

THE
SOVLES
HVMILIATION.

Job 22. Verse 29.
And He shall save the humble Person.

The second Edition.



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THE
SOULES HUMILIATION.

Luke 15. vers. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, &c.

14. *And when he had spent all, there arose a mightie
Famine in that land, and he began to be in want.*

15. *And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that
countrey, and he sent him into his fields to feed Swine.*

16. *And he would faine have filled his belly with the
husks that the swine did eat : and no man gave them un-
to him.*

17. *And when he came to himselfe, he said, How many
hired servants in my Fathers house have bread enough,
and to spare, and I perish with hunger ?*

18. *I will arise, and goe to my father, and will say un-
to him, Father, I have sinned, &c.*

THAT a poore sinner might come,
and bee partaker of the pre-
cious merits and death of our Sa-
vior and receive comfort therby;
There are two things confide-
rable. First, a fitting and enabling
of the Soule for Christ. Secondly
an implantation of the Soule into Christ. For howlo-



ever it is true there is abundance of mercie, and infinite merit in Christ: yet unlesse the Soule be fitted and enabled by the hand of faith, to lay hold upon Christ; he shall never receive comfort from him, be his necessities never so many, and his misery never so grievous. Therefore *Iohn Baptist* was sent to prepare the way, that all those mountaines of pride might be laied low, and all the ditches filled up, and all the crooked things might bee made streight, and all rough things might bee made smooth, that there might be a way for Christ. The meaning is this: The heart of a man is the high-way wherein Christ comes. Now there are mountaines of pride and untoward stoutnesse of heart, and many windings and turnings, and devices which the heart hath, by reason of many lusts that are in it. This fitting and preparing, is nothing else but the taking away of that knottie knarlinesse of the heart, and that pride, and all such cursed corruptions, that the doore may bee set open, and the heart made ready that the King of glory may come in.

The heart being thus fitted and enabled, then followes humiliation: for the breaking of the heart is not all that God hath to doe with a poore sinner, though the Lord wound the heart of a sinner, and run him through, yet the heart will be starting aside, and will not goe out to Christ. Therefore I shal now speake of humiliation of the spirit, yet before I come to it, give me leave to lay open two passages.

1. The necessity of this worke, it must needs be.
2. The nature of this worke.

First, it is necessary that the soule should bee thus humbled

humbled ; for humiliation pares away all selfe-sufficiencie from the soule by compunction : the Lord breakes the heart, and wearies it with sinne, and then the soul wil be no more drunk, nor loose, nor vain, no more foolish, nor dissembling, nor hating of Gods servants, nor use no more false weights : by humiliation the Lord plucks away the confidence in a mans priviledges, and all his good performances, and all his duties, by which he is ready to shelter himselfe, and by which he thinkes to get some succour and comfort to his owne soule. Now as sin shall not rule in the heart, so the Lord will make the sinner see, that whatsoever he hath and doth, can never helpe him, except the Lord Iesus come downe from heaven by his mightie power. For the further opening of these, you must know that there are these two maine lets, which hinder the comming of faith into the soule, and which keep a man from beleiving in Christ, that Christ may have possession of him.

First, when the soule is taken up with a secure course, and rests it selfe well apaid in his owne practices, & therefore it never seeth any need of a change, nor never goes out for a change : now while he lives thus, and blesseth himselfe in his sinne, it is impossible that ever the Soule should receive faith, or ever by the power of faith repaire to Christ upon these termes: for ever where faith comes it works a change, all the old things are done away, and become new, he is new in heart and life ; now the secure sinner that seeth no need of a change, will never see need of faith, nor labour for it ; and if the Ministers of God bid such a man to leave his sinne, and to pray in his

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Let of Faith.

family, and forsake his sinfull practises, and to sanctifie the Lords day, and take up new courses, he thinks they bid him to his losse: now by that time the Lord hath taken away this let, and burthened the Soule marvellous extreamely, and saith, is it well that you live in drunkenesse, and in covetousnesse, in cheating in lying and the like, then take your sins and get you downe to hell with them; thus the Lord is forced to breake the heart: then a poore sinner begins to see where now he is, and now he saith, and is this true, then I am the most miserable creature under heaven, and except I be otherwise, it had beene good for me if I had never been borne, by this time the soule sees need of a change: Therefore as they said, *Men and brethren what shall we do,* we have been thus and thus, but if we rest here it will be our ruine for ever, oh, what shall we doe. Thus the soule comes to a restlesse dislike of it selfe, and saith, I must either be otherwise or else I am but a damned man for ever.

Acts 2.37.

When the soule is thus resolved that it must of necessitie change, & there is no dallying with the Lord nor with himselfe, and this heart must be altered, and this course must be amended. When it sees that it must change, it begins to improve all meanes to see if he can possibly do it by his owne strength, and by his meanes using, as if the soule did say, good Lord cannot my wit compass it, and cannot my prayers worke it, and though I am a sinful wretched man, yet I will be no more drunke, nor uncleane, nor the like: but by prayer, and hearing, and fasting, I will labour to mend all in this kinde; will not these duties doe the deed: this very resting in a mans selfe-sufficiency

doth marvellously crosse and hinder the worke of Faith, for this is the nature of Faith; It goes out of it selfe, and fetcheth a Principle of life, grace, and power from another. The soule apprehends it selfe miserable, and it falls upon the arme of Gods mercy, and meerly goes out to God for succour. Now for a man to fetch all from without, and yet to seeke for sufficiency from himselfe, these two cannot stand together they are professely crosse one to another; and therefore after the Lord hath made the soule see an absolute necessitie of a change, and now the soule seeth an utter impossibilitie in himselfe, to change or alter himselfe, then he is content to goe to Christ for grace and power. Thus Humiliation pares away all a mans priviledges and all his hearing and praying, &c. not, that a man must use these no more, but he must not rest upon them for strength to help and succour himselfe withal. As it is with the graft, First it must be cut off from the old stocke. 2. It must be pared and made fit for the implantation into another. So the Soule being cut off from sin, then Humiliation pares it, and makes it for the ingrafting into Christ. Thus you see this worke is absolutely necessary.

What humiliation is.

But what is this Humiliation of heart? It is thus much. When the soule upon search made despaire of all helpe from it selfe: he doth not despaire of Gods mercie, but of all help from himselfe and submits himselfe wholly to God, the soule strikes saile and fals under the power of Iesus Christ and is content to be at his disposing.

In this description let me discover these three particular passages.

First, the sinner that is now wounded and apprehensive of his own misery, makes out for some succor and remedie else-where, but he doth not go to Christ.

Secondly when he used all meanes that he can, hee seeth no helpe at all, nay, he utterly despaires of finding any succour from himselfe or from the creature

Then the soule despairing of all succour in himselfe it falls downe at the Throne of Grace, and saith, if the Lord will damne him he may, and if he will save him he may which as yet he cannot see, but hee resolves to wait upon God for mercie; he submits himselfe to the Lord and is content to be at his disposing.

For the first part of the Description that the soule seeketh for remedie else where and not from Christ. This is exprest here in the 15 verse of this Chapter The Prodigall would needs have his Portion, and he would not ever be a slave in his fathers familie: wel he it and gone he is, and he hath spent all, and when all was gone there fell a great famine in the Land; and what did he then? He would not now ryot any more as he had done, because Povertie pinched him in this kinde, but he turnes good husband, and is content to use any meanes for his maintcnance, and he would make hard shift before he would goe home to his father, and therefore he joynes himselfe to a Citizen of the Countrey, &c.

This prodigall is a true picture of every poore distressed sinner that hath ryoted away his Time, yet at last when the venome of sinne begins to scortch and pierce his soule, and he is famished for want of Gods favour and the wrath of God pursues him, and a desperate sorrow seafeth upon his heart, and he is wearied

and burthened and tired with his sinne, and sees that he hath no helpe, he sets all his wits to worke to see if he can tell which way to succour himselfe in these his grievances, and though he will not take up any base courses as he had done, but proves a good husband and useth all meanes to succour himselfe: so the Doctrine from hence is this.

A sinner naturally in his trouble and distresse seeks for succor (not from God nor from Christ) but from himselfe and from his owne abilities.

Doctrine.

So that the soule being in this great extremitie of heart by reason of his sinne, he dares not, nay he will not meddle with sinne any more but it betakes it selfe to hearing and praying, and to other duties ordinarie and extraordinarie, and by these it thinks to be absolutely succoured. I confesse the best of Gods Saints must use these meanes, they must heare and pray, and fast, but they must not rest upon these; it was very fit that the Prodigall should labour for his living, but not that he should not withall seeke home to his father for reliefe. So, it is requisite that we should heare and pray and fast, but these should not keepe us from a father. It is the nature of man naturally to make of meanes a Saviour to himselfe: he scrapes for some succour and rests upon some rotten indeavours, and because he can heare and pray and fast, he thinks this is enough to save him, he uses not these to bring him to Christ but rests on them.

It is a naturall thing ingrafted into all man-kinde since the fal of *Adam*: as you may see by the Apostle: because the Jewes were scrambling for life and happinesse from the works of the Law, therefore they could

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not

not attaine it, but the Gentiles which did not seeke it from the workes of the Law, they got it : as if he had said, when they saw their anguish and trouble then they fell upon these duties of hearing and praying and fasting, and they thought that was enough in Conscience, and here they tooke up their stand, this is to cleave to a man of the Countrey. And the same Apostle saith, they being ignorant of the Righteousnesse of God, sought to establish themselves in their owne Righteousnesse, &c. this they would have, here they would rest, and here they would die. In common experience we may see it : take a poore sinner that hath bene soundly awakened in the sence of his owne vilenesse, what is the ground of his hope ? Oh, saith he, now the World is well amended with mee, and I have not beene drunke so many yeares, and I have performed these and these duties, as if that would serve the turne: this is to looke for happinesse from a mans owne duties. It is with a poore sinner as it was with *Ephraim*, when *Ephraim* saw his wound and his sickenesse, then he went to *Asbur* and to King *Iaribbe*, that is to the king of Contention or advocate, but hee did not heale their wound. Therefore the lamenting Church saith *Asbur*, and the King of Egypt our gods, & we thought we might have hired help from them ; but now we see there is no helpe in them : as it was in that temporall distresse, so it is in this spirituall affliction of the soule. When the soule seeth his wound and his sinne before him to condemne him, and miserie prepared to plague him, and he hath (as it were) a little peepe-hole into hell, the soule in this distresse sends over to prayer and hearing and holy services,

Rom. 10. 3.

Hosea 5. 13.

services, and thinkes by his wits and duties or some such like matters to succour it selfe, and it begins to say my hearing and my prayer, &c. will not these save me? Thus the soule in conclusion rests in these duties. Though these duties be all good, honourable comfortable, yet they are no gods at all able of themselves to save us, but they are the ordinances of God that lead us to God, yet they cannot give salvation to any that rests upon them. It is the nature of a sinfull heart to make the meanes as meritorious to salvation; yet mistake me not, these duties must be had and used, but still a man must not stay here: a man will use his bucket, but he expects water from the Well: these meanes are the Buckets, but all our comfort, and all our life and grace is onely in Christ; if you say your bucket shall help you, you may starve for thirst if you let it not downe into the well for water: so, though you brag of your praying, and hearing, and fasting, and of your almes, and building of hospitals and your good deeds, if none of these bring you to a Christ, you shal die for thirst, though your works were as the workes of an Angell.

But why doth the soule seeke for succour from it selfe, and will not goe out to Christ?

The first reason is, because the sinner (being conceived not yet to be in Christ) out of the guilt of sin dares not be so proud as to thinke that hee shall have any favour at Gods hands, for the sinner being now overwhelmed with the body of death and the guilt of his abominations galling of him, and being starved by reason of his finnes, and still his sins being before his eyes, and to this day having gotten no assurance of

1. Reason.

the pardon of them, and God being angry against him, his heart shrinks in consideration of the eternall wrath of the Almighty against him; and hee saith, because I have despised Iustice and abused Mercy, how dare I appeare before Gods justice, for feare justice consume me and execute vengeance upon me, and therefore the soule dares not yet venture to come before God: and hence it is that the soule saith, can I not take some course of my selfe and doe it without Christ? Must I needs goe and heare? Certainly the word will condemne: and must I needs goe and confesse my sinnes? What shall I a Rebelle goe before a Prince? to come before him, it is the next way to bee executed and have some plague throwne upon me. As a Malefactor will devise some shift that hee may not come before the judge; so while the soule may have some succour from himselfe and the staffe is in his owne hand there is some hope, and he would willingly doe any thing for himselfe; but for the soule to have salvation out of his owne reach, and to put the staffe out of his owne hand, and to hang his salvation upon Gods good pleasure, whose love and mercy (as yet) he was never perswaded of. Oh this is very hard, and the heart is marvellous shie and carefull in this, and it is with the heart in this kinde as *Rabsbecab* said to the people of Israel; *If you say to mee, is not that bee, whose Altars you have broken downe, &c.* Thus he laboured to plucke away the hearts of this people from trusting in the Lord: The soule in this kinde sometimes shakes and shrinks in the apprehension of his owne vilenesse, and saith as this wretch did, have you offended him? And doe you

Esay 36.7.

you looke for any succour from him? This argument was very peevish and keene and yet false, for they were the Altars of Idols, but the soule saith against it selfe and marvellous truly: when a Minister would perswade a man to goe to Heaven for Mercy, the soule beginnes to reason thus with it selfe and saith, shall I repaire to God? Oh thats my trouble, is not he that great God whose justice, and mercy, and patience I have abused? and is not he the great God of heaven and earth, that hath been incensed against mee? Oh, with what face can I appeare before him, and with what heart can I looke for any mercy from him; I have wronged his justice, and can his justice pardon mee? I have abused his mercy, and can his mercie pitie me? what, such a wretch as I am; If I had never enjoyed the meanes of mercy, I might have had some plea for my self, but oh, I have refused that mercy, and have trampled the blood of Christ under my feet, and can I looke for any mercy? no, no, I see the wrath of the Lord incensed against me, and thats all that I looke for: the soule rather desires the mountaines to fall upon him, that hee may never appeare before God. Nay, I have observed this in experience. In the horrour of heart, the soule dare scarce reade the word of God, for feare hee should reade his owne necke-verse, and hee dare not pray, for feare his prayers be turned into sinne, and so increase his Iudgement: thus the soule out of the guilt of sinne dare not seeke out to the Lord, & therefore it will use any shift to helpe it selfe without going to God

The second Reason, why the Soule dare not seeke *2. Reason.*

out to Christ for succour, it is this, because the mysteries of life and salvation through Christ are not yet made knowne to the Soule, the Soule being yet considered, as barely broken and wearied with the burthen of sinne. Let me say as the Apostle doth, the new and living way in Christ, is not yet revealed to the soule, and it is not yet set open before his Eyes, though it shall be revealed, taking it as in this precise consideration onely prepared for Christ. Nay, those supernaturall Truthes, namely, That the soule must live by another mans life, and be made holy by anothers holinesse, and bee sanctified by anothers spirit, these are not yet revealed; these doe exceed our corrupt nature. *Adam* after his fall could not have found out this way, if the Lord had not revealed it. Had not the Lord Iesus Christ that came from the bosome of his Father, made this bosome truth knowne, wee had never beene acquainted with it; therefore the soule cannot come to Christ upon these termes. As our Saviour saith, *No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came downe from heaven.* Now, this poore distressed sinner as yet guiltie of his sinne, and yet not seeing a way revealed, and not able to ascend into this heavenly mysterie, because it seeth no better way, it will betake it selfe to these duties, that may be done by his own strength without seeking to Christ.

3. Reason.

Because for a man to be able, and to have a power and principle of life, to performe duties of himselfe, and to please God of himselfe, it was once possible in the time of mans innocencie; *Adam* had it, and hee might have procured Gods favour, and have kept the Law,

Law, and have beene blessed by the Law, because the Lord had given him a stocke in himselfe, and made him able to doe it of himselfe, and wee retaine thus much of *Adams* nature, wee are loath to live of another, but we would faine be as able to doe duties as *Adam* was. And it is with every naturall man as it is with *Sampson*: hee had once Sacramentall haire, and therefore when any Temptation came, hee did shake himselfe, and was able to breake strong cords, and to overcome his enemies, and when his haire was gone, hee went out as at other times, and thought to doe as he had done, but the Spirit of God was gone from him: So, because *Adam* had power of himselfe to yeeld exact obedience and to please God, a naturall man makes an offer of this still, and would be doing, and he goes out and shakes himselfe, and saith, cannot my wit, and my prayers, and my good meanings, and my priviledges save mee, and satisfie divine Iustice, must the guilt of sinne still lye upon mee. Thus the soule would give content to God by his owne strength; as it is with a man that hath been a rich Chapman, and hath had a faire stocke, but is now decayed, it is hard to bring downe the pride of this mans heart, hee is loath to bee a Journey-man againe, hee wil be trading though it be but for pinnes: So, the Lord put a stocke into *Adams* hand, and hee turned bankrupt; and yet we will be trading here for a companie of poore beggerly duties, dead prayers, and cold hearings, and we think this will be sufficient. This is the disposition of the soule naturally; So, the issue of the point is thus much; if the soule through the guilt of sinne dare not appeare before God, and it

knowes not how to come to God, in, and through a Mediator ; and in regard of *Adams* innocency, it needed not to goe out to another , for any power and strength, hence it is that the soule wil invent any way, & take up any courle rather then come to Christ, but all the former truthes are true, and therefore still this turnes the heart to deale with God in this manner.

1. *Vse.*

Here you see the reason, why that opinion of some men prevailes so much, and why they rest upon their owne good works, because their hearts give such entertainment to it : it is old *Adams* nature, and everie man seekes it, but if ever God draw you home to the second *Adam* Christ Iesus, he will draw you from the first *Adam*. You wonder to see a company of poore wretches, build all their comfort upon what they can do, and they will patter over a few prayers, it may be in their beds too ; it is easie to consider it. Nature makes a man thus give way to himselfe in it, and no wonder though his heart is prepared for this way when it comes.

An use of instruction.

But for instruction for our selves. Doth the Soule seeke out every where before it come to the Lord God ? and to the Lord Iesus Christ ? and will the Lord Iesus spare, and succour a poore sinner when he comes ? then heare, and see, and admire at the goodnesse of the Lord, that ever the Lord should vouchsafeto give entertainment to a poore sinner when he hath made so many outs. If he come home never so late, the Lord receives him when he comes. Is not this mercy, that when we have been roving and ranging, here and there, and we have coasted this way, and that way ; and never thought of Christ, nor mercy,

nor

nor of his bloud? I say, is not this admirable mercy, that the Lord Christ, should receive us when wee come, yea though we come to him last of all? Hee may deale with us justly, as hee did with the people in *Jeremy*; *Where are thy Gods (saith the Lord) that thou hast made thee, let them arise if they can helpe thee in the time of thy trouble, for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, ob Iudah.* Ier. 2. 22. The people made Idols and served them, and when the time of trouble came, and all their gods failed them, then they come for succour to the Lord, & would faine shelter themselves under his wings. Nay, saith the Lord, go to your gods that you have loved, and let them helpe you, as if hee had said unto them, doe you come to mee in the day of your distresse, have you honoured and worshipped your Idols, must they have all the honour, and I have all the burthen, get you home to your Idols, and let them succour you. Oh, thinke of it and wonder. So the Lord may justly deale with us; wee that rested here upon our good prayers, and our hearings, and fastings, and yet when all these prevaile not, but the guilt of sinne remaines, and wounds the conscience still, and at last we are forced to looke up to the Lord Iesus Christ, & to say, except the Lord Iesus Christs bloud purge these filthy hearts of ours wee shall never have helpe, and good Lord bee mercifull to us. Did you rest in these, because there was no God in *Israel*, and no mercy in the Almighty, that you have rested upon your priviledges? Goe then (may the Lord say) doe you come to me to bee saved and succoured? goe to your meritorious workes now, let them cheere your heart, and pardon your finnes and

comfort you, for I will not succour you at all. It were just with the Lord to deale thus with us, because we give him the leavings, and come last to him. But here is the wonder of mercies, that whensoever we come, hee casts us not off, yet if wee would but come to him, and leave these broken reeds, he would receive us: *Yet returne to mee (saith the Lord)*: as if the Lord had said, you say that all that you can doe will not succour you, you have plaied the adulterers with many lovers, yet at last come home to mee, and beleve in me, and settle your hearts upon my mercy, and whatsoever your weakenesse and rebellions have beene, I will save and succour you.

Ier. 3. 1:

2. Vse.

The second use is for Exhortation, seeing it is so, that we are ready to seek for succour and reliefe from our selves, then let this make us watchfull against this deceit of our hearts. Yet, I doe not dishonour these ordinances, but I curse all carnall confidence in these. You cleave to these poore beggerly duties, and (alas) you will perish for hunger: the divell knowes this full well, and therefore he will sinke your hearts for ever. *Indas* did so, and hell is full of hearers, and dissemblers, and carnall wretches, that never had hearts to seeke unto Christ in these duties, and to see the value of a Saviour in them. The divell slides into the heart this way unsuspected and unseene, because hee comes under a colour of duties exactly performed; but now in that the divell labours to cheat us of health and salvation, wee should bee so much more watchfull. This is the stone that thousands have stumbled at, yea many that have gone a great way, in the way of life and salvation. For howsoever, the soule that is truly

truly broken cannot be satisfied without a Christ, yet it may be much hindered from coming to Christ : but those that are not soundly broken and wrought upon by the work of contrition, they are dawbed up, and come to ruine and destruction for ever. When the Soule lies under the hand of God, and under his stroke, and a man seeth his drunkenesse, and his base contempt of God, and his grace, and all his finnes are presented before him ? Oh, then he voweth and promiseth to take up a new course, and every man will mend one, and hee begins to approve himselfe in the reformation of the evils committed, and then hee need doe no more, and now the Soule saith, well now I see the justice of God is provoked, and I see now what sinne is, and what the danger of it is, I will have no more drunkenesse, now I will bee a sober man, and now no more scoffing and scorning at those that goe to heare the Word ; I will attend upon the good Word of God my selfe, and by this time hee thinkes thus ? what can you say against me ; what can I doe more ? to heaven I must ; all this is but a mans selfe. Its true, this is the way, and these are the very meanes, but all these cannot procure the pardon of one sinne, if he go no further. We have many such trials : I have knowne many that have done great workes, but never had a thought of Christ, and never expected salvation from him, and thus they fed upon the huskes : and then the divell saith, you pray, and heare, and doe duties ; so did *Judas* and many others that are now in hell, then the heart seeth his vilenesse, and he is driven to a desperate despaire, so that no Minister under heaven is able to comfort him, but he

goes away with the huske of duties, but Christ who is the substance of all, and the pith of a promise is forgotten, and a Christ in hearing, and a Christ in prayer is not regarded, & therefore he famisheth for hunger.

Now see the successe that the Prodigall found, the case is cleare, he found no reliefe at all. No man gave unto him: his hungry stomacke was not refreshed, and his waits were not relieved, so that now the soul of the poore man sinkes unrecoverably in his misery. And that he doth thus, consider two phrascs, first in the 16. verse, *no man gave unto him*. Not, that no man gave him huskes, for he that fed the swine might have fed himselfe, but the meaning is, no man gave him mans meate, if hee might have had mans meate, though never so poore and meane, hee would have beene content, but no man did give him, and hence followes the phrase in the 17. verse, *How many bired servants in my fathers house have bread enough, and I die for hunger*, It was not because he had no huskes, but because hee had no bread, as if hee had said, perish I shall, I see no succour; nay, I looke for none, I may shuffle on here for a while, but if I stay here I am a dead man. This condition of the Prodigall, discovers the second passage in the description of Humiliation; So the Doctrin from hence is this:

2. *Doctrin.* *The broken hearted sinner finds no helpe; nay, hee hath no hope to receive any helpe from himselfe in the matter of justification.*

You see the ground of the point is cleare: The Citizen relieved him not, but hee gives himselfe as lost, and saith; I cannot helpe my selfe, and no man will succour mee, and therefore I perish for hunger.

This

This is the picture of a Soule that is famished for want of the sense of Gods favour, though hee use meanes; and heareth, and prayeth, and fasteth; yet he finds no good, and no sound comfort in all these: not that a man must not use these meanes, but he must not rest upon these: a man must not thinke that his bucket can quench his thirst; but hee fetcheth water from the fountaine with it: So, these duties are as the bucket, a man may famish for all these duties, unless he goe to the Fountaine of Grace, and pardon, and mercy, and in the use of all these see a need of Christ, and goe to God for a Christ by them; these meanes must be used, but these cannot be saviours of him; these meanes must be used to bring him to a Christ, yet they cannot save him without a Christ. What was spoken temporally to *Ephraim*, it is true of the Soule spiritually: When *Ephraim* saw his wound, and his sicknesse, he went to *Ashur* and King *Iarib*, but they could not helpe him, nor cure his wound. It is true, this Text mainely aimes at a temporall deliverance, but this may draw us to consider the successe that a poore Soule finds in his duties, resting upon them. When a poore Soule is broken in the sight of his sinne, and weary of it; he sends downe to prayer, and hearing, and the like; but these cannot succour him without Christ: and therefore the Prophet *Esay* saith, *Why lay you out your money for that which is not bread.* &c. The Lord accountes the paines of his faithfull servants good labour, and would not have them lay it out for that which is not bread. All the profits that may enrich a man, and all the honours that may advance a man; nay, all the priviledges

Hosea 5.13.

Esay 55.2.

ledges that a man hath ; as Word, Sacraments, and Ordinances ; and that a man is baptized, and hath often come to the Lords Table ; these come no farther then the very bare huske ; if they goe no farther, and have not an eye to their Saviour ; these are no true bread : the horror of heart cannot be quieted, nor his finnes pardoned, barely by these duties doing : the meate of the Soule, is not the bare Word, nor the bare Sacraments ; but a Christ in all these : this is the prop of the Soule : all the bare duties in the world cannot succour us, if we rest upon them, without justification through Christ.

Phil. 3.5,6,7.

The Apostle *Paul*, a learned Pharisee, and a man of an unblameable life, because hee was a man of a good life, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and a Jew circumcised the eighth day ; hee thought to doe great matters, and hee thought he had done enough ; hee counted these his priviledges, gaine. What, learned *Paul* ? reverend *Paul*, unblameable *Paul* ; What, not he goe to Heaven ? hee counted these his greatest gaine ; as if he would lay down enough upon the naile to purchase Heaven to himselfe : but these were so far from saving him, that he found them to be losse. Thus you see that a distressed sinner finds himselfe helpelesse, and hopelesse, in regard of any sufficient succour in himselfe, or the creature, if he goe no further then the very duty.

Now the Soule finds that there is no saving succour to be had in these duties barely : I say, he comes to see it by these three meanes.

First, from his owne experience that forceth him to confesse it.

Secondly,

Secondly, from the examples of others.

Thirdly, The greatnesse of the evill that lyes upon him, makes him see an utter inabilityie to receive any good from that which he doth.

First, From his owne experience. Though hee thought to take up a new course, and to performe holly duties, and thought that without all question these would save him, yet he finds now that these will not doe the deed, hee hath no saving good in these; and that appeares by these three particulars. First, Hee seeth that the guilt of sinne still remaines, and the Iustice of God, being unsatisfied still pursues him; though he pray, and heare, and performe many duties, as the Lord told the people, when they were sharking for their owne comfort, and they thought to give God content by their new courses. Yet the

Lord tels them, *Though thou wash thee with Nitre, and take thee much sope, and though thou use all means of reformation, yet thy finnes are sealed up, and thy iniquitie is marked before me.* It is with a poore sinner as the Psal-

Ier. 2. 22.

mist saith of himselfe; *Whither shall I goe from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flie from thy presence, if I ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I lie downe in hell thou art there, if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the Sea, even thither shall thy right hand lead me. &c.* So, let a poore sinner goe where he

Psal. 139. 7.

8. 9.

will, and doe what he can, the guilt of sin will ever be with him, it will lye downe, and rise up, and walke with him in the way. His sins remaine unpardoned, and the wrath of God is not appeased: and hence it is that all his prayers, are but as so many inditements against him, and hee dare not read the Word for feare

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he should read his owne damnation. Nay, at every Sermon that hee heares, hee seeth more vilenesse in himselfe, and every Sacrament that he receives, increaseth (not his comfort but) his horror, & he thinks thus with himselfe, good Lord, I have taken my bane this day for I come unpreparedly, & the Lord knows what an unfaithfull, and unbelieving heart I have.

2.

Secondly, as the guilt of sin cannot be remooved by all his duties, so his conscience cannot bee quieted by all that he doth; if his heart be thoroughly pierced by the Sword of the Law, still conscience calls upon him, and quarrels with him, and takes exceptions against him in the best of his duties, so farre they are from yielding any satisfactiō to God, or from bringing any peace to his conscience; if hee rest upon the bare performance of them. I speake of a broken hearted sinner: for the conscience is now Eagle eyed, it was ful of filme, and scales before, but now it is open, and Eagle eyed, and can spie, all his weakenesses, and picke matter of disquiet, even in the best of all his duties that are done. The Soule thought them very good payment, yet now the heart of touched, and conscience is awakened, and tells him of his barrenesse, and deadnesse, and roaving thoughts, when he doth pray, and how insufficient, hee is to pray, and therefore he dare not pray with his Family, and conscience saith to him, you have formerly contemned prayer: and now you cannot pray. And when the Soule comes into the congregation, there Conscience notes him, and when he goes home, Conscience saith thus unto him, how dead were you, and how unreverently did you attend to the Word, and how unwilling

ling was your heart to be in subjection to the Word, thus Conscience becomes Gods Serjeant, and saith, doest thou thinke that these prayers will save thee; Nay, they are rather a meanes to condemne thee, so heartlesse, so cold, and so dead hearted thou art in them; and is this hearing sufficient to save thee: Nay, will not the Lord curse thee for thy weake performance of these duties? Now the distressed Soule comes to a stand with it selfe, and hee seeth so much weakenesse in his duties, that he almost leaves off all, saying: I had as good not goe to the Word at all, for I profit not by it; and I had as good not pray at all, as pray thus deadly, and untowardly: thus the Lord drives the Soule out of himselfe; and when Conscience thus picks quarrels with him, and saith; Will prayer, and hearing, and these duties so meanelly performed, save you? Nay, may not God justly confound you for them? It is admirable mercy that God did not confound you in hearing, and strike you dead in praying! and then Conscience calls him in question for his old sinnes, and saith; If God may condemne thee for these duties, and for these prayers? Then what may God doe for thy old drunkenesse, and railing at good men, and good meanes? as the Apostle saith, *If conscience condemne us; God is greater than our Consciences, and knoweth all things*: so the Soule saith, I know thus much by my selfe, but God knowes more.

1 John 3.20.

Thirdly, as the guilt of sinne cannot be removed, nor Conscience quieted, meerey in the performance of duties, if the Conscience be truly inlightened: so in the last place, the sinne that hath taken possession in

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the heart cannot bee subdued by the power of any performance that he doth. I speake still of one that is not yet ingrafted into Christ: rebell against his sinne he will; but kill it, and subdue it; that he cannot; and hence it is, that the Lord lets in upon the Soule a great many infirmities, and a swarme of weakenesses that are present with the Soule: and so he seeth an utter inability in himselfe to help himself against them; the one of these two things befalls him. If hee bee a man of mean parts, and small gifts, he seeth himselfe so weake, and so unprofitable under all meanes, that his Soule almosts sinkes downe in desperate discouragement; and when he gets nothing by all the duties that hee doth, hee falls out with himselfe, and pineth almost to desperation. And if hee bee a man of great parts, and gifts, and learning, and hath wisdom to conceive of things; the Lord suffers many corruptions to fall upon him; and when he comes to humble himselfe before God, he saith, I am able to discourse of this, and that; and I can heare, and pray; but (oh) this heart of mine: a man had as good move a mountaine, as move my heart; this hard heart will not stir, nor be broken under all, and helped against these as it should be. Now, the Soule upon these termes is even content to leave off all: and it befalls the heart in this case, as it did *Hagar*: When her bottle of water was spent, she cast the child under a tree, and sate a far off, because she would not see the child die; so it is with the Soule. When the bottles of these Saints, and scantie duties are done, the Soule sits downe in discouragement, and saith, Good Lord, it will never be, my Soule shall never bee accepted, and my sins will never
bee

Gen. 21. 15, 16.

bee pardoned; and the heart begins to reason thus with himselfe, and saith; I have had as good meanes as ever any poore creature had, and many gracious friends have counsell'd mee, and yet the guilt of my finnes is ever before mine eies; and my Conscience is not yet quieted: Nay, these finnes, this blind mind, and this hard heart, will not bee subdued; but the Lord Iesus Christ can doe more then thou, and the world too. The Lord will make thee see that thou and the world can doe nothing, that Christ may take away the guilt of sin, and quiet thy Conscience, and subdue thy corruptions for thee: thus much he seeth from his owne experience.

The second passage is this; as his owne experience makes the Soule confesse that there is no hope of good in himselfe, so the example of others doth confirme a broken hearted sinner in this; that all the creatures in the world, and all the duties under Heaven without Christ, cannot purchase salvation to the Soule; because the Soule now seeth, and considers in the Scriptures, that many thousands have had all these priviledges, and done many duties, and yet come short of perfection. Many reprobates have had these priviledges as well as Gods people; and the Soule thinks thus with it selfe: If beautie, or honours, or riches, might have purchased eternall life; then *Pharaoh*, *Abfalon*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*, should have bene accepted of God: therefore, What have I that many thousands have not had? and, What doe I that reprobates have not done, and yet for ought I know, it never did them good? *Isaac* was circumcised, and so was *Ishmael* too; *Abel* offered Sacrifice, so did *Cain*

Esa. 58. 2, 3.

Psal. 130. 3.

too ; and the stony ground receive the Word with joy, and many there were that waited upon God in the use of his Ordinances, as you may see in the Prophet *Esay*. *Ahab* fasted, and *Indas* repented, and yet he is a divell now in hell this day: And the Prophet *David* saith, If the Lord should marke what is done a-misse, who could abide it ? there was enough in *David*s prayers to condemne him ; and if all these did thus, and much more then I can doe ; Then why should I think to find more helpe in my prayers then they did : thus the Soule seeth that Gods people never had Iustification from any priviledges that they enjoyed, nor from any duties that they did, without relying on Christ.

Thirdly, the greatnesse of the evill which now the Soule seeth, and the desperate miserie wherein it is, is so great, that now it finds an utter in-abilitie, that all the creatures under heaven should ever remove the evill of it. For the soare that is made, and the wound that is given by sin, is broader then all the salve (that the creatures can apply) is able to cover. The Word, Sacraments, Prayer, and duties cannot reach the evill that lies upon the heart in this particular ; and this is considerable ; the meanes that must comfort and quiet the heart in distresse, must be able to beare the wrath of God, and to take away the venome and poyson of the wrath of the Almighty. Now, the Soule seeth that no creature can doe this ; no creature can beate backe Gods wrath but it will fall ; and hence it is that the Lord saith, he hath laid salvation upon one that is mightie ; there are mightie corruptions, and mightie indignation, and mightie guilt, and therefore

therefore the Lord hath laid salvation upon the mightie. It must be more then a creature, that must beare or remove the wrath of the Creator ; As the text saith, *There is no other name under heaven, whereby you can be saved but onely by Christ.* Prayer saith, there is no salvation in me; and the Sacraments and Fasting say, there is no salvation in us ; there is salvation in no other but in Christ. The other are subservient helps, not absolute causes of salvation ; As the holy Prophet *Jeremy*, shewing the peoples desperate condition and their miserie therein, saith, *In vaine is salvation hoped for from the mountaines* ; hee had said before in the 22. verse, *Returne againe, oh, disobedient children and I will heale your rebellions*, and they answered, *Behold we come Lord, for thou art the Lord our God, and in vaine is salvation hoped for from the mountaines* : By salvation in the mountaines is meant the Idols set up in the hills, which the poore people worshipped, and thought they were able to succour them, but in the day of trouble, they said, we come Lord, for in vaine is salvation hoped for from the mountaines. So, if thou trust in thy praying, and hearing, and good works, though thou hadst a mountaine of them, they can doe thee no good, unlesse with the eye of faith, thou lookest upon Christ for acceptance : but in the Lord our God is salvation for evermore. Then gather up all : if the Soule seeth by experience, that no good will come by these, and if examples shew so much, and if the greatnesse of the evill, shew that it is impossible for any comfort or pardon to be brought home to the Soule ; barely by these meanes, then the heart concludes thus, and saith ; these will not doe

the deed, I may have all these priviledges, and performe all these duties, and yet salvation is not in these; if I trust in them, there is no pardon in them, and no hope of redemption from them saith the Soule. The Soule doth not despaire of all good in Christ, but the Lord is compeld (as I may say with reverence) to weary us from this confidence in our selves, and from seeking any succour from our selves, that hee may make us goe to Christ.

Pse. 1.

