

be called in question for this day's uproar.' I must give an account for idle words, careless praying, and unprofitable mis-spending of time.

3. Improve it to patience under ignominy and reproaches. Thy innocency will appear on thy trial; if in an abject condition, the upright shall have dominion in the morning; afflictions and persecutions will then end, and thou shalt have thy reward: 1 Thes. i. 6, 7, 'And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy in the Holy Ghost, so that ye were examples of all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia;' and, 1 Cor. xv. 58, 'Wherefore, my beloved, be stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.'

### SERMON XVIII.

*Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences—2 COR. v. 11.*

THE apostle is giving an account of his sincerity, zeal, and faithfulness in his ministry. Three things moved him to it; hope, fear and love. Here he asserteth the influence of the second principle.

In the words take notice of two things.

1. The motive and reason of his fidelity in his ministry, *knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*

2. The witnesses to whom he appealeth for the proof of his fidelity and diligence,—(1.) God the searcher of hearts; (2.) The consciences of his auditors, who had felt the benefit and force of the word.

[1.] To God, as the supreme witness, approver, and judge; *but we are made manifest unto God*, he seeth our principles and aims, and with what hearts we go about our work.

[2.] To the Corinthians as secondary witnesses; *and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.* He was confident that he had a witness of his sincerity and uprightness in their consciences. The greatest approbation that we can have from men, is to have an approbation in their consciences. Mark the order; our first desire should be to approve ourselves to God, who is our judge, and then to men; and in doing that, to approve ourselves to their consciences, which is the faculty which is most apt to take God's part, rather than to their humours, that we may gain their respect and applause; next to God the testimony of conscience, next to our own conscience the consciences of others.

1. I begin with the motive and reason of his fidelity: knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men, τὸν φόβον τοῦ Κυρίου—the Vulgar, *timorem Domini*, knowing the fear of the Lord; Erasmus, Beza and our translation, *terrorem Domini*; Grotius, according to the former reading, knowing the fear of the Lord, *i.e.*, the true way of religion,

we persuade men to embrace it. Rather, the apostle understandeth the terror of this judgment; being certain that these things are so, and that such a terrible judgment of Christ will come, we persuade men to become christians, or to live as such as shall speed well then, when others shall be destroyed. He saith plurally, *πείθομεν*, we persuade, as comprising his colleagues, suppose Timotheus and Sylvanus; he and they persuaded men to embrace the faith, and to live as those who are to be judged. For it is to be looked upon,

[1.] As an argument and motive to persuade himself, and his colleagues, to sincerity in their ministry, who were to give an account of their dispensation.

[2.] As an argument and motive to the people for their obedience to the faith.

*Doct.* That the certain knowledge of the terrible judgment of God should move us to persuade, and you that hear to be persuaded, to a careful and serious preparation for it. In managing which point,

1. I shall consider the object. Here is terror or matter of fear offered in the judgment mentioned.

2. The subject, or persons fearing—Paul and his colleagues, together with all the parties who are to be judged.

3. The means. How this fear cometh to be raised in us, or to work on us: 'Knowing.'

4. The effect. Here is persuasion grounded thereon; 'Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.'

*First.* That there is terror, and matter of fear offered in the day of judgment, upon several accounts.

1. As it is an impartial judgment, that shall pass upon all, heathens, christians, apostles, ministers, private persons. This ground is urged, 1 Pet. i. 17, 'If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.' Those who take the Lord to be their father, and themselves for his children, must consider him also as an exact and an impartial judge of all their actions; and therefore with the more care and solicitude carry on the work of holiness. What is respecting or accepting persons in the judgment? It is to esteem one person rather than another for outward advantages, not regarding the merits of the cause which cometh to discussion and trial, as in man's courts, when men are spared for their greatness, dignity, or worldly pre-eminence. But what person may God be supposed to respect, or accept in judgment? Surely none can be so irrational as to think the great or rich can have any pretension to his favour, or merciful dealing, rather than others. No; noble or ignoble, poor or rich, prince or beggar, they all stand upon the same level before God. Well then, the persons who may be supposed to presume upon the indulgence of that day, are such who make a fair profession, enjoy many outward privileges: as suppose the Jew above the Gentile, the christian above the Jew, the officer, or one employed in the church, above the common christian. The privilege of the Jew was his circumcision, the knowledge of the law and outward obedience thereunto, or submission to the rituals of Moses; because they were exact in these things, they hoped to be accepted with God, and to be more favourably dealt with than others.

