly, your set time of prayer, and it is well, but unlesse you keep your heart better, all you doe will bee but dead works, you must keep your hearts above all: were you invested with as much wealth as the world could yeeld, yet keep your hearts above it; better lose a kingdome then your hearts, look to the keeping of the heart, above the keeping of Crownes and Scepters, otherwise thy prayers will be abominable; we oftentimes come off with dead works, through want of keeping these poore precious hearts of ours.

*Vse 3.*

Labour you to take diligent heed to all the corruptions that are in your hearts, labour to know what straines of pride, and hypocrisie, and covetousnesse is in the heart, come and complaine of it to God, and labour to mortifie it, and intreat him to subdue it in us, and suffer no thought to lift up it selfe against Christ; and what ever grace you want, do as good huswives do that want herbs for their gardens, where ever they heare of any  
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to be had, they will seeke and gather them; so observe such Christians whose graces excell you in any kind, and be often gleaning from them, and so in time you will get more patience, and meeknesse, and zeale, by gleaning from them upon all occasions, in your conferences with them. I therefore call upon you to keep your hearts, which is done by these two things; keepe your hearts cleane from corruptions, and use all good meanes to mortifie them, and to that end apply the Commandements, promises, and threatnings, and examples, what graces you want, get your selves furnished therewith, meditate duly upon the promises God hath made to that end, so shall you keepe your hearts alive and all your performances.

It is of great consolation to all such Christians, whose performances are very smal, & abilities run shallow; onely they are able to say, they walk before God in truth, and with a perfect heart; *1 King. 20.3.* His heart was with God, and it was the desire of his soule, that hee could have beleevved more, and have beene more humble, but here was his comfort, that he had walked before God in truth, and that God takes much pleasure in, hee will accept such a mans prayers, though they be but weake, and our hearings, though they be but dull and slow; if the desire of our hearts be to seek God in every dutie, then out of this frame of heart life will spring forth, what ever you conceive of it, yet there will bee life in the businesse in the end.

Having already from the twelfth of *Zach.* and

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the second of the Acts, spoken of bringing the heart into a good frame; and from *Prov. 4.* of keeping it so; I know not now, what so fitly to speake of, as the addressing of a Christian soule, to live the life of faith, all his daies before God in this world.



GAL. 2. 19, 20.

*For I through the Law, am dead to the Law,  
that I might live unto God.*



His words depend upon the former, and are brought in as a reason to bring *Peter* to a sight of his error in dissembling with the Jews.

Yet notwithstanding, because they are entire in themselves, observe, That in the words the Apostle describes his freedome from the Law, of himselfe, and of all such others as himselfe was.

Observe therefore his estate in reference to the Law; First, *Dead to the Law*; Secondly, observe in this 19. verse, the occasion of that his freedome, and the meanes of it, *I through the Law, am dead to the Law*; here is exprest the end of such his death to the Law, which is, *that he might live unto God*; which death of his to the Law, and his living unto God, are both of them amplified by their

their proper and next causes. First, his death to the Law is argued by the cause of it, his fellowship with Christ in his crucifying; his life unto God, the causes of it are two:

First, principall, and that is the life of Christ in him, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

Secondly, instrumentall, and that is the life of faith in his soule; where the faith by which hee lives, is amplified by the effect of it, *life*; and the object of it, *faith in the Son of God*; and the Son of God considered, as he is applied when he works new and spirituall life in us; *That loved me, and gave himselfe for me.*

Now though *Peters* failing, of which you read in the twelfth and fourteenth verses, was in breach of a point of the ceremoniall Law, refusing fellowship with the Gentiles, because of some Jews comming to Antioch, yet because it was such as did trench upon the moral Law of God, therefore *Paul* in these former verses, carefully reasons against the practise, as an overthrowing of the Gospel of Christ, and labours therefore to overthrow what *Peter* had done, by sundry reasons. In which he labours to prove upon that occasion, that a man is justified, not by the works either of the Ceremoniall or Morall Law, but to both these a man is dead, after hee is crucified with Christ.

From the 19. verse, observe these notes.