This is a word of Exhortation. You see that a poore Soule finds nothing, and he hopes for no saving succour from any meanes enjoyed, or duties performed, therefore wee ought to have our desires quickned, that since we see the way, and the duty required, wee must not rest upon any thing here below. Since our hearts must be brought to this, and wee must not rest upon the bare performance of holy duties, (though I doe not dishonour these duties, but onely speake against resting upon them) Oh, therefore strive to come unto this, it will make you ready for the riches of Gods mercy and goodnesse in Christ Iesus. Let us have our hearts raised up from our own bottomes, and let us plucke downe the foundations that we have had in priviledges, or any service done by us at any time. This is that which above all things we must doe; all the Saints of God have found this, from day to day, after search made, then why should we seeke for succour from these; I say, wee must not neglect these duties, but we must not rest upon them. Bee perswaded to pluck off the handle of hope, from of any thing that we do, or any priviledge that God gives us. Let us doe what we may, but yet goe be-

yond

yond all that we can do in this case; when your hearts are hankering after these crazie holds, stay them, and deale by your hearts, as the Lord sometimes did with the people of *Juda*. In their distresse, they did not goe to the Lord, but they went to *Egypt*, and *Nilus*, and therefore the Lord saith unto them: *What hast thou to doe in the way of Egypt, to drinke downe the waters of Nilus? &c.* Jeremy 2. 19. When they were thus ranging for their owne reliefe in the time of their trouble, the Lord (as it were) calls after them, and saith, you will downe to *Egypt*? What have you to doe there? Deale so by your owne Soules, when thou findest thine heart hammering helpe from it selfe, and catching it out of the fire, thou seest thy sins, and art troubled; and now to quiet all, thou wilt heare, and pray, and performe duties; and thus thou thinkest to forge comfort out of thine owne shop; therefore call upon thine owne heart, and say: What hast thou to doe to rest upon these broken staves, upon thy praying, and hearing, and professing; these, if not accompanied with faith in Christs merits, will lay thee in the dust, and if thou makest Gods of them, the Lord will plucke them away. *Judas* prayed, and preached, and heard, and received the Sacraments too, and yet he is a divell in hell this day, and except thou have more then he had, thou wilt be no better then he was: and therefore thinke thus with thy selfe; what have I to doe to stand here in these duties? I may bee deluded by these, but saved and comforted by them I cannot be, therefore use these I will, but rest upon them I will not. If I could looke up to heaven, and speake to *Abraham*, and *Paul*, and *David*; and say, how were
you

you saved ; they would all make answer, and say, oh, away to the Lord Christ, it is he that saved us, or else we had never come here ; and he will save you too, if you lie to him. Therefore (brethren) bring backe your hearts from these, and dreame not to receive any saving succour from what you have, or, what you doe, unlesse you relie on Christ.

Question.

But, mee thinkes I heare some say ; Oh, it is marvellous difficult, and hard ; wee hang upon every hedge, and we are ready to thinke that it is enough, if we can but take up a taske in holy duties ; How shall we plucke our hearts from resting upon them ?

Answer.

For the answer to this question ; suffer mee to answer two things. First, I will shew the meanes whereby wee may find all these hopelesse, and helpelesse resting upon them. Secondly, I will shew when these meanes drive the heart truly to despaire of all succour in them.

Now, that we may find these meanes to bee so to us, as they are in themselves, and that our soules may be able to say, It is true ; these are the holy Ordinances of God, but it is in vaine to expect any salvation, or justification from them alone. I say, the meanes are mainely foure, and I will handle them something largely ; because, if I be not deceived, here is the main sett of a Christian ; and herein appears the root of old *Adam* ; wee will not part with our selves : the meanes are foure.

First, consider seriously with thy selfe, and be convictingly settled, and perswaded, of the unconceivable wretchednesse of thy naturall condition. If thou canst but see this throughly, it will make thee see how

how vaine it is to look for any succour from thy selfe; labour to see the depth of thine owne misery because of thy sin, and to see how thou hast sunk thy selfe into such a desperate gulfe of misery; that all the means under heaven will bee short to succour thee, unlesse the Lord Iesus come downe from heaven, and his infinite power be let down, to pluck up thy Soule from that misery wherein thou art: there thou lyest, and there thou art like to perish for ever, if God in mercy succour thee not. Now, that I may pull downe the pride of every vile wretch; give me leave to discover the depth of our misery, in these foure degrees.

First, consider that by nature thou art wholly deprived of all that abilitie, which God formerly gave thee to performe service. *Whatsoever is borne of the flesh, is flesh*: (saith our Saviour) and therefore the Apostle Paul saith, *I know that in mee, that is, in my flesh dwels no good thing*. All men by nature are flesh, and therefore think thus with thy selfe, and say, there was never good thought in my heart, nor good action done by me, for in me dwels no spirituall good thing: there may bee morall good in us, but though wee are good morally, yet we are naught spiritually; howsoever you pranke up your selves, and thinke your selves some body, yet there is no spirituall good in you: unlesse God worke upon your hearts; whatsoever you have thought, or done, is all in vaine.

Secondly, thou art not onely deprived of all spirituall abilitie, but thou art dead in trespasses and sins. What is that? a man is wholly possessed with a body of corruption, and the Spawne of all abomination hath overspread the whole man, and it leavens all the

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whole

Four degrees
of our misery
by nature.

Ioh 3.6.
Rom.7.18.

2.
Degree of our
misery.
Ephes.2.1.

whole lump of body and mind. You often read this phrase in Scripture, but you perceive it not; as it is with a dead body being deprived of the Soul (which did quicken it, and enable it to doe the workes of a reasonable man) there comes a kind of senselesse, and after that, all noysome humours breed in the body; and all filthy vermin come from the body, and therefore a man may bury it, but he cannot quicken it any more. Iust so it is with the Soule that is deprived of the glorious presence of Gods Spirit, & grace which *Adam* had in his innocency: For, looke what the Soule is to the body, the same is the grace of Gods Spirit to the Soule. When the Soule is deprived of Gods Spirit, there followes a senselesse stupidnesse upon the heart of a man; and all noysome lusts abound in the Soule, and take possession of it, and rule in it, and are fed there; and appeare in a mans course in this kind. There is no carrion in a ditch smels more loathsomely in the nostrils of man, than a naturall mans workes doe in the nostrils of the Almighty: There are some workes of a dead body; it rots, and stinckes, and consumes: so, all the workes of a naturall man are dead workes: nay, all the *prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord*. If you can but say over the Lords Prayer, you thinke yov doe a great piece of worke; but, though these are good in themselves, yet because they come from a corrupt heart, they are dead, and loathsome prayers in the nostrils of the Almighty; as the wise man saith, *Hec that turneth his care from hearing the Law, even his prayer is abominable*. The prayers of a drunkard, of an adulterer, or of a blasphemmer, are an abomination to the Lord;

PROV. 28. 9.

Lord ; He cannot abide them ; they are such unfavou-
 ric, dead, stinking prayers, that the God of heaven ab-
 hors them : I would to God you were perswaded of
 it. I would have a man to reason thus with himselfe,
 and say ; This is just my condition ; How many gra-
 cious commands have I sleighted, and despised ?
 How many precepts have I trodden under my feete ;
 therefore even my best prayers are abhominable to
 the Lord ; and if my prayers bee such ? then what is
 my person, and all my sinfull lusts ? Looke what we
 doe with a dead body, wee may pity him, and bury
 him, but we cannot quicken him : So, wee may pity
 a poore drunkard, and pray for him, and bury him
 with teares ; but we cannot save him : Nay, all the
 meanes in the world will not save him, except the
 Lords mightie power come from heaven to worke
 upon his heart.

Thirdly, the sentence of condemnation is now al-
 ready past upon him, and one foot is in the pit alrea-
 dy. *He that believes not, is condemned already:* He doth
 not say, hee may be condemned ; but the sentence is
 already past upon him : his hard heart was never
 soundly broken, and his proud heart was never con-
 tent to part with it selfe and all for Christ, and there-
 fore he goes to endlesse torments for evermore. Eve-
 rie naturall man is an unbeliever, and therefore stands
 under the sentence of condemnation : So that, unlesse
 the Lord bee pleased to open his eies, and to breake
 his heart, and to draw him from that estate, he is like
 to perish, and goe to hell for ever.

Fourthly, and lastly, if this be not enough, hee is
 not onely deprived of all spirituall good, and dead in
 sinne,

Three degrees
 of our misery.

Iohn 3. 18.

The fourth
 degree of our
 misery.

sinne, and stands under the sentence of condemnation, though this were enough to lay our hearts low before the Lord. You see the sinner in the pit; But will you see him sinking into the bottome? I am loath to speake the worst: Nay, I durst not have thought it, had not the Lord Christ spoken it in his

Ioh. 6. 70. **Word.** Therefore see what he saith, *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a divell?* Who was that? It was *Judas*. Why, what did he? What, a dead man, and a damned man, and a divell too: What will become of such a forlorne creature? It is said of *Judas*, that the divell put it into his heart to betray Christ, out of a covetous humour to get money, and the divell entred into *Judas*. Thus the divell puts it into his mind, and suggested it into his heart, to devise a way how to compasse his end: nay, the divell entred into *Judas*, not by a corporall possession; but by a spirituall kind of rule, which the divell did exercise over *Judas*, that is, when the divels counsell, and advise took place with *Judas* to betray his Master: this is not *Judas* his condition alone, but it is the condition of all men by nature. That look as it is said of the Apostles, *They were inspired with the spirit of God*; and as it is said of all sound Christians, *They are led by the Spirit of God*: So, on the contrary, the wicked are led by, and with the spirit of the divell, *Hee that rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience*: The divell casts wicked thoughts into their hearts, and carries them into the commission of those evils, which formerly he had suggested: The divell rules in them; he speaks by their tongues, and workes by their hands, and thinkes, and desires by their minds, and walkes by their

Ioh. 13. 27.

Act. 1. 4.

Ephes. 2. 3.

their feete ; *The divell shall cast some of you in prison,* Revel 2.10. saith *S^r. Iohn*. All men are naturally under the power of Sathan, and therefore *Saint Paul was sent to preach the Gospel that hee might deliver them from the power of Sathan to God.* Acts 16.18. You thinke your selves brave men, and you can despise the Word, and the grace of God, and abuse his Ministers : Alas, the divell hath power over you ; as it is with a dead sheepe, all the carrion Crowes in the Countrey come to prey upon it, and all base vermin breed and creepe there : So it is with every poore naturall carnall creature under heaven ; a company of divels, like so many carrion crowes prey upon the heart of a poore creature, and all base lusts crall, and feed ; and are maintained in such a wretched heart. Now (brethren) thinke of all these, and search seriously. It is better to know this now, then to know it when there is no remedy : I say no more for pitie ; is it so with thee, and me, and all of us by nature ? Then judge the case clearly, and passe the verdict. Doest thou thinke that a few faint prayers, and lazy wishes, and a little horror of heart can pluck a dead man from the grave of his sinnes, and a damned soule from the pit of hell, and change the nature of a divell to be a Saint ? No, it is not possible ; and know that the work of renovation, is greater then the worke of thy creation ; and there is no helpe in earth, either goe to Christ, or there is no succour for thee. We can pity poore drunkards, and sorrow for them ; but we are as able to make worlds, and to pull hell in pieces ; as to pull a poore Soule from the paw of the divell. Nay, he is a divell, and a damned divell, as you have heard : if this were well considered ; it

would dash in pieces, all those carnall conceits of a great many, which make nothing of turning a divell to be a Saint.

The second
meanes.

Secondly, consider seriously the infirmitie, and feebleness, and the emptinesse of all meanes that we enjoy, and all duties that we doe: it were argument enough, to perswade a poore broken-hearted sinner, not to relye upon a poore broken reed that will deceive him when hee hath most need: therefore since they cannot succour us, let us draw our hearts from resting on them. This is a matter of great weight also; for the Soule being thus broken for sinne, sets a great matter of excellency, and sufficiencie in holy duties. Nay, people hang all their hope of eternall life, upon what they have, and what they can do. Come to a poore broken hearted sinner, and tell him of his sinne, that he stands guiltie of: Marke what his reply is; I confesse (saith he) it is true; I have beene so, and so, but the world is well amended, I meddle not with my sins, and I have reformed all those base courses. Nay, the Lord knowes that my corruptions have cost mee hot water, my heart hath beene exceedingly vexed with them, I hope, I have had my hell heere, and I shall have no hell hereafter. Alas, poore wretch, is this the hope that upholds thy heart, and is this all the ground that thou goest upon? it is good that thou doest repent and amend, and reforme thy wayes, and blessed be God, for what hee hath made thee able to doe; but, this I must tell thee; If thy repentance, and reformation be all thy hope, and thou relyest upon them, as the Iewes did upon their Legall righteousness: thy Soule and all will sinke everlastingly;

lastingly; if thou look no further for help, for all these cannot procure thy acceptance before God in that great Day of accounts; nor give any satisfaction to Gods Justice. Now the weakenes of al these priviledges, and duties, may appeare in five particulars.

First, Thou canst not do that which God requires of thee, in all this that thou so much braggest of. *Thou hast a hard heart, and canst not repent.* Rom. 8. 14. If thou canst doe what God requires of thee; then why doest thou not breake that hard heart of thine. It is a heart that cannot repent. The Saints of God find this; though they see their sins, yet their hearts will not breake. Thou art as able to rend the rocks in pieces, as to breake thy heard heart. *The good that I would doe (saith St. Paul), I cannot doe, and the evill that I would not doe, that I doe.* Rom. 7. 5. The Church complaines of it, and saith, Why are our hearts hardened from thy feare? Therefore God may justly take exception against thee!

Secondly, Thou art not many times carefull to do what thou canst; sometimes thou lettest passe opportunities; and if thou takest the occasions, it is marvelous slightly, and hoyerly; though God have put power, and abilitie into thy heart, to performe holy duties; so, that thou seest the occasions, yet thou slightest them over most shamefully. *In many things we sin all,* (saith the Apostle Saint James) *and the Prophet Esay saith, There is none that calleth upon thy name, neither stirreth he up himselfe to take hold of thee.* It was the common fault of the wise Virgins, *they all slumbered:* this befalls even those that are the most beloved of the Lord.

Thirdly, Do what thou canst in the best of all thy services;

services; when thou comest to the highest pitch of the holiness of thy heart, and to the most ferventest prayers that ever thou didst make, and the most broken heart that ever thou haddest, and the most exactest way of godliness; I say in the very best of all thy duties; there is still some imperfection, and for which God may in exact rigour frowne upon thee: now judge this; can that service save thee in which there is enough to condemne thee? thats impossible; in the best of thy duties there is enough to make God frowne upon thee. And therefore the Priest that was to offer Sacrifice; *Was to offer Sacrifice for the sinne of his offering.* Where wee see that even the holiest service that ever the Minister puts up to God, and in the best care that ever he exprest, he hath need to offer Sacrifice for his offering: and so it is in all your services. You little thinke that God may condemne you, for your Prayers, and Sacraments, and Fastings. But I will make it cleare to you: for, this is a common rule, we all believe in part, we know in part, and we love in part, so that, though our hearts are renewed, yet they are but renewed in part, there is some hatred mixed with our love, some unbelieve with our faith, and some ignorancie with our knowledge: And as the Apostle saith, *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that these two are contrary the one to the other.* There is so much corruption in thee, so that when thou wouldest doe good, thou canst not doe it with that readinesse that thou oughtest; thou canst not doe it with all the whole streame of thy heart. The Law requires, that wee should love the Lord with all our hearts, and with all our

Heb. 7.27.

Gal. 5.17.

our strength ; So that wee have no hangings backe in our duties ; but in all our prayers, and hearings, and readings, there is flesh that oppoſeth the ſpirit, and corruption, that croſſeth the worke of grace. So that we are not able to performe any ſervice, as God doth require of us : how backward are wee to duties, and how weary in duties ? what wandring thoughts ? what privie pride ? and what ſeeking of our ſelves have we in them ? You know nothing, if you know not this ; but whether you know it or no, it is ſo. There is much corruption, oppoſing and thwarting the worke of the Spirit ; and therefore you had need pray for the repentance of your repentance ; and to beg the pardon of all your prayers : and whereas you thinke, that you will repent, and amend, and heare, and pray, and the like ; I tell you ; that though it be commendable to pray, and heare ; yet there is ſo much ſin in your amendment, and repentance, and duties ; that in exact juſtice God may curſe all that you doe, and execute his Iudgement upon you for the ſame, therefore theſe cannot ſave you. He that heretofore hath prophaned the will now ſanctifies it, and ſo he thinks all is quit ; but I tell thee that in all thy ſanctification of the ſame, thou haſt need of a Saviour.

Fourthly, Where it granted, and let it be ſuppoſed (which I confeſſe will not, nay can never bee) but imagine it were ſo ; that after God hath opened a mans eies and broken his heart, he ſhould never commit the leaſt ſin in all the world, and never have any failing in holy duties, nor any diſtemper in his Soule, though this cannot bee ; but imagine it were ſo that he did never ſinne after his repentance, yet even the

sinne of his nature which he brought into the world with him were enough to make the Lord take the advantage of him for ever, and to cast away all that ever he doth as abominable from his presence. Our repentance, and our exactest performance of duties, though we could doe them even to the uttermost: it is a dutie that wee are bound to doe, and the doing of that which we owe; can never satisfie for that which hath beene done amisse by us: but our repentance of sinne, and our reformation, is a dutie which the Gospel requires, and therefore will not satisfie for that which is done amisse before our conversion. As a Tenant that is run behind hand with his Land-lord so many hundreths, and at last hee begins to consider with himselfe what he hath done, and hee brings the rent of the last halfe yeare when his lease is out; will this man thinke that he hath now satisfied his Land-lord? if he should say, now Land-lord, I hope you are contented, and all is answered & I have fully paid all that is betweene you and mee, you Land-lords would be ready to reply thus, and say, This satisfies me for the last halfe yeare past, but who payes for the odde hundreds: so it is with a poore soule, bee it so, that after those arrerages that thou hast run upon the score with God, after all thy contempt, and pride, and all thy Stubbornesse of spirit, at last God opens thine eyes, and breakes thy heart, and gives thee a sight of, and sorrow for these finnes; wilt thou come before the Lord, and say, Lord, I have repented of my finnes past, and so I hope thy Iustice is satisfied, and all accounts made even betweene thee and mee, the Lord would answer, it is true thou dost repent and reforme

reforme thy selfe, the Gospel requires it, but who payes the odde thousands, and who satisfies for thy old drunkenesse, and for thy thousands of pride and Stubborneesse, and all thy carelesnes, and all thy contempt of God and his grace, and who satisfies for all thy blasphemies, and omissions of holy duties, and the like, the Lord may justly take the forfeit of thy Soule, and proceed in Iudgement against thee to thy destruction for ever. Our repentance and amendment is a new dutie which the Lord requires of us from the Gospel, but it is not the paying of the old debt; for if we do not repent, we stand guilty of the breach of the Gospel, and so must satisfie for that sinne. The breach of the Law is sinne, and the wages of sinne is death, the wages of sin is not repentance nor amendment, but it is death: then repentance will not satisfie for sinne: no, no, the wages that must be laid downe for a mans sin, is death. As the Lord said, *In the day* Gen. 2. 17. *that thou eatest of the forbidden fruite, thou shalt die the death. And therefore the Apostle saith, cursed is every* Gal. 3. 10. *one that continues not in all things written in the Law to doe them.* Repentance is onely a worke of the Gospel to bring our hearts in frame againe, but the breach of the Law must be satisfied for; so that having sinned against the Lord, and wronged his Iustice, wee must either die our selves or have one to die for us; then, there is no laying downe of any satisfaction to God by any thing that we can doe in this case, but we must have recourse to our Saviour who onely can satisfie Gods wrath for our finnes.

Fifthly, As a sinner is utterly unable to bring himselfe into a good estate, by all the meanes that he can

use; so he is unable to maintaine his lot : and to keepe himselfe aforehand in a Christian course, when he is brought unto it. Therefore as it is necessary to have a Saviour to pardon us : So, it is necessary to have a Saviour, to continue that estate of grace to us for our good. When the Lord in mercy had given to *Adam* in his innocency, perfect holinesse, and righteousness ; insomuch that hee was able to keepe the Law, and to purchase favour for himselfe, *Adam* then fell, and spent all that stocke of grace ; and if we had our stocke in our own hands, we should spend all and be ruinated for ever, if God did leave us to our selves. If *Adam* having no sinne could not keepe himselfe in that happy estate ; much lesse are we able that have much corruption in us ; therefore it is not only required to go to Christ for grace to pardon us ; but we must go to Christ to maintaine our grace, and to keepe our hearts in frame here, and to bring us to a Kingdome for ever hereafter. When *Adam* had spent all the stocke of grace ; and proved a bankrupt, the Lord would raise him up againe ; but hee would not put the stocke into his hands againe ; but hee puts it into the hands of Christ. As, a man that gives his child a portion, and he spends it all ; now his father will raise him againe, but will not put it into his own hands, but into the hands of some friend, and will have his sonne goe to that man for his allowance every day, and for every meale : So, it is with the Lord our heavenly Father, because we have mis-spent all that wisdom, and holinesse, and righteousness, which God gave *Adam*, and in him to all of us ; therefore the Lord would not put the stock of grace into

into our own hands again; but he hath put it into the hands of Christ, & will have us depend upon Christ for every crum of grace; yea, even for the will to do any good; we must go to him; that he may preserve and maintaine the worke of grace in us; and wonderfull happy are we that it is so. For, should the Lord set the divell, and us together, all were gone. The Lord Iesus gives grace, and continues it, and helps us to persevere in grace; and so makes us come to the end of our hopes even the salvation of our Soules. Oh therefore, looke up to the Lord Iesus Christ; and say, Oh, it is a blessed mercy; that when my heart is proud, vaine, loose, and foolish; that then I may goe to the Fountaine of grace, for humilitie, and for grace. We are kept (saith Saint Peter) *By the power of God through faith unto salvation*: As if he had said, all the powers of hell and darkenesse are come about us, and a world of wickednesse besets us, and all the powers of the world, and the corruptions of our own hearts allure us. Now, we cannot stand by our owne strength, therefore we have need of a Christ, that we may be kept by his power, and be able to suffer, and to do any thing for his Names sake, and that he may preserve us in that great day of accounts. And the Apostle *John* saith, *Little children you are of God & have overcome the world, for greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world*. Hee doth not say, greater are you, then he that is in the world, but greater is hee that is in you, &c. Hee doth not say, greater is your humilitie then your pride; greater is your patience, then your impatience; and greater is your love, then your hatred; but he saith, The Lord Iesus is greater

1 Peter 1. 5.

1 John 4. 4.

in us, to succour and to helpe us ; then all the temptations of the divell, & the corruptions of our hearts that can presse in upon us, to doe us any hurt, or to hinder us in a Christian course. Doest thou thinke thy owne hearing, and praying, and duties will serve the turne and save thy Soule ? No, no, thou art an undone man, if thou rest upon thy owne crazie bot-tomes; Amend thou mayest, and pray thou oughtest; but these will not save thee; these will not cause the acceptation of thy person with God; nor justifie thy Soule before his Tribunall. All these are poore, weake, and crazie meanes. For, if thou canst not doe what God requires; and if thou doest not what thou art able, and if in the best of thy services, there is pride, and stubbornesse enough to condemne thee, and when thou risest up from praier, thou hadst need pray againe for pardon of thy prayer: Nay, couldst thou doe all that thou shouldest after conversion; in the most strict and exactest manner; yet that doth not satisfie for the sin, that thou hadst committed before conversion; and if thou canst not maintaine thy owne grace, then there is an absolute necessitie of going to Christ for all. Nay, aske your owne hearts, and services; and say thus: Prayer, wilt not thou save me? and Hearing, wilt not thou save me? they will all professe plainly, and say; salvation is not in me (saith Prayer), and salvation is not in mee (saith Hearing), and salvation is not in me (saith repentance, and amendment): Indeed, we have heard of a Christ; that he hath died, and satisfied, and suffered, and risen, and delivered his poore servants; and pluckt poore Soules from hell; and we need a Saviour to pardon

us, alas, wee cannot save our selves. All thy duties will say to thee, as the King said to the woman, when the famine was great in Samaria: *And as the King was going upon the wall, there cryed a woman to him, saying, Helpe, oh King. And the King made this answer, If the Lord God succour not, how can I helpe?* So, me thinks the Soule saith; When it is besieged with the wrath of God? Oh helpe prayer, and hearing, and Sacraments, and the like: Me thinks I heare them reply in this manner; Alas, how can wee helpe, you have prayed sinfully; and heard the Word untowardly; and received the Sacraments unworthily? Oh, let us all go to heaven for a Mediator; good Lord, pardon the sinne of these prayers, and these hearings, and the unworthinesse of these Sacraments; and all this frothinesse, and deadnesse in hearing: Thus they will all send you to heaven for a Christ; and say, alas, I cannot save you; how many commands have I disobeyed? how many duties have I slighted, and therefore send to Christ for pardon; we are weake, and feeble, and onely come to the eare, and to the eye; but the Lord Iesus must come downe from heaven, and be powerfull, every way to doe good to your Soules. You must goe to a Christ, to batter the proud flesh; and to pardon all that is amisse, and to performe all duties that you would have done. When *Elisha* tooke up the cloake of *Eliab*, he said, *Where is the God of Eliab?* he did not say, Where is the cloake, but where is the God of *Eliab*. All the ordinances of God, are but as the barke of the tree; but Christ and the Promise are the pith. The heart, and life, and power of all is in Christ onely: therefore looke higher then these,

2 King. 6. 26,
27.

2 King. 2. 24.

these, for they doe all proclaime; that there is no succour but in Christ.

The third
means.

The third meanes to drive our hearts from resting upon our duties is this. Wee must consider the unconceivable hazzard, and danger, and the inconvenience that will come if we put any affiance in any of those priviledges that we have, or any duties that we performe. The very consideration hereof is able to withdraw our hearts from resting upon them. The danger appeares in two particulars.

First, The carnall confidence in what wee have, and doe; shut a man out from having any part in Christ. He that is guiltie of this sinne, withdrawes himselfe from the favour of the Lord, and he becomes uncapable of that mercy & good which God hath revealed; and Christ hath purchased for poore distressed sinners. For this is all that the Lord looks for at our hands, that we should deny our selves, and wholly cast our selves upon his goodnes and mercy: nay, that man which relies upon what he doth, puts himself without the reach of all that mercy and great salvation that is in Iesus Christ. Christ came not to call the righteous to repentance, nor them that trust in themselves; nor them that thinke they can save themselves, but he came to call sinners to repentance, and those that see an utter insufficiency in themselves to save or succour themselves in the day of trouble, there is great salvation in Christ, and plenteous redemption purchased by Christ, and you heare of all this, and it is all true, but this I must tell you, all that Christ hath done and deserved shall never doe you good, if you rest upon your selves. You doe thinke that

that it is such a great sinne, as indeed it is, sometimes you make conscience of drunkenesse and other sins, if you make conscience of any thing, then know that this is the greatest sin in the world. See how the Apostle sets himselfe against this carnall confidence, where speaking to the Galathians that trusted in their owne circumcision, that answers to our Baptisme: Behold (saith he) *I Paul*, say, I, not a bare man, but *I Paul* inspired with the Spirit in an extraordinary manner, and I, an Apostle that doe not, nay that cannot erre, I that have received a commission from the Lord, I say, that if you be circumcised, that is, if you trust in your Circumcision, Christ shall profit you nothing: nay, (saith hee) *Iesus Christ is made of none effect to you if you seeke to be justified by the workes of the Law.* If you rest in the merit of your prayer, Christ is made of none effect to you, and you shall never receive any power from the death of Christ: the blood of Christ will never purge those filthy hearts of yours, and his resurrection shall never quicken you. Whatsoever your case and condition is, or can be, if your sins were never so haynous for greatnes, continuance, and for number, if you wil but renounce your selves, and go to Christ; nothing shal condemne you: but if your sins were reformed, if you trust in them, all your reformation, nay, Christ himselfe shall never do you good. It is with the Soule of a poore sinner, as it is with the body of a man. If it had some slightie disease or sicknes, and that may (haply) bee cured, but if his throat begin to swell, and the vitall passages be stopped up that he can receive no meate, nor phisike, every neighbour will say, hee is but a

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dead

dead man, all the meanes and men in the world can doe him no good, he can receive nothing downe: So it is with the Soule; it is annoyed with many base corruptions, and sinnefull distempers; and if it bee wounded with many rebellions; there is meanes enough in Christ to cure all? If thou be a filthy besotted drunkard, or an adulterer, the blood of Christ can purge thy drunken adulterous heart, one touch of Christ can cure all thy bloody issue. If thou wert dead in trespasses and sinnes, the Lord Iesus could quicken thee, and raise thee from death to life; but if thy proud heart swell with thy owne sufficiency, and thou wilt rest upon thy selfe, all the merits and grace in Christ can doe thee no good. This is the maine conclusion, into which all the rest is resolved. *You will not come to me* (saith our Saviour) *that you might be saved.* He doth not say; you have many sins and shall not be saved; but, you will not come to me, &c, that is, you will not goe out from your selves to the Lord Christ; and therefore cannot receive mercy and grace from his Majesties hands: though thou art never so base and vile, if thou couldest goe to the Lord Iesus, and rest upon his mercy, nothing should stand between thee and heaven, but if thou stickest in thy self, all the grace in Christ can doe thee no good.

Ioh. 5. 40.

Ier. 17. 5, 6.

Secondly, This carnall confidence, makes a man unprofitable, under all the means that God bestowes; As the Prophet *Jeremy* saith, *Cursed is he that trusts in the arme of flesh, and departs from the Lord; Why? What shall become of him? the text saith, he shall be like an heath in the wildernesse, and shall never see good.* The nature of the heath is this; though all the dew of heaven

heaven, and all the showres in the world fall upon it ; and though the Sunne shine never so hotly, it will never grow fruitfull, it will never yield any fruit of increase, but it is unfruitfull still. Such a Soule thou wilt be, thou that retest upon thy owne services, and sayest ; because thou hearest, and prayest, and doest sanctifie the Lords Day ; therefore thou must needs goe to heaven ; I say, thou shalt never see good by all the means of grace ; if thou makest them independent causes of salvation ; all the promises in the Gospel shall never establish thee, and all the judgements in the world will never terrifie thee ; thou shalt never have any saving grace wrought in thee by them : The truth is, he that hath all means, and hath not a Christ in all ; he shall never see good by all. Therefore thou that retest upon thy parts, and gifts, and upon thy duties ; thou wilt have a heart so besotted, that grace will never come into thy heart, and God will never quiet thy conscience. It may be a poore drunkard is converted and humbled ; but thou standest still, and canst get no good by all the means in the world. Therefore say thus to thy selfe ; doth this carnall confidence cut mee off from all the grace and mercy that is in Christ ; and without mercy, and pardon from Christ I am undone for ever ; and without grace I am a poore defiled wretch here, and shall bee damned for ever after ; if I rest heere, I may bid adue to all mercy : Nay, all the meanes that I have, will never do me good. Is this the fruit of my carnall confidence ? Oh Lord withdraw my heart from it.

Lastly, when all the meanes of grace, will not plucke away the Soule from resting upon it selfe,

The fourth
meanes.

when reason will not rule him, nor meanes will not prevaile with a poore sinner, as commonly a great while they will not, then the Lord tires a poore Soule with his owne distempers. And the Lord deales with the Soule, as an enemy deales with a Castle that hee hath besieged; When the Citizens will not yield up the Castle, he famisheth them, and cuts off all provision, and makes them consume within, and so at last they are forced to resigne it up upon any termes. So, when the Lord hath laid siege to a carnall heart, and hath shewed him his wofull condition, and yet the heart will not off, nor will not take up any termes of peace, but stil he will shift for himselfe. Now, what doth the Lord doe? he takes away the comfort of all the meanes that he hath, till hee is famished with the want of Gods favour; and then he is content to yield up all to the God of heaven and earth. It was just so with this Prodigall; all the world could not perswade him but hee might live better of his portion, and so away he goes; and when hee had tried the world, and could get no succour, at last hee confest, it was better to be at a fathers finding, & now he saw that a fathers house was admirably good, and that the servants and children in their fathers house are happy; for they have bread enough, and enough againe, and to spare too: and so he is forced to return. So, it is with many poore distressed soules: all the arguments under heaven cannot quiet them, and all the meanes in the world cannot plucke them from themselves; and wee tell them daily, that they must not expect grace, nor power, nor pardon from themselves; *It is mercy and peace* (saith the Apostle). You would

would have peace of conscience, and pardon of sinne, and assurance of Gods love; and whence would you have it, you would have it from your duties? it is not prayer, and peace, nor hearing, and peace; but it is mercy and peace; and therefore away to the Lord Iesus, that you may receive mercy from him: Yet we cannot get poore creatures from themselves, but they would faine shuffle for themselves, and have a little comfort of their own, and they say, Lord, cannot my prayers, my care and fasting merit salvation? Now, what doth God then? hee saith to such a Soule, goe try then, put to the best of thy strength, and use all the meanes that thou canst, and see what thou canst doe; See if thou canst cure thy conscience, and heale those wounds of thine; and subdue the corruptions of thy heart, with thy prayers and abilities: but when the Soule hath made tryall, and weltred, and wearied it selfe, at last, he finds that all the meanes hee can use cannot quiet him, nor comfort his conscience, and the poore sinner is pinched and wearied, and the Lord will not answer his prayers, nor sweeten the desires of his Soule, and the Lord will not blesse the Word to him for his comfort, and at last, the Soule saith: Such a poore Christian (even a man of mean parts, and weake gifts) how is hee comforted, and such a prophane drunkard is puld home, & hath gotten the assurance of Gods love; The Lord hath puld downe the proud hearts of such and such; and they live comfortably, and sweetly; and I have no peace nor assurance of Gods love. You may thanke yourselves for it; they saw nothing, and they looked for nothing from themselves; and therefore they went

home to the gate of mercy to the Lord Iesus Christ, and they have bread enough, if you would come home to Christ, you might have beene comforted also. Now therefore, go to the Lord Iesus Christ, and as certainly, as God is in heaven, refreshing and comfort will come into your hearts, and mercy (which is better then marrow) shall satisfie those feeble fainting spirits of yours. You see what the way is, and what the helpe be to plucke off our hearts from resting upon these duties, and therefore think thus with thy selfe, and say, is my misery so great? are my duties so weake? and is my carnall confidence so dangerous; that I may be troubled for ever? for any thing that I can doe for my selfe, and is comfort no where else to be had, but in the Lord Iesus Christ? Oh then Lord, work my heart to this dutie. Stick not in your selves, doe all this, but goe beyond all that you can doe, and labour so to approve your hearts to God, that you may see greater mercy in God, than all that you can doe.

Now there are two Cavils, which carnall persons slander this truth of God with all; and these must be answered before I can come to the trials.

The first Cavill.

The first cavill with which wretches are content upon this truth, it is this. Oh say they? What, is it so that all our prayers, and hearings, all our care, and desires, and all our improvement of meanes are nothing worth? will not all these justifie us? nor make us acceptable to God? then let us cast care away, let us sweare, and ryor, and drinke, and live as we list, we heare that all the duties that we can do, will not save us, the Minister tells us so. Thus a company of carnall

naill wretches runne headlong downe to eternall destruction, one sweares, and another casts all the commandements of God behind his back.

