

JUDGMENT'S REASON.

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### NOTE.

The 'Two Sermons' from 1 Cor. xi. 30, 31, also appeared originally in the folio volume entitled 'The Saint's Cordials,' in the first—1629—edition of which they form Nos. 3 and 4. Their separate title-page therein is given below.\* In the editions of the 'Saint's Cordials' of 1637 and 1658, they form Nos. 5 and 6, under a different title, which will also be found below.† Our text, as explained in note to 'Right Receiving,' follows the edition of 1629. Those of 1637 and 1658‡ are designated by the letters B and C respectively in the 'various readings' appended to each page. 'Readings' peculiar to C are noted by numerals 1, 2, &c. G.

### \* I V D G E M E N T S REASON.

In Two Sermons.

WHEREIN THAT GREAT QUESTION  
IS DECIDED, AND THE AFFLICTED  
SATISFIED ;

*Why God sends so many crosses and troubles in this life ; both upon  
his best Seruants ; and those who are not yet brought into the way  
of life.*

[The woodcut of 'Right Receiving' here.]

VPRIGHTNESS HATH BOLDNES.

HEBR. 12. 10.

*For, they verely for a few dayes, chastened us after their own pleasure : but hee for  
our profit, thot we might be partakers of his Holinesse.*

L O N D O N,

Printed in the yeare 1629.

† The Art of  
Self-Ivdging.

Delivered

In A Preparatory Sermon

To The Sacrament :

At Coleman-street Church in London.

By R. Sibbs D.D. Master of Katherine Hall in Cambridge  
and preacher of Grayes Inne London.

The second Edition.

[Same woodcut as in 1629.]

Esay 57. 15.

For thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy Place: with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

London,

Printed for R. Dawlman, at the brazen Serpent in  
Pauls Churchyard. 1637.

‡ The edition of 1658 is marked 'The Third edition,' and 'Printed for Henry Cripps at his shop in Popes head Alley. 1658.' It spells 'self' and 'street' with final 'e,' and substitutes a different woodcut. Cf. title-pages subjoined to note to 'Right Receiving.—G.

# JUDGMENT'S REASON.

## SERMON I.

*For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged,' &c.*—1 COR. XI. 30, 31.

I NITEND at this time especially to stand upon the duty of judging, as being fittest for the occasion.\* But yet, by God's assistance, we† will take the words‡ in order, because I desire to speak somewhat of the other which follow.

'For this cause many are sick,' &c. After the holy apostle, the seedsmen of God, had sown the seed of heavenly doctrine, Satan also by his instruments had sown his cockle of abuses among the Corinthians, of which, amongst many, this was one, to come irreverently to the holy communion. Whereupon God was forced to take them into his own hands; and lest they should be ignorant of the cause, the blessed apostle points them here, as it were with the finger, to the cause of the visitation among them, § for their irreverent and unprepared coming to the Lord's table, 'For this cause,' &c. In the words we will speak of,

1. The cause of the correction among them.
2. And then of the kinds of it: 'Many are sick, and weak, and sleep.'
3. And then of the care, if it had been used, that might have prevented those contagious sicknesses among them: 'If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.'

But lest God's children should despair when they are judged and sharply corrected of him, he adds, in the next place, the comfort; howsoever things fall out, our salvation is promoted. 'When we are judged,' and chastened of the Lord, 'it is that we should not be condemned with the world.'

First, *of the cause.*||

I will speak briefly of the former verse, but dwell most upon the next, of self-judging. 'For this cause many are weak and sick, and many sleep.' Observe here in the cause.

\* That is, celebration of the sacrament. Cf. preliminary note †.—G.

† 'By . . . assistance' omitted in B, C, and for 'we' is substituted 'I.'—G.

‡ 'Text' in B, C; and the sentence, 'and speak somewhat of the other words.'—G.

§ 'Their unprepared coming,' &c., in B, C.—G.

|| 'Observe here' in B, C, and 'I will speak . . . in the cause,' omitted.—G.

*Doct. (1.) First, when there is a cause, God will correct; and where there is this cause, he will correct, that is, irreverent coming to the communion.*

*Doct. (2.) Secondly, As there is a cause when God doth correct, so usually there is this or that particular cause.*

For the first, where there is cause he will correct, and where there is this cause. Where there is no cause he will not correct. 'For this cause.' There is always a cause, and a particular cause, [and a particular cause of God's judgment is]\*

*Quest.* Why must there be always a cause?

*Ans.* Because God is the judge of the world, and the judge of the world must needs do that which is right, Gen. xviii. 25. And therefore he will not judge without a cause.† We have ill in us, before we suffer ill. God is forced to mortify sins by afflictions, because we mortify them not by the Spirit, and in the use of holy means. There is a cause always.‡ God doth favours from his own bowels, and from his own nature; but he never correcteth without a cause from us. Corrections and judgments are always forced. It is a stranger<sup>1</sup> work to him than favours that come from his own nature as a gracious God, and therefore the cause of his judgment is always in us. But when he is beneficial to us, it comes from himself, as water comes from a fountain.

*Instruction.* This should teach us in all visitations to justify God, and to take heed of that which our nature is prone to, of swelling and murmuring, and rising up against God. Just thou art, and righteous are thy judgments. 'I will bear the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned,' &c., as it is said, Micah vii. 9. Let us lay our hand upon our mouth, and justify God in all his visitations. There is a cause.

And not only a cause at random, but if we search ourselves there is this or that particular cause. So 2 Thes. ii. 10 it is said, 'For this cause God gave them up to strong delusions, because they entertained not the truth in the love of it.' There is a 'this;' for God shoots not his judgments, as children shoot their arrows, at random, light where they will; but he hath his aim.

*Quest.* How shall we find out that 'this'?

*Ans.* 1. *Our consciences will upbraid us.* If we be well acquainted with our consciences, we shall know it by them, as Joseph's brethren did. It was because they used their brother hardly many years before, Gen. xlii. 21.

2. *Again, what the word meets most with when we hear it.*

3. *And what our friends tell us most of.*

4. *And what our enemies upbraid us most with.*

5. *That we may know the cause, we may know the sin by the contrary.* God cures contraries with contraries. We may read oftentimes the cause in the judgment. Is the judgment *shame*? Then the cause was *pride*. Is the judgment *want*? Then our sin was in *abundance*. We did not learn to abound as we should when we had it. It is an ordinary rule, contraries are cured with contraries. Usually God meets with men, he pays them home in their own coin and kind. Those that have been unmerciful, they shall meet with those that shall shew them no mercy, &c. § By searching into our own hearts, by considering these things, we may know what is the 'this,' the particular cause.

\* The words enclosed added in B, C, intended to link on to the sentence interrupted by the question, Why, &c.—G.

† 'And therefore . . . cause,' omitted in B, C.—G.

‡ 'There is . . . always,' omitted in B, C.—G.

§ The ' &c.' characteristic of Sibbes's style omitted in B, C.—G.

<sup>1</sup> 'Strange' in C—G.

And, if we fail in the search, then go to God, that he would teach us, as well as he corrects us, as usually he doth his children: Ps. xciv. 12, 'Blessed is the man that thou correctest and teachest.' Desire God that unto correction he would add teaching, that we may know what the meaning of the rod and of the cross is. Whatsoever it is, if we join prayer with the other means, we may know the 'this,' the particular sin that God aims at. So you see these things\* clear, that there is a cause, and usually the 'this,' some particular cause.

*Doct. (3.)* The next point is that *where there is a cause, God will correct first or last*, and where there is this cause mentioned, irreverent coming to the communion, he will do it because he is just. If we prevent † it not by repentance, and so afflict our souls, surely we must fall into God's hands. He will lose the glory of none of his attributes. Where there is a cause he will correct. Sin is against his nature, against his truth, against his manner of dealing with us by favours and benefits, and therefore he will correct us.

For even as smoke goes before fire, and as conception goes before birth, and as seed-time goes before harvest; so sin goes before some correction or other universally, ‡ unless it be those daily infirmities that God's children fall into, those sins of daily incursion, as we call them. When we labour to knit our hearts fast and close to God, some infirmities slip from us that God overlooks; he takes not notice of every slip; § he bears with our infirmities 'as a father bears with a son that serves him,' Mal. iii. 17. And yet if we allow ourselves in any infirmity, we shall not go unpunished. ¶ Infirmities are one thing, and allowance and defence of them is another. Therefore I beseech you make this use of it. ¶

*Use. Take heed of sinning upon this false conceit, We shall escape, we shall never hear of it again.* No; it will be owing first or last. As we say of those that make bold with their bodies, to use them hardly, to rush upon this thing and that thing: in their youth, they may bear it out, but it will be owing them after; they shall find it in their bones when they are old. So a man may say of those that are venturous persons, that make no conscience of running into sin, these things will be owing to them another day; they shall hear of these in the time of sickness, or in the hour of death. And therefore never sin upon vain hope of concealing; for as there is a cause always, and 'this cause,' so where there is a cause, God will correct his own children.

Again, *where there is this cause, God will visit.* What was this cause? This cause was irreverent, unprofitable coming to the holy table of the Lord. Why, is this so great a matter as to provoke God's judgment? Oh, yes! Favours neglected provoke anger most of all.

Is it not a great favour for the great God to condescend<sup>1</sup> to help our weakness in the sacrament? Is it not a special favour that he will stoop to strengthen our weak faith this way? And shall we, when he condescends to us, rise up in pride against him, and forget our distance, forget with whom we have to deal? No; God will be honoured of all that come near him; if not by them, yet in them. Those that come not to God now

\* 'See it clear that there is a cause, and usually some particular cause' in B, C.—G.

† That is, 'anticipate.'—G.

‡ This reads more accurately in B, C: 'So some sin or other goes before correction universally.'—G.

§ 'From us' in C.—G. ¶ 'For infirmities' in B, C.—G.