The privilege of the christian is baptism, the knowledge of Christ, being of his party, and visibly owning his interest in the world; they have eaten and drunk in his presence, he hath taught in their streets, and they have frequented the assembly where he is ordinarily present, and more powerfully present, Luke xiii. 26. It is possible they have put themselves in a stricter garb of religion, forborne disgraceful sins, been much in external ways of duty, given God all the cheap and plausible obedience which the flesh can spare. But if all this be without solid godliness, or that sound constitution of heart or course of life which the principles of our profession would breed and call for, these privileges will be no advantage to him. Well then let the officer come, the apostle, prophet, pastor or teacher, by what names or titles soever they be distinguished, who have borne rule in the church, been much in exercising their gifts for his glory, have taught others the way of salvation; this is their privilege: Mat. vii. 22, 'Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils and in thy name done many wondrous works? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.' Well now, if no man's person shall be accepted, if not for his profession, if not for his office, if not for his external ministrations, surely we ought to be strict and diligent, and seriously godly, as well as others. And if we shall all appear before this holy, just, and impartial judge, we should all pass the time of our sojourning here in fear.

2. It is a strict and a just judgment: Acts xvii. 30, 31, 'He commandeth now all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world in righteousness.' Now God winketh at every man's faults, and doth not take vengeance on them, judgeth the world in patience; but then all men must give an account, those who have refused the remedy offered to lapsed mankind, shall have judgment without mercy. And how terrible will that judgment be, when the least sin rendereth us obnoxious to the severity of his revenging justice! But those who have heard the gospel, and accepted the Redeemer's mercy, shall also be judged according to their works, in the manner formerly explained. There is a remunerative justice observed to them; we must give an account of all our actions, thoughts, speeches, affections, and intentions, that it may be seen whether they will amount to sincerity, or a sound belief of the truths of the gospel, and therefore we should be the more careful to walk uprightly before him: Mat. xii. 36, 37, 'But I say unto you, that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned.' Words must be accounted for, especially false, blasphemous words, and such as flow out of the evil treasure of the heart; and sadly accounted for. For in conferring rewards and punishments, God taketh notice of words, as well as actions, they make up a part of the evidence; certainly in this just judgment we shall find that it is a serious business to be a christian. But those who have owned the Redeemer, must esteem him in their hearts above all worldly things, and value his grace above the allurements of sense, and count all things but dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of their Lord, Phil. iii. 7-9; and glorify him in their lives, 1 Thes. i. 11, 12; and

pass through the pikes: 'To him that overcometh,' Rev. ii. 26; and resist the devil, and subdue the flesh, and vanquish the world. There must be doing, and there must be suffering; there must be giving, and forgiving, giving out of our estates, and forgiving wrongs and injuries; visiting the sick, and clothing the naked, and feeding the hungry; there must be believing, and loving, mortifying sin and perfecting holiness. And this is the trial of those who come under the gospel-covenant; which might be easily proved, if the thing were not evident of itself. Now judge you whether all this should not beget the fear of reverence, or caution at least; which fear of God should always reign in the hearts of the faithful.

God's final sentence is to be passed upon us, upon which our eternal estate dependeth. Therefore the great weight and consequence of that day maketh it matter of terror to us. We are to be happy for ever, or undone for ever; our estate will be then irrevocable. Where a man cannot err twice, there he cannot use too much solicitude. According to our last account, so shall the condition of every man be for ever. What is a matter of greater moment than to be judged to everlasting joy or everlasting torment? Matters of profit or disprofit, credit or discredit, temporal life and death, are nothing to it. If a man lose in one bargain, he may recover himself in another; credit may be wounded by one action, and healed in another, though the scar remain, the wound may be cured. If a man die, there is hope of life in another world; but if sentenced to eternal death, there is no reversing of it. Therefore, now, we, knowing the terror of the Lord, sue out our own pardon, and persuade others to sue out their pardon, in the name of Christ, to make all sure for the present.

