

having sufficient means for conviction and information. I am not concerned to dispute the truth of the former, but see no reason to question the certainty of the latter. And might it not be said of many Protestants, that they might be saved in another country, but cannot be saved here, and that for the same reason,—because here they have means of getting more knowledge? Alas! how many ignorant souls are in hell already, and how many more are posting after them! When they die, there goes not only “dust to dust,” but “darkness to darkness;” the darkness of ignorance to the darkness of hell! *They* will at last find themselves greatly deceived *that* think they shall be saved because they are poor ignorant creatures, and know no better; that is, that they shall be saved because they know not the way to salvation; they shall be healed because they know not what will cure them. And, however they may for a time flatter themselves, upon the account of any external privileges, that they are Christians, Protestants, professors, yet they may read their doom in the text, which will one day be made good upon them; and if they will not know what else they should, yet let them know this, that “because they are a people of no understanding, therefore He that made them will not have mercy on them, and He that formed them will show them no favour.”

SERMON VI.

BY THE REV. THOMAS CASE, A.M.

OF SABBATH SANCTIFICATION.

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.—Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.

THESE two verses contain a model of sabbath-sanctification.

The thirteenth verse contains *the duties enjoined*.

The fourteenth verse contains *the privileges annexed*.

The *duties* are set forth unto us, I. *Negatively*; II. *Affirmatively*.

I. The negative duties are expressed, 1. *Generally and comprehensively*; 2. *More particularly and distinctly*.

First. *The general* in these words: “If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day.” Wherein there are three things:

1. *The thing forbidden*.—That is, the doing of our pleasures on the sabbath. God never appointed a sabbath for the satisfaction of corrupt nature.

2. *The manner of doing or forbearing it.*—And that is, by turning a way our foot from the sabbath. The meaning of which phrase may be,

(1.) Either a turning away of our mind and affections from each object to which corrupt will does strongly incline us. The affections are the feet of our souls.

(2.) Or an awful fear of trespassing upon the sabbath, for the satisfying of our carnal desires. As men that are afraid of trespassing upon some great man's freehold, withdraw their foot and turn another way, &c. The sabbath is God's freehold, of which God saith, as once to Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." [Exod. iii. 5.] When we are tempted to any thing unworthy of the sabbath, we should make a stop and turn away, that we may not transgress.

3. The third thing in the general is *the reason why we should be so afraid of encroaching upon sabbath-time*, implied in this clause, "on my holy day."

Wherein are two considerations: 1. It is holy time. 2. It is God's time.

To take *holy time*, and bestow it upon our own lusts,—it is profaneness.

To take *God's time*, and bestow it upon the uses of the flesh,—it is sacrilege.

It is not fit to make sacred time to serve any but sacred uses. This is the general inhibition.

Secondly. *The more particular and distinct inhibition* followeth in the end of the verse. Wherein [are] three things forbidden in the particular:—

1. *We are forbidden the doing of our own ways.*—It is an Hebraism, as much as in our English, "going our own ways;" that is, following our carnal and sinful courses, pursuing our own corrupt and sensual inclination.

2. *We are forbidden the finding of our own pleasure.*—Which is the same forbidden in the general *ut supra*, only with this difference, that there, as I conceive, "pleasure" is taken more largely. So, whatsoever is pleasing to unregenerate nature and inclinations, whether they be bodily labour or carnal recreations, profit or pleasures, sports or the works of our callings, we must not find them; that is, we must be so far from making provision for the satisfying of the sensual appetite, that we must not so much as own them, when we meet them; we must not suffer ourselves to be tempted, or ensnared by them; we must be to them, when we meet them, as if we had neither eyes, nor ears, nor hands, nor feet; we must not desire them, or have any thing to do with them.

3. *We are forbidden the speaking of our own words.*—That is, our own impertinent discourses, worldly contrivances, or, in the apostle's language, all "filthiness, and foolish talking, and jesting," or *τα οὐκ ἀνήκοντα*, "any thing that is not convenient." (Eph. v. 4.) Christians should not only consult what is lawful, but what is decent and ornamental to the sabbath. None of these things must be so much as named on our days, much less on God's days.

Christians, look to it: you may profane the sabbath by your words as well as your works, and by *rain* words as well as by *vile* words.

But there is one thing further observable, that is, the note of appropriation, namely, "thine own," "thine own ways," "thine own pleasure," "thine own words."

"*Thine own?* What is that?"

ANSWER. In opposition to God's ways, God's pleasures, God's words; thereby utterly excluding, not only wicked ways, and sinful pleasures, and profane words whatsoever, which are unlawful at all times, but even all such ways, pleasures, words, and thoughts also, (which are the words of the mind,) which relate to our own private concerns, whether personal or domestic, of a worldly and secular nature; which, though they may be lawful upon other days, duly circumstantiated, yet [are] by no means to be allowed of on God's day, unless they fall under the general exception of God's own indulgence, namely, necessity and charity; of which I shall speak more largely hereafter.

In a word: Nothing may be done or spoken, but what is of a divine or sabbath nature and tendency, upon pain of forfeiting our part in the blessed privileges following, verse 14. And so much for *the negative part of sabbath sanctification*.

II. I come to *the affirmative*: "And shall call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him." In these words also there be four branches or duties:—

(I.) *We must call the sabbath "a delight."*

(II.) *We must call it "holy," or "the holy of the Lord."*

(III.) *We must call it "honourable" or glorious.*

(IV.) *We must not only call it "honourable," but must actually and really honour it or Him by a suitable deportment.*

(I.) *If we would sanctify the sabbath acceptably, we must call the sabbath "a delight."*—Call—That is, account it so. Calling—It is an act of the judgment, or appreciative faculty. *A delight*—Or, as some render it, "thy delights." We must reckon the sabbath *inter delicias*, as is said of Jerusalem: she "remembered all her pleasant things." (Lam. i. 7.) Surely, her sabbaths were some of those "pleasant things." It is said, "Her enemies did mock at her sabbaths." Ay; but she did mourn. They were her "delightful things," whereupon her heart was: and so they must be to us. But we must also remember to take-in, with the day, all the ordinances and religious services and duties of the day. They must not only be done spiritually, holily, and universally, but they must be done with delight and complacency, we must prefer them to our chiefest joy; yea, the very approach of the sabbath should be our delight. So have all the saints and servants of God in all ages of the church done; they have been to them the very joy and life of their souls. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." (Psalm cxxii. 1.) I was never more affected with joy and gladness in all my life, than when I was wont to hear the people encouraging one another to assemble themselves to the public worship of God, in the house of God, on God's day. O! it did my heart good to hear with what alacrity and rejoicing they did provoke one another: "Come, let us go to the house of the Lord;" notably prophesied of in words at length: "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of

the God of Jacob ; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths : for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isai. ii. 3.) In the loss of ordinances and sabbaths they have been dead in the nest, like "Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." [Matt. ii. 18.] And in the recovery and enjoyment of them they have rejoiced as men rejoice that divide the spoil. (See Psalm iii., xlii., xliii., and xlviii., *per totum*.) Christians, we must write after this copy, and count the sabbath, not our duty only, but our delight and privilege.

