

fidelity in all our relations. We that shall live in the clear vision and full fruition of God in Christ, should be other manner of persons.

[4.] In an heavenly manner: Phil. iii. 20, 'But our conversation is in heaven:' either acting for it, or living upon it, or solacing ourselves with it. With delightful thoughts of heaven sweeten your pilgrimage here; be willing to suffer afflictions, if God call us thereunto, patiently. You suffer with Christ; Christ takes it as done to himself: Acts ix. 'Why persecutest thou me?' Fill up your share of the sufferings providence hath appointed for Christ mystical: Col. i. 24, 'Who now rejoice in my afflictions for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church;' 2 Cor. i. 6, 'And whether we be afflicted it is for your consolation and salvation;' and Phil. iii. 10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.'

SERMON XXVI.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.—ROM. VIII. 18.

IN this chapter the apostle speaketh first of bridling lusts, and then of bearing afflictions; both are tedious to flesh and blood. The necessity of taming the flesh is deduced throughout that whole discourse, which is continued from ver. 1. to the end of ver. 17, where he maketh patient enduring afflictions a condition of our glory; 'if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together.' He now showeth us a reason, why we should not dislike this condition; because the good which is promised is far greater than the evil which we fear. Two things nature teacheth all men; the first is to submit to a lesser evil, to avoid a greater; as men will cut off an arm or a leg to save the whole body; the other is, to undergo a lesser evil to obtain a greater good than that evil depriveth us of. If this principle were not allowed, it would destroy all the industry in the world; for good is not to be obtained unless we venture somewhat to get it; upon this principle the apostle worketh in this place,—'For I reckon,' &c.

In the words take notice of—

1. The things compared; *The sufferings of the present life and the glory to be revealed in us.*
2. The inequality that is in them; *They are not worthy.*
3. The conclusion or judgment of the apostle upon the case; *I reckon.*

1. The things compared. On the one side, 'the sufferings of the present time.'

[1.] Mark that, *sufferings* plurally, to comprise all of the kind, reproaches, strifes, fines, spoiling of goods, imprisonment, banishment,

death. Again *of the present time*, to distinguish them from the torments of hell, which maketh up a part of the argument; for if to avoid temporal evils we forsake Christ, we shall endure eternal torments; but the apostle speaketh of temporal evils.

[2.] On the other side, 'The glory that shall be revealed in us.' Every word is emphatical. (1.) Our reward is called glory; in our calamity we are depressed and put to shame; but whatever honour we lose in this mortal life, shall be abundantly supplied and recompensed to us in heaven: 'If any man serve me, him shall my Father honour,' John xii. 26. An afflicted, persecuted people are usually misrepresented and scandalized in the world; but there is a life and state of glory prepared for them in heaven; men cannot put so much disgrace upon them, as God will put marks of honour and favour. (2.) It shall be revealed. This glory doth not appear for the present, it is not seen; it is not conspicuous to the eyes of men; therefore some believe it not, others regard it not; 'it doth not yet appear what we shall be; the world knoweth us not, as it knew him not:' 1 John iii. 1, 2, 'Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Behold, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, and see him as he is.' But it shall be seen, because of God's decree and promise; for the glory is prepared, though it be not revealed. (3.) In us, or upon us, *εἰς ἡμᾶς* when we shall be raised immortal, incorruptible, and we shall be so highly favoured and honoured by Christ, as we shall be at the day of judgment, then this glory is revealed upon us; that is, we shall be possessors of it; we have the right now, but then the possession.

2. The inequality between them: 'They are not worthy to be compared,' *οὐκ ἄξια πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν*; not worthy to future glory, not worthy to be set the one against the other, as bearing no proportion.

3. The conclusion or judgment of the apostle in this case. The word *λογίζομαι* is emphatical, and implieth, that he had weighed these things in his mind; after the case was well traversed, he did conclude and determine upon the whole debate; *rationibus bene subductis colligo et statuo*. The apostle speaketh like a man that had cast up his accounts, well weighed the matter he speaketh of; and then concludeth, resolveth, and determineth, that the sufferings which are to be undergone for Christ are nothing, considering the glory and blessedness which shall ensue.