¶ 'Therefore . . . use of it' omitted in B, C.—G. <sup>1</sup> 'To descend' in C.—G.

in Christ, a Father, they know not his goodness; and those that come irreverently, know not his greatness and majesty. Take heed, therefore, when we come before God, that we come not with strange fire, as Nadab and Abihu; that we come not irreverently and unpreparedly, with carnal affections; but that we converse in holy business with holy affections. Is it not a great pity that those things which God hath ordained for the comfort of our souls, and the help of our faith, that we by our carelessness should turn them to our hurt, as we do by an irreverent coming to the holy things of God? We procure our own judgments, and therefore we ought to help this irreverent demeanour and carriage of ourselves in the holy things of God by all means, with the consideration of his majesty, and our dependence upon him;\* and such considerations, which I cannot now enter into, because I hasten. So you see these things clear, *the cause*, and the particular cause, *this cause*.

To go on to *the kinds* therefore. The kinds are set down in three degrees:

1. Some are weak.
2. And some sick.
3. And some sleep.

Nay, 'many are sick and weak, and many sleep.' Here are three degrees, like the three degrees of sin amongst them. Some are more presumptuous than other, and,

*Doct. 4. God, who made all in number, weight, and measure, dispenseth all in number, weight, and measure.* Some are weak, and some are sick, which is greater; and some sleep, that is, die.† Even as in the commonwealth, those that are discreet governors have degrees of punishment, as the stocks, the prison, and the gibbet, violent death, and the like; so God, the great Governor of heaven and earth, according to the different degrees of sin, hath different degrees of correction.

A physician loves all his patients alike, but he doth not minister sharp potions alike to all; but out of the same love there is a different carriage of the same, according to the exigent‡ of the party. So doth the wise God. 'Some are weak, and some sick, and some sleep.'

*Doct. 5.* Again, we may observe here, that *sickness and weakness of the body come from sin, and is a fruit of sin.* Some are weak, and some are sick, 'for this cause.' I shall not need to be long in the proof of that, which you have whole chapters for, as Deut. xxviii. 27, *seq.*; and many psalms, cvii., and others.§ It is for the<sup>1</sup> sickness of the soul that God visits with the sickness of the body. He aims at the cure of the soul in the touch of the body. And therefore in this case, when God visits with sickness, we should think our work is more in heaven with God than with men or physick. Begin first with the soul. So David, Ps. xxxii. 5, till he dealt roundly with God, without all kind of guile, and confessed his sins, he roared; || his moisture was turned into the drought of summer. But when he dealt directly and plainly with God, and confessed his sins, then God forgave him them, and healed his body too. And therefore the best method, when God visits us in this kind, is to think that we are to deal with God. Begin the cure there with the soul. When he visits the body, it is for the soul's sake: 'Many are weak and sick among you.' We see what taber-

\* 'And the like' in B, C; and 'which I cannot . . . this cause' omitted.—G.

† 'Which is greatest of all' added in B, C.—G. || 'And' in B C.—G.

‡ That is, 'exigency'.—G.

1 'The' not in C.—G.

§ Cf. Mat. ix. 2, Luke vii. 47.—G.

nacles of dust we carry about us, that if we had no outward enemy, yet God can raise that in our own bodies that shall cast out the greatest giant, 'weakness and sickness,' that we may learn to fear God, in whose hand is both health and sickness. And it should teach us to make precious use of our health while we have it. It were a thousand times better for many persons to be cast on the bed of sickness, and to be God's prisoners, than so scandalously and unfruitfully to use the health that they have : 'many are weak and sick.\*'

*Doct. 6.* The sin was general, and God's visitation was as general. *When sins grow general, corrections grow general.* It is an idle and vain excuse that many think to make to themselves, The world doth thus ; others do thus. Oh ! there is the more danger of a spreading and general visitation ! Do others so ? Is it a spreading sin ? Take heed of a spreading and contagious punishment. We must not follow a multitude to do evil, *Exod. xxiii. 2.* He is not a whit the less<sup>1</sup> tormented that is tormented with company. The plea therefore that they make from many, that the world doth thus, it should rather, if they did wisely reason, move them to take heed. 'Many are sick and weak, and many sleep,' saith he ; † that is, many even die. God takes away the life of many for the irreverent coming to<sup>2</sup> the holy things of God. So that sin brings with it death itself, not only at the last, but sin it shortens a man's days ; and this kind of sin, irreverent coming to the holy things of God, shortens our days, and puts out our own candle, and pulls our own houses about our ears. They are felons upon themselves, soul-murderers and body-murderers, that wilfully commit sin ; yea, if it be this sin in the holy things of God, not only if they commit gross sins, but if they commit this sin, if they be careless and unconscionable‡ in the performance of this holy duty. If any other did us the thousand part of that harm we do ourselves by a careless life, a loose and lawless kind of course, we would not bear them. We see here what hurt we do ourselves [what injury, what wrong we do to our own souls and bodies also] ; § for 'for this cause many are weak and sick, and many sleep.'

We are the greatest enemies to ourselves. We cry out of Judas and Ahithophel that made away themselves, and we may well. Every stubborn man, that goes on in a course of sin, and forgets with whom he hath to deal, he is like Judas and Ahithophel ; he is an enemy to himself, and a murderer of himself. Oh ! take heed therefore of the Devil's baits ; meddle not with this pitch ; touch it not ; hate all shows and appearances of evil.

*Doct. 7.* Again, it is not to be forgotten here that he saith, 'Many of you,' that is, 'you, believing Corinthians ;' whence learn, that *God will correct sin wheresoever he finds it, even in his dearest children ;* nay, he will correct them more sharply in this world, because he will save their souls in another world, than he will others. The careless, brutish|| world, that are not worthy of correction, God lets them go on in smooth ways to hell ; but 'many of you,' &c. Let none think to be exempt, and venture themselves from grace they have. No. God will look to those of his family, that are near him ; ¶ he will have a special eye to them, he will have his

\* Not given in B, C.—G.

‡ Added in B, C.—G.

† 'Saith he' omitted in B, C.—G.

|| 'Brutish' omitted in B, C.—G.

‡ That is, 'unconscientious'.—G.

¶ 'That are near him' omitted in B, C. -G

<sup>1</sup> 'The less' is brutally omitted in C.—G.

<sup>2</sup> 'Of' in C, another misprint.—G.

family\* well ordered: 'You have I known of all the nations of the world,' saith he, 'and therefore I will be sure to punish and to correct you,' Amos iii. 2. Let none therefore bear themselves upon their profession, I do thus and thus, so many good things, therefore I may be bold; nay, therefore, you may be the less bold. Moses cannot so much as murmur at the waters of strife, but he must not come into Canaan, Num. xx. 2. David cannot have a proud thought of numbering the people, but he must smart for it, 1 Chron. xxi. 2. The Corinthians cannot come irreverently to the communion, 'but for this cause many are weak and sick.'

I beseech you, let us take it to heart, and let no profane person take encouragement because God so deals with his own: 'If God deal thus with the green tree, what will he do with the dry?' 'If judgment begin at the house of God, where shall the sinner and ungodly appear?' 1 Pet. iv. 18. If the godly taste of the cup of God's anger, the wicked must drink off the dregs of his wrath. And therefore let no man take offence that God follows the church with crosses, that the cross follows the poor church in the world. Alas! they carry corruptions about them continually. We see here,† 'you, many of you,' &c. Let us therefore labour to make an end of our salvation with fear and trembling, the best of us all.

Doct. 8. One thing more before I leave this; that is, *how God in justice remembereth mercy*. 'Many,' he saith not, 'all,' and 'many of you are weak;' he takes not all away with death. It is a mercy, then, that the correction is outward in the body, weak in body, and sick. There was not a spiritual giving up to hardness of heart. Beloved! if we consider what kind of judgments spiritual judgments are, to have a seared conscience, and a hard and desperate heart, which are forerunners of hell and of eternal judgment and damnation, we would much prize mercy in judgment. Oh! it is not so with God's church. Their visitations are in the outward man; they are weak, and sick, and die, but God is merciful to their souls, as we shall see after.‡ And it should be an art we should learn and labour to be expert in, to consider God's gracious dealing in the midst of his correction; § that in the midst of corrections § we might have thankful, and cheerful,|| and fruitful hearts, which we shall not have, except we have some matter of thankfulness. Consider, doth God make me weak? He might have struck me with death, or if not taken away my mortal life, he might have given me up to a spiritual death, to a hard heart, to desperation, &c. So let us search out in the visitations that we are in, always some matter of mitigation, and we shall always find that it might have been worse with us than it is.¶ So much shall serve for that verse, that is, the cause and the kinds, 'For this cause many are weak and sick, and many sleep.' Now I come to the cure.

'If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.'

This course, if it had been used by the Corinthians, they might have prevented their weakness, sickness, and over-timely\*\* death; and so we, if we take the course prescribed by the apostle here, may prevent the like; and perhaps God will not now, in this dispensation that he useth in the latter end of the world, outwardly visit us, for now usually his dispensation and government is more inward. And therefore we should take the more

\* 'Them' in B, C.—G.

§ 'That in them' in B, C.—G.

† 'As we see here' in B, C.—G.

|| 'Cheerful' omitted in B, C.—G.

‡ 'Corrections' in B, C.—G.

¶ 'This shall serve for the cause' in B, C; and 'So much . . . sleep' omitted.—G.

\*\* That is, 'untimely' or 'premature.'—ED.

