

teth on to serious endeavours of practising it when known; which pride doth not. Thus we see both how extensive and how necessary to Christians in whatsoever station they are, this excellent grace of humility is, which is a special ornament of Christians, and a notable piece of beautiful conformity to meek and lowly Jesus.



THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

EXODUS xx. Verse 13.

Thou shalt not kill.

IN the fifth command the Lord generally prescribeth humility, in that respect which is to be shown by every one to another in their several stations and relations; he proceedeth now more particularly to give directions in these things that are most dear and necessary to men, first in the matter of life, command sixth: 2 In the matter of chastity and temperance, Com. 7. 3. In what concerneth their estate, Com. 8. 4. In what concerneth truth, and more especially our neighbours name, Com. 9. Lastly, in what concerneth the inward frame of our hearts toward our own estate, and the estate of others, Com. 10.

For understanding this command, *Thou shalt not kill*; we may consider, 1. Its object; 2. Its act, to *kill*: 3. Its subject (to speak so) *Thou*.

As for the first, this command cannot be considered, as relating to beasts; as if they were not to be killed, because God gave man all the beasts for his use to feed on them, Gen. ix. 3. and we are to eat of whatever is sold in the shambles, by his allowance, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof, 1 Cor. x. 25. Beside man in all these commands is properly directed in reference to his neighbour and not to beasts: Yet I grant by striking a beast, a man may offend, as, 1. When that stroke wrongeth his neighbour, to whom that beast belongeth. 2. When in our striking there is, 1. Unreasonableness, as if we would require that capacity in a beast, that is in reasonable creatures, and so are ready to offend when they answer not our expectation. 2. When there is a breaking out into anger and passion at brutes, as when a horse rideth not well, a dog runneth not well, a

hawk flyeth not well, &c. which speaketh an impotency in us, who are so easily mastered by irrational passions, which will sometimes also seize upon us in reference to senseless and lifeless creatures, when they do not accomodate us to our minds. 3. When there is bitterness and cruelty in striking: Something of this the Lord reproveth by making Balaam's ass speak, and rebuke the madness of that prophet, who unreasonably smote the ass, and wished he had had a sword to kill her, Numb. xxii. 29. whereas a just man pitieth his beast, and regardeth the life thereof, Prov. xii. 10.

But for the better understanding of the object of the command, we shall proceed to speak to it, and the act of killing (which is the second thing) complexedly, and if we consider killing in reference to a mans self, it is certainly understood here; for that being the sum of all the commands of the second table, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, it must be understood as repeated in each of them; as here, *Thou shalt not kill thy neighbour more than thyself*, or *shalt preserve him as thyself*, which supposeth that it is not free for a man to wrong himself more than to wrong others; and generally these reasons whereby the Lord restraining us from killing others, will also hold in the restraining us from killing, and otherwise wronging ourselves; therefore there is no question, if it be a sin to wrong, hurt or torture others whether in body or in their soul, as to the tranquility and quiet frame thereof, and any ways to procure or further their death, it will be no less to do thus to ourselves; because love to ourselves is the pattern that we ought to walk by in loving others.

We may be guilty of the breach of this command in reference to ourselves by omissions as well as commissions, as when things needful for entertainment and health of the body are, either designedly, or with an excessive misregard to health and life, omitted.

We may further fall into the breach of this command in reference to ourselves, either directly, as purposing and intending hurt to our own body; or indirectly, by casting ourselves in unnecessary seen dangers, by wilful or careless over-using of known unwholesome food, by excessive and immoderate toil, by spending and wasting the body with unchasteness, by drunkenness and gluttony (whereby many more are destroyed than with the sword, according to the common saying, *plures gula quam gladio pereunt*) and many other ways.

If we consider this command with respect to others, we may conceive it in reference to a threefold life, which we should endeavour to preserve and promote in them, in any one

one of which a commission or omission will make a breach thereof.

