

## SERMON XVI.

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IN WHAT THINGS MUST WE USE MODERATION, AND IN WHAT NOT?

*Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*—  
Philippians iv. 5.

WHAT St. Austin said, in his days, of another scripture, that “it stood more in need of good practising, than any learned interpretation,” THAT may I say, in these days wherein I live, concerning the words that I have read to you at this time. I shall not therefore detain you, with showing their coherence, (especially considering their entireness,) or with any glossing upon them; but haste to open the nature of this duty, and press the practice thereof upon you all. In the verse you have two general parts:—

1. An exhortation to the showing [of] moderation, which, being in *materiâ necessaria*, [“in its matter necessary,”] is a command.

2. The argument enforcing it: “The Lord is at hand.”

The former will bound my present discourse, which I need not alter, but, according to the grammatical order the words stand in, might consider the *personæ, res, et actiones*, [“the persons, the things, and the actions,”] expressed therein: all which make up the whole of the duty enjoined. Yet, if you please to have the proposition formed, take it thus:—

## DOCTRINE.

*It is God's command, and our duty, to let our moderation be known unto all men.*

Which I shall prosecute, according to the order of nature, in this method: I. In opening the nature of moderation. II. In showing its exercise. III. By whom, and to whom. IV. Why. V. And, lastly, make application.

## MODERATION OPENED.

I. Concerning the *nature of moderation*, or what it is: wherein *the signification of the word, description of the thing; its subject, kinds, rule, and extremes.*

1. And here I confess I enter upon an unbeaten path: the word *ἐπιεικῆς*,—and *ἐπιεικεία*, which descends from it, and for which, by a

\* The character of Mr. Hill is held, to this day, in high estimation among all classical scholars, for the very great and important improvements which he introduced into Schrevelius's Lexicon, and by which it was rendered the best manual then extant for students. See his elegant preface to the ninth edition of that useful work, in 1707, which contains a well-merited eulogium on the learned printer, the elder Bowyer, and which has been retained in all subsequent impressions.—EDIT.

Græcism, it is used in the text,—being of such multifarious signification, and no where in scripture rendered in that extent as here, nor any where else that I can find by “moderation,” which also occurs in no other place of all the Bible. In signifies properly “that which is fit, decent, due, meet, convenient;” \* and is accordingly rendered by former interpreters, *modestia*; not as opposed to pride or haughtiness, in its strict philosophic acceptation, (which some not attending to, have therefore quarrelled with,) but that which doth moderate our actions, in which sense the masters of that language frequently use it; † and by later [interpreters] for avoiding that ambiguity, *moderatio*, from whence is formed our English word “moderation.”

2. Which, in its latitude, is not any particular grace or virtue, but that fit and proper temper [which] we ought to observe in the governing of our hearts and lives; that equal judgment which should command our wills and affections, and all our human actions, which are capable of excess or defect, by proportioning them according to the quality of the object, and the end for which and [for] whom they are employed, for the preserving of peace within ourselves and with others; that there may be no contumacy or rebellion in our affections to disquiet ourselves, or in our actions to disquiet others.

3. So that moderation, according to *its subject*, is either that of the mind, which is as a cause; or of the will and affections in their actings, which is as the effect: from all which the whole man is denominated “moderate.”

(1.) The former, or that of the mind, is that part of Christian prudence which proportions our actions to the object which the will chooseth, and its end, according to the variety of circumstances the agent is in, by applying the general rules of scripture for our walking, to our particular actions; and is accordingly well rendered here, by one of the ancients, ‡ *rationalis conversatio*, “your reasonable or equitable conversation.”

(2.) The latter, of the will, pertains to the several and particular virtues therein, especially those that serve for the restraining our most strong and impetuous passions, which offer the greatest violence to the equality of our minds. § And, therefore, although it most properly be of the judgment, yet being most conspicuous and discernible in the exercise of such virtues, it doth, according to the quality of the object about which they are conversant, assume their several notions and names. The most violent passions in reference to ourselves being the lusting power after the good things of this life, and, consequently, the grief which arises from the want or loss of them; it is therefore, in reference to the former, *temperance*, in its large acceptation; and the latter, *patience*: and in relation to others, the raging power of anger and revenge, with what flows from them; in which regard it is in the magistrate, *clemency*; and

\* Καθηκον, ωρεπον, ωροσηκον, ικανον.—HESYCHIUS. Επιεικες, το ωρεπον.—*Etymologicum Magnum*. † *Modestia dicta est a modo: ubi autem modus nec plus est quicquam nec minus.*—CICERO. “It is called *modesty* from a *mode* or limitation. But where any thing is completely *modified* and bounded, it has neither excess nor deficiency.”—EDIT.

‡ AMBROSIOUS *in loc.* § *Est autem modestia in animo, continens moderationem cupiditatum.*—CICERONIS *Rhetor.* lib. iii. cap. 2. “It is *modesty* or *soberness* of mind, and comprises within it the government or moderation of the passions and desires.”—EDIT.

*humanity, meekness, gentleness, lenity*, in all. In this variety is the word used by authors, sacred and profane, which I will not clog you with. And for this cause, it consists in that mediocrity which approaches nearer to the extreme of defect, and consequently is opposed to violence, impetuosity, or inordinacy of affection, (not as placed upon *undue* objects, for that is materially evil and to be wholly declined, not moderated, but upon *lawful* [objects] immoderately,\*) and in general, to all excess in human actions.† Hence it is, by the way, as I conceive, that it is commanded so frequently in scripture by negative precepts; as, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” (1 John ii. 15.) “Take no thought for your life, for the morrow.” (Matt. vi. 25, 31, 34.) “Fear not them which kill the body.” (Matt. x. 28, 31; Luke xii. 4, 7.) “Let not your heart be troubled;” (John xiv. 1;) and many the like, which I cannot stand to mention; and sometimes by the action contrary to its opposite vice; as, “Turn the other cheek: Let him have thy cloak also: Go with him twain;” (Matt. v. 39—41;) that is, rather than violently resist, and revenge thyself.

4. Moderation, then, being no particular grace or virtue, (as you have heard,) cannot have any peculiar object, but only in common with the principles and actions wherein it is employed; whereby it becomes incapable of any future accurate division into several *kinds*. For although it be of a general consideration, yet not as a principle which acts upon its object, but that which peculiarly respects the actions themselves when the object is pitched upon; it being moderation’s office to regulate and govern principles in their actings upon their due objects chosen, that they exceed not therein. So that as all those graces and virtues which respect the manner of actions, as zeal, sincerity, &c., that respect the moral quality, as this doth the moral quantity, degree, or measure of them, are of so many several kinds, as the actions are wherein they are conversant; so also is moderation.

5. And in regard our particular actions are so very many, so diverse, and clothed with such infinite variety of circumstances, it is impossible to lay down any certain *rule*, that may determine wherein moderation in them all should consist; the *τα δεοντα*, or “the things that are just, necessary, and convenient,” and no other, being always in particular actions very difficult to define, as the philosopher acknowledgeth, who saith, “There is nothing more full of difficulty than in every thing to find the mean;” the rule [which] he lays down to walk by is reason, and a prudent man’s determination; the best [which] nature affords, and are especially good for the duties of the second table, which he only (though not to all) speaks of; yet we, through the goodness of God, have a more sure and certain one to guide us, to which we shall do well to take heed, even the scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation. It will be worth our while to speak briefly what we can touching the rule, which in general must guide and determine our moderation:

\* All the editions except the first have culpably changed this appropriate adverb into the noun *moderation*.—EDIT. † *Επιεικεις τῆ βιαίῳ ὀρροπιῖ Hermogenes. Μηδεν ὑπερβαλοντας, αλλα μετρωις, επιεικωις, &c.*—ISOCRATES. “Hermogenes places *befitting* or *moderate* in opposition to *that which is violent or outrageous*.” “Let nothing be done in excess, but with much equanimity and moderation.”—EDIT.

for which end we must know, that all our human actions, which are capable of moral good or evil, are of two sorts, especially according to their objects, religious or civil: (1.) The former requires a spiritual principle, end, and rule, by which we must perform them for their manner and measure; which scripture doth abundantly (for the internal by its *particular*, and sufficiently for the external by its *general*, precepts) declare. (2.) For the latter, or civil actions, as a natural principle and end referrible to God's glory; so also for their manner and measure, the general rules of scripture to allow and prescribe them is all we can reasonably expect, and is sufficient for the same. In the application whereof, reason and prudent determination are three ways subservient:—

(i.) In judging the nature or quality of the objects in general, which we are particularly employed about, (as the good things or [the] evils of this life, in the particulars wherein we are conversant,) according to what scripture declares them to be, when it speaks of them, especially not comparatively, but absolutely what they are in themselves.

(ii.) Of the end God hath ordained such things for, about which he hath commanded us to be employed, and accordingly to proportion our actions; it being a known rule in the schools, *Omnium appetibilium finis est mensura*; or, that “the end is that which must prescribe the measure of our actings,” according to its double respect, *rei, et personæ*, “for *what* and for *whom*” the action is.