To this I answer. Doth the Minister say so; nay, *Answer.* the Word, the Scripture, the Spirit of God saith so, and the Lord Iesus himselfe speakes it. In the meane time wilt thou gaine-say that which the Lord Christ hath spoken? Doth not the Apostle say, *You are saved not of workes, &c.* And in another place, *It is not in him that wills, nor in him that runs, but in the Lord that* Rom. 9. 16. *shewes mercy.* It is the Spirit of God that saith it, and doest thou stand to out-face the Lord Iesus Christ in it? But stay awhile, and take a full answer with thee, and know these three things thou that dost abuse this doctrine of Gods free favour. First, howsoever thy good workes are not sufficient to save thee, yet thy evill workes are enough to damne thee. As the Apostle saith, *that all they might bee damned which believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse.* 2 Thess. 2. 12. You that take pleasure in your drunkenesse, and prophanesse, and in your jibing and jesting at the meanes of grace, there is roome enough in hell for you all: that all you might be damned. Yea, thou that delightest in thy drunkenesse, thou maist drink downe thy last, and thy damnation too, and thou that blasphemest against the truth of Christ, take heed that God poure not downe his wrath upon thee. It is true, though thy good workes are not perfectly good and cannot save thee, yet thy bad workes are perfectly naught and will condemne thee: nay, thy prayers are an abomination to the Lord, and will the Lord save thee for that which is abominable to him: thou thinkest hell

hell is broke loose because mercy is come into the world, this thy wickednesse will condemne thee for evermore. Secondly, they that thus stand it out against Gods free grace in Iesus Christ (the Lord is mercy open their eyes, my Soule mournes for them and for that strange punishment that shal befall them, except the Lord break their hearts in time) as any sin is enough to condemne them, so their sin is of an unconceivable hainousnesse, and their judgement will be answerable. Their sinne is become out of measure sinfull, because mercy is revealed, and they have made a mocke of it. The very height of all, that wrath that is in God shal be their portion. Good Lord, is it possible that ever any man should dare to despise the mercy of God, and to trample the bloud of Christ under his feete, and not onely to commit wantonnesse, but to turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, and to make the Lord Christ the Patron of their filthinesse? How will the Lord Iesus take it at their hands: that, whereas the Lord Iesus came into the world to destroy the works of the divell, they should make Christ a meanes to uphold the workes of the divell. Oh, that ever any man should dare to sinne, because mercy abounds! and because they heare that Christ will one day save them, therefore they in the meane time wil do all they can against him that must save them. See what St. Paul saith against such, *Despise thou the riches of his goodnesse, long sufferance and forbearance, not knowing that the goodnesse of God lea- deth to repentance, but after thy hardnesse of heart, thou treasurest up to thy selfe wrath against the day of wrath.* Thou that livest in the bosome of the Church, where the Angels come down from heaven, and rejoyce in

Rom. 2. 4. 5.

in this free grace of God in Christ, and hast thou the offer of this mercy, and dost thou despise it? then thy drunkenesse is not bare drunkenesse, but there is a treasure of vengeance in it. And thou sayest, thou wilt be drunke, and prophane, because thy sobrietie and thy good workes cannot save thee. I tell thee, it is not bare scorning, and bare prophannesse, but there is a masse of vengeance in all these. And when thou shalt stand before the Iudgement seat of Christ, and shall be indited for a drunkard, and a scorner, and a prophane person, and such a one as hast tossed the people of God with scornes upon thy Ale-bench; when the Law hath thus proceeded against thee, then will mercy come in against thee, and say, Lord, execute vengeance upon him for me, and for me, saith another, for I have been dishonoured, and because mercie did abound, he would have his sinne abound also. And then comes in the blood of Christ, and cries aloud, saying, Vengeance against that drunkard, indeed Lord, there's a poore wretch that knew no other, but vengeance (Lord) against that drunkard, and that scorner, because my blood was shed, and mercy was offered, and he despised it. You that know your drunken neighbours and servants, and see their rioting and scorning, tell them that there is a treasure of vengeance in those sias; and you that are guilty of it, goe your wayes home and mourne, and the Lord give us hearts to mourne for you. You that know what this sinne is, when you goe to the Lord in Prayer, put up one petition for them, and say, Good Lord take away that treasure of vengeance. Oh, pray that if it be possible this great sin may be pardoned. Thirdly, all such

H

persons

persons must know that it is carnall confidence, in the meanes that withdrawes a blessing from them in the use of the meanes. *What things were gaine to mee* (saith Saint Paul) *I accounted losse for Christ*; that is, when he put any confidence in them, hee lost the benefit of the meanes.

Phil. 3. 7.

The second
cavill.

Secondly, Some will say, you doe nothing but reprove us for duties, and labor to pluck us from them: then, why should we pray, and heare, and what good shall we have by all that we do, if we cannot be saved by these meanes; then, what use is there of them?

Answer.

Titus 3. 14.

Verfes 4, & 5.

To this I answer. Yes, there is great use of them, and much good to be had by them: As the Apostle saith; *Let us also learne to maintaine good workes* for necessary uses. When he had spoken of free Iustification through his grace; then the Text saith, teach a man to maintaine good workes for necessary uses: and in the 4. and 5. verses, he saith; *After that the kindnesse, and love of God our Saviour towards man, appeared not by workes of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration.* Now, least any man should say, if God doe not save a man for his workes, then why shall we doe good workes and the like? See what he addes; *Let us learne to maintaine good workes, &c.* There are many necessary uses of the meanes, though they bee not meritorious, and of absolute sufficiency. Were not he a mad man that should say, what shall I doe with my money if I cannot eat it? and what shall I doe with my boate if I may not dwell in it? A man may buy meate with his money, and row with his boate. So, you must use all meanes, and improve all importunities,

tunities, and if ever pray, and fast, pray and fast now in these daies of trouble, but think not to be saved, nor justified by the worth and merit of them : yet use them for some necessary uses ; and the uses are three.

First, Wee must use all the meanes that God gives *Use. 1.*
 us as guides, to lead us by the hand to the Lord Iesus *Of the means,*
 Christ ; and as lights to shew us where life is to be had. *John Baptist* professed plainly, that he was not the Messiah ; but he pointed at him, and said, *Behold the Lambe of God that takes away the sinnes of the world.* So, I say, all the ordinances of God which are honourable, and commendable, and comfortable ; they all professe, that they are not our Saviours : onely they point us to a Saviour, even the Lord Iesus Christ ; the Word reveales Christ, and Prayer goes to a Christ, and the Sacrament presents Christ to us ; and therefore they al say with one accord, let us go to the Lord Iesus ; and look up to him. When your hearts are troubled and disquieted, all your duties knocke at your hearts, and say, would you not have mercie, and power against corruption, and some evidence of Gods favour? Oh (say you) it is that which we want, and it is all that we desire in this world ; Come then (saith Prayer and the Word) wee will goe to Christ with you ; there is all fulnesse in him : this is the end of all the holy ordinances of God, not to make them Saviours : but to lead us to a Saviour.

Secondly, as they are guides to lead us to a Christ, *Use. 2.*
 so they are meanes to convey grace, mercy and com- *Of the means,*
 fort from Christ to our Soules. Though they are not meat, yet they are as dishes that bring the meat. They are the meanes whereby salvation hath beene revealed

led, and is conveyed to you. There is a fountaine of grace in Christ, but the Word, and Prayer, and Sacraments, and Fasting, these are the conduits to convey this water of life, and to communicate this grace to us. You doe not use to drinke the conduit, but the water that the conduit brings. Aske, that your joy may bee full, (saith our Saviour) and so the Lord speakes by the Prophet *Esay*, *Incline your eare, and come unto me, heare and your soules shall live.* As if hee had said, waite upon God in his Word and Ordinances, and your Soules shall live. Though the meanes are not life it selfe, yet life is conveyed by them. *In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdome and knowledge.* If you would have any grace and holinesse, the treasure of it is in Christ. The Word is as the Indepature or great Will of God whereby the treasure of Gods favour is made knowne to your Soules. The bond or will is not the treasure, but conveys the treasure to us, and makes us have a right, and title to it: our Saviour saith, my peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, and, all the promises in Christ are, yea, and Amen: yea, that is truth it selfe, and, Amen, that is confirmed now, you must receive the tenure of all these in Christ. And the holy Sacraments, are as the broad scales whereby the Covenant of grace is confirmed, made authentick and ratified to your Soules. When a man hath much goods and lands and would make an other his heire, hee passeth his lands or goods over to him by will, and if the will is not onely drawne but also sealed, then, though this will is not the treasure it selfe, yet it is a speciall meanes to convey this treasure to the heire that must have

Esay 55. 3.

Coloss. 2. 3.

have it. So, the Word is the will of God, and the Sacraments are the Seales of it, and all that mercy and goodnesse in Christ is made knowne to you by the Word, and made sure to you by the Sacrament; the Word and Sacraments are not this treasure, but they are blessed meanes to convey this treasure to your Soules. Therefore, when your hearts are dead, weake, and heavie, and you begin to breath for some consolation, saying, who will tell me how I may have my dead heart quickned, and my heavy heart refreshed, as *David once breathed for the water of Bethlem;* then mee thinkes the Word and Prayer, and Sacraments doe all say, wee will goe to the Lord Iesus Christ for all these for you, and then Christ will sanctifie you in his Word, and if you have strong divels hanging upon you, fasting and prayer, will fetch power and grace from Christ; and cast all these divels out: So then you see their good use of all these.

Thirdly, the last use of the meanes is this, that by *vsē. 3.* the exercise of our selves in them, and by the improvement of our times and meanes, we may glorifie the God of grace that hath given us all these meanes, *Of the means.* and that wee may waite upon him with feare and reverence, and honour God in his Word, and come to his Table, and there partake of the dainties of life and salvation, and expresse the vertues of him that hath called us to this marvellous light, that we may see Gods grace in prayer, and in professing, and delight in the duties of his worship. These are all very good uses; so then, the conclusion is this, you must not thinke that your duties can pardon one sin, yet they must be used, and blesse God for them, and (if ever)

now is a time to improve all these, for they are a meanes to leade us to Christ, and to convey grace and life from Christ into our soules, and thereby we may glorifie the God of grace that hath beene so mercifull to us. The second thing that I mentioned is this. When shall we know that our hearts are brought to this passe, that the meanes of grace doe work so kindly that our hearts may bee brought to this holy despaire? I would not have you goe away, and say, the Minister saith, we must despaire. Its true, you must despaire of all saving succour in your selves, but you must not despaire of all mercy in Christ.

When wee doe
despaire of all
helpe in the
meanes.

Answer.

For the answer to this question, you must know that there are three particular trialls of our owne hearts, wherby wee shall know when the Lord is pleased to deale so kindly and sweetly with us, as to drive us from our selves to Christ.

The first triall

First, the Soule of a poore sinner that seeth all meanes helpelesse and hopelesse in themselves, will freely confesse and acknowledge (and that openly) that the worke of salvation is of an unconceivable difficultie, and he seeth an utter insufficiencie and impossibilitie in himselfe, and in any means in the world to be saved of himselfe: He seeth that it is beyond his power, and the staffe is out of his owne hand, and the Soule almost sinkes under it, and conceives it almost impossible to come out of it, in regard of that which it apprehends. Hee seeth now that all those broken reeds, and rotten props, and all that boldnesse wherby the heare did beare up it selfe, they are all broken in pieces, and all those Castles which he hath built in the ayre, wherein hee comforted himselfe with dreames

dreames of consolation, they are all throwne downe to the ground, and battered about his eares, and now the Soule wonders how hee was so deluded, to trust to such lying vanities, and to such deceitfull shadows. This is the difference that the Soule will find in it selfe before this worke of conversion, and after it is wrought. Before, a man thinks it an easie matter to come to heaven, and judgeth it a foolishnesse in people to be cast downe and discouraged in the hardnesse and difficultie of the worke of salvation; and he conceives it to bee a foolish conceit in the franticke braine of some precise Ministers? Oh (saith he) God bleffe us, if none be saved, but such as these, whatsoever he saith, a man may goe to heaven, and repent, and get the pardon of his sinnes, it is nothing but confessing his sins before God, and craving mercy for the pardon of them, and is this such a hard matter; this man in the dayes of his vanitie, thinkes hee hath heaven in a string, and mercy at command, and hee can come to heaven, and breake his heart at halfe an houres warning: but take this man when the Lord hath awakened his conscience, and put him to the trial; when he seeth that after all his prayers and tears, yet his conscience is not quieted, and his sinnes are not pardoned, and the guilt still remaines, now hee is of another mind, now he wonders at himselfe that he was so deluded, and now he saith, where is the deluded heart, that did thinke it, and the mouth that did speake it? Nay, he thinkes it a great mercy of God, that hee is not in hell long agoe; and hee stands and wonders that ever any man comes to heaven, and hee saith, certainly their hearts are not like mine; and their

their finnes are not so great as mine, good Lord, who can ever be saved, such a divell to tempt, and such a world to allure, and such corruptions boyling within. He wonders how *Abraham* got to heaven beyond the Starres, and *Moses*, but above all *Manasses*; yet hee saith, blessed bee God that ever hee did this for them, but for my selfe (all things considered) I think it a matter impossible, how I, nay, how can I ever be wrought upon? shall ever any mercy comfort mee? and shall ever any meanes doe me good? Why have not all those meanes that I have had done mee good, I shall never have power to pray better then I have done, and I shall never bee able to wrestle with God more earnestly then I have done; and yet I see all meanes profit not; therefore I am but a gone man. I am but lost, and I know not which way my soule should be saved. When our Saviour Christ was discovering the difficultie of the way to Salvation; His Disciples said, *Good Lord, who then shall be saved?* So the poore soule saith; Oh the means that I have had, and the prayers that I have made; so that I have thought the heavens did even shake againe, and yet, Good Lord, my heart did never stir at all, and therefore how can I be saved? And as the Prophet *Jeremy* saith, *Shame hath eaten up the labours of our fathers, and we lye downe in our shame, &c.* They had the meanes of grace, and the Ordinances of God, and shame hath eaten up all, and where are their Temples, and Priviledges now? Shame hath consumed them to nothing. So it is with a poore feeble fainting Soule, he saith, shame hath eaten up all my labours; I have laboured in prayer, in hearing, and in fasting; yet I have

have no pardon sealed, nor no mercy granted, I am as much troubled as ever ; I see as much evill as ever I did ; hell is gaping for mee , and so soone as life is gone from my body ; the divell will have my soule. This is the nature of despaire, to put an impossibility in the thing that it despaire of : and to say, can it be ? and will it bee ? and will it ever be ? Nay, it is impossible, for ought I know. Where is the man now, that thought it an easie matter to goe to heaven, he is in another mind , and his heart is of another frame ; now he hath found by wofull experience, that there no is hope, nor helpe in himselfe nor in the creature.

Secondly, this followes from the former disposition of spirit ; the Soule is restlesse, and remains unsatisfied in what he hath, and what hee doth. The heart cannot bee supported, and therefore it growes to bee marvellously troubled , and it is not able to stay it selfe. There is nothing that can satisfie the Soule of a man, but it must be some good. No man is satisfied with evill, but rather more troubled with it. It must be some good, either in hand, and in present possession, or else in expectation of some good that hee may have, and he saith, it may be, and it will bee. But, when he seeth the emptinesse of all his priviledges, and the weakenesse of all his duties ; when these faile, his heart and all must needs sinke ; because he seeth no other good, but them ; for the while. As it is with the building of a house, if the bottome and foundation bee brittle, and rotten, and begin to shake, all the whole building must needs shake : So, the Soule that sought for comfort, mercy, and salvation from his outward priviledges and duties ;

I

when

The second
Triall.

when all these beginne to shake under him, and to breake in sunder, and hee seeth no helpe thereby, and that it can receive no ease there in; hence it is, that the Soule (thus troubled and despairing) is in such an estate, that if all the Ministers under heaven should come to flatter him, and daube him up with untempered mortar, and perswade him of Gods mercy towards him; Take this man upon his death-bed, when all the Ministers come to give him comfort upon any termes, and they say unto him, your course hath bene good and commendable, and you have lived thus, and thus; and taken much paines in praying, and hearing, and fasting; therefore undoubtedly you cannot but receive mercy from the Lord. See what the poore Soule will reply: It is true (saith he) I have done, and may doe all these, but I have not done them in a right manner. I have not had an eye to Christs mercy; but have accounted these duties, as satisfactory to Gods justice, so that they favour not so much of dutie, as arrogancy; whilest presuming upon their worth: I have not depended upon Gods mercy; but even challenged his justice in the reward of my labours. Thus the Soule argueth with it selfe, I have depended too long upon these outward workes, and thought to purchase heaven by them, but now I find it necessary, that I get them dyed, and sanctified in the bloud of Christ. Thus it was with Saint Paul when he said; *I know nothing by my selfe*: What might some say, Paul, You are a reverend learned man, and have had a great name in the Church, and who can say, blacke is your eye. It is true, (saith he) I know nothing by my selfe: but what

1 Cor. 4. 4.

what then, yet I am not thereby justified. Nay, it is the difference that he makes betweene himselfe a Pharisee, and himself a poore contrite sinner. When he was a Pharisee hee counted his priviledges gaine to him; but now *hee thought them losse in regard of* Phil. 3.7. *Christ.* They are good mercies, where God gives them in regard of themselves, but in the way of Iustification, and Salvation, they are as dung and drosse in respect of any merit in them. This is one difference betweene a dead hypocrite, and a living Christian. A dead hypocrite will be content with dead hearing, and dead praying, and with the bare shell of duties, but, a living Christian that seeth his owne evill, and sinne; cannot be fild nor contented without a Christ. That which will maintaine a Camelion, will starve a man; for a Camelion will live upon the ayre; but, put a Man into the best ayre that is, and it will starve him, if hee have no other food. So, if thou canst feed upon the ayre of hearing, and the picture, and shadow of praying; it is a signe thou art a dead man; whereas if thou bee a true man in Christ Iesus, thou must have bread, or else all the world cannot content thee. Bread for the Lords sake, saith the hunger-starved man: therefore let mee give thee an Item this way; goe thy way home, and take notice of thine heart, thou that canst licke thy Soule whole, and cure all thy finnes with a few prayers, and teares, and fastings, and in meane time seest thou not a necessitie of a Saviour, know that it is a notorious signe of a cunning hypocrite, as there are many in these daies. It is with an hypocrite, as it is with some men written of in Sto-

riés, they have such an antidote, and preservative, that they can eat poyson, and it shall never hurt them: So it is with some hypocrites, that have their reservations of some sins, and they retaine some base distempers, and they will tipple in a corner, and lye in some secret finnes, and yet they trust so much to their antidote, and to their duties, that it will cure all; and it is but praying, and fasting so much the more often. The God of heaven open the eyes, and awaken the consciences of all such, if there bee any such here this day. If it be so that thou canst pray, and keepe a close hollow heart, and thou canst licke thy selfe whole, and then sinne, and a little prayer will serve againe; and then goe, and bee unjust, and unclean, and keep false ballances still, know then, it is certain thou never hadst a part in Christ, nor ever didst see a need of Christ. And as it was with the Prodigall: if he had beene a Hog, the huskes might have served him; but he was a Man, and therefore must have bread. Therefore thou hypocrite to thy Stye, if these huskes will save thee, and serve thy turne, and if the mill of a prayer will serve, (I doe not discommend these duties: No, cursed bee hee that doth it) but if thou content thy selfe with a mill of praying, and yet there is as much power of Christ, and sap of grace in thy heart, as in a chip, then (I say) thou art a Hog and no Man, whom these huskes will content.

The third
Triall.

Thirdly, he that seeth himselfe helples and hopelesse in the means, hee will constantly labour to goe beyond all the meanes. Because hee is in need and finds no helpe here, he wil seek it else where that his heart

heart may be refreshed, when the Lord hath awakened the heart, and shewed him the emptinesse of all means, it makes the soule go further then the means: this is the heavenly skill. It is with the Soule in this case as it is with a marriner; though his hand bee upon the oare, yet hee ever lookes homeward to the haven where he would be. And it is in professing as it is in trading. You know when a man sets up for himselfe and would live of his calling, he will buy and sell, but his eye is ever upon the gaine, thats it which must keep the Cart on the wheelles, or else he may die a begger and shal never be able to keep him and his; it is not enough to trade, and to buy & sell, but hee goes beyond all these, and labours to get something. Iust so it is in professing; it is like thy trading; thou hearest and prayest, and professest, but the gaine is to have Christ made to thee in life and death gaine; so that, all the gaine a man gets is Christ. Thou art a professor, and hast beene baptized and hast received the Sacrament, but, what hast thou gotten by all thy praying, and preaching, and other services? unlesse thou hast gotten Christ, thou hast gotten just nothing at all. It is with thee as it is with a man that hath a great shop, and much wares, and quicke returne, and yet he is not able to pay his debts: so thou performest many faire duties, and hast many rich priviledges, and yet thou art not able to satisfie Gods Iustice; nor to recompence the Church for the wrong done to it, and when thou art going the way of all flesh, but specially in the day of judgement, then shall people say of thee, such a man was buying and selling, and professing all his life,

and yet got nothing; and when a poore Soule is breathing out his last, then comes justice, and saith, give me my own, thou hast sinned, & therefore thou must die for it; Lord (saith hee) take some prayers, and readings, and fastings, in stead of payment, and if these will not serve, then hee is blanke, and justice carries him downe to the place of execution, and he shall not come thence, till hee have paid the utmost farthing. And then the Soule saith, some comfort, some mercy and consolation for mee; oh saith he, I have received the Sacrament, & prayed, and fasted, and professed, canst thou not feed on these? oh no! (saith the Soule) these are huskes, bread for me: as the world thiakes of a man that hath got nothing by his trading, such a man that made wonderfull shew in the world to day; so many hundreds, and thousands worse then nothing, this is lamentable. Iust so it will bee with thee, if thou hast not gotten Christ. If a man have gotten Christ in his hearing, and praying; he will answer all easily; and when the divell comes in, and saith; Thou hast many sinnes, who shall satisfie Gods Iustice for them? The soule makes this answer; Christ hath paid all. Oh, but thou hast broken the Law of God (saith the divell); Oh (saith the Soule) Christ hath fulfilled all righteousness for mee. You have many corruptions (saith the divell;) but Christ hath purged me (saith the Soule). Oh, but you shall be damned (saith the divell to him): Nay, (saith the Soule) there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, but I am in Christ, and therefore shall not be damned. Thus the divell shall goe away ashamed, and say, That man

man is out of my reach, I shall never get him downe to hell, he hath gotten Christ.

But here this question must be asked, how may a man goe beyond himselfe in all his duties?

Question.

Because this is a skill above all skills, therefore for the answer hereof take these three directions.

Answer.

First, labour to see an absolute necessity of a Christ in all these priviledges that thou hast, and in all the duties and services that thou performest. First, in all thy priviledges, See a need of Christ to make all these powerfull to thy Soule. Hearing, and reading, and fasting, will doe thee no good, except thou have a Christ to goe with all these: As a Ship that hath faire Sailes, & strong Mafts, except there be a winde it can never goe. So, the Soule is like the Ship; and the precious ordinances of God are faire Sailes and good Mafts; and it is good hearing, and good reading, and good fasting; but except the Spirit blow with these, thou canst get no good by them: the Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and except the Lord Iesus Christ, by the power of his Spirit, goe and breathe upon thy hearing, Preaching, and upon all the ordinances, they can do thee no good. When the Lord was to come into his Garden, which was the Church; The Spices are the graces of Gods Spirit. The Spices could not grow, because the Spirit would not blow upon them, and therefore the Spouse saith, *Arise oh North, and come (oh South) and blowe on my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out.* As if he had said, Good Lord, blow this way, and that way, and give a blessing to the means, and then comfort will come indeed. And as there is need:

The first Direction,

Cant. 4. 16.

need of Christ to blesse all means, so secondly there is need of Christ to make all thy services acceptable to God the Father. Oh send to heaven for a Christ, that he may hide all thy weakenesses, and present all thy duties to God his Father, in his merits and righteousness. They that brought a Sacrifice in the time of the Law, were to offer it upon the golden Altar, and no Sacrifice was accepted without it : So, if thou wilt have thy hearing, and praying, and fasting acceptable to God, lay them upon the golden Altar, the Lord Iesus Christ. And know that thou hast need of Christ to cover all the failings and weakenesses in thy duties.

The second
Direction.

Secondly, in all the beautie and excellencie of Gods ordinances that thou seest and prizest. See a greater beautie and excellency in the Lord Iesus Christ, then in all these. See what comfort is it that thou wouldest finde, and what sweet is it that thou wouldest get from hearing, and reading, praying, and professing ; goe beyond all this, and say, if the beames be so sweet, what is the Sunne it selfe, and if the ordinances of God be so sweete & comfortable, what is the Lord Iesus Christ then ? You come to heare, and it is well that you will come ; What would you have in hearing ? You would have some life to quicken you, and some wisdom in your minds to direct you, and some grace into your Soules to purge you ; and then mee thinkes I heare you say, Blessed be the Lord, this day I found my heart something more quickned, & my soule something inabled to hate sinne, and to walke with God ; blesse God for that. But, is a little life in the Word

so

so good, and is a little grace in the Sacrament so sweet, Oh then away, away higher, if these bee so sweet, what is the Lord Iesus the God of all wisdom, grace, and power. If the Word do so much quicken thy Soule, what would the Lord Iesus doe, if thou couldest get thy heart possessed of him. Let all those drops of life and mercy draw up thy heart to heaven. When the Spouse in the Canticles had sought after her beloved, see how she describes him, *Hee is white and ruddie*, and so forth; and in the 16. Can. 5. 19. 16. verse she saith, *his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely*. The originall hath it, hee is altogether pleasant, yea, pleasantnesse it selfe. You have some comfort, and some discomfort with it, you have some wisdom, and some folly, some power, and some weakenesse with it; but the Lord Iesus is all comfort, and no discomfort; he is all power, and no weakenesse; he is all life, and no deadnesse; therefore in all the ordinances of God, carry your hearts a little higher, and looke upon that fulnesse that is in Christ.

Thirdly, let us labour in the use of all meanes, as The third meanes. to see the beauty of a Christ surpassing all meanes; so let us bee led by all meanes into a neerer union with the Lord Christ. As a wife deales with the letters of her husband that is in a farre Country; she finds many sweet inklings of his love, and shee will read these letters often, and daily: she would talke with her husband a farre off, and see him in the letters, Oh (saith she) thus and thus hee thought when he writ these lines, and then shee thinkes he speaks to her againe; she reads these letters only, because she

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would be with her husband a little, and have a little parley with him in his pen, though not in his presence: so these ordinances are but the Lords love-letters, and we are the Ambassadors of Christ; and though wee are poore sottish ignorant men, yet wee bring marvellous good newes that Christ can save all poore broken hearted sinners in the world.

You do well to come and heare, but it is all that you may chat and parley a little with Christ. Our Saviour saith, *Where the carkasse or the dead body is, there wil the Eagles be.* This is the nature of an Eagle, she will not goe to catch flies, (that's the nature of the hedge Sparrow,) but shee will prey upon the carkasse. So, this is a good heart that will not prey upon dead duties, but upon the Lord Christ, who is the life of the Soule. If thou art of a right brood, thou wilt not fill and glut thy Soule with a few duties like a hedge Sparrow; still, mistake mee not, I doe not dispraise these duties, but (I say) they are nothing in the way of justification: if faith in Christs merits be not joyned with them. Therefore if thou hast a dunghill heart of thine owne, thou mayest go and content thy selfe with profession, and with a few cold dead duties; but if thou art an Eagle, and a sound hearted Christian, and one, that God hath beene pleased to doe good unto: thou wilt never be but where the Lord Iesus is, & where his grace and mercy is. As we doe at a Feast; the dish is greater then the meat, yet wee reach the dish (not for the dishes sake) but that we may cut some meat: So, the ordinances of God, are as so many dishes, wherein the Lord Iesus Christ is dished out to us. Sometimes

times Christ in his merits, is dished out in the Sacrament to all the senses, and sometimes hee is dished out in the Word; therefore as you take the dish to cut some meate: So, take the Word; that Communicates Christ to the eare; and prayer Communicates with Christ, and the Sacrament Communicates Christ to all the senses; cut the meate, and let not the Lord Christ goe whole from the Table, and no man looke after him; fill your hungry Soules with Christ. When a poore travelling man comes to the Ferry; he cries to the other side; Have over, have over; his meaning is, he would go to the other side by a Boat; he onely desires the use of the Ferryman to convey him over. So, Christ is in heaven, but we are here on earth (as it were) on the other side of the river; the ordinances of God are but as so many Boats to carry us, and to land us at Heaven where our hopes are; and our hearts shoul bee. Therefore you would be landed: Have over, have over (saith the Soule). The Soule desires to bee landed at the Straies of Mercy, and saith, Oh, bring me to speake with my Saviour. *Mary* came to the Sepulchre to seeke for Christ, and therefore when the Angel said to her, *Woman why weepest thou?* shee made this answer, *Oh, they have taken away my Lord.* So it is with you, if you be not hypocrites. Is there ever a *Mary* here? is there ever a man or woman that prizeth a Christ, and seeth need of a Christ, and that comes weeping & mourning to the holy ordinances of God? whom seekest thou (saith the Word, and Prayer, and the Sacrament? Oh (saith the broken hearted sinner) they have taken away my

Ioh. 20. 13.

Lord Christ? Oh this sinfull heart of mine; oh these cursed corruptions of mine! if it had not beene for these, Christ would have comforted my conscience and pardoned my sinne; if thou seeest my Christ and my Saviour, reveale him to my Soule, that I may receive comfort and consolation by him. This is the frame of a Christian Soule: when the Ferry-man hath carried the traveller over, hee stayes not there, but goes to the house of his friend, and saith, is such a man within, he desires to speake with him, and to receive some good from him. We heare, and pray, and read till wee are weary, we doe not cry; Have over: let mee come to enjoy a neerer Communion with my Saviour, that I may dwell with him, and have a neerer cut to the Lord Christ; I would have way, that I may receive grace and mercy from Christ according to my necessities. When a man hath gotten so many hundred pounds, he not onely tels that he hath met with the Ferry-man, but he shewes the money hee hath gotten. So you come to Church, and goe from Church, and you have your hearing, for your hearing; and your professing, for your professing and the like; but you should labour to say; I have gotten the pardon of all my sinnes, and the assurance of Gods love to my Soule; I have beene with my Saviour, and thus graciously, and mercifully hee hath dealt with mee. All that I have said, is but a speech of little time, but it is a taske for all a mans life. Oh thinke of it, and say, what have I gotten by all that I have done? and what would I get when I go to prayer? I would have a Christ and mercy from him. This is not in

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our minds. I tell thee what thou must aime at, and labour for, heare, and pray for a Saviour. See a need of Christ in all, & see greater beautie in Christ then in all, and bee led neerer to Christ by all, or else you get nothing by all that you doe. If there were no gold in the West-Indies the King of *Spaine* would not care for his Ships, nor for that place. Schoole-boyes care not for the Carrier, but for letters from a Father. So, now raise up your hearts higher towards heaven: All holy duties are but as Ships, and Carriers; but the golden Mines of mercy are all in the Lord Iesus Christ. It was a sweet speech of a man (whether he was good or bad I know not) that a man should loose the creatures in God. So, I would have you do, loose your selves, and all ordinances, and creatures, and all that you have, and do, in the Lord Christ. How is that? Let all bee swallowed up, and let nothing be seene but a Christ, and let thy heart be set upon nothing but a Christ. As it is with the Moone and Starres, when the Sunne comes, they loose all their light, though they are there in the heavens still; and as it is with rivers, they all goe into the Sea, and are all swallowed up of the Sea: and yet there is nothing seene but the Sea. So, all the ordinances, and creatures, are as so many rivers from that Ocean of mercy and goodnesse in Christ, and they all returne thither; therefore onely see a Fountaine of grace, goodnesse, wisedome, and power in Christ: When a man is upon the Sea, he can see no fresh water, it is all swallowed up: So let it bee with thy Soule, when thou wouldest finde mercy and grace. The ordinances of

God are good in themselves, yet loose them all in Christ. That wisdom in Christ is able to direct, and that grace and mercy in Christ is able to save, when all other helps faile, and that power of Christ must support the Soule in time of trouble. There is some comfort and sweet, and some refreshing in the Word, and in the Sacrament, and in the company of Gods people; but loose all these in the Lord Christ. And see that mercy, and compassion, & that boundlesse goodnesse that is in the Lord Iesus; and that mercy that will pardon all finnes, and forgive all sorts of sinners, if they be humbled before him. There is no pardon in grace, nor in means, in Word, nor in Sacraments, there is none but in Christ, see none but that; and when thou art there, hold thy heart to it; drench and drowne thy Soule there, and fling thy Soule into the Sea of that plenteous Redemption in Christ; and though thy prayers and all faile, yet that mercy in Christ will never faile. Away with these rivers, these are all fresh-water-comforts that will faile; but that Sea of mercy in Christ will hold for ever. See a Sea of misery and confusion in thy soule, and a Sea of mercy in Christ and say, none but that Lord; Heere sit, and here fall, and for ever establish thy soule, that it may goe well with thee for ever. Thus you ought to goe beyond all meanes; and he that doeth thus, doth truly despair of all saving succour in them. Therefore goe home, and say thus, the Lord hath given mee some comfort, and some grace, and a heart enlarged to walke with God, and to performe durie, to him, but I trust not in this comfort, nor in my enlargement, all my

my comfort is in Christ, that Sea of mercy is still full, and I rest there; goe from all these to that, and rest there, and let that content thee for ever.

Thus you see how farre the Prodigall hath gone. What doth he now? he comes to himself and saith, *I will arise and go to my Father, and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy sonne, make mee as one of thy hired servants.* Now his stout stomack is come downe, and he comes home by weeping crosse, and he that had formerly slighted the kindnesse of a father, and said, Hee would not alwaies bee holden within his fathers house, he would have his portion, and he hath it, and is gone, and at last when his heart and all failes him, he comes to himself and said, here I may starve and die too, the hogs fare better then I doe, therefore home I will goe to my father, &c.

This is the third passage that I told you of in the description of this worke of humiliation.

In these words there are these two things cleare.

First, he submits himselfe to his father.

Secondly, he is content to be at his fathers disposing; he doth not seeke to bee his owne carver, and say, if I may be my fathers steward, and have some eminent place in the house, then I will go home; no, but he saith, father, I am not worthy to be a sonne, make me as a hired servant, if I can but get into my fathers house againe; I will die rather then go away any more: he is content to be any thing, so his father will but receive him into his family, though it were but to be a drudg in the kitchen, heres a heart worth gold; oh! (saith he) let all the weight lye upon me, I care

The third
Doctrine.

care not what I be, only let me be a servant. So then from the former of these two, the Doctrine is this.

** The distressed sinner that despaires of all supply and succour in himselfe, is driven to submit himselfe to the Lord God for succour and reliefe.*

It is no thanks to the Prodigall that hee comes home now, neither is it any thanks to a poore sinner that he returnes after all his wandring away from God, yet better late then never. For the opening of this point I will shew two things.

1. First, What is the behaviour of the heart in this worke of submission, and the manner of it.
2. Secondly, the reasons why the Lord drives the heart to this stand, and makes it fall downe at the footstool of mercy.

What is sub-
jection.

The first, how the Soule behaves it selfe in this subjection. The sinner having a sight of his owne sin, and being troubled and overwhelmed with the unsupportable sorrow that attends thereupon, and yet he is not able to get power over his sinne, nor assurance of pardon from the Lord; for you must conceive the sinner to bee in the worke of preparation, and yet hee conceives God to bee an enemy against him, though he is in a good way to mercy, yet God comes as an angry God against him, and hee takes what course he can, and seekes far and wide, and improves all meanes and takes up all duties, that (if it were possible) hee might heale his wounded Soule, and get ground against his corruptions, but the truth is, he findes no succour, and receives no comfort in what hath, nor in what hee doth, and therefore being in this despairing condition; he seeth he cannot
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avoyd Gods anger, neither can hee beare it, therefore he is forced (though loath) to make triall of the kindnesse of a father, and of the Lord, though for the present he apprehends God to be just, and to be incensed against him, and though he hath no experience of Gods favour for the while, and no certaintie how hee shall speed if he come to God; yet because he sees that he cannot be worse then he is, but hee may be better if God please, and this he knows, that none but God can helpe him: therefore he falls at the foot-stoole of mercy, and lies grovelling at the gate of grace, and submits himselfe to God that he may do what he wil with him. When *Jonah* had denounced that heavy judgement, and (as it were) thrown wild-fire about the streets, saying, *within fortie daies Nineveh shall be destroyed*; See what they resolve upon, they fasted, and prayed, and put on sack-cloth and ashes; the Lord in mercy grant that we may take the like courses, *who can tell* (said they) *but God* Jonah 3.9. *may turne and repent him of his fierce wrath that wee perish not.* As if they had said, we know not what God will doe, but this wee know that wee cannot oppose Gods judgements, nor prevent them, nor succour our selves: yet who can tell but the Lord may be gracious and bountifull, and yet continue peace and goodnesse to us in this kind; thus it is with a sinner despairing of all succour in himselfe, when he seeth hell fire flashing in his face, and that hee cannot succour himselfe, then he saith, this I know, that all the meanes in the world cannot save mee, yet who can tell but the Lord may have mercy upon mee, and cure this distressed conscience, and heale all these

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wounds that sinne hath made in my Soule: when *Paul* went breathing out threatnings against the Church of God, and hee came furnished with letters from the high Priests, with all his tricks and implements to persecute the Saints, the Lord met him and there was a single combat fought between them the glory of the Lord amazed him, and threw him flat on the ground, and when *Paul* saw that the Lord *Jesus* had the advantage against him, hee yielded himselfe and said, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* This is the lively picture of the Soule in this case; this subjection discovers it selfe in foure particulars.

Act. 9. 5.

1.

First, take the Soule despairing of mercy and succour in himselfe, hee seeth and confesseth that the Lord may, and (for ought he knowes) will proceed in justice against him, and execute upon him those plagues that God hath threatned, and his sin deserved; and he seeth that Iustice is not yet satisfied, and all those reckonings betweene God and him are not made up, & therefore hee cannot apprehend but that God may, and will take vengeance of him; he seeth that when he hath done all that he can, he is unprofitable, and Iustice remaines unsatisfied, and saith, thou hast sinned, and I am wronged, and therefore thou shalt die. See what the Text saith, *can a man be profitable to the Lord?* as he that is wise may be profitable to himselfe, is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous, or is it any gaine to him that thou makest thy way perfect. So the Soule saith; Is all that I can doe any thing to the Lord, is the Lords Iustice any gainer by it? Nay, Iustice is yet unsatisfied, because there is sinne in all that I doe, and

Job 22. 2, 3.

and therefore Justice may proceed against me: therefore the soule resolves, that the Lord may and will: Nay, why should hee not come in vengeance, and Iudgement against him?