Doct. That every good christian, or considerate believer, should determine that the happiness of his glorified estate doth infinitely outweigh and exceed the misery of his present afflictions. I shall open the point by these considerations:

1. That counterbalancing temporal things with eternal, is the way to clear our mistakes, or prevent the delusions of the flesh. The apostle observeth this method here and elsewhere: 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'This light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;' and it is necessary; for all our mistakes come by reckoning by time, and not by eternity; but looking to eternity sets us right again: 2 Cor. iv. 18, 'Looking not to the

things which are temporal, but to the things which are eternal.' The flesh is importunate to be pleased with present satisfactions; it must have something seen and at hand; and this tainteth our minds, so that present things bear a big bulk in our eye, but things to come are as a vain fancy; therefore nothing will scatter this mist and cloud upon our understandings, but a due sight of eternal things, how real they are, and how much they exceed for greatness and duration. Then we shall find that time to eternity, is but as a drop lost or spilt in the ocean; as a point to the circumference; and that the honours and dignities of the world, which dazzle men's eyes, are vain and slippery; that riches, which captivate their hearts, are uncertain and perishing; that pleasures, which enchant their minds, are sordid and base, and pass away as the wind; that nothing is great but what is eternal. If wicked men did but consider the shortness of their pleasures, and the length of their sorrows, they would not be so besotted as they are; and if holy men did but consider the shortness of their afflictions, and the length of their joy and glory, it would animate and encourage them to carry it more patiently and cheerfully in all their tribulations.

2. This may be done four ways:

[1.] Comparing temporal good things with eternal good things, that we may wean and draw off our hearts from the one to the other, and so check the delights of sense; as wealth with heavenly riches: Heb. x. 34, 'Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, as knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and a more enduring substance.' Eternal bliss in heaven is the most valuable and durable kind of wealth; all other treasure cometh more infinitely short of it, than wampompage, or the shells which the Indians use for money, doth of our coin and treasure. So to wean us from our sensual delights, the scripture propoundeth to our consideration that eternal and solid joy which resulteth from the immediate fruition of God, Ps. xvi. 11. So to wean us from vain glory, and that we may be contented with the glory that comes from God only, it telleth us of the honour and glory of the saints, John v. 44. All the sensual good things we dote upon are but a may-game or painted show in comparison of what we shall enjoy there.

[2.] Temporal bad things with eternal bad things; so to defeat the terrors of sense. All the sufferings of the world are but as the scratch of a pin or a flea-biting, to that woe, wrath, and tribulation that abideth for every soul that doth evil; no fire like the fire of hell, nor pains like the pains of the worm that never dieth: Luke xii. 4, 5, 'Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell.' Men threaten prisons, God threateneth hell; they can mangle the body, but when they have cut it all in pieces, they cannot reach the soul; if we sin to avoid trouble in the world, we escape at a dear rate. As a nail driveth out a nail, so doth one fear drive out another; temporal sufferings are nothing to eternal: Heb. xi. 35. 'They accepted not deliverance, looking for a better resurrection;' the general resurrection is better than present remission of torments

[3.] Temporal good with eternal evil. Many succeed well in a way of sinning here, live without any remarkable blast and stroke of God's

judgment; but how is it with them in the other world? *Momentum est quod delectat, eternum quod cruciat.* Heb. xi. 25. 'The pleasures of sin are but for a season;' but the punishment of sin is for ever; if we compare the pleasures of sin with the pains of hell, it may be a means to reclaim us from the sensual life. This short pleasure is dearly bought.

[4.] Temporal bad things, with eternal good things. This here, and 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'For our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' A due sight of eternity will soon show us the smallness of all that we can suffer here; and so our afflictions are not matters much to be stood upon, or accounted of; the comparison must be rightly stated, and weighed, and improved by proper considerations.

3. In this last comparison these things are considerable—

[1.] Our sufferings come from men, but our glory cometh from God; now as the agent is, so is the effect; man afflicts as a finite creature, but God rewardeth us as an infinite and eternal being; man showeth himself in his wrath, and God in his love; man in his anger: Isa. li. 12, 'Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man who shall be as grass?' Men soon perish and are gone, and the effects of their anger cease with them; they can do no more than God pleaseth, and their time is limited; they can rage no longer than God pleaseth. But as man showeth himself as man, God showeth himself as God. It is intimated in the general expression of the covenant, 'I will be your God,'—be such a benefactor as a God should be; do us good so as becometh an infinite eternal power; thence are those reasonings: Mat. xxii. 32, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;' Heb. xi. 16, 'But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city.' He will give us somewhat like himself; now what comparison between the wrath of man and the bounty of God?

[2.] Our sufferings are earthly, but our glory is heavenly. As the place is, so is the estate; here both the good and evil is partial, but there both are complete; for here we are in the way, there *in termino*, in our final estate; here a believer's spiritual condition will counter-balance all his outward troubles; his consolation exceed his afflictions: 2 Cor. i. 5, 'For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation doth abound by Christ;' much more his eternal estate. For now we are but in part acquainted with God, but there he is all in all, 1 Cor. x. 28; here we see him in a glass, but there face to face, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Here we have the earnest, there the whole bargain; here a taste, there a full feast; here the beginning, there the consummation.