(iii.) Lastly. In due consideration of the circumstances of the agent; wherein is such great variety, not only in regard of the person, which involves *the end for whom* the action is, but all the adjacent circumstances, that herein occurs by far the greatest difficulty. For example, in meats and drinks. Consider diligently their nature in those set before thee; then their end, for refreshing us, not feeding our lusts; and of thyself, what is sufficient and convenient for thee in the circumstances thou art then in, and accordingly use them, or put “a knife to thy throat,” and refrain, as the wise man speaks; (Prov. xxiii. 2;) for that which may but be sufficient for one, may serve for another to make his belly his God; yea, that which may be only convenient to the same person at one time, may be gluttony and excess at another. And as about things, so in our dealing with others much more variety, both in respect of ourselves, and those we have to do withal. As we must remit that to one, we need not (nay, sometimes ought not) to another, according to our own and their capacity; as they are poorer or richer than ourselves, as they are weak, or wilful and malicious opposers of truth or equity; and a thousand such-like considerations, which occur in our actions; which, though always sufficient in themselves to determine us, yet because of our shortness of sight, are often but as the uncertain twinkling star-light to us, whereby to steer our course.

6. All that is said of moderation will more clearly appear, if we consider its *extremes*, from the nature of God's commands, which are of two sorts:—

(1.) Some are affirmative; and those either general, what we must do, &c., and imply the end for which, and all the circumstances that necessarily attend our doing it; or particular, and express *the circum-*

*stances external*, as time and place, and *internal*, (usually called the manner,) which comprehends the quality, and the moral quantity or proportion we are speaking of; which implies the intenseness, frequency, and duration of our actions. These continually oblige us, though not to continual practice, but only when God requires; the former by way of more absoluteness, the latter more conditionally, as depending thereupon.

(2.) The other sort of precepts are negative; some, what we must not do, and so, consequently, at once forbid all the concomitants of such actions as are prohibited; others, not forbidding us the object, but rectifying us about it, in the end we most do it for, manner how, &c.; both which oblige us to continual observance; and, in morals, to the contrary duties. By which it appears, in our not right proportioning our actions, we sin *in omission*, by not doing so fully as he commands; *in commission*, when we do those things that are our duty, but exceed therein, and go beyond the bounds [which] God hath set us: and this is formally immoderateness, which is rectified by moderation. As for actions materially evil, as Jonah's being angry with God, hating virtue, and loving vice, &c., which are absolutely forbidden, no proportion is to have place, but it and all other circumstances, together with the action, wholly avoided or suppressed; because towards undue objects forbidden us there can be no defect, in regard there should be no action, and therefore no moderation or government thereof. For instance, in those two great commands, on which hang all the Law and the Prophets, as our blessed Saviour tells us: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." (Luke x. 27; Matt. xxii. 37—40.) Here is the grace of love required to act towards God; the manner expressed in *heart, soul, strength, mind*; the measure, in the four *alls*, the New Testament adding one to the three of the Old Testament, so far is the gospel from detracting from duty. Here can be no excess, in regard we can never love him as he deserves; not only in regard of what he hath done for us, but is to us, being our end and happiness; and towards our neighbour, the manner expressed, "as thyself," that is, truly and sincerely; but not "with all thy heart," &c., that is only God's due, who is absolutely to be loved for himself, others for him. Herein, alas! grace is defective, but never exceeds, so that moderation hath here no place; for if we love any person or thing more than God, Christ, and ourselves, it is not the action of grace, but sinful affection, which is to be moderated. For he that with his natural affection loves father or mother, wife or child, (whom yet they ought greatly to love,) more than God or Christ, is not worthy of them.

I am not ignorant all this while, that this word *επιεικεια* is most frequently used in a forensical or law sense, more strictly; the Moralists, Schoolmen, and Civilians borrowing it from Aristotle, and restraining it to that particular moderation of mitigating strict justice in the execution of human laws, and so is rendered, *equitas*, "equity." Which is either, 1. That of the magistrate in his public capacity, and is so *clementia*, "clemency," and is opposed to cruelty; the magistrate being

obliged, as not to write his laws in blood, like Draco's, so also not to execute them with cruelty, (though, where requisite, with severity,) but to moderate them by the law of nature, other laws, former precedents, constant customs, which have the nature of laws, or the reason and end of the law, which is more equitable (and more law, say some) than the letter, and, amongst Christians, by the written laws of God, that there may be *convenientia pœnæ ad delictum*, or "a proportioning punishment to the quality of the offence," all circumstances (which the law cannot possibly foresee or provide for) being duly considered. This includes all superiors, political, ecclesiastical, domestical, &c., and is frequently joined with "justice" and "judgment" in scripture, as executed both by God and man. (Psalm xcvi. 9; xcix. 4; Isai. xi. 4; Prov. i. 3; ii. 9; xvii. 26; Micah iii. 9, &c.) Or, secondly, that of private persons, or public in their private capacity, which is between party and party, when, according to the rules of equity, we omit what the rigour of the letter of the law would adjudge us, thereby neither injuring ourselves nor others; which is usually called *probitas*, or *honestas*; by us, "common honesty" that should be twixt man and man. And hence some borrow it, and restrain it to that carriage [which] the law takes not cognizance of in our meekness and gentleness, making it that single virtue the moralists call *mansuetudo*, we, "meekness." But though it be all these, yet it is also more, these not reaching the latitude of the word *επιεικεια*, nor the extent of the duty here enjoined; the word being not used here in that strict sense [in which] the philosophers use it, as the learned Grotius well observes upon the place; but for that equalness of mind and spirit that becomes us in our conversation, and diffuseth itself through many, very many, other actions, than are proper to these virtues; and though sometimes restrained to this or that particular kind of moderation, yet in its latitude, as the best philologers tell us, [it] denotes "mediocrity, indifferency, equality," or the like.\* And in this general acceptation, which I may call "the moral or theological sense," not restraining it to, though not excluding, the forensical and stricter acceptation thereof, I shall, through God's assistance, handle it; the rather, because our judicious and learned Perkins hath in a peculiar little tractate already spoken sufficiently to that particular, of the moderation of justice by the magistrate, and private persons, in reference to their remitting from the rigour of the law; which every one may peruse, and I seriously wish they would also practise.

#### THE EXERCISE OF MODERATION.

II. The second general now follows: *the exercise of moderation*; wherein the case proposed is included; namely,

CASE. *Wherein must we practise moderation?*

Which necessarily implies the external object, or about what our moderation must be conversant, and appear to all; call it *the object of the faculty* or *of the action*, or *of moderation* when employed in

\* *Μετριοι, επιεικεις.*—HESYCHIUS. *Επιεικως σημαίνει το μετριο.*—*Etymologicum Magnum.*—*Επιεικως, μετριο.*—SUIDAS. *Την τούτων μετριοτητα, &c., id est, επιεικειαν.*—SCHOLIASTES in *Thucydiden*, lib. i.

governing these, and so hath the same object with them, as is said before, it all comes to one.

And [it] formally includes, 1. *What it is that we must moderate*; or the faculty, or principle, of what kind soever internal and external, from which the action flows. 2. *In what actions*. And, 3. *How*, or the measure and proportion to be observed in such our actions. Which three are always distinct in themselves, though not always easily distinguishable to us, and therefore often seem coincident. I shall therefore join them together in the prosecution of the case.

*For the general object of moderation, or about what it must be exercised and appear.*

NEGATIVELY. 1. *Not [about] such things as are materially good.*—About such things, or in such actions as are materially good, moderation hath no place, because all the good we can possibly do is too little, so that there can be no excess in these, and therefore no moderation: for the office of moderation being to restrain excess, where there can be none of this, that can have no employment. For example: we cannot believe in, hope, love God and Christ too much, nor hate sin and Satan, as the schoolmen affirm, in regard of his wholly losing the image of God, too much. In all our internal religious duties, and actings of grace, as such, no moderation therefore can or ought to have place.

2. *Not about such things as are materially evil.*—For herein we cannot be defective. Where the object is absolutely forbidden us, and no circumstances can make the action good, there we are wholly to abstain or suppress the action, if in it, there being inordinacy in the principle or faculty; for though moderation is to govern even the principle, yet not in the choice of its object, but in its exercise about a due object chosen, that it exceed not. And though we call any great acting upon an undue object, or great omission towards due, “immoderate,” because of their excess, yet this is not properly immoderacy; for so every sin would be it formally; whereas those only which respect the moral quantity of our actions are properly immoderacies. Both these sufficiently appear by what is said before.

POSITIVELY. But about such things as are in themselves of an indifferent nature, and neither absolutely commanded as things materially good, or absolutely forbidden as those materially evil, but only conditionally according to the circumstances we are in: which, though of an indifferent nature, yet become morally good or evil to us, as we are actually conversant about them. In these properly may be excess; in regard of which, moderation is to take place to restrain and keep all within due bounds, being formally *the modification* (to use the school-term for once) of such actions. Wherein we must carefully distinguish of the several formalities of the object, grace and nature being conversant about the same object, but not in the same respect.

*For its exercise, therefore, or what, wherein, and how we must practise it.*

Which I shall speak of,

1. ABSOLUTELY, in reference to ourselves, for preserving peace within, as it is to be exercised towards the good and evils of this life.

2. RELATIVELY, or in relation to others for external peace, wherein we must exercise it, in civil and in religious matters. The former I shall call *moderation towards things*, the latter *towards persons*.

#### I. MODERATION TOWARDS THINGS.

First, then, for *moderation towards things*, as it is absolutely taken in reference to ourselves.—This being so clearly enjoined in the text, as appears not only by the word *ἐπιεικεία*, but the duty *γνώσθητω*; the apostle not saying, “Use moderation towards all men,” but, “Let it appear to all men,” which even that which is internal doth in our external conversation. But though there be abundance of excellent fruit on this branch of moderation, yet in regard I conceive that towards persons principally intended, I will not stand to shake it down, but only point you out briefly the boughs, on which it especially grows, that you may gather it yourselves; and proceed to the second, moderation towards others, which I shall only prosecute afterwards in all the following discourse. Now the good things of this life being either *internal*, of the mind, as parts, learning, &c.; of the body, as health, strength, beauty, and the like; or *external*, as the riches, honours, relations, and lawful pleasures of the world, and what [are] comprehended under them: and the evils of this life, such as are contrary to these, as shallowness of parts natural or acquired, sickness, weakness, death, deformity, poverty, losses of friends or estate, infamy, reproaches, troubles, wars, hunger, thirst, nakedness, imprisonment, captivity, banishment, and such like: we are towards these to exercise moderation.