Secondly, he conceives that what God will doe, he can doe, and hee cannot avoyd it. The anger of the Lord cannot be resisted; If the Lord will come and require the glory of his Justice against him, there is no way to avoyd it, nor to beare it, and this crusheth the heart, and makes the soul to be beyond all shifts, and evasions, and all those tricks, whereby it may seeme to avoyd the dint of the Lords blow.

As *Iob* saith, *Hee is one mind, and who can turne him,* Iob 23. 13, 14, 15, 16.
and what his soule desireth, that doth he. It is admirable

to consider it: for this is it that makes the heart melt and come under; When the Soule saith, If God come who can turne him, hee will have his honour from this wretched proud heart of mine, hee will have his glory from me, either here in my humiliation, or else hereafter in my damnation. And in the next verse, *Iob* saith, *Many such things are with him:* As if hee had said, hee hath many wayes to crush a carnall confident heart, and to make it lye low, hee wants not meanes to pull downe even the most rebellious sinner under heaven. And now marke what followes, He can crush them all; What became of *Nimrod*, *Gain*, *Pharaoh*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*; They are all brought downe; therefore (saith hee) I am troubled at his presence, when I consider it; I am afraid, for God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me.

Thirdly, As the sinner apprehends, that God may

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doe what he will and he cannot resist him; So the soule flings away all shifts and tricks that he had, and he resignes up the power of all his priviledges that he hath to defend himselfe withal; he casts away his weapons, and falles downe before the Lord, and resignes himselfe into the Sovereaigne power and command of God. This was in the Spirit of the Prophet *David*; When the Lord had cast him out of his Kingdome, hee said to *Zadock*; *carry backe the Arke of God into the Citie, if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, hee will bring mee backe againe, and shew me both it, and his habitation. But if hee thus say to mee, I have no delight in thee, Behold, here I am, let him doe with me as seemeth good in his eyes.* Or as it was with those people, *2 Kings 10. 2, 3, 4.* Where when *Iehu* sent this message to the people of Israel, saying, *Now assoone as this letter commeth to you, seeing your masters sonnes are with you, and there are with you chariots, and armour, and a fenced Citie, looke out even the best and fittest of your masters sonnes, and set him on his fathers throne, and fight for your fathers house.* But the Text saith, *they were all exceedingly afraid, and therefore they sent word to Iehu; and laid, two Kings could not stand out against thee, and then how can we stand? We are thy servants, and will doe all that thou shalt bid us, wee will make no King, doe thou that which is good in thine eies.* This is the frame of a poore Soule: When a poore sinner will stand upon his own priviledges, the Lord saith, *beare my Iustice, and defend thy selfe by all that thou hast, if thou canst; and the Soule saith, I am thy servant (Lord) doe what is good in thine eies, I cannot succour my selfe: there-*

2 Sam. 15.
25, 26.

2 King. 10. 2.
3, 4.

therefore the heart gives up it selfe to be at the command of God.

Fourthly, The Soule thus yielding up the weapons, and coming in, as to an enemy, and as conquered; then in the last place the Soule freely acknowledgeth, that it is in Gods power to doe with him, and to dispose of him as he will; and therefore he lyes and lickes the dust, and cryes mercy, mercy, Lord. He doth not thinke to purchase mercy at the Lords hands, but onely faith; it is onely in Gods good pleasure to doe with him as he will, but hee lookes at his favour, and cryes, mercy (Lord) to this poore distressed soule of mine. And when the Lord heares a sinner come from wandring up and downe in his priviledges, the Lord replies to the Soule in this manner, and saith. Doest thou need mercy? I had thought thy hearing, and praying, and fasting, would have carried thee to heaven without all hazard, therefore gird up thy loynes, and make thy ferventest prayers, and let them meet my Iustice, and see if they can beare my wrath and purchase mercy; Nay (saith the sinner) I know it by lamentable experience, I have proved, that all my prayers and performances, wil never procure peace to my soule, nor give any satisfaction to thy Iustice, I onely pray for mercy, and I desire onely to heare some newes of mercy, to relieve this miserable and wretched soule of mine; it is onely mercy that must helpe me; Oh mercy, if it may bee possible: the issue is thus much; The sinner seeth that all hee hath, and can do, can never succour him, and therefore he throwes away his carnall confidence, and hee submits him-

selfe to the Lord; and now he seeth that the Lord may justly come against him, and that his Iustice is not satisfied, and that hee cannot beare Gods wrath, nor avoyd it, and he casts away all his shifts, and lies downe at the gate of mercy. As it is with a debtor that stands bound for some farre greater summes, than ever hee is able to pay; to satisfie of himselfe hee cannot, and his friends will not: and he knowes that the bonds are still in force, and his creditor will sue him; avoyd the suit he cannot, and to beare it, he is not able, and therefore he comes in freely, and offers himselfe, and his person, and gives up himselfe into his creditors hands; only hee beseecheth him to remit that which he can never pay. Iust so it is with the Soule of a poore sinner. The Soule is the Debtor: and Divine Iustice is the Creditor. When the poore sinner hath used all meanes to save and succour himselfe, and to make payment, and hee hath (as it were) made a gathering of prayers all the Countrey over, and yet he seeth, that there is a controversie betweene God and him; and yet his sinne is not pardoned: and God is Iust and will have his honour, and he is not able to avoyd the suite nor to beare it, and the Soule saith, as *David* did; *Whither shall I goe from thy Spirit? and whither shall I flie from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there, &c.* So the Soule saith, God will have his payment from this heart bloud of mine; if I go into the East, the Lord will follow mee; and bid his Serjeant Conscience to arrest mee, and I shall lye and rot in the Prison of hell for ever. Now the Soule offers himselfe before the Lord, and saith, *Father, I have*

Psal. 139. 7, 8.

sinned

sinned against heaven, and before thee: Oh shew mercy (if it be possible) to this poore distressed Soule of mine: thus the Prodigall did. An other Similitude is this, Me thinks the picture of those foure famished Lepers, may fitly resemble this poore sinner. When the famine was great in Samaria: *There were foure leproous men sat in the gate of the Citie, and they said, Why sit wee here until wee die? If wee enter into the Citie, the famine is there, and if we sit heere we die also; Now let us therefore fall into the hands of our enemies, if they save us alive we shall live, and if they kill us we shall but die.* They had but one meanes to succour themselves withall, and that was to goe into the Campe of their enemies, come (said they) wee will put it to the venture, and so they did, and were relieved: This is the lively picture of a poore sinner in this despairing condition. When the Soule of a poore Leprous sinner is famished for want of comfort, and hee seeth the wrath of God pursuing of him, and the Lord besets him on every side: at last he resolves thus with himselfe, I say, when he hath used all meanes, and finds succour in none; hee resolves thus with himselfe and saith, if I goe and rest upon my priviledges, there is nothing but emptinesse and weakenesse, if I trust in them; and if I rest in my naturall condition, I perish there also. Let me therefore fall into the hands of the Lord of Hosts, who (I confesse) hath bene provoked by mee, and for ought I see is mine enemy, I am now a damned man, and if the Lord cast me out of his presence, I can but be damned that way, and then hee comes to the Lord, and falls downe before the footstool of a
 consuming

*2 King. 7. 3. 8,
9, &c.*

consuming God, and saith as *Iob* did, *What shall I say unto thee, O thou preserver of men?* I have no reason to plead for my self withall, and I have no power to succour my selfe, my accusations are my best excuse, all the priviledges in the world cannot justify me, and all my duties cannot save me, if there be any mercy left, Oh succour a poore distressed sinner in the very gall of bitterness. This is the behaviour of the Soule in this worke of subjection.

The reason why the Lord deales thus with the Soule, and why he pluckes a sinner upon his knees; there is great reason why he should doe it. The reason is two-fold. First, That the Lord may herein expresse and glorifie the greatnesse of his power. And secondly, To shew forth the glory of his mercy.

I. Reason.

First, the glory of his power is marvellously magnified, in that the Lord shewes that hee is able to pull downe the proudest heart, and to lay low the haughtiest spirit under heaven, and those that have out-braved the God of heaven, and beene opposite to him, and despised the glory of his Name. For herein is the glory of his Name greatly exalted, that hee makes a poore wretch to come, and creepe, and crawl before him, and beg for mercy at his hands, and to be at his dispose.

Exod. 9. 27.

It is a fine passage. You know how *Pharaoh* would out-face the Lord, saying, *Who is the Lord that I should obey him?* And as the Master sometime saith to his servant, You shall, And you shall doe this; saith the husband to his wife. This is the sturdy fiercenesse of a company of wretches. Well, the Lord let him alone for the while, but in the 27. verse, when the Lord

Lord had freed and delivered his servants, and had plagued the Egyptians with the haile, then Pharaoh said, *Now I know that the Lord is greater then all Gods, and that he is righteous, but I and my people are wicked.* Where is Pharaoh and Nimrod, and all the rest of those mightie ones of the world? they are all gone downe to hell, and God hath destroyed them, for, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly hee was above them. Herein is the glory of Gods power. So it is here. As we use to say, Doe you know such a man? Yes. What was hee? A profest drunkard, and a desperate despiser of God and his grace, and one that did hate the very face of an honest man. Oh, the Lord hath brought him upon his knees. Oh, admirable (saith he) what is he humbled, and is his heart broken? Oh yes, the Lord hath dejected him in that wherein he was proud. As it is amongst men; If two men be in controversie, and the one enters into suit with the other, and before a man will submit and yield himselfe, he will die, and rather spend all that he hath then to want his will, and he will make that tongue deny what it hath spoken. He thinks this his excellencie: So it is with our God. Herein is the power of the Almighty magnified, that he hath brought down those great *Leviathans*; and all those *Nimrods* and great Kings, which said, Who is the Lord? hee hath made such as these are, to come in; and to submit unto him.

Secondly, by this meanes the Lord doth marvellously promote the praise of his mercy. First, partly for the greatnesse of it. And secondly, partly for the freedome of it. First, in that the Lord helps

The second
Meanes.

a poore sinner at a dead lift, and when all prayers, and hearings prevailed not, and when all priviledges were not able to purchase mercy and favour, then the Lord shewes mercy. Doth not this argue the excellency of that Balme? that will cure when all other meanes cannot doe the deece, that the Lord should then (I say) looke upon a poore sinner, and refresh him with one drop of mercy: Oh, this is unspeakable mercy! As the Prophet *David* saith, *All my bones can say, Lord, who is like unto thee?* as if hee had said, This eye that hath wept for my finnes, this tongue that hath confest my finnes, and this heart that hath grieved for sinne, all these have beene refreshed by thee. This prayer is not like to thee, this fasting and these priviledges are not like to thee, for these could not succour me; but thou art the Lord that didst deliver and succour thy poore servant. And secondly, here is also admirable freeness of mercy; that when the Lords mercy was but lightly looked after, that then the Lord should give mercy, and that to an enemy. For, the Soule can say, if any thing in the world would have saved mee, I should not have gone to the Lord for mercy; and yet when all would not doe, and when I did not thinke of any such matter, then the Lord saved me. This is free mercy. The hope of Israel is not like others, and the God of *Jacob* is not like other Gods. You distressed Soules, did not you know the time when God terrified you, and then offered mercy and you would none, but you would scramble for mercy, and shift for your owne comfort, and yet the Lord brought downe those proud hearts of yours, and when you were

were at a dead list, and could find comfort no where else, then did the Lord shew mercy to your Soules. Was not this free mercy? wonder at it, and give God glory for it, even for ever.

This being so, that the Soule that is throughly *vsē* 1. humbled, yields to submit it self to the Lord: Then, this is like a Bill of inditement, against all the stout ones of the world. This shewes how unworthy they are of any mercy; Nay, how unfit they are for mercy. They are so farre from partaking of Gods mercy, that they will not bee humbled, and therefore they cannot bee exalted: Nay, they have a base esteeme of it, and so they hate their everlasting salvation. For, looke how far they are from submission, so farre they are from the comfort and happinesse of the Lord. He that will enter in at this strait gate of subjection, is so farre from ever going in the way to life; that he never set one foot. (yet) in this way. Let me speake, as once the Prophet did; *Heare and tremble all you stout ones of the earth, you that account it a matter of credit to cast off the Commandements of God, and that you can lift up your selves against the Almighty.* Good Lord, is it possible? you know what I say; there is many a one here, and if they bee not here, (as commonly they are not) let them heare of it. How is it that men slight all corrections, and snap all Gods Cōmandements in sunder, as *Samsōn* did the Cords; and they say, their tongues are their owne, and their lusts are the cōmands that carry them; Nay, is it not come to this passe now adayes (for the Lords sake thinke of it) that men account it a matter of basenesse of spirit to bee such childish

babes, and to be so womannish, as to stoope at every command. Oh, you must not be drunke, (saith one) it is a hot argument, and are you such a child as to yield to it. No, let us follow our owne wayes; is it not thus? I appeale to your owne Soules: there are too many guilty in this place: Doe you thinke to out-brave the Almighty in this manner? Doe you provoke the Lord to wrath, and doe you not provoke your soules to your owne confusion? Doeft thou thinke to goe to heaven thus bolt upright, the Lord cannot indure thee heere, and will Hee suffer thee to dwell with himselfe for ever in heaven? What, thou to heaven upon these termes? Nay, thou must not thinke to out-brave the Lord in this manner, and to go to heaven too? How did the Lord deale with *Lucifer*, and all those glorious spirits? He sent them all downe to hell for their pride. Let all such spirits heare, and know their miserie. I doe noe trouble my selfe with any matter of indignation, it is no trouble to mee, but onely because of your finnes, for you are the greatest objects of pitty under heaven. You that know such, and have such husbands: oh mourne for them exceedingly. The Lord doth detest their persons, As the Wise man saith; *The froward in heart are an abomination to the Lord.* The Lord doth abhorre that heart of thine: And, shall God abhominat that proud heart of thine, and yet blesse it, and save it, and will he dwell with such a heart in heaven? No, he hath some body else to give heaven to. Secondly, thy estate is desperate here, and marvellous unrecoverable. As the same Wise man saith, *Hee that being often reprooved,*

Pro. 11. 20.

hardeneth his necke, and will not stoope to any counsels, nor reproofes, but saith: Who meddles with you, and I know what I have to doe, and let every Tub stand upon his owne bottome. How many of you here have beene reprovved for your swearing, but you leave it not? How many of you have beene reprovved for your prophaning of the Lords Day? doe you withdraw your selves from it? Oh no such matter! Goe your wayes then and mourne over those hard hearts of yours; and in private say thus. This is my sentence right. The Lord be mercifull to my father (saith the child) and the Lord bee mercifull to my proud husband, (saith the wife), and to my wife, (saith the husband), are not we they that have beene often reprovved? have not wee had such exhortations as have made the Church to shake; the divels would have gotten more good if they had had them, and yet we have cast off all, & we would not come in; wee doe not yet pray in our Families, but wee throw away all; the Lord hath said it; hee that being often reprovved hardneth his necke, and will not come in, shall perish: hee is gone then, and therefore thou mayst say, Oh my husband is but a dead man, and my child is a dead child, hee shall perish: but there is no remedy, (may some say) No, the Text saith so, he shall suddainly be destroyed, and that without remedy. The truth is, I need say no more, but that you know your owne hearts; bewaile those hard hearts of yours, that (as the water by continuall dropping, at last melts the flint) so if it be possible, those proud hearts of yours may be brought downe. If a drunkard, or an adulterer will

submit to the Word, there is remedy for them; but there is no remedy for him, that will not yield to the Spirit of God. The Lord bee mercifull to the Soules of them. Will you see your sturdy hearted husbands and children perish? the Lord in mercy set this home to your hearts at last, and prevaile with them. Will you perish, and that suddenly? Oh let us pitie them! will you not yield now, but will you stand it out to the last man?

The Lord comes out in battell array against a proud person, and singles him out from all the rest, and when the vyalls of his wrath are poured out upon all wicked ones, (me thinkes) the Lord saith, Let that drunkard and that swearer alone a while, but let mee destroy that proud heart for ever. You shall submit in spight of your teeth, when the great God of heaven and earth shall come to execute vengeance, and doe not thinke to scarre God with your mocks, you that wil sweare a man out of your company. Consider that place in *Iob*, and see how the Lord comes with all his full might against a proud man. It is good to read this place often, that God may pull downe our proud hearts. *For he stretcheth out his hands against the Almighty (saith the text) and strengthueth himselfe against God, and he saith, I will do it though my life lie at the stake for it, he strengthens himselfe and will doe it. Surely God is afraid of him, he comes so well mann'd; the Lord must deale some way with him to overthrow him. Mark what the text saith; The Lord runnes upon him even on his neske, upon the thicke bosses of his bucklers; because hee covereth his face with his fatnesse, and maketh collops*

*Iob 15, 25,
26, 27.*

of fat upon his flankes; the Lord comes upon him not at the advantage, but in the height of his pride, and in the rage of his malice the Lord will come upon him, and ruinate him for ever: Those that now stand it out, and cast off all, carelessly throwing away the Commandements of God; I would have them at the day of their death to out-stand the curse of God. The Lord God commands to sanctifie his Sabbaths, and to love his truth and his children, yet, you will not, but you will strive against all; I would have you to out-stand the curse of God in the day of Iudgement, and when the Lord Iesus shall say, *Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire,* stand it out now, and say, I will not goe to hell (Lord) I will not be damned. No, no, you broke the cords here, but the Lord will bind you in chaines of darknesse for ever, remove those chaines if you can. No, *the haughtinesse of men shall be brought low, and the loftinesse of men shall be abased, and the Lord shall onely bee exalted in that day.* Esay. 2. 17.

The second Vse is for instruction, to shew unto us Vse. 2. that an humble Soule is marvellous reachable and tractable, and is willing to yield unto, and to bee guided by any truth; it submits, and there is no quarrelling against the Commandements of God, one word of Gods mouth is enough. If the Lord reproveth, it takes the same home to it selfe, if the Lord promiseth, it believes; and if the Lord threatens, it trembles. It is easie to be convinced of whatsoever it is informed, if it have no good reason to gaine-say it. It is not of that wayward and pettish disposition, that it will not be satisfied though all his

Job 34.32.

his reasons bee answered, and all objections taken away. It is not led by his owne humours, as many a man is, though his conceits be against reason, and opposite against God and his grace. Nay, it is content to yield to the authoritic of the truth, and to take the impression of every truth; it heares, and yields, and obeyes, and frames it selfe answerably. As Job saith, *That which I know not teach thou mee, and if I have done any iniquitie, I will doe so no more.* The humble Soule is content to confesse his ignorance, and to submit to any truth, that may informe him, and it is content to receive that mercy and grace that is offered, by what meanes soever God seeth best to Communicate it. Nay, the heart that is truly submissive, is as willing to take comfort when it is offered upon good grounds, as it is to performe dutie enjoyned. By a foolish pettishæffe, the divell withdrawes the hearts of Gods owne people from much comfort, that God hath dished out of purpose for their benefit. For howsoever the Soule of a poore sinner be truly touched, yet for want of this lowlinesse, and this teachablenesse, and submission it refuseth, that sap and sweet, that it should take and receive from the Lord. Take a poore sinner, that hath many sinnes burthening of him, and he is crushed with them, and that in truth he desires comfort, but receives none: Let the Minister of God come, and answer all his arguments, and satisfie all his quarrels that he can make, & set him on a cleare board, and tell him that the work of grace is cleare, and mercy is appointed for him: Now marke how he flies off through that sullennesse, and untoward peevish-

peevishnesse and pride of Spirit, hee casts away the mercy, & yields not to the comfort offered, though he is content to yield to the duties enjoyned, and so he deprives himselfe of that mercy, and comfort that is offered; and thus when all is done time after time, the Soule saith, I see it not, and I perceive it not: and all the world shall not perswade me of it. Why? what, are you wiser then all the world? what a pride of heart is this? Oh saith he, another man may be cozened and deceived, but I know my owne heart better then any Minister doth. But you tell the Minister what your condition is, and so, what you know hee knowes, and hee hath more judgement to enforme you, then you have of your selfe. Then saith the Minister, all your cavils and objections are answered, and remooved; and all that worke of grace that God hath wrought, you have made it knowne and revealed, and all this is made good by the Word of God; now, if all these quarrels be answered, and if all the reasons and evidences of the worke of grace bee made cleare, that you cannot deny them; then, why may not you take comfort? Downe with that proud heart of yours that will not believe, whatsoever the Minister saith. Oh the height of pride, and haughtinesse of heart in this case! I speake to you to whom comfort and mercy is impropriated; downe with those proud spirits I say. It is not because you cannot, but because you will not. It is said in *Esa.*, *God prepares the garment of gladnesse for the spirit of heavinesse.* Esa. 61. 3. When the Lord seeth the soule prepared and humbled, hee takes measure of it, and disbeth out a com-

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fort answerable, he prepares a consolation as fit as may be, and yet the Soule will not put it on, nor be warmed and refreshed with it; as it is with some way-ward and untoward child, who when his father hath prepared a suit of cloathes fitting for him; because hee hath not such and such a lace, hee will not put it on, but throwes it away. Oh, it is marvelous pride of spirit! a rod, a rod. Even so, when the Lord prepares the garment of gladnesse, you will not put it on, nor receive the comfort that is offered, and so swelt your owne hearts.

Now I come to this last passage in this worke of Humiliation, and this is the dead lift of all. The Prodigall doth not stand it out with his Father and say, I am now come againe, if I may have halfe the rule in the Family, I am content to live with you. No, though hee would not stay there before, yet now he cannot be kept out, hee is content to bee any thing. Oh (saith hee) I confesse I doe deserve the worst, but if any man will once helpe mee in, and but throw me over the threshold, if I may but Scoure the Kettles, or doe any drudgery, I will never out againe. Oh that I could get in once! As if he had said, you that thinke nothing sufficient, if you had tasted the bitternesse of affliction as I have done, you would bee glad of any thing in a fathers house: Come all you drunkards, and adulterers, you will needs away from God, and his grace: I tell you, if you were bitten and troubled as I have beene, then you would say, it is good being in a fathers house, and it is good yielding to the Lord upon any termes: as it is with this Prodigall: Set

is with every Soule that is truly humbled with the sense of his owne vilenesse. When the Soule seeth that no duties will quiet his conscience, nor get the pardon of his sinne, hee comes home and is content, (not onely to take up the profession of the Gospel upon some agreements with the Lord, and to say, if I may have honours, and preferments, and ease, and libertie, and the like, then I am content to follow it. Nay, the Soule saith, let me be a miserable slave and imprisoned, let me be a servant, and be brought to the heaviest hazards, I care not what I be, if the Lord will but receive me to mercy. Lord (saith he) shew me mercy, and I am content to be, and to suffer any thing. So from hence the Doctrine is this.

The Soule that is truly humbled, is content to be disposed of by the Almighty, as it pleaseth him.

4.
Doctrine.

The maine pitch of this point lyes in the word, content. This phrase is a higher pitch then the former of submission: and this is plaine by this example. Take a debtor, who hath used all meanes to avoyd the creditor: in the end he seeth that hee cannot avoyd the suit, and to beare it hee is not able. Therefore the onely way is to come in, and yield himselfe into his creditors hands; where there is nothing, the King must loose his right; so the debtor yields himselfe: but suppose the creditor should use him hardly, exact the uttermost, and throw him into prison; Now to be content to under-goe the hardest dealing, it is a hard matter: this is a further degree then the offering himselfe. So, when the Soule hath offered himselfe, and he seeth that Gods writs are out against him, and his Conscience (the

Lords Serjeant) is coming to serve a *Subpena* on him, and it is not able to avoyd it, nor to beare it when he comes, therefore he submits himselfe and faith, Lord, whither shall I goe, thy anger is heavy and unavoydable; Nay, whatsoever God requires, the Soule layes his hand upon his mouth, and goes away contented and well satisfied, and it hath nothing to say against the Lord. This is the nature of the Doctrinæ in hand: and for the better opening of it, let me discover three things.

1. First, What is the behaviour of the Soule, in this worke of contentednesse. Brethren, these are passages of great weight, that I would have every man to take notice of.
2. Secondly, What is the behaviour of the Lord, or, what is the disposition wherewith the Soule must be contented.
3. Thirdly, The reason why the Lord will have the heart at such an under, and to be at his command? For, howsoever the Lords worke is secret in other ordinary things, yet all the Soules that ever came to Christ, and that ever shall come to Christ, must have this worke upon them; and it is impossible that faith should be in the Soule, except this worke bee there first, to make way for faith.

How shall a man know when his Soule is thus contented? this frame of heart discovers it selfe in three particular acts, or passages.

First, You may remember, that I told you before, that the sinner was resolved to yield to God, and to submit himselfe to his power, and pleasure, and hee did begge mercy. Now the Soule that is truly abased,

Wherein this contentednesse consists.

fed, (though he secke mercy) yet hee leeth so much corruption, and unworthinesse in himselfe, that hee acknowledgeth himselfe unfit for mercy. He cannot avoyd the wrath of God, neither can hee beare it, therefore he saith, Oh mercy, mercy Lord! What (saith the Lord) I had thought your owne duties, and prayers, would have carried you out against my Iustice, and have purchased mercy? Oh no (saith the Soule) it is onely mercy that must relieve and succour me, but such is my vilenesse, that I am not fit for the least mercy and favour; and such is the wickednesse of this wretched heart of mine, that whatsoever are the greatest plagues, I am worthy of them all, though never so insupportable: and all the Judgements that God hath threatned, and prepared for the divell and his angels, they are all due to this wretched Soule of mine, for I am a divel in truth; onely here is the difference, I am not yet in hell: and oh (saith the Soule), had the divels the like hopes, and meanes, and patience that I have enjoyed, for ought I know, they would have beene better then I am. It is that which shames the Soule in all his sorrowes, and makes him say, had they the like mercy? Oh those sweet comforts, and those precibus promises that I have had, and that the Lord Iesus hath made to mee, and hath come so many heavy journeyes to knocke at my heart, and said, Come to mee ye rebellious children, turne yee, turne yee; why will yeedie. Oh that mercy, that hath followed mee from my house to my walke, and there mercy hath conferred with mee, and from thence to my closet; and there mercy hath wooed mee: and in my

night thoughts when I awaked, there mercy kneeled
 downe before mee, and besought mee to renounce
 my base courses, yet I refused mercy, and would
 needs have my owne will; had the diuels but such
 hopes, and such offers of mercy, they that now
 tremble for want of mercy; they would have given
 entertainment to it; for ought I know: And what,
 doe I seeke for mercy? shall I talke of mercy? Alas,
 shall I seeke for mercy, when in the meane time, I
 have thus slighted and despised it; what I mercy?
 the least of Gods mercies are too good for me, and
 the heaviest of Gods plagues are too little for mee.
 Nay, the Soule finds no end in pleading, and there-
 fore he reasons thus with himselfe, and saith, that
 God cannot doe more against him then he hath de-
 served; but be sure, he thinks that God will not lay
 more upon him then hee is worthy of. Nay, it is
 sure the Soule cannot beare nor suffer so much, as he
 hath deserved and pluckt upon himselfe, if God
 should proceed in rigour with him. For the sinner
 that will deale plainly, and discernes his euill ex-
 actly; it is easie for him to number up all his abho-
 minations, and the Soule thus reasons with it selfe,
 and saith, I onely deserve eternall condemnation;
 for the wages of all sinne is death, being committed
 against an infinite Majestic, and against a Divine Iu-
 stice, and then, what doe all these my finnes deserve,
 committed, and continued in, and maintained against
 the light of Gods Word, against all corrections, and
 all checks of conscience, and all the Commande-
 ments of God, hell is too good, and ten thousand
 hels is too little to torment such a wretch as I am. In
 truth,

truth, I begged mercy, but what, I mercy? I am ashamed to expect it, and with what heart can I beg this mercy which I have troden under my feet? Shall that blood of Christ purge my heart, that blood that I have trampled under my feet, and accounted it as an unholy thing? and when the Lord hath wooed me, and his wounds were bleeding, and his sides goared, and his hideous cries coming into mine eares, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee,* yet this Christ have I slighted, and made nothing of his blood, and can the blood of Christ doe mee any service? indeed I doe crave grace, but how doe I thinke to receive any. All the pillars of the Church can testifie, how often grace, and mercy have been offered to me, but I have refused it, therefore how can I begge any grace? And as the Text saith, *They shall see their sinne and acknowledge their wayes, and judge themselves worthy to bee condemned.* So the Soule confesseth, that it is worthy of nothing that is good; it is not worthy of Gods love, nor of Gods preservation, or any other priviledge, onely he confesseth that he doth loath himselfe, and saith, Oh this stubbornnesse, and villanie, and this wretchednesse of mine: what I mercy? no, I am not worthy of any, it is more then I can expect, I am onely worthy to be cast out for ever. As the Prophet *Ezechiel* saith, *That thou mayest remember, and bee confounded, and never open thy mouth more because of thy shame;* that is, they shall remember the evill that they have committed, and the Lords kindnesse and mercie that they have opposed, and they shall be confounded, and not open their mouthes any more. So,

NOW

now his tongue cleaves to the rooſe of his mouth, and he ſaith, I remember my evill, and am aſhamed to expect any mercy, I ſought for mercy before, but now I ſee I am unworthy of any, and worthy of all the judgements that God can powre upon me. The Soule confeſſeth clearly, that hee hath deſerved more then God will lay upon him; for if God ſhould powre all his wrath upon him, he muſt make him infinite to beare his infinite wrath, and therefore the Lord only layes ſo much upon him as hee is capable of.

2. Secondly, the Soule acknowledgeth the equalnes of Gods dealings be they never ſo harſh in this kind. He confeſſeth that hee is as clay in the hands of the Potter, and the Lord may deal with him as he wil. Yea, the Soule is driven to an amazement at the Lords patience, that hee hath bene pleaſed to re-prive him ſo long, and that God hath not caſt him out of his preſence, and ſent him downe to hell long agoe. It is the frame of Spirit that the poore lamenting Church had, *It is the Lords mercy that we are not confounded, becauſe his compaſſions faile not.* When a poore drunkard ſeeth how hee hath roared in the Alehouſe againſt God and his truth, and how hee hath plotted againſt the Saints, hee wonders that ever God could beare with ſuch a wretch, and that the earth hath not ſwallowed him up quicke. And when the Lord hath humbled the heart of an adulterer, or adultereſſe, hee begins to thinke thus with himſelfe, the Lord ſaw all the evils that I have committed, and all my plottings, and all my inveiglings and allurings to this ſinne, and my delight in it: then the

the Soule admires that ever Gods Iustice was able to beare with such a monster, and that God did not confound him in his burning lusts, and cast him downe to hell. Oh (saith he) it is because his mercies faile not, that my life and all hath not failed long agoe. Nay, the Soule concludes, that the Lord should not save him. As *Nehemiab* saith, *Howbeit,* Nehem.9.33. *thou art just in all that is brought upon us, for thou hast done right, but wee have done wickedly;* as if hee had said, It is righteous that every man Sould lie under his owne load, and therefore thou mayst justly condemne us. Nay, the Soule saith, That God cannot but plague him for ought that he perceives in Iustice; as *Daniel* saith, *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon* Dan.9.14. *the evill, and brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all his workes which he doth, because wee obeyed not his voyce:* Hee speakes there of the 70. yeares captivitie. So the Soule saith, Because the Lord is just, and righteous, and doth not onely punish, but he cannot but punish, and therefore he justifies the Lord in all the plagues that ever can be inflicted upon him. And hence it is that the Soule will not maintaine any kind of murmuring or heart rising against the Lords dealings, much lesse doth he hide it in the Lord. But, though nature and corruption will be stirring, and somerimes the heart will be grudging against the Lord, and say, Why doth the Lord thus, and why are not my prayers answered, such a Soule is humbled, and such a Soule is comforted, and why not I as well as hee, yet when any such matter ariseth in the heart, he stifles, crusheth and chokes these wretched distempers, and doth
 O at ase

abase it selfe before the Lord, saying, *What if God will not* (as the Apostle saith) *speaking of the rejection of some, & the receiving of others : so the Soule saith, What if God will not heare my prayers ? and what if God will not pacifie my conscience ? nor shew any mercy to mee, I have my owne, and doth the Lord doe me any wrong, vile hell-hound that I am, I have my sinne and my shame, wrath is my portion, and hell is my place, I may goe thither when I will, it is mercy that God deales thus with me. Now the Soule comes to cleare God in all his providence, and saith, It is just with God that all the prayers which come from this filthy heart of mine, should be abhorred, and that all my labours in holy duties should never be blessed, for I have had these ends, and by-respects in all my duties ; it is I that have sinned against checks of conscience, and against knowledge ; and therefore it is just that I should carry this horrour of heart with mee to my grave ; it is I that have abused mercy, and therefore it is just and righteous with God, that I should goe with a tormenting conscience downe to hell ; Oh that (if I be in hell) I might have a Spirit to glorifie and justifie thy Name there, and say, Now I am come downe to hell amongst you damned creatures, but the Lord is righteous and blessed for ever in all his dealings, and I am justly condemned.*

Thirdly, Hence the Soule comes to be quiet and framable under the heavy hand of God in that helpelesse condition wherein hee is ; so that the Soule having beene thus framed aforehand, it comes to this, that it takes the blow and lies under the burthen
and

and goes away quietly and patiently, he is quiet and saith not a word more: oh! this is a heart worth gold. He accounts Gods dealing and Gods way to be the fittest and most seasonable of all. Oh (saith he) it is fit that God should glorifie himselfe though I be damned for ever, for I deserve the worst; whatsoever I have it is the reward of my owne workes, and the end of my own way; if I be damned, I may thanke my pride, my stubbornnesse, my peevishnesse of spirit, and all my base corruptions; What, shall I repine against the Lord because his wrath and his displeasure lies heavy upon mee? let me repine against my sin that made him to do it; Let me grudg against my base heart that hath nourished these adders in my bosome, shall I be unquiet and murmure against the Lord, because this horror of heart doth vexee mee? oh, no, let mee blesse the Lord and not speake one word against him, but let mee repine against my sin; as the holy Prophet *David* saith, *I held my tongue and spake nothing, because thou Lord haddest done it.* Psal. 39.9. So the Soule saith, when the sentence of condemnation is even seazing upon him, and God seemes to cast him out of his favour, then he saith, I confesse God is just, and therefore I blesse his Name, & yield to him: but sinne is the worker of all this misery that hath befallen mee. The holy Prophet *Jeremy* pleading of the great extremitie that had befallen the people of God, saith, *woe is me for my hurt, my wound is grievous, but I said, truly this is my grieve and I must beare it.* Ier. 10. 19. This is the frame of a heart that is truly humbled; it is content to take all to it self & so to be quiet, saying, this is my wound and I must beare

it, this is my sorrow and I will suffer it; thus you see what the behaviour of the heart is in this contentednesse. Hold these wel for they are of marvellous difficultie and great use. But, what is the dealing of the Lord that the Soule must be contented with?

Question.

Answer.

The behaviour of the Lord towards the Soule in this kind discovers it selfe in two things. First, In what hee will doe to the Soule; Secondly, in the manner of his dealing, how hee will deale with the Soule, and the heart must bee contented with both these. Sometimes a man will beare a thing, but not the manner of it, that kills him; but God will make a sinner waite upon Him for mercy, and beg againe, and againe, and bee content with the hardest of his dealings, and glad he may have it so too.

The first thing that God will have the Soule contented with.