1 'Hereafter' in C.—G.



heed to what followeth ; he may give us up, I say, to blindness, to deadness, to security. He doth not usually give men up to sickness, and to death, now, for such breaches, but his government is more spiritual. Indeed then, for the terror of all, his government was more outward in the primitive times of the church. To come therefore to that I mean to speak of: *the cure of all is judging*. There is a judge set up in our own hearts. 'If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord.' To open the words a little.\*

That which is translated here 'judging,' is by the best expositors, one and other,<sup>1</sup> and according to the nature of the word, 'if we would *discern* of ourselves,' 'if we would *try* ourselves,' and have our senses exercised to distinguish what is good, and what is ill in us, and then to fall upon judging, trial, and discussing. The word signifieth primarily 'to discuss,' and 'to sift,' and then 'to censure' upon that ; and then after, 'To sever ourselves from the ill we censure.' The word implies all these duties.†

God hath so framed man, that he alone of all other creatures can work upon himself ; he hath this reflexed act, as we call it, he can examine, judge, try, and humble himself ; other creatures look straight forwards. Man, I say, can discern and put a difference ; he can discern of relations ; this and that hath relation to such and such a thing. The beast cannot discern of relations:‡ the beast goes to the water, and to the fodder, but knows not what relation that hath to spiritual things. But man, when he sees the sacrament, he can think of Christ ; when he seeth one thing, he can think of this relation to more spiritual things. So he can discern of himself, and of the things he takes in hand, by a principle that God hath put into him peculiar to himself. Now God hath set up in a man a judgment-seat, wherein things should be judged, before they come to this scanning and judgment. We ourselves are the parties judged, and we should be the judges ; we are the parties that examine, and the parties examined ; we are the parties that condemn, and the parties condemned. This is the power of conscience, that God hath made his vicegerent and deputy in us. But to acquaint you with what things I mean to speak of, as the time will give leave.

*Doct. 9.* [1.] *First of all*, out of these words, *the cure I will shew* ; that naturally we are very backward to this duty, because the Corinthians here were failing in the duty.§

[2.] *Secondly*, I will shew you the necessity, profit, and use of this self-judging.

[3.] Then of the time when we should judge especially ; when we are to deal with God in holy things.

[4.] And then,|| what to do after all, when we have judged ourselves ; what course to take then. The unfolding of these things will help us to understand this great point that is so necessary.

[1.] First of all, *naturally we are wondrous backward to this duty*, as we see here in the Corinthians ; they slubbered over this duty of examination and self-judging.

*Quest.* What is the reason ?

*Sol.* The reason is, *it is an inward act* ; and naturally we look to outward glorious things. There is no glory in it before the world ; it is in God,

\* 'To open . . . little' omitted in B, C.—G.

† The word is *διακρίνω*, on which consult Robinson, *sub voce*, and cf. Hodge and Stanley, and Webster and Wilkinson, *in loc.*—G.

‡ 'Relation' in B, C.—G.      § 'Because . . . duty' omitted in B, C.—G.

|| 'Then' omitted in B, C.—G.      ¶ 'Another' in C.—G.

and his own soul, and usually the life of careless persons, even of Christians sometimes, it is spent outwardly; they never enter into their own souls to see what is there.

Again, *naturally we rest in the judgment of others.* Others conceive well of us, and therefore we conceive well of ourselves. Remember they are but our fellow-prisoners. What can they excuse, if God accuse and condemn us? Those things that make us most odious to God are undiscernible of the eye of man, as a proud heart, a revengeful spirit, an earthly disposition, and the like; no man can see these things.

Again, usually we rest in this, *that we have wit enough to judge others.* The proud nature of man thinks itself somebody, when it can get up and judge others perhaps better than itself. This is a poor contentment, and an easy thing for a man to spend his censures upon others, and is done usually with some glory. It is necessary sometimes to those that are under us, to discover to them what we judge of their ways, but oftentimes, I say, it is done only of self-love and pride.

Again, *we are backward to this duty.* Hence that the heart of man is a proud piece of flesh; and therefore he is loath to be conceited\* of himself as there is cause. Man naturally would be in [a] fool's paradise. He knows if he enters deeply into himself, somewhat will be presented to the eye of his soul that will be an ungrateful object to him; and therefore, because he will not force upon himself other conceits of himself than he hath for the present, he is content never to examine his courses, but to go on still. As there are some creatures in the world deformed, that are loath to come to the water, because they will not see their deformity in it; so it is with the nature of man, he is loath to see his deformity, he is willing to be deceived. In other things we are loath to be mistaken, but in our state between God and us, we are willing to be deceived. We deceive ourselves, we are sophisters unto ourselves, in this great point. Thus we see that it is a duty to which we are very backward, and that it is something hard, because, I say,† it reflects upon ourselves, and requires retiring; for naturally we are slothful and idle; and then sin it loves corners, which makes it harder.

Now, what is this sifting and searching of the heart, but a searching of all the corners of the soul by the light of God's word and Spirit? A searching of all the corners of the heart. This requires much pains. Naturally we are loath to take pains with our own souls, though indeed this be a preventing pains, to shun a worse misery hereafter; there is nothing gotten by favouring ourselves. What need I be large in this point? It is clear that naturally we are loath to judge ourselves, as we shall see hereafter.‡ Oh! if the worst man had that judgment of himself, as he shall have ere long, when he shall not be besotted, but be free from his spiritual drunkenness and madness that he is in, carried with the course of the world, then he shall judge truly of himself. Oh! that he could do it in time. But naturally, I say, what for negligence, and what for pride, and resting in the conceits that others have of us, we neglect so necessary a duty.

Well, then, to go to the second point: as we are prone to neglect it, so we must know,

*Doct. 10. That it is a necessary and useful duty to judge ourselves:* for it is the ground of all repentance, Jer. viii. 6. He complains that they rushed as<sup>1</sup> 'a horse into the battle, and no man said, what have I done?'

\* That is = to conceive.—G.

† 'I say' omitted in B, C.—G.

‡ 'It is clear . . . of himself' omitted in B, C.—G.

<sup>1</sup> 'As,' by a misprint, not in C.—G.

*Quest.* What was the reason they rushed as a horse into the battle?

*Sol.* No man entered into himself and said, What have I done? I considered my ways, and turned my feet to thy testimonies, saith David, Ps. cxix. 59. Consideration is the ground therefore of repentance and conversion. Thus in discussing of our ways, and trial of them, and of every good work, there must be this judging, this discerning, what is spirit and what is flesh. A man cannot do a good work without the use of this principle that God hath put into him, of judging himself, and judging his ways.

And then again, *it is a duty that makes a man good in himself*: for when we do outward good duties, they are good for others. If a man be bountiful, another hath the benefit; if he be merciful, another hath the profit; but when a man judgeth himself, and sets up a court in himself, his own soul is the better for it; he is the more holy man, the more watchful man, the more clear from his sins; he is the fitter framed for holy duties; it is the better for his own self; and therefore this duty it is the spring of all other good duties, and it is most beneficial to a man's own soul.

Again, *this is such a duty as doth settle the judgment, and make us impregnable in temptation*. When we have passed a judgment upon ourselves, let this or that judgment be, we care not; for we have judged ourselves as we should by the rule. We know what we have done, we know what we have said, we are able to justify it: it makes us ready and able to give an account to God, and to the world for what we do. But what, should I go further than the text? Here is a special good use it hath: if we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged of the Lord. This judging of ourselves, it\* prevents a further judgment.

*Quest.* How is that?

*Ans.* First of all, because we spare God a labour. When we judge ourselves, he need not take us in hand to judge us. His corrections and his statutes are often called judgments in the Psalms.† Now upon the neglect of his judgments‡ and statutes, we run into his judgments and corrections; yet if we were careful of our duty, we might prevent the judgments of correction.§

Then again, *things judged in one court cannot be judged in another by equity*. Now|| the God of all justice and equity will surely strictly observe equity. When our sins are judged in an inferior court; when in the court of conscience we have cited, indicted ourselves before ourselves, and given sentence upon ourselves, before ourselves,¶ then what is\*\* condemned in this lower court of conscience, it shall never be condemned for hereafter: and, therefore, the necessity of this duty issues hence; 'if we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged.'

*Quest.* What is the ground that men are judged with the judgment of correction? ††

*Sol.* We may learn hence, that we may thank ourselves for not returning into our souls. I was careless of setting up a court in my‡‡ own heart; careless in using those abilities that God hath given me to discern, to

\* The 'it,' which with other pronouns is a characteristic in this use of Sibbes, as of his contemporaries, omitted in B, C.—G.

† Cf. Ps. x. 5; xix. 9; xxxvi. 6; lxxii. 1; cxix. 7, *et alibi*.—G.

‡ 'Judgments and' omitted in B, C.—G.

§ 'Yet if . . . of correction' omitted in B, C.—G.

|| 'Now' omitted in B, C.—G.

¶ 'Before ourselves,' omitted in B, C.—G.

\*\* 'Was' in B, C.—G.

†† The question 'What,' &c., omitted in B, C.—G.

‡‡ 'Mine,' in B, C.—G.

understand my\* own ways. I have been careless there ; and because I did not judge myself, it is just with God to judge me. We see here the necessity from the text : when we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged ; therefore, when we are judged, we have been negligent in this duty of judging ourselves.†

Well, to hasten ;‡ if this be so, if it be a duty that we are backward to, and yet it is a holy and useful duty, then we come, in the next place, to some directions how to carry ourselves in it.

(1.) First, in judging ourselves, *let us call and cite ourselves before ourselves*, and fall to a reckoning both with our persons and the state wherein we stand, and likewise the actions that come from us ; what is good in us, and what is ill ; what omitted, and what committed ; what corruption is mingled with our best performances, and such like, as we shall see after. First, call ourselves to a reckoning, and see whether we can give account to ourselves or no. And if we cannot give account to ourselves, much less can we to the all-seeing eye and justice of God. I would fain have a worldling give account to himself, why the elder he grows the more worldly he should be ; he cannot give an account to himself for it. I would have a profane swearer give account to himself, why he dallies with the great and terrible majesty of God, as if he were greater than he, when he pronounceth 'that he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain,' *Exod. xx. 7.* I would fain know of those that spend the prime of their time and years in the service of the devil, and bring their rotten old age to God, what account they can give to their own hearts. I would have any sinner, that lives in a course of sin, give account to his own heart : thou wretched man, canst thou not give an account to thyself ? God is greater than thy heart ; how dost thou think to stand before the judgment-seat of God ere long ? The first thing, therefore, is to arraign ourselves at our own bar. I exclude not others that have calling to examine others, but especially present ourselves.