##### 1. *Towards the good things of this life.*

(1.) *We must moderate our judgments in the valuation of them.*—As forbidden fruit must not be looked upon, so lawful must not be judged by us more desirable than it is. As we may not undervalue these good things, and, with the Stoic, despise and cast them away; so we must not over-value them, beyond their intrinsic worth, and the ends for which God allows them, the end and use being the measure of every thing's estimation. For though every creature be good in itself, and some better in themselves and to us than others; yet those that are the best, and best for us that the world affords, are still but creatures who are most of them serviceable only to our bodies, that they may be serviceable to our souls, in the service of our heavenly Father; which when we too much estimate, we quickly fall to admire, and so bow down to them, and commit idolatry with them. For, an over-valuation of the judgment begets in us admiration, and so an over-valuation of them also in our affections. These sensitive objects make such impressions upon our imagination when absent, and our passions when present, that if grace and reason moderate not our judgment of them, our whole man becomes inflamed therewith, and violently carried out towards them, by an excessive admiration of their seeming excellency, love to them for the same, and desire after them for their apprehended suitableness, hope to obtain them, (seeming possible,) using means for obtaining them, and delighting and glorying in them. Therefore our Saviour prescribes wisely, that our hearts may not be in them, the light of our minds being single. (Matt. vi. 22, 23.)



When Achan judged the Babylonish garment "goodly," and the silver and gold, then he quickly coveted and took them. (Joshua vii. 21.) Let thy moderation, therefore, begin here, and consider the character [which] Solomon, upon good experience, gives them, that they are all to us in this degenerate state "vanity of vanities," yea, "vexation of spirit."

(2.) *Moderate thy will and affections, in their love, desires, hopes, after the getting or keeping these things; according to the ends for which God allows thee in particular, and with subordination to his pleasure and providence in the event.*—We must [not only] value, love, desire, God and Christ, and hope in them absolutely and for themselves, and grace absolutely, but [also] for the enjoyment of them, and consequently for our own happiness; but so must we not *these things*, but only conditionally, as God in his all-wise disposing providence sees meet to dispense to us, he having so only promised them, and for those ends and so far forth as they are "convenient for us," according to Agur's desire. (Prov. xxx. 8.) Which *conveniency* is to be measured by the estate [which] the providence of God hath set us in, and the circumstances wherein we are: as so much health, strength, refreshment, comfortableness in our lives, as God sees good for us, and may render us serviceable to him; so much food, raiment, profit, pleasure as he pleaseth to bestow, and so far forth as convenient for us, according to our present condition, for our health, and other ends now mentioned, to which they refer. But neither these nor any other good things of this life absolutely or for themselves, so as to make them our end and happiness, or to be fuel for our lusts, must we either love, desire, or hope for. It is not thus desiring the lawful pleasures, profits, honours of this life, which St. John speaks of, 1 John ii. 16; but the immoderacy of the desiring them, which he calls "lust," and saith it is "of the world;" as well he may, seeing this is the trinity that it generally worshippeth more than the blessed Trinity of heaven. Is it not the cry of many, nay, most, "Who will show us any good?" but of how few, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us!" (Psalm iv. 6.) How do men grasp at these things in their desires, which are as boundless as the ocean, as craving as the horse-leach's daughters, still crying, "Give, give;" as unsatiable as the grave, and as unsatisfied as hell and destruction, towards which they are travelling. What Libanius observed so long since, (and it is worth the observing,) holds as true at this day.\* "It is difficult," saith he, "to meet with a man, satisfied and not complaining of his condition. If he want any bodily good, as beauty, strength, &c.; or, if none of these, yet not thankful, if he want some of the mind, if he be not an orator, physician, skilful commander, or the like: and especially in riches and honours. He that hath one field would have, and complains if he have not, two; he that hath two, for four; he that hath ten, for twenty; and he that hath twenty, twice so many; and so on, no number satisfying his desire. For though it be great before, when we enjoy any thing it then seems small to us; as one thousand talents of gold, when we have them, are small to two, and two to ten, and so on. In honours, likewise, he that governs a city is not satisfied because he governs not the nation; and if

\* Λογος Γ̅ ὑπερὶ Ἀπληστίας.

the nation, that no more; as Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes, mighty princes, yet they wanted Greece, they thought, which caused their expeditions against it. Thus passing by still what we have, and reckoning what we have not, [we] never think we enjoy enough; *αδικων ουκ αδικουμενος*, 'every one herein being injurious to God, not injuriously dealt with by him.' 'Keep, therefore, thy heart,' and moderate it, that it break not out in these things, 'with all diligence,' lest the swarms of these lusts, whatever sweetness they seem to bring with them, sting thee to death."

(3.) *Moderate thy pursuit and endeavours after the acquiring and retaining these, by the ends for which, and subordination wherewith, thou mayest and oughtest desire them.*—This, speaking only the execution of the former particular, must needs be accordingly bounded. What we may lawfully desire, that we may use lawful means to attain; and so far forth as we must desire, so far only must we use the means. We must seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness absolutely, and in the first place; then the things convenient for us in this life, according to their subserviency thereto, and his seeing good to bestow upon us. As it is the statute-law of Heaven, that "in the sweat of our brows we should eat our bread," and should be our daily prayer, that our "Father which is in heaven" would "give us this day our daily bread," that is, all things requisite and convenient; so is it that we should "not lay up for ourselves treasures upon earth," nor serve these as our masters, nor "take thought for our lives, what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed;" which three are the total sum all these externals amount to in their use; (Matt. vi. 19, 24, 25, &c.) our blessed Saviour, from verse 19 of that chapter, forbidding this immoderate pursuit in those negative precepts which he presseth with several cogent arguments and expostulations; and not absolutely, but so as they may be not our "treasures" that we set our hearts upon, our "masters" that we serve; whenas they are but our servants, and so as that we oppose them not to, and set them in competition with, the "treasures in heaven," and God our great "Master," whom we ought to serve even in the following [of] our employments for these; as appears [from] verses 19, 24; nor absolutely our taking thought, but our too solicitousness about the choice of, and using means, and especially their event, and so, consequently, what shall become of us, if we be not blessed but blasted therein, as appears by the word *μεριμνατε*, in the last verse of the chapter. And yet, alas! after all this, how do we seek them as if they were our treasure, our happiness, our all! as if here was our continuing city, wherein we should always live and have these treasures, and none other to come that hath better! Though these be things after which "the Gentiles seek," yet they will be excusable who know no better in comparison of thee and me, who know the true pearl of price, are invited and called to better dainties, and yet make light thereof, one preferring his farm, another his merchandise. (Matt. xxii. 5.) And yet, though the generality of the Gentiles which had not the gospel, (as the Jews in our Saviour's time,) were so immoderate; yet many of them were such, as appears by their works and lives, as, I fear, will rise up in judgment in this particular against most of us that call ourselves Christians. They,

beholding the busy world, (as one of them speaks of the souls in the other,) as the ant carrying a straw, or some little thing of like moment, into her hole in the mole-hill; which yet dazzles our eyes with their seeming lustre, and makes our hearts say of these our houses, as if they were our homes, "It is good for us to be here."

(4.) *We must moderate our whole man in the use and enjoyment of these, in our loving, delighting, rejoicing, and glorying in them.*—We must not, in our using of them, exceed the bounds within which they are allowed us; nor in our love towards them, ("Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," 1 John ii. 15,) by taking too much complacency and delight in them; not our rejoicing. If thou dost, "know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." (Eccles. xi. 9.) Nay, our Saviour, when the disciples "returned with joy, that the devils were subject to them," which was a divine and extraordinary gift, calls them off, and shows them a fit matter of rejoicing, wherein they could not exceed; not absolutely forbidding, but limiting them with a "*rather*." "But *rather* rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." (Luke x. 17, 20.) Nor in our glorying in them. (Jer. ix. 23, 24.) O what need of moderation here! In our eating, drinking, sleeping, lawful recreations, raiment; in the using of our parts, learning, riches, honours, and other creature-comforts! If the enjoyment of these outward things had been so considerable, think you our blessed Saviour, who could have commanded them, would have wanted them? What are the best of them? Are thy riches any thing but of the earth and earthly? thy pleasures any thing, but a little titillation of the flesh, of no permanent nature; lives but one instant, and dies as fast? thy honour any thing beside a hollow echo or noise, that, like the circle of the water, is but of little circumference, and soon gone? doth not every cross wind or wave break and dash it away? Is not he that is great in this city scarce known in the next? he that is king in one nation, unknown to many other nations? How short-lived, I pray? Have there not been many great ones [whom] we never heard of? Those [of whom] we read, do we not skip their names often, not troubling ourselves with the thought or remembrance of them? If we do, what are they the better? Read Psalm ciii. 14—18. Nay, have not the greatest judgments of God followed excess in things lawful? I will trouble you with none but a few scriptural examples: two of the greatest the world ever knew,—the flood, and [the] destruction of Sodom and the rest of the cities of the plain. To what are they ascribed but security and excess? "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage:" what follows? "The flood came, and destroyed them all." "Likewise in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;" (all, again, things lawful in themselves;) "but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all." (Luke xvii. 27—29.) If David take too much pride and glory\* in the number of his people, and fall to numbering them, God quickly follows with pes-

\* In the first edition, the author employed *pride* and *glory* as verbs, without the use of *like*.—EDIT.

tilence, and makes them decrease seventy thousand. (1 Chron. xxi. 14.) If Nebuchadnezzar will vaunt, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" while the word is in the king's mouth there falls a voice from heaven, saying, "The kingdom is departed from thee;" and he is turned to grass with the oxen. (Dan. iv. 30, 31, 33.) And his son Belshazzar's great feast fills up the measure, for which he was that night slain, and his kingdom taken. (Dan. v. 1, 30, 31.) If the rich man will think thus: And so "will I do, and say, 'Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry:'" he is not only stigmatized for a "fool," but, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee" follows. (Luke xii. 19, 20.) Nay, if the wicked servant begin to "eat and drink with the drunken," his lord will come unexpectedly, and "cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites." (Matt. xxiv. 49, 51.) How great, then, this sin is, God's judgments being always equal, and proportioned to our offences, what slight thoughts soever we may have of it, you cannot but by these examples perceive; nay, rather, what a big-bellied monster is it, full of many deadly sins, of atheism, unbelief, idolatry, carnal security, preferring these things before God, Christ, heaven, and happiness! Take heed, and beware, therefore, herein, lest, while they speak thee fair, they wound thy heart.

