

## SERMON VI.

*Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires [or, the wills] of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

—VER. 3.

I HAVE formerly told you that in these three first verses of this second chapter, there is an exact description of the state of man by nature, so complete and so compendious a one as is nowhere else together, that I know, in the whole Book of God.

I did cast the whole into these three generals:—

I. Here is the *internal habitual estate*, which in that state of nature men stand and lie in; they are ‘dead in sins and trespasses.’

II. Here is their *external conversation*, with all the three causes—the world, flesh, and Satan—which do pervert them; ‘wherein,’ saith he, ‘in time past ye walked.’ There is—

1. The *exemplary cause*, the weakest; ‘according to the course of this world.’

2. The *outward efficient and inciter*, or procatartical cause,—that is, Satan; according to the ‘prince of the power of the air.’ There is—

3. The *inward cause*, the lusts of our own hearts; ‘fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,’ &c.

III. Here is the *misery and the punishment* that is the consequent of both,—that we are ‘children of wrath;’ we Jews, saith the Apostle, as well as others, and all mankind.

The last thing I fell upon was, the description of that third and last cause, of all the corruption in men’s conversation: ‘Having our conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,’ &c.

In opening of this third cause, which is the corruption of nature, I told you that the Apostle’s scope was to shew the pedigree of all these causes. Here is—

1. The root whence all spring; ‘our flesh,’ a body of sin. Which flesh—

2. Begetteth lusts, which are the first-born buds of original corruption inherent in us; ‘the lusts,’ saith he, ‘of our flesh.’ And then you have—

3. The division of these. They are either—

(1.) The lusts of the body, sensual lusts. Or—

(2.) The lusts of the mind, of the understanding and superior part. And then he telleth you—

4. What is the spring, both of this flesh and this inherent corruption, that produceth these lusts, which lusts we obey, and all our conversation by nature is nothing else but the fulfilling of these lusts; he saith, it is our birth, we have it by nature. So he tells us in the next words, ‘and are the children of wrath by nature, even as others.’

And as he tells us the order of corruption thus, and the pedigree of it,

of pure and mere corruption so considered, so he shews the order of the causes in the course of nature, according to the subordination of the faculties one to another. Man hath an understanding, and man hath a will, and there is no lust fulfilled but there is a consent of the will first given thereunto. And therefore that which he calls *lusts* in the first part of the words, 'in the lusts of our flesh,' when it comes to the fulfilling of them, he calls them the *wills* of the flesh; so it is in the original and in your margins.

And so you have the analysis of the words.

I left in these words, *in the lusts of our flesh*, and I shall proceed in them. There are four things to be explained:—

I. *What is meant by 'flesh.'*

II. *Why it is called 'flesh;'* for there is not a particle, nor a word, that is in vain here.

III. *What are the lusts of our flesh*, and the sinfulness of them.

IV. *What it is to have our conversation in these lusts.*

I. *What is meant by flesh.*

I told you, by it is meant that inherent corruption which sticks in us, and overspreadeth all the powers both of soul and body. 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh.'

When I handled this, I did two things:—

1. I gave you an account of the phrase and the reasons of it, why inherent corruption is called flesh. It was called so by Moses, in Gen. vi., and it was called so by Christ, and so the apostles used it.

2. I described the thing itself, and I told you it was a mass, or a bundle, or body of sinful dispositions in man's nature, which were become his nature, whereby the whole man and all the powers thereof were empty of all good; and it contained within it the seeds and the inclinations to all sins whatsoever. It is called the 'body of the sins of the flesh,' Col. ii.

I will not stand to repeat what I then delivered, but will proceed to—

II. *Why is it called our flesh?*

When God made man, it is said he made him in his image; as the grace that Adam had, it was God's, it was his image. But you read in Gen. iv., when man was fallen, he is said to beget Seth in his image; the style is altered from *God's* image to *his* image. An account may easily be given why it is called Adam's image, because that he sinned, and contracted it to himself. But why is it called *ours*, as here 'our flesh?' The truth is, because we are the miserable subjects of it. So, why is it called *our* flesh, but because we are the miserable subjects of it, because it is our nature? Though we have it from our parents, that is derived to us by them, yet being our nature it is of all things properly ours; for there is nothing so properly ours as what is our nature, and what is ourselves. As therefore hell is called a sinner's place, as you have it, Acts i., so corruption and flesh is called our flesh; we possess nothing but sin. Yea, Paul calleth it himself: 'In me,' saith he, 'that is, in my flesh;' he doth not only call it flesh, but he calls it *himself*. And—