(II.) The second affirmative duty : "*The holy of the Lord*,"—We must "call it," that is, (*ut supra*), count it, keep it, as קֹדֶשׁ יְהוָה *Lichdosh Jehovah, Sanctum Domini* ; one of the titles of Jesus Christ, "The Holy One of God." We must observe the sabbath as holy time ; holy, yet not by constitution, *not essentially* holy, as Christ is holy ; *nor inherently*, as the saints are holy ; but holy by institution, by sanction, *relatively* holy. "The Lord blessed the sabbath-day, and hallowed it ;" [Exod. xx. 11.] that is, he set it apart for holy uses : "Keep the sabbath-day to sanctify it." (Deut. v. 12.) Nothing but holy things must be done in this holy time,—praying, reading, hearing, singing of psalms, &c., (as Psalm xcii., which is both a precept and platform for sabbath sanctification,) meditation, rejoicing in God, and thanksgiving, as you may read at large.

(III.) *We must call it* (that is, count it) *honourable, or the glorious day of God*.—Glorious upon several accounts.

1. *For God's glorious resting upon that day*.—God's rest ; that is, a glorious rest, rest of God. As "things of God" in scripture are great and glorious things.

2. *Glorious or honourable by a glorious sanction*.—Coin, with the king's stamp upon it, is counted royal, not for the metal so much, though it be of silver or gold, but for the image, superscription, and impression it beareth. Every day in the week is honourable, because it is God's creation ; but the sabbath is glorious for the inscription,—Jehovah hath set his image upon it. He did sanctify it. It hath God's sanction upon it, and that is glorious.

3. *It is honourable for those glorious ends for which it was set apart*.—And they are three :—

(1.) *That God might sanctify his people*.—"Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be for a sign between me and them : " not a ceremonial sign, as some would dwindle it, that have no more religion in them than an old rotten ceremony cometh to ; but a moral sign, that is, a testimony, pledge, or covenant, whereby it might appear that they were God's people, sanctified to his service and honour. So it follows : "That they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." (Ezek. xx. 12.) The sabbath is God's medium to raise up to himself an holy people.

(2.) *That God's people might sanctify him*.—So, Ezek. xx. 41 : "I will be sanctified in you." So, Lev. x. 3 : "I will be sanctified in them that draw nigh me." God sanctifieth us, when he makes us holy ; we sanctify God, when we acknowledge him to be holy. God sanctifieth us, when he makes us what we are not ; we sanctify him when we acknowledge him to be what he is. These be glorious ends : but,

(3.) Another glorious end for which God made the sabbath, was, *that the sabbath on earth might be a type and figure of the sabbath in heaven.*—That in this initial and imperfect sabbath on earth, we might see (though “in a glass darkly”) what the saints and angels are doing in heaven without ceasing; that we might peep into heaven before we come thither, and long and wait for that eternal sabbath. A day wherein God bows the heaven and comes down, and offers himself in ways of sweet and friendly communion with his people. (Exod. xx. 22.)

(IV.) The fourth duty is: as we must call and count it glorious, so *we must actually honour it or Him*: it may be rendered both.—And, indeed, when we honour this day, we glorify God; and we glorify God, when we make him our end in honouring his day. Without both these we do take God’s name in vain, and do but mock God rather, in pretending to keep a sabbath, than glorify him. We must set-up God in his own day and in his own institution. And thus I have done with the opening of this blessed model in *the duties of it*. I should come now to *the privileges annexed*; but sufficient to the day is the travel thereof.

For the improvement of this doctrinal exposition, I shall do these two things:—

First. I shall endeavour the stating of some *cases of conscience* concerning the sabbath.

Secondly. I shall raise some *observations*, instead of more distinct uses and application.

CASE. If it be inquired what sabbath it is that is here spoken of, we shall not need to stick long upon the solution.

Some indeed of the anti-sabbatical doctors, who love neither the name nor thing, will needs expound it of the yearly sabbath, the day of the strictest rest among the Jews in their solemn convention for humiliation and atonement, of which we read, Lev. xvi. 31, and xxiii. 27—31. But surely it is an unreasonable straitening of the text to confine it to this, especially since the prophet had sufficiently insisted upon that subject, both by way of reproof and exhortation, in the former part of the chapter. Here, therefore, I conceive, we are to understand the weekly sabbath; not only the seventh-day sabbath, which was yet in being, but the first-day sabbath also, which was to succeed: the prophet, being an evangelical prophet, (as one calls him “the evangelist Isaiah,”) speaks of the evangelical sabbath, which was to continue to the end of the world.

RULES DRAWN FROM THE NEGATIVE PART OF THIS MODEL.

RULE I.

Note, in the first place, that, *from the creation of the world to this day, God never suffered his church to be without a sabbath.*—As soon as ever there was a church, though it was but in its infancy, and confined within the narrow limits of a single family, and few souls therein, God did immediately institute a sabbath for it. “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” (Gen. ii. 2, 3.) This some learned divines suppose to

have been by way of anticipation only ; to be a sabbath in deck,* as it were, until the church should have need of it. Others, as eminent and learned as they, do assert it to have been by way of institution ; a notion of a far more easy understanding than the former, and more useful. This sabbath rested, it seems, sometimes in silence : save only that we may possibly spell it out in some imperfect characters in their offerings and sacrifices before ever the law was given, which were originally proper sabbath-work ; until at length we may read of it in words at length : And Moses spake to the people, "This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath." (Exod. xvi. 22, 23.) And this some conceive to be a second and renewed institution ; but with little probability. Moses rather speaks of it as a thing notoriously known to the Israelites in the wilderness, it being of a more ancient original than the miracle of the manna : yet it may serve as a testimony unto the sabbath, and of use unto our purpose.

From thence therefore we must step on as far as Mount Sinai, for a new institution ; and there we may find it standing in the midst of the ten moral precepts, the fourth whereof it makes in number : "Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day," &c. (Exod. xx. 8—11.) Then was that command, which before was given by word of mouth, and continued by tradition, now written in words at length, engraven in stone by the immediate finger of God ; and there it stands during all the time of Moses and the prophets on its own basis, until the Messiah came, who put upon it his own sanction. (Matt. v. 17—48.) And under that sanction did the seventh-day sabbath continue, until upon the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, that Sun of Righteousness, and by his command to his apostles, (Acts i. 2,) the sabbath was translated to the first day of the week, and that continued by apostolical practice, and by the practice of succeeding ages of the evangelical church, the gospel-sabbath, or Lord's day, even to this present generation.