1. There is a life of the body; and whatever cometh from us that wrongeth that, either directly, as strokes, challenges or appeals, &c. or indirectly, if it were but by keeping back something that is in our power to give which might be useful to our neighbour in his need, that no doubt maketh guilty of this sin of killing in respect of this bodily life. I have mentioned appeals to duels under the former branch, because albiet that in the matter of private duels, the pride and corruption of men do ordinarily either commend a vain bravery and gallantry, or pretend the excuses of a seeming obligation in the point of honour or necessary defence: Yet we are sure that the judgment of God, which is according to truth, by pointing out on the part as well as of the acceptor as of the appellant; these ensuing irregularities do condemn the thing as exceeding sinful. As, 1. Impotency of mind and excess of passion, which if sooner in the acceptor, doth only add deliberation to his other guilt. 2. Contempt of the public laws and civil order. 3. An usurpation of the magistrates sword, which is given to him, both for punishing and protecting. And 4. An invasion of God's right of vengeance, which he hath so expressly reserved to himself, and from this the acceptor observing ordinarily no more moderament in his defence, than there was necessity for the engagement, hath no excuse more than the challenger, so that in effect although the mediate rise may be thought to be on the appellers part, yet the sin is common, and is in a word a plain complication of hatred against our neighbour, contempt against the laws and powers of God, who hath appointed them, and a bold and desperate despising and rushing upon death, judgment and eternity, which do so eminently attend all such rencounters: O how much more heroic and noble, were it for men to approve the wise and great kings choice, *he that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city*, to hear him, who is higher than the princes of the earth, who commands us, *Love your enemies bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you*, and confirmed all by his own most powerful example: And lastly, the study of that divine goodness, which embraceth both good and evil, just and unjust, to aspire to that height of all felicity and glory in being perfect as our Father, which is in heaven is perfect; But to proceed.

2. There is a spiritual and eternal life of the soul, thus sin deadneth and killeth men, and in this respect all who

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are unfaithful to others in the matter of their souls, or who cause them to sin, or sinfully give them occasion of sin, become guilty of soul-murder, so Ezek. iii. 18. and xxxiii. 6. *His blood will I require at thy hands*, saith the Lord to the prophet.

Men become guilty of this not only, 1. By commanding, as Saul did Doeg to kill the Lord's priest's, and David did Joab to cause Uriah to be slain, 2. By counselling and advising, as Jonadab did Amnon in reference to his sister Tamar. 3. By alluring and down right tempting, as Tamar did Juda; 4. By consenting to the sin of others; or any wise assisting, countenancing or encouraging them in it, as Saul was consenting to the death of Stephan, and was standing by keeping the clothes of them that stoned him, and as men may be in reference to false teachers, 2 Epistle of John x. 11. 5. By proving high provocations to others, and thereby stirring them up, to sin such as are reproaches, opprobrious speeches, chartallings and challenges to fight, &c. but also, 6. By evil example, as David was accessory to the sin of the adversaries blasphemous reproaching, by what he did, and the apostle often insinuateth Christians may be thus guilty by their insuitable deportment in the several relations they sustain and stand under. This may also be by doing what hath the appearance of evil, yea even by doing of things in themselves lawful but inexpedient because unseasonable and with offence. Thus one Christian may be accessory to anothers stumbling, and may sinfully hazard the destroying of these for whom Christ died as the apostle discourseth concerning offences even in things not sinful in themselves: 7. By not warning faithfully before sin be committed, as is clear, Ezek. iii. 18. 8. By not reproving after the sin is committed, but suffering it to lie on our brother, Lev. xix. 6. 9. By not suiting and proportioning the reproof to the greatness of the sin, but making it too soft and gentle, not shewing just indignation against it, which was Eli his guilt, who though he did not altogether neglect or omit to reprove the prophanity and gross wickedness of his sons, yet did not reprove at that rate of holy severity, called for, and answerable to their atrocious and villanous wickedness, he frowned not on them and dealt not roughly with them, as he should have done, as is clear by comparing, 1 Sam. ii. 22, 23, 24, 25. with 1 Sam. iii. 13. 10. By rash putting men in offices for which they are not all, or not competently qualified, and so cannot but in all probability sin much in them, especially in the office of the ministry, 1 Tim. v. 22. 11. By not endeavouring by all suitable and lawful means within the compass of our power and calling

to prevent the sin of others, and to restrain them from it, as Eli is on this account challenged by the Lord, 1 Sam. iii. 13. 12. By broaching, venting, teaching and spreading heresies and false doctrine; thus Antichrist is notoriously and primely guilty of this sin of soul murder; as all false teachers and seducers are less or more according to the nature of the doctrine taught by them and their industry in propagating the same; and likewise all that tolerate and do not restrain them, whose office obligeth them according to their power: all these and otherwise may men be accessory to other mens sins, and so make themselves guilty of this great and cruel sin of soul-murder.