2. It is called our flesh in opposition to God's work. 'Let no man,' saith James, 'when he is tempted, say he is tempted of God;' he is tempted of his own lusts, of his own flesh. 'Of his own lusts,' that is the phrase there, in James i. 13, 14. It is spoken there in opposition to the work of God in us; it is not that which at first God created us in. And—

3. It is called our flesh in opposition to the grace that is in us. When the devil is said to sin, he is said to sin 'of his own,' John viii. 44. And in Jude, ver. 16, carnal men are said to walk after their own lusts. But if any

grace be spoken of that is in us, how runs the style of that? I have done thus and thus, saith Paul, and yet not I, but the grace of God that is in me. I know a man in Christ, saith he, was thus and thus; not of myself will I glory, but of that man in Christ. The phrase that is used, speaking of grace, and all the workings of it, in 2 Cor. iii., is, 'We are not sufficient of ourselves,'—there is all the exclusion that may be, both ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν and ἐξ ἑαυτῶν, either of ourselves, or out of ourselves; neither à nobis, *tanquam ex nobis*,—'to think a good thought.'

And so much now why it is called *our flesh*. The interpretation doth carry observations with it which I need not mention. I come to—

### III. *What are the lusts of our flesh?*

All the buddings of this cursed root of inherent corruption in us are in Scripture expressed to us by *lusts*. Sometimes the word lusts is put for the root itself, for original sin itself, that inherent quality in us; as in James i., 'When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.' He calleth corrupt nature lusts; but here he calls the first buds, the first risings of corruption from this root, he calls them lusts. So, in Rom. vii. 8, 'Sin wrought in me all manner of concupiscence;' that is, all manner of lusts. Lusts there are taken for the buddings of original corruption, which is there meant by sin, which is the sin that dwells in us.

Now all the corruption that is in corrupt nature I reduce to these two heads; yet not I, but the Apostle—

1. All those *principles of atheism, of infidelity, and ungodliness* that are in the hearts of men, which are the foundation. For the principles of unbelief, and of darkness, and presumption, and the like, these do cut a man off from God; and the soul being cut off from God is left to eternal death, as I shall shew you how by and by. I say, all the corruptions in man's heart, they are reduced either to the principles of atheism, of infidelity and unbelief, or else—

2. To those *positive lusts*, and inclinations, and desires after something in the world which a man would have, and which he placeth his comfort in more than in God.

I take this division from that of the Apostle, in Titus ii. 12, 'Teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.' Here you have the sum. And hence in the 18th verse of the Epistle of Jude, you shall find that they are called 'ungodly lusts;' for the heart being cut off from God is left to the swing of its own natural lusts and desires. And in these two lies the utmost extent of all the corruption in man's nature.

Now although indeed the Apostle here doth not directly mention that privative part, as I may call it, of atheism and unbelief, yet it is evidently implied; for our lusts were not sinful lusts unless they did arise from ungodliness, from that ungodliness, and that atheism, and that unbelief, that is in the spirits of men. He had occasion to have mentioned those principles that are in the mind, but yet he terms these 'lusts,' and calleth them 'wills,' or lusts, or desires of the mind, of the reasoning part, as the word signifies.

Under the word 'lusts' the Apostle by a *synecdoche* meaneth all the inward acts, all the purposes, all the contrivances, all the counsels of the heart. For what are purposes? They are but the continuation of desires. And what are all the contrivements and counsels of the hearts of men? They are but to accomplish their desires and lusts. Therefore the Scripture indeed doth express the corruptions in the hearts of men by lusts.

I could open to you the several names that are given to the buddings of corruption in us of all sorts, as the Scripture hath laid them down. As—

1. Sometimes they are called the *savouring of the flesh*; as in Rom. viii. 5, 'Those that are after the flesh savour the things of the flesh.' Every faculty hath a principle to discern what is suitable to it, and it doth savour that thing and mind it. The word expresseth the suitability that there is between a fleshly heart and fleshly things.