[3.] Our sufferings are but short, but our glory eternal: 1 Pet. i. 6, 'For a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations;' the trouble is but of short continuance; so 1 Pet. v. 10. 'He hath called you to eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after you have suffered a while.' It is but a little time that we suffer; for God knoweth our spirits are soon apt to fail; he considereth we are but dust. Indeed the Lord useth a difference with his children; some have shorter trials,

some longer ; but they are all but for a season. If they should last for our whole lives, they are but momentary, if compared with eternity. But it is not credible that our lives should be altogether calamitous ; there is no instance either in scripture, or the records of time ; there are intervals of rest, and our enemies cannot trouble us, but when it is permitted of God. But if there were no intermission, yet this life itself is but for a moment, compared with eternity. If you consider that which in these afflictions we most dread, and beyond which the power of the most cruel adversaries cannot reach, death itself ; it is but for a moment ; in the twinkling of an eye we are in eternity ; death cometh in a moment, and it is gone in a moment ; after that, we enjoy eternal rest and peace. Therefore though in our way to heaven we should endure the most grievous calamities, yet since they are but short and momentary, we should submit to them, that we may enjoy so great a good as the vision and fruition of God. *Toleramus brevia, expectamus eterna* ; the sufferings are temporal, the glory is eternal, because it dependeth upon the will of an immutable God, and the everlasting merit of a glorious Redeemer : when either of these foundations fail, your blessedness will be at an end. But these can never fail ; and therefore our glory will be everlasting. Well then, the pain and suffering will be short ; within a little while you will feel it no more than if it had never been ; if the pain be remembered, it will be but to increase your joy.

[4.] As they are short, so they are light. *Leves et breves*. The scripture often joineth them together : 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'This light affliction which is but for a moment.' They are light, just so they are short in comparison of eternal glory ; as of short continuance if compared with eternity, so of small weight if compared with the reward ; eternity maketh them short ; and the greatness of the reward maketh them easy. There are degrees in our troubles ; some of the saints get to heaven at a cheaper rate than others do ; but yet the afflictions of all are light, if we consider the unspeakable glory of the world to come. Indeed we do but prattle when we presume fully to describe it ; for it doth not appear what we shall be, and it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive the great things which he hath prepared for them that love him. But the scripture expressions everywhere show it shall be exceeding great, and also by the beginnings of it. The world is ignorant and incredulous of futurity, therefore God giveth us the beginnings of heaven and hell in this world, in a wounded spirit and the comforts of a good conscience ; these things we have experience of ; we know not exactly what our future condition will be, but the hopes and fears of that estate are very affective ; the fears and horrors of eternal torment, which are found in a guilty conscience, do in part show what hell will be, or the nature of that woe and anguish which abideth for the impenitent : Prov. xviii. 14, 'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity ; but a wounded spirit who can bear ?' The salve for this sore must come from heaven only. So the joys of a good conscience, which are unspeakable and glorious, 1 Pet. i. 8, show that the happiness appointed for the saints will be exceeding great ; for if the foretaste be so sweet, the hope and expectation be so ravishing, what will the enjoyment be ? Besides, God moderateth our sufferings, that they may not be over-long, or over-grievous :

I Cor. x. 13, 'But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' If the trial be heavy, he fortifieth us by the comfort and support of the Spirit, and so maketh it light and easy to us. To a strong back that burden is light which would crush the weak and faint, and cause them to shrink under it; but though God moderateth our afflictions, he doth not abate our glory, that is given without measure: 'A far more exceeding weight of glory.'

[5.] The sufferings are in our mortal bodies, but the glory is both in soul and body. It is but the flesh which is troubled and grieved by affliction; the flesh which, if delicately used, soon becometh our enemy; the soul is free, and not liable to the power of man. Now it becometh a man, much more a believer, to look after the soul: Heb. x. 39, 'We are not of them who draw back to perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul;' *οὐκ ἐσμέν ὑποστολῆς εἰς ἀπόλειαν, ἀλλὰ πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιον ψυχῆς*, implying, that they that are tender of flesh are apostates in heart; if not actually and indeed so, yet in the practice; but those which will purchase the saving of the soul at any rates, are the true and sound believers. The world, which gratifieth the bodily life, may be bought at too dear a rate; but not so the salvation of the soul; they that are so thirsty of the comforts and interests of the bodily life, will certainly be prodigal of their salvation. But a believer is all for the saving of his soul; that is the end of his faith, and labours, and sufferings, and his self-denial. The end of his faith is to save his soul, 1 Pet. i. 9. So much as God is to be preferred before the creature, heaven before the world, eternity before time, the soul before the body; so much doth it concern us to have the better part safe. But yet this is not all; that which is lost for a while, is preserved to us for ever; if the body be lost temporally, it is secured to all eternity. If we lose it by the way, we are sure to have it at the end of the journey, when the body shall have many privileges bestowed upon it; but this above all the rest, that it shall be united to a soul fully sanctified, from which it shall never any more be separated, but both together shall be the eternal temple of the Holy Ghost.