Such, I say, hath been the care and love of God to his church to this day, that it never was without a sabbath, unless it were when the want of a sabbath was the punishment of sinful neglect and obstinate violation of the sabbath. (Lam. ii. 6.) And this care God used upon a two-fold account :—

1. *Upon the account of his own sovereignty.*—That is, that by reserving one day in seven for his own immediate worship, he might be actually acknowledged as the great Sovereign Lord of ourselves and of our time. The sabbath is as the first-fruits among the Jews ; whereby we do not only entitle God to the whole harvest, but whereby the whole lump and mass is sanctified to us.

2. *A second account is God's pity and compassion to his creatures.*—God saw the heart of man since the fall so fixed to the world, (Eccles. iii. 11,) and immersed in the pleasures and profits thereof, that had he left man to himself, he would not have spared for divine worship one day in seven weeks, not, possibly, in seven months, or in the whole year ; but he would have even drudged himself and the irrational creature to death in the pursuit of worldly fruitions. And therefore God hath enjoined him the severe observation of one day in seven, that he might lay upon him

* A pile or heap in reserve, from which supplies may be taken as wants arise.—EDIT.

the necessity of minding and seeking the things of eternity, and whilst the rational creature did enjoy a spiritual rest for the soul, the irrational creature might have natural rest for self-preservation. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift !

RULE II.

Observe, *this day God was pleased to honour with the title of a "sabbath," as both here, and in the fourth commandment.*—Which signifies "rest : " because on this day both God the Father and God the Son, respectively, did rest from their own proper work, and by their precept and pattern command it and commend it for a stated rest to the church of God for ever. (Gen. ii. 2.) What the reason, therefore, is, why some learned men of our generation should be so exceedingly offended at that name "sabbath," that they cannot so much as hear it with patience, is to me a wonder even to astonishment. And while they are so much offended at the name, the vulgar sort of Christians are thereby, I am afraid, as much offended at the thing.

As to the first of these, I have heard some say, *they like it not, because it is Jewish.* But to that we reply,

1. Not the Jews, but the God of the Jews, gave it that name here and elsewhere ; and,

2. The notion of a sabbath signifies no more but "rest ; " and is rest Jewish ? O that men would look into their hearts to see whether the reason of this disgust is not more latent there !

3. And were it a Jewish name indeed, is not the Jewish name "sabbath" better than the heathenish name "Sunday," the name which heathenish idolaters gave it in their dedication of that day to the created sun ? Notwithstanding, consult their calendars, writings, and languages, and you can meet with no other name or notion, but Sunday all over. At this we have more cause to be offended, than they have at the notion of a Sabbath.

As for the vulgar sort of people, it is the thing which offends them more than the name ; not the rest so much as the nature of the rest, is that which they dislike. Were it a carding rest, a gaming rest, a dancing rest, such an one as the Israelites once celebrated in the wilderness, wherein they did eat and drink, "and rose up to play ; " [Exod. xxxii. 6 ;] such an one for all the world as the Popish devotion celebrates,—after mass and even-song, as they call it,—pipe and dance, and then to the ale-house or tavern ; such a rest would gratify the sensual world of carnal Christians. But for an holy "rest," a rest to be spent in public, domestic, and secret duties of religion, reading the scriptures, praying, singing of psalms, hearing the word preached, repeating at home what they heard in public, catechising their families, meditation, &c. ; these things do not please the unregenerate part, but men are ready to murmur, as they did of old, "What a weariness is it ! " and, "When will the sabbath be over ? " &c. (Mal. i. 13 ; Amos viii. 5.) "This is a lamentation," &c.

RULE III.

From these words, "my holy day," take a third rule :—*We must look upon the sabbath as a day of divine institution ; not of a human*

ordination.—The sabbath hath a *jus divinum* [“a divine right”] written upon it, more authentic than theirs that deery it: “My holy day,” and “the holy of the Lord,” twice in this thirteenth verse; and this, not in reference only to the seventh day, but in reference to the first day of the week, which this evangelical prophet had then, by divine revelation, in his eye. How much more doth it concern us, who are reserved to this glorious administration under the gospel, to own the divine right of the evangelical sabbath! Surely it is the voice of the glorious Trinity that calls it “my holy day;” God the Father by creation, God the Son by redemption, and God the Holy Ghost by sanctification, sending down a rich and plentiful effusion of gifts and graces upon the apostles, for the enabling them to go forth and convert the Gentiles, by the preaching of the gospel. To deny God his own right is sacrilege and atheism.

RULE IV.

We learn from hence that *we must give God the whole entire day.*—“My day,” saith God: a few hours, or the forenoon, will not serve God’s turn: but he challengeth the whole time, as his own peculiar.

There is a great dispute amongst divines, when the sabbath begins, and when it ends. The text determineth the controversy: saith God, “All is mine.” The whole twenty-four hours is sabbath. Look, how many hours we reckon to our days, so many hours we must reckon to God’s days also, if we will be ingenuous.

RULE V.

OBJECTION. *But who is able to spend the whole twenty-four hours in religious duties without any intermission?*

ANSWER. None; neither is it required: for neither do we ourselves on our days spend the whole twenty-four hours in the employments of our particular places and callings; but we allow ourselves a sleeping time, and a time for preparing our food, and a time for eating and drinking, and other refreshments of nature, both for ourselves and our relations. And so doth God also, provided always,

1. That we be not over-lavish and prodigal in our indulgences to the flesh, and the concerns of the outward man, that we exceed not our limits of Christian sobriety and moderation.

2. Provided that we do not those things with common spirits. We must eat, and drink, and sleep, as part of the sabbath-work, with heavenly minds, and sabbath-affections.

The occasional sabbaths amongst the Jews gave them a greater latitude: no more time of those days being counted holy, than was spent in the public service of the day; which continued but from nine of the clock in the morning, when the morning sacrifice was to be offered, and ended at three of the clock in the afternoon, at evening sacrifice. But the weekly sabbath was holy in the whole extent of it: not indeed by constitution, but by institution and consecration: “God blessed the sabbath-day, and hallowed it;” that is, set it apart for divine and holy uses, of which more *infra*.

RULE VI.