2. It is called *ἐπιθυμία*, as here, *lust*; for when the heart doth find a suitability between it and any object, it puts forth a desire and a lust towards it. That which is in other creatures an instinct, in man that is reasonable is called a lust, a desire.

3. They are called, τὰ παθήματα, *passions*; and that indeed is the proper implication of the word; so in Rom. vii. 5; and in Gal. v. 24, to 'crucify the lusts of the flesh,' it is the 'passions of the flesh.' For God being gone, all these lusts become passions, become inordinate in us, they turn into violence. They are παθήματα, as Galen useth the word, which is the fits of the disease; for all sinful desires come by fits, and come with violence as the fits do, and put nature into a fire,—set on fire, as James expresseth it, the whole course of nature.

4. They are called, as here, *wills*; *wills of the flesh*. When they are gotten so high as they have got the consent of the will, and then are put forth into action, they are called the wills of the flesh. And so much for the names that are given to flesh.

For the thing itself; I shall endeavour a little that you may understand the nature of the lusts of the hearts of the sons of men: it reacheth to all the motions of man's nature whatsoever,—that is, the desires,—and there is no faculty but hath its desires. To open this, I shall do these three things, that so you may see in what lieth the sinfulness of these lusts. I shall—

1. Shew you the *natural state of the soul*, and the lustings thereof; for this you must know, that *lusting* and *lust* is used sometimes in a good sense; for it is said the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, as well as the flesh lusteth against the Spirit. So that, I say, I shall shew you, first, the natural state of the soul, and the lusts thereof, without the consideration of being good or evil. I shall—

2. Shew you the *holiness* of all the lusts and desires of the heart—wherein that lieth—in *man's first nature*, and now when he is renewed. And so—

3. You will understand the *sinfulness of the heart of man*, in all its lustings, now when God is gone, now when they are become ungodly lusts.

First, I shall speak of the lustings of the heart, abstractedly considered from good and evil in man's soul, in man's spirit.

My brethren, what is the soul of man *in its natural essential constitution*? It is nothing else but a chaos of desires, (let me so express it;) it is as the first matter, which was void of all form, and was full of nothing, but desires after forms, of being filled, and being satisfied. God created the soul as a mere stomach to receive from other things a filling of it, and as we use to say, it is an empty stomach. And therefore the voice of all things and of all mankind by nature is, 'Who will shew us any good?' Ps. iv. And all faculties are like so many birds in a nest, that stand gaping to be filled with some good thing suitable thereunto. So that now there are not only the sensual desires, or the bodily lusts, but the lusts of the mind; the mind itself hath its lusts in it, and its desires. As a man hath a desire to think of this rather than of that,—though it be his understanding only that works,—he hath a mind to such a thing, a thought to such an object, to take such a thing into consideration. All the superior parts, the memory and the understanding, they have all their lustings, as well as the lower and inferior parts of the spirit of

man. Now then, the essential constitution of the soul of man being nothing but a chaos of desires, an emptiness,—as the earth, the first matter, in Gen. i., is said to be void; so naturally in the essence of it the soul is a void thing, made to be filled up with other things, which may satisfy this vast chaos of desires,—the Lord ordained first himself to be man's chiefest good, and to satisfy and to fill all the desires both of the understanding and the will. He opened their mouths wide, and he was able and ordained himself to fill them. And to that end he created him with the image of God,—that is, with such a divine impression, that look, as the needle when it is touched by the loadstone moves northward, so the soul being touched with that image, carries the understanding, the will and affections, and all the lusts thereof, unto God, as the chiefest good, as finding a suitableness in him more than in all things else. And yet, in the second place, God putting this soul of man into a body, and so to lead an animal life,—as the expression is in 1 Cor. xv. 48,—he made a world suited to this soul in this body. And there is nothing in man, either in his understanding or his will, or in any of the senses, or in anything belonging unto man, but there is something in the world likewise to suit it. He hath made the little world suited to the great world, and the great world to the little, as he hath suited ears unto sounds; 'meats for the belly,' as the Apostle saith. Now then—

Secondly, Wherein lay *the holiness of all these lustings and desires of the soul of man?* The holiness of them lay in these three things, and by that you shall see wherein lieth their sinfulness:—

1. This image of God, which had touched the soul of man, through the working of the Spirit of God in him, did carry on the soul of man to God as his chiefest good, to nothing above him, to say, 'Whom have I in heaven in comparison of thee, and whom in earth?' And—

2. It carried the soul of man, and all its desires, to other things that had a sweetness in them, but only as means to taste the goodness of God, to enjoy God in and by them, to know God the more, and to love him. And then—

3. It carried on all the desires of the soul to all things else besides God, for God's sake; yea, and unto God himself, not only as his chiefest good, but as the chiefest good, not out of love of pleasure, but out of love unto God himself: for holiness being the image of God, as God is for himself,—therein lieth his holiness,—so this image makes the creature also to be for God.