First, *That a justified person is dead to the Law.*

Secondly, *That a justified person is dead to the Law, by the Law.*

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Thirdly,

Thirdly, *A justified person is therefore dead to the Law, by the Law, that he might live unto God.*

For the first: *A justified person is dead to the Law.*

First, what is meant by the law; and secondly, what it is to be dead to the Law. By the Law understand in this place, the Covenant of the Law, or the Covenant of works, as in *chap. 4. 24.* These are the two Covenants, the one is Mount Sinai, the Covenant of the Law; the other is Jerusalem which is from above, which is the Mother of us all; Now this Covenant of the Law, is that which the Apostle here saith we are dead unto; In that Covenant you may consider, what it did require on our parts, and what it did give on Gods part; On our parts it required perfect obedience of the whole man, to the whole Law all our dayes, according to that *Gal. 3. 10.* Now that which God did give on his part was, that in case a man did thus keep the Law, hee would give him eternall life; He that doth these things, shall live in them, *Levit. 18. 5.* and it is repeated, *Gal. 3. 12.* And so also, God did inflict a curse, and eternall death upon every transgressor of this Law, *Gal. 3. 10.* Now this Law gives us no grace nor strength, for the performance of this Covenant, but presupposeth it once given in our first Parents, *Iob. 1. 17.* and therefore it is impossible for the Law to give life, because it gave no grace to heale our sin; and so the Law gave us no surety to keep the Law for us, but that is a better Covenant that hath Christ Jesus for a surety of it, *Heb. 7. 22.* But now to this Covenant of the Law

Law we are dead. This Law as it stood in the Law of the ten Commandements, so it stood in the Law of certaine Ordinances and statutes, the whole Ceremoniall Law, which if a man kept he should live in them, *Levit. 18.5.* For of that Law he speakes as well as of any other, so that there was an hand-writing of Ordinances given to the Jewish people to bee kept, and so it was to all the carnall Israelites, who were not borne anew to a better Covenant. But to this Covenant we are now dead, which implies that we are now free from the Ceremonial Law, wholly free from that after once justified by Christ, then (*Ephes. 2. 14, 15.*) they all ceased, these Ceremonies caused the Gentiles to fly off from the Israelites; they looked at the manifold ceremonies of the Law as ridiculous, but Christ by his death abolished these, and so we are wholly dead to the Law of Ceremonies, *Colos. 2. 14, 20.*

But now for the Morall Law, the Law of the ten Commandements, we are dead also to the covenant of that law, though not to the command of it; as that we must have one God, &c. yet we are free from the Covenant of it, that is, free from either expecting life by our obedience to it, or from feare of death by the breach of it; wee are free from the curse of the Law, and from the provoking power of it, as also from the rigour and exaction of the Law.

First, from the curse of the Law, *Gal. 3. 10.* Notable is that speech of David, *Psal. 49. 5.* Why should I feare in the day of evill, when the iniquity

of my heels follow me? why should he not feare, when his sinnes follow him, and are ready to triumph over him? True, he had cause to feare, if he should stand to the Covenant of the Law, but *uir. 15.* God hath redeemed me from the power of the grave; If faith carry us to lay hold on Christ our Redeemer, we are free from the curse of the Law, and from feare of death by the breach of the Law. And as we are free from the curse of the Law, so we looke not for life and salvation from the keeping of the Law; It is true, many temporall blessings wee may get by it, yet it is not so much from the Law, as from Gods acceptance of our Euangelicall obedience, but otherwise wee challenge not life, by any of our best performances: *Nehem. 13. 22.* when he had done much good, yet even then *Spare me, according to the multitude of thy mercies*, when a man hath done all that he can, yet he doth not challenge righteousness by the Law, but desires mercy in Jesus Christ to accept their weake endeavours.

This is that you read *Gal. 3. 18.* The inheritance is not by the Law, but by promise, and therefore we challenge nothing by our most perfect obedience to the Law.

Again, secondly, we are free from the provoking power of the Law, that is that whereby it stirres up in us an earnestnesse to the commission of sin, for this is the nature of man, that if you forbid him any thing, or limit him any thing, that his conscience is bound to this or that duty, he can by  
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no meates endure it; *Nitimur in vetitum, cupimusq; negata*; Had not God forbidden our first Parents to eate of the fruit of the tree, they would not have desired it; but *stolne waters are sweet*: For you reade of the motions of sin by the Law, *Rom. 7.5.* In our carnall estate, many sinfull motions we had, to stirre us up to doe wickedly, because the Law of God restrained us; meaning the Law did stirre us up to more earnestnesse after it, by how much the more it restrained our liberty from it; but this now we are freed from. The Law to a godly man doth not provoke him to be more wicked, but if he see any Commandement of God against him, it is a sufficient discouragement to him to forbear that sin, *Gen. 39.9.* A godly man disallowes himselfe in any thing that is evill.