4. The execution, in case of failing in our duty, is terrible beyond expression. Because this is the main circumstance, and is at the bottom of all, I shall a little dilate upon it, not to affright you with needless perplexities, but in compassion to your souls, God knoweth. I shall take the rise thus: the object of all fear is some evil approaching; now the greater the evil is, the nearer it approacheth, the more certain and inevitable it is, and the more it concerneth ourselves, the more cause of fear there is; all these concur in the business in hand.

[1.] The execution bringeth on the greatest evil; the evil of punishment, and the greatest punishment, the wrath of God, the wrath of the eternal judge, who can and will cast body and soul into eternal fire. This was due to all by the first covenant, and will be the portion of impenitent sinners by the second: Heb. x. 31, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' Mark, first, obstinate and impenitent sinners do immediately fall into the hands of God; a metaphor taken from one that is fallen into the hands of an enemy who lieth in wait for him, to take full revenge upon him; if he catch him, he is sure to pay for it. Now we are let alone, but then we fall into his hands, and he will be righted for all the wrongs which we have done him. Now, when God shall have an immediate hand in the punishment of the wicked, it will make it terrible indeed. When God punisheth by the creature, he can put a great deal of strength into the creature, to overwhelm us, by hail, locusts, flies, frogs; if they

come of God's errand they are terrible; but a bucket cannot contain an ocean; as a giant striking with a straw in his hand, he cannot put forth all his strength; when God punisheth by creatures, it is like a giant's striking with a straw in his hand. But now by himself, we fall into his own hands. Again observe, it is the living God. God liveth himself, and continueth the life of the creature. God liveth for ever to reward his friends, and punish his adversaries. A mortal man cannot extend punishment beyond death; when they have killed the body they can do no more, Mat. x. 28. We are mortal, and they that persecute and hate us are mortal. But since he liveth to all eternity, he can punish to all eternity. So long as God is God, so long will hell be hell. It is tedious to think of a short fit of pain. In a feverish distemper we count not only hours but minutes; when in such a distemper we cannot sleep in the night, how tedious and grievous is it to us! But what will it be to fall into the hands of the living God? Thirdly, The apostle saith, *ἐὶς χεῖρας Θεοῦ*. The wrath of God is no vain scare-crow, and if anything be matter of terror, the terror of the Lord is so. But, alas, who consider it, or mind this? Ps. xc. 11, 'Who knoweth the power of his anger? According to his fear, so is his wrath.' Who layeth it to heart, so as to be sensible of his own danger, while he is permitted to live? We divert our thoughts by vain pleasures, as Saul cured the evil spirit by music. The delights of the flesh benumb the conscience, and exclude all thoughts of eternity. Again it is called wrath to come, Mat. iii. 7; and, 1 Thes. i. 10. It is so called to denote the certainty, and the terribleness of it. The certainty of it; it will most certainly come upon the wicked; the day is not foretold, but it is a-coming; wrath hovereth over our heads, it is every day nearer, as the salvation of the elect is, Rom. xiii. 4. *A pari*, whether we sleep or wake, we are all a step nearer, a day nearer, a night nearer, to eternity. They that are in a ship are swiftly carried on to their port by the wind, though they know it not; security showeth it is coming on apace: 'Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not,' 2 Peter ii. 3. They sleep, but their damnation sleepeth not. But, secondly, it is called wrath to come in regard of the terribleness of it. There is a present wrath that men suffer, and there is a wrath to come; this is such a wrath, as never was before; present wrath may be slighted, but wrath to come will stick close: Jer. v. 3, 'I have stricken them, but they have not grieved.' There is a senseless stupidity under judgments now, but then men cannot have hard or insensible hearts if they would. Present wrath may be reversed, but men are then in their final estate, and God will deal with them upon terms of grace no more. Present wrath seizeth not upon the whole man, the body suffereth that the soul may be saved, but there body and soul are cast into hell. Present wrath is executed by the creatures, but in the other world God is all in all. Present wrath is mixed with comforts, but there it is an evil, and only an evil, Ezek. vii. 5. There is no wicked man in the day of God's patience but hath somewhat left him, but there they shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, Rev. xiv. 10. It is not allayed and tempered with any mercies. There is a difference in duration; present wrath endeth