## 2. Towards the evils of this life.

(1.) *We must moderate our fears of these befalling us, according to the good they threaten to deprive us of.*—As we must not fear these groundlessly, so when there is just cause, and apparent danger, we should not be senseless and secure, nor fear all alike, or over-fear any. Security is the forerunner to destruction; (1 Thess. v. 3;) which these should awake us out of, but not so affect us, or affright us, as to put us past ourselves and our duty. When the storm threatens us, we must not, with Jonah, be asleep, but praying and endeavouring, as the poor mariners, for preservation; or, as the disciples, "Lord, save us, we perish!" though they were too fearful in regard of Christ's being with them, who was sufficient security for their safety. There is a *provident fear*, that opens our eyes to foresee dangers, and quickens us in the use of lawful means for their prevention. Such was the good patriarch Jacob's [fear] of Esau's destroying him and his company; that makes him pray, send presents to his brother, divide his bands, and use all prudent means of preservation. (Gen. xxxii.) This we must have; for, security and putting far away the evil day, when God threatens us even with temporal judgments, is a great sin, and hath a "woe" pronounced upon it; (Amos vi. 1;) whereas this makes us wisely serve the providence of God. But then there is a *diffident fear* that distracts us, and cuts all the nerves and sinews of lawful care and endeavours, that brings a snare with it, (Prov. xxix. 25,) and often drives us upon unwarrantable means, or makes us sit down in despair. This we must beware of, by a due moderating our fears according to the impendent evil, which must be judged by its opposite good; not fearing all evils alike; the loss of some wealth like the loss of our health, because health is the better good: no, nor all

evils of the same kind alike ; not a tertian ague like the stone ; this, by its exquisite pain, depriving us more of the natural comfort of health, and more endangering our lives. And not overfearing the greatest, namely, death, called by Job, "the king of terrors," (Job xviii. 14,) and by the philosopher, φοβερων φοβερωτατον, "of all terribles the most terrible ;" which our Saviour, as man, feared with a natural fear, yet chargeth we should not over-fear it. (Matt. x. 28 ; Luke xii. 4.) Yea, though we should fear political or public evils, as wars, famine, pestilence, more than our own personal, (of which, you see, I speak only all along.) in regard those are greater, the public good being better and to be preferred before any private ; yet not these too much.

(2.) *We must moderate our grief and trouble for these, according to the good we want or lose by them.*—There are *imaginary evils*, that are of our own creation, begot, brought up, and nourished by our own brain : these we must carefully avoid, and, if formed, not be cruel to ourselves, in being compassionate to them, but dash them in pieces. And there are *real evils*, which come not forth of our own dust, nor spring out of the ground, but are from above, of God's creating and framing, (Amos iii. 6 ; Isai. xlv. 7 ; Jer. xviii. 11.) These we are not to be senseless under, but duly affected with, and yet not over-affected, so as to murmur and repine, much less quarrel with God. A stoical apathy becomes us not, and yet better than quarrelling at God's providence ; it coming nearer moderation ; for "wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins ?" (Lam. iii. 39.) Little reason whilst thou art living, seeing it is less than thy desert ; and no reason even for death and hell, for they are but equal to thy desert : if thou confess thyself a sinner, thou must confess this. Plato said, that God doth *ασι γεωμετρειν* ; which is expounded by Plutarch well : that "God is said always to act the geometrician, in regard of his equal dealing with all men, in proportioning rewards and punishments to their deserts."\* And a greater than he, yea, the greatest that can be, God himself, appeals to the sinner's own conscience : "Is not my way equal ? Are not your ways unequal ?" (Ezek. xviii. 25 ; ) which whole chapter is a defence of his equity. Troubled, then, *we may be*, murmuring and discontented *we must not be*. Nay, troubled *we ought to be*, as the evils are greater or less, which must be judged by the good they deprive us of ; more for public, because that good is greater ; less for private evils, because our own good is not equal to the community's. But in the body politic it is quite otherwise than in the natural body : we are usually too senseless under public, and too sensible of and immoderate under our own particular, evils ; rather apt to quarrel with God, like Jonah, for a gourd, or some inconsiderable concerns of our own, than be troubled at the destruction of a great Nineveh ; more troubled at our own houses being on fire, or child sick, than all our neighbours in the city about us burnt and dead. Therefore, scripture accordingly calls for affection for the public, and forbids it in our own concernments, in regard [that] we are generally defective in the former, and excessive in the latter ; nay, even towards others, when just cause of compassion, if excessive. So our Saviour, when the women lamented his

\* *Symposiac.*, lib. viii. quæst. 2.

death, (which was matter of grief, as in respect of him, though of greatest joy in itself, as to them and the world,) bids them, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children," in regard of the public calamities that were coming upon Jerusalem; (Luke xxiii. 27—29;) every particular being concerned in the community. Now, of these evils, seeing all are privations of good; *some are of the good we want, and never enjoyed*; as deformity of body, defect in parts, constant poverty, &c. And here we must beware we judge not those [to be] evils which are none, and so trouble and torment ourselves without cause, and reproach our Maker; saying, "Why hath he made me thus?" "Why am I no nobler born, no more beautifully made, no greater heir, no quicker-parted? Why am I not as such, or such, not as they, this, or that?"—when thou hast what is suitable and convenient for thy condition; for this all may say of those that excel them, (and the best of imaginary excellences,) as well as thou. *Other evils are [privations] of the good we have enjoyed, and are deprived of*; as sickness [is a privation] of health; losses, of friends and estate; reproaches, of our good name; imprisonment [a privation] of liberty; and the like, which are incident to our present state.\* These are they especially which the world lament, and cry out after, as foolishly as Micah: "Ye have taken away my gods: and what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee?" (Judges xviii. 24.) We must not here be too passionately excessive, either in the degree or duration of our trouble; we must be affected with the providence of God in these evils, according to their greatness to us, (a little loss in itself may be great to a poor man; as the widow's two mites were more to her than their far greater sums were to them that cast them in; the death of an only child greater than when a number,) and so trouble and sorrow for them; but discontented we must not be, nor distracted in the duties [which] God requires; nor refuse to be comforted, because our husbands, wives, children, pleasures, honour, riches, are not; for as there is a time to weep, so a time to take up, and refrain from weeping: we must love them so as we may lose them; that when we do, we may not lose ourselves. *Amavi hæc omnia tanquam amissurus*, let us every one say at parting with them: "I loved you so as I can lose you." Take heed of murmuring with the Israelites, cursing thy stars with the profane; of discontentedness, which the best are apt to fall into; nay, wish for death rather than life, as several of the prophets. Maintain that equilibrious frame in thee, as David: "Here am I, let God do to me as seemeth good unto him;" (2 Sam. xv. 26;) which is the mother of patience, and, like it, makes these evils, though not none, yet become none to us.

Thus I have done with *moderation towards things*, most of whose particulars mentioned you have pressed by the apostle Paul, and by the same argument of the text: "The time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced

\* In all editions except the first, this sentence has been left in a very faulty state, no reference having been made to the author's preceding proposition: "Seeing all these evils are privations of good;" which is the proper key to all that follows.—EDIT.

not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as not abusing it : for the fashion of this world passeth away." (1 Cor. vii. 29—31.) And though I have stood longer upon this than I intended, and promised both you and myself, in regard the fruit hung so thick about me, that I could not but pluck some of it, and, after I had tasted it, more ; yet I hope it will prove so pleasant also to the taste, that you will pardon me ; especially considering how much this *moderation towards things* conduceth to that which respects persons ; (the contentions in the world arising usually from our want of moderation to the things of the world, as in civil matters it is patent ; and in religious, though less obvious, yet most frequently as certain, that these are the springs from which they flow ;) and how necessary it is for us all to know and practise it ; for *licitis perimus omneis*, "We usually perish by the hand of these lawful things."

## II. MODERATION TOWARDS PERSONS.

Having spoken of moderation, as it respects ourselves, for preserving peace within, (this, as all government, having peace for its end,) which appears, and is made known to others, by our conversation ; let us now look abroad, as we are members of the public, and have to do with others, and see what moderation we must use for the preserving external peace. Now, each Christian having a double capacity ;—*as a man*, his civil capacity in the state ; *as a Christian*, his religious capacity in the church wherein he lives ;—I shall speak to both these, in reference to peace, political and ecclesiastical ; to the former more briefly, being so near akin to that part we have already dispatched.