And so, thirdly, we are free from the rigour of the Law, so as though we doe not fulfill the Law to the exact perfection thereof, yet we look for life by another Title, *Gal. 3.18.*

Now by this Covenant of grace it comes to passe, that God spares his children, as a man spares his son that serves him, *Mal. 3.17.* Thus you see what it is to be freed from the Law. But there is yet something more in the freedome, for it seemes to be such a freedome, as is purchased by death, *Gal. 3.13; 14.* and therefore there is some weight in the word, *Dead to the Law*; Dead to the Law, we are partly by the death of Christ, and partly by the death of our lusts, in our selves, *Rom. 7.4.* We are dead to the Law by the body of Christ;

Christ having dyed, he hath satisfied the Law; and look as the Law hath no Dominion over a man, when once he is dead, so our head being dead, the Law is satisfied, and our bond is discharged.

And we are dead to the Law also in the death of our own lusts, *Rom. 7. 6.* By our sinfull lusts we were kept under the dominion and bondage of the Law, now they being dead in us, we are freed from the Law.

Now because the second point is sutable to this, let me handle them both together.

*We are dead to the Law, by the Law.*

Now we are said to be dead to the Law by the Law: First, because the sentence and curse of the Law crucified Christ our head, and so consequently in him crucified us, *Gal. 3. 13. Dent. 21. 23.* Now then the Law gives sentence against Christ, as cursed, not for any desert of his own, but because he was willing to take upon him our sin, and therefore in crucifying our Head, it hath killed us.

But yet that is not all; Therefore, secondly, the Law doth kill sin in us, and thereby kills us, it kills all our former jollities and comforts in this world, that we have no life to the honours and pleasures thereof: *Rom. 7. 9. I was alive without the Law;* till this Law came, I thought my selfe a righteous and just man; and when the Law came he was stubborn and murmured, that God had made such Law; then sin revived, it made him lively to wickednesse; but I died, I was as a dead man before God:

God: Not onely all his lusts were mortified, and crucified, but his affections to the world, and all the comforts of it, they all die and decay in him; now he is *crucified to the world, and the world to him*, Gal. 6. 14. The power of the death of Christ doth wonderfully subdue the heart of a man to a weaned affection from this world, it blasts a mans contentment, even the very ministry of the Law, *Esay 40. 6, 7, 8*. When a man is once blasted by the ministry of the Law, a spirit of bondage breathing in it, it doth so darken and dead all his comforts, as that a man is dead to sin, and dead to the world."

Again, there is a further power in the Law, though of it self it work nothing, yet it is a *School-master to drive us to Christ*, Gal. 3. 24. Not onely the Jewish Ceremonies, but the Morall Law, when it discovers to us our sins, occasionally, and God blessing it to that end, the spirit of Adoption striking in with it, makes us cry out, *What shall we doe to be saved? Acts 2. 37*. and so the Jaylor, now the Law terrifies him with sense of his owne sins, and blasts all the comforts of this life, and by this occasion we are driven to Christ, the spirit of Adoption striking in, we are driven to seek to Christian communion; and being thus cast out, Christ findes us in one Ordinance or other, and gives us to see our part with him, in his death, and so we are freed from the feare of death, unto which before we lay in bondage.

And again, now also we have no life to the Law; Take you a man that is not in some measure dead.

dead to the Law, by the Law, and in some measure driven to Christ, and he will be very earnest after the Law, and therefore *Paul* opposeth this death to the Law, to the desire of false Teachers to be under the Law, *Gal. 4. 21.* They are eager to be justified by the Law, *Rom. 10. 2.* They will not submit to look for righteousness onely by Christ, and *Acts 24. 20.* they were all zealous of the Law; for want of fellowship with Christ in his death, they became zealous of the Law: but take a man whose heart is brought low by Christ, tell not him of rites and shadowes, they are all empty and beggerly rudiments, he is dead to the expectation of any comfort by these meanes; *Psal. 51. 17.* A broken and a contrite heart is better then sacrifice, an humbled heart, by the sense of the Law findes no savour in these things: though for their time they were of Gods owne appointment, yet now there is no life in them; but sprinkle me with hyssop, (which typified the blood of Christ) and thence it is, that as he is dead to the Ceremoniall Law of *Moses*, so he is dead to the Morall Law also; he hath no heart to look for any recompence by his obedience; when he hath performed any duty never so well, tell him of meriting by it, and his heart is wholly dead to it, *Luke 17. 10.* Even then *spare me O Lord according to the multitude of thy mercies*; he knowes his case miserable, if God should enter into judgement with him. Nor doth he feare death, by how much the more he hath fellowship in the death of Christ; tell him of death and hell, and he will say, *Wherefore should*

*I feare in the day of euill?* Like a man that hath already been in hell, and born the wrath of God in his soule, he now feares not what flesh can doe unto him, and so he is dead to all his gifts and parts as *Paul* was.