The first thing that God will doe to the Soule, and which the Soule must be contented with, is that salvation, and happinesse, and the acceptance of a mans person now, must be no more in a mans owne hands, nor in his owne abilitie, the Lord hath taken the staffe out of his hand; and salvation must be no more put in his owne power. Here is a wonderfull height of pride. exprest before the Soule will yield to this. When *Adam* was created in his innocencie, the Lord put a faire stocke into his hand, and hee might have traded for himselfe; and he had liberty of will, and power of grace, so that he might have gotten the favour of God, by that which hee could do, if he would have done that, he might have lived. But, when *Adam* had betrayed that trust which God committed to him in the state of Paradise, because he had forfeited this trust, the Lord tooke all away from

from him, and nothing shall be in him, or from him any more in the point of Iustification, or acceptation as any way meritorious. *Adam* in his innocency might have required mercy by vertue of a Covenant from God, but *Adam* shall now have nothing in his owne power any more, but hee shall have his Iustification and acceptation (not in himselfe) but in another, even Iesus Christ. So that the reason why any Soule is justified and accepted with the Lord, it is meerey in another, not in himselfe. It is a great matter to bring the heart to this: for the Soule to see nothing in himselfe, but all in and through Christ; Oh this is a difficult worke. The Lord wil not trust him with a farthing token. There are two passages marvellous usefull this way, and therein you shall see the exceeding pride of a mans heart, and it is very common. One passage is in the *Romanes*, Where the Text saith, *The Iew and the Gentile sought for righteousnessse*, that is, *how they might find acceptance and righteousnessse in the sight of God*. The Iew sought this by the workes of the Law, that is, by himselfe, by his sacrifices, and washings, and the like; and he thought these would have acquitted him in the sight of God. But the Text saith, *Israel which followed after the Law of righteousnessse, hath not attained it*, that is, they have not attained it, because they sought it not by faith, and from Christ, but, in and of themselves, and therefore they never came to attaine it. But most pregnant is that other place, where the Apostle saith, *I beare them record that they have the zeale of God, but not according to knowledge*, for they being ignorant of Gods righteousnessse,

Rom. 9. 31, 32

Rom. 10. 2, 3

teousnesse, and going about to establish their owne
 righteousnesse, have not submitted themselves to
 Gods righteousnesse: the cause why any man is ac-
 quitted of God; it is not because of any thing that
 hee hath or doth, but it is from anothers righteous-
 nesse. But what a great matter is this: The Text
 saith, *That going about to establish their owne righteouf-
 nesse they have not submitted, &c.* here in this place
 there is this remarkable. They thought to establish
 their owne righteousnesse, that is, their owne duties,
 and services, their owne parts and abilities, and be-
 cause they thought to find acceptance for what they
 did, they did not submit. Submission argues a point
 of subjection, and the want of this, horrible pride.
 This is marvellous divellish pride, that a man should
 set up the lusts of his owne righteousnesse, and du-
 ties, and thinke to finde acceptance, and reconcilia-
 tion with, and pardon from the Lord because of
 these. So that now the Soule is nothing, and the
 Lord saith unto him, thou shalt go in ragges all thy
 dayes, that Christ may be thy righteousnesse. Thou
 shalt bee a foole, that Christ may be thy wisdome;
 and thou shalt be weake, that Christ may be all thy
 strength; and I will make thee submit to that righ-
 teousnesse of Christ. Nay, the Lord saith further, if
 you thinke to find acceptance, and to purchase mer-
 cy by what you can doe, then come your way; and
 bring all those prayers, and duties, and see if they
 can all answer my exact Law of righteousnesse, and
 satisfie my Iustice. Thus the Lord is faine to emptie
 a man of himselfe, this is an admirable worke of the
 Spirit, when the heart is thus content to be at Gods
 carving,

carving, and to have nothing of its owne, to be ignorant, weake and meane, and to have all from a Christ. This is considerable, every man would faine bring something with him, even where God hath wrought grace, and when we are all dead in the nest, and all amort when we find it not, and we are ready to say, if I had these, and these enlargements, then God would accept mee; but because I have not, the Lord will reject me. What is that but to set up the merits of a mans parts and duries: therefore it is that the Lord will bring the Soule to this, to be content to bee justified, (not for what hee hath,) but for something in another, besides what hee can doe to entitle himselfe to heaven and happinesse. Therefore the Apostle saith, *To him that worketh not, but belie-* Rom. 4. 5. *vesth* (on him that justifieth the ungodly) *is faith accounted for righteousness.* This is our nature; Wee would faine bee loynt-purchasers with Christ, and have something of our owne of meric (to make us find acceptance with God) as well as Iesus Christ in the point of Iustification. But the Lord will bring the heart to this, it shal come as an ungodly wretched traitor, that the Lord may Iustifie him in Christ. Why dare not a poore sinner sometimes come to Christ, and looke to him for mercy? Oh, he is not worthy. But, art thou not content to see thy unworthinesse? Yes (saith hee) but I see such pride, such lithernesse in holy duties, and such corruption that I dare not goe to Christ for mercy. If this bee a burthen to thee, and if thou art content to bee rid of this, then Christ hath prepared mercy for thee, and thou maiest take it; the Lord will make thee know

know that thou art not accepted, because thou art worthy, but through Christ. The Lord justifies the ungodly.

The second thing that the Soule must be content with.

The second part of the Lords dispose, that hee brings the Soule unto, it is this. As the Soule must looke for what it hath from another: so in the second place, it must be content to take, what mercy, and what another will give. Not, what the Soule thinks fitting; but, what mercy accounts the best for him. Now, see this blessed frame of heart in these three particulars.

1.

First, the Soule is content that mercy shall deny what it will to the Soule, and the Soule is content, and calmed with whatsoever mercy denyes. If the Lord will not heare his prayers, and if the Lord will cast him away, because he hath cast away the Lords-kindnesse, and if the Lord will leave him in that miserable and damnable condition, which he hath brought himselfe into, by the stubbornesse of his heart, the Soule is quiet. Though I confesse, it is harsh and tedious, and long it is ere the Soule be thus framed; yet the heart truly abased, is content to beare the estate of damnation; because hee hath brought this misery and damnation upon himselfe. In a word, the Soule seeth, that it deserves nothing at Gods hands; and therefore he is content, if God deny him any thing; and it befalls the Soule in this case as it did *David*: See how willingly hee takes, whatsoever the Lord shall allow him. Where hee saith; *Carry backe the Arke of God into the Citie, if I shall finde favour in the eyes of the Lord, hee will bring me againe, and shew me both it and his habitation; but*

2 Sam. 15. 25,
26.

if hee shall say, I have no delight in *David*; Behold, here I am, let him doe whatsoever is good in his eyes. As it was with *David* for a Temporall Kingdome; So it is with the Soule for a Spirituall Mercy. The Soule saith, if there be any mercy for a poore rebellious creature, the Lord may looke graciously upon me; but if the Lord shall say, thou hast brought damnation to thy selfe, therefore I will leave thee in it. Behold, here I am, let the Lord doe with mee what he will.

But, some may here object and say, Must the Soule, can the Soule, or ought it to be thus content, to be left in this damnable condition? *Objection.*

For the answer hereof; Know, that this contentednesse implies two things, and it may bee taken in a double sense. *Answer.*

First, Contentednesse sometimes implies nothing else, but a carnall securitie; and a regardlesnesse of a mans estate, hee regards not his owne Soule, what he is, nor what hee hath, nor what shall become of him. This is a most cursed sinne, and this contentednesse is nothing else, but a marvellous negligence, either of Gods glory or his owne good; and it is a sinne to give way to it: and it is a fore-runner of damnation to that man which entertaines it. The Soule that is truly humbled and abased, cannot (nay it dare not) say so in cold blood, setting aside passions, and temptations). Nay, this contentednesse argues damnation for ever. This is not meant in this place, neither is it lawfull to give way to it; and it is certaine, upon these termes the Soule shall never be saved; God will make him

prize mercy, and care for it too before hee have it.

But then; Secondly, it implies a calmeneffe of Soule not murmuring against the Lords dispensation towards him, and this contentednesse is ever accompanied with the sight of a mans sinne, and the following of God for mercy. The Soule that is thus contented to be at Gods disposing, it is ever improving all means, and helps that may bring him nearer to God, but if mercy shall deny it, the soule is satisfied and rests well apaid; this every Soule that is truly humbled may have, and hath in some measure. Yet you must not throw all at fixe and seavens, no, it is a cursed distemper of spirit that you must hate as hell it self. But this contentednesse is opposed against quarrelling with the Almighty, & this every humbled Soule doth attaine unto, though it bee not so plainly seene. As it is with some thiefe that is taken for a robbery, and the sentence of death hath past against him: he should not neglect the using of means for to save his life and to get a pardon; and yet if he cannot get a pardon, hee must not murmur against the Iudge for condemning of him because hee hath done nothing but Law. This thiefe should use means for a pardon; but if he cannot get one, he should be contented though the sentence passe against him: So wee should not bee carelesse in using all meanes for our good, but still seeke to God for mercy; yet thus we must be, and thus we ought to be contented with whatsoever mercy shall deny, because wee are not worthy of any favour; and the humble soule reasons thus with it selfe, and saith, my owne sinne, and my abominations have brought me into this damnable

ble condition wherein I am, & I have neglected that mercy which might have brought me from it, therefore why should I murmur against mercy, though it deny me mercy? and if mercy leave mee in that miserable estate, which I have brought my selfe into, I have but the reward of my own works. Marke this well. He that is not willing to acknowledge the freeness of the course of mercy, is not worthy, nay, hee is not fit to receive any mercy: but that Soule which is not content that mercy deny him what it will; he doth not give way to the freeness of the Lords grace and mercy, and therefore that Soule is not fit for mercy. I conclude all thus. Iudge with your selves whether this be not a marvellous hideous pride of heart, or no? that the sinner doth murmur because the Lord will not dispence of mercy as he will himselfe, either the sinner thinkes that hee hath deserved mercy, and therefore he is angry with God because he gives it not, or else, he thinkes himselfe wiser to dispose of mercy then God; both which are most devillish pride of heart, and arguments of a haughtie heart that is not yet fit for mercy; nay, if this bee in the heart, and if the heart allow of this, and continue in this distemper, the Soule cannot receive mercy.

A Sillogifine.

But some may object. Can a man feele this frame of heart, to be content, that mercy should have him in hell? doe the Saints of God find this? and can any man know this in his heart?

Answer.

To this I answer. Many of Gods servants have been driven to this, and have attained to it, and have laid open the simplicitie of their Soules, in being

content with this. But the secret passage of the Soule is most subtle here, and hard it is to find this, and clearly to discern this frame of spirit this way: but the best way to guesse it, and to bee able to discern it, is this. For this end, you must know these three things.

First, that the Soule out of the nature of it, and in nature cannot but desire the preservation of it selfe, and it is a rule that God hath stamped in the creature, and therefore we must not thinke that nature must or should, or can goe further then nature, and it is not the fault of nature, that it is carried in this kind.

But Secondly, the Soule being humbled, cannot but yield it selfe, to bee disposed of by the Lord as he will, yea, if the Lord will bring destruction upon it.

Thirdly, though the Soule sometimes find a secret rebelling against God, and a grudging against the Lords dealings, and the sinner begins to say, these are my corruptions, and still my sinnes prevaile against mee, and I shall one day perish, and the Lord seemes not to looke at mee, and with that the Soule sometimes grudgeth, and repines at the providence of God, yet the heart that is truly humbled, grudgeth at himselfe, because hee hath such a quarrelling heart against the Lords dealing with him in this kind. Nay, I have known many in the anguish of heart, when they have thus quarrelled with the Almighty, they have fallne into a desperate extremity, and thought they had committed that sinne against the holy Ghost; In somuch, that it hath made them

them to walke more humbly before God all their dayes ; but (I say) when the Soule findes these distempers , it labours to undermine them , and it dares not quarrell against God, it dare not but yield, and this is an argument that the Soule is content.

Secondly, The Soule that is contented comes to be well apaid with this, that mercy shall take away from him what it will, friends, and means, and ease, and libertie, and credit, and whatsoever it is that the heart hath loved most. It is content that God should strip him naked of all : And hence it is, that we shall observe it in experience, and in practice. A broken battered Soule, that hath beene long overwhelmed with the weight of his corruptions, the Lord brings him to a marvellous desperate low ebbe : You may see a man sometime in the torment of Conscience, that nature and naturall parts begin to decay; his understanding growes weake, and his memorie failes him, and he growes to bee marvellously distracted, and besides himselfe ; so that the partie which was (before) a man of great reach and of able parts, and was admired, and wondred at for his wisdome, and government ; he is now accounted a silly sot, and a mad man, in regard of the horror of heart that hath possessed him; in so much that the husband saith, Oh my wife is undone ; and the father saith, my child is undone; he was a fine witty child before, but now he is a very sot. Yea, the mercy of God will not leave a man before hee bee content to bee a despised man, that hee may finde mercy and bee saved, and mercy will plucke away all those parts and gifts from him, and make him glad to have salvation, and

2.

Ioh. 5. 44.

all in another: And in conclusion, when God cheeres up his heart againe, hee is more wise than ever, and more able than ever, both for temporall, and spirituall affaires. *How can you believe* (saith our Saviour) *that seeke honour one of another.* Without this dealing of God, no man would ever come to heaven, though the Lord sometimes abates some measure of it. It may bee before this worke, the Soule saith, if I may have honours, and ease, and libertie, and credit, so it is; I care not whether ever I have drop of mercy or no: But the text saith, *How can you believe which seeke honour one of another, and not that honour which comes from God onely.* Mercy will bring you downe upon your knees, and you shall not be content with the honours of the world; No, no, mercy will make you content to be fooles, and to take that honour onely which is from God, though you be abased, and hated, and persecuted in the world. It is against reason that the Soule can beleeve, except this be in the heart.

An humble Soule is content that mercy shall rule him.

Luke 3. 13, 14

As the humbled Soule is content, that mercy shall deny him any thing, and take any thing from him, so it is content, that mercy enjoyne what it will, and make what Edicts, and Lawes it will: So that the Commands, and Precepts of the mercy of God in Christ may take place in his heart. When *John Baptist* came to prepare them for Christ, and the hearts of the people were humbled, the *Publicans* came to him, saying, *Master, What shall we doe?* and so the souldiers said, *Master, What shall we doe?* and he said, *Doe no man wrong, but bee content with your wages.* The question is not now, covetousnesse, and cruekie,

What

What shall we doe? No, the souldiers came now, and said, Thou art our Master, the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of wisdom is revealed to thee in the Word, command and enjoyne thou what thou wilt, and they are content, with whatsoever hee commands them. The humbled heart is content, that mercy doe what it will with him, not onely that mercy shall save him, for so farre a reprobate, and a carnall hippocrite may be content. The hypocrite is marvellous willing, that mercy shall save him; but his lusts and corruptions must rule him still. You are content, that mercy should save you from your peevish heart, and yet your peevish heart must rule you still; and you are content that Christ should save you from your drunkenesse, and prophaning of the Lords Day, but these lusts must rule you still. A drunkard that hath gotten some dangerous surfeit, is content that the Physician should cure him, not because he would leave his drunkenesse, but because he would have his health, and therefore being up, hee returnes to his drunkenesse againe. And the thiefe that is condemn'd to die, cries for a pardon, not because he would live to bee an honest man, but to be free from the halter; and therefore when he is freed, hee goes to the hie way and robs againe; it is not for honesty that he desires a pardon, but for libertie. Deceive not your selves: mercy will never save you, except mercy may rule you too. Here is a heart worth gold, and the Lord delights in such a Soule, that falls into the armes of mercie, and is content to take all from mercy, and to bee at mercies disposing, and to have mercy sanctifie him,
and

and correct him, and teach him, and to rule in him in all things. This the heart of a truly abased sinner will have, and it will say, Good Lord do what thou wilt with me; rule this Soule, and take possession of mee; only doe good to the Soule of a poore sinner. If the Lord give any thing, he is content, and if the Lord take away any thing, or command any thing, he is content. You that are ruled by your lusts, think of this. When the Lord hath awakened and arrested your Soules, you are going downe to hell, Oh, then you will crie, Lord forgive this and that sinne; it is true, I have hated, and loathed the Saints of God, good Lord forgive this sinne, oh that mercy would save me, then mercy will answer, and say, When you are out of your beds, you will returne to your old courses againe; no, he that ruled in you, let him save and succour you: I will save none (saith mercy) except I may rule them too.

3. Thirdly, The last degree of contentednesse is this. The Soule is willing that the Lord should make it able to take what mercy will give. This is a lower pegge that the Soule is brought unto. The sinner before had nothing of his owne in possession, nay, he can challenge nothing of the other, but meerey to doe what hee will, and hee is not able to take what mercy will give and bestow. And therefore hee is not only content that mercy provide what it thinks good, but also to give him strength to take what mercy gives. The beggar that comes to the dole, though he have no means to help himselfe withall, and though hee can challenge nothing of the man, yet he hath a hand, and can receive the dole that is given

given him, but a poore sinner is brought to this low ebbe, (and this shewes the emptinesse of it) that as hee hath no spirituall good at all, and can challenge no good, neither is he able to take that good which mercy provides. The hand of the Soule whereby it must receive mercy, is faith, and the humbled Soule seeth that hee is as able to satisfie for his sinne, as to believe in a Saviour that must satisfie. And he is as able to keepe the Law, as to believe in him that hath fulfill'd the Law for him. In Saint *Iohn*, *believing is* Ioh. 1. 15. *called receiving*, and therefore the poore sinner seeth that it is not only mercy, and salvation that must do him good, but hee seeth that if mercy and salvation were laid downe upon the naile for believing and receiving of it, hee could not doe it of himselfe, and therefore the Lord must give him a hand to receive it with. You know the Apostle *Paul* saith, *The naturall man cannot receive the things that be of God.* And Phil. 1. 29. the same Apostle is plaine, *to you it is given to believe.* So that faith is a gift, and a poore sinner is as able to create a world, as to receive mercy of himselfe. The want of this, is the cause why many a man that hath made a good progresse in the way of happinesse, falls short of his hopes. Many a sinner hath beene awakened, and his heart humbled, and the Soule comes to heare of Christ, and thinks to lay hold of mercy, and Christ out of his owne proper power, and thus he deceives himselfe, and the faith that he dreamed to have, was nothing else but a fancie, a faith of his owne framing; it was never framed by the Almighty Spirit of the Lord in heaven, hee never saw need of the power of God, to make him

him able to believe as well as to save him, and therefore his faith and all came to just nothing. Now the broken hearted sinner saith, All that I expect it must be from another, and I am content to take what mercy will give, and that mercy shall deny me what it will, and give me what it will, and I am content that mercy rule in me, nay, that mercy must give me a heart to believe and to take mercy, or else I shall never believe. Now you see what it is that the Soule must be contented withall.

The manner
of Gods dealing.

Now I come to shew the manner of Gods dealing with the Soule, for the Soule must be content with this too, as I told you before. The manner of Gods dealing may appear in three particulars.

I.

First, the Soule stoopes to the condition that the Lord wil appoint, be it never so hard, & it is content to come to Gods termes, be they never so harsh and wearisome. As, sometimes when the soule finds that the heaviest hand of the Lord hath laine long upon him, & that the sharpest arrows of the venome of the displeasure of the Almighty stick deepest in him, and he finds the fierceness of Gods wrath burning in his heart, and *that all his sins which have been sealed up in a bag, as Job saith, they are all set in order before him,* and the wrath of the Lord (more heavy then any mountaine) falls upon his back, (I say) when the poore sinner finds himselfe thus pursued after, in the fiercest and most terrible manner, the abased heart dare not flie away from God, nor repine against the Lord, but he layes downe meekely. 1. He will not flie away from God, for that is his pride. Nay, he dare not do it. He will not goe with *Saul* to the Witch of *Endor*,

Job 14. 17.

nor with *Judas* to a halter. When the Lord let *Judas* see that hee had betrayed innocent blood, and fill'd his heart with horror, hee did not goe to God and lie down under the hardest horror, but he went to a rope and hanged himselfe, and all through his pride, because hee was not content with the harsh dealing of God, though hee leaped from the fire-pan into the fire, As the proverbe is. And likewise *Cain* went into the land of *Nod*. So, when the Lord hath awakened a poore creature, and after a good while, that a man would have thought he had gone on a good way in a Christian course, at last when he finds that he is not able to beare the wrath of God, but more iniquitie comes in aganst him, then hee flies off from God, & fals from a Christian course, and goes to the Ale-house, or some other base course, and so hardens his conscience: but (I say) the humble Soule dare not doe so, but lyes at Gods foot-stoole, and if it were the very bottome of the dregs of Gods wrath, and the very fire of hell, hee is content to undergoe Gods dealing. Hee doth not question Gods dealing, and say, others are not thus, and thus terrified, and why should I be so? No, the Soule returnes all against it selfe, and saith, why doe I talke of others? they have not such untoward, uncleane peevish hearts as I have. The humble soule resolves with the Church in *Micah*, *I have sinned* Mich. 7.9. *and therefore I will beare the indignation of the Lord:* So the Soule saith, I have sinned most hainously, I know not their siane, but I know my own sinne, and therefore I will beare the Lords wrath, though it be never so unsupportable, and unsufferable; Lord give mee

mee a heart, that I may be able to beare it. When a Malefactor comes to the Assises, hee lookes for nothing but condemnation, and execution, if hee can scape with burning in the hand, or branding in the forehead, or shoulder, hee is glad, and goes well a-paid, and cries, God save the King, because hee thought he should have beene hanged: So it is with an humble, and a selfe-denying sinner; When the poore creature finds the heaviest of Gods indignation upon him, and such strange distempers, as if a thousand divels were within him, the soule quiets it selfe thus, and saith, Why do I thus fret: and wherefoe am I thus perplexed: it is wel that I scape thus: I might have beene in hell this day, and blessed bee God that it is no worse, that I am not in hell; I might have beene roaring in hell, as thousands of poore reprobates are, that have no more hope of mercy; therefore I will beare whatsoever the Lord layes upon mee.

Secondly, as he is content with the hardest measure, so hee is content with the longest time. Hee is content to stay for mercy, be it never so long. After the poore soule hath his eyes growing dim with waiting for mercy, his hands grow feeble, and his tongue cleaves to the roose of his mouth, and his heart begins to sinke, and his Soule shakes within him, with waiting for the mercy and goodnesse of the Lord; and yet hee finds no mercy, and hath no Inking of any favour, yet God lookes a-farre off. Yet his Soule is content with this. If a beggar should stay halfe a day for an almes it would grieve him, though that be his pride. See what *Esay* saith,

I will waite upon the Lord that hath hid his face from Jacob, and I will looke for him. As if the poore sinner did say, The Lord hath hid his face away, and turned his loving countenance from mee, yet I will looke towards heaven, so long as I have an eye to see, and a hand to lift up, I will yet looke to heaven to the Lord that hath not (as yet) heard nor answered my prayers; the Lord may take his owne time, it is manners for mee to waite and stay Gods time: Away therefore with that peevishnesse, and that discontentednesse of Soule, that when a poore sinner hath called, and cryed, and finds no answer, and heares no newes from heaven, he secretly intends to lay all aside; As if a man, lift a weight againe, and againe, and seeth that it is too heavy for him, he lets it alone. So many poore creatures are content to let all alone, and say; Why should I waite upon God any more? I have prayed, and cryed thus long, and finde no answer; Why should I waite any longer? How now? who shall have the worst of it? cannot God have his glory without your prayers? Why should you waite? this is horrible pride of heart. Why should you waite? Its no marvell, that you should take such State to your selves? who must waite then? Must the King waite, or the Subject? The Master, or the Servant? The Iudge or the Traitor? Downe with that proud and sturdy heart of yours. An humble Soule dare not doe so; hee is content to waite for Gods mercy, and you will bee brought to it too, before ever the Lord will give you any mercy. The humble soule saith thus, I have waited thus long, and the Lord seemes to be angry with my

my person, and prayers, and all is blasted, yet I will waite still; Nay, I am glad that I may waite: What, waite upon the Lord Iesus Christ, and mercy? Yes, and glad you may. Kings and Princes have done it, and blessed are they that waite upon mercy. Nay, the poore broken heart resolves thus, and saith, if I lye and licke the dust all my dayes, and cry for mercy al my life long, if my last words might be mercy, mercy, it were well I might get mercy at my last gaspe: Oh, I blesse God, that yet I live here, and and that I am not in hell as thousands are, that waite for judgement and vengeance; blessed be God, that yet I may waite, till God looke upon mee in goodnesse and mercy.

3. Lastly, when the Soule hath stayed a long time, it is content with the least pittance of mercy; hee is not like many proud beggars, that thinke much when they have stayed long, if they have but a farthing. Nay, if hee have but from hand to mouth, It is all that hee craves, and all that hee lookes for. This is our nature; We would faine have something to trade withall, but the Lord will keep the stocke in his owne hand, and the Soule is content to have it so. Hee comes sometimes and God will not heare, and he goes away, and comes againe, and then goes away fasting, and well contented too. See how the poore Woman of Canaan did. Shee comes to beg
- Matth. 15. 26. mercy of our Saviour, and he said, *It is not lawfull to cast the childrens bread to dogs*, truth Lord (saith she) I am as bad as thou canst call me, I yield all, I am as vile a sinfull poore creature as ever any was;
- Verse 27. *Yet Lord the dogs may eat the crumbs that fall from their*

their Masters table. You know the Dog must stay till his Master comes in, and when hee is come, hee must stay till he sit downe, and then till hee cut his meate, and hee must not have the meate from his trencher neither, when he hath stayed all this while, he hath nothing but the crums. So it is with a poore sinner; you must not thinke that God will bee at your becke: No; you must bee content with the crums of mercy, and pity, and lye under the table til the Lord let the crums fall. The humbled Soule faith, Lord, let my condition be never so hard, doe what thou wilt with mee, let the fire of thy wrath consume me heere, onely recover mee hereafter, and let me finde mercy, and if the time be never so long, if at last gaspe I may finde mercy I am content, and whatsoever thou givest, I blesse thy name for it. The soule doth not quarrell with the Almighty, and say, Why are not my graces increased? and why am not I thus, and thus comforted, and refreshed? Nay, it lyes, and looks for mercy, and if it have but a crum of mercy, it is comforted, and quieted for ever. Thus the heart is brought very low.

Why doth the Lord thus bring the heart under, *Reason.* is this necessary and requisite? Yes, it is without all question, not onely convenient, but very necessary, that it should bee so. And the reason is taken from the nature of the covenant of grace which requires this; and without which the covenant of grace could not bee fitted for us. For the covenant of grace is this, Believe and live. The condition on our part is faith, and believing. Now faith is nothing else, but a going out of the Soule, to fetch all from another,

as having nothing of it selfe, and therefore this resting in our selves, will not stand with the nature of this covenant. Now were it so, that wee were not resolved to yield to, and to be guided by another, it is certaine, we could not have our hearts enlarged to goe to that other: by whose wisdome, and providence, we would not be guided and disposed. To be in our selves, and out of our selves, to have power in our selves, to dispose of any thing belonging to our spirituall estate, and to fetch all from another; these are two contraries, and therefore cannot stand together. To have the dispensation of life, and grace in our owne hands to dispose of it as we will, it utterly overthrowes the nature of this second Covenant of mercy and grace in Christ. For (I pray you observe it) this I take to be the maine difference, betweene the second maine Covenant of grace, whereof the Apostle disputes so often; and the first Covenant of works, which he so often confutes. The first Covenant is, to Doe and Live, This *Adam* had, and if he had stood still, hee should not have needed any Saviour: The second Covenant is, Believe, and Live, that is, to live by another. These two cannot stand together, in one and the same Soule, at one and the same time. The same Soule that is saved by the Covenant of Grace, cannot be saved also by the Covenant of Works. The Lord in the beginning, put the stufte into *Adams* hand, and he had libertie, to dispose of Life and Salvation; by reason of that abilitie, and that principle of Grace that God had given him; for he had perfect knowledge, and perfect holinesse, and righteousnesse; and by the power

of these he had libertie, freely to please God, and to keepe the Law, and to be blessed in so doing, and if he had done that which he had power to doe, hee might have been blessed for ever, and we all in him, but he lost it, and so overthrew himselfe, and all his posteritie: Now wee being thus false in *Adam*; and being deprived of all that holinesse, and righteousnesse which *Adam* had; Now the sinner is neither able to fulfill the Law, and so to purchase mercy for himselfe; nor to satisfie for that which is done amisse. A sinner must die, and yet he cannot satisfie in dying: he is dead in finnes and trespasses, and having lost all that abilitie which *Adam* had: therefore the Soule must goe our of it selfe; and since it is so, that nothing which hee hath, or doth can save him, hee must goe to another; that whatsoever is amisse, that other may satisfie for it; and whatsoever mercy is needfull, he may purchase it; and whatsoever is to be done, he may doe it. Now, what wee have done amisse, Christ hath satisfied for it, and what we cannot doe, Christ hath done it; hee hath fulfilled all righteousnesse. And hence it is, that these two are so professedly opposite the one to the other; the Law, and Faith. The first *Adam*, and the second *Adam*. Consider a passage or two. The Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, cannot stand together in the point of Life and Grace; As the Apostle saith, *If it bee of grace, then it is no more of workes, and if it be of workes, then is it no more of grace.* As if he had said, *If a man bee saved by grace, then he cannot be saved by workes, and if he bee saved by workes, then he cannot be saved by grace.* And in another

Rom. 11.4.

Rom. 4. 14.

ther place the same Apostle faith, *If they which are of the Law be heires, faith is made voyd, and the promise is of none effect.* If a man that thinks to merit life by the Law, be an heire; what needeth faith, or the promise. For, it is the nature of faith, to goe out to Christ, and to receive all from him; now if I had enough in my selfe, I had no need of Christ, and faith were made of none effect. *You are saved by*

Ephes. 2. 8.

grace through faith, saith the Apostle, *and that not of your selves.* There S. Paul brings in a deniall, not only of sionne, but of workes; and saith, *You are not saved of your selves.* Hee doth not say, of your sinne; but, your selves; you, and your works, and all must be renounced, and all that you are, and doe, as any way meritorious; and not to bee found in your selves, but in Christ, before ever you can receive mercy from Christ. So I dispute thus. There is none that will save us, Man nor Angel, and our workes will not; therefore we must goe to Christ, and if wee goe to Christ for all, and expect all from him, then we must be content, to be guided by him in all. Now, let me propound this question: Either thou must be content; to be at the dispose of God, and mercy, or at whose dispose wilt thou be? If thou wilt have any thing else (besides mercy) to dispose of thee, thou makest that to be a Mediator to thee. But haply thou wouldest dispose of thy selfe, and dispose of mercy after thy owne mind? Yes, so I thought. It may be thou sayest, I will have grace, if I may dispose of it. Thus a proud heart would faine have it in his owne hands; but upon these termes thou never hadst: (nay, thou never shalt have)

have) grace. Here is the winding of the Soule. Therefore many dare not venture their salvation upon Gods free favour. But they would have it in their owne power, that they may receive it when they will, that they may be drunke and take grace, and be proud, and prophane, and take grace when they will. It is a sottish delusion of men, that are deluded, and blinded by the divell. But that the Soule (which would have it thus) cannot have it upon these termes, I thus reason.

Hee that will have grace from his owne dispose, shall never have grace, because he hath none in his owne power to dispose of; Syllogisme.

But he that is not content to bee at the dispose of grace, and to bee at the dispensation of Gods good pleasure for mercy and grace, hee would have it to bee at his owne disposing.

And therefore he shall (may he never can) have grace.

In a word. Who must dispose of you? Your selves? then you must have that grace which you can dispose of, and thats just none at all. Grace is meereley in Gods hands to dispose of. Thus we have brought the Soule to bee fitly prepared for Christ, and mercy, and grace.

Now let us doe as travellers do, they sometimes sit downe, to reckon how many miles they have gone. So let us enquire, what we have spoken. You know I mentioned two things, necessary in this worke of preparation for Christ. First, Contrition. And secondly, Humiliation. First, God brings the sinner to a sight of himselfe & his sin, and makes him to be insupportably burthened with the vilnesse of

The summe of all this worke of preparation

it, so that now the heart of a poore sinner, seeth an absolute necessitie of a change, and therefore thinks thus with himselfe, if I rest thus, I shall never see God with comfort. That's for Contrition. Now he seeth that he must change, and hee is content to change; and therefore, though he will no more be drunke, nor follow his old base practises, yet he begins to sherke for his owne comfort, and he useth all the ordinances of God, to see what they can doe for him, and hee goes to himselfe, and his selfe sufficiencies, and finding no succour there, hee falles downe before the Lord and begs mercy, and yet hee seeth himselfe unworthy of mercy, without which hee must perish. Hee hath nothing, and hee can doe nothing to merit it; yet he is content, that God should dispose of him as he thinkes good, onely (if it bee possible) he prays, that the Lord would shew mercy to a poore forlorne creature. Now the sinner is prepared, and fitted for Christ, as a graft for the stocke. He is come to the very quicke, and is as little as may bee. All his swelling sufficiencie is pared away: For, hee is not onely brought to renounce his sinne, but even his sufficiencie, and all his parts and abilities; which *Adam* needed not have done, if he had stood in his innocency. In a word, hee is wholly pluckt from the first *Adam*, (for here is the maine lift). So that now the second *Adam* Christ Iesus, may take possession of him, and be all in all in him, (as the Apostle saith): Now, the Soule is a fit matter for Christ to worke upon, namely, to make him a vessell fit to receive mercy and grace: and when hee hath fitted him for mercy, hee will give it to him: and

when

when he hath given him grace, he will maintaine it, and increase it, and then quicken it, and crowne it, and perfect it in the day of the Lord Iesus Christ. And lastly, he will glorifie himself in all these. Here is a right Christian indeed, that expresseth Christ in all. Christ preparing, Christ giving, Christ main- taining, and increasing, and Christ quickening, and Christ crowning. Thus you see that it is not left as a matter of libertie, but it is of necessitie required, that the heart bee thus contented: every humble heart hath this in some measure, though not (all) so sensibly.

The uses are double. First, to the people, to shew them what to doe. Secondly, to the Ministers.

The uses for the people are. First, for instruction. Secondly, for Examination. Thirdly, for Ter- rour. Fourthly, for Exhortation.

The first use is for instruction, and that is double.

First, Is it so that the humble Soule is content to be thus at the Lords disposing: then from hence we collect this use, that, they which have greatest parts, gifts, meanes, places, abilities, and honors; for the most part they are most hardly brought home to the Lord Iesus Christ. They that are most hard- ly humbled, they are most hardly converted; how hard a thing is it for such men as have gifts, and learning, and wisdom, or any bignesse that makes them swell naturally, how hard is it (I say) for such men to be saved. I wish their courses did not testifie the same; they that are most high and greatest in gifts, and place, they must come in at the strait gate, and what a hard and difficult worke that is, judge

Vses.

The first use
to the people:

you, and therefore it is hard for them to come home to the Lord Iesus Christ. Humiliation is the emptying of the soule from whatsoever it hath that makes it swell. The heart must not joy in any thing, nor rest upon any thing, but onely yield to the Lord Iesus Christ to be at his disposing and carving, now these parts and gifts, and abilities and meanes (both for judgement and place) they are great props and pillars for the heart of a carnall man to rest upon, and to quiet it selfe withall, and to looke for some good there-from; and when the heart is setled upon such pillars as these are, it is hard for the word of God to prevaile with that heart. The Prophet *Jeremy* knew it well enough, and therefore he said, *I will goe to the rich and honorable, and they burst all bonds asunder, and brake the yoke.* The poore were naught, but the rich were exceedingly vile; and our Saviour proves it; for when the rich young man came to Christ & said, *Master, what shall I doe to have everlasting life?* Christ answered thus, *go, sel al that thou hast, but he would not,* and hereupon our Saviour comes to shew the difficultie of the work of salvation, saying, *it is easier for a Camell to go through the eye of an needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of heaven.* It is true, a rich man may be brought home, but it is easier for a Camel, &c. There is great difficulty for a man that hath many gifts and parts to deny all, and to bee at the Lords disposing. If a man were fit to cut a Camel so small till he were fit to go through a needles eye, what a worke would it be: so it is with a great man. The blind Pharisees saw this when they said, *do any of the rulers believe in him?* as if they had said,

Jeremy 5. 5.

Matth. 19. 24.

Joh. 7. 48.

a company of Coblers, and Tailors, and the basest sort of people believe in him, it is they onely that will not swear, and that will sanctifie the Lords Day; But doe any of the great men, and rulers believe. The Apostle also tooke it for confest, and therefore he said, Brethren you see your calling, *how not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty men, not many noble men are called.* 1 Cor. 1. 26 Indeed, blessed be God, there are some great, some wise, and some noble men converted. But, not many. For they have so much of themselves, that they are hardly brought to renounce themselves. Therefore commonly greatnesse and wickednesse go both together. And it is a pretty speech of the Prophet David, *There is that great Leviathan,* that great Whale; little rivers have their little fishes, but there is that *Leviathan*. So, there is that hideous pride of spirit, and that strange resistance of God and his grace; those fearefull crying finnes in great men. Yea, many mightie men, except God give them a great deale of grace, they are pestered with a great deale of corruption; Inso much that they are hardly brought home. For a rich man to become poore, and a noble man to be abased, and for a wise man to bee nothing in himselfe, this will cost hot water, and yet it will be in all that belong to the Lord. See what the Prophet Esay saith, *The day of the Lord of Hosts shall bee upon every one that is proud and loftie, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low, and upon all the Cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the Oakes of Bashan, and the glory of the Lord shall be exalted in that day.* Isa. 1. 12, 13 As if hee had said, The Lord shall undermine

dermine the mountains, and make those tall Cedars fit to come in at this strait gate. The poore receive the Gospel, and hee that will have the pearle, must part with all that he hath ; not that God will take away all those outward things and parts, but that he must loosen his affection from these if hee will have Christ. A poore creature that hath nothing, may more easily come to the price of the Lord Iesus Christ, then hee that hath his hundreds, and thousands a yeare : What (saith one) must a man part with all these ? Yes, the Lord will have the love that was set upon these, wholly to himselfe.