And thus you have the holiness of these lustings in the soul of man. I have shewed you, first, what the natural constitution of the soul was in itself; it is indeed nothing else but lusts, a heap of desires. What the holiness of all these desires was, I have shewn you in the second place. Now then—

Thirdly, I am to shew you the sinfulness of them, which makes them to be here called *the lusts of our flesh*. You may easily understand, by what hath been said of the holiness of them, wherein their sinfulness lies. In a word, it lies in two things. It lies—

1. In a privation; and—

2. In something positive.

They are *ungodly* lusts, and they are *worldly* lusts; they are called both. The one expresseth the privative part, the other the positive.

1. For the *privative* part. The foundation of all the sinfulness of these desires lies in the want of that image of God, of that magnetic virtue, that virtue of the loadstone, that should carry up all these desires to God and

unto other things for his sake. This iron, as I may say, hath lost this magnetic touch, this influence, and now it moveth only as iron. The understanding is taken off from God, and the will is taken off from God, and so all the affections. You have that in Rom. iii. 11, 'There is none that understandeth,'—namely, God,—'and there is none that seeks'—that have a will to seek—'after God.' The one expresseth the privation of the understanding, the other of the will. The heart is cut off from God utterly, it cannot go that way; therefore, as I said before, they are called 'ungodly lusts.' Atheism, unbelief, &c., have cut the heart off from God, from either aiming at him as his chiefest end, for he wanteth holiness, or going forth to him as his chiefest good, for he wants his image, which maketh a soul suitable unto God; and a man desireth nothing but what he knows, and what is suitable to him. Hence therefore you have it, in Job xxvii. 10, that a carnal heart cannot delight himself in the Almighty; there is no suitableness. And in Rom. viii. 7, the carnal mind is called 'enmity against God.'

2. For the *positive* part. The image of God being thus gone,—you have that expression in Rom. iii. 23, all men are come short of the glory of God; where by the 'glory of God,' I understand his image, that which carried the heart of man out to God, to glorify him, which made him stand under the favour of God in that covenant of works; for so, in 1 Cor. xi. 7, the image of God, and the glory of God, are both made one: man, saith he, is the glory and the image of God;—this image, I say, being gone, the soul being deprived thus of that touch, all the lustings that it had in its natural constitution remain still, there is not a desire which the soul had before but it hath still; and all the sinful desires it now hath are but what were before, take the nature of the desires. There is nothing of the substance of the body or of the soul destroyed, nor any new lusts put in. Now when God is thus gone, and holiness is thus gone, and all the lustings and desires of a man's heart are left to themselves, then what do you think is left?

(1.) Here is a love of himself left. There is one great lust, and the greatest of all the rest. When holiness was there, the love of God subjected the love of a man's self unto God: now take this love of God away, and then self-love is the next heir, that great lust steppeth up into the throne; and that indeed is the very bottom of original sin, it is the spring.

(2.) I told you man was made suitable to all the creatures; there was nothing in this world but God had framed a suitableness between man and it. All these suitablenesses still remain, a suitableness to all creature-comforts whatsoever. Now here lies the sinfulness of it, that all these lustings are carried out, and managed by self-love, which is the great lust of all the rest. And then, secondly, they are carried out to all the creatures, and to all creature-comforts,—which indeed the soul and body were made for,—rather than unto God. So that the lusting or desiring of happiness merely for a man's self, and the seeking of this happiness in those things that man was made for, without God; in these two doth lie all that positive part of the lusts of our flesh; for now we describe them but in general. And therefore you shall find that in these two, viz., love of a man's self and love of pleasure, namely in other things than in God, is the sum of all man's corruption reduced unto, in that 2 Tim. iii. 2-4, where he reckons up all sorts of corruptions, a great bead-roll of sins; and he makes 'love of men's selves' to be the captain, as I may so speak, the first, the ringleader; and 'lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,' to be that which cometh in the rear. For these two are the spring of all the corruption in us, and unto these two are all our lusts reduced. And,—as I may rightly express it,—as there is never