Now the reason why every justified person is dead to the Law, is, first, because it was the good pleasure of God to glorifie Christ, *Gal. 3. 16.* the inherance is by promise, and the promise is by Christ, *ver. 14.*

Secondly, it is taken from the impossibility of the Law to give life, *Gal. 3. 21.* Had there been a Law that could have given life, then righteousness had been by the Law, but it was impossible for the Law to give life, by reason of the weakness of it, *Rom. 8. 3.* Had we stood in our integrity, it could have given us life, but being faln, now it is impossible.

It may be first a refutation of a principall Popish Doctrine, calling men to look for life of grace and glory, from the works of the Law. For you see the Apostle saith, that a justified person is dead to the Law, that is, dead to the *Covenant*, not to the *Command* of the Law; this sense is the most literall, that we by the Law are dead to the *Covenant* of the Law, so as we look for no salvation from the Law in regard of our best performances; all we look for at the best, is but pardon of sin, and sparing, but we look for it by promise, and by promise made to us in Christ, so that such a conceit is opposite to this Doctrine: When we have done the best we can, we may not promise to our  
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selves life by our obedience to it. And the very truth is, if they look for righteousness by their keeping of the Law, they must expect death by their disobedience to the Law, & then what would become of them and us all? In this respect *no man living can stand in the sight of God, Psal. 143. 2.* Meaning of the works of the Law, no man living could be justified. The Papists say, some men there be, that may plead so; but I would fain see the man that dare stand out, and tell God that he looks for righteousness by his perfect obedience to the Law of God, when as *Abraham*, and *David*, and *Paul* durst not expect it; and indeed it is desperate presumption against the grace of Christ.

*Use 2.*

It may serve to avoid a cavill which some doe gather out of such like places of Scripture, who are enemies to the Law: They say, that after once a man is justified by Christ, he is no more subject to the Commandement of the Law, he doth nothing now in conscience of the Law, he takes himself not bound to it. And you have another sort of them who say, that not onely a Christian is freed from the obedience to the Law: but take you any man in the daies of the Gospel, & no man ought to have the Law prest upon him, but only the Gospel, & the promises thereof to be expounded and applied unto him: but both of them mistake this Scripture. Indeed this place exempts all from obedience to the Ceremoniall Law, so farre we agree with them; and for the Morall Law, we grant, that we are dead to the *Covenant* of the Law, but not to the *command* of the Law; you say unto me, and so

so do they ; but how shall I know that I am not dead also to the command of the law?

You may know it from some evident expressions of the Apostle , that he allowes us not to account our selves dead to the command of the law, *Ephes. 6. 1, 2.* He speaks there of the Children of Christian Parents , and he presseth them to the obedience of the law; for though wee expect not everlasting life by our obedience to the law , yet our obedience to it may procure us many blessings, though not from our desert, yet from Gods acceptance, and *Rom. 3. ult.* Christ established the law, *Mat. 5. 17.* we should walke even as Christ hath walked , and because he hath ratified the rule of righteousness , given by *Moses* law, it comes to passe that though we be freed from the Covenant of the law , yet by the Covenant of grace , we are bound to keepe the Commandment of the law, so as to doe our best endeavours that way; and hence it is , that the Apostle *James* presseth obedience to the law, *James. 2. 8, 9, 10, 11.* so that we to this day are subject to the law, bound to take heed we transgresse it not, and this law of liberty must judge us at the last day : Take the Covenant of the law, and that is an estate of bondage, *Gal. 4. 24.* but take it as we are freed from the Covenant of the law , and onely the command of the law lying upon us ; and so it is a *Law of liberty*, *James 2. 12.* If men therefore be hypocrites under the law, it will condemne them, and it will judge Gods servants and make them fly to Christ; so that they who plead exemption from the law after

after justification, they transgresse the righteous order of the Gospel of Christ; and for them who forbid the threatnings of the law to be preached, they do most preposterously mistake the wholesome doctrine of the childrens bread. The Ceremoniall law, that indeed was accomplished in Christ, but for the Morall law, the law of the ten Commandements, we are never said to be dead so that while we live, *The law hath dominion over a man as long as he lives*, Rom. 7. 1, 2, 3. so as the law ought to be prest as that which would kill us, untill that by the law, our hearts be dead unto the law of sin, and to all the comforts of this life; he mentioneth one law, Thou shalt not lust, and that is the tenth Commandement; and after that, then indeed threatnings are not to be prest absolutely, but so as may mortifie our corruptions; when the sentence of the law hath once driven us to seeke unto Christ, then the terrors of the law are not to be prest to such a soule; but thinke not that all Christians that are baptized, are freed from the Law, and know that carnall men, even in the time of the Gospel, are under both the covenant and curse of the Law, *The wrath of God abides upon them that believe not*, Joh. 3. 3. ult.