with death. The drowning of the world, the burning of Sodom, was a sad thing, if a man had been by, and seen the poor miserable creatures running from valleys to hills, from hills to mountains, from the mountains to the tops of trees, and still the floods increasing upon them; or had heard the screechings, when God rained hell out of heaven, and seen the scalded Sodomities wallowing up and down in a deluge of fire and brimstone; but all ended with death. But this fire is never quenched, and the worm never dieth. Now should man know this, and not persuade, or be persuaded, and take warning to flee from wrath to come? Surely the thoughts of falling into the hands of God should shake the stoutest heart, and awaken the dullest sinner, rouse up the most careless, to use all possible means to prevent it.

[2.] The nearer it approacheth, it should the more affect us. It is but a short time to the general assizes; we live in that age of the world upon which the ends of the world are come, 1 Cor. x. 11; 'Little children, it is the last hour,' 1 John ii. 18. And let us stir up one another, so much the rather as ye see the day approacheth, Heb. x. 25. It cannot be long to the end of time, if we compare the remainder with what is past, or the whole with eternity; but for our particular doom and judgment, every man must die, and be brought to his last account. Now the day of death approacheth apace; the more of our life is past, the less is yet to come; every week, day, hour, minute, we approach nearer to death, and death to us. But, alas! we little think of these things; every soul of us within less than an hundred years, it may be but ten, or five, or one, shall be in heaven or hell. The judge is at the door, James v. 9. We shall quickly be in another world. Now should we hold our peace, and let men go on sleepily to their own destruction, or to suffer men to waste away more of their precious time, before they get ready? It is said, Amos vi. 3, 'They put far away the evil day;' and therefore it did not work upon them—that is, they put off the thoughts of it; for as to the day itself, they can neither put it on, nor off.

[3.] The more certain and unavoidable any evil is, the greater matter of terror. Now it is as certain as if it were begun, and there is no way to escape either trial, sentence, or execution. Solomon saith, Prov. xvi. 14, 'The wrath of a king is as the messengers of death;' because they have long hands, and power to reach us. The wrinkles of their angry brow are as graves and furrows; yet some have escaped the wrath of kings and worldly potentates, as Elijah escaped the vengeance of Jezebel: 1 Kings xix. 2, 3, 'The gods do so to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them to-morrow by this time. And when he heard that, he rose and fled to Beersheba for his life.' But there is no escaping God's wrath, Rev. vi. 16: no avoiding his sight, or escaping the stroke of his justice, Ps. cxxxix. 7.

[4.] If it particularly concern every one of us. A clap of thunder in our own zenith doth more affright us, than when it is at a distance. This did once belong to all, and it doth still belong to the impenitent; and therefore we should take the more care, that we be not of that number; and while we are in the state of trial, we cannot be over confident. I am sure it is a sinful confidence, that is joined with the neglect of the means to shun it. The dreadful consequence of that day to the wicked,

it is in itself a matter of terror to all; and to slight this terror is to turn the grace of God into wantonness; and it cometh either from unbelief, or from a dull, stupid, senseless spirit. And if it produceth not caution and watchfulness, and serious and diligent preparation, it is not a fruit of the assurance of the love of God, but of the security of the flesh. I confess it is a case of conscience, how to make the day of judgment matter of joy and confidence, and matter of terror and caution; sometimes we are bidden to reflect upon it with joy and confidence, so as we may love his appearing, 2 Tim. iv. 8; to lift up our heads, because our redemption draweth nigh, Luke xvii. 28; to rejoice because we shall be partakers of the blessedness promised, 1 Peter iv. 14; at other times matter of fear and terror. These are not contrary; the one is to prevent slight thoughts, which are very familiar with us, the other future perplexities and dejection of spirit; the strictness of our account, the dreadful consequence to those that shall be found faulty, should not discourage us in the way of duty; eternal wrath should not be feared farther than to stir us up to renew our flight to Christ, and to quicken us in his service, who hath delivered us from wrath to come.