(2.) And when we find anything amiss, *then besides this arraignment of ourselves, we must give sentence against ourselves.* That is the second thing in discussing : as David, *Ps. lxxiii. 22,* 'So foolish was I, and as a beast,' when he had entertained a thought that God neglected his church, and regarded it no more ; he had a dishonourable thought of God raised in his heart. 'Oh,' saith he, 'I was ashamed, so foolish, and so like a beast was I.' And so you have the prodigal ; and *Dan. ix. 4, seq.,* and *Ezra ix. 6. seq.,* for examples how to pass a censure upon ourselves, when we find anything amiss ; and labour that those affections that are in us towards ill, as grief, and shame, and sorrow, may be stirred up in us, by setting ourselves in grief, and shame, and sorrow, as we should, to turn the stream of our affections the right way.

When we find anything amiss in our own hearts, when we have given sentence and judgment upon ourselves ;§

(3.) Then proceed to *execution* : let them go together, judgment and execution. This the apostle calls an holy revenge, *2 Cor. vii. 11.* If we have been proud, let us abase ourselves. If we have been base in the duties of charity and good works to others, let us now, as *Zaccheus*, labour for the contrary, *Luke xix. 8.* If we have misspent our precious time, let us labour

\* 'Mine' in B, C—G.

† The sentence 'We see here,' &c., omitted in B, C—G.

‡ 'To hasten,' and 'If this be so,' not in B, C, and reads simply, 'If this be a duty,' &c.—G.

§ The sentence 'When we find,' &c., omitted in B, C—G.

now to redeem the time, to do the contrary good. This course we ought to take.

And for the things that we ought to sift, and to try, and to judge, they are not only our persons, but whatsoever comes from us: we are to judge all our actions, not only our<sup>1</sup> ill actions, but our good actions. There is much dross mingled with our gold: let us examine our best actions. Nay, and not only our outward, but go to the very root. When we find a fault in any outward action, follow it to the very corrupt spring. Those that have a plant, that bears venomous fruit, they dig it at the root; so when any bad fruit comes from us, go to the root, strike there at it; follow sin to its burrow, its first hatching place, to the very heart. Thus David doth, Ps. li. 5: he goes to his birth sin. What, should I speak, saith he, of the sins that I have committed? 'In sin was I conceived.' In all actual sins look to the corrupt root and puddle whence they come; as, Oh, what is this word that I have spoken? what is this action? I have a corrupt nature, that is ready to yield to an hundred such upon the like occasion; and thereupon go to the heart, and to\* the soul, and censure that; for that is worse than any particular act whatsoever.

*Take heed of laying the fault upon this occasion, or that occasion,† when we find ourselves faulty.* No. Say it was thou, my proud heart! it was thou, mine angry heart! my base worldly heart! The occasion did but help; the principal was mine own heart. Let us labour, therefore, to be acquainted thoroughly with our heart, that is wondrous unfaithful. There is a mystery of deceit in it.

What is the reason that God's children sometimes fall into sins that they never thought of, and that naturally they are not prone to?

*Sol.* Because there is no man that sufficiently knows the depth of the falsehood of his own heart. For Moses to become an angry man, that was the meekest man on earth, it was strange, yet at the waters of strife he brake forth into passion, Num. xx. 10. For David, that had his heart touched for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment, it was strange to come to murder, 1 Sam. xxiv. 5, 2 Sam. xi. 15, *seq.* Now, who would have thought that murder had lodged in David's heart? For Peter, that loved Christ so much, to come to deny and to forswear his Master; who would have thought that forswearing had lurked in the heart of Peter? Mat. xxvi. 72. Beloved! we know not what corruption lurks in our hearts. Nay, sometimes we shall find, if we search our hearts narrowly, those corruptions therein that at other times we are not prone to, so deceitful is our heart. And therefore, in all breaches outwardly, in speech or carriage, be sure to run to the heart to condemn sin, and to strike at it there.

Well, thus we see some directions how to carry ourselves. *It is not, beloved, the having of corruption that damns men, but the affections we carry towards our corruptions.* The best of us have corruptions, but mark how we do carry ourselves towards them. A carnal man pleads for his corruptions, he strengthens them; and another man hath corruption, but it is hardly used. Corruption is differently used in the heart of a carnal and of a gracious man, for in the one it is fostered, cherished, and pleaded for: in a civil, carnal man;‡ in the other man it is indeed, but it is subdued and mortified, it is judged and condemned. As we say of a man, when judgment is passed upon him, he is a dead man, though he be not dead, because the sentence of death is passed upon him, who, when he comes to

<sup>1</sup> Misprinted 'for' in C.—G.

† 'Upon this or that occasion' in B, C.—G.

\* 'To' not in B, C.—G.

‡ 'In a civil . . . man' omitted in B, C.—G.

be executed, by little and little he dies, till he be perfectly dead ; so it is when corruption is judged by us and condemned in our hearts, it is as it were dead, because we have passed the sentence on it, we have condemned it, and because<sup>1</sup> we have begun the execution that shall end in death ; and therefore, as we would difference ourselves from the world, let us labour more and more, that though we have corruption, yet to carry ourselves thus towards it, to make it more hateful by all means. We cannot make it too hateful to us ; it doth us all the mischief in the world ; it is the ill of ills. All other ills are but the fruits<sup>2</sup> of it ; it puts a fiery, venomous sting into all things ; it makes things comfortable uncomfortable : as the hour of death, that should be thought on as our entrance into heaven ; and the day of judgment, the consideration whereof should be our joy. What makes these things terrible ? Oh ! it is sin, the sin that we cherish and love better than our souls ; it is that that makes things that are most comfortable uncomfortable. What a thing is that that makes us afraid to go to God ! to think of a gracious God ! that hinders us in our best performances ! that makes us backward and dull ! Labour, by all means, to make sin odious, I say. In the best commonwealth in the world there will be lurking rebels, base people. What ! doth the commonwealth bear the blame ? No. The laws are against them, and they are executed when they are found out. So in the best heart there will be rebellious thoughts, evil thoughts, but let it not be laid to the charge of God's people. There are laws against them ; they labour to find them out and to execute them. Here is the comfort of God's children, that though they groan under many infirmities, yet they look upon them as enemies, and as objects of their mortification.

Well, to hasten : again, in judging ourselves, *let us labour to judge ourselves for those things that the world takes no notice of* ; for spiritual, for inward things : as for stirring of pride, of worldliness, of revenge, of security, unthankfulness, and such like ; unkindness towards God, barrenness in good duties, that the world cannot see. Oh, let these humble our hearts ! For want of judging ourselves for these, God gives us up to outward breaches, and justly too. When we make not conscience of spiritual sins, God gives us up to open sins, that stain and blemish our profession.

Again, *for the sins in good duties*. Take heed in our best performances that we be not deceived in them. Poison is dangerously taken in sweet gloves, and in sweet things, because it is conveyed in sweetness ; and so in holy duties there is conveyed pride and resting in them. Take heed, lest corruption mingle some deadly thing with our best performances.

The Corinthians came to the table of the Lord ; but because they thought the duty a good duty,\* and that they might not sin in a good duty, they came hand over head, carelessly [unto it].† Oh, but we see how God deals with them. And therefore, let us examine, in good duties and performances, with what minds we come, with what preparation, with what aims and ends [we perform them].‡ Many thousands, we may fear, are damned even for good duties ; for § duties that are not ill in themselves, because they think they may be bold there, and put off the power of grace, and rest in common civil things, [even] || in outward performances. When we regard not the manner, God regards not the matter of the things we do,

\* 'But because they thought the duty good,' in B, C.—G.

† 'Unto it' added in B, C.—G.

‡ Added in B, C.—G.

§ 'For because they are not ill in themselves,' &c., in B, C.—G.

|| 'Even' added in B, C.—G.

<sup>1</sup> 'Therefore because' in C.—G.

<sup>2</sup> 'Fruit' in C.—G.

but oftentimes punisheth for the performance of good duties, as we see here in the Corinthians. But to proceed.

Let us observe some helps to all this that we have spoken. To help us, let us get a *good rule*.\* Let the rule of our judging and discerning be digested into our hearts; let the word of God be engrafted into us; that is the word that we must judge by, that we must be saved or damned by ere long; [as]† for false rules, the practice of the world, our own imaginations, away with them. We must not judge by those, but by the truth of God; and,‡ therefore, be sure of this, that so the rule and our souls may be one, that we may have the rule as ready as any corruption and as any sin is; when anything ariseth in our hearts, that the word engrafted in our hearts may be ready to check it presently. An unlearned judge oftentimes may mar all, whatsoever the cause be, though never so good. So, when the judgment is not instructed, an ignorant person can never manage his own soul. Let us labour for knowledge, that we may be learned in this judicature and judgment§ of ourselves.

*Quest.* What is the reason that many good souls are ready to bear false witness against, and to condemn themselves for what they should not?

*Sol.* (1.) *Sometimes they condemn their state,|| and think [that]¶ they are not the children of God, when they are.* They want judgment out of God's book. Because they have corruption in them, they conclude that they have no grace; because they have but little grace, therefore they have none at all; as if God's glory were not to shew his strength in the midst of their weakness, and so, for want of judgment out of the Scriptures, they lay a plaster upon a sound place, and a true man is condemned for a traitor. Just persons condemn themselves in their courses that are gracious, for want of a sanctified and good judgment. Let us labour to have our judgment rightly instructed out of God's word, and in the use of all good means, grow in knowledge, that we may be discerning Christians, to judge between the flesh and the spirit,<sup>1</sup> between good and bad, to have our senses exercised in this kind.