[6.] Sufferings do mostly deprive us of those things which are without a man; but this is a glory which shall be revealed in us. By sufferings we lose estate, liberty, comfortable abode in the world among our friends and relations. If life itself, which is within us, it is only as to its capacity of outward enjoyments; for as to the fruition of God and Christ, so it is true he that loseth his life shall save it, Mat. x. 39, and shall live though he die, John xi. 25; it is but deposited in Christ's hands. But this glory is revealed in us, in our bodies in their immortality, agility, clarity, and brightness; in our souls by the beatifical vision, the ardent love of God, the unconceivable joy and everlasting peace and rest which we shall have when we shall attain our end. Now if we be deprived of things without us; if we be denied to live in dependence on the creature, that we may immediately enjoy God, should we grudge and murmur?

[7.] Our sufferings dishonour us in the sight of the world, but this glory maketh us amiable in the sight of God. For having such a near

relation to God, and being made like him, we are qualified for a perfect reception of his love to us; we love God more in the glorified estate, and God loveth us more, as appeareth by the effects; for he communicateth himself to us in a greater latitude than we are capable of here. Now is the hatred of the world worthy to be compared with the love of the Father? Or should their frowns be a temptation to us, to divert us from that estate wherein we shall be presented 'holy, and unblamable, and irreprovable in his sight?' Col. i. 22. When perfectly sanctified, we love God more, and are more beloved by him.

[8.] The order is to be considered. For look; as to the wicked, God will turn their glory into shame; so as to the godly, he will turn their shame into glory. It is good to have the best at last; for it is a miserable thing to have been happy, and to have had experience of a better condition, and to become miserable: Luke vi. 24. 'Woe to you rich, for you have received your consolation;' and Luke xvi. 25, 'Son, in thy life time thou receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.' The beggar had first temporal evils, and then eternal good things; but the rich man had first temporal good things, and then eternal evil things; as many that do well here in the world, fare ill in the world to come. But now it is otherwise with the godly: John xvi. 20, 'Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.' Our last and final portion is most to be regarded; the christian by temporal trouble goeth to eternal joy; the worldling by temporal glory to eternal shame; a christian's end is better than his beginning, he is best at last; a man would not have evil after experience of good.

4. The comparison, though it be rightly stated and weighed by us, yet it will have no efficacy unless we have faith, or a deep sense of the world to come. For unless we believe these things, they seem too uncertain, and too far off to work upon us. It is easy to reason down our bodily and worldly choice, and to show how much eternal things exceed temporal; but this taketh no hold of the heart, till there be a firm belief of the glory reserved for God's people: Heb. xi. 1, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen;' and 2 Pet. i. 9, 'He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off.' To draw us from things that we see and feel, we need a clear light about things we see not; men are sharp sighted enough in things that concern the present world, but beyond it we can see nothing, but by the perspective of faith; and therefore reason as long as we will, yet the consideration of the other world doth nothing prevail with us, without a lively faith.

5. This faith must be often exercised by serious meditations, or deep and ponderous thoughts. For the greatest truths work not, if we do not think of them. Faith showeth us a truth, but consideration is the means to improve it, that we may make a good choice, and our hearts may be fortified against all temptations; we must often sit down, and count the charges with ourselves, what it will cost us, what we shall lose, and what we shall get: Luke xiv. 28, 29, 30. The Spirit of God will not help us without our thoughts; for he dealeth not with us as birds do in feeding their young, bringing meat to them, and putting it into their mouths, while they lie still in their nest, and only gape to

receive it; but as God giveth corn while we plough, sow, weed, dress, and with patience expect his blessing. No, here the apostle was reasoning and weighing the case within himself.