### 1. *In civil matters.*

Herein we may be considered *actively* or *passively*.

#### (I.) *ACTIVELY.*

1. *We must moderate our speeches, that we give no just provocation thereto, according to prudence.*—That we may neither provoke those of whom or to whom we speak, we must duly consider the nature of the matter we speak of, and the quality and temper of the persons concerned.

*In our discourses with others.*—Not trifling in weighty matters, and fervent in trifles of no moment ; not rashly to thy superiors, without respect ; not superciliously to thy inferiors ; not contentiously to thy equals. We also must have regard to their temper, if passionate and angry, with soft, not grievous, words ; or, if tender and meek-spirited, with the like ; (for these two different tempers must be alike, though for different ends dealt withal ;) if contumacious, more sharply ; if flexible, gently ; if testy or jealous, more tenderly and cautiously ; if equal, with more freedom and liberty ; and so of all others. Yea, we must also observe their present condition, if distressed, or joyful and comfortable, and the like ; and the disposition they are in, (which for the most part is suitable thereto,) as sad and dejected, or cheerful and pleasant, beyond their accustomed temper, and accordingly moderate our speeches, as the wise man adviseth ; (Prov. xxv. 20 ;) at no time stirring up contention, or speaking swords and darts ; but as the wise, whose "tongue is health." (Prov. xii. 18 ; xviii. 6.)

*In our judging, characterizing, and censuring of others.*—We must also consider for what, of whom, and to whom we do it; not for every failing, and weakness, or miscarriage, nor upon slight grounds; not readily taking up a reproach against our neighbour, and rashly venting it; (Prov. x. 12;) nor jealously framing one, and according thereto passing verdict; for though there be a charitable and godly jealousy we may exercise towards those we have special interest in or charge over, such as St. Paul's towards his Corinthians; (2 Cor. xi. 2;) and Job's [towards] his children, (Job i. 5,) in reference to our admonishing or other dealings with them, yet not to our judging and censuring them to others. And when the carriages of others are such as no due candour can excuse, we must rather interpret them better, than aggravate them as worse, according to the favour of charity to the offender, though in no wise to the offence: nor this without necessity; nor to every one blazoning others; nor of all alike, without respect to quality, age, temptations, and the like; of which, and all other circumstances, consideration must be had, and due allowance made.

*In our rebuking and reproving of others.*—We must likewise see, that it be a matter so deserving, and consider the persons we so deal with. In counsel and admonition, though prudence be required, yet in them we assume not so much to ourselves, nor [are we] apt so passionately to miscarry. Great need of this in superiors, masters especially towards servants and scholars, that they deal with them according to their dispositions, "forbearing" (or, as the Greek, "moderating") "threatening," (Eph. vi. 9; Prov. xvi. 24;) and parents often towards children: "Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged." (Col. iii. 21.) And as [there is] great need of superiors moderating their passion towards inferiors, so [is there] great need of these using prudence towards those and their equals. "Rebuke not," therefore saith Paul to Timothy, "an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren." (1 Tim. v. 1.)

2. *We must moderate our contests with others according to equity.*—So long as sin, Satan, and *meum et tuum*, "thine and mine," are in the world, there will be strife and contention about the things of the world. And where interest engages us, we are subject to be biassed thereby, and drawn away by our passions from all equality. Great need, therefore, of moderation here:

(1.) *In considering the matter, that it be of moment, and the person we have to do withal, whether faulty;* and not about toys, and rashly, with any that is next us [whom] we think upon the blush guilty, enter the lists of contention and strife. "Go not forth hastily," saith Solomon, "to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame." (Prov. xxv. 8.)

(2.) *If so, in trying by all fair means the obtaining [of] thy right,* whether of estate, good name, honour, or the like, by arguments and persuasions, by seeking accommodation, by willingly referring it to the equal judgment and determination of others, or the like. "Agree," saith our blessed Saviour, "with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him;" (that is, "to the magistrate," as Luke expounds it, xii.



58;) "lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison." (Matt. v. 25.)

(3.) If these will not prevail for thy right, *in voluntary yielding some part thereof, rather than contest.* It must be thy own right [that] thou must yield, not another's, except thou be intrusted therewith, and so far forth as he consents thereto; for this being a gift, must be of such things as are our own, which thou oughtest to do for peace' sake. How eminent was Abraham for this! who stood not upon his terms of superiority with Lot, though his uncle and guardian formerly and governor, nor his right, nor his nephew's first seeking to him, and the like; but that there might be no strife, [he] offers him his choice of the land: "If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left;" (Gen. xiii. 8, 9;) and performs accordingly. How far are we from following our father Abraham's example! How many that will not yield others any of their right, but by compulsion of law! How few that yield their own right voluntarily! how far, or how much, we must yield, our own (and those we deal with) circumstances best determine. We must not be injurious to ourselves; for, as St. Austin saith well, *Quis aliis æquus, qui sibi iniquus?* "Who that is unequal to himself, will be equal to others?" We must not yield that which is greatly to our detriment, except our yielding be on as easy terms as further contesting; as it proves often when we proceed to law, &c. And here that may be very considerable to one, that is but small to another, as poorer or richer for matters of estate, as entering the stage of the world, or well known in it, for credit and good name, &c.; and very considerable to the same man at one time, that may be small at another; as if upon preferment to have reports made of him, or the like. Nay, there may be grounds for not yielding the least we can possibly obtain, which we must conceal from the public, though we may satisfy private Christians; as when we know our estate is small, though, living upon credit, others judge it great; or the like cases. But here is not such difficulty; every one knowing his own circumstances, for the most part, pretty well, which should be a ground for our charity, that we censure not men whose circumstances we know not; nor are we apt to miscarry in departing from our own interest. We should especially, therefore, consider the condition and circumstances those are in [whom] we have to do withal: if greater, we usually make a virtue of necessity, and yield most where we should yield least: but here, in our speeches and carriages, we should especially yield, and [the] least we can of our purses; and on the contrary, if they be meaner and poorer: not when others are low, or in present exigencies, to take them by the throat, saying "Pay me what thou owest;" (Matt. xviii. 28;) but to be equal, merciful, and considerative of others as well as ourselves, and accordingly to deal.

(4.) If all thou must yield will not satisfy, *in thy chargeable appeal to the civil magistrate.*—As all lawful means must be essayed for public peace before by war appeal be made to God, so should all lawful means be used before we appeal to his vicegerent for private peace: and when we do, with charity to the person against whom we proceed; for it is a

great mistake to think we cannot be in charity and law together: and, though with vigilance and circumspection, yet not with violence and passion, to manage the prosecution.

Lastly. *In the issue or event of appeals.*—If we overcome, in admitting equal compensation for the loss of riches, credit, or the like thou contestest about. For some men's natures, others' necessities, are such as make them obstinate, and persist, to their ruin and destruction; and laws in some things are severe, though just; which though the magistrate moderate according to equity, yet [they] often adjudge more than we should take. And if thou be overcome, and lose thy right, by no means seeking revenge, or righting thyself, but use moderation, in committing thy cause "to Him that judgeth righteously."

3. *We must moderate our whole carriage and conversation towards others, according to the rules of modesty and sobriety.* (Prov. xxv. 6.)—Avoid all occasions of giving just offence to others. Seek peace and pursue it; but fly occasions of quarrelling and strife, lest the wrath both of God and man pursue thee. Consider, that not only "hatred" and "wrath," but "variance, emulations, and strife," are reckoned amongst "the works of the flesh," which "they that do shall not inherit the kingdom of God;" whilst "peace, long-suffering, gentleness, and meekness," "fruits of the Spirit," shall. (Gal. v. 20—23.) Let not thy immodest looks efface others' modesty, nor thy gestures offend their gravity. For St. Ambrose extends this moderation to gestures, gait, and bodily motions; speaking also his own experience herein, how he refused to admit one into orders, merely for his immodesty in these.\* Let not, then, any taunting jests, bitter sarcasms, or any other words, or mimical gestures, foolish wagers, recreations, or the like, become snares to entrap thy peace with others. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest," (or "grave and venerable," *σεμνα*,) "whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things," speak these things, do these things: "and the God of peace shall be with you." (Phil. iv. 8, 9.)

#### (II.) PASSIVELY.

Thus we are considered in our suffering from others; wherein, as we must cordially forgive them all; (Matt. vi. 15;) so in our carriage we must moderate our spirits, passions, speeches, actions, and punishing thereof, towards those that are the offenders.

1. *We must moderate our spirits, by an equal bearing with the weaknesses and natural infirmities of others.*—"He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down, and without walls;" (Prov. xxv. 28;) that is, soon overcome. We must consider *their years*; as the fervour of youth, testiness of old age: *Their temper*; some are more dull and phlegmatic, others more melancholy and suspicious; some more choleric and boisterously passionate; others more agile, quick, and sprightly: *Their education*; some are with study morose; others, according to those they converse with, more rude, or complimentary and

\* *De Officiis*, lib. i. c. 18.

courtly; according to which, and their present condition, we should give due grains of allowance, in our speeches and conversations towards them, and retain our equality of mind; as the orator said, "*Tranquillus animus meus, qui æqui boni facit omnia.*"\* (1.) By a prudent dissembling them. (1 Sam. x. 27.) (2.) By a charitable covering them. (Prov. x. 12.) (3.) Interpreting them; not putting any sinister interpretation, but most favourable, nor aggravating the offence. (1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7.) (4.) Admonishing them. (Matt. xviii. 15; Gal. vi. 1.) Lastly, pardoning them: "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another," &c. (Col. iii. 13.)