*Use 3.*

To shew you the comfortlesse condition of all such soules, as to this day are not yet justified, they are yet all subject to the whole Law of God, Rom. 7. 1. while you yet live in an estate of nature, sinne is mighty in you, and the old man raignes and rules in you, while you are strong and lively in sin, you are not yet dead to the Law; there is no man

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dead to the Law, but by the Law; if the Law never killed you, Christ never justified you, and then sin was never pardoned, and an unpardoned sinner is bound to keepe the whole Law; whilst thou thinkest of thine owne righteousness, and hopest to be saved by thy good meanning, thou art alive to the Law; though Paul sinned not against his conscience, *Act. 23. 1.* neither Law nor conscience did accuse him, yet hee looked not for righteousness by that meanes, *Phil. 3. 6, 8.* And all you that walke in acts of civill Justice in your callings, though it be much to be commended above mens disorderly walkings, yet I say, I beseech you, and charge you, as ever you looke for salvation by Christ, that you rest not in these. Paul had as much to boast of as any man, but he is now dead-hearted to all these, and so will you be, as soon as ever you have fellowship with Christ and his death.

Of comfort and direction, to comfort all the servants of God, that ever had experience of their death to the Law, by the Law; if ever the Law of God blasted thy sinne, and thy estate, and the World, and thou hast found them all as dead things, let this then be a direction to thee; thou must now take heed, that thou dost not suspend thy peace, upon thy good performances, and exact obedience to God, for that is the misery of many a poore soule: could they but alwaies performe duties with life and power, they could beleeve that God had pardoned their sin; but when they see they are so weake, and so cold in their  
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best duties, then they cannot beleeeve ; but when thou art dead to all thy best performances, as well as to thy sins, it is a signe thou art dead to the law, for it was the law that brought thee to a sight of thine owne corruption, and let thee see the emptinesse of thy performances, and therefore now looke for no comfort from them, suspend not thy comfort and peace, and contentment upon thy exact obedience to the Law ; and therefore for comfort, feare not what the law can doe against thee, onely make not Christian liberty a cloake to flesh and blood, but walke we with God, as closely as we can, and though we doe fall short of what we desire to reach unto, yet doubt not but Justification and salvation is laid up for us in Christ.

Come we now to a second Note, though it be the third in order.

*Doctrine.*

*God leadeth a Christian soule unto the Law, by the Law, that he might live unto God.*

Thus *Paul* expresseth Gods manner of dealing with him, and he speakes in the name of all justified persons, *I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live unto God* ; so that this is *Pauls* case, and in him generally, the case of all justified persons.

That you may understand what is meant by living unto God, see some part of the Coherence of the words with the former. In the 15. and 16. verses, the Apostle saith, that he, and such native Jews as himselfe was, knowing they could not be justified

justified by the law, but by Christ, they therefore sought righteousness by faith in him. Now against this protestation of the Apostle, an objection might be moved by carnall reason, and the Apostle answers it; the objection may be raised thus, That if justified persons renounce the Law, seeke righteousness by faith in Christ, this will open a doore to licentiousness, and justified persons will make no conscience of the Law, but live without and besides the Law, under pretence of justification by faith, and so you shall pin upon Christ the sin of all justified persons. This is mentioned in the 17. verse, Is Christ the Minister of sin? &c.

Now the Apostle labours to prevent this objection, and gives a double answer to it. First, by averſation, or a word of abomination, as his manner is, *God forbid*; that we should transgreſſe the Law without feare or care, God forbid.

Secondly, he answers it by three Reasons; all of them shewing the necessary conjunction and connexion that is betweene justification and sanctification; the first of the Reasons removes the imputation of sin from Christ, and not from him only, but from any who are justified by him, *ver. 18.* the Reason stands thus, *If I build againe the things that I have destroyed, I make my selfe a transgressor*, and not Christ. And as he removes it from Christ, so from himselfe, as unreasonable, that a man who hath laboured to be freed from sin, and lookes for righteousness only by Christ, that he should turne againe to it, to shew, that it is in-

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compatible to such mens spirits.

The second Reason is taken from the end which God aymeth at in using the meanes that he doth use to bring us to justification by Christ; and the meanes hee useth is to kill us to the law : and to what end doth he use that meanes? not that we might live to our selves, but unto God, as in the words of the Text.