*Secondly*, The persons fearing, Paul and his colleagues, together with all the parties who are to be judged. That the unspeakable terror of the Lord is a rational, just and equitable ground of fear, we have seen already; but the doubt is how this could be so to Paul and his colleagues, especially if we consider it mainly, as we ought, with respect to the execution of punishment, or the wrath of God, that shall abide on the impenitent. I answer,

1. To be only moved with terror is slavish. The wicked may out of fear of hell be frighted into a little religiousness, but Paul was moved by other principles, hope and love as well as fear; see the 14th ver., 'The love of Christ constraineth us.' But this among the rest is allowable; it is one of the Spirit's motives to quicken us to fly to Christ, and to take sanctuary at his grace, Heb. vi. 18; to engage us to thankfulness for our deliverance, 1 Thes. i. 10: yea, to stir us up to more holy diligence and solicitude in pleasing God, Heb. xiii. 28, 29. The eternal wrath of God, among other things, doth rouse us up to serve him with godly fear.

2. Though Paul and his colleagues had the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and were assured of his favour, and their everlasting salvation, yet knowing the terror of the Lord, they had a deeper reverence of his majesty, and so afraid to displease him, or to be unfaithful in their charge and trust, and could not endure that any others should do so. Reverence of God, as one able to destroy us and cast body and soul into hell-fire, is always necessary. The fear of reverence remaineth in heaven, in the glorified saints and angels, and Christ presseth us to this fear, Luke xii. 3, 4.

3. We must distinguish between a perplexing, distrustful fear, and an awful, preventive, eschewing fear. A distracting, tormenting fear of hell, or the wrath of God, would weaken our delight in God, and therefore the love of God casts out this fear, 1 John. iv. 18. But now the awful fear, fleeing from wrath to come, this doth not destroy peace of conscience, or joy in the Holy Ghost, but guard it rather. This

only quickeneth us to use those means by which we may avoid so great an evil. Instances we have in scripture. Job, that was sure that his Redeemer lived, Job xix., yet destruction from the Lord was a terror to him, chap. xxxi.; that is, he thought himself obliged to use all those means by which he might shun so great an evil. So Paul; 'We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;—yet, 'knowing the terror of the Lord.'

4. There are great reasons why this terror should have an influence upon us, while we dwell in flesh.

(1.) Because it was once our due, Eph. iii. 2. And though we are delivered from it by God's grace, yet still it is a fearful state, which we cannot sufficiently shun and avoid. (2.) We still deserve it, after grace hath made a change in our condition. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, Rom. viii. 1, yet many things are condemnable. We now and then do those things for which the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience; we deserve that God should say to us, Depart, ye cursed. (3.) It is certainly a great and extreme difficulty to get free from so great an evil, 1 Peter iv. 18. We cannot get to the harbour but by encountering many a terrible storm; and God is fain to discipline us, that we may not be condemned with the world, 1 Cor. xi. 32. I know I shall be saved, but it is a difficult thing to save me.

*Thirdly,* The means; how this fear cometh to be raised in us, 'knowing.' This implieth three things: (1.) A clear and explicit apprehension; (2.) A firm assent; (3.) Serious consideration.

1. A distinct knowledge of this article of Christ's coming to judgment: 1 Thes. v. 2, 'You yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh, as a thief in the night.' It is good not only to know things, but to know them perfectly; for though a man may be saved by an implicit faith, as he knoweth things in their common principle, yet explicit faith and plenitude of knowledge, or seeing round about the compass of any truth, conduceth much to the practical improvement of it; instance in the creation of the world. To know the general truth may make me safe, but a distinct explication thereof maketh us more admire the wisdom, goodness, and power of God. So for providence; it engageth my dependence to know there is a providence, but it helpeth my dependence to know how it is managed for the good of God's children: 'They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee,' Ps. ix. 10. So the doctrine of justification by Christ. The thing is plain in all points.