In our sanctifying of the sabbath, we must have an equal respect to the negative prohibition, as to the affirmative injunction.—That is, to what is

forbidden, as well as what is commanded, *et e contra*. And this is a rule which holds in the exposition of all the commandments of the law, and of the gospel: "Cease to do evil, and learn to do good." (Isai. i. 16, 17.) The negative and affirmative precept have such a mutual relation one to another, that one doth infer the other; and take away one, and you destroy the other. It is impossible to do what is commanded without due care of avoiding what is prohibited; neither can that man rationally pretend to keep the sabbath, that lieth a-bed all day, because he doth not work; nor he that followeth his servile labour, because possibly he may perform some religious duties. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

Carnal sports and pleasures are as great a profanation of the sabbath, as the most servile labour and drudgery in the world. Dicing and carding do as much violate the law of the sabbath, as digging and carting; playing, as much as ploughing; dancing and morrice-games, as much as working in the smith's forge; bowling and shooting, as well as hewing of wood and drawing of water.

The reasons are clear: for,

1. *Sports and pleasures are as expressly forbidden as bodily labour in our ordinary vocation.*—For he that said, "Thou shalt do no manner of work," said also, "Thou shalt not find thine own pleasure," &c.

2. *Sports and pleasures are as inconsistent with a sabbath-frame of spirit, as the grossest labour in our calling.*—Yea, I will undertake that a man in his particular calling may more easily get good thoughts of God and of eternal life, &c., than a person that is drenched and immersed in vain delights and sports. In such cases, men are usually so intent upon their sports and pastimes, that it is not easy to edge-in a good serious thought in the midst of sensual delights. A man in his carnal pleasures is like the soul in the body; "all in all, and all in every part" of their pleasing vanities.* Pleasures do fox † and intoxicate the brain; whereas labour is apt to make them serious and considerate.

3. *Pleasures are as great diversions from the duty of a sabbath, as labours.*—It is conceived, Adam should have had a sabbath in Paradise, had he persisted in innocence. "Why?" Not because his dressing of the garden would have wearied him, (for weariness is the fruit of sin,) but his dressing of the garden would have been a diversion from attending his Creator in the ordinances of a sabbath.

4. *Carnal pleasures leave a defilement on the spirits, and so do totally unfit the soul for communion with God.*—That character, "Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," how fully doth it agree to such kind of profaners of the sabbath! Pleasures draw off the mind from God, and justly cause God to withdraw from the soul; how totally doth this indispose to sabbath-work! In heaven they "cease not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy," &c. O! Christians, never think of reconciling carnal pleasures and communion with God together: it is impossible.

RULE VII.

"Not speaking thine own words." *The sabbath is polluted by words as well as by works.*—Christ will judge men in the great day for their

* *Tota in toto, et tota in quolibet parte.*

† In the old meaning of, "to stupify."

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words ; and by them will he either justify thee for sanctifying the sabbath, or condemn thee for profaning of it. I am afraid, it is the great controversy God hath with this nation : not only profane, but even professors, are all guilty of not sanctifying the name and day of God in their talk and discourses upon the sabbath-day. If Jesus Christ should join himself to our tables, or lesser companies, as he did with the two disciples going to Emmaus, and ask us, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another?" (Luke xxiv. 15—17 ;) how might the question fill our faces with paleness and strike us speechless ! Alas ! who can tell what day it is by men's discourses and conferences one with another ? How vain, foolish, unprofitable, and unsavoury is most men's speech all the day ! No jest so idle, no story so common and fruitless, but will pass at our tables and in our private conference. Many spend the *best* of their time no better than the idolatrous Athenians did their *worst*, "in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing." (Acts xvii. 21.) "What news?" is the most innocent question wherewith (I would I could not say) most men fill up the vacancies of a sabbath. "And is that sinful ? will you say ? Was it not in Nehemiah's question ?—'Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah ; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem,' &c. (Neh. i. 2.) Presently, 'What news ?' And why may not Christians ask the same question ?"—Yes ; they may, when they ask it in Nehemiah's spirit, to Nehemiah's end ; that is, that we may get our hearts suitably affected with the miseries or prosperity of the church of God, abroad or at home. See what a gracious use he makes of his news in that and in the following chapter, at your leisure : go ye, and do likewise, and it shall be your honour. But, to tell news, and to inquire after news, merely for novelty-sake, and to fill up time for want of better discourse, is a miserable idling-out of precious time, which might be spent to mutual edification ; whereas, by ordinary and unsavoury discourses, which are usually heard amongst us, people do edify one another indeed, but it is *ad gehennam*,—they edify one another "to hell."

You that pretend to be the Lord's people, be more jealous for the Lord's day and honour. "The Lord taketh pleasure in his people. Let the saints be joyful in glory." (Psalm cxlix. 4, 5.) Let your speech be always seasoned with salt, especially on God's day, that you may season your children and servants, who otherwise will be corrupted by such rotten communication. O let your prayer be all times, but especially on the sabbath day, that of holy David : "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth ; and keep the door of my lips." (Psalm cxli. 3.) The sabbath is God's glory : let your tongues be so too.

RULE VIII.

The like caution we ought to use about our thoughts.—By the rule of proportion ; they being the language of our hearts, and as audible in the ears of God as our words are to men's ; yea, whereas men understand our hearts by our words, God understands our words by our hearts. Moses did set bounds about the mount, that neither man nor beast might break-in ; whatsoever touched the mountain must die : (Exod. xix. 12, 13 :)

so must we set bounds about our heart, that neither human nor brutish distractions may break-in. There is death or life in it, and, therefore, "of all keepings, keep thy heart ; for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. iv. 23.) The heart indeed is not so fencible as the mountain ; but the more open it lieth, the stronger guard had we need to set upon it, and to pray for a guard from heaven ; as David : " Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer." (Psalm xix. 14.) If vain or vile thoughts break in upon thee, do as the ravished virgin was to do, in the law,—“cry out” to God, and thou shalt not be held guilty. (Deut. xxii. 27.)

Christians, this caution is of a special concern to you : “O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?” (Jer. iv. 14.) Resolve the text into its integrals, and it will afford you some such observables : 1. Thoughts will defile the heart, as well as deeds. “Wash thy heart.” 2. This defilement will damn the soul. “Wash, that thou mayest be saved.” 3. The reason is implied : they are wickedness. “Wash thine heart from wickedness.” 4. All this evil is even in *vain* thoughts as well as in *vile* thoughts. “How long shall thy vain thoughts,” &c. 5. Therefore we must wash our hearts from vain thoughts, as well as from wicked and blasphemous thoughts. Hence I infer, 6. If this should be the work of a Christian every day, how much more on God’s day ! The purer the paper, the fouler the stain and blot. Christians, look to your hearts.

RULE IX.

Further, *take notice of the appropriation*.—“Thy own ways ;” “Thy own pleasures ;” “Thy own words.”

OBJECTION. “And are not holy ways, and holy pleasures, and holy words our own, as well as such as are carnal and sensual ?”

ANSWER. Yes, they are : but God speaks here according to our sense and apprehension ; from whence, note how brutish and sensual lapsed man is in his notions and apprehensions of things, that he can call nothing his own, but what relateth to the flesh. “I have written to him,” saith God, “the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing :” (Hosea viii. 12 :) *alienum*, “foreign,” and of no concernment to himself at all.