*Sol.* (2.) *And not only to have the law, but to know the gospel too.* To know in what estate Christians should be under the gospel, not to look to legal breaches altogether, but what the gospel requires; not only how short we are of the law (which we can never attain to),\*\* but of that which we might attain to in the gospel. Let us bring ourselves to that which we might be, and which others have attained to, to the view of others better than ourselves, and this will make us to judge ourselves. But, as I said before, let us labour to know the sins against the gospel; let us know what condition of life is required under the gospel: a fruitful life and a thankful. Our whole life should be nothing but thankfulness under the gospel, and fruitfulness; we should be inflamed with the love of Christ. Oh! take heed of turning that grace of God into wantonness. Oh! would we have fresh evidence of the love of God in Christ?†† Take heed of sins against the gospel; know what the conversation of a Christian should be, to walk worthy of the gospel, worthy of the high calling of a Christian. The state of the gospel requires that we should deny all ungodliness and worldly lust, and live righteously, and soberly, and godly, &c., Titus ii. 12; that we

\* 'To help . . . rule' not in B, C.—G. || 'Estate' in B, C.—G.

† 'As' inserted in B, C.—G. ¶ 'That' added in B, C.—G.

‡ 'And' omitted in B, C.—G. \*\* 'Unto' in B, C.—G.

§ 'And judgment' not in B, C.—G. †† 'Of his favour' in B, C.—G.

<sup>1</sup> 'The flesh and the spirit' not in C.—G.

be earnest, and zealous of good works. When we find ourselves otherwise, think, Oh! this is not the life of a Christian under the gospel. The gospel requires a more fruitful, more zealous carriage, more love to Christ. 'Anathema maranatha' belongs to him that loves not the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. xvi. 22; and therefore, when we find any coldness to so gracious a God, and so blessed a Saviour, let us condemn ourselves.

*Sol. (3.) And take the benefit likewise of the judgment of others, if we would learn to judge ourselves thoroughly;* consider what others say; it is one branch of the communion of saints to regard the judgment of others. Oh, it is a blessed thing to have others tell us of our faults, and as it were to pull us out of the fire with violence, as Jude speaketh, 23; rather to pull us out with violence, with sharp rebukes, than we should perish and be damned in our sins. If a man be to weed his ground, he sees need of the benefit of others; if a man be to demolish his house, he will be thankful to others for their help; so he that is to pull down his corruption, that old house, he should be thankful to others that will tell him, This is rotten, and this is to blame; who if he be not thankful for seasonable reproof, he knows not what self-judging means. If any man be so uncivil when a man shews him a spot on his garment, to grow cholerie, will we not judge him to be<sup>1</sup> an unreasonable man? And so when a man shall be told, This will hinder your comfort another day; if men were not spiritually besotted, would they swell and be angry against such a man? Therefore take the benefit of the judgment of others among whom you live. This was David's disposition, when he was told of the danger [in]\* going to kill Nabal and his household; when Abigail, a discreet woman, came and diverted him; Oh, saith he, 'Blessed be God, and blessed be thou, and blessed be thy counsel,' 1 Sam. xxv. 32; thou hast kept me from shedding of innocent blood this day. So we should bless God, and bless them that labour by their good counsel and advice to hinder us from any sinful course, whatsoever it is.†

*Sol. (4.) And then again, as a help to awaken thy conscience, go to the house of mourning.* That will help us by awakening conscience. Consider the judgments of God abroad in the church, and consider our danger at home, and labour to have our hearts awakened; and then we will be ready to judge ourselves, when we keep our souls in a waking temper; take heed of spiritual security above all things.

*Sol. (5.) For our conversion,‡ let it not be with the world;* for then we will justify ourselves, but converse with those that are better, and the light of their excellency will abase us, and make us to judge ourselves. I have reason to be as good as they, to be as forward as they; what a shame is it for me not to do as they do! To bring ourselves to the light of good examples, it doth much good to Christians, and makes them ashamed of their backwardness and dulness. Those that have false hearts they§ shun the company of those that are better than themselves; who because they would have all alike, they besmear and sully others in their reputation, because they shall not be thought to be better than they. A base and devilish course! Whereas a Christian labours to converse with those that are better, because he would grow better than himself; take heed of a false heart in this kind.

*Sol. (6.) Again, because I cannot follow the argument so fully as I*

\* 'In' added in B, C.—G.

† Qu. 'conversation'?—ED.

‡ 'It is' not in B, C.—G.

§ 'They' not in B, C.—G.

<sup>1</sup> The words 'a spot,' &c., blunderingly omitted in C; and reads, 'If any man be so uncivil, when a man shews him to be an unreasonable man.'—G.



thought I should have done, when all these helps and directions perhaps are not sufficient, *join with this\* a desire that God would help us by his own Spirit to search our hearts and judge ourselves*; and complain to him of our corruptions and weaknesses; as the virgin when she was forced, Deut. xxii. 26, if she complained, she saved her reputation and her life. So complain to God, Lord, I would serve thee, but corruption bears too great a sway in me; and desire God to help us with heavenly light and strength, so shall we escape eternal death. Corruption is his enemy. [It is]† Christ's enemy as well as ours, and Christ, if we beg of him, will help us against his enemy and ours; this should be our daily course and practice.

*Obj.* Now some will object, Here is a troublesome course! what a deal of do is here. What kind of life would you have the life of a Christian to be, to be thus discussing and censuring?

*Sol.* I answer, *it is the trouble of physic that prevents the trouble of sickness.* Is it not better to be troubled with physic, than to be troubled with a long and tedious sickness? Is it not better to be troubled with the pain of a tent,‡ than with the pain of a wound? All this is but preventing; by this course we prevent further trouble. For we must know that God hath put conscience into us, and this conscience must, and it shall have its work, either in this world or in the world to come; and therefore let us discharge it now by sifting, by examining and condemning ourselves, that it may not rise and stand against us, when we would have it our friend. Oh, carry things so that conscience may be a friend at the day of judgment, put it§ out of office now, let it say what it can, stifle it not, stop it not, divert it not, let it have its full scope to say what it can. For I beseech you do but consider the fearful estate of a man that hath neglected self-examination: when he comes to die, and is in any trouble, when he sees death before him, live he cannot, and to die he is unfit; for if he look back, he looks back to a world of sin² not repented of; forwards he sees eternal damnation before him; if he look to God, he is offended for his rebellious course of life. Where is then the comfort of such a one, that in the glorious light of the gospel doth not practise this duty of judging himself?

Sin must be judged either in a repentant heart or [else]|| by God, [it]|| being against God's prerogative, for he hath made a law against it. Judged it must be: we must give account of every 'idle word,' either in a repentant heart, by afflicting our own souls for it, or at the day of judgment, Mat. xii. 36. Now what a fearful thing will this be, to have all to make account for then. Is it not a great mercy, beloved, that God hath pointed out such a course to set up a court of conscience to prevent shame? Were it not a shame for us to have our faults written in our foreheads? And yet better so, than to have all to reckon for at the day of judgment. For if all our faults were laid open, our corrupt thoughts and vile affections here—there were hope of repentance in this world; but to have them laid open to our shame and confusion in the world to come, it is a matter of eternal despair. Now God, to prevent both these, hath set up a court of conscience, that we might judge ourselves, and prevent shame here, and damnation hereafter.

*Quest.* And how shall this torment [wretches]¶ in hell, when a man\*\* shall think, God put conscience in me; if I had not put it off, but suffered

\* 'These' in B, C.—G.

|| 'Else' and 'it' added in B, C.—G.

† 'It is' added in B, C.—G.

¶ 'Wretches' added in B, C.—G.

‡ That is = ligature made 'tent' or 'tight'.—G. \*\* 'They' in B, C.—G.

§ Qu. 'put it not'?—Ed.

¹ 'Yet' in C.—G.

it to have done what it would, I might have been thus and thus, but now I have wilfully cast myself into this [misery].\* It will be the hell in hell, that shall torment us more than hell,† when we shall think, I have brought myself carelessly and securely to that‡ cursed estate such shall be then in;§ therefore, I beseech you, consider the misery of a man that neglects the practice of this duty, and consider withal how happy and how sweet the condition of that man is that hath and carefully doth daily perform this duty: he is afraid of no ill tidings; if anything come, he hath made his reckoning and account with God, there is no sin upon the file|| unrepented of, and unjudged, and unconfessed to God. If he looks back, he considers his sins, but he hath repented of them. If he look forward, he sees nothing but God reconciled, and he can think of death and judgment with comfort. Oh, the happiness, and the peace, and the inward paradise of such a man, about¶ another careless man that puts off his estate, because he will not trouble and afflict his own soul, and torment himself before his time.

Here is the difference between a careless and a sound Christian; what the one thinks now, the other shall ere long. But only the one is mad now, and is not his own man, but besotted with ambition and covetousness; the other is sober, and in his right wits, able to judge and to censure himself. And therefore let holy persons that are careful, pass not a whit for the censures of vain persons; they speak against what they know not; against a strict course of life. Those that truss up the loins of their souls, and are careful of their ways, they are the only sound Christians; they are the only comfortable Christians, that can think of all conditions, and of all estates comfortably. I beseech you take these things to heart, and let us be stirred up to perform this duty I speak of,\*\* of daily trying and examining of†† our ways, that daily we may relish Christ.

*Quest.* What is the reason there is no more rejoicing and thankfulness for Christ?

*Sol.* We keep not the wound, I mean corruption, open; we see that which is unmortified, but we dry it up; and therefore we do not relish Christ. Sweet is Christ to the soul that is exercised in a search of his own heart and ways.

*Quest.* But at what times especially are we to examine?

*Sol.* At all times, every day; because we must feed on Christ every day. Therefore we ought to have these sour herbs, considering that we daily sin, that Christ may relish. Christ justifieth the ungodly every day. We have use of justification; and therefore we should daily see our corruptions, and judge ourselves for them: then Christ is Christ indeed, and Jesus is Jesus indeed to us. Every day let us do this. We have short memories; and sin when it is green it is easily rooted out. Therefore,

1. Every day, before sin be rooted, let us judge ourselves. The more we do it now every day, the less we shall have to do when we die, and when we are on our sickbeds; and therefore do it still, that we may have the less to do when we are weak. Is that a fit time to go over our life, and to censure our courses, when we are in such a case as we cannot think of earthly things? Oh, it is an ill time to get grace when we should use grace. And therefore, that we may have the less to do when we shall have

\* 'Misery' added in B, C.—G.