a vein in the body of a man but there is an artery, as we say, that runs under it, the one carrying blood, and the other spirits; so in the lustings of the soul of man, there runneth a vein of the love of pleasures, or some other thing than God, and an artery of love of a man's self that puts spirits into this. And as the principles of motion (of life at least) are blood and spirits in a man's veins, so are these in a man's soul.

So by this you may easily understand wherein the sinfulness of these lusts lies. All these lusts are guided by love to a man's self, and love to pleasures in something else than God. The passage being stopped to God, it runs to riches, beauty, honour, and all these worldly things, as its chiefest good. Whatsoever the understanding of a man, if he be wise, can find that is suitable to him, it draws forth a lust towards that thing. Whatsoever the art and wit of man finds any way suitable to him, he is carried out to it, and that merely out of a love he beareth to himself, and merely for pleasure's sake: that, look which way self-love moveth, still that way the vein of lust runneth; as that is pleased or displeased, the soul cometh off or on, putteth forth lusts or desires, and pulls them in again. And he hath no new desires put into him which he had not at first, only these desires are left to themselves, God being taken away: so that now all the affections in the soul turn with that wind every way; if another man have happiness and he wants it, self-love, desiring happiness, puts forth envy; the spirit that is in us lusteth after envy. Still, they have all their rise and spring in the love of a man's self, and in the love of pleasures, setting up the creature more than God. Therefore the belly is said to be god, and Mammon is said to be god. The holiness of man's desires lay in subordinating all things to God; and the sinfulness of them lies in loving of pleasures more than God: so the Apostle expresseth it, 'these are the lusts in our flesh.' There is not an action stirreth but these lusts are the ground of it. And hence, that I may give you a scripture for this division, they are called 'our own lusts,' and 'worldly lusts.'

They are called, in respect of self in us, *our own lusts*. And therefore to live to a man's lusts, and to live to a man's self, are all one. In 2 Cor. v. that which in one place is called living to a man's lusts, is in another place called living to a man's self, because that self-love runs in the vein of every lust, as an artery doth under a vein in a man's body; and you may feel the pulse of it, if you lay your hand upon your heart, and search but narrowly into the bottom of all. And they are therefore called the lusts of our own hearts, in Rom. i. 24.

They are likewise called *worldly lusts*, because the things of this world are the objects of them. They are called 'earthly members,' because they run out to things on earth, as in Col. iii. 5, and 'fleshly lusts,' in 1 Peter ii. 11. And so now I have shewn you wherein lies the sinfulness that is in every lust in the heart of man. I come now, in the next place, likewise—

#### IV. *To shew you what it is to have our conversation in these lusts.*

If you mark it, the Apostle, when he speaks of the efficacy that Satan and the world hath upon us, he useth another phrase,—'walking,' saith he, 'according to the course of the world,' and 'according to the prince of the power of the air;' but when he speaks of lusts, he speaks of them as of an inward intrinsical cause, 'having our conversation in the lusts of the flesh'—*in the flesh*, as a fish is said to live in the water. And a man is said to be in love, or in wine, or in anger, or in passion, because he is overcome with it. So we are said to have our conversation in lusts, and to be in the flesh; because a man is always overcome with some one lust or other, and that is

the ground of all the actions he doth, so long as he is in his natural estate. And therefore James saith, 'He that is tempted is drawn aside of his own lusts;' and as Christ saith, 'That which cometh from within defileth the man.' The Scripture therefore doth attribute all the actions of the sons of men unto their lusts. In 2 Tim. iii. 6, 'led away with divers lusts.' All the corruption that is in the world is attributed to the daily boilings up of these lusts, to the tumbings and tossings of these desires; for the soul of man is like the raging sea, tossing to and fro, and never resteth. So in 2 Peter i. 4, 'the corruption that is in the world through lust;' and the old man is said to be corrupt in lusts, Eph. iv. 22. And therefore the Apostle doth propound these lusts as the chiefest object of mortification, as I shall speak by and by.