2. Firm assent: John xvii. 8, 'They have known surely,' ἀληθῶς, indeed or in truth; and Acts ii. 36, ἀσφαλῶς, assuredly, safely, without danger of error. The certainty of faith mightily enlivens our apprehensions of any truth, and makes them more forcible and operative. But usually there is a defect in our assent; hated truths are usually suspected; ministers speak of it coldly, and in jest, as if not persuaded of what they say; and we hearers learn it by rote. Yet this I must say, God hath not only warned the world of wrath in the Old Testament and the New; but also natural light doth so far evidence this truth, that in their serious and sober moods, men cannot get rid



of the apprehensions of immortality and punishment after death. Reason will tell us that God perfectly hateth sin, will terribly punish it; we cannot easily lay aside these fears, nor stifle them in our bosoms, nor sport them away, nor jest them away; when we are alone, or when we are serious, or when we come to die, they will revive and haunt us. But oh, that we were oftener alone, and would resuscitate and blow up these sentiments which lie hid in the heart, and revive our faith about them!

3. It implieth serious consideration; knowing, that is, considering, acting our thoughts upon it; for next to sound belief, to make truths active, there is required serious consideration. Thoughts of hell may keep many out of hell. It is a moral means, which God may bless: it will be no loss to christians to think of their danger before they incur it. They that cannot endure to think of it, or hear of it, discover their guilt, and the security of their own hearts: presumption is a coward, and a run-away, but faith meeteth its enemy in open field: Ps. xxiii. 4, 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.' It supposeth the worst: suppose God should reject me; consider with thyself beforehand, as the unjust steward, Luke xvi., what to do when turned out of doors; how shall I make my defence 'when God shall rise up, what shall I answer him?' Job xxxi. 14; what shall I then do?

*Fourthly.* Here is persuasion as to the effect<sup>1</sup> and fruit of all; which implieth three things.

1. The thing to which they were persuaded. That is not mentioned, but the matter in hand showeth it to be such things as would bear weight in the judgment, and exempt them from wrath to come; such as faith, repentance, and new obedience. Faith in the Redeemer, 2 Thes. i. 10, Heb. vi. 18; repentance, Mat. iii. 19, and Acts iii. 19; new obedience, Heb. v. 9, 2 Thes. i. 8; or a serious coming to Christ, and hearty subjection to him, is the only way to escape that wrath. To these we exhort and persuade you again and again; without these you are obnoxious to the severity of his revenging justice.

2. Earnest zeal and endeavours on the part of Paul and his colleagues, and all that are like-minded with them; they must not only teach and instruct, but persuade: Col. i. 28, 'Warning every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.' He addeth, ver. 29, 'Wherunto I also labour, striving according to his working.' The understanding is dark and blind in the things of God, and needeth teaching. The will and affections are perverse and backward, and they need warning. And therefore we must warn, and teach; warn, and that not in a cold or flaunting manner, as if we were in jest, and did not believe the things we speak of, but with such vigour, and labour, and striving, as becometh those who would present them to Christ, as the travail of our souls, at the last day, and as those who are sensible of the terror of the Lord ourselves.

3. It implieth a being persuaded on the people's part. For all that mind their own welfare will take this warning, and since we must shortly appear before the bar of the dreadful God to give an account

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'as the effect'?—ED.

what use we have made of these persuasions. When God giveth warning, and God giveth time, our condemnation is the more aggravated: Rev. ii. 21. 'I gave her space to repent, and she repented not.' Warning and persuasion, as Reuben; did not I warn you? 2 Cor. vi. 1, 'We beseech you receive not this grace in vain.' God keepeth an account of these warnings, Luke xiii. 7. And the importunity of these pressing convictions which we have had; every request and exhortation made for God will be as a fiery dart in your souls. How fresh will every sermon come into your minds! the melting words of exhortation which you were wont to hear, will be as so many hot burning coals in your hearts, to torment you. It will be easier for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah than for you, Mat. x. 15.