† 'The flames' in B, C.—G.

‡ 'This' in B, C.—G.

§ 'Such shall be then in' omitted in B, C.—G.

|| Cf. Vol. I., note 4, p. 289.—G.

¶ Qu. 'above'?—Ed.

\*\* 'I speak of' omitted in B, C.—G.

†† No 'of' in B, C.—G.

enough to do to struggle with sickness ; and have nothing to do when we die, but to die and comfortably yield up our souls to God let us be exact in our accounts every day.

2. But more especially we should do so when we are to deal with God, as now we are to receive the communion, wherein we draw near to God.\* Those that go to great persons, they will not go in rags, but put on their best attire, and make all neat and handsome, that nothing may be offensive. Have we this wisdom when we appear before any greater than ourselves ? When we are to appear before God and Christ (especially† to have so near communion as we have in the sacrament), let us labour, I say,‡ to come neat and prepared. When they were to come to the passover, the lamb was singled out beforehand three days, that they might have time to prepare themselves in, Exod. xii. 6. But we ought especially§ to examine and to judge ourselves when we come near to God in holy communion, to feast with God,|| which is here intended, when we come to receive the blessed sacrament. They should have prepared and have judged themselves. ¶ Because they neglected it they were judged of God ; and therefore know you that mean to receive now, now is the time when we should judge ourselves, the more especial time.\*\* Though we should do it every day, yet this is the special time. Take heed of superstition though, to thrust all religion into one time, to the time of the communion, as many do. They turn off all their examination to a little time before the communion, and the taking of the communion to one time of the year, to Easter ; and thus they think God will bear with them. Oh, take heed ! †† that is superstition. As I said before, keep a daily account ; every week examine how we have kept our daily account ; and every month examine how we have kept our weekly account ; and when we come to the communion, examine how we have kept our daily account, whether we have slubbered anything before,‡‡ especially when we come to take the communion.

*Quest.* But what shall we do, when we have done all ? When we have examined, and judged, and passed a censure upon ourselves,§§ what shall [we] do when we have done all ?

*Sol.* When we are condemned in one court, go to another ; as a man that is condemned in the Common Law, he appeals to the Chancery. When we are condemned in the court of justice, fly to God's chancery, fly to mercy. He that hath a sentence passed in one court, he appeals to another : when we have judged ourselves, then appeal to mercy ; for this is to do it in faith ; and when we judge ourselves in faith, then, upon our judging, we know that God will pardon. You know he hath promised, ' If we confess our sins, he is merciful to forgive them,' 1 John i. 9. Say, Lord, I confess them, cancel thou the bond, cancel thou the debt. Therefore a Christian's plea is, when he hath judged himself, to fly to God for pardon. Saul, we know, could judge himself ; and Judas could pass a sentence upon his

\* 'Unto him' in B, C.—G. † 'Specially' in B, C.—G.

‡ 'I say' not in B, C ; and 'much more' added after labour. Neat = pure.—G.

§ 'And ought not we' in B, C.—G.

|| 'Him' in B, C ; and 'which is here intended' omitted.—G.

¶ 'But because' in B, C.—G.

\*\* 'The more . . . is the special time' omitted in B, C.—G.

†† 'Of such a superstitious course' added in B, C ; and 'That is . . . before' omitted.—G.

‡‡ 'We have grown in grace, got ground of corruption, been exact in time, hung loose from God or not' added in B, C.—G.

§§ 'In a strict manner' added in B, C ; and 'when we have done all' omitted.—G.

own act, that he had sinned; but they went no further, they did not fly to God for mercy in Christ. Therefore let us fly to the throne of grace; as we have an excellent pattern of this, Ps. cxxx. 3: saith the psalmist there, 'If thou be strict to mark what is done amiss, Lord, who shall abide it?' There he is condemned in one court. If thou be strict to mark what is done amiss, who shall abide it? There, being condemned in that court, he flies to the throne of grace: 'But there is mercy with thee, that thou mightst be feared.' Lord, if thou be strict to mark what is done amiss by me in this action and in that action, who shall abide it? But, Lord, there is mercy with thee in Jesus Christ, in whom thou hast stablished a throne of mercy;\* there is mercy with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Take this course, and undoubtedly God will shew mercy; because the Son directs us to the Father in the Lord's prayer that we should ask forgiveness; and God the Father directs us to his Son, to believe his Son† for forgiveness. 'This is his commandment, that we believe in his Son Jesus Christ,' 1 John iii. 23. We cannot honour the Father more, we cannot honour the Son more, than to go to God for mercy; because God in Christ now will be glorified in his mercy.‡

Let us fetch out a pardon of course for every sin. 'If we confess our sins, he is merciful to forgive our sins.' And therefore it is our own fault if we find not the assurance of the forgiveness of them, because we deal not roundly, without a spirit of guile, with God. That is the next duty then, after we have judged ourselves, to go to mercy. And to shew you one example, how peace comes in after this judging of ourselves, Rom. vii. 24, the blessed apostle complains of his own corruptions. He had laid sore to his own charge, that the ill that he would not do, that he did; and the good that he would do, that he did not; and he breaks out, 'Oh! wretched man that I am.' What did he find presently upon this? 'Thanks be to God,' presently upon it, as if he had found peace presently upon complaining of his corruptions. Oh, miserable man, &c.§ So when we honour God by confessing and judging ourselves, he will honour us with inward peace and joy; because faith honours him by trusting and relying upon his mercy. If therefore we would find inward peace in the pardon of our sins, let us deal faithfully with our souls in spreading our sins before God; and we shall find peace presently upon it. If not, learn to wait; for undoubtedly God will make good his promise.

*Quest.* But what shall we do in the next place, after we have so opened the case to God, and gone to him for pardon, and forgiveness, and mercy in Christ?

*Sol.* Then renew our covenant with God for the time to come, of better service, and enter upon reformation,|| upon our resolution; for this is a fruit of the former.

*Quest.* How shall we know that we have humbled ourselves, and judged ourselves as we should do?

*Sol.* When we relish the mercy of God in the pardon of our sins.

*Quest.* But how shall we know when God hath pardoned our sins?

*Sol.* When he gives us grace to renew our covenants for the time to come, not to offend him; and when he gives us strength to reform our ways; for with pardoning mercy there goeth healing mercy: Ps. ciii. 1, 'Praise the

\* 'Grace' in B, C; and 'There is . . . feared' omitted.—G.

† 'In him' in B, C.—G.

‡ 'In mercy to penitent sinners' in B, C.—G.

§ 'Oh, miserable man' omitted in B, C.—G.

|| 'Of life' in B, C; and 'Upon . . . of the former' omitted.—G.

Lord, O my soul, that forgives all thy sins, and heals all thine infirmities.' So these must go together, judging and censuring of ourselves; then pleading for mercy, and renewing of our covenants, with reformation thereupon. A Christian looks as well to the time to come as to the time past: for the time past he repents; for the time to come he resolves against all sin. A wicked carnal man could be content to be freed from the guilt of sins past, that his conscience might not twitch\* him and torment him. But for the time to come he makes no conscience to entertain any vows, and purposes, or desire, that God would assist him against all sin. But† a Christian is as careful of the sin that he is in danger to commit for the time to come,‡ as a wicked man is to have the sin past off his conscience.§

As therefore we would have an evidence of our certainty,|| let us look that we renew our covenants and purposes for the time to come; an excellent pattern for this you have, Ps. xix. 12, where David prays, 'Lord, cleanse me from my secret sins' (for the sins that hung upon him, and his sins past¶), and what for the time to come? 'Lord, keep me that presumptuous sins have not the dominion over me.' So we should pray to God, 'Lord, cleanse me from my former sins, and keep me by thy Holy Spirit, that presumptuous sins for the time to come have not the dominion over me;\*\*\* and as it is in the Lord's Prayer, to join both together, 'Forgive us our debts,' and 'lead us not into temptation' for the time to come. Those that feel in their souls' assurance of pardon, they†† will entertain purposes against all sin for the time to come; they will as heartily say, Lord, lead me not into temptation, as they will say, Lord, forgive my sins.

Use 1. Well,‡‡ I beseech you, *let us lay these things to heart, to practise them.* Our peace depends upon them. Oh! how sweet is peace and rest, after we have made our peace with God, when we have dealt thoroughly and soundly with our own souls, and have not daubed with them!§§ There may be dangerous times a-coming; there is a cloud hangs over our heads; we know not how it may fall; we see all the world is in combustion. Who, when troubles come, will be the happy man? [Even]|||| he that hath judged himself, accused himself, that hath mortified his corruptions, and, according to the grace that God hath given him, renewed his covenant and laboured to reform his life, and keeps it in his purpose of heart so to do (as David prays, that he may not offend God for the time to come¶¶), he is fit for all times; whatsoever times come they shall find him in good purposes. What a fearful thing were it if death, if some terrible judgment should light on us in an evil course of life; what would become of us then? Happy man is he that is in the good way, in good purposes, in good resolutions, that the bent of his soul is to God and to heavenward; and therefore, as we would evidence to ourselves, that our state is good, that we are wise, and not fools, I beseech you let us practise this duty, and make it more familiar to

\* 'Touch' in B, C.—G.

† 'For the future' in B, C.—G.

‡ 'But' not in B, C.—G.

§ 'Of his conscience pardoned' in B, C.—G.

|| 'In bliss' added in B, C.—G.

¶ 'The present sins that hung upon him, and his sins past' in B, C.—G.

\*\*\* 'Have no power over me' in B, C; and the 'and' following omitted, together with 'to join both together.'—G.

†† 'They' not in B, C; neither 'for the time to come' following.—G.

‡‡ 'Well' not in B, C.—G.

§§ That is = 'have not dealt superficially.' Cf. Ezek. xiii. 10, 11, 12 14 & vii. 28.—G.

|||| 'Even' added in B, C.—G.