The 3. Reas. is taken from the nearer communion which every justified person hath with Christ, in both his death and life; as I have part with Christ in his death, so have I part in his life, and therefore having partnership with him by justification of faith in both his death and life, therefore *The life I now live, is by the faith of the Son of God.* Thus you see what is meant, by this living unto God; Now then, to prove the Doctrine, and see what it is to live unto God in particular, and then the Reasons, and the Application, *Rom. 7. 4. We are dead to the Law by the body of Christ, that we might be married unto Christ, and bring forth fruit unto God;* this is the way by which God leads us on to spirituall life; to the same purpose you reade, *2 Cor. 5. 15.* Christ once died for all, that they that do live, should live no longer unto themselves, but unto Christ, who died and rose againe for them; so that when men are driven to seek righteousnesse by Christ, they doe by the power of his death, live no longer to themselves, but unto Christ, that is the end of the worke of Christ, *1 Per. 4. 1, 2.* *As Christ suffered in the flesh,* &c. *So anne your selves likewise, to be of the like mind,*

mind; he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin, that he should no longer live unto sin, but to the will of God; and therefore now none of us live or dye to our selves, but to the Lord, Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9. For this cause, Christ dyed and rose againe; that hee might be Lord of quick and dead. Now for further opening of this point, see what it is to live unto God in particular, and then, how this death to the law leads us to such a life.

Living to God, In that place, Rom. 14. 7. is opposed to living to ourselves: now what is it for a man to live to himselfe?

First, (as Civilians say) a man lives to himself, that is, *his owne man*, bound to no man, but is free to live as pleaseth himself; a man in bondage lives to another, what he hath, and what he can do, is another mans, but a man that lives to himselfe, is as it were his owne Master, no man can claime any interest in him; and so did the Jews expound it, Job. 3. 33. Wee were never in bondage to any, free from all men, in respect of subordination.

Secondly, A man is said to live to himselfe, that lives according to his owne will, and principles, and for his owne ends, as in usuall phrased of speech wee say, such a man lives to himselfe, as regards no mans profit, or pleasure, or credit, but his own, he cares for no body, further then his respect to others may accommodate his own occasions and ends; A man lives from his owne principles, for the rise of his worke, and for the end of his work, he aymes at no further end then himselfe.

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Now thirdly, that which follows upon this, that such a man lives to himselfe, as lives *without being desired* of other men, to himself he lives, & to himself he dies, no man is better for him, & he may die when he please, no man will hinder him, as it was said of *Iehoram*, he lived *without being desired*, & so he died, *2 Chro. 21. 20*. Now this is that which the Apostle denies to justified persons, There are *none of them lives or dyes to themselves, but whether we live or dye, we live and dye to the Lord*; so that then the meaning of the phrase is this.

First, when hee saith, wee live unto God, his meaning is, We acknowledge our selves, not to be in our owne hands, not to bee free, to live as we list our selves; so now we doe not live according to our owne principles, wee acknowledge the Lord hath right and interest to us; *Rom. 14. 8*. We are bought with a price, and therefore his that bought us.

Secondly, to live unto God, implies, that as now Gods we are, to him we belong, and not to men or Angels, or to ourselves; so now, we do not live according to our owne principles and Rules, nor the wils and lusts of other men, nor their counsels, nor examples, nor commands, but we live unto God. *I live, yet not I; but Christ liveth in me*; I live now, from an inward principle of the Lord Jesus, he lives in me, and he speakes as the Father hath given him commandement, *Ioh. 14. ult.* And the Son can do nothing of himselfe, *Ioh. 5. 19*. This is the whole life of any member of Christ, we dare not live as wee list,

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nor after the wils of others, further then we see Christ in them, for Christs we are, 1 Cor. 7. 23. so that they who now live, shall not live to themselves, 2 Cor. 5. 15. but unto him; so that the life of a Christian man, as it springs from Christs command, so from the worke of his Spirit, and workes not for its owne ends, further then it is subordinate to Christ, for the glory of Christ, the building up of his kingdome, the doing his will; this is the bent of the whole life of a Christian.

And thirdly, hence it followes, That a Christian man thus living, as one that lives from Christ, and through Christ warranting his course by his word, and quickning his actions by his Spirit, and working not for any low ends, but for the ends of Christ, the glory and will of Christ; hence it comes to passe, that a Christian liveth to God, in respect that he lives not a life unregarded or undesired, but God hath a speciall eye to his whole course, God desires him, and he will move others to desire him, Iob 14. 14, 15. *For thou wilt have a desire to the worke of thine owne hands,* he shall not dye undesired; *Why sayest thou, my way is hid from the Lord?* Esay 40. 27, 28. *The most High doth neither faint nor wax weary, and they that waite on the Lord shall renew their strength;* If a man live by waiting upon God, for warrant from his word, for life from the Spirit for what he doth, God will not suffer such a man to run into such courses, as in which he will take no notice of him.

Thus you see what it is to live unto God ; the two former being most principall, but this other followes upon both.

Now for the next thing ; Can you shew us any Reasons from the word of God , that God leads his servants by death to the law, to make them live unto God ?