And then, in the second place, to have our conversation in these lusts, it doth note out a constancy also, a constant walking in some lust or other; whereas there is no other foundation of all the actions of a man's ways but these sinful lustings of his own heart. It may be reduced either into the love of pleasure in something else rather than in God; or to the love of a man's self above God.

Now, men have their conversation in these. Why? Because that the soul of man being an empty chaos of desires, as I said at first. As the stomach cannot live unless it have some nourishment in it, so a man cannot live unless some lust or other be satisfied. 'In which ye walked,' saith he, Col. iii. 7, 'whilst ye lived in them;' he speaks of lusts plainly, as appears, ver. 3. All creatures are conversant about that which is their life, and they are constant about that which is their life. As a fish, whose element is the water, if it be out of the water it dies; therefore we are said to 'drink in iniquity like water.' And these lusts, and the satisfying of them, being a man's life, he is said to 'war after them;' it is a mighty expression. In 2 Cor. x. 3, our warfare, saith he, is not after the flesh. He speaks in opposition to what carnal men's warfare is; they pursue after the satisfaction of their lusts, as a matter of life: as men that in war do fight *pro aris et focis*, for their subsistence, for their lives; therefore they are called the 'lusts that war in our members,' James iv. 1. They are not only compared to a law in the members, as in Rom. vii. 23, but they are compared to the violence of war too; 'the lusts, saith he, 'that war in our members.' And so you have the sinfulness of these lusts described, and what it is to have our conversation in them. There is not an act which a carnal man doth but it is to satisfy some lust or other.

All that I shall more observe is but this: that they are called *lusts*, in the plural; there are a variety of them; they are said to be 'divers lusts,' Titus iii. 6; they are not one, but many. And the reason why they are many is this: the desires of man's soul were once united in one object, namely, in God; but he being gone, the soul breaks into a thousand desires, and makes every one of them its god. That which did unite and begirt up all the desires in one, that centre being gone, all these beams are scattered. And look, how many objects there are which may any way please a man, and in which he may have pleasure, the soul being all for pleasure, and being itself an unsatisfiable thing,—for it being made to be filled with God, it must needs be so,—and because one thing cannot fill it, it runs to another, and so to another, and so the soul is scattered into a thousand several lusts.

And then again, we are said to walk in our *lusts*, in the plural, because a man cannot always live in satisfying one lust only, therefore in the *interim*



there must be other lusts to entertain the soul : for the soul is never idle, it can never want a moment's pleasure some way or other ; it must have relief, or at leastwise desiring and seeking after it : and so what in one thing, and what in another, a man walketh all his life in some lusts or other, and makes it a sorrowful life. And thus natural men have their conversation in the lusts of the flesh.—And so much now for these words.

I come to the next : *fulfilling the wills of the flesh and of the mind.*

That which the Apostle had said in the general before, here he speaks of more particularly. He doth both further explain what it is to walk in the lusts of the flesh ; it is to fulfil them, saith he, it is to act them,—it is the most proper word in the English that can be,—to act the wills of the flesh and of the mind. As in our usual speech we say, a man acteth his spirit.

And then, secondly, he divides these lusts into two parts, the lusts of the flesh, or of the sensual part ; and the lusts of the mind, that is, of the understanding and the will. I shall first open the phrases.

The first phrase I shall give you an account of is this, *the wills* ; for indeed in the original so the word is, and so you shall find it in your margins. It is certain that what he meant by *lusts* in the general, in the words before, he meaneth the same thing by *wills* here. The truth is, in a strict sense, only the lustings and the motions of the understanding and of the will are τὰ θελήματα, they are 'wills ;' but in the inferior part, in the sensual part, those sensual affections, of anger and the like, are but lusts and desires. And yet notwithstanding the one is put for the other sometimes in the Scripture, as Beza hath observed upon John i. 13, out of Mark x. 35. Now by 'wills of the flesh,' he therefore here meaneth lusts or desires, as it is translated, as he had done before. As when, in Rom. vii., he calleth the lusts of a man's heart the law of the members, which properly are the lusts of the body, but he means likewise all the lusts of the mind too : so here, when he calls them the wills of the flesh, he meaneth all the motions of the body also, all the lusts both of soul and body. But to give you an account why he calls them 'wills,' it is for these reasons :—