¶¶ 'As David . . . to come' omitted in B, C.—G.

us than we have done ; and then undoubtedly we shall find somewhat in us better than nature. Nature cannot judge itself. Corruption cannot pass a censure upon itself. It is grace, a principle above nature, that censures corruption ; and therefore when we judge ourselves, it is an undoubted evidence that we are in the state of grace. Who would want such an evidence ?

*Use 2.* Again, when we find want of grace, *go out of ourselves, go\* to God and to Christ.* Naturally we stick in ourselves. Judas and Saul, they could not go to God for mercy, when their conscience was awaked with the sense of their sin. To go to God for pardon, it is an argument that there is somewhat wrought above nature in the heart ; and therefore, as we would have an evidence to our souls, that there is somewhat in us above common men, *let us judge ourselves ; let us spare no sin, that God may spare all,* Be severe to ourselves, that God may be merciful to us ; and when we have done this, look to the abundant mercy of God in Christ. ‘ Where sin hath abounded, grace hath more abounded,’ Rom. v. 13. Oh ! mercy is sweet after we have searched into our corruptions. There is a height, and breadth, and depth of mercy, when we have felt the height, and breadth, and depth of corruption first. The Lord give a blessing to that which hath been delivered.

\* ‘ On ’ inserted in B, C, and ‘ to ’ omitted.—G.

# JUDGMENT'S REASON.

## SERMON II.

*For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*—1 COR. XI. 30-32.

AFTER blessed St Paul had sown the seed of heavenly doctrine, Satan had sown some tares. Besides some corruption in doctrine, there was also corruption in life among the Corinthians; whereupon God was forced in mercy to visit them with some judgment: and lest they should be ignorant of the cause, the blessed apostle here doth put his finger to it, 'for this cause.' We have considered these four things in the words: *the cause* of the judgment; and then *the kinds*; and *the remedy* for the prevention, if it had been used: 'If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged;' and *the comfort*: howsoever, 'when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.' Of the cause, the kinds, and the remedy we have spoken; and now we proceed to the comfort.

Mark here the text that I have read unto you. Though we do all neglect this forenamed remedy in part, yet God is wonderful merciful: 'When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.' We will unfold the comfort, as the text leads us. In the words consider these things especially, these general heads:—\*

1. First of all, *that there is a world that must be condemned*: we shall not be condemned with the world.†

2. And then, *God's people shall not be condemned with the world.*

3. The third conclusion that ariseth out of the text is this, *that the way that God sanctifies to prevent his children from damnation, is fatherly correction and chastisement*; and therefore we are judged, that we should not be condemned with the world; in the unfolding of which course that God takes, these three things are to be touched:—

(1.) *That God's dealings with his children are but chastisements.*

(2.) *And his chastisements*:‡ 'We are chastened of the Lord.'

\* 'These general heads' omitted in B, C.—G.

† 'We . . . world' omitted in B, C.—G.

‡ 'They are his' in B, C.—G.

(3.) *And that\* they are blessed for this end, to keep us from damnation.* These things we will speak of in order.

*Doct. 1. First, There is a world that is to be condemned: God's children shall not be condemned with the world.*

What is the world in this place?

The world in this place, it is not the frame of heaven and earth; but (to avoid multiplicity of acceptions, in which were idle to spend time) by world here is meant those that Peter speaks of, the ungodly world, the world of ungodly.† As we see, 2 Pet. iii. 7, they are called the world of ungodly; so there is a world took out of the world, the world of the elect. For as in the great world there is the little world—man—so in the great world of mankind, there is a little world—the world of God's people; but here it is the world of the ungodly.

Why are they called the world?

They are called the world, *partly because they are great in the world.* They swagger in the world, as if they were upon their own dunghill there, and as if they were the only men in the world, as indeed for the most part they are. God's people are a concealed, a hidden people here. And then again, they are the world, *because they are the most of the world.* But especially they are the world, *because the best thing in them is the world.* They have their name from that they love. Love is an affection of union. What we love, that we are knit unto. Now because carnal men are in love with the things of the world, being united in their affections to it, they have their name from that they love. And indeed, anatomise a carnal man that is not in the state of grace, rip him up in his soul, what shall you find in him but the world? You shall find in his brain worldly plots, worldly policy and vanity. You shall find little of the word of God there, and scarce any thing that is good, because the best thing in him is the world; therefore he is the world.‡ But to pass from the meaning of the word to the point: *This world must be condemned.* Why condemned? Mark these four or five reasons.

[1.] First of all, *because the world doth set itself upon things that must be condemned, upon present vanities.* Why?§ All things in this world must pass through the fire ere long, the frame of heaven and earth and all in it. Now those that love the world especially, and have no better things in their souls, they must perish with the world. He that stands on ice, and on slippery things, he slips with the thing he stands on. So those that fasten their souls upon the world, upon slippery and vain things, they fall, and slip with the things themselves. Now, because the world pitched their happiness|| in the things of this life, they are vain as the things themselves.¶ But to go on.

[2.] A second reason why the world must be condemned is this, *because they serve a damned prince,* and it is pity that the state of the subject and the state of the prince should be severed. Satan they serve; Satan rules in them according to his own lust; Satan bathes himself in their humour as it were, in their anger, in their pride [in their covetousness\*\*], in their melancholy, in their passion. As Saul, when he was given up to an evil passion, the devil seized upon him; so the devil leads them according to the stream of their own humour and of their own lusts; they are led

\* No 'that' in B, C.—G.

† 'The world of ungodly' omitted in B, C.—G.

‡ 'Therefore . . . world' not in B, C.—G. || 'The worldly men pitch' in B, C.—G.

§ 'Why' not in B, C.—G.

¶ 'Are' added in B, C.—G.

\*\* 'In their covetousness' added, and 'in their melancholy' omitted in B, C.—G.



according to the bent of the prince of the world.\* Now, being led by the temptations of Satan, who knows where to have them upon any temptation, and leads them as we lead sheep with a green bough, when he presents anything to them, he knows where to have them; and he being a damned prince and governor, all that are under him are in the same condition.

[3.] The *third* reason why the world shall be damned is this, *because the world condemns God*. It is but quittance. Carnal people in the world condemn God's ways and God's children, and the ways of religion to be nice† and foolish. The world hath its conceits of itself, and scorns the sweetness of religion, and accounts the word and obedience to be a weak and poor spirit. §Considering that the world passeth such censures upon God's ways, and condemns the generation of the righteous, if God condemn the world, do you wonder, when the base and slavish world, led by the devil and by their own lusts, will condemn God and his ways? And certainly, if you would see into the poisonful disposition of persons among whom we live, that are yet in the world, how malicious they are to God's courses, you will not wonder that God hath ordained such to be set on the left hand, to pass the sentence of eternal condemnation upon them; because though the light discover to them which way they should walk, yet they abhor all God's ways, and take ways of their own: as if they would teach God wisdom, and prescribe what he should do; as if they were wiser than God. All your politicians they|| are such: they lead their lives as if they would teach God wisdom: what he should prescribe; as if they were wiser than he a great deal. Do you wonder that he condemns them [then]?¶

*Obj.* But you will say, 'the world?'\*\* What do you talk? We are baptized. We hear now and then a sermon! Are we the world? The world are Pagans, and Turks, and Jews, and such; perhaps papists. Such as they are the world.

*Ans.* Oh no, beloved, 'Babylon is in Jerusalem,' as the father saith,†† the world is in the city of God, the world is among you. Nay, and that part of the world that shall be deepest damned is here amongst us. For our damnation shall be deeper than the Turks' or Jews'. 'You have I known of all the nations of the world, saith God; and therefore I will be sure to visit you,' Amos iii. 2. The three bad grounds,‡‡ beloved, were the world, Mat. xiii. 1, *seq.* Howsoever, all heard the word, yet there was but one good. You may be of the world, and yet live in the midst of the church, as Paul, Phil. iii. 18, *seq.*, complains of many, 'of whom, saith he, I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, they are enemies to the cross of Christ,' [they were teachers in the church; they were so far from being aliens], 'whose end is damnation, whose belly is their god, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.' When the guides and teachers of the church, that should give aim at§§ salvation to other people; when they shall make 'their belly their god, and damnation their end;' shall we secure ourselves that we are in a good estate, because we are baptized, and because we hear the word; when the 'three bad grounds' did so? It is another manner of matter to be out of the world, and to be in Christ, than the world takes it for. Beloved, in holy duties there are two

\* 'They are led . . . of the world' omitted in B, C.—G.

† That is, 'condemned.'—G.

‡ Cf. Note c, Vol. II. p. 194.—G.

§ 'Now considering' in B, C.—G.

|| 'They' not in B, C.—G.

¶ 'Then' added in B, C.—G.

\*\* 'The world' omitted in B, C.—G.

†† Augustine de Civitate Dei.—G.

‡‡ 'Beloved' not in B, C.—G.

§§ 'Of' in B, C.—G.

things ; there is the outward<sup>1</sup> duty, the shell, and the life and soul of the duty. A carnal worldly man may do the outward thing ; he may be baptized and receive the communion ; he may come to hear the word of God, but there is a life and soul in the duty ; to hear as he should ; to be moulded into the performance of it ; to obey that we hear, and to come to receive the sacrament with reverence and due preparation ; and to increase the assurance of salvation, and our comfort and joy. This is the hard part of the duty ; this the world cannot do. Let us value ourselves by the practice of the inward part of the duty, the power of the duty, and not rest in the outward performance.