RULE X.

And let this also serve for a tenth rule : *In our sanctifying of the sabbath, we must be specially careful to distinguish, what is God’s, and what is our own*.—Indeed we must distinguish between what is Satan’s, our own, and God’s.

1. There be sinful, wicked pleasures, ways, words, thoughts ; I say, *wicked and sinful* in themselves, and these are properly the devil’s pleasures, the devil’s ways, the devil’s words and thoughts ; and these are lawful at no time, much less on God’s time. God’s day and the devil’s employment do not well agree.

2. And there are our own pleasures, ways, words, and thoughts ; such as concern the present life, relating to the body and outward man. These

may be lawful on our days : "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work ;" but are not lawful on the sabbath-day : "In it thou shalt do no manner of work," &c., save what is of necessity or charity.

3. And then there are God's pleasures, ways, words, and thoughts ; that is, of God's command, and such as lie in a direct tendency to the worship and service of God in public, private, or secret ; and these only we may and must do and mind upon the sabbath. If we mix any of the devil's or our own pleasures and profits with God's, we pollute the holy things of God, and profane his sabbath.

This is the sum of what time will give me leave to say upon the negative part of this model. Only, before I dismiss it, let me add this short note of observation, that if what hath been spoken even on this negative part be the mind and will of God concerning the sanctifying of the sabbath, then may the generality of Christians lie down in the dust, and, smiting upon their thigh, with brinish tears upon their cheeks, confess, with a pious, honourable lady upon her dying bed, "O ! I never kept a sabbath in all my life." The Lord teach us so to lay this sin to heart, that God may never lay it to our charge.

RULES DRAWN FROM THE AFFIRMATIVE PART OF THIS MODEL.

Having thus briefly dispatched the negative part of sabbath-sanctification contained in this model, I come now to the positive and affirmative part. *There* we saw what we are forbidden, as that whereby the sabbath is polluted. *Here* we are informed what we are commanded, as that whereby the sabbath is sanctified, that is, kept holy to the Lord ; as we are enjoined, "Keep the sabbath-day to sanctify it," &c., in these words following : "And shalt call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable ; and shalt honour him," &c.

In this positive model are contained four great comprehensive branches or duties, wherein the sanctification of the sabbath doth consist ; namely,

(I.) *We must call it our "delight."*

(II.) *We must call it "holy," or "the holy of the Lord."*

(III.) *We must call it "honourable," or glorious.*

(IV.) *We must not only call the day an "honourable" day, but we must really and actually "honour" God, or "honour" the day.*

The heads are few ; but they are very comprehensive, and such as will afford us, in the opening of them, much matter for our use and direction in the sanctification of the sabbath ; although I intend in this exercise but briefly to touch upon some few particular heads or rules, reserving the more full and ample enlargement thereof to some other opportunity.

(I.) The first is : *We must "call the sabbath a delight," or, the pronoun supplied, "thy delight."*

Call it so—We are not to account the sabbath as an ordinary and common thing, but to put a very high and precious valuation upon it, as delightful, "the holy of the Lord," and of honourable renown.

A delight, thy delight—We must call it so, account it so, or make it so. The sabbath must be a delectable thing to us, a nest of sweetness, the delight of our eyes, the joy and rejoicing of our hearts, a day wherein all our comforts and pleasures do concentre ; all our fresh

springs must be in it. And this I humbly conceive the Holy Ghost doth most significantly oppose unto the pleasures forbidden before in this same verse.

If thou turn away thy foot from doing thy pleasure, &c.—As if it had been said, “Must we be excluded and shut out from all pleasures and delights upon the sabbath?” “No,” saith the Holy Ghost; “sanctify the sabbath of Jehovah, and thou shalt not need to fear the want of pleasure, neither shalt thou need to be beholden to the flesh or the world for delights. The sabbath itself will be incomparably more sweet and delectable to thee, than all the sensual and luscious contentments and satisfactions which this whole sublunary world can afford. Make the sabbath thy delight, and thou shalt need to knock at no other door for pleasurable entertainments. If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, ‘Call my sabbath thy delight,’ he would make his day unto thee a spring of sweetness, that shall always be flowing out to eternal life.” A day well-spent with God will fill the soul with “joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

QUESTION. “But what shall we do, that we may make the sabbath our delight?” or, “When may we be said to call it so, or make it so?”

RULES OR SIGNS OF MAKING THE SABBATH A DELIGHT.

ANSWER 1. We then call the sabbath our “delight,” *when we can rejoice in the approach of the sabbath.*—See how holy David doth solace his soul in the joyful expectation of communion with God, when his banishment from the ordinances did approach: “Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy;” Hebrew, “the gladness of my joy.” (Psalm xliii. 4.)

2. *Our early stirring-up of ourselves to bid the sabbath welcome to our hearts and habitations.*—So, the holy prophet: “O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee.” (Psalm lxiii. 1.) The earliness of his devotions shows the delight that he took in them. Truly the great indulgence that most Christians allow themselves in their bed on the Lord’s day, is an infallible argument how little delight they take in God’s day, or in the ordinances thereof.

3. Then we may be said to call the sabbath our “delight,” *when we are universally careful to sanctify God in all the institutions of the day, both public, private, and secret.*—And are solicitous so to methodize and time them, that they may not jumble out or interfere with one another; that is to say, to be so early in our closet devotion, that the closet may not exclude or straiten the duties of the family, and so to perform the domestic duties, that they may not trespass upon our attendance on the more solemn public worship of God. An universal respect to all the institutions of a sabbath is an evident demonstration, that we call the sabbath our “delight:” as David evidenceth to his own soul the sincerity of his obedience: “Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.” (Psalm cxix. 6.)

4. *When we are angry with, or impatient of, any diversions from or disturbance in any duty or services of the day.*—To be glad of a diversion argueth little love to or delight in the sabbath. “I have esteemed,”

saith Job, "the words of his mouth more than my necessary food;" Hebrew, "appointed food." (Job xxiii. 12.)

5. And, lastly, then we "call the sabbath a delight," *when the bare having of a sabbath, without the presence of God in the sabbath, and the ordinances thereof, will not satisfy us.*—Delight springs principally from the presence of God: "In thy presence is fulness of joy." (Psalm xvi. 11.) This delight is promised as a reward in the verse following: "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." There is a delight of duty, and there is a delight of dispensation, and *this* is the reward of *that*; *that* is our work, *this* is God's work. When a gracious heart sets itself to delight in a sabbath and in the ordinances thereof, then often God is pleased graciously to come in, and to fill the ordinances, and by it the soul, with his own presence; his *convincing* presence; his *enlightening* presence; his *converting* presence; his *quicken*ing presence; his *strengthening* presence; his *comforting* presence. And when the soul cannot be satisfied unless it be in some measure sensible of God's presence in some of these blessed respects or other, then doth it really "call the sabbath a delight." Thus doth the holy Psalmist: "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee." Why, what would he have? It follows: "To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in thy sanctuary." (Psalm lxiii. 1, 2.) It is not the sanctuary of God only, but communion with God in the sanctuary, which David's soul thirsted after.