6. There is, besides sound belief and serious consideration, need of the influence and assistance of the holy Spirit. For besides his giving faith, and exciting and blessing meditation, to dispose and frame our hearts to bide by this conclusion, the influence of the Holy Ghost is necessary. For God is the chief disposer of hearts; it is not enough notionally to know this, but we must be practically resolved, and the heart inclined; it is a new enlightened mind and a renewed heart that is only capable of determining thus, that we may live by it; and that is by another spirit than the spirit of the world, which naturally possesseth us, even the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. ii. 12, which is promised to his children, and inclineth us to place our happiness, not in worldly things, but in Christ and his benefits. In short, sense is too strong for reason without faith; and faith cannot do its office without the Spirit; the flesh seeketh not reason, but ease; unless the heart be changed, and otherwise biassed and bent, all is lost.

Use. Now I must show you the use of this doctrine.

First. Certainly it is useful for the afflicted in any sort, whatever their troubles and afflictions be.

1. For common evils:—

[1.] Are you pained with sickness, and roll to and fro in your bed, like a door on the hinges, for the weariness of your flesh? In heaven you shall have everlasting ease, for that is a state of rest, Heb. iv. 9. We are apprehensive of present pain, but not of the greatness of the ease, peace, and glory that shall succeed; though the pains be acute, the sickness lingering, and hangeth long upon you, yet present time is quickly past; but eternity shall have no end.

[2.] Must you die, and the guest be turned out of the old house? 'You have a building with God, eternal in the heavens,' 2 Cor. v. 1, You do but leave a shed to live in a palace, and forsake an unquiet world for a place of everlasting repose.

2. It is especially to be applied to those that suffer for righteousness' sake. Shall we shrink at sufferings for Christ, when we shall be in glory with him for evermore? How short is the suffering? how long the reward? For a greater good, we should endure a lesser evil. A traveller endureth all the difficulties of the way, for the sake of the place where he is going unto; so should we. What is the evil threatened? Are you cast out by man as unworthy to live in any civil society? You shall be received by the Lord into an everlasting abode with him: 1 Thes. v. 17, 'And so shall we be ever with the Lord.' Have you lost the love of all men, for your sincerity and faithfulness? You shall everlastingly enjoy the love of God, Rom. viii. 39. Are you reproached, calumniated in the world? Then you shall be justified by Christ, and your faith found to honour, praise, and glory, 2 Pet. i. 7. Are you cast into prison? you shall shortly be in your Father's house, where there are many mansions, John xiv. 2. Are you reduced to sordid poverty? You may read in the scripture of the 'riches of the glory of the inheritance of the saints,' Eph. i. 18. In short, are you tempted, opposed, persecuted? Consider, much of your journey is past

away; you are nearer eternity than you were when you first believed, Rom. xiii. 11. They that both tempt and persecute cannot give so much to you, or take so much from you, as is worthy to be compared with your great hopes. Immortal happiness is most desirable, and endless misery most terrible; therefore be you faithful to the death, and you shall have the crown of life, Rev. ii. 10. Is life itself likely to be forced out by the violence of man? The sword is but the key to open heaven's door for you; surely this hope will make the greatest sufferings to become light, turn pain into pleasure, yea, and death itself into life.

Secondly. It is useful for all, if only for the afflicted. None is exempted, and you must hear for the time to come; but every good christian should be of this temper and spirit, and wholly fetch his solaces from the world to come, else he is not possessed with a true spirit of christianity, which warneth us all to prepare for sufferings, and calleth for self-denial. Besides, this is a great means to mortify worldly affections, which are the great impediment of the heavenly life. When we once learn to despise the afflictions of the world, our affections to the delights thereof die by consent; both are rooted in the same disposition and frame of heart; such a dead and mortified temper, as hath learned to contemn earthly things; and they are both fed and maintained by the same considerations, a looking to the end of things, which maketh us wise, Deut. xxxii. 29. If our hearts be often in heaven, it will lessen all worldly things in our eyes; and it will make us not only patient and contented in sufferings, but diligent in holy duties, fearful of sinning. For all those pleasures which tempt us to neglect duty, or to make bold with sin, are no more worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, than our sufferings are; yea, the argument holdeth stronger against them; if the greater sufferings should not deter us from our duty, certainly vain pleasures should not. They that cast off the profession and practice of godliness out of indulgence to carnal delights or some worldly hope, are less to be pitied, because they involve themselves in a more heinous sin than they that shrink from it out of some great fear. For torment and death, which are the chiefest things we fear, are destructive of our nature; therefore we have a natural shunning and abhorrence of them; but those other things are such things as nature may easily, and without greater inconveniency, want; such as preferment, splendor of life, sottish pleasures. They are enticed by their mere lust, which is not so pressing as fear.