1. To shew that the desires, the lustings of the hearts of men, are not merely brutish, they have a tincture of will and reason in them ; and though oftentimes they are involuntary, for there are many motions arise before the will is put forth, yet because they are in a creature that hath will and reason, which will and reason should be too strong for the risings of such lusts, and keep them down, hence therefore they are called 'wills.' You shall see the same kind of lusts in beasts as in men. You shall see pride in a horse, you shall see revenge in an elephant, &c. But yet these very lusts that are the same in men with those that are in beasts, because they are in a creature that hath a will and reason to keep them down, the fault therefore of all these lusts is laid upon the will, and they are called 'the wills of the flesh and of the mind.' Take now a natural fool, between whom and a beast there is but a nice distinction in appearance ; yet these lusts in him are sins, not in the other, because he hath a will and reason. But—

2. The chief reason why the apostle here alters his phrase, and calls them the wills of the flesh and of the mind, is this. He speaks here in relation to action, of acting or fulfilling the wills of the flesh and of the mind. And therefore, to shew how it comes to pass that all these lusts, these brutish sensual lusts that are in the flesh and in the body, as well as in the reason, do come forth to outward action, he saith, there is a consent of the will ; and therefore now in James i. lust is said to be the tempter,

but the will, that is the thing tempted ; for that is the stern and rudder of all in man. And, as I shall tell you in the observation when I come to it, there is no lust so sensual but before it comes forth into act there must be the consent of the will, for the order of nature still standeth ; they must have the will's pass and commission for it ; and therefore he calls it here *fulfilling*. When once they come into action, these lusts are turned into wills : hence therefore they are said to be the 'wills of the flesh.'

3. He calls them 'wills of the flesh,' to shew where the chief seat of corruption lies : it lies in the will. Therefore Amesius, as I remember, when he speaks of the corruption of the will, quoteth this place. And therefore in other scriptures, that which is called the 'lusts of men,' is called the 'wills of men.' Look but in 1 Pet. iv. and you shall find that that which in the 2d verse he calleth 'the lusts of men,' in the 3d he calleth 'the will of the Gentiles ;' and he calls them so in opposition to the will of God, because it is the will of man that must consent to the actings of those lusts.

Therefore, my brethren, by the way, a man can never be saved by any power in this will. In John i. 13, 'which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God.' He instanceth, you see, in the will of the flesh. Beza indeed takes it to be meant of the seat of the grosser corruptions in the sensual part of the flesh. But surely the Apostle would not instance in that, as if that should have any hand in salvation ; there was not so much as any pretence for that : his intention is therefore to instance in the best part, and the strength of the will. Take the will in itself, in the uttermost purity of it, yet it being a will of the flesh, a man can never be born again of it ; he speaks of the best endeavours of the will.—And so much now why it is called 'the wills of the flesh.'

*Obs. 1.*—I will only now give you an observation or two from what hath been said. And the observation from that which was last said—for from everything there might be observations raised—is this, *That there is no lust cometh forth to action but it is by the consent of the will ; yea, and of the reasoning part too.* They are called the 'wills of the flesh and of the mind,' of the reasoning part. It may refer as well to the order of the casuality of sin, how it cometh forth into action, as to the subject of these lusts.

As to this you must know, that although man is fallen, yet the order of nature, in the subordination of the faculties one to another, stands as it did, works as it did. The most brutish lust that is, the understanding and the will must concur and consent ere it is fulfilled ; only the first motion doth not come from the mind and the will. And there is this difference between the workings of grace and sin in this respect, that all the workings of grace begin with the mind ; for all the motions of grace must arise from the apprehensions of faith in the understanding, and so they pass to action ; and so spiritual affections are moved in us. And therefore it is called the 'law of the mind,' in Rom. vii. It begins there, and the understanding, like a burning-glass, that takes in the beams of the sun, receiving the beams of spiritual things, it inflameth and setteth on fire the affections with them. But now, if you come to lusts and corruption they begin oftentimes in the sensual part ; and therefore in Rom. vii. are called oppositely the 'law of the members.' And they propound first, yet so as still the order of nature, in respect to outward action, remains—that the understanding and will must first give their consent. In man's pure state, as now in our regenerate condition, so far as we are regenerate, the

understanding and the will lead on to every action ; but in the corrupt state usually the affections begin to lead ; yet so as, until the understanding and the will do consent, the man proceeds not to action. The difference of these two may be expressed by those ways of government : the one when, suppose, in a corporation, there should not a motion pass the common council but it must come from the mayor and aldermen, with their consents, first ; the other, that motion must come from the vulgar sort first. So it is in the corrupt state ; all cometh from below, or at least much of all the actions in which men live in sin, they come from the sensual desires, and gain the consent of the will.