This is to "call the sabbath a delight."

(II.) I come to the second duty:

We must call the sabbath, "the holy of Jehovah." לְקֹדֶשׁ יְהוָה (*Lichdosh Jehovah,*) *sanctum Domini.*—This title is very significant. We must not only count the sabbath "holy," but "the holy of the Lord." It is, as it were, one of the titles ascribed to the Son of God; for so he is called: "Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," &c. "Ye denied the Holy One," &c. (Acts ii. 27; iii. 14.) And well it may; for it is the holy day of the holy Son of God. Yea, God the Father and God the Son have put-off their own holiness upon it; not *essentially*, for that is incommunicable. Nor is it *an inherent holiness* which they have communicated to it, as the saints of God have, who are made holy by a supernatural change of their natures. (2 Peter i. 4.) But the sabbath is holy *by divine institution, by special dedication and consecration*; God having hallowed this day above all other days in the week, by separating it from common and civil uses, and consecrating it to holy and religious ends and purposes, namely, to be a sabbath of holy rest.

QUESTION. But now the question is: "How may we thus call the sabbath holy?" or, "When may we be said truly to make it holy?"

ANSWER 1. *When we make God's hallowing and sanctifying this day our motive and argument to sanctify it, by a holy observation of it.*—When that which God hath called "holy" by his divine sanction, we dare not call it "common and profane" by prostituting of it to unsuitable actions, words, or thoughts. There is a *real* calling it "unholy," as well as *vocal*. He or she that spends the day or any part of it in doing evil, or in doing nothing, or in doing nothing to the purpose, he proclaimeth to the world what he calleth the day, although he speak not a

word. He speaks his heart by interpretation ; and when all is done, our works are more credible interpreters of our hearts, than our words or profession. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say ?" [Luke vi. 46.] Then we *believe* it holy, when we *keep* it holy.

2. Then we call the sabbath "holy," *when we sanctify ourselves for the sabbath, and for the ordinances of the sabbath.*—If we have no care what frame of spirit we bring with us into the day, nor with what frame we drive through it, we are far from calling the sabbath, "the holy of the Lord." "For their sakes," saith our Lord, "I sanctify myself." (John xvii. 19.) *I sanctify myself*, that is, "I separate myself wholly for the work of a Redeemer." If the Lord Jesus separated himself for our sakes, should not we much more separate ourselves for his ? Then we believe Christ to be our holy Redeemer, when we labour to be an holy people, "holy as he is holy ;" and then we have high, venerable thoughts of the holiness of the sabbath, when we labour to be holy as the day is holy. An unsuitable spirit is a profanation of the sabbath. The day holy, but we unholy,—what a reproach is this ! "Holiness becometh thine house for ever." (Psalm xciii. 5.) As if he had said, that ceremonies were to continue but for a time, but "holiness is the standing qualification of thy day and of thy worshippers for ever."

3. *When we make holiness in the beginning and increase of it, our design in our sanctifying of the day, and of our attendance upon the ordinances.*—When we make holiness our business. It is the great end for which God hath ordained a sabbath. "Verily, my sabbaths ye shall keep : for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations ; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." (Exod. xxxi. 13 ; Ezek. xx. 12.) Not a ceremonial sign, but a moral sign, a covenant sign, a kind of a sacramental sign, a medium to effect what is promised in the covenant, as water in baptism, and bread and wine in the Lord's supper. (1 Cor. xi. 23—26.) O when God's design and man's design meet ; when God makes a sabbath for a medium to make his people holy, and they keep a sabbath that they may be holy ; this is excellent, this is to call the sabbath "the holy of the Lord." When we labour to bring as much holiness as we can into a sabbath, and to bring more holiness out of a sabbath, to come out of God's day more holy than we came into it ; this is to sanctify a sabbath indeed.

4. Then we call it "holy," *when the more pure and holy the sabbath is kept, and the more purely and holily the ordinances are dispensed, the more our souls do love them, the more beauty and glory we do see in them.*—As David expresseth his affection to the word : "Thy word is very pure : therefore thy servant loveth it." [Psalm cxix. 140.] It is very sad, when, the more purely and the more holily the word is dispensed, the more people dislike it, and pick quarrels with it ; as that vile people did, who cried to their prophets, "*Prophecy not* ; or, if you will be prophesying, prophecy *smooth things*, sermons that will go down pleasantly, discourses of peace, that will not trouble our consciences, nor cross our corruptions ; but *cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.*" (Isai. xxx. 10, 11.) It was "the *Holy One of Israel*," &c., the title which the prophets used in their sermons ; but their ears were so tender they could not bear it. If the prophets would prophesy of the *Merciful*

One of Israel, and of the *Bountiful* One, the *Omnipotent* One, &c., let them go on. But they cared not so much for holiness and strictness, as they pressed upon them from day to day: this did not please their palate. So when it is with a people in reference to other ordinances, prayer and the sacraments, the more corrupted they be with the mixtures of men, and of human inventions, the more acceptance and applause they find; this argues that men seek not *Jesus propter Jesum*, "Christ for Christ's sake," nor ordinances for their purity, nor sabbaths because they be holy days of an holy God.

When to get holiness, and to grow in holiness, is our design in sanctifying sabbaths; when we sanctify sabbaths that God may "sanctify" us by his sabbaths and "by his truth," as our Lord prayeth; (John xvii. 17;) then we do call and account the sabbath indeed *sanctum Domini*, "the holy of the Lord."

5. We do truly count the sabbath "the holy of the Lord," *when we come out of sabbaths, as Moses came down from the mount, with our faces shining*.—When we bring with us the savour of Christ, his sweet ointments upon our garments; (Psalm xlv. 8;) when they with whom we converse may take notice that we "have been with Jesus." (Acts iv. 13.) It is sad when men come out of a sabbath just such as they came in, as vain and loose, as proud, worldly, wanton, "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;" in a word, as fit for sin as they were before.