Right worshipfull and beloved, and you of the Ministry, suffer the words of Exhortation. The greater your parts and abilities are, the greater is your danger ; and the greater your places are, the more hard will it bee for you to come home to the Lord Iesus Christ. Therefore as ever you desire comfort to your selves ; goe aside into your closets, and thinke thus with your selves, The Spirit saith, *Not many noble men, not many mightie men, not many wise men after the flesh are called.* Hath the Lord advanced mee ? then the more care I had need have, and the more I had need to tuggle and toyle for Christ, for it is marvellous hard to have this proud heart humbled, and for an honorable man to lye and lick the dust, and to take the crummes under the table. You that have these honors, and friends, and means, and parts, for the Lords sake, let none of these beare up your hearts against the truth of Christ, and let none of all these make you swell, and say, because I am great, or rich, or honourable, or wise, therefore

I must not be checked, and shall such a man as I bee at the command of a poore Minister? alas, we desire not to have you at our commands, onely we would have you be content to be at the dispose of the Lord *Iesus Christ*, and that you must be; if you belong to him: and glad you may. It is observable, that when the Turke comes into the congregation, or the Temple of his Idoll, he layes by all his state, and hath no man to attend him for the while: so let every man that hath riches, honors, and parts; let them be as if they had none. You that are rich, be as if you had no riches, and you that are honorable as if you had no honors: and you that are wise, as if you had no wisdom; when you come to hear the word of God, humble your selves, and say, my wisdom, riches, and depth of my judgement shall not hinder me, but whatsoever it is that is my part and my portion, let the Lord speake to me, as if I were the meekest and weakest in all the congregation. The Lord give you hearts to do it, the worke is hard, and therefore put hard to your hearts to do it.

Secondly, is an humble Soule content to be at the Lords dispose? then hence I collect that, an humble heart makes all a mans life quiet, and marvellously sweeteneth whatsoever estate hee is in. That which makes a man content in every condition must needs make him quiet whatsoever estate he is in; howsoever the heart that is truly humbled may sometimes bee tossed and troubled, yet he is not distracted, because he is contented, as it is with a ship upon the sea, when the billowes begin to roare and the waves are violent, if the Anchor bee fastned deepe, it staies the

The second
use for in-
struction.

ship; let the tempest be what it will: so this worke of humiliation is the Anchor of the soule; the world is the sea, the ship is a soule that is truly humbled, the deeper this humiliation is, the more quiet is the heart, and the more it is calmed. When *Iob* in the time of his extremity gave way a little to his proud and sturdy heart, he quarrelled with the Almighty, his friends and all, but when the Lord had humbled his proud heart, he said, *behold I am vile and base, once have I spoken, yea twice; but now no more.* And it is observed of *Ionah* that when hee was in peace and in quietnesse, he had a sullen heart, and when the Lord said, *dost thou well to be angry?* yea (saith he) *I do well to be angry.* See how distracted, a distempered proud heart is; but take *Ionah* in the Whalls belly, and we shall heare no more newes of quarrelling, but of praying, and there he abased himselfe; as it is with a Physitian, when the Patient hath some vehement fit of a fever or the like; that he cannot sleepe, they use to give him a little *Opium* and that makes him rest a little: This humiliation of heart is like *Opium*; there are peevish fits of a proud heart that no word nor commandes will rule a man, but he must have what he will, or else hee will set his mouth against heaven, but a little receipt of this *Opium* wil quiet al, if he could but come to see his owne emptinesse and wretchednesse, and get his heart to be at Gods disposing, then his heart would be wonderfully calmed and meekened whatsoever he endured.

Humiliation gives quiet to a mans course in three causes. First in the fiercest temptations; Secondly, in the heaviest oppositions of men, Thirdly, in the greatest

greatest poverty that can befall a man in this life.

In the strongest temptations. When Sathan begins to besiege the heart of a poore sinner, and layes battery against him; the Soule is so settled, that hee cannot bee removed. See how the humbled heart tires the divell, and runnes him out of breath, and out-shoots him in his owne Bow, in the very highest of all his malice and indignation. Take a poore Soule at the under, when hee hath beene throughly burthened with a corruption, and laid gasping for a little grace, and favour, and could not finde any evidence of mercy; the Soule cryes continually, and begs for mercy earnestly; the divell seeth him, and (having some permission from God, so to doe) hee lets flye at the poore Soule, and labours to knocke him off from his course, and saith to him in this manner.

Doest thou thinke to get mercy from the Lord? and doest thou dreame of any mercy at the hands of God? when thy own conscience dogs thee. Nay, goe to the place where thou livest, and to the chamber where thou lyest, and consider thy fearefull abominations, and how thou art foyled by them to this day, set thy heart at rest, God heares not, and respects not the prayers of such vile sinners.

Now, the Soule seeth this easily, and confesseth it plainly, and the humbled Soule saith, it is true. I have often denied the Lord, when hee hath called upon mee, and therefore he may justly deny mee, yet seeke to him for mercy I must, and if the Lord will cast mee away, and reject my prayers I am contented; if hee doe cast mee away, what then Sa-

Sathan objects.

The Soule answers.

Sathan.

than? what then, saith the divell? I had thought this would have been enough to make thee despaire. Yet this is not all: for God will give thee over, and leave thee to thy selfe, and to thy lusts and corruptions; and thy latter end shall be worse than thy beginning; and thou shalt call, and cry, and when thou hast done, be overthrowne; that loose, unclean, and proud heart of thine will overthrow thee for ever, God will leave thee to thy selfe, and suffer thy corruptions to prevaile against thee, and thou shalt fall fearefully, to the wounding of thy conscience, to the grieving of the hearts of Gods people, to the scandall of the Gospell, and the reproach of thy owne person.

The Soule
answers.

Yet the humble Soule replies in this manner, and saith, if the Lord give mee up to my base lusts, which I have given my selfe so much libertie in, and if the Lord will leave mee to my sinnes; because I have left his gracious commands, and if I shall fall one day and be disgraced, and dishonoured, yet let the Lord bee honoured, and let not God loose the praise of his power, and justice, and I am contented, if God doe leave me, what then Sathan?

The Divell
objects.

What then saith the divell? I had thought this had beene enough to drive thee out of thy wits, yet this is not all. For when God hath left thee to thy sinnes, then the Lord will breake out in vengeance against thee, and get praise from that proud heart of thine, and make thee an example of his heavy vengeance to all ages to come, and therefore it is best for thee, to prevent an untimely Iudgement, by an untimely death.

The

The humble heart is quieted all this while, and The Soule replies, whatsoever God can, or will doe I know answers. not : yet, so great are my finnes, that hee cannot, or (at least) will not doe so much against mee, as I have deserved; if the Lord doe come in Iudgement against mee I am contented; say what thou wilt, what then Sathan? Thus you may runne the divell out of breath; then the divell leaves the humbled Soule.

The want of this Humiliation of heart, is it where by men are brought to desperate stands; so that sometimes one man goes to a halter, another runs out of his wits, and another drownes himselfe: all this is horrible pride of heart. Why will you not beare the wrath of the Lord? It is true indeed, your finnes are great, and Gods wrath is heavy, yet God will doe you good by it, and therefore be quiet. In the time of warre, when the great Cannons flye off, the onely way to avoyd them, is to lye downe in a furrow, and so the Bullets flye over them, whereas they meeete with the mountaines and tall Cedars. So it is with all the temptations of Sathan which besiege us. Lye low, and be contented to be at Gods disposing, and all the temptations of the divell, shall not be able to disquiet or distract thee.

Secondly, when Sathan is gone, then comes the troubles, and oppositions of the world. And this The second benefit. Humiliation of heart, gives a secret settling to the Soule, against all the railings, and oppositions of the wicked world: For, this takes of the unrulinesse of the heart. So that when the Soule will not contend with oppositions, but is content to beare them, it is

not troubled with them. The humble Soule seeth, God dispensing with all oppositions, and therefore it is not troubled with them: A man is sometimes Sea-sicke, not because of the Tempest, but because of his full stomacke; and therefore, when hee hath emptied his stomacke, hee is well againe: So it is with this Humiliation of heart. If the heart were emptied truly, though a man were in a Sea of oppositions, if hee have no more trouble in his stomacke, and in his proud heart, then in the oppositions of the world, hee might bee quieted: Consider *David*, when hee was in the wildernesse, and sent to *Nabal* for some reliefe, see how he raged extreamly against him, because he was denied it: The reason was not in the offence, but in the pride of his heart. Take the same man in the persecution of *Absalon*, and when *Shimei* cursed him, saying, Art not thou he that kild such & such, and that committed adultery with the Wife of *Vriab*, In this his heart was marveilous quiet, and now he was able to beare it, better then the souldiers that were with him. Though his cause was just, and hee might have revenged it: yet now hee was humble and brought under, and therefore quieted, though never so much opposed. This Humiliation of heart, so settles a man, that though ten thousand oppositions come against him, yet nothing will disquiet him. Cast disgrace upon the humble heart causelessly, and he cures it thus, he thinks worse of himselfe than any man else can doe, and if they would make him vile and loathsome, hee is more vile in his owne eyes then they can make him, and therefore he is contented, If they imprison an humble

1 Sam. 25. 12,
13.

2 Sam. 15. 25.

2 Sam. 16. 6. 7.
8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

ble Soule, and persecute him, hee wonders at Gods goodnesse, so farre hee is from being discontented, that hee wonders at Gods goodnesse, and mercy towards him, that he would cast him into a Dungeon, when he might have cast him into hell.

Thirdly and lastly, this Humiliation of Soule, brings in satisfaction and contentednesse, in all the wants that may befall him. Take away from him what you will, and deny him any thing, yet he will be quiet. Hee that is contented with all Gods dealing towards him, cannot bee disquieted with any thing; The humble Soule justifies God, and is pacified, & joyns side with Gods providence; he justifies God in whatsoever he doth, & therefore is quiet in whatsoever hee hath done. The ship that goes with wind and tide goes easily, but if it goes against wind and tide, it is wonderfully troubled; so, when the humble Soule goes on with Gods blessed providence, and goes that way which the will of God goes: hee goes on quietly, and the want of this humiliation of heart is the cause of all your disquietnesse; when you will stand in opposition against the Almighty; the Lord will have you poore, and you will be rich, the Lord will have you base and meane in the world, and you would be honorable, the Lord on the one side, and you on the other side, you would have it, and the Lord saith you shall not; if all come not according to your minde, oh then you flye out, God must be of your mind, and bee at your beck, & this you must have, and that you will have, or else God shall heare of you: thus you make your owne trouble, and this troublesome Spirit breeds all the

The third benefit.

for-

sorrow that befalls you; whereas if you would go on with God, you might be quieted and comforted whatsoever condition you were in; as one said, that he could have what hee would of God; why, how was that? because, whatsoever Gods will was, that was his will; humiliation quiets all, and supplies all wants, once make the good will of God that which thy heart shall yeild unto, and Gods providence the best that can befall thee, and then live comfortably for ever. Oh! that our hearts were brought to this. But the pride and vilenesse of our hearts is such, that we trouble our selves needlesly: therefore above all, labour for this. Be content to want what God will deny, and to waite Gods good pleasure, and to bee at his disposing, and then live quietly, and comfortably for ever. Oh! that I could bring your hearts to bee in love, with this blessed grace of God. Is it so, that Humiliation brings quiet in all a mans conditions? Is there not a Soule here that hath beene vexed with the temptations of Sathan, did you never know, what it is to be under the malice of an enemy, and did your owne distempers never trouble you? Have none of you found hard measures at the hands of wicked men? is there never a Soule here that is burthened with many wants, and that lovethis owne comfort? have you not many necessities at home, the want of friends, and meanes, and even of common necessaries, and would you arme and fence your selves, that no wants may disquiet you, nor trouble you, but in all, to be above all, and to rejoyce in all; more then all oppositions in the world can doe you hurt: then be humbled, and

for

for ever quieted. Whatsoever can or shall befall you, by the divell and his instruments, and if every spire of grasse were a divell, bee humbled, and then bee above all the divels in hell, and all temptations, and oppositions, that they shall not so disquiet you, as to cause you to be unsettled or uncomforted.

In the next place, you are to bee desired, to try your selves by the former truth: and let every man try his owne heart, whether ever God hath given him this gracious disposition of Soule or no? You must come to this truth: for there is no justification nor acceptation without this; Nay, there is no faith can be infused into the Soule, before the heart bee thus fitted and prepared: no preparation, no perfection. Never humbled, never exalted: therefore let every man and woman, lay their hearts to the former truth, and consider this one thing in the generall. So farre as the heart is from this contentednesse to be at Gods dispose, so farre it is from true preparation for Christ. You must be emptie, if ever Christ fill you: you must bee nothing, if you would have Christ all in all to you. Thus much in the generall. But, now let us come to the particular trials: and herein let us consider two things. First, the truth, and soundnesse of our Humiliation. Secondly, the measure of it: both of these, this Doctrine doth discover to us. It is very profitable to handle them both, that they which have not this work may be humbled, and that they which have it, may see how farre they come short of the measure which they should and might have, the want of which is

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the cause of much sorrow, and the want of much comfort.

How to try
the truth of
our Humilia-
tion.

You may try the truth of this worke of humiliati-
on, thus. In the generall, look how you are disposed
of in your lives, and conversations. But in particular,
that you may see where wee be, let us observe these
three rules.

First, Let us see, what is it that swayes our rea-
sons, and judgements. Secondly, What is it that
over-powers our hearts, our wills, and affections.
Thirdly, What is it that rules our lives, and conver-
sations. Try your hearts by these rules, and then it
will bee plaine and cleare, whether you bee truly
humbled and abased or no. You know (I told you)
that you must not onely be disposed off by God (for
God will dispose of you, whether you will or no,
hee will rule all things in heaven and earth, hee will
either crush those proud hearts of yours by Humili-
ation here, or else cast you downe to hell for ever),
but you must bee content to bee at Gods disposing.
To beginne with the former; namely, to see what
swayes our judgements: If you will attend, I hope
you shall know something in your owne hearts, you
that are weake; as for the other, haply they come to
quicken up their hearts, and to renew that which
they knew before.

What swaves
our Reasons.

First, Let us try whether we submit in our judge-
ments or no? Here is a maine breach; contrary to
this submission is a mans carnall reason, and that
marvellous height of our conceits, when wee raise
up our owne carnall reasons, as so many holds,
and

and maintaine them against the truth of Christ; and wheresoever this frame of minde is, there this worke of humiliation was never wrought. And this is in too many. When a man swels in his owne conceits against the truth of Christ. That's a sweete place to this end in the *Romans*. Where the Text saith, *The wisdom of the flesh, or as it is in the Originall; The carnall mind is enmitie against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* Rom. 8. 7.

The carnall mind, and all the reasonings, and wisdom of it, is not onely an enemy, but it is enmitie against God. The Apostle doth not say, that a carnall mans wisdom and reason doth not obey, but, he is not able to beare the truth, he (as it were,) sets himselfe in battle array against it, it cannot be subject to the Law of God. This is a maine wound in all the sonnes of *Adam*, That a man (as it were) deifies himselfe, and his owne dreames, and devices, and makes his owne conceit, a line and leuell to all his conversation. So that the carnall minde, will bend the truth to his mind though hee breake it. Here is the marvellous pride of a mans mind. Hence it is that the Apostle adviseth us to *be wise with sobriety.* Rom. 12. 3.

As if hee had said, a man may bee drunke with his owne conceits; as when a drunkard hath gotten his braines well steeped in Wine and Beare; then whatsoever he conceits in his mind, must needs be as true as Gospel. So it is with a carnall mind. Though arguments be never so plaine, and Scriptures never so pregnant; yet a carnall wretch will carry himselfe againg all, and say, it is not my judgement, I am

not of that mind. This is the height of our mind, as if he did say, I doe not thinke it, let the word of God, and his Ministers say what they will to the contrary; they shall not perswade mee of it. Doest thou finde this in thy selfe, then it is an undoubted argument, thou never hadst a heart truly humbled.

1 Cor. 8. 2.

See what the Apostle saith, *If a man thinkes that hee knowes any thing, hee knowes nothing as he ought to doe.*

You thinke you are as wise as you need to be, and you are not children yet. You that thus lift and set up your selves in your owne conceits, whatsoever you be, you know nothing as you ought to doe. And therefore the Apostle speaks of some *that were puffed up*

Colloſſ. 2. 18.

in their owne conceits, intruding into those things which they have not seene, vainely puffed up in their own minds.

You conceive and imagine thus and thus, and will not believe the Minister of God whatsoever hee saith, therefore you are puffed up, and this is not a heart truly humbled and kindly wrought upon.

A carnall man presseth into some imagination, as to his owne proper possession. As the old proverbe is: The foole will not leave his bable for all the Citie of London. So a carnall heart saith, I cannot be otherwise perswaded. I say, then the case is cleare, is it so with thy judgement, and carnall reason? then as yet thou wert never under the power of this truth, thou shuttest up doores against Iesus Christ, he cannot come into informe thee, thou art so full of thy selfe.

Objection.

But some will say, how doth this carnall reasoning lift up it selfe against the truth of Iesus Christ?

To

To this I answer, the lifting up of my carnall reason, makes it selfe knowne in three particulars, and by these you shall know when your conceits carry you aloft from the truth of Christ. *Answer.*

First, A carnall reason being thus puffed up, it is not willing to know the word of God, nor his truth, especially those truths that are troublesome and tedious to him; preach and speake what you will, but preach not that. Hee either wisheth himselfe deafe that hee could not heare, or the Minister dumbe that hee could not deliver those truths. The Lord sent the Prophet *Esay* to preach to the people, and yet to seale them downe to eternall destruction, and therefore the Lord saith, *Goe tell this people, ye heare, Efa. 6. 9, 10. but understand not; see, but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, they winke with their eyes.* As it is with a bleare eye, that is not able to looke against the Sunne, but shuts for feare the Sunne should hurt it. So, a carnall proud mind is not able to looke into the truthes that may trouble it, and that would awaken his bleare eye. And in another place, the people doe intreate the Prophet *Esay*, to goe out of *Efa. 30. 12. the way, and to turne aside out of that path; cause the Holy one of Israel to cease from before us.* As if they had said, Wee cannot endure this holinesse, we cannot brooke this exactnesse, you bid us to be holy or else God will destroy us, get you out of that path; they were weary of those blessed truthes. A double example we have of this distemper of spirit in holy Scriptures. As in *Iob*, Where the wicked say to God,

depart from us for wee desire not the knowledge of thy wayes. The drunkard desires not to heare of any horror of his heart for sinne: and the hypocrite desires not to heare that he must be sound, and sincere, and keepe touch with God in every thing; and so all ungodly men goe against the truth of God, which crosseth their lusts and corruptions. And in *Timothy*, it was the range of a cursed distemper of spirit in a company of wretches of this age. The Text saith,

The time shall come when they shall not endure sound doctrine. And here it is to be noted, that a company of carnall Gentlemen and base refuse people of other degrees are come to this passe, that let a plain searching truth be discovered, they turne away from it, and cannot heare it with patience; but if any man will tell them some fine stories, Oh, this pleaseth them admirably: they cannot endure sound doctrine that searcheth the heart, and awakens the conscience, they cannot brooke that: now, an humble heart is of another mind, it is willing to heare any thing from the Lord, and any message from heaven; and the humble Soule saith, *Speake on Lord, thy servant desires to heare: be the word never so troublesome, and the truth never so much crossing his lusts, hee is well content to heare it.* Nay, he desires that especially, and hee is calmed with it. Marke what *Eli* said, *Keepe not back from me, but let me heare whatsoever the Lord hath said unto thee.* An humble Soule comes to this passe, and saith, *If there be any sinne or any wickednesse in my heart, good Lord discover it,*

2 Tim. 4. 3.

1 Sam. 3. 17.

it, and, if there be any duty to be done, Lord let me know it. And as *Cornelius* said, *Wee are all here present before the Lord to heare whatsoever thou art commanded of God,* So the humble Soule saith, *Whatsoever trouble it brings, I yield to the truth, and desire to heare it.* Acts 10.33.

Thirdly, As the carnall reason shuts his eye, and will not look upon the truth, so in the second place, if it be so, that it must heare that which it would not; what is the next shift that it hath, hee will not suffer himselfe to be convinced by the truth, but when the truth comes in with plainenesse, and power, he labours what hee can to gather up objections and cavills against the truth, that he may oppose the power of Gods word, that sith it is so; that he must heare it, he labours to make it false. This is considerable. *Unto them that are contentious and doe not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousnesse shall be indignation and wrath.* Who are they that are contentious; not on-ly they that contend with their neighbors, but they that contend against the truth, for so the words following doe import so much, *Which obey not the truth.* One man heares a close point, and then hee goes away, and saith, I will not believe it, I know reason, and I will be bound to confute it, and all this is nothing but a smoake: and he deales by the truth, as men doe with an enemy in this case. First, they labour to keepe him out from their confines, and if they cannot doe that, then they leavy forces to drive him out from their land: So it is with a company of

of carnall men; they would not looke upon the truth to be enforced by it. Well, Heare they must, and heare they shall, if they live under the power of the Gospel; but if they must heare it, they are contentious, and advise with this carnall friend, and that carnall Minister, and if they can get any man to plead for their lusts, that they may arme themselves against the blessed truth of God, they thinke themselves happy men.

If a Minister come home to the heart of a carnall wretch, that will buy, and sell upon the Lords Day, and say to him, Remember that thou keepe holy the Sabbath; then hee goes to some carnall man that buyes and sels as well as himselve, and then he will have an army of forces against the truth of God. As the Apostle saith, *As Iannes and Iambres withstood Moses, so doe these men resist the truth, men of corrupt minds, and reprobates concerning the faith; how is that? When Moses came to Pharaoh, to deliver the people of Israel, and when Moses shewed some signes and wonders; Pharaoh would not yield to the Miracles, and therefore he called for Iannes and Iambres, and they made some appearances of Serpents, as Moses had done, and so Pharaohs heart was hardened: even so, When the Word of God is plaine, and the evidences of it are uncontrollable, then a carnall mind, sends for carnall quarrels, and pleas, and objections; and this hee doth to oppose the truth of Christ, and to make an army against the blessed ordinances of God.*

They

2 Tim. 3. 8.

They count it a matter of favour, if any man will deliver and rescue them from the truth.

As when this truth comes, You must not buy and sell upon the Sabbath, but you must bee holy, as God is holy, &c. If this truth bee troublesome; oh they cannot beare it, and they would faine bee rescued, they account this truth an enemy to them, and if any man will deliver them from the truth, they thinke him a God; and they admire at his judgement, and say, such a man is wise, and a deepe Scholler, and he saith thus and thus, he will defend this as well as I: thus a man is fortified against the truth.

But an humble Soule will not doe thus. After the Word and Truth of God is revealed in this kind, and all reasons answered: The understanding of this humble Soule, gives way and opposeth not the truth. Give an humble Soule Scripture for that you say, and hee hath done; and lets all carnall counsels passe: and all matters objected, and hee saith, I am fully perswaded of it, the truth is plaine, God forbid; that I should quarrell wth it. This is for the understanding.

Thirdly, If the truth be so cleare and plaine, that hee cannot gaine-say it, then hee turnes aside from the authoritie of the truth, and will not suffer it to take place in his mind. This is the last shift which a carnall man hath.

As, when a debtor is arrested, at first, hee grapples with the Serjeant, but when hee seeth the Bailiffe, or Serjeant, is too good for him;

he labours to make an escape, and trusts to his feet, rather than to his hands. So it is with a carnall wretched heart. When he cannot but confesse, and yield that the truth is plaine, and that hee cannot grapple with the truth, then he fallcs flat against it: when his Serpent is eaten up by *Moses* Serpent; and all carnall pleas are eaten up by the truth, then he is faine to withdraw himselfe from the authoritie of it.

From hence comes all those shifts: we tell people they are miserable, and in a naturall, and damnable condition: Oh say they, God is mercifull: oh but (say wee) the mercy of God is such, that as hee pardons men, so hee purgeth them, and if mercy will save you, mercy will purge you too, and make you forsake your sinnes; doe you thinke that mercy will carry you, and your peevish proud lustfull hearts to heaven: No; hee will not; then say they, wee will repent hereafter: and then we tell them againe, harden not your hearts, to day if you will hear his voyce, take mercy now while it is called to day:

God requires repentance now, and now you must humble your selves and repent. Yet the Soule goes on, and saith, we blesse God, we doe repent, and when wee swear, wee cry God mercy, and though wee have beene, and are sometimes drunke, yet wee are sorry for it, then we make them answer, and say, you say you are sorrowfull, but sound sorrow is ever accompanied with sound reformation. As the Apostle saith,

saith, *This same thing that you have beene sorrow-^{2 Cor.7.11.}full, what carefulnesse hath it wrought in you, what clearing of your selves, what indignation and the like? And as the wise man saith, He that confesseth and forsaketh his sinne shall find mercy. Then the sinner repliyes, no man can doe thus. What, would you have us without sinne? wee must bee content to doe, as wee may. Thus you see, they yield to the truth, and cannot but confesse that it is plaine, but they take away the power of the truth, and the command of it. You may see this in that cursed shift of a carnall man. When Balack sent for Balaam, saying, Come curse this^{Pro.28.13.} people, and I will advance thee, The Lord met Balaam, and said, thou shalt not curse them, then Balaam rose up early, and said to the Princes of Moab, get you home for the Lord refuseth to let me goe with you: hee laid all the fault upon God, as if hee had said, I have a good affection to goe with you, but the Lord will not give mee leave. Well, when they came againe, hee said, tarry heere all night, that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more. He would goe to advise with God, to doe that which God had formerly forbidden.^{Num.22.13. 19.}*

Thus the carnall heart goes to worke, when hee cannot avoyd the truth, and he would faine have some reservations, and such exceptions, and hee saith, is it not possible that I may bee drunke, and adulterous, and covetous, and yet make a shift to go to heaven too? this is a wretched heart; as Ba-

1 Ioh. 3. 2.

1 Pet. 1. 15.

laam did, so doe many, nay, the most of the world doe so; consider that place of Scripture, and let me have your judgements in it; *he that hath this hope* (saith the Apostle) *purgeth himselfe as Christ is pure.* He doth not say, he may and ought to do it, but he doth purge himselfe; and the Apostle *Peter* saith, *be yee holy as Christ is holy in all manner of conversation.* He doth not say, hee may and should bee so, but, bee holy as Christ is holy, that is in truth and sinceritie; as a child goes like his father though not so fast as he. And as an apprentice workes as fast as his Master though not so well; and as the Apostle saith, *abstaine from all filthinesse of the flesh and Spirit:* as is he had said, if there be ever a harlot or alehouse in the world avoyd them, and all those appearances of evill, come not neere them. This is the condition that God requires. You heare all these truths, now let me call for record from heaven, I would faine know what any wicked opposer can say against these truths; oh that I could know your mindes a little! You that thinke a man need not bee so exact and precise, nay, you blame you children and servants for it. I know not what you would say; except it bee this: It is true, this is good, but doth any man do it? and it were to be wished that we could doe it, and happy are they that can do it, a man may bee a man though not so good as an other man, &c. away with those tricks, the Text saith, *he that hath this hope purifies himselfe, as Christ is pure, though not for the measure yet in the same manner.* Thou and I, and all of us
must

must do it or else we may cast a way all hope. The Lord be mercifull to us; If your judgements were humbled I can tell what you would doe, the heart that is humble takes the truth, and yields to the authoritie of it, whereas a carnall heart Lords it over the truth; if it bee thus with thee thy mind was never soundly enlightned, and as the Lord lives never humbled, never converted, and never brought home to the Lord; see what our Saviour saith, *why do you also by your traditions transgresse the commandement of God.* They set their owne carnall traditions cheeke by joll with the commandements of God, they made the Command of God without any royaltie or power. They were content to give Christ the hearing, but they turned aside from the truth that should have prevailed with them. If ever thou wouldest have the word, worke upon thee to doe thee good, then, whereas heretofore thou wouldest not come in, nor yield; now shew thy selfe to be humbled, and goe thy way home, and let this truth take place in thy heart, and be delivered into the forme of this doctrine now in hand, and when profanenesse, leud and ungodly sports come: then remember this, and say, I must purge my selfe as Christ is pure, did Christ ever thus and thus? did he ever sit up till twelve a clocke at night ryoting and banquetting? it is a truth, (oh Lord) let it take place in my heart, and let it bee fastened there. When the Lord hath a man in his fetters, and breakes the heart with horror, *be openeth his eare to discipline and commands*

Matth. 15. 3.

Iob 36.8,9,10

him to returne from iniquitie. Hee doth not leave a man there and say, this is the way and the truth, walke in it, but he saith, I must have that unclean heart purged, and that carnall company abandoned and so forth; and so the Lord saith to the Ministers, command that dissembler, and that hypocrite, and that base wretch to come out from their ungodly practises, and to yield to mee. Oh let the power and royaltie of this truth take place in your hearts, as it will do, if you be Subjects of the truth. I charge you before God and his Angels if you know any command, obey it, and if you know any sinesfull course, remember the commandement is plaine, you must purge your selves as Christ is pure. Let this word prevaile and have his authoritie over you, and bee not carnall hypocrites to oppose it now, and so to bee damned for it everlastingly.

2.

The will must
be subject.

As the reason must bee subject to Gods will, so the will and affections must be humbled, and the frame that is contrary to this humilitie, is this; when the will and heart of a man (and that part whereby you say, I will have this, and I will not have that) when this part doth not yeild to the authoritie of Gods word, when there is a kind of Sovereigne Command in this waywardnesse of heart, and the heart would challenge a kind of monarchicall authority, and would not be overtopped by the truth of God. This cannot stand with any saving worke of humiliation. The generall is thus.

Jeremy 2.31. *As the people said, we are Lords, we will come no more*

unto thee, we know what to doe. And as it is said in the Psalmist, our tongues are our owne, we ought to speake, *Psalmc 12.4.*
Who is Lord over us ?

But some will say ; How shall wee know, that *Objection.*
our corrupt hearts, wills, and affections doe thus over-power the truth of Christ? and challenge to themselves a soveraign command? Here is the maine wound, and women that are weake in their reasons, are wonderfully refractory in their wills.

We shall know it by these three particulars.

Answer.

First, The heart is weary of the command, and wisheth secretly there were no command of God to crosse him in his course, and to hinder him in his way of sinne. I will declare what I have heard wicked wretches say in this kind, because I will not teach men to bee wicked. He wisheth that there were no righteous God to bound him. The adulterer wisheth that there were no such Law as this, hee that burnes in his lust here, shall burne in hell. And the drunkard wisheth that there had never beene any Law made against that sinne, and hee saith, it is pity that every man may not drinke what hee will: and the unjust person that would bee stealing and pilfering, hee wisheth that there no Law against that sinne, and when the Word and his Conscience workes, and the Law makes havocke in his heart, and labours to throw him to the wall, Oh hee is weary of it.

Now a carnall heart thinks it the greatest plague
in

in the world, to be paled in within the compasse of Gods commands, that he may not do what he list, but itill, Word, and Conscience, and the Ministers check him.

Malac. 1. 13.

When the Lord required, *Sacrifices at the peoples hands in Malachy*; They thought it a wearisomnesse, and snuffed at it. What every morning Sacrifice? and every evening too? what a wearisomnesse is this? So, you ought to have morning, and evening prayer in your Families, how are your hearts affected towards it? doe not you say, what a wearisomnesse is this? why doe you tell us of prayer, and of humbling our Soules? This is a burthensome thing; this argues a heart that is above the truth, and that would bee free from the truth, and justle it to the wall, therefore the wicked are (as it were) in bonds and fetters, as the *Apostle* saith, *they did not like to have God in knowledge*. As if he had said; it is a vexation to their Soule still to have conscience calling, bee holy and humble, and be not proud, nor drunke, nor adulterous, their consciences flies in their faces, and the Word galls them, they doe not like to have this in knowledge. And therefore the Lord deales with them after their desires, and he gives them over to a reprobate mind; and to a heart that shall never imbrace the truth. You that have no delight to heare of your duties, and wish there were no Minister to controll you, the Lord will satisfie your desires, and give you up to a reprobate sence. As if the Lord did say, you are weary of my wisdome, and goodnesse,

Rom. 1. 28.

nesse, and weary of my word and commands, I will ease you of that burthen, you shall have hearts that never shall bee mooved with my Spirit; goe all you damned lusts and reigne in him, rule over him, and make him a slave, and bring him downe to destruction for ever.

If the Lord comes and will needs be revealed to him, then a sturdy heart layes violent hands upon the command, he disposeth of it, and will not let the command dispose of him; he hinders the power of the truth that would draw him to God. As the Apostle saith, *they withhold the truth in unrighteousnesse*. The word in the Originall is, they imprison the truth; as if the Apostle had said, you know you should not be loose, nor covetous, nor drunke; is it so conscience? are you drunke, loose, and covetous still? when the conscience saith, I will be loose, and covetous still, and you will have the vengeance of God to follow you, and go to hel too. They do imprison the truth: The covetous man imprisons the truth, and he must have his covetousnesse still; and the truth is imprisoned at the suite of the adulterer, and he must be uncleane still. And so, the oppressor must lye, and dissemble, and oppresse still, and therefore he justles the truth and will of of God to the wall. He takes the wall of Gods will. As the people said, *there is no hope but wee will walke after our owne devices, and we will doe every one the Imaginations of his evill heart*. They said most desperately, wee will doe it; heare it and feare, all you whose consciences doe convince you of it; and you know that theeving and stealing, and pettishnesse,

2.

Rom. 1. 18.

Jer. 18. 12.

1 Sam. 8. 19.

pettishnesse, and peevishnesse, and all your profainnesse is forbidden, what saith your hearts to this? who disposeth of your wills in this case? doe not you say, wee will doe what wee list? As when *Samuel* hath made an excellent Sermon, and told them the danger of having a King, *they said, nay, but wee will have a King over us.* So is it with many of you, Is this humilitie? The Lord saith, you shall not, and you say you will: oh fearefull! is this humilitie? aske but common reason; you say, wee must have and wee will have it, wee have had our liberties and wee will have them, and so destruction too.

3.

Thirdly, This is the lowest and least kind of rebellion; the Soule is content happily to do what God requires, but it must be upon his owne conditions, and his owne termes. This is the last, and it argues no saving worke of preparation for Christ. The hypocrite is content that God shall have his glory, but hee must doe it. And a man is content to be painefull in his place, provided hee may have ease, and honours, and parts, and preferments, and be respected; but when these faile, then God hath broken his condition, and hee will none. Thus God is at his dispose, and stands to his agreements. This is a cursed hypocrite. You can bee content to heare, and pray that you may have some corruption, and that under the name of profession you may be adulterous and loose still. The God of mercy send some veine of good motions into your hearts, to awaken you if it bee possible. Thus it is with some Ministers that are content to be

be painfull in their places, so long as they may have honour, and bee respected; but if they misse of their end, they give over all. If there bee any such here, you are hypocrites, and shall never bee comforted upon these termes.

Now I come to the third passage of this triall, namely, what it is that disposeth of our lives. A mans life and conversation must be at Gods disposing. If the heart bee distempered, and the reason bee thus lifted up, then the actions of a mans life must needs be answerable: If those wheelles goe false, then the actions of a mans life must strike false. As they said, they would walke in their own wayes. And as the Lord saith, *I will bring their feares upon them, and my soule shall loath them because they did choose their owne devices.* That is, whatsoever their own corrupt hearts would have, that they will take; and that way they will walke in. Not according to Gods will, but according to their owne rebellious hearts. So that all the practices of a mans course, are nothing else but as so many distempered behaviours of a rebellious carnall mind and heart. This disordered carriage discovers it selfe in three particulars.

A mans life
must be sub-
ject.

Esa. 66 4.

First, when a mans life and conversation comes contrary to God, and goes abreast against the Almighty: as they did of whom the Apostle speakes, *Having their understandings darkened, have given themselves over to all lasciviousnesse.* They doe not what God will, but what their pride and idlenesse will. The wise man saith, *Hee that is perverse in his wayes shall fall at once.* And the Apostle saith,

I.

Eph. 4. 18.

Pro. 28. 18.

- Rom. 6. 23. *When you were the servants of sinne, you were free from righteousnesse.* What's that? Holinesse and Gods command had nothing to doe with them, that never tooke place in their hearts. Doe you thinke these mens hearts are at Gods disposing? See what the Apostle saith; *Fashion not your selves like unto this world.* I onely appeale to mens consciences, what strange apparell, and haire laid out, and what Spanish locks bee there now adayes? who disposeth of these things? Oh forsooth, they are newly come up, and they must come up to thy head, and armes and all. These strange fashions doe argue strange distempers of spirit, and doe you thinke that God rules in those hearts and minds? & does God over-power those affections? when as they will not give him leave to meddle with a haire, or a locke, or an excrement: this is my judgement in this case. If it be so, that the Word of God may not take away a lap, and an excrement, our shame, and those things that are scandalous, then surely the Word of God must not plucke away our lusts. No, no, you are as far from subjection, as heaven is from hell, and as the divell is from the God of Hosts. The Lord speakes plainely by the Prophet *Zephany, Hee will visit all those that are cloathed with strange apparell.* When the fire shall flame about your eares, and the enemies come to plucke your feathers from your Caps, then you will remember this. You would not have God to dispose of your cloathes, and haire, and the like, and therefore God will now dispose of your lives and liberties, and when

when you lye upon your straw, and see that you must not goe gay to heaven, you would then bee content that the Lord should dispose of you, and looke graciously towards you; and then you will recommend your soules to God. But then the Lord will make you answer and say, who had the disposing of you before, a drunken, adulterous, and fashionable soule, therefore let them succour you now, get you to your fashions, and let them make you fry and roare in the fashion; he that will not have these base trifles to bee at Gods command, surely hee will never have his heart at Gods disposing, and therefore neither mind, nor heart, nor life.