And then, if you ask the reason why that the understanding and will do assent to such lusts as it receiveth not immediately ? the reason is this : because the understanding and the will know no better ; they are cut off from God, and being cut off from God, they must give consent : for the man is for pleasure, and the will is for pleasure, and so is the understanding ; therefore what pleaseth the man, the understanding approveth for best, and so doth the will too, though not best in itself, yet best for the man. And *qualis quisque est, talis finis ei videtur*, as is the man, such is his end ; as he is disposed in himself, such is his end in working ; every man works for his end, and look what the man is, such is his end. As now, a man in a sickness desireth drink ; reason and understanding tell him it is ill and naught ; but yet the understanding consents and approves it. Why ? Because as the man is affected, such is his end and happiness, that is judged best which suiteth the man. And hence now all the sensual lusts come to obtain the consent of the will.

*Obs. 2.*—Secondly, in that here, lusts, when they come to action, are called wills, observe from hence : That the chief sinfulness of a man in his actions, it is not simply his lusts, and the rage and violence of them,—though therein lies a great inordinacy which a man is to be humbled for,—but when they come to act, it is the will either that is indulgent to those lusts, suffers the thoughts to dwell upon them, pore upon them, or which yieldeth to the performing and fulfilling of them. You see here that the Apostle, when he comes to speak of fulfilling of lusts, instead of fulfilling of lusts, he saith, fulfilling the *wills* of the flesh. The will is the great measure of sin. My brethren, the aggravation of sinning against knowledge lies chiefly in this, that the more knowledge a man hath, the more his will is discovered to be for the sin, notwithstanding that knowledge ; therefore the highest sinning of all, what is made the measure of it ? ‘That sin wilfully,’ saith he, ‘after they have received the knowledge of the truth,’ Heb. x. Therefore they are called ‘children of disobedience,’ in the very words before ; for their disobedience, their sinfulness especially, lies in the obstinacy and perverseness of the will. Therefore when God turns any man to him, he fasteneth that man’s will. He trusted to the will of man first, and was deceived by it ; and now he is resolved to make sure work with him when he comes to save him, and therefore he puts man’s salvation out of himself. And therefore now, when he doth work upon him, he works especially upon the will ; the Holy Ghost sits there, as in the centre of the soul, and hath a chief hand upon the stern of a man’s spirit. My brethren, your wills are the slipperiest things in the world, the fullest of a lubricity, of a fickleness. You see, Adam’s will, though it was strengthened with grace, and poised, how it was overcome, how fickle it was. Therefore, above all, desire the Lord to fasten your wills, to hold his hand upon that stern, always to guide you ; for if God hold his hand upon that stern, if the

will remain firm, and be kept close to him, it is called 'arming our mind,' 1 Pet. iv. 1. Though lusts do arise, and tempt, as they will do continually, yet you shall not fulfil them, they shall be as water about a rock that breaks; the will keeps these lusts from breaking forth into action, and takes the mind off from thinking of them.

*Obs. 3.*—Thirdly, you may see, my brethren, *wherein lies the slavery of the most noble creature.* What is the noblest thing in us? Our reasoning and our will. Now you may see by this that all these are enslaved to lusts; that phrase which the Apostle used before, 'walking in the lusts of the flesh,' here he turns it, and saith, 'fulfilling the wills of the flesh and of the reasoning part.' It is not a will now, it is indeed nothing but lusts; for that which he terms lusts in one part he termeth wills in another; so brutish it is. The will hath lost that freedom which once it had, and now it is in bondage, serving pleasures, serving divers lusts,—these expressions the Apostle hath, —falling down, God being now gone, to the poorest and meanest creature below itself. Herein lies, I say, the uttermost expression of the slavery of man, that his will is thus subject to the common, as I may express it, to all the brutish lusts that are in a man's spirit.