This sort of murder aboundeth and is very rife, and yet is in an especial manner forbidden by this command, and the prevention of it accordingly called for, it being a greater evidence of love to our neighbour to be careful of his soul than of his body; the one being more precious than the other: and however false prophets, teachers and seducers, seem ordinarily to be most tender of mens persons, and most desirous to please them, yet are they in this sort horridly guilty of their murder.

3. There is a life of contentment, consisting in the tranquillity of the mind, and the calm form of a quiet spirit with comfort, joy and chearfulness: To this purpose saith Paul, 1 Thess. iii. 8. *I live, if ye stand fast in the Lord*: and it is said of Jacob, Gen. xlv. 27. when he heard that Joseph lived, *his spirit revived*; as if it had been dead before, because of his great heaviness, arising from the supposed death of his son. Thus we become guilty of this sin of *killing*, when we obstruct or interrupt the spiritual comfort and joy, or the inward contentment of our neighbour, by fear, heaviness, disquietness, discouragement, &c. whereby his life is made bitter, and his tranquillity impaired, and so his hurt procured or furthered: As Joseph's brethren did not only become guilty of his blood, but of weighting their Father, and deadning, as it were his spirit, which afterward at the news of Joseph's being alive revived: So people may be guilty against their ministers, when they make them do their work not with joy, but grief, as it is Heb. xiii. 17.

Again, murder, as it respecteth the bodily life of our neighbour, is either immediate as Cain's was of Abel, Joab's of Abner and Amasa; or mediate, as Saul's was of the Lord's priests, David's of Uriah, and Achab's of Naboth.

Again, killing may be considered either as purposed, such as Cain's was of Abel, and Joab's of Abner and Amasa, or

not

not purposed; which again is twofold: 1. Innocent which is even by the law of God every way so, and is indeed no breach of this command: As when a man following his duty, doth that which beside, and contrary to his intention, and without any previous neglect or oversight in him, proveth the hurt and death of another. 2. Culpable, because although it do proceed beyond the purpose of the person, yet it is occasioned and caused by a culpable negligence: As, suppose one were hewing with an ax, which he either knew or might have known to be loose, and the head not well fastened to the helve, did not advertise those about it; if by flying off, it happened to wound or kill any person, he were not innocent; but if without any inadvertancy he either knew not that it were loose, or that any were about him, if then it should fall of and kill his neighbour, in this he is guiltless: So, when the Lord commanded those who built houses to build settlements about the roofs of them, if any person fell where the battlements were, the master was free; if the battlements were not, he was guilty.

Murder is also either to be considered, as committed after provocation, or without all provocation, which is a great aggravation of the sin, though the provocation maketh it not cease to be a sin. Further it may be considered, as it is the murder of wicked and evil men, and that on the account of their religion, which is a most horrid aggravation of the murder.

Lastly this murder is either ordinarily, as of meer equals, or inferiors; or extraordinary aggregated by the quality of the person murdered, whether he be a superior, as a magistrate, a parent; or whether he be of a near relation, as a brother, or kinsman, &c.

We come a little more particularly to consider the extent and nature of the sin forbidden here (which is not certainly to be understood by taking this life by public justice, or in a lawful or just war, or in necessary and pure self-defiance) that we may the better understand the contrary duty commanded: It implieth then a hurting, which we may consider, 1. As in the heart. 2. As in the mouth or words. 3. As in gestures. 4. As in deeds; for we take it for granted that it reacheth further than the gross outward act, as by Christ's exposition of it in Matth. v. is incontrovertibly clear.