2. *We must moderate our passions in their due exercise, in case of greater and wilful offences, according to the nature and quality thereof.*—Our anger towards such offenders, aversion of them, severity with them, and the like; avoiding of and suppressing all wrath, envy, malice, revenge, and the like sinful passions, that have the stamp of hell upon them; (James iii. 15;) which come thence, and lead thither. (Gal. v. 20, 21.) In God's cause we must be angry against sin; and in the public's, against the impediments of peace and truth. (Neh. v. 6; Acts xvii. 16.) But these I am not speaking of. In our own we may be angry, but we must not sin. (Eph. iv. 26.) "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment," saith our blessed Saviour. (Matt. v. 22.) In which three things are considerable: (1.) With whom; and that is clearly the offenders, not every one that is next us. (2.) For what; which the philosopher and all acknowledge difficult to determine, being in particulars: the only help is from the consideration of the quality of the offence. (i.) Not for every trifle, but material in itself, or in its consequence. (ii.) Not for natural defects and weaknesses; as when they are slow of parts, weak of strength, or the like, and can do no better: here we may find fault, and admonish gently to quicken, not be angry to discourage, those we have power over, or interest in. (iii.) Nor for purely involuntary and casual offences, such as no due circumspection could prevent; but for errors and mistakes which might have been avoided, [for] carelessness and negligence in the doing or omission; wilfulness or maliciousness in the end for which others offend us. When these appear, and as they appear more or less, we may be angry; least for the first, more with the next, and most with the last of wilfulness and malice. Lastly. The measure of our passion is considerable, which must not be beyond the nature of such offences, in the degree or duration. "Be ye angry, and sin not:" (the same words in the original the Septuagint renders Psalm iv. 4, by "Stand in awe, and sin not;" when we are angry with others, we had need stand in awe of God, that we sin not:) "let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil;" (Eph. iv. 26, 27;) that is, we must neither too deeply, nor too long, be angry, lest the devil, who is ready at hand, take occasion thereat to blow us all into a flame of wrath, malice, revenge, and what not: all which are to be wholly avoided.

\* CICERO *ad Atticum*, lib. vii. epist. 7. "In a state of perfect tranquillity, my mind views all things favourably, and receives them in good part."—EDIT.

3. *We must moderate our speeches and actions towards such wilful offenders.*—By no means rendering railing for railing, or “evil for evil,” but “overcoming evil with good.” O that our blessed Saviour’s known precept, Matt. v. 44, &c., was but as well known in the practice, and that his copy was but writ after by us! how would the world be reformed thereby! If those many places of holy scripture, of “forbearing, and forgiving one another,” under the penalty of damnation, were duly believed, they would marvellously restrain men at least, and becalm the world. But let us see our practice.

(1.) *By a prudent silence, or slighting the presumptuous offenders of us, when secret, or not greatly to our detriment.*—Not to hearken or regard every reproach, scorn, and contempt, that is cast upon us, nor every trespass of our neighbour. (2 Sam. xvi. 10.) “The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.” (Prov. xix. 11.) It is his glory, not only as it shows a spirit above such dealings, but wisdom, many times, more ashaming and silencing such thereby than by our contending with them.

(2.) *By yielding to the unequal demands of others for peace, wherein we are solely concerned, and not greatly prejudiced.*—How eminent is our Saviour’s example herein, who, though free from tribute, yet, rather than he would offend, works a miracle for the solution thereof! (Matt. xvii. 27.) He fairly shows first that he is so, and then notwithstanding pays; whose wisdom and practice herein let us follow.

(3.) *By admitting equal compensation, or less than our wrong, for such manifest injuries as we may and ought to right ourselves in, when the offender is willing to make us satisfaction.*—If in our reputation, let us not insist too much upon the punctilios of honour; if in estate, upon the strict terms of right; but herein observe the golden rule, by putting off *self*, and putting on *thy neighbour*, doing to him as thou wouldest he should do to thee. (Matt. vii. 12.) Nay, in real wrongs of estate, we should, in case of their incapacity of recompensing, accept, for present, verbal satisfaction, till they be better enabled, and, if never, to lose all, rather than, by imprisonment or otherwise, to bring upon them, and often theirs also, utter destruction. (Matt. xviii. 29, 30.) For, as the moralist well [observes]: Το δικαιοσ ισον, but not Το ισον δικαιοσ.\* “Though all justice be equal, yet all equality is not justice, but that which is proportioned to persons.”

(4.) *Lastly, We must moderate our prosecution of such injuries and wrongs as we ought to vindicate ourselves from, and see punished.*—Though we must forgive all injuries, as to ourselves, by charity to others; yet we may, nay, we must, in some cases have so much charity also to the public and ourselves, that in notorious injuries we should do right to both, in the prosecution of such offenders as will not otherwise be restrained, or do us right. If thy brother sin against thee, not only seven, but seventy-seven, times a day, thou must forgive him; (Matt. xviii. 22;) that is, if he frequently wrong and injure thee, (for so the word “sinning,” when against us, signifies, as the Septuagint, 1 Sam. xix. 4, Gen. xlii. 22, and elsewhere, frequently use the Greek words, Α

\* PLUTARCHI *Symposiac*. lib. viii.

ἀμαρτη ἕκαστος τῷ πλησίον' [1 Kings viii. 31:] "If any man trespass against his neighbour," that is, injure or wrong him,) yet thou must constantly forgive him; but, notwithstanding, thou mayest seek thy right from him, and if by no fair means canst obtain it, prosecute him before the magistrate for the same. Nay, thou not only *mayest*, but sometimes *must*.

(i.) *When God is concerned therein, as in the church's right.*—Thus Moses, though the meekest man upon earth, would not abate Pharaoh "an hoof; for thereof must we serve the Lord," saith he; "and we know not with what, until we come thither," that is, to Canaan. (Exod. x. 26.) A minister may yield his own, but he must not the church's, right.

(ii.) *In case of trust from others.*—Either from the public, or private persons, which allow us not to make terms of concession, but stand upon strict justice and right. Here, so far as others consent who are proprietors, we should compose, yield, and take up controversies; further we justly cannot: for in cases of trust, a man must be regulated by the will of those that intrust him; as arbitrators and solicitors for others; so executors frequently, and guardians, that are intrusted for those that are young, and not yet *sui juris*, "at age to consent and dispose of their own;" and the like cases, wherein the intrusted are responsible for what is not legally done therein; the law's determination being by all presumed just.

(iii.) *In our own personal injuries, wherein the public is concerned.*—First. When public peace, order, and government are much violated and broken thereby; as in notorious thefts, attempts of murder, and the like; which if tolerated, the world would become a great *latrocinium*\* and slaughter-house, wherein the longest sword and strongest arm would sweep away all; a place for beasts, but no quiet habitation for men. Secondly. When the public emolument or estimation suffers in our injuries. As magistrates, ministers, and all others employed in public affairs, when grossly defamed, so as the public is thereby reflected on, ought fairly to vindicate their integrity, so far at least that those that employ them and the public suffer not thereby. And, lastly, When thy serving the public, and, consequently, the public good, is thereby hindered. How ample is the apostle Paul in his own vindication against the false apostles' defamation of him, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, which is much of it apologetical! And, good reason; for where the person is traduced, his employment is not likely to be much effectual or advantageous to the public, and his example less; as Quintilian,† and many others, yea, constant experience tells us. In these cases thou must do thyself justice, but so moderately, as not doing to others injustice thereby.

In all other merely personal wrongs and injuries, when they are considerable in themselves, or their issue to thee, provided thou canst no other way obtain right, thou mayest publicly prosecute thine injurers, oppressors, public defamers, and the like wrongers of thy estate, reputation, and other thy temporal good things; in charity, and according to equity, equally seeking thy own right and good, not thy neighbour's wrong,

\* "An asylum for robbers."—EDIT.

† *Institution. lib. ii. cap. 3.*

much less ruin and destruction. And thus for moderation towards others *in civil matters*.

2. *In religious matters.*

Although I have spoken, in the opening, [of] the nature of moderation, and *the general object*, that which might serve to direct us herein ; yet, lest I be mistaken, and thence any of you mistake your duty, I shall further open *this particular object*, by speaking to it *negatively*, about what moderation is not to be practised, and *positively*, wherein it must.

NEGATIVELY. 1. *Not in matters of faith.*—For the believing these, being not only absolutely required of every Christian, and in that measure that we cannot fully come up to, in regard of the great truth and reality of spiritual objects, and their revelation, the best being, alas ! miserably short and deficient herein ; but also internal, the profession of these being matter of practice, moderation cannot possibly here have any place, much less that which respects others.

2. *Nor in matters of moral practice ; such as the moral law requires, and grace and virtue should perform.*—For in these can be no excess, either in degree or duration. We cannot love God too much, nor, with grace, our neighbour, nor too constantly. Consider father, mother, wife, children, as moral objects, so we exceed not, as natural goods ; and so in the exercise of natural affection, we frequently, as is said before, do exceed, which is discernible especially by the end ; with grace we love them for God ; with the moral virtue of love, for the relation they stand in to us ; with the affection of love, when we sinfully over-love them for ourselves : for though the natural affection co-operates with the former, yet it solely exceeds. But it being difficult for us to discern these *formalities* in objects, and the operations of principles about them, it is our only way to have recourse to God's laws, (which, though founded upon the nature of things, yet show us plainly our duty, where we cannot discern them,) which, in all things wherein we may exceed, (as in the externals of the first table, and the duties of the second,) not only prescribe us what, and also particularly how, to act by *positive* precepts ; but, lest we should miscarry, by *negative* also, which respect the end, manner, measure, &c., of such duties, restraining and bounding us that, we exceed not. Both which are moral, and comprehended in this particular ; it being equally moral not to over-love, as to love thy neighbour ; the former being forbidden, as well by the *negative*, as the latter enjoined by *positive* precepts.