Secondly, If God will over-rule wicked men a little, and pull downe their trim fashions, and will gripe the Vsurer, and send the thiefe to remember his Chests, and if the Lord say, you shall not be rich, nor honorable, as you would: though you seeke them never so fast.

2.

Yet secondly, they use all carnall shifts, and sinfull devices to come from that woefull condition into which God hath cast them. A man cannot endure to bee poore, and therefore hee will steale, coosen, or oppresse, and take any course to lift up himselfe.

Thirdly, Sometimes a man is content to bee at Gods disposing in an outward conformitie, and hee will do the duties that God reveales, and leave the sinne that God forbids, and gives a charge against: but why will hee doe this? Hee doth not these to honour God, but for some by and base ends. As when the hypocrite prayeth, God doth

3.

not make him pray as the first mooving cause of the worke, but his hypocrisie : and so the dissembeling professor, that will professe for advantage, to draw people to his house, or to sell off his Wares more readily. And that people may say, Oh he is a marvellous honest man; yes, and a covetous wretch too, and hee makes Religion as a stalking Horse, for his lusts. You are not at Gods disposing, unlesse you bee at his command in all these.

Thus you see the pride of a mans reason, in his will, his heart and life, wherein you see the desperate villany of a mans nature; and all is opposite against the God of heaven. If every bird had her feathers, and the worme her filke, and every creature their owne, what would become of the man that is proud. This is base enough, yet this is nothing to that Masse of haughtinesse, and *Luciferian* wretchednesse that is in the heart. That a poore creature should set his will against Gods will, and his way against the way of the Almighty; before whom the Angels stand amazed, and the divels doe tremble. God saith, I will have this, and the Soule saith, I will not have it: God saith, thou shalt not walke in this way, but the Soule saith, I will walke in it; God saith, thy reason, thy will, thy life, and all; shall be subject to mee; but the Soule saith, they shall not. Is not this infinite intollerable haughtinesse? What, to make God no God, and that hee must have no will, no providence, and no rule over a mans life? Oh! you that are guiltie in this case take notice of it. And, let mee

mee exhort you all that have heard the VVord of God this day , and are poore ignorant men , and prophane, and carnall hypocrites. Ignorance rules one man, and his corrupt lusts rules another man, but there is no good rule at all.

You have the VVord of God and his counsels, and you have seene the way set out, now what remains, but that you bee intreated to goe home and humble your selves in secret , and say, this is my proud reason, my proud heart, and this is my proud carriage , it is I that would not submit to the command of Gods VVord. And let every servant come in, and say, this is my proud heart, my Master , and my Mistris may not speake, but I give word for word : this is my fault. And you wives reason thus : Now the Lord hath revealed the pride of my heart , and this is my proud reason and will , that would not yield to the command of my husband though never so warrantable. Let the child also humble himselfe, and say, when my father counsels mee , I turne my deafe care ; and my mother is but a woman, and therefore I would have my owne will, and walke in my owne way ; this is my vaine mind. How many be there present heere this day , that are not willing to know some truths. You know you have made many conspiracies against the VVord of *God* in the middle of the night , because your honours, ease , and liberties lay at the stake , therefore the VVord must not rule. If it bee thus ; then to this day you are carnally minded , and stout-hearted, and vaine. Goe home therefore I charge you,
and

and as you tender your owne good, gee into your private chambers, or else into some fields, and there get downe on your knee, though your hearts will not bow, and say, good Lord, I know and confesse it, to this day my carnall mind hath not beene brought under, and this vaine and idle conversation hath not beene ordered by thy word: I have known much, and gone on in rebellion against thee, and it is a wearinesse to mee to sanctifie the Sabbath, and hearing, praying, and other holy duties are a burthen to mee: to this day my heart is not prepared for mercy, good Lord, to this day I am a wretched carnall man.

This is something, Now there is some hope. And the Soule goes on further, and saith, Good Lord, what will become of my Soule, am I Gods to dispose of? no, no, pride and peevishnesse hath ruled mee, and I must cloath my selfe as Pride would have mee. This is somewhat indeed. And the adulterer saith, If the adulteresse come, I must goe though I die for it. When the drunkard comes to pull you out, tell him of this, and say, Who hath disposed of you this day, and all your life, a drunken wretch, and a base queane. You have heard the word of God checking of you, and yet nothing would doe, Oh now at last yield, and say, The Lord hath not disposed of me. Now therefore labour that God may dispose of you; and let the mightie God pull downe that mightie heart: Challenge the Lord with his promise, and give him no rest till hee have mercy upon you. And you servants, humble your selves, and say, Wee have

have beene broud and idle together, now let us mourne and pray together. The time shall come when you will be content that God should dispose of you, and you shall desire the Lord to tooke graciously towards you, and that God would take away your corruptions, and that pride wich accuseth you, and all those abominations that have beene a shame and disgrace to you; therefore now resolve with your selves, and say, Lord, take away this sinne, and subdue that corruption, and doe thou rule and reigne over my heart and life for ever: let the power of thy truth carry mee, and turne me from my wickednesse, and over-power this proud will of mine, and whatsoever vanitie is in my life, good Lord take it away, & frame me after thy mind. When this time comes, say, That a poore Minister did with you good, and that you had a faire offer. If you will be at Gods disposing, in mind, in heart, and life, the Lord will prepare a place for you in heaven, and ranke you there amongst his blessed Saints and Angels for evermore.

If another mans servant come to demand of you meat, drinke, and wages, you will say, You have not beene at my command, therefore goe to the Master that you have served, let him pay you your wages: So it will be with you, if you goe to God for mercy, and comfort, in that day, the Lord will send you to your lusts, and new fashions, &c. but if any man be Gods servant, then every thing shall be fitted for him, and though that day bee troublesome to the proud and haughtie spirit, yet it will

be a comfort to the godly, that they have submitted themselves to Gods word. For, then Christ shall fill their mindes with wisdome, and their wills with holinesse, and their lives shall be made honourable and acceptable before him. Thinke of this, and labour to bring your hearts to it, that Gods will may be your wills; and if you be humbled, you shall, and must bee for ever comforted. Thus much of the triall of the truth of our humiliation.

The second
part of the use.

Now I come to the second part of the use, that is, to examine the measure of our humiliation: for (as I conceive) all the difficultie of a mans course lyes here; and the cause why a man receives not the assurance of mercy from God that hee desires, or that comfort that he might, it is all from hence (I say) because he is not emptie: For if the heart be prepared, Christ comes immediately into his temple, and the lesse we have of our selves, the more we shall have of Christ. This is marvellous usefull, and therefore you must know that though the heart be truly humbled, and laid low in it selfe in truth, and the thing is done, yet there remains a great deale of pride in the heart. Take a mightie Castle, though it bee battered downe, yet there remains many heapes of rubbish, and happily some of the pillars stand many Winters after: So it is with this frame of Spirit, in a high imagination, in these Towers of loftinesse. Though this *Dagon* of a mans selfe bee fallen downe, yet still the stumps remaine, and will doe many yeares. And it will cost much horror of heart, and much trouble

2 Cor. 10. 5.

ble before this haughtinesse of heart will be every way pull'd downe, and made agreable to the good will of God. Though this distemper be marvelous secret, yet 'a man may take a measure and scantling of it, and hee may know how much of this cursed rubbish remains in his heart, by these foure particular rules.

How to try the measure of humiliation.

First, looke what measure there is of carnall reasoning against the truth of God when it is made knowne, what measure their is of it either subtilly comming in upon the heart, or else that doth violently transport the Spirit against the Spirit, so much need thou hast of Humiliation, and so much thou wantest of it. This is a cleare case. Every Saint of God is willing to know the truths that he shall doubt of, and is content to yield himselfe to the truth that shall bee revealed, and of which hee shall bee convinced, yet there remains much carnall reasoning against the truth. As the Apostle saith, *Let no man deceive you; intruding into those things which he hath not seene, vainely puff up in his fleshy mind.* The ground and root of this carnall reasoning, or the measure of it may appear in two causes.

The first particular Trial.

Coloss. 2. 18.

First, There is a kind of perverse darkenesse in the heart, still sticking in the mind and understanding, even of a gracious godly man. And from hence, namely, out of this mistaking of the minde, followes all that carnall reasoning: that, howsoever the Soule is satisfied, yet it will not sit downe, but still it sticks in this carnall reasoning, and the sinner cannot conceive the truth, nor fa-

thom the compasse of it, by reason of his owne weakenesse, therefore it is long before hee will bee perswaded that it is truth, and that he is bound to yield to it. When the wisdome of the truth is so plaine and evident, that he cannot resist the clearenesse of it, yet because he cannot conceive of it, hee thinks, that he is not bound to yield thereunto.

Objection. But some will say, should a man yield to that which he cannot conceive ?

Answer. To this I answer. When the mind is so farre enlightened, that hee cannot gaine-say any thing in reason, though hee cannot compasse the depth and bottome of the truth, yet hee should yield to it, and rather goe with reason, then follow his owne imagination, when there is no reason for it: Iust so it was with *Nicodemus*. When Christ spake of the worke of regeneration, he said, *Can a man bee borne againe the second time.* Well, Christ opens the mystery of regeneration, and the secrecie of it the second time, and when *Nicodemus* could not comprehend what Christ had spoken, yet hee would hold his owne, and said, how can this bee, I cannot conceive it ? because hee could not comprehend it ; therefore he throwes all away. Marke how Christ hits him in the right veine, and strikes him to the bottome, and see how hee tames him : *Art thou a Master in Israel, and a Doctor in Law, and yet art such a novice in this worke of regeneration ;* downe with that proud heart of thine. Lay downe all thy carnall reasoning, & become a foole, and so thou mayst understand this truth that is communicated to thee.

John 3.9.

This

This is ordinary amongst us, for a man to say, I cannot believe it, I see it not, and I think not so; and yet they have no reason at all to carry them, but because they cannot comprehend it by that light which they have, therefore they will not yield to any reason, because they cannot see it by their owne light, they will not use Gods spectacles (as I may so say) looke how much of this carnall reasoning thou hast, so much pride thou hast, and this is very much, specially in the most ignorantest Soules.

Secondly, because of the weakenesse, and feebleness of their judgements, which are not able to hold a truth when they have it in their hands, but it goes away like lightening, and because the minds of those poore creatures, are over-worne with many thoughts, and cursed reasonings, and troubled therewith, they grow unable to helpe themselves against those distempers. And hence it is, that though the Word of God be let in, and made cleare, yet a man stoopes to those conceits, and cursed reasonings that have beene attended to, so that they take off the power of the truth. As it is with a Ferryman: hee applyes the Oare, and lookes home-ward to the Shore where he would be, yet there comes a gust of winde that carries him backe againe whether he will or no: So many a poore humbled creature, that is truly wrought upon, and hath a true title to Christ; hee applyes his Oare, and would have assurance of mercy from Christ, yet the over-whelming of carnall reasonings, and cursed suggestions (that are either cast

in or stirred up in his heart) ·throwes him backe againe, and takes of the power of the truth; inso-much that hee can see nothing, nor yield to any thing for the good and comfort of his Soule. I take this to bee the ground of all the trouble that befalls a broken heart. Let any man under heaven give mee the reason of this; why any Soule that is truly burthened for sinnes as finnes, and hath found God marvellous gracious to him this way, why (I say) after all his cavils are removed, and all his objections are fully answered, and all controversies are ended, and this often done; yet a poore broken hearted creature, will still recoyle to his former carnall reasonings againe; the reason is, because all the answers that were given are now forgotten, and all his cavils, and carnall conceits will be as fresh in his mind as ever they were, partly from the haunt they have had in his mind, and partly from that selfe-wylie waywardnesse of the heart, that is content to goe that way.

They that have beene long over-whelmed with these cursed carnall cavellings, they will rather labour to oppose a direction, then to hold it and to walke in the comfort of it; onely because of the weakenesse of their understandings, and their carnall reasonings are so violent against them. Vpon this hinge it is, that (as I take it) all the objections of a company of poore broken-hearted doe hang, and by this means they keep out that comfort which they might have; and in the strength whereof they might walke all their dayes. I might propound many instances, as thus; come to a contrite

trite Soule, and say to him, why walkest thou so uncomfōrtably, seeing thou hast now a title to mercy and salvation in Christ? see what he replies, I a title to mercy? nay, I am unterly unworthy of that title, it is a great gift and few have it, and I have beene a vile wretch and an enemy to God and his glory; what I a title to mercy? we reply againe; God gives grace to the unworthy, hee justifies the ungodly, and not the godly, and if he will give you mercy too, what then? hee replies againe, What mercy to me? Nay, it is prepared for those that are fitted for it; had I such a measure of humiliation, and so much grace; if I were so and so fitted; and if my heart were thus disposed, then I might have some hope to receive it: wee reple againe. But have not you beene weary of your corruptions, and are you not content that God should doe that for you, which you cannot do for your selves; this is the qualification which God accepts, and requires, and by which hee fits the Soule for mercy; unlesse you have that other of your own conceits you will have none, and so you deprive your selves of mercy; you have a childs part, and a good portion too, if your proud hearts would suffer you to see it. Then the Soule saith, I would have the Lord say to my Soule, bee of good comfort, I am thy Salvation; if the Lord would witnesse this to mee by his Spirit, then I could believe it: content then, onely let us agree upon the manner how it must bee done, and how God shall speake it. Will you then yield it? Yes, then know this, what the Word saith, the Spirit saith,

faith, for the hand and the sword, the Word and the Spirit goe both together. For as the text saith, *My Word and my Spirit are one.* Then take the Word and lay thy heart leuell to it, and see it. The Word saith, *Every one that is weary shall be refreshed;* Hast not thou beene weary, and hast not thou seene sin worse then hell it selfe? The Text, the Word, the Lord, and his Spirit saith, Thou shouldest come: and the Spirit saith, thou shalt be refreshed. Oh saith the sinner, I cannot finde this assurance, and this witnesse of Gods Spirit, I cannot see it, and I cannot believe it: Thus hee leaves the judgement of the Word & Spirit, and cleaves to the judgement of his finding, and feeling: and thus he judgeth Gods favour in regard of his own imaginations, and not according to the witnesse of the Word and Spirit: the Spirit saith, Thou art fitted for mercy, but because thy ignorant blind mind conceives it not, hence it is that thou shuttest the doore against the mercy of God revealed, and that would be settled upon thy Soule for thy everlasting comfort. Thinke of this, and say, Whether is it fit that my wit should determine my estate, or the word of God? Will you determine the cause, and perke into the place of judgement, & say, I feele it not, & I feare it not? Is not all this carnall reason? Here they runne amaine, even a-breast against their owne comfort, and will not receive the Word that might couvey what comfort is needfull for them. I charge every poore Soule to make conscience of resisting the word of God, as you desire to make conscience of lying and stealing:

stealing: This is a sinne though not so great as the other; make conscience of this carnall caveling, pull downe those proud hearts, lay downe all those carnall reasonings, and let the word of God rule you, & then comfort will come amaine. I take this for a truth; That, when the heart is truly humbled and prepared for mercy, and rightly informed & convicted of the way to salvation, the cause why the heart cannot receive comfort, it is meere pride of a mans spirit one way or other, it is not because he will not, nor because God will not, but because hee listens to what his carnall reason saith, and not to the plaine will and word of God. I say, make conscience of it, and then comfort will come amaine into your Soules.

The second triall of the measure of our humiliation, is this. Looke to thy discouragements; For as the discouragements of thy course are, so is the pride of thy heart.

The second triall of the degree of humiliation.

If the stream run amain here, there is much pride, if little discouragement, then there is little pride. This is nothing else, but when the Soul out of the feare of evill that it either fees or expects, and the price that it puts upon it selfe, & that it looks for from it selfe, it is nothing else but the sinking of the Soule below it selfe. As the Author to the *Hebrewes* saith, Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himselfe, least you grow weary, and faint in your owne mindes. The word in the Originall is, as if their sinewes were shrunke. This is an undoubted argument and evidence of so much pride as this doth appeare. Whē

Heb. 12. 3.

a man is driven to a desperate stand, and comes to say a dispondencie, and to lay himselfe too low, and is not able to beare the blow that God layes upon him: for, were the Soule as willing to take the want of good if God denie it, as to take good when God gives it, it would not be so discouraged. The heart is content to have good, but if God take away this good, hee is not content to be at Gods disposing therein, but if this good goe away, he sinks and is discouraged, and this argues pride. The heart desires to have riches, and especially honors in the world, happily God denies this, & throwes filth and disgrace upon his person, and now the Soule is desperately downe and forlorne in himselfe: So much as thou hast of this, so much pride thou hast. Why art thou not content that God take away any thing? the truth is, thou wouldest bee at thine owne disposing, and that which thou wouldest have; thou art not able to want. Now because this is a thing that wee must take speciall notice of, know therefore that this discouragement appears in these severall passages, and pride vents it selfe in them all.

First, This keepes a man from comming to the word, when he is called to it. Though the Word of God be never so plaine, and his calling to it never so cleare, yet hee is loath to come at Gods call, and when hee is come hee is quickly weary, and saith, what doe I heere? Aske God that, because he thinks, he shall not finde the successe that he desires, therefore he is loath to come to it, this is horrible pride. Thus it was with *Jonah*: he was sent

I.
Signes of a
discouraged
heart.

sent to *Nineveh*, and because hee thought God would shew mercy to them, and hee should be accounted a false Prophet; therefore he would not goe, but turnes to *Tarshish*, hee was not able to beare the crossing of himselfe.

Secondly, It damps the Soule, and (as I may so say) it knockes off the wheelles of a mans endeavours, when hee sets upon the worke, and it kills him at the roote. As the Prophet *David* saith, *Why art thou cast downe within mee oh my soule? why art thou so disquieted within mee?* Psal. 43. 5. As a man that awakens from a swoond, he wonders at himselfe: so did this Holy man. Thus it comes to passe, that the Soule recoyles upon it selfe. And the heart gives in, and hee (as it were) trips up his owne heeles, that, howsoever a man is able to doe duties, yet by reason of discouragements he is not able to put forth that which hee can doe, for feare he should not doe that which he would.

Thirdly, this discouragement marvellously dis-temperes a man after the worke. When the worke is done by others, if they finde acceptance, and have good successe, this comes like cold water upon the Soule, and then hee goes away and saith, Oh hee is fit for nothing, and hee is unable to doe any thing, as if a man should say, Hee hath no light because another mans candle burnes clearer then his: but after his owne worke, all his care is what will become of the businesse, and how his labour, and how his Sermon tooke, what improvement of his gifts, & what admiration of his parts, and if the acceptance of others answer not his de-

3.

fires, then his Soule sinks downe, and hee is even weary of himselfe, his worke and all. If no man commend him, and the worke is not approved, then hee complains of himselfe this way and that way, and begins to disparage himselfe, onely to fish out commendation from others, and to see what they will say, if they commend him, then he goes away rejoycing, if not, then hee sinks; especially if he have not grace to go in secret by prayer, to quicken up himselfe with some promise after that drunken fit. So the truth is plaine, it is wonderfull to see what pride there is. One man is sicke of the fullen, because the breath of man departs, and hee falls short of that which hee expected. Though I should prepare my selfe never so well, yet if the Lord did stop my mouth now in the Pulpit, let me be humbled, but comforted and contented therewith.

The third triall, of the measure of our Humiliation.

The third Triall of the measure of our humiliation, is this discontentednesse in a mans occasions, and so much of this as there is, so much pride thou hast in thy heart, where this discontentednesse growes, there is this bitter roote of pride also. The nature of a proud heart is not able to beare any superiour, and if it be checked, it falls to strange murmuring, and gaine-saying. This discontentednesse lets out it selfe in five particulars, and there is a world of pride in them all.

First, the Soule will grudge at the dispensation of God, and snarle at the providence of the Almighty, as if God had forgotten himselfe. Hee quarrels exceedingly with the Almighty, if God answer

answer not his will, and his hearts desire. When the Lord had prevailed with the peoples hearts, and they had humbled themselvss, and the Lord had turned from his wrath; see how this man falls out with God ! Oh, faith hee, I thought so much when I was in my owne cuntry, that thou wouldest save this people, and I should be accounted a false Prophet, and thus my glory lyes in the dust. You thinke God is beholden to you for your prayers, and fastings, and you say, how is it that after all our prayers yet wee have not comfort, such a man is cheered, and such a poore creature is refreshed, and yet they have not the partes that wee have, and they have not prayed as wee have done, thou hast shewed mercy to them, and therefore why not to us too. This is horrible pride

Ionah 4. 1. 2.

See how a proud Soule justles God out of the place of his providence, and brings the Almighty to his barre, and to his judgement; & the heart begins to reason inwardly, and sometimes vents it outwardly, and faith, had the Lord given me that grace and fitted a place for me, I could have done much for God, and some good to his Church, and I could have ministred much comfort to others: this is the English of it. As if he had said, had the Lord bene so wise (to devise a meanes to effect his glory) as I am, then great matters might have bene done. This is to make a mans wisdome above God, and his mercy, grace, wisdome, & all. Oh ! this is devillish pride.

Secondly, It flights all mercies received, and

Hester. 5. 13.

all that God bestowes from day to day ; because he cannot have what he would, therefore he cares not for it, and he regards not what hee hath. As *Haman* said, *All this honour and these riches availe me nothing, so long as I see the Jew Mordecai sitting in the gate.* This one thing denyed him, made him not to regard whatsoever hee had ; and it was not onely so with *Haman*, but even with good *Jonah*; Whē God had prepared a goard, because he tooke it away againe suddainely, *Jonah* tooke on exceedingly, and forgetting all Gods mercies in the depth he quarrels with heaven, & when the Lord said, *doſt thou well to bee angry ; yes (saith hee) even to the death,* thus he commends himselfe. The reason is, the soule is like a fullen child, who because his coate is not garded as he would have it, therefore hee is discontented and will have none at all.

Therefore the Soule saith as they did of the two little fishes, heere are five barley loaves and two fishes, but what are these amongst so many people, So the Soule saith, oh ! he hath nothing and he can doe nothing, and God frownes upon him &c. but, hath not God given you a care and conscience to reforme your lives? and hath not he done this and that for you? Oh yes, but what's this to that I might have had and that I would have? oh, down with that proud heart.

Jonah 4. 9

John 6. 9.

3.

Thirdly, The discontented Soule will quarrell with his owne condition whatsoever it is, though hee had a condition of waxe as the Proverb is, hee is never pleased nor quieted, but hee hath strange Imaginations in his minde, and strange listings up
of

of his owne conceits, and hee saith, If God had set mee in such a place answerable to my gifts and parts, then such a thing might have beene done: but God hath put him (as it were) under a clod, and therefore hee hath no care of himselfe as God hath had no care of him: nay, let him have that condition which hee desires, and hee falls out with that too; *Rebecca could not bee contented without children, and yet when shee had conceived, and the children began to strive in her wombe, shee said, if it be so, why am I thus?* So it is with a proud discontented heart. Hee must have this, and hee will have that, and if there bee any weaknesse, hee sinks downe in his sorrow.

It is a strange passage of good *Iosuah* (when the Lord had discomfited the host of *Israel* by the men of *Ai*, see how he complains, saying, *Alas, (oh Lord God) wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, would God wee had beene content to dwell on the other side Jordan.* As if hee had not begged Gods blessing, and had not seene Gods hand in succouring of him before, and yet now because he had not what he would, hee takes all in the worst sence. And as *Moses* said, when the Lord had called him to goe before *Pharaoh*, *send by whom thou should'st send.* As if God must not dispose of him, because hee had not that eloquence which hee desired.

Fourthly, as he quarrells with his condition, so hee becomes weary of his life, and will needs die in a pet, because God answers not, and his humour

is

is not fitted, therefore he will away from the world, no man shall see him any more, neither will he see any man. Thus it was with good *Eliab*, when he said, *Lord take away my life, for I am no better then my Fathers.* So it was with *Ionah*, and with *Iob*. You women thinke of this. It may be your husbands will not speake to you, as you would have them, and then you wish; Oh, that you had dyed in such a sicknesse, &c. Downe with those proud hearts. The Lord hath given you life, and continues it, that you may seeke to God, and yet you will needs dye in a sullen fit: it is mercy that you may live to seeke mercy.

1 King. 19. 4.

Iob 3. 10. 11.

12.

Fifthly, in conclusion, when the Soule hath thus quarrelled with God, and slighted all mercies, and quarrelled with his condition, and is grown weary of his life & all, then the Soule comes to a desperate distraction in himselfe, and a wonderfull thought seizeth upon the Soule of a discontented man, that his heart is almost driven beyond himselfe; and out of this comes a great deale of madnesse in the wicked; and it doth much hurt to the good too. His thoughts runne in a marvelous hurry one upon another, and makes the Soule unfit to doe any good to others; or to receive any good from others. Here is the cause: when God hath opened your eyes, and the wrath of God first began to pursue you; then you could have been content to fall into a river, and to make away your selves: Now, what if God will have you beare his hand, and will not give you grace yet; why doe you quarrell against God? Oh, sit down and

betweene a heart truly humbled, and a discouraged heart. And the difference appears in two things.

The Soule thinks it doth marvellous well to be thus discouraged, and that there is no other Humiliation but this. Know therefore this double difference.

The differences between a heart humbled, and a heart discouraged.

First, This Humiliation leaves the Soule more calme and better able to undergöe a light blow when it hath borne this. Whereas after discouragement the Soule is more full of trouble, and more unable to beare any trouble, because it hath funke under this: If the Lord denies to the humble Soule that which he would have, it makes him more able to beare the want of any thing: but the discouraged Soule flies off, and is lesse able to beare the hand of God in the want of any thing. Humiliation seasons the vessell, and makes it more wide, and more fit to hold liquor, but, discouragement cracks the vessell, and makes that it will hold nothing at all. And, humiliation is like the Tentures that stretcheth the cloath, and makes it more smooth and plaine: humiliation stretcheth the Soule, and makes it more humble, and meeke: but discouragement rends the heart, and makes it more unfit to undergöe that which is laid upon it. As Saint Paul to the *Hebrewes* saith, you have forgotten the exhortation which saith, *My Sonne despise not the correction of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* The word faint, that is, discouragement is spoken of by our Saviour, when he was moved with compassion towards the

Heb. 12. 5.

the people because they fainted, and were as sheepe scattered abroad having no Shepheard. So I say, doe not suffer thy selfe to bee so farre scattered with these troubles, that thy heart be unable to gather up it selfe againe. As it is with some stubborne child, when his father comes to correct him, he snuffes, and falles into a swoone with griefe, whereas an other child is quiet and takes the blow quietly, and goes away contentedly without any manner of fainting. So the heart truly humbled, is like the child that takes the blow quietly; but the discouraged Soule faints, and is not able to beare the hand of God in this kind.

Matth.9 36.

Secondly, the second difference is this. As Humiliation ever leaves the Soule calme and quiet, after the hand of God hath beene upon it: so it makes the Soule more ready, and puts a kind of abilitie, and cheerefulnesse in attending upon God in any service, without any hankering after his owne ends, and without this quarrelling, and this drawing backe from the Lord. So, that because hee hath borne the hand of God, therefore it is much more ready that the Lord should dispose of duties, and the successe of them; seeing it hath found God going out with him heretofore; and he saith, the truth is, sometimes the Lord did deny mee that mercy which I desired, and blessed be God for it, for by this meanes I found my proud heart humbled and brought downe; therefore if God will have mee doe any dutie, I will doe it, and if hee cast shame and disgrace upon me in it, I

The second difference.

am contented. This is a heart truly humbled: but, the discouraged Soule not receiving that strength and assistance in his duties that he would have, hee is marvellous untoward, and unwilling to come to the like service any more. For feare hee want successe, and shall not be able to beare the want of it. Humiliation (as it were) levels the heart, that the Lord Iesus may take place there; but this discouragement deludes the heart, and makes it more unfit for Christ. *Iohn Baptist* was sent to prepare the way for Christ, that every valley might bee fill'd, and every mountaine and hill brought low. The high way wherein Christ went is the heart, and the ditch or valley, was the desperate discouraged heart; and this fainting of heart unfits the way for Christ, as well as the mountaines and hills. As, Humiliation levels the heart, and makes it fit for Christ, so this discouragement delves and unfits the Soule to be quickned, and to give way to a Saviour, and to entertaine him. Humiliation takes off the knottinesse of the heart, and makes it runne faster in the way of Gods Commandements, but discouragement hangs a backe byas upon the Soule, that, as a backe byas holds a boule that a man cannot make it run right to the marke: so this discouragement is like the backe byas, and thats the reason why a discouraged heart comes so weakely to holy duties, as to conference, fasting, and the like. If a man goe to fasting, and prayer privately, if God give him not that successe that he would, and he cannot doe it as he desires; oh, how hardly is he drawne to it againe: but

Luke 3 4.

but the humbled Soule saith, blessed bee God, though I had not that strength, and that successe that I desired, yet if the Lord shall call me to the like duties, I will goe againe though I cannot doe as I would. So then, know that there is no ground for discouragement, thats a sin: be contented, yet for ever humbled.

In the next place, the discontented person thinks his way reasonable, and it is warrantable for him now and then to be discontented, and therefore he saith, what would you have a man doe? you know it, and I finde it, that God hath denied me many abilities in those duties which hee calls for at my hands; others have gifts, and power, and abilities; but I am weake and feeble, and can any man, nay, should any man bee contented with this? would you have a man content with his sin? I cannot believe it; thus, because they see such deadnesse and untowardnesse of heart, therefore they conceive that they doe well to bee discontented, and they cast all the fault upon their sinne.

This is a desperate hinderance to all good duties, and therefore I answer it thus. It is true, the Lord allowes it, and warrants it that thou shouldst be displeas'd with thy sinne, not to bee under the power and rule of it, and the humble heart is at the dispose of God, not at the dispose of sinne, but yet bee wise in this case. It is one thing for a man to bee discontented with his corruption, and it is another thing to bee discontented with that condition wherein he is.

Thou mayst (and oughtest to bee) discontented

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with

with thy pride and corruption ; and with thy unbelieve, but, take heed that thou bee not discontented with the weakenes of thy gifts and parts. This is damnable pride ; and it is an argument that thou art not content to bee at Gods finding, and this is thy disease twenty to one.

Now, that thou mayest know whether thy discontentment is for thy corruption , or for thy estate and the weakenes of thy parts; I shew it thus: he that is discontented with his sin, will never sin in his discontentednesse. As we use to say of immoderate sorrow. If any man loose a friend and begin to grieve and sorrow excessively , wee use to say, take heed that you mourne not out of measure. Marke what hee replies ; may not a man sorrow for his sinne ? To this I answer. Art thou sorrowfull for sinne , and wilt thou sinne deeply in thy sorrow and resist the good will of the Lord ? no, thou hast lost a friend, and meanes, and therefore thou mournest.

This is carnall sorrow , and in this thou never sorrowest for sinne , he that is sorrowfull for his sinne, will not sinne in his sorrow; it is for thy condition that thou art so sorrowfull, and discontented. Is it not so with thy Soule ? that thy heart is tossed up and downe in a restlesse disquiet, and art thou not out of the command of thy selfe ? and art thou not hurried up and down in a confused lumber in thy mind , because thou art not fit for duties ? if it be so with thee , then thou doest sinne desperately in thy discontentment.

It is a rule in warre ; If an Army be once scattered

red and dispersed, it will hardly come on againe, because it is put out of ranke and order. So that Soule is discontented with his estate, that is made unfit for duties, and unwelgy in them; that discontentment which unfits a man to be at Gods disposing, it is not the worke of humiliation, but a worke of pride. But it is so with thee, thy discontentment makes thee unable to beare Gods hand; and the want of any thing; and makes thee more unfit for duties; and it is not finne, but for thy weaknesse in gifts, and for thy condition, and therefore thou art possessed with this pride of heart.

The fourth and last note, and triall of the measure of our humiliation is this. If thou wilt know how much pride is in thy heart; then consider how thy Soule stands in regard of the word and truth of God that crosseth thy beloved lusts, and those corruptions to which thy Soule hath cleaved in the time of thy wretchednesse; and in this there are two passages.

The fourth and last note of the measure of our humiliation.

First, see how thy heart behaves it selfe, in regard of the strict commands of God.

Secondly, in regard of the keenest reproofes, and the sharpest admonitions that are suggested into thy heart. See how thy heart is able to beare the reproofe of an enemy, or the admonition of a faithfull Minister of God, when he meetes with thy darling lust. When thy heart comes under these commands, and these reproofes, if thou find thy heart swelling, and bubbling against the truth, and thy heart begins to bee angry with the Word, and Minister and all; then know this, that certainly

certainly so much of this as there is in thy heart, so much thy Soule wants of Humiliation. Is not this pride that the Soule should lift up it selfe against the Lord of heaven? and take the way of Gods Word? and when the frothy franticke heart of a man will beare downe the command of God; and let the command of God fall to the ground, rather then let a corruption fall; is not this infinite pride?

You must take notice of this distemper in severall passages. When the Prophet came to that wicked King *Amaziab*, and said to him, *Why hast thou sought after the Gods of the Heathen, which could not deliver their owne people out of thine hand?* then the King said to him, *Art thou made of the Kings counsell? forbear, why shouldst thou bee smitten?* Then the Prophet said, *I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened to my counsell.* *Amaziab* was naught, and God did deal with him accordingly: So, when Gods word doth meete with mens hearts, and lusts, they are mad; and if it were not for shame, and feare; they would pull a man from the Pulpit.

2 Chron. 25.
15, 16.

Objection. But some may say, can the Saints of God bee thus transported with this vile distemper?

Answer. Yes, this colericke distemper of heart, sometimes creepes in upon a good Soule, but the difference will appeare afterward. *Aza* was a strange man; though Divines hold him a good man: When *Hawani* the Prophet dealt plainly with him, and said, *Thou hast done foolishly in resting*

2 Chron. 16.
7, 10, 11, 12.

ing upon the King of Aram, &c. See how the King entertaines this; *He was wroth with the Seer, and put him in prison*: But see what befell the King. He never saw good day afterward: he fell into many finnes; so the Lord leaves a man to his corruptions; *and after that he fell into a strange disease in his feete*: A strange thing that God should leave a good man in this misery; thus hee dyed; and all this was for opposing the Word of God. This is the nature of a peevish cholericke spirit. The humble spirit doth not quarrell with the Word of God, *but receives it with meekenesse,* Iam. 1. 21. *and with a quiet still spirit*. If any sinne bee revealed, and if any dutie bee commanded, he beares the Word without contending; unlesse it bee now and then, for flesh will have his bouts. Looke home therefore into your owne hearts, and families: how can you beare the checks and reproofes of a Master or Mistris, when they say, you are idle. And so, you wives, when your husbands reprove you; is not all on a light flame? Oh, this is infinite and intolerable pride. You may be good servants, and good women, but it is strange if you be so.

But you will say, how shall a man see a difference in all these? *Objection.*

I say, the Saints of God, and the sinners; the faithfull, and the faithlesse; all have this in their manner and measure; but this corruption is poyson in the heart of a good man. Its true the Saints of God are sometimes discontented and discouraged, but when they see it, they are content *Answer.*

that the Word should worke upon them against it, and they complaine of these wretched hearts, and when they finde this discontentednesse, they quarrell with themselves for it; and a good man would even pull out that heart which quarrels against the Word of God, and he saith, is not this the Word of God by which wee must bee saved? and is not this the power of Christ? and shall I be angry with it? God forbid: But, these distempers are naturall in a carnall man, and though he bee reprovved for a foolish fashion; yet hee will hold his corruptions still; hee puls, and the Minister puls; the Minister would pull downe his proud heart, and take away his corruptions; but hee will have his pride, and foolish fashions, and his corruptions still: then keepe them, and perish with them, and know that thou art a wretched man: the humble heart contends with his corruptions and sinnefull distempers, and hee is not quiet therewith. As it is with a treason; If it bee revealed to a Traitor, and a good Subject: the Traitor keepe it secret, but the true Subject reveales it, and complaines of the Traitor, and the Treason; and calles for justice against them: so it is with a gracious good heart. Hee seeth these cursed distempers, and sometimes finds bubblings of heart against the Word of God, and this shakes his Free-hold; yet, when a good heart seeth the Treason, hee doth not joyne with it, but he complaines to the Lord of it, and saith, Oh Treason Lord; this vile heart will be my destruction; good Lord, reveale it yet more to mee, and take

take away all these corruptions; take thou the possession of me, that I may serve thee here, and bee with thee for ever hereafter. Thus much for the use of Examination.