They sanctify the sabbath indeed, who can in truth say with the apostle, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass," or mirror, "the glory of the Lord, are changed," or metamorphosed, "into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) When the sabbath leaves its image and impress upon us, in some measure, then we do count it and keep it holy. Surely, the sabbath is the very spring upon which the holy conversation of the whole week is turned and moved. And therefore it is observable that the sabbath stands as it were betwixt the two tables,—the last precept of the first table, and the preface to the second,—to show us, that it is the bond of union between both tables; that without a severe sanctification of the sabbath, the duties of both tables will fall to the ground. Whence, in the primitive times of Christianity, the strict observation of the sabbath was accounted the principal character of a true saint. And so it is even at this day: there are no such Christians, for exemplary holiness, as those who are taken notice of to make most conscience of sanctifying the sabbath.

But, so much for the second duty.

(III.) I come now to the third branch, or duty of duties: *Wherein sabbath-sanctification consists; namely, "honourable."*

If thou call it, or make it, or keep it as an honourable day, Hebrew, *מַעֲבָד מֵעֻבָּד* *Mecubbad*, which signifieth "honourable or glorious." The duty implied is, *we must keep the sabbath, as the honourable, glorious day of Jehovah*.—Truly glorious things are spoken of this honourable day. The Jews were wont to call it "the queen of days." The week-days they called "profane days," but the sabbath, after God's example here, they called "holy." "*My holy day*," saith God; it is God's peculiar. One of ours, now translated into his glorious rest, honours it thus, calling it, "The map of heaven, the golden spot of the week, the market-day of the

soul, the day-break of eternal brightness, the queen of days, the blessed amongst days, the cream of time, the epitome of eternity, heaven in a glass, the first-fruits of an everlasting and blessed harvest ;” and much more to that purpose.* The week-days are (as it were) the back parts of the week, made to carry burdens, a mere servant or slave, made to do the drudgery of the human life. The sabbath is the face, the seat of majesty, which God hath made to look upward, and to contemplate the glory of the heavens and of the Maker thereof. The week-days are like the terrestrial globe, wherein are painted to us the earth with the inferior and more ignoble creatures. The sabbath is the celestial globe, wherein we have the prospect of “Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and of an innumerable company of angels, of the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and of God the Judge of all, and of the spirits of just men made perfect, and of Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant,” &c. (Heb. xii. 22—24.) The beholding of these glorious visions, truly beatifical, are the work of a sabbath.

Moreover, to discover to you the glory of a sabbath, consider we another excellent passage in our quoted author (*ut supra*) speaking of the sabbath : “All the graces triumph in thee ; all the ordinances conspire to enrich thee. The Father ruleth thee : the Son rose upon thee : the Spirit hath overshadowed thee. Thus it is done to the day which the Lord delighteth to honour. On thee light was created ; the Holy Ghost descended ; life hath been restored ; Satan subdued ; the grave, death, and hell conquered,” &c. Much more might be added, but rather the question is,

QUESTION. *When do we make the sabbath, or how may we make it to us an “honourable,” glorious day ?*

ANSWER I. Then we call the sabbath “honourable,” *when we make honourable preparation for it.*—To which purpose it is useful to mind seriously that word which stands as a watchman at the door of the fourth commandment, “Remember the sabbath to keep it holy.” *Remember*—It is like the Baptist, “The voice of one crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord :” or that, Eccles. v. 1 : “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God,” &c. It calls for solemn preparation for a sabbath and the ordinances of a sabbath,—a duty wofully neglected amongst Christians ! Some little preparation people make for a sacrament ; and it is to be feared there is more of superstition in it than evangelical affection to the day, consisting rather in a ceremonial abstinence from meat and drinks, than a serious separation of the heart and affections for communion with God. But as to the sabbath, there is rarely any thing to separate between the drudgery of the week and the solemnities of the sabbath, but a little sleep ; and that usually less than any other night is allowed ; people loading the Saturday night with so many worldly affairs, that the Lord’s-day morning is too little to satisfy their sluggish indulgences of the flesh ; and there is not time either for closet or domestic devotion. They cannot force themselves out of their bed time enough to join with the congregation, until half the public worship be finished. The Jews shall rise up against this generation, and shall condemn them ; of whom it

* Vide MR. GEO. SWINNOCK in his “Good Wish to the Lord’s Day.”

is reported, they were so severe in their parasceves, or "preparations," for the sabbath, which were precisely to begin at three of the clock in the afternoon, that if the servants in the family were cast behind in dispatching the servile labour of the family, the master of the house, though he were a nobleman, would not refuse to set his hand to the lowest drudgery, that they might observe the punctual time of preparation.* This argued an honourable estimation of the sabbath.

2. Then we call it "honourable," *when we give it honourable entertainment*.—When we awaken ourselves in such good time (yet so as we may not indispose nature for the service of the day) as David did: "Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake right early." (Psalm cviii. 2.) I say, to get up early in the morning, to meet our blessed Lord and Bridegroom coming from his sepulchre to visit us. (Matt. xxviii. 1.) That which is but fancied of the natural sun, its dancing upon Easter-day in the morning for joy of the Lord's resurrection, I have known realized by some excellent Christians, whose hearts have not only leaped in them, but themselves have hasted out of their beds, and have leaped and skipped up and down in their chamber, when the morning light of the sabbath hath shined on them, in remembrance of "the Sun of Righteousness arising" from the grave "with healing under his wings."

Such extraordinary impulses and ravishments are not every Christian's attainment, and must not be imitated to the prejudice of the body. "The spirit" may be "willing, but the flesh is weak." But certainly every Christian that hath the love of Christ shed abroad in his heart, will be careful to abate himself somewhat of his wonted indulgences on that morning which was his Redeemer's birth-day, (Psalm ii. 7,) that he may have time to get on his wedding garment by meditation, reading, and prayer, that he may go forth to meet Him whom his soul loveth, in the public solemnities of the sabbath, and bring him home with him "into the chamber of her that conceived" him. (Canticles iii. 1—4.)

This is to call the day "honourable."

3. Then we call it "honourable," *when we have a precious esteem of every moment of sabbath-time, and [are] jealous lest any drop of it should run waste*.—Even the filings of gold and the dust of diamonds are precious. No man can call the sabbath "glorious," that sets light by an hour, or minute, or moment of so divine a creation. Time is a ring of gold; but the sabbath is the rich sparkling diamond in it. David's heart smote him for cutting off but a lap of Saul's royal coat. So should ours for profaning, or unprofitably wasting, any part of Christ's day. It is like his seamless coat, and cannot be divided without sacrilege.

4. The day is honourable *when we have a singular esteem of all the institutions and ordinances of the day*.—When prayer is precious, and the word read, preached, is precious; when singing of psalms is precious, the sacraments precious; when every one in its time and order is observed with such due regard that none do jostle out or exclude the other, but one doth catch in the other, as the links in a chain of gold.