In negatives, which forbid the action *absolutely*, (as blasphemy, adultery, &c.,) no need of any such precepts to regulate us ; for the actions being not to be done, no need of direction for their manner, and consequently no place for moderation ; such being to be subdued and suppressed, not ordered or regulated, as I have formerly spoken ; and in things only *indefinitely* forbidden, (as swearing, travelling on the Lord's day, &c.,) when we are to practise them, we have the rules for positive actions, affirmative and negative, to direct us sufficiently.

3. *Nor especially in the weightier matters of the law or religion.*—I must speak a little to this ; because that may be commanded *absolutely*

in itself, which *comparatively*, when it comes in competition with other duties of greater moment, becomes only conditional. For affirmative precepts are so many, it is impossible they should bind *ad semper*; ["perpetually;"] so that when two or more duties come together, man, in regard of his finite capacity, being not able to perform them at once, must duly consider the weightiest, and that do; it being requisite, in terms of inconsistency, that the lesser always give place to the greater, and cease *pro hic et nunc*, or "for that present," to oblige us. Thus David's eating the shew-bread, and the disciples' plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, when hungry, is defended by our Saviour. (Matt. xii. 3, &c.) Yea, even frequently the externals of the first table give way to the weighty exigent duties of the second; as the sanctification of the sabbath, to the defending the city in the Maccabees' case; according to that, "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice." (Hosea vi. 6.) Not only "*rather than sacrifice*," but, in such cases, "*not sacrifice*;" God dispensing with the lesser, so that its omission becomes no sin; as is clear, in our Saviour's practice, in his healing the man with the withered hand, &c., as well as in his defence of his disciples. (Luke vi. 3—10.) For that may be our duty, and necessary at one time, which, at another, when a weightier comes that should take place, ceaseth to be so, by virtue of the reason and constitution of the laws themselves, that the superior law take place.

Therefore, under the notion of moderation, to omit moral, and especially the great and necessary, duties required, and practise only the less, is pharisaical hypocrisy, not Christianity. If to do the great duties of religion God requires of us, be accounted immoderateness, let us say with David, "If this be to be vile, we will be more vile still." God's laws admit of no *επισημεια*, or dispensation from us, but what he hath admitted himself: we must neither add nor detract. (Deut. iv. 2.) Thou canst neither mitigate their execution, nor any other beside himself, on thee for thy transgressing [of] them. If the wise Romans were so careful to preserve their laws from others, [rather] than the supreme dispensing with them, lest they should prove a Lesbian rule; \* much more the great and wise God hath reason to keep up the authority of his laws, and expect our punctual observance of them. Moderation in religion and religious duties is the devilish precept of Machiavel, not the doctrine of the gospel or St. Paul. To engage or wade no further in religion than temporal interests will permit us to come safely again to shore, was the resolution and speech of a greater courtier of France than of heaven, and of such as resolve more to save their skins than their souls. How doth Christ every where arm those that will be his disciples against their desisting from their necessary duty, for the offence of the world! [He] is so far from concealing this, that it is the first thing he tells them of; invites them upon no other terms than the cross; tells them, they must trust him in this world, for compensating them in the future, &c. (Matt. xvi. 24—38.) And how eminent was he in the practice of this! How did the zeal of God's house eat him up, and he persist in doing the work he was sent about, notwithstanding all the offence the Jews took! And yet, in his

\* *Digest. de Legibus et Senatús-Consult.*

own private concerns, how meek, gentle, patient! which none can be ignorant of that read the gospel, and which he commands us to learn of him. (Matt. xi. 29.) Great, then, is the mistake of those that think zeal and moderation, which were thus eminently centered in Christ, should be inconsistent. No lovelier match than of this blessed couple in our souls; nor of more universal use to us throughout the course of our lives, if rightly ordered: the one for God, the other for the world; *that* giving life and intenseness in our duties towards him, *this* restraining us in our personal concerns; *that* edging\* and quickening us in desires, motions, and endeavours for heaven, and *this* stopping us, and retarding the wheels, when we drive too furiously after our own interests; *that*, according to knowledge, supplying us with resolution for and fervour in the *great* duties of religion, *this*, according to charity, duly qualifying them in the *less*, that our love to God and one another may walk hand in hand heaven-ward, and neither leave the other behind.

**POSITIVELY.** *It must, then, be in matters of opinion and Christian liberty and indifferency, as they all refer to practice.*—And here let none expect I should determine what things are only matters of opinion, liberty, and indifferency, which so much trouble the world, what not; for every one herein must, according to the scriptures, be, in some respect, judge for himself and his own practice. (1 Cor. x. 29; Rom. xiv. 4, 12.) Upon which I shall proceed and show our moderation, in *principles, passions, speeches, and practices.*

1. *We must moderate our principles or judgments concerning these, by forming them according to the nature of truths and duties.*—This is necessary, not only in regard of ourselves, (for as the judgment, such is the practice,) but others also, for the moderating our prejudices towards them. We must therefore carefully distinguish between matters of faith and necessary duty; and matters of opinion and conditional practice. For though every ray of truth be excellent in itself, and absolutely there be no *minimum in religione*, [“matter of small account in religion,”] as the Heathen said; yet, comparatively, there is great difference in truths, some differing from others, as one star from another in glory. Nor have all the like clearness of revelation, nor shine forth with that lustre as others, nor [have] all a like consequence. Some are *βαρύτερα νομίου*, [“the weightier matters of the law,”] great in themselves, clear to us, and weighty in their consequence. (Matt. xxiii. 23.) These we must hold fast, practise carefully, contend for earnestly. (1 Tim. i. 19; 2 Tim. i. 13; Jude 3.) Others are such as, *salvâ religione*, [“without injury to piety,”] we may and do differ in, both in judgment and practice, without the endangering our happiness: “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;” (Rom. xiv. 17;) that is, in the opinion or practice of those, [which] the false apostles would have obtruded as necessary. In these things, our principles should give us leave to meet one another in our practice; keeping the unity of the Spirit in the former, and the bond of peace by the latter; as the apostle enjoins. (Eph. iv. 3.)

2. *We must moderate our passions in these, our heat and fervour for*

\* In the active sense of “giving an edge or sharpness to any thing.”—*EDIT.*



*them, our anger against those that differ from us in them.*—In these things, wherein the way to heaven is broad enough, there may be difference without division; and let any take heed how they straiten it, taking upon them to be wiser than Christ, who, well knowing human frailty, so chalked it out to us, telling us, “He that doeth the will of his Father,” not [he] that is for or against these things, “is his brother, sister, and mother;” and, consequently, [they] should be brethren and sisters amongst themselves. It is strange to consider, how, upon principles and prejudice once sucked in, passion blinds men in their own opinions and practices, and what woful divisions have in all ages arisen thence. That the eastern and western churches, wherein were so many grave, holy, learned, and wise men, should so fall out as to make a separation; every one would be ready to think and say, “Surely it was some great matter that occasioned it:” would you know? Nothing but about the time of the observation of Easter. Though Irenæus and others were mighty advocates for peace, yet nothing would serve Victor, bishop of Rome, but exact uniformity in these indifferencies; and thence arose, about two hundred years after Christ, that great breach of unity betwixt those two great and famous churches. How do all the zeal and fervour [which] we should bestow upon the great things of religion run out at this time amongst us about these things! May not I say, *Quorsum hæc perditio?\** “Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?” Why do we stand thus busily hewing good timber into chips, and, leaving out the figures, spend our time in the bare ciphers? How many, on both sides, at this day, make it their religion to be for or against those things that they account indifferent in themselves! So true is the moralist’s observation, that “the devil always labours that mankind may either wholly neglect a Deity, or be wholly taken up in the externals of worship.” Quite contrary to scripture, that teacheth us to mind every thing as of consequence in its place; to do the great and weighty things, and not to leave the other undone. My beloved, “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” When Elijah, that good prophet, was discontented, and passionately requests he may die, and professeth his zeal for the great things of religion, God passeth by him: but in the great and strong wind, or in the earthquake or in the fire, the Lord was not; but “in the still small voice,” showing him and us thereby, that he is not in our passions; (1 Kings xix. 4, 10—12;) and if not for the great, how much less for these things of religion wherein the apostle’s rule for peace and edification should be observed! (Rom. xiv. 19.) God never suspended his church’s peace upon these; for if I should not love others till I knew they were of all † my opinions and my practice in these, I might perhaps never love any.

3. *We must moderate our speeches, in our discourses of, debates and contests for or against, these.*—Some speeches [which] we are too apt to,

\* “What is the course of this widely-spreading ruin, and whither does it tend?”—EDIT.