Is it so that the heart truly humbled, and prepared for mercy is content to bee at Gods disposing, as you have heard? then, what shall we say of those that lift up themselves against the Almighty: this discovers the fearefull condition of every such Soule. It is certaine, the haughtie Soule is furthest of all from Salvation; how proove you that? hee that is furthest of from Humiliation, he is furthest off from the beginning of grace heere, and from perfection afterward: the gate of grace is meerely here; for, except you become as little children, that is, except you bee humbled, you cannot enter into the Kingdome of Heaven; a proud heart is farre from grace now, and from happinesse in the end of his dayes. For the discovery of this mans misery, let mee lay open foure particulars: and I would have my selfe and you to consider them, that our proud hearts may be pull'd downe.

First, Pride is professely against God, and is the most directly contrary to the whole being of God, and that in the whole man.

Foure degrees of a proud mans misery.

Indeed, all finnes are nothing else, but a kind of crossness to the Lord of Hosts, and a kind of thwarting of some Attribute or other in God: As, falshood crosseth the Truth of God, impatience crosseth the patience of God; and injustice, crosseth the Iustice of God: So that, these

Pride opposeth God.

finnes goe against the Almighty in their measure, some against one Attribute, some against another: but a proud heart, smites at the whole Essence and Being of God: Nay, hee doth as much as in him lyeth, labour to take God out of the world; and he would be God himselfe, and have no God but himselfe: The Lord doth principally Attribute two things to himselfe, which can bee in none but himselfe. God is the first of all causes, and the last End of all. All things were created by him for himselfe; Hee made all by his Will, and Wisedome; and by his Wisedome, and Providence, he governes all for himselfe. Before any thing was, God was, and all must returne tribute of praise, and thanksgiving to God. A man may bee like God in mercy, and in Iustice, though not so perfectly, yet sincerely; and a man may be like God in other of his glorious Attributes, but God onely is first and last. If it bee a creature, then it was made: but here is the venome of a proud heart, he would be first and last. He doth all by his owne power, and hee will promote his owne praise in all that he doth. As the great King *Nebuchadnezzar* saith, *Is not this great Babel that I have built, by the might of my power: I built it, there is the first, for the honour of my Majestie, there was the last. So, it is not the wisdome, and pleasure of God that must stand; but his owne proud heart: it must not be what God commands, but what he would have; all of a proud man is against the Almighty.*

Dan. 4. 30.

The Saints of God have wondred that the Lord

Lord is able to beare a proud man that thus out-braves God in regard of his speciall prerogatives; it is a wonder that God sends not some lightning from heaven and even stamp them to powder, and send them downe packing to hell suddainely, I take this to be the siane of the divells that are now chayned up in eternall darknesse, untill the judgement of the great day, nay, I take this pride of a mans Spirit, of his minde, his reason, his will and affections, to bee another old man of sinne. Drunkenesse is a lymme of this old man, and so is adultery and other sins, but pride is (as it were) the old man it selfe.

This is the brooder, the Spawne and the very mother from whence the sinne against the Holy Ghost growes, and there wants nothing but the illumination of the truth to come in upon the heart; when a mans understanding is enlightned, and this Illumination comes upon the heart, and hee is violently carried against the truth with indignation, this is the sin against the holy Ghost.

Seconly, as Pride is opposite to God himselfe, so it is opposite to the covenant of grace, beleive and live; for the truth is, that which we call infidelitie and the ingredients of it, are pride; as the Apostle saith. *Where is boasting then? it is excluded, by what Law? by the Law of workes? no, but by the Law of faith.* If there bee beleiving, then away with carnall reasoning and with pride.

Therefore I may say by collection, if faith exclude all boasting, then pride or boasting opposeth the covenant of faith. Faith is excluded by

2.

Pride opposeth
the covenant of
grace.

Rom. 3. 7. 73

Habak. 2. 4.

this pride of a mans spirit; and by his swelling of heart: and the holy Prophet *Habakkuk* saith, *the Soule that is lifted up in himself is not upright within him*, hee that swells and bubbles up in his heart, and puffes up himselfe against the Word of God, he hath no upright spirit within him, but the just man shall live by his faith; above all, see that place in *Esay*, *hearken to mee all you stout hearted ones of the world which are farre from righteousnesse*. Let me speake to all you stout hearted men and women that are here this day; you that swell against the truth of Christ, and will not come under the power of Gods ordinances, you are farre from righteousnesse. The further you are gone in this sin, the further you are from the righteousness of God. A stout hearted man is a thousand miles from righteousnesse.

Esay 26. 12.

Drunkards and adulterers are far enough from it, but a proud man is (as it were) 20. hundred thousand miles from it; hee is far from the covenant of faith.

Faith goes out for all that it hath to another, it reacheth up to heaven for all; it wants meate and nourishment, and therefore it goes to Christ for all; and pride onely rests upon it selfe for all; faith gives the glory of all that it hath to another, but pride takes all the glory to its selfe. Faith goes to another for strength in what he doth, but pride rests upon it selfe for strength: So that, though all sinnes hinder the worke of Faith, yer, pride hinders it more then any thing. You that thinke it a brave matter to be proud; and you must

not

not buckle to the Minister, and you must do what you list, you are stout-hearted men; but you are farre from believing men. The more faith, the lesse pride; and the more pride, the lesse faith.

Thirdly, As pride opposeth God himselfe, and as it opposeth the covenant of grace, so it followes from the two former, that the proud Soule upon these conditions (that it is in) shall never receive any grace from the Lord. Set your hearts at rest for that. You may swell, and lift up your selves, but if ever you receive the worke of grace, and mercy upon these termes; I will bee your bond-man for ever. For, he that is professely contrary to the grace of God, that gives all, and hee that is contrary to the covenant of grace by which all is conveyed; let him set his heart at rest, for ever receiving any mercy. The Lord himselfe is not able to endure the sight of a haughty spirit; he cannot looke upon him, much lesse will he live with him. Hee beholds the proud man a farre off, hee drives a proud man farre from heaven. The Lord deals by a proud man, as a man doth that is carried with indignation against his enemy, he wil not looke upon him : So it is with the Lord, hee will not be within the ken of a proud man, and if the Lord doe come neere a proud man, wo to him that he doth so. The Lord resists the proud. Hee whets all the sharpest arrowes of his vengeance, & shoots them all against a proud man. You broken hearts consider this. The Lord gives grace to the humble, but the proud man must bee content with his portion, he shall be resisted, not received; he

3.

A proud soule
is farre from
mercy,

Psal. 138.6.

he shall bee resisted, not converted ; nor saved, nor sanctified. He may bid farewell to all grace, hee shall never have it upon those termes : and as God intends no good to him, so a proud man comes not within the scope of mercy, nor of that redemption which Iesus Christ hath wrought and purchased. Christ came not to call the righteous, that is, them that looke loftily in regard of what they do. You stout hearted people, thinke of it. The Lord Christ came not to call you. The devill calls, and you may goe to him : but Christ came to call and save the poore broken hearted sinners. It is said of Christ, *That he was annoynted of the Lord, to preach the glad tidings of the Gospel, to whom? to the meeke, &c.* You meekened Soules shall heare good newes from heaven. But there is not any one sillable of one promise in all the Gospel, that any proud spirit can conceive to belong unto him. If I could seperate all the good from the bad, I would have the good to stand by, and heare these good newes that I have for them; & if you proud hearts will come in and yield, they may be yours too: You that tremble at Gods Word, and are willing to doe what God shall command; if there be any such here this day, as I doubt not but there are many, then know, that the Sonne of man came to seeke and save you; it is good tidings. Nay, in the Lord Iesus Christ are all the Treasures of wisdom, and knowledge, and out of this fulnesse of holinesse, and happinesse, hee fills all your meeke hearts, and hee will give all grace according to your necessities; here is newes of salvation,

Esa. 61. 1, 2, 3.

vation, life, and comfort from heaven. But to whom is it? Christ came to seeke, and save them that are lost: that is, them that are lost in their owne apprehension; but the proud man was never lost in himselfe. A lost man in the Wildernesse is content to be guided into his right way: but the proud man saith, he will be filthy and fashionable still, therefore he was never lost, and Christ never came to seeke nor save him.

All the meanes of grace that God gives, will never benefit a proud man. So that now, it is as possible, nay, more possible for heaven and earth to meet together, then for a proud man to come to heaven, except God give him a heart to stoope.

No man can receive benefit by the Word, except he be under the power of it; if the wax be not under the Seale, how can it receive any impression?

As the Apostle saith, *They were delivered into the forme of that doctrine propounded.* Rom. 6. 17.

The forme of the Gospel tooke place in their hearts. There is no Soule can get any benefit by the Gospel, but he must receive what it reveales, and what it commands, hee must doe; and what it forbids, hee must labour to avoyd; but a proud heart is above all means, and therefore the word will not, nay, it cannot worke savingly on him. As those wicked ones said, *Our tongues are our own we ought to speake,*

who is Lord over us? Psa. 114.

What reproofe shall awe me, saith a proud heart, I will be led by my own lusts? Your owne reason leades you, and your owne wills rules you; your owne minds, and your lusts; and what your hearts will have, they must have.

You stout hearted ones that are resolved not to yield, nor to come under the grace of God: you will not have your affections framed, nor made more teachable; then, seeing you will not be taught, be for ever deluded; goe your way, and be for ever hardned; and for ever cast off from the presence of God, and goe downe to the bottomlesse pit; you will have your owne wills, therefore goe to your owne places, for that is all you can have. You that are the faithfull of God, and know any such, mourne for them.

4.
A proud mans
end is excec-
ding fearefull.

Fourthly, againe, the destruction of a proud man is both certaiue, exceeding heaue, and it is like to be marvellous fearefull. There is nothing to be expected and hoped for, but totall ruine, and that suddenly, and unconceivable to every proud spirit, that beares up it selfe against the blessed God of heaven. Let mee open it thus. A proud man is marked out for Gods Iudgements, and is made (as it were) the white against whom all the arrowes of his vengeance are fully bent. When *Amaziah* would needs out bid the Prophet in his advice; and said, forbear, *Why shouldst thou bee smitten?* I will forbear. (saith the Prophet) but know what shall befall thee, *I know the Lord hath purposed to destroy thee, because thou wilt not hearken to my counsell.* You that are acquainted with your stout-hearted husbands, and wives, and friends, and know how your children bandy themselves against the blessed truth of Christ; goe in secret and bemoane their estates, and pray for them, that if it be possible, destruction may be prevented: goe

2 Chron. 25.
15, 16.

goe in secret and say, it is my husband, or my wife, or my child, that yields not to the direction of the VVord, and therefore howsoever wee may live a while together, yet I know God hath decreed to destroy him, and her. Thinke of this with your selves you that are proud, and say, If I will not be exhorted, then I shall be destroyed; I cannot avoyd it. Oh, me thinks if every proud spirit, would write this upon the palmes of his hands, and upon the tester of his bed, that he might see it wheresoever he goes; how would his heart sinke within him. When thou goest abroad, say, for ought I know I shall never return home, God hath decreed to destroy me. And when thou lyest down think thus, for ought I know I shal never rise more. It is not the word of man, but of the Almighty. When the Lord would (as it were) frame a path for destruction, hee sends a proud heart. If once the Lord intend to destroy a People or Nation, he gives them over to pride of heart. *The sonnes of Ely did not hearken to the voyce of their father, because the Lord meant to destroy them*: hee gave them over to proud hearts. Nay, the proud Soule is not onely the ayme of Gods wrath, but as the Lord determines destruction for him; so, he brings destruction first upon him. When the Citizens said, *Wee will not have this man to rule over us*, then the King was wroth, and said, *bring hither those mine enemies, and slay them before me, &c.* There was no delay, nor no mitigation of the punishment to be granted. Oh thinke of this, all you proud spirits. Indeed, the Lord will con-

1 Sam. 2. 25.

Luk. 19. 4 27.

found all the wicked in the Day of Iudgement, but he will execute even the fiercest of the Vials of his vengeance against a proud man; and when the Lord shall say, where are those wretches mine enemies? then the Ministers of God shall come in and say, this man was a drunkard; and this man an adulterer; Yes (saith the Lord) I will plague them anone, but, where are those mine enemies? those stout-hearted men and women, that hated to be reformed? let me see those damned and destroyed for ever. And for ought I know, God hath a strange indignation in store for them. Nay, it shall be so executed upon a proud man, that there shall bee no relaiming of it, and God will not be perswaded to pity him. *They shall call upon mee* (saith the Text) *but I will not answer, they shall seeke mee early, but they shall not finde mee.* So that, it is no wonder though a company of rebellious wretches have no comfort upon their death-beds, and though a thousand divels seaze upon them, and hurry them downe to hell, it is no wonder, I say; cry and call they may, but God will not heare them: Nay, the Lord will laugh at their destruction, and mocke when their feare commeth; It is a grieffe for a man to be in misery, but to bee laughed at, that is a plague of plagues. But, to have mercy rejoyce in the destruction of a man, this makes the plague out of measure miserable.

If any man say this is false doctrine, and this is too sharpe and too keene. Brethren, we dare doe no other, and we can doe no lesse, and you had better heare of it now while you may prevent it, then

PROV. 1. 26, 27,
28.

then to heare of it, and feele it hereafter when there is no remedy. But, here is the maine wound of our Ministry, you will not stoope nor yield to our Ministry. We speake not in wrath and anger, (as you imagine) but in mercy; wee now preach against a proud heart, that you may be humbled, and finde mercy, and so be comforted and saved for ever. Therefore take your owne shame, and the Lord prevaile upon those hearts, which word and counsell cannot worke upon. And the Lord now fit you for mercy, that you may receive mercy from the Lord. That is all the hurt wee wish you. Oh, that you would so heare of these plagues that you might never feele them. The Lord hath an old grudge against a proud heart. Go away you proud hearts, feare and tremble. When you are gone from the Congregation, do not say, What if he say so, we fare well enough yet, & we see none of all these judgements, and all this winde shakes no corne: no, no, once stoope and come in, and take the yoke of Christ, and the Lord make it easie. Goe in secret and reason thus, good Lord, have not I onely lifted up my selfe against man, like my selfe; but against God, and against his Ordinances? and hath God yet shewed me mercy in sparing of me? and it is yet mercy that I may bow my body, though I cannot bow my proud heart: oh what mercy is this! You wives, thanke God that yet he hath spared your husbands, and that yet they have breath and being here: pray to God, that they may lay about them for humble hearts, that so they may finde mercy against the evill day.

Our God is very merciful, but it is no contending with him. Did ever any man provoke the Lord and prosper? Come in therefore, shame your selves, that the Lord may humble you now, and and shew mercy to you hereafter.

Use. 4.

The last Use is for exhortation: You see the woe and misery of a proud spirit. What remains then, onely this; bee exhorted, as you desire to finde favour with God, and to receive mercy from him, now be content to be at his disposing. Walke in this way, and ayme at this marke; strive hard for it, and put forth the best of your abilities, that you may get humble hearts. You must not thinke that every lazie wish, and every desire will serve the turne; and that it will be enough to say, is it so that a proud heart is so farre from heaven? I would I had an humble heart and so forth. You must not thinke that God will bring you to heaven before you be aware of it, and that a humble heart will drop into your mouthes. The Saints of God have alwayes had it before they received Christ, and thou must have it too, if ever thou wilt have him, therefore make it a chiefe part of thy daily taske to get it; *And suffer not thine eyes to sleepe, nor thine eye lids to slumber, nor the temples of thy head to take any rest, before thou hast this gracious disposition of spirit.* You see the price, the worth and excellency of this blessed grace, doe not now let this grace lye lay, cast it not into a bye corner; but in all your desires covet this, and in all your hunting up and
downe

downe after commodities , prize this more then all, and labour to get it above all.

I know one man hath his eye upon the world, and another on his pleasures, and every man saith, what shall wee eat, and drinke , and wherewith shall we be cloathed ? but doe not thou say, how shall I be rich, or honourable, but how shall I get this humble heart ? What is that to thy Soule, that thou art rich and a reprobate ; and that thou art honourable and damned. If thou bee once humbled ; then thou art past the worst. It is the choiseft good, and the chiefe of thy desires should be for an humble heart. Now to draw our hearts to this, there are three considerations that may be seasonable, and serviceable to this end. And they are these.

First, Consider, that it is possible to have an humble heart.

Secondly, Consider the danger if you have it not, I will not give a rush for all that you can doe without it, though you live *Methuselabs* dayes.

Thirdly, Consider the exceeding benefit that will come by this grace.

For the first , It is possible for any Soule pre-^{r. Motive.}sent (for ought I know or that he knows) to get an humble heart. This may be a provocation to us, to set upon this dutie. If a man had no hope to get this desire, he would have no heart to use any meanes for it. A man had as good sit still, as rise up and fall, as the Proverbe is. But, seeing it is possible, why may not thou, and I, or any man here get an humble heart ? and therefore seeke to the Lord

Lord for it, and say, there hath beene many as proud hearts, and as stout as mine (though I have beene like a divell for my pride) yet they have had this grace, and therefore (Lord) why may not I have it as well as they? who knows but God may give me an humble heart too? though my heart be now stout, and stubborne, and rebellious, yet Lord, I see no command that forbids mee not to expect this mercy, and I see no truth that excludes mee; no, the Lord saith in his command, humble your selves under the mightie hand of God. Yea, the Lord hath appointed meanes for the working of this grace, and hath ever blessed those meanes for the good of others, and why not me Lord? Lord, hast thou blessed these meanes to others? and made them stoope and yield, why wilt thou not blesse them to mee too Lord? who knowes but God will doe it for mee, as well as hee hath done it for others?

Therefore goe thou to God, and say, The truth is (Lord) I confesse this haughtie and this rebellious heart of mine will not come downe, it is not in mans power to pull downe my proud heart: No, it is not in the power of Angels to humble a proud heart: Lord, now take this stout heart, and humble it, and doe what thou wilt with it; didst thou not tame the heart of *Manasses*, that Witch and bloud-sucker that made the streets of *Ierusalem* to swim with bloud? didst not thou humble him? and didst not thou bring downe the proud heart of that sturdy Iaylor? and didst not thou tame the heart of proud persecuting *Saul*? Didst

no thou make him come creeping in upon his knees? Lord, thus thou hast done; Lord, humble me too. Thus importune the God of heaven. Nay, presse God with his promise, and with that engagement whereby hee hath tyed himselfe. *The day of the Lord of Hosts shall bee upon every one that is lifted up, and that is proud & lofty,* (saith the text) *and hee shall be brought low, and upon all the Cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the Oakes of Bashan.* That is, upon all mightie, vile, sturdy, and unreasonable men; and what then? they shall be brought full low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. The day of the Lord shall be upon all flesh; presse God with this promise, and entreate the Lord to remember it, and say, Lord make all those sturdy hearts yield. Oh that this may be the day, and that I may bee the man, and that my heart may be the heart, that thy mercy and grace may onely be admired and wondered at. Thus you see, that God may doe as much for you, as he hath done for others; and it is possible to get an humble heart, therefore labour for it.

Secondly, as it is possible to get an humble heart, ^{2. Motive.} so, consider, that if you mistake your selves, and faile here, the danger is wonderfull desperate, and fearefull; and therefore, use so much more care and diligence, not to be deceived therein. If you misse here, never looke to be saved nor recovered hereafter. Misse now, and you are undone for ever, its as much as your soules be worth: as your Humiliation is, so your Faith, so your Sanctification,

and your obedience will be. If that be nought, all will be nought. It is observed by Philosophers, and Physicians, that if there be any fault in the first digecture, it cannot be amended in the next, if the stomacke digest the meat ill, the Liver can never make good blood: So a wound here, can never be amended. If the bottome and foundation of a building, bee not sound and substantiall, though the frame bee never so neate and handsome, yet there is no mending of it, it must be al puld down, and the ground-worke made more sure, and therefore, when men set up some maiae pillars to uphold a house, they digge deepe and low, and set them strong: So, if this worke of humiliation be not deepe and low enough, all the frames of a mans profession will fall downe, there is no mending of it. If the foundation of the house be sound, though the thatch and spars flye off, there is some helpe: but if that be nought, the house will downe whatsoever the other bee: So, many weakenesses may be succoured, and the heart may be sustained under them all, if this worke of humiliation bee good; but if a man once prove false here, thy faith and obedience will be nought, and the Spirit of God will never dwell in thee, nor quicken thee.

Matth. 7. 13. See what our blessed Saviour saith, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate, &c.* This gate, or this entrance into life, is Humiliation of heart. When the Soule is loosened from, and bids farewell to sinne, and himselfe, then the gate is opened. And as it is in other wayes; If there be but one way or gate into an house, and the traveller misseth that gate, hee looseth

looseth all his labour, and must go back again: but if he once get in at the gate, he is safe enough then. So it is here, There is a most narrow way of Gods Commandements, and there is but one way or gate into this happinesse, it is narrow, and a little gate; and a man must be nothing in his owne eies, and if you misse this gate, you loose all your labour, and shall never come to Salvation. If a man could heare and pray all his dayes, yet, if his heart be not humbled, he, and his profession shall goe to hell together. In Saint *Matthew* the conclusion is very peremptory; when the Disciples were contending who should be highest; Christ set a childe in the midst of them, and said, *Except you become as little children, you cannot enter into the Kingdome of heaven.* You may doe any thing with Infants, and all that they have to do, is to cry. Valesse you have humble hearts, you cannot enter into heaven. He doth not say, You cannot be great men, or, you cannot goe farre into heaven; but he saith, *You cannot enter.* So then, the danger being so great, and the mistaking so full of hazard, and seeing it is possible to have it, therefore let us use all diligence to make this worke sure.

Matth. 18. 3.

Thirdly, consider the marvellous good that God hath promised, and which hee will bestow upon all that are truly humbled. And let all these bee as so many cords to draw us to looke for this blessed frame of heart. Wee have need of all the motives in the world. I know it is a hard matter for a man to lay downe himselfe, and his parts and all his priviledges in the dust; I say, it is marvel-

3. Motive.

lous irksome and tedious to the nature of a carnall man ; but, it will quit all his cost in the end. When we shall taste of those sweet benefits that come by an humble heart, and have gotten Iesus Christ; and mercy from him : then it will never repent us that wee have spent so many teares, and made so many prayers, and used so many meanes to pull downe the pride of our hearts ; Oh breshren, thinke of it, See and consider the admirable benefits, and the exceeding great good that will come to you thereby. The good things that come by a heart that is truly humbled, they are specially foure, and with those the truth and substance of whatsoever the heart can crave and desire.

The first benefit of an humble heart, is this, by this meanes wee come to bee made capable of all those riches of the treasure of wisdome, and grace, and mercy that are in Christ : and not onely of the blessings for a better life, but of all things in this life so farre as they are good for us.

First, wee are made capable of all those treasures of wisdome, grace, and mercy that are in Christ, and for this cause was Christ sent to preach glad tidings to the meeke as you heard before. All the Gospel, and all the glad tidings of it doe belong to an humble Soule. And the Prophet *Malachy* saith, *Behold, I will send my messenger to prepare the way before mee, and the Lord whom you seeke shall suddenly come into his Temple. Iohn Baptist was Christs harbenger, and he made way for Christ, and when the way was prepared, Christ came immediatly : We are the Temples of the holy Ghost* (saith

Malac. 3. 1.

the Apostle.) Now, if the heart bee once prepared and humbled, looke then immediately for Christ. Are you not content to have Christ dwell in your hearts? If you will be humbled, and so prepared, there is neither want of love, nor speed on his part. This should marvellously lift up the heart of every man, to seeke for this blessed grace. If thou art truly humbled, care not for the love of men; the love of Christ will satisfie thee. And though thy father and mother cast thee out of doores, and thy husband tumble thee out of his bed, yet if thou be truly humbled, Christ will be in stead of father, and husband, and all comforts to thee. God hath but two thrones, & the humble heart is one: So the Text saith, *I dwell in the high* Esa. 57. 15; *and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, &c.* If the Lord Iesus come to dwell in thy heart (and that he will do) if thou be truly humbled) then certainly he will provide for thee all needfull comforts for this life. See what Ze- Zeph. 2. 3. *phany saith, Seeke yee the Lord all yee mecke of the earth, which have wrought his judgement, seeke righteousness, seeke meekenesse, it may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lords anger.* When all things threatened desolation and destruction; see who they were that had safety promised, onely the meeke.

But some will say, Is it not better for a man to *Objection.* be proud with the proud, and to play the Beare amongst Beares, and the Lyon amongst Lyons, and to shift for one?

No (saith the text) *seeke meekenesse.* The humble *Answer.* Soule may take this to himselfe as his part and

portion: If there should be desolation amongst us as there is in *Bohemia*, in the *Palatinate*, and in other Countries, the humble Soule shall be hid. When the mightie tall trees are blowne down by strong winds, the little shrubs may be shaken a little, but they stand still; they are safe and sure, when the mightie Oakes are either horribly shaken, or puld up by the rootes: So, if ever you will seeke safetie and deliverance, seeke meekenesse, and then you shall be hidden. When the proud heart shall be weltering in his blood, the Lord will provide a shadow to succour, and comfort you. If Christ dwell in your hearts, he is bound to all reparations.

2. Benefit.

Secondly, as Humiliation of heart doth estate a man into Christ, and his merits, and all provision in this kind; so, it gives him the comfort of all that good which hee hath in Christ. There are many that have a right to Christ, and are deare to God, and yet they want much sweet refreshing that they might have, and as the Proverbe is, They never see their owne, because they want this Humiliation of heart in some measure. To be truely humbled is the next way to be truely comforted. *The Lord will looke to him that hath an humble conscience heart, and trembles at his word*, that is, an humble Soule, a poore Soule, a very beggar at the gate of mercy; the Lord will not onely know him (for hee knowes the wicked too in a generall manner) but hee will give him such a gracious looke, as shall make his heart dance in his breast; thou poore humbled Soule, the Lord will give thee a

Esay. 62.8.

glympse of his favour when thou art tryed in thy trouble, and when thou lookest up to heaven, the Lord will looke downe upon thee, and will refresh thee with mercy. It is that which God hath prepared as a sweet morsell for his child, he will revive the humble. Though the proud man shall sit and swelter himselfe in his trouble, yet the Lord will not onely bee in the house, and heart of an humble man, but looke to him and revive him, Esa. 57. 15.
 It is the condition to which the Lord hath promised consolation, and this humiliation of heart is the maine terms of agreement, upon which God hath ever shewed mercy: *Behold, I stand at the doore and knocke, if any man heare my voyce and open, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and hee with mee.* Rev. 3. 26.
 As when men sup together and eate in the same dish, it argues a sweet rejoycing in the familiaritie one of another. I know you would faine have much comfort, the Lord now knocks, if you will but open the doore, hee will come into your hearts, and he will bring his owne provision with him; even the sweet cordials of his grace and comfort; and he will refresh you with those consolations which the eye of man hath not seene, and the care of man hath not heard, &c. only the Saints of God shall feele them. *Every valley shall bee filled,* Luk 3. 5, 6.
(saith the text) and every hill shall bee brought low, and the crooked things shall be made straight, and then all flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord. When shall they see it? when those things are done that are there promised. *Iohn Bapstist was to make way for*
 Christ,

Christ, and the text saith, *Every valley shall be filled,* that is, every desperate discouraged heart, and every mountaine shall bee levelled, that is, every proud heart shall bee humbled; and then all flesh shall see the salvation of God; here is the cause why we finde not the assurance of Gods love that wee might and ought to have; there are mighty mountaines of carnall reasonings, and strange mists of discontentment between Christ and the Soule; and these keep off the light of Gods love in Christ, which else would shine in our faces for our everlasting comfort. Now bee humbled, and throw away all those distempers, and then the Lord Iesus who comes with healing under his wings will comfort you, and you shall see the salvation of God. There is a Christ, and comfort in him, if your Soules be humbled, you shall see it, and finde the evidence of it. When the Sunne is neere setting, because there is a mountaine betweene us and it, therefore, wee thinke it is set when it is not; whereas if a man were on the top of it, hee shoule see the Sunne cleare: So it is with all those mountaines of carnall reasonings, they stand betweene the Lord Iesus and thy Soule, and that is the reason why thou seest not the light of Gods countenance shining upon thee.

The third benefit of an humble heart.
 Matth. 23. 12.

Thirddly, we also may have glory in this comfort that we have in Christ; as our Saviour saith, *Whosoever exalts himselfe shall be abased, but whosoever humbleth himselfe shall be exalted.* He doth not say, If such a man & such a woman humble themselves,

themselves,

selves, but the words are universally to be understood; whatsoever thou art, be thou humble, and the Lord shall lift thee up. It is impossible that the exaltation and glory of an humble Soule should be hindred by men, or devils. Let the devell and all his instruments labour to cast shame and disgrace upon thee; nay, bee thy condition never so base and meane in the worlds account, bee thou humbled, and it cannot bee hindred, but that the Lord will exalt thee; the Lord hath promised it, and thou being as thou shouldest be, the Lord will doe what he hath engaged himselfe to. The Lord many times for want of this, leaves men of great parts, and gifts, in the lurch: they fret and are griev'd exceedingly, because such a poore man findes acceptance, and is approved of, and yet no man lookes after them; If you know any such, tell them it is by reason of their pride, they seeke their own honour and not Gods; they are not humbled but seek to exalt themselves, and God wil abase them. Let them fawne and flatter, let them flatter & dissemble never so much, (as most men do to get honors,) yet God wil abase them. And for this cause God blasts one mans endeavors, and withers another mans gifts, and brings him to shame, because he is proud; whereas the humble soule that is content to honor God in his abasement, the Lord will fet up that man in mercy and goodnesse; the Lord will teach the humble in his way. Do: h the Lord care for any mans parts or gifts, or for his honor & respect? No, the Lord hath chosen things that are

Psal. 25. 9.

1 Cor. 1. 28.

2 Sam. 6. 20,
21.

not, that is, things that in the eyes of the world are accounted as nothing, those hath God chosen, to confound the haughtinesse of the hearts of proud men in this kind. See how *David* answered *Mitchell* when she mocked him, and said, *Oh how glorious was the King of Israel this day, &c.* Is not this a goodly matter for the King to doe? See how he answers her, it was before the Lord who chose me rather then thy father and all his house, and commanded me to be ruler over his people, and therefore I will play before the Lord, and if this be to be vile, I will yet bee more vile. Thy father was nought, and thou art so too, and he is gone to his place. The meanest in all the place will honour the humble heart, but though happily the people may feare a proud man, yet they wil never honour him in their hearts.

The fourth
benefit,
Matth. 18. 4.

Fourthly and lastly, we have blessednesse in all that appertaines to an humble heart. *Whosoever humbles himselfe as a little child, shall bee greatest in the Kingdome of heaven;* Hee doth not say, he that is greatest and most loftie may haply be great, but he that is humble, and trembles at every truth of God, and every truth prevailes with him, and every terror awes him, hee shall bee greatest in the Kingdome of heaven. You take it as a disgrace to be reprooved by a servant, or an inferiour; but the humble Soule takes it whatsoever it is, and is willing to bee reprooved by any; and hee that doth thus, shall bee in the highest degree of grace here, and shall bee greatest in the glory of heaven, and
be

be lifted up to the highest pinnacle of glory, the wider and deeper a vessell is, the more liquor it holds; So, Humiliation makes the heart wide and deepe: and as thy humiliation is, so shall bee thy Faith, and thy Sanctification, and Obedience is answerable, and thy Glory shall be suteable. Now to conclude all.

Doe you consider that it is possible to have an humble heart? do you consider the danger if you have it not? and doe you consider the good that comes by an humble heart, and doe you sit still? as hee said in another case. Me thinks your hearts begin to stirre, and say, hath the Lord engaged himselfe to this? Oh then (Lord) make me humble. Mee thinks your countenances say so; The Lord make mee and thee, and all of us humble, that we may have this mercy. Let mee make but this one question to your Consciences, and give mee an answer secretly in your soules; when the Lord shall close up your eyes here, and put an end to your pilgrimage; would you not be content to dwell with Christ in heaven? which the Apostle did account his greatestt happinesse, to bee ever with the Lord; wee shall bee ever with Christ to comfort us, when we shall be no more with sine, to vex and trouble us: would not you be content to bee with Christ? mee thinks your hearts say, that's the end and upshot of all, that's the end why we live, and pray, and heare, that wee may be ever with him. And doe not you meete with many troubles, while you are members of the Church Militant?

The conclusion.

licant ? I know you have sometimes distempers
 without, and troubles without, would you not
 have comfort against them all ? and what would
 you give, that Christ would looke in, and aske
 how your Soules doe, and say, thou art my redee-
 med, and I am thy Redeemer. No, you know, all
 flesh desires it. Would you not bee content to
 have some honour in the Church ? and to leave a
 good name behind you, that the disgraces which
 wicked men cast upon you, may not bee as a blot
 upon your names ? and when you shall bee no
 more, and you shall bid adue to friends, and ho-
 nours, and meanes, would you not be blessed ? and
 though you would be content to bee the meanest
 in the Kingdome of heaven, what would you give
 to be the greatest in heaven ? let me put a condi-
 tion to you ; get but humble hearts and you have
 all. Men, brethren, and fathers ; if there bee any
 Soule here, that is content in truth and sinceritie
 to be humbled, and to be at Gods disposing in all
 duties to be done, do not you make too much hast
 to go to heaven, the Lord Iesus Christ will come
 downe from heaven and dwell in your hearts, hee
 will sit, and lye, and walke with you ; his grace
 shall refresh you, and his Wisedome shall direct
 you, and his Glory shall advance you ; and as for
 happinesse, take no thought for that. Everlasting
 happinesse, and blessednesse, lookes and waites for
 every humble Soule ; Come (saith happinesse)
 thou that hast beene vile, and base, and meane in
 thine own eyes, and in the contempt of the world,

come

come, and be greatest in the Kingdome of heaven. Brethren, though I cannot prevaile with your hearts, yet let happinesse, that kneeles downe, and prayes you to take mercy, let that (I say) prevaile with you. And answer me now, who would not be humbled? If any man bee so regardlesse of his owne good: I have something to say to him, that may make his heart shake within him. But, who would not have the Lord Iesus to dwell with him? who would not have the Lord Christ by the glory of his grace to honour, and refresh them? and that he should set a crowne of happinesse upon their heads? Mee thinkes your hearts should earne for it, and say, oh Lord breake my heart, and humble mee, that mercy may bee my portion for ever. Nay, mee thinkes every man should say, as Saint *Paul* did, I would to God that not onely I, but all my children, and servants, were not onely thus as I am, but also (if it were Gods will) much more humbled, that they might bee much more comforted and refreshed.

The Lord in his mercy grant it. Let all parents labour to have their children humbled, and every master his servant. This will give them cheering of heart in that great Day of accounts: when palenesse comes upon your face, and leannesse to your cheekes, then I know you would leave your children a good portion; then get their Soules truly humbled. Me thinkes it cheeres my heart to consider of it; if a man could get his own heart, and the hearts of all, truly humbled; when he leaves

the world, if he could but say, my wife is humbled, and such a child, and such a child, is humble; how comfortably might he go away, and say, though I go away, and leave wife, and children behind me, poore and meane in the world, yet I leave Christ with them. Brethren, though you care not for your selves, yet care for your little ones, never leave exhorting of them, never leave praying for them, and for your selves too, that you, and they may get these humble hearts. When you are gone this will bee better for them then all the beatea gold, or all the honours in the world.

There are many that have heretofore stood out against the Lord, and they would not come in, nor yield to the conditions of mercy; all those proud, haughtie, and rebellious spirits that have stood out against Gods Truth, his Word, and Ministers, and have stood out long; some twentie, some thirtie, and some fortie yeares, let all such feare and tremble; and now resolve not to stand it out any more; but since the Lord offers so kindly to comfort you, and to honour you upon your Humiliation; Now kisse the Sonne, bee humble, yield to all Gods commands, take home all truths, and bee at Gods disposing. There must be subjection, or else confusion: will you out-brave the Almighty to his face, and will you dare damnation? as you love your soules take heed of it. As proud as you have beene crushed and humbled. Where are all those *Nimrods*, and *Pharaohs*, and all those mighty Monarchs of the World? The Lord hath thrown them

them

them flat upon their backs, and they are in hell this day. Therefore be wise, and bee humbled under the mightie hand of the Lord. It is a mightie hand, and the Lord will bee honoured, either in your Humiliation and conversion, or else in your damnation for ever. Let all the evill that is threatned, and all the good that is offered prevaile with your hearts, and though meanes cannot, yet the Lord prevaile with you: the Lord emptie you, that Christ may fill you, the Lord humble you, that you may enjoy happinesse, and peace for ever.

FINIS.

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