*Reas. 1.*

Taken from the power which the Law hath had, over and against such as are dead by the law, to the law ; when the law hath had such power over a man, as to kill him to the law, then the law hath done with a man: take a malefactor that hath committed any capitall crime, when the law hath had power over him, and put him to death, now he no longer lives to the lawes of this world, but he lives to another world, *Rom. 7. 1.* so is this case, there is not any Christian that hath beene put to death, by the law of God, that hath beene struck downe by the terrors of the law , but ever after he is as a dead man to this world, and he now lives as a man of another world , his conversation is in Heaven, *Phil. 3. 20.*

*Reas. 2.*

Taken from the second marriage , which God calls us to , when he calls us to death to the Law, by the Law, *Rom. 7. 4.* We are dead by the law, so as that the law, and consequently sin which had power over us by the law , should have no more dominion over us, but that we should be married to Christ, and so bring forth fruit unto him, so that when by the law we are dead to the Covenant of the law, now all the fruits we bring forth are to the Lord Jesus, we depend upon his grace for guidance,

dance, and upon his word for warrant, and his Ordinances we frequent, the seeds of his grace we conceive, and so bring forth fruit unto God.

Taken from the purchase which Christ hath *Reas. 3.* made of us unto himselfe by his death, the possession which he claimes, whensoever he strikes us dead to the Law, Christ having dyed for us; hee therefore dyed, *That we might not live unto our selves, but unto him,* 2 Cor. 5. 15. When Christ strikes us dead to the Law, so as he doth not only blast our lusts, but makes us run to Christ, by which occasionally, the life and death of Christ working together, brings us on to Christ, and by this meanes Christ hath laid fast hold on us, for otherwise, the Law of it selfe would never lead us to Christ, were not the blood of Christ sprinkled upon our hearts, so as that the soule cannot rest, untill it find something of Christ dispensed to it.

This serves to warne all Christian men from *Use 1.* three principall vices, that do commonly accompany their lives, Self-pleasing, Security, and Diffidence, all of them expressly here reproveable, *Rom. 15. 1, 2.* When we live no other life, but to please our selves, we think we are our owne, and we live from our owne Rules, and to our owne ends, and live securely, and many times Gods own servants are to be blamed herein, they grow diffident, and thinke neither God nor man cares for them; doe but therefore try, and you may know, whether ever the Law had any kind of working upon your spirits, or no: If we be such as stand upon our owne freedom, Our tongues are

our owne and we will speake, *Pfal.* 12.4. and we breake the bonds, and cast the cords from us, *Pfal.* 2.2,3. If we will stand upon our owne bottomes, free to live according to our owne wils, and rules, and principles; certainly the law of God never had any worke upon such unbroken hearts. And so you may make it an use of tryall, if wee thus stand upon our owne bottomes, the Law never came so neere us, that wee understood the true sense of it; and how many are there, that live in the bosome of the Church, who yet will beare no yoakes, nor bee bound to any thing? You say, you respect God, though not his servants. The Scribes and Pharisees pretended they respected God the Father; though they did not the person of Christ, and yet when they cast his cords from them, they resisted God himselfe; so if God by his servants call us to repent, and to lead a new life, and we have a devise to put this off, because we thinke it is the devise of some curious braine, this is not a legall way, and so put it off, this is to stand out against God himselfe; but if God give us an heart to thinke that wee stand bound to his Law, it is a signe the Law hath had its worke upon us, else wee could never have lived to any mans ends but our owne; but when we live so, as to advance nothing but our owne pleasures, wee need not wonder if wee live without being desired, and dye without being lamented; and therefore let this weane us from such a disposition, for if wee doe not live to God, then wee live without God in the World, and so  
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the life of an Atheist.

This may serve to teach men, not to bee too *Vse 2.*  
 sharpe in censuring their brethren in such wayes,  
 as wherein they desire to live unto God, and dare  
 not but so live; *Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9.* *One man keeps a*  
*day to the Lord, another man keeps it not, why,*  
*both doe it to the Lord;* Who art thou then that  
 judgest another man? for hee lives not to him-  
 selfe, but to the Lord. While a man lives by the  
 Rules of the Word, and in what ever he doth, he  
 seekes the glory of God, and the good of the  
 Church, though other men doe not so, yet judge  
 not one another in cases of this nature; Suppose  
 one man keepeth this or that day, prescribed by  
*Moses* law, another man keeps it not; hee that  
 keeps it, thinkes he is bound by the law of God  
 to keepe it, and for the edification of the few  
 whom he would not offend, another man keeps  
 it not, because he thinkes they are abolished in  
 Christ, for the benefit of the Gentiles, yet hee  
 that doth either, doth it to the Lord; so that here  
 is the point, If it appeare that the life of our bre-  
 thren is by the Son of God, and by the Spirit and  
 word of God, and desire to live no other life but  
 so, then be sparing in judging and censuring one  
 another.