† All the editions have this reading: some persons may think that it ought to be, “They were all of my opinions,” &c. But the transposition is not authorized; and perhaps the clause as it now stands correctly conveys the writer’s meaning.—EDIT.

we must wholly forbear, others we must moderate. (1.) We must beware of judging and censuring others for these. We may, in apparent transgressions of God's law, censure, upon occasion, the offenders, though not rashly, or for hypocrites, reprobates, or the like; but, for these we must not at all. (Rom. xiv. 4—18.) For, in these, through another's knowledge *that* may not be a sin in him *which* would [be] to thee; and [which] thou judgest sinful therefore in others, for want of charity. How much malice, and how little candour, do we use in this! How do we almost make it the characteristic note of Christianity, to be of such or such a way which none account essential to religion! We are apt (as those in Africa, in Tertullian's time) to account it enough, that we or others are of such a party; and to empale the church, and impropriate Christ and salvation, every one of us, to our own side: and this many times the most by the vulgar: so true is that of Seneca, *Qui pauca respiciunt, facillè pronunciant*: "Those that discern the least, being apt to judge most." (2.) We must take heed of despising and contemning others for these. (Rom. xiv. 3.) As the former, (of not judging,) so this, (of not despising,) is a necessary duty internally as to ourselves, and in our carriage and speeches especially as they respect our external duty towards others; our sinning in both arising from uncharitableness, in that to others' liberty, in this to that we judge their weakness. Our hearts and tongues are too apt to follow our judgments, and break out into these exorbitancies; but, my brethren, these things ought not so to be. Judge not, censure not, according to outward appearance or inward prejudice, but righteous and charitable judgment rather, that we mutually bear with one another in these. And when we have occasion to discourse or debate concerning what things are such or their practice, not measuring all men's judgments by the model of our own apprehensions, or, like dictators, thinking ourselves infallible, obtrude those things for necessary which, it may be, others of as piercing sight account but indifferent; or those things for *indifferent* which they reckon amongst the number of *unlawfuls*; but modestly declaring our judgments herein. For, as I told you in the entrance, I take not upon me to determine what are such, nor the magistrates' duty: (concerning which, I think, he said well and wisely, that "it were good [that] they require as little as they can," what is necessary for the safeguard of religion, as contained in the scriptures, "and [that] subjects practise as much as they can:") but only for the direction of every one how to order their conversation in the diversity of judgments that are amongst us.

4. *We must moderate our practising of these, according to the circumstances we are in, and as they are convenient and expedient for us.*— Sometimes the practice of these must be wholly waved: for the laws concerning them being *conditional* as to their doing or not doing, (though not as to the manner thereof,) and *not absolute* as of necessary duties, their practice becomes suspended on such conditions; which (beside that I formerly mentioned, namely, when they come in competition with greater matters) are especially three: in regard of ourselves, *dissatisfaction of conscience*; in regard of others, *known scandal*, and

*disturbance of public settled peace.* When any of these cases occur, wherein the condition on which the command is suspended is wanting, the command there, as all other conditionals, becomes negative. For we are obliged absolutely in moral duties to do them, and for the manner rightly, they being no ways suspended as to practice; but in these only absolutely for the manner, that, if we do them, we do them rightly; and conditionally, if we be satisfied in our judgments, and offend not others thereby, or disturb the public peace; the first being *knowledge in ourselves*, the other two *charity to others*, if we do them. And therefore where there is no place left for charity to others, (as in case of equal scandal on both hands,) thy doing or forbearing, there thou art at liberty. In which case, in smaller matters, that which is least observable is best; in greater matters, according to thy concernments, and charity to thyself, and for general good, if the public be interested in thee. For when we cannot know on which side our doing or not doing most evil to others lies, charity to ourselves preponderates suppositions of the issue.

But time permits me not to launch out into discourses of these cases, my subject also confining me to the exercise of moderation, which when the action is to be wholly omitted, is not required, its office being only, as I have often said, in the regulating of actions. As we must therefore use modesty in our speeches for or against these, so also in our practising them according to conveniency and expediency; not too violently running ourselves out of breath, or a-tilt at others, in our practising them; but with that equalness of spirit and candour towards others as becomes us. (Rom. xiv. 19, 23; 1 Cor. xi. 16.)

Thus I have done with the case, wherein I have been too large, I confess, in the whole, though perhaps too short in several particulars, and I hope not very tedious in any. A little more time for that which remains will give a release to my pains and your patience.

#### THE PERSONS.

III. For the third general, the *persons*.

1. *Who* must exercise this moderation.—And that is, in a word,—all.

2. *To whom*.—And that is also all with whom we have to do, of all ranks, degrees, and qualities, superiors and inferiors, as well as equals, of all tempers and carriages; not only to the gentle, but also to the froward; not only to friends, and those equal and fair to us; (for then what singular thing do we?) but to those that are, or we repute, our enemies, that despitefully hate us, and injuriously persecute us, as our Saviour teacheth. (Matt. v. 44.)

3. *Before whom*.—And that is expressed in the text, “all men;” our conversation in all the good and the evil things of this life, and towards all, must to all that see, and observe, or hear thereof, be known to be moderate.

#### REASONS.

IV. The fourth general, or the equity of this command, which I shall show for that towards persons, (waving that towards things, both in this, and [in the] application, as I told you, being by many sufficiently handled,) in three particulars:

1. *This is no other than what God himself exercises towards us.*—In all his dealings with mankind, from the fall, to the consummation and end of the world. This doth eminently and always will appear ; so that good reason we should do it, “that we may be the children of our Father which is in heaven ;” (Matt. v. 45 ;) who spareth us continually, when we offend and sin against him. If God was not more moderate than man, the world would quickly crack about our ears ; for if man had power to his will, it would scarcely be habitable ; but he that hath power, if he should but exercise it even justly, and not use moderation, it would no longer be inhabited. “Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all : shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant ?” (Matt. xviii. 32, 33.)

2. *Christ did use moderation eminently towards us, and hath left us his example to follow, in our exercising it towards one another.*—Though he was equal with God, yet he “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ;” (Phil. ii. 7, 8 ;) whose example how pathetically doth the apostle urge, that “nothing be done through strife or vain-glory ; but in lowliness of mind esteeming other better than ourselves ; not looking every man on his own things, but the things of others ;” (Phil. ii. 1—4 ;) likewise Matt. xi. 25, and many other places well known.

3. *Because we have all need of this from one another.*—We are all men subject to like passions ; nay, usually those that need it most from others, use it least ; such as are passionate and boisterous, and though good men, yet, as a wise man said of one of such a rugged temper, “Though he had grace enough for seven others, yet had little enough for himself.” But yet, if there be any so equal-tempered by nature, so polished by education, so ruled by grace in all things and towards all, that he hath no need of moderation from others, let him take the first stone, and violently throw at his neighbour. Read, I pray, Matthew xviii. 21—35 ; which is the great scripture for our moderation to one another, and is most ample therein, where you will see both the equity and necessity thereof to salvation.

#### USE.

V. For the last particular, which is the use and application of this moderation towards one another.

1. *Use of information.*—That it is not enough that we have moderation, which all pretend to, though few practise ; but we must show it ; nay, not only show it sparingly, or at some times and to some, but usually, frequently, constantly, and to all men.

2. *Therefore use of exhortation.*—Wherein let me plead with you a little for moderation towards one another, this so much a-wanting, and yet so necessary duty, besides the equitableness thereof in the reasons, consider briefly the necessity, utility, and jucundity thereof.

(1.) *How necessary.*—Are there not *δυσνοητα*, or “difficulties ?” Have all the like apprehensions ? Is not the balance of reason very deceitful ? Are any of us infallible ? Nay, doth not the pretence thereto declare the contrary ?

(2.) *How profitable is this to us all.*—Moderation doth not a little conduce to the health of our bodies, as the great Hippocrates and experience tell us; nothing more destroying us than not only immoderateness in things, but our passions against others; and not less to the peace and tranquillity of our minds, for the enjoyment of ourselves, and most to the serving and enjoying of God. If good Jonah be in a passion, he is not only weary of his life, but his praying is nothing but quarrelling with God. (Jonah iv.) Nay, it hath an especial promise both from God and Christ: “The meek shall inherit the earth;” (Psalm xxxvii. 11;) whom our Saviour therefore pronounceth “blessed.” (Matt. v. 5.) Whosoever, therefore, may curse them, or count them fools for the same, He having blessed them, blessed they shall be.

(3.) *How sweet and pleasant a thing is moderation, both to ourselves and others.*—It being the foundation of that sweet fellowship and communion of saints which is one great article of our creed.

Experience tells every one how sweet the fruit of moderation is, so that felicity and it (as the heathen said) constantly dwell together, in families, in nations, all the world over.\* Without it, this world would be a desert, barren of all comfort, and nothing but a vast howling wilderness for bears and wolves, not civil men or Christians, to dwell in. Let, therefore, the necessity of moderation persuade thee, let its profit and pleasure draw and allure thee, to the practice thereof.

Lastly. To these motives, let me add that of the text, “The Lord is at hand.” For so I look upon this and all other arguments subjoined to exhortations and commands; for though they be materially reasons to convince, yet are formally motives to persuade and quicken us to the duties enjoined. Flesh and blood may say, “Others are insolent; and the more we are ready to bear, the more they are apt to injure us;” as the Heathens to the Christians of old cried, “Blessed are the poor,” and so plundered them: therefore, *ululandum inter lupos*,† “we must retaliate like for like.” O no, saith the apostle, *Ὁ Κύριος ἐγγυς*, “The Lord is nigh” to observe them, and how they carry [themselves] in his family; whose wisdom governs their petulancy, and whose power and goodness can overcome all their malice and unkindness;—“is nigh” to observe thee, and to help thee in his due time, if injured;—and “is nigh” also to judge both, to punish those that miscarry, (Matt. xviii. 34, 35,) and reward those that herein are his children. The not believing this, that “the Lord is at hand,” in his providence and with his judgment, is the great reason of the want of moderation in the world. Let us, therefore, all live under a continual sense of this, and all pray for and practise moderation. “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing;” (1 Peter iii. 8, 9;) and that “the Lord is at hand,” ready to bestow it upon all those that make their “moderation known unto all men.”

\* VALERIUS MAXIMUS, lib. ix. cap. 5.  
wolves.”—EDIT.

† “There must be mutual howlings among