The heart is the fountain, spring, and treasure of all evil, in it breedeth all evil, and from it proceedeth this murder, Matth. xv. 19. He that in heart hateth his brother is a murderer, 1 John iii. 15. In a word whatever is opposite to love in the heart, is a breach of this command: As, 1.

Hatred,

Hatred, which is malicious, and simply wisheth ill to our neighbour, and only because we love him not, without any other reason, as one wickedly said,

*Non amo te Zabidi, nec possum dicere quare,
Hoc tantum possum dicere, non amo te.*

So Cain hated his brother without cause. 2. *Anger*, that supponeth a pretended wrong, and is desirous of revenge, because of ingratitude, pretended injustice, &c. 3. *Envy*, whereby we are grieved with the good of another, supposing, though groundlessly that it obstructeth ours, and therefore we seek to overturn it: *Anger is cruel, and wrath outrageous, but who can stand before envy?* Saith Solomon. There is often secret hatred on this ground more irreconcilable, than where many and grave reasons can be given. 4. *Rage*, which presseth revenge beyond what is condign, though it follow it lawfully, as to outward means. 5. *Servitia*, or *cruelty*, that delighteth in the hurt and prejudice of another, all these and others of this kind go generally under the name of *hatred* and *anger*.

If any ask here, Is there no anger lawful? *Answ.* Yes, for there is somewhat of it natural, yea, and sometimes it lawfully immixeth itself in duty, as in zeal, when God is dishonoured, which was in Moses, Exod. xxxii. And no doubt, indignation at wicked men, in some cases, is lawful and also required. But carnal anger is forbidden; which, 1. Is a desire of revenge where there hath no wrong been done to us. 2. When the revenge desired is disproportioned to, and greater than the wrong. 3. When it is preposterously desired, without intervening justice. 4. When it is not desired for the right end, to wit, the man's gaining, but only for the satisfying of our carnal humour. 5. When it is immoderate and corrupt in the manner of it, so as the name of God is dishonoured by it. This unlawful anger, when it is, 1. Against a superior, it is called *grudge*. 2. When against an equal, *rancour*. 3. When against an inferior, *disdain* and *contempt*; these two last follow ordinarily upon the first.

2. This command is broken by injurious words, as in that fifth chapter of Matthew, *He that shall say to his brother, thou fool, is guilty*: O what guilt will there be found to have been in imprecations, cursings, wrathful wishes, disdainful and passionate speeches, when Christ will call men to an account for the breach of this command?

3. It is broken in gestures, such as high looks, fierce

looks, gnashing with the teeth, Acts vii. 54. foaming with the mouth, and such like, wherewith even our blessed Lord and his servants have been followed; and as there may be adultery in looks, so there is also murder in them; such looks had Cain, Gen. iv. 5.

4. It is broken in deeds, even when death followeth not, as in wounding, smiting, oppressing, cruel withdrawing of the means of life, extortion, exaction, biting, usury, litigious wrangling, violent compulsion, raising and racking of land or house-rents beyond the just value, and squeezing and exacting upon poor labourers and tenants, without any due regard to them or their labours; which last is a frequent sin, but little regarded, a crying sin, but little cared for. Next, it is broken by withholding what might be useful and refreshful, as by neglecting the sick and distressed, want of hospitality, especially to the poor: All these are sinful breaches, whether directly or indirectly incurred, neither is it sufficient that we abstain simply from committing some of these, but we must also make conscience to practise all contrary duties.

The last thing proposed to be spoken to, was the person *thou*; where, in a word, we are to distinguish private men from public men, who are magistrates and bear the sword, whom this command doth not restrain from executing of justice; yet these may also sin in their passions; and unjustly put forth their authority, and be carnal in punishing and passing sentence, even when there is ground in justice; and thus magistrates may become guilty, though in the executing of justice, not simply, but by reason of other concurring circumstances. Thus much shortly on this command.



THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

EXODUS xx. Verse 14.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

THE Lord having spoken of such sins as do more respect mans being, simply in the former command, he cometh now to direct in those things that concern a man
in