It may bee to provoke any man to an holy and *Vse 3.*  
 Christian life before God, and not to bee afraid  
 of the meanes that lead to it; Many a poore soule  
 thinkes when God begins to worke upon him,  
 hee feares hee shall never see good day after; if  
 once the Law of God strike in upon him, that  
 once

once hee begins to become a dead man to his lusts, cannot drinke, nor sweare, &c. if he begin to make conscience of his waies, he thinks he shall now live a disregarded life, but bee not afraid of that which is the life and comfort of a Christian soule, the onely way to bring a man to an honourable life, wherein he lives not to his base lusts, nor to the unthankfull and base world, but unto God; and in very deed, till a man bee by the Law struck dead to the Law, that a man finde himselfe a dead man in the sight of God, no better then a man given over to death and destruction, till then, he is full of self-pleasing, and selfe-seeking, till then, a man lives to himselfe, and unto others but for himselfe. Take you the measure and scantling of any naturall man upon the face of the earth, take but the scantling of your heart, and give mee the *Summa totalis*, and see if he lives any way but to himselfe, and for himselfe; shew mee the noblest Heroes among the Gentiles, the bravest spirits among Christians, the stoutest and wisest among the Sommes of men, and let them tell mee if this bee not so, That a man that lives a life of nature, whether he lives or dies, he lives and dies to himselfe; and shall wee thinke this to bee the onely brave life, which the sonnes of men satisfie themselves in, the onely honourable life? and a man would thinke himselfe a mad man, if hee should live otherwise; to live besides a mans selfe and the world, is counted a life of phrenzie and madnesse, whereas indeed, a man must be

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*besides himselfe*, or else hee cannot live to God. So when *Paul* discoursed of his owne conversion and manner of life, the Governor told him rightly, hee was besides himselfe, he stood not upon himselfe, as many a man in such a case would have done, and yet, *Paul* knew full well, he was never neerer God, then when he was furthest off from himselfe, never more sober and wise then at such a time to preach the Gospel; And therefore in the name of Christ, let me call upon you, not to be afraid of legall terrors, nor of a Christian life; looke not at such wayes, as an utter undoing to you, it is the onely way to live unto God, despise not such a life; true it is, *As long as thou doest well to thy selfe, men will praise thee*, Psal. 49. 18. and men will thinke that thou deservest to live in the world, but know this, that wee should not wholly live to our selves. And therefore since the Holy Ghost is pleased, to call us on to lead an higher life then nature, I beseech you, let me perswade you to some better affection to the life of God, bee not discouraged with it, nor discourage others from it; know this, there is an higher life then the life of nature, a life that lives not to it selfe, but from the hand, and word, and Spirit of Christ, from the Rules of Christ, and to the glory of Christ, and to the good of others.

To direct and comfort Christians, that by the Law are dead to the law, to encourage such men the more to goe on, and to be farre from the

*vse 4.*

the former life which they have lead. Know if ever the Law of God have struck you dead to sinne, it hath struck you downe from all dependance upon your owne righteousnesse, so as that now for ever you must live to the Lord Jesus: Why are you discouraged because of dulnesse and livelesnes in the performance of holy duties? you would still live to the Law, but your life is from Christ, and not from your owne works, be they never so good.

And let it be a further direction unto you; labour to bee weaned from the world: not that I call upon any man to neglect his calling, but that must be had respect unto, though after the other; A man must not be so carefull for his daily bread, as that he wholly forget, and neglect his duty to God. And for your comfort, let no Christian man thinke, he lives an unregarded life; many men complaine, they may dye when they will, no body ownes them; *David* himselfe sometimes was ready to thinke so, *No man cared for my soule, Psal. 142.4.* It was his complaint indeed, but there was sinne wrapped up in it, *Esay 40.27.* If thou livest to God, make account of this, there is not the poorest Christian, that hath learned to live to the Lord, but God will regard him, both in life and death; Thou shalt never live but desired, nor dye but lamented, and therefore never feare what will become of thee, though thou bee cast aside as a refuse commodity, and every wretch can tell how to trample upon a poore Christian,  
yet

yet know , that *the candle of the wicked shall be put out*, when he dies he shall stinke, as the snuffe of a candle, but the light of the righteous shall shine, and the memory of the just is precious; and when thou diest, the stoutest and toughest heart will secretly say , Would God I might dye the death of such a man, and that my latter end might bee like his.

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