5. *When it is the grief of our souls that we can keep sabbaths no better, and [we] strive cordially and conscientiously to keep the next better than we did the last.*

6. And lastly, *when we are careful that all ours as well as ourselves keep sabbaths.*—This is a main clause in our obedience to the fourth commandment:—"Thou, thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant," &c. (Deut. v. 14.) Every one in their several capacities must keep the sabbath. To be strict ourselves in the duties of a sabbath, and careless what the rest of our families do; whether our children or servants sleep, or be idle, dance, or play at cards, sing idle songs, or take God's name in vain, &c; this is not to call the sabbath "honourable." "I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." (Gen. xviii. 19.)

(IV.) "And shalt honour him, or glorify him." The verb in the Hebrew, וְכִבְדָּתוֹ *Vecibbadto*,* may be rendered "it" or "him;" but the sense seems to incline to the latter, "him," rather than "it." The day having had its title of veneration put upon it before, "honourable," this may more properly belong to God, even to the whole blessed and glorious Trinity, requiring at the hands of every one that enjoyeth this blessed privilege of a sabbath, that they ascribe the honour and glory of it unto God. And that is done,

1. *When we make divine authority the sole ground of our separating and sanctifying the whole day to his peculiar service and worship, without alienating any part or parcel of that holy time to our own carnal uses and purposes.*—"Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it:" there is the duty: "as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee:" there is the authority. [Deut. v. 12.]

2. *When, as we make God's command our ground, so we make God's glory our end.*—When we make it our design to set up God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in all his glorious and infinite perfections, in our adorations and admirations upon that his holy day. And that is done in a special manner, when we make it the great business of a sabbath to ascribe to each glorious Person in the Trinity the glory of his proper work and operation, whereby he challengeth a title to and interest in the sabbath. For example:—

(1.) *When we ascribe to God the Father the glory of the stupendous work of creation.*—And that is done by a due contemplation of all his glorious attributes, shining forth in this beautiful structure of heaven and earth, celebrated by the royal Psalmist in Psalm xix. 1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." The transcendent excellencies of the glorious Jehovah are conspicuous and illustrious in this admirable theatre of the world, that is to say,

First. *His power.*—(i.) In creating all things out of nothing. (ii.) And that by a word of his mouth.

Secondly. *His wisdom.*—In making all things in such a beautiful and exact manner and order. As the great Physician said of the body of man, "No man can come after God and say, *This might have been better*;"† so in the fabric of heaven and earth, neither man nor angels can say, "Here is a defect, and there is a redundancy: it had been better there had been more suns and fewer stars, more land, and less sea," &c. No; when the divine prophet had stood, and in his most

* From כָּבַד *Cabad*, *honore*.

† GALENI *Liber de Usu Partium*.

serious contemplation looked through the creation, he could spy out nothing that could have been otherwise, but breaks out in admiration: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all." [Psalm civ. 24.] He could see nothing from one end of the universe to another, but what speaks infinite perfection: "In wisdom hast thou made them all!" And as the omnipotency and wisdom of God is magnified in the creation, so also,

Thirdly. *His bounty*.—In bestowing all this visible creation upon man for his use and benefit: as one saith, "God made man *last*, that he might bring him, as a father brings his son, into an house ready furnished." This is one branch of our honouring God, when we ascribe to God the Father the glory of the work of creation.

(2.) *When we ascribe to God the Son the glory of his most glorious work of redemption*.—Wherein these particulars are wonderful:—

(i.) *His ineffable incarnation*.—"Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh," (1 Tim. iii. 16,) that is, the invisible God made visible in a body of flesh. This was a mystery indeed: a Son *in heaven* without a mother; and a Son *on earth* without a father.

(ii.) *Christ's stupendous being "made under the law"* (Gal. iv. 4.)—Behold, He that made the law, was made under the law! *Under the ceremonial law*, that he might abolish it. *Under the moral law*, the preceptive power of it, that he might fulfil it, that so every believer might have a "righteousness" which he may call his own; (Rom. x. 4;) the *maledictive* power of it, that he might take it away. (Gal. iii. 13.)

(iii.) *Christ's work of redemption was principally transacted by his death and passion*.—For therein he laid down *pretium redemptionis*, "the price of redemption," which was "his own precious blood." (Acts xx. 28; 1 Peter i. 18, 19.)

(iv.) *This great work and mystery of our redemption was perfectly consummated in Christ's glorious resurrection*.—Wherein he "spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them" *ἐν αὐτῷ*. (Col. ii. 15.) Some render it, "in it," and would refer it to his cross: but *ἐν αὐτῷ* is to be understood here in the masculine gender, not in the neuter; and so to be translated, "in himself." Christ, rising from the dead like a conqueror, led death, and the grave, and hell, and the devil in chains after him; as conquerors in war were wont to lead their vanquished enemies, whom they had taken prisoners, in chains of captivity after them, exposing them to the public scorn of all spectators.

Thus we are to ascribe the glory of the work of redemption to Jesus Christ the Son of God; and thereby do honour God in our sanctifying of his holy sabbath.

(3.) *We likewise glorify the Holy Ghost, when we ascribe to him the honour of the work of sanctification*.—Whether we look upon it in that first miraculous effusion of the Spirit which our Lord Jesus, as the King and Head of his church, did first purchase by the blood of his cross; and afterward ascended into heaven and obtained of his Father when he took possession of his kingdom; and, lastly, did abundantly pour down

upon the apostles, and other officers and members of his evangelical church, in the day of pentecost, (Acts ii. 1—4,) which was (as it were) the sanctification of the whole gospel-church at once in the first-fruits; or whether we understand that work of sanctification, which successively is wrought by the Holy Ghost in every individual elect child of God; happily begun in their first conversion, and mightily upheld and carried on in the soul to the dying day. This is a glorious work, consisting in these two glorious branches of it, mortification of corruption, which, before the Holy Ghost hath done, shall end in the total annihilation of the body of sin; (that blessed privilege groaned for so much by the blessed apostle, Rom. vii. 24;) and the erecting of a beautiful fabric of grace, holiness in the soul, which is the very "image" of God, (an erection of more transcendent wonder and glory than the six-days' workmanship,) which the Holy Ghost doth "uphold" and will perfect unto the day of Christ. (Heb. i. 3.) And this is the great end and design of the sabbath and of the ordinances of the gospel, according to the word which the great Maker and Appointer of sabbaths speaketh: "I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." [Ezek. xx. 12.]

Here then is the third branch of our sanctifying the sabbath, namely, the ascribing to God the Holy Ghost the glory of the work of sanctification.

And this is proper work for Christians, in the intervals and void spaces between the public ordinances,—to sit down, and first seriously and impartially to examine the work of grace in our souls, 1. For the truth of it. 2. For the growth of it: and then, if we can give God and our own consciences some scriptural account concerning this matter, humbly to fall down, and to put the crown of praise upon the head of free grace, which hath made a difference where it found none. And so much for this text at this time.