*Use is, to teach us all to apply this truth.* What Paul had spoken in general concerning the last judgment, he applieth to himself. It is not enough to have a general knowledge of truth, but we must improve and apply them to our own use. Men of all ranks must do so.

1. It presseth preachers to persuade men. Oh, how diligently should we study, how earnestly should we persuade, with what love and tender compassion should we beseech men, to escape this wrath to come! How unweariedly should we bear all opposition, and mocks, and scorns, and unthankful returns! How plainly should we rip up men's sores, and open their very hearts to them! How carefully should we watch over every particular soul! How importunate should we be with all sinners, for their conversion, considering that shortly they must be judged! 'Cry aloud, spare not,' Isa. lviii. 1. It is a notable help against a sleepy ministry to consider that those souls to whom we speak, must within a while receive their everlasting doom. When you find a deadness, rouse up yourselves by these thoughts, this will put a life into your exhortations; a sense of what we speak, zeal for the glory of God, and compassion over souls, will not suffer us to do the work of the Lord negligently.

2. To all christians.

[1.] Persuade yourselves, commune with your own souls, Do I know the terror of the Lord? What have I done to escape it? If you would not fall into the hands of a living God, cast yourselves into the arms of a dying Saviour. Hide yourselves before the storm cometh: 'If his anger be but kindled a little, blessed are all those that put their trust in him,' Ps. ii. 12. Seek conditions of peace, while a great way off, Luke xiv. A powerful enemy marcheth against us, especially when you begin to grow negligent, dead-hearted, and apt to content yourselves with a sleepy profession. Paul counted this terror, or matter of fear, to be an help to him; and should not we, who are so much beneath him in holiness? Will you, that must shortly be in another world, will you be careless, and please the flesh, and give up the boat to the stream?

[2.] Do you persuade your family, servants, friends, and neighbours, with your children about it; tell them what a dreadful thing it is; they have a conscience, apt to fear. Dives, in the parable, is represented as desirous of his brethren's welfare, lest they should come into that place of torment: Luke xvi. 27, 28, 'Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house, for

I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' Shall we be less charitable than a man in hell is represented to be? If we have a friend or a child falling into the fire, we save him by violence, though we break an arm or a leg. Your children by nature are children of wrath; pluck them as brands out of the burning.

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## SERMON XIX.

*But we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not ourselves again to you, but give you an occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them who glory in appearance, and not in heart.*—2 COR. v. 11, 12.

THE apostle having proved his sincerity and fidelity in his ministry, now asserts it with confidence;—(1.) By an appeal;—(2.) An apology.

1. An appeal to God, as the supreme judge; and to the Corinthians, as inferior witnesses. And he appealeth to the most impartial and discerning faculty in them, their consciences, who are most apt to give infallible judgment, and to take God's part, and own what is of God.

2. By an apology, or answer to an objection, which might be framed against him, by his adversaries, ver. 12; where, first, the objections were intimated—*We commend not ourselves again to you.* Secondly, His vindication, from the end, the reason why he spake so much of his fidelity and integrity—*But give you occasion to glory in our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them.* Thirdly, A description of the false apostles at Corinth, or those vain-glorious teachers who went about to lessen the apostle's authority: *They glory in appearance, and not in heart.* Let me explain these passages.

[1.] The intimation of the objection; 'For we commend not ourselves again to you.' The adversaries were wont to say upon all occasions, he runneth out into his own praises; which doth not become a modest and a sober man, for boasting is the froth of pride; and how can Paul be excused from pride? This was the objection against Paul, that he did commend himself too much.

[2.] Paul's answer and vindication was from his end. It was not to set forth his own praise, but to arm them with an argument and an answer against the false teachers, whereby they might defend his ministry, and the doctrine they had heard from him; it was not pride and ostentation in Paul, but a necessary defence of the credit of his ministry, their faith and obedience to the gospel depending thereupon.

[3.] The false apostles are described by their hypocrisy and ambition: 'They glory in appearance, and not in heart.' For the opening of this clause, observe, First, That there were false apostles at Corinth, who sought to depreciate Paul, and to lessen the authority of his