[4.] The next reason to shew that the world must needs be condemned, it is this, *because even in the church there are a company of men* (I beseech you, let not your thoughts go out of your\* congregations and places we live in when we speak of the world) *that will be damned.* It is a strange thing ; that will be damned ! Who will be damned ? I say, there are a company among whom we live, that resolve to be damned. Why ? There are evil courses, which whosoever will take, they will go to hell ; they will end in death, as in the Proverbs, Prov. viii. 35. 'He that takes such a course, hates his own soul.' God saith thus, that† is Wisdom himself ; and therefore if you wilfully walk in those courses that lead to hell, it is as much as if you would‡ be damned. Indeed, there is none but would be saved, if they would be saved in the paths of the broad way, that lead to damnation ; they could be content to go to heaven in a race of vanity. Who would not be saved in that sense ? But the world will be damned in this sense, if they resolve to take a course to flatter their own lusts, going their own ways in spite of God, in spite of his truth, in spite of conscience, and to despise the Spirit that awakeneth them and tells them that there is another way that they should walk in, and puts them in mind, 'This is the way, walk in it,' Isa. xxx. 21 ; and this is not the way, avoid it ; and yet they will rush on in their courses, as the horse rusheth into the battle. Say God what he will, the world will be damned. Are there not many that have been told of their pride§, of their vanities, of their lusts, of their sins that their conscience tells them they pamper themselves in ? and they will not amend for all this. This, in God's construction (and this conscience will tell them another day), is because they would go on rebelliously in courses tending to damnation. Nay, which is worse, there is a generation of venomous persons, that hate the ministers, hate good people, hate the image of God, and hate anything, that may present to their hearts a dislike of the courses they are wedded to. Oh ! I would they would hate the devil so ; and do you wonder that these are damned, that hate the image of God, the motions of the Spirit, and raise reproaches upon religion, and make it odious as much as they can, that their vileness may the less appear, and be the less disgraced in their wicked ways ? And yet this is the course of many thousands in the bosom of the church, and in the best places, that are guilty of this ; whom if one tell, that this temper and frame of soul is contrary to God, and will yield nothing but desperation in the end,|| notwithstanding they will not regard what you say. Well, beloved,¶ I must hasten. Many other reasons there are to shew that the world must be damned, as,

\* 'Our' in B, C.—G.

† 'Who' in B, C.—G.

‡ 'Resolved' in B, C.—G.

§ 'And hypocrisy' in B, C.—G.

|| 'They will nothing regard' in B, C.—G.

¶ 'Beloved' not in B, C.—G.

<sup>1</sup> 'Holy' in B, C.—G.

[5.] *The world, it is shut out of Christ's prayer.* They have no part in the prayer of Christ, in him that died to redeem us. And the world will not receive the Spirit, because they maintain their own lusts. Many other reasons the Scripture heaps upon this, that there are a company of men that must and will be damned. But what is the use of this?

Use (1.) *First, to pull our friends, our children, out of the world;* to get ourselves out of the world, as soon as we can. Come out of Sodom, come out of Babylon, make all haste; for, as the angel tells Lot, 'I will destroy this place,' Gen. xix. 16. The world is a place that God will destroy. It is Sodom; it is Babylon; get out of it. There is no being there, except you will reap eternal damnation with the world.

(2.) Again, *pass\* not for the censures of worldly proud people, that think that they are jolly Christians,* when they are but in truth damned persons. God may recover them, but yet they are in damnable ways. Who carest† for the sentence of a damned person, till he have gotten his pardon? Such are all profane persons, that have not the work of grace wrought in their hearts in an effectual manner; they are yet in the state of damnation. Why should we pass for their censures? There are a company of weak persons, who reason as weakly, If I do this, the world will say thus and thus. What is the world? The world is a generation of unregenerate wretched people, that must be damned. Who would regard the censure of a damned person? and indeed who would follow the guise of damned persons? And yet of late such is the madness of people, that they take up the fashions, though they be condemned fashions. They‡ do not consider the vanity of it, so to take up the fashions of damned persons.§ The world is a condemned generation; therefore take not up the guise and fashion of the world.|| The world's fashion is the worst fashion of all. I speak not of correspondency with the world in civil actions in the passages of our life. We must 'come out of the world,' as Christ saith, 'if we will not be correspondent in outward things,' 2 Cor. vi. 17; and here should be a redeeming of our peace with the world in yielding in lesser matters. But I speak of those things which concern our inward comfort and peace, and that concern the practice of holy duties; let us not stand in it, what the world judgeth or allows, but practise holy duties, though the world censure them; and abstain from wicked courses, though the world applaud them. So we shall have a seal that we are taken out of the world.

Use (2.) Let us make another use of trial, *and examine whether we be taken out of the world or no.* In brief, therefore, let us ask¶ our aims, our ends. For, those that are taken out of the world have aims beyond the world; they frame their courses to supernatural ends, to eternity; and labour so to guide themselves in this, that they may be saved in another world. We should steer and guide our actions suitable to our peace hereafter. We should have further ends than the world hath. He that is a worldling confines his thoughts within the compass of the world; he hath no further aim. Sometimes he hath by-thoughts of heaven and happiness. But he makes it not his aim, it is not his scope to which he directs his course. In the second place, answerable to our aims, let us examine what our affections are. Our affections will tell us of what city we are, whether of Jerusalem, or of Babylon, as one of the ancients saith well.\*\*

\* That is, = heed not.—G. ¶ 'Therefore take not up their guise' in B, C.—G

† That is, 'who would wish.'—G. ¶ 'Observe' in B, C.—G.

‡ 'And do not' in B, C.—G. \*\* Augustine.—Cf. \*\* p. 99, *an'e.*—G.

§ 'So to take . . . persons' not in B, C.—G.

Ask thy love, Whither dost thou weigh down in thy love? Doth earthly love as a weight press thee to things below? or is it a sanctified love, that carries thee to Christ, and to the things of God? Examine thy affections of love,\* of joy and delight, of what city thou art. Mere earthly actions are hypocritical; therefore the inward affections are the best discoverers of the estate of our soul, where our joy and delight is.† And ask likewise in the third place, our relish, What do we savour most? Come to a carnal man; put him to a course of vanity; he hath learned the language of the times, all your complimentary phrases; he hath them exactly; all the language of the time he can speak. But come to him in matters of religion; he is out of his theme there; he savours not those things. Those that are of the world speak of the world. Talk to them of vanity, of this and that, and you put them to their proper theme; but tell them of other things, they are mere strangers; and they speak as if they had never learned anything in that element. And so those that are of the world, they converse with those that are of the same bent; doves flock to doves, and delight in those that are like themselves. Many such arguments of trial we may have, but especially think what I have said before.‡ *Look to your aims, to your affections, and to your inward relish and bent of soul*, which way your and conversation is bent,§ and how it relisheth; and these will discover to us our state, as in Rev. xiii. 11, *seq.*, and other places: there antichrist is called the beast that riseth out of the earth; because Romish religion is taken out of the earth, that is, it hath earthly aims, earthly grounds and principles. It is all for the world; it is a fallacy indeed, popery and not religion; and thereupon the pope is called the beast rising out of the earth. All the considerations that feed popery are out of the earth. Oh! a glorious monarch of the church, to have glory; and in the church to have all that may feed the senses, and that may please the outward man. Every thing, I say, is to please the outward man, to get riches, &c. They are called Gentiles; 'the outward court shall be cast to the Gentiles.' He speaks there, that antichrist with his crew that follows him, they should trouble, vex, and persecute the church, and cast it out to the Gentiles. The followers of antichrist are called Gentiles. But I speak not of them. We are earth and Gentiles, if our aims, projects, and affections be towards the earth, as the Scripture useth to speak.|| Therefore,¶ let us examine ourselves by what I have said. I beseech you, let us consider that the world must be condemned. And before I leave it, do but think what damnation is. I beseech you,\*\* have no slight thoughts of it. The Scripture saith, 'We shall not be condemned with the world.'

What is condemnation?

To be condemned is to be adjudged from the presence of God, and to be adjudged†† to eternal torment with the devil and his angels. It were somewhat unseasonable to enlarge this point; but I beseech you consider what is wrapped in this word 'condemned,'‡‡ 'condemned with the world;'

\* 'Love' not in B, C.—G.

† 'Where our joy and delight is' not in B, C.—G.

‡ 'But . . . before' not in B, C. After 'we may have' there is 'therefore.'—G.

§ 'Sways' in B, C.—G.

|| The paragraph 'Everything I say' . . . to 'useth to speak' not in B, C.—G.

¶ 'I beseech you, let us examine ourselves by what I have said and considered, that,' &c., in B, C.—G.

\*\* 'I beseech you' not in B, C . . . nor 'the Scripture saith,' &c.—G.

†† 'Cast' in B, C.—G. ‡‡ 'Condemned' not in B, C.—G.

that so if we hate the end, damnation, we may hate the way that leads to it, the ways of the world. But to go on.

*Doct.* The second general is this, *that God's children shall not be condemned with the world.*

*Quest.* Why?

*Ans.* 1. *Because they are the first-fruits dedicated to God out of the world, and Christ was condemned for them.* How can they be condemned for whom Christ himself\* was condemned?

*Ans.* 2. And then *a godly man in the state of grace, he is in heaven already;* and who shall pull him from heaven? How can he be condemned that is in heaven already? We sit in heavenly places already. Beloved, to hold that an elect Christian may fall away, is to pull Christ himself out of heaven; we are in heaven already in Christ. A Christian being a member of Christ cannot be condemned, no more than Christ can be condemned, be it spoken with reverence to his majesty.

*Ans.* 3. Again, *for whom Christ is a priest, he is a king.* He is a king to rule them in this world, and to subdue whatsoever might oppose their salvation. Whom he hath bought with his blood as a priest, he rules as a king, and orders all things to help their salvation. Where Christ is a king, for those he is a priest.† Can those be condemned then?‡ And he vouchsafes them a spirit stronger than the world. God's children have a spirit in them that overcomes the world: 'Stronger is he that is in you,' saith John, 'than he that is in the world,' 1 John iv. 4. For the Spirit of God suggests reasons, and arguments, and motives that are stronger to a believing soul than the temptations of the world are; the world biasseth them one way, and the Spirit of God another way. The children of God have the Spirit of God, especially a spirit of faith, therefore they overcome the world. It presents better things in religion than the world can afford. Now those that have the Spirit of God, and a spirit of faith, by which they overcome the world, how can they be condemned with the world? And God takes a safe course with his children.

*Note.* That they may not be condemned with the world, he makes the world to condemn them; that they may not love the world, he makes the world to hate them; that they may be crucified to the world, he makes the world be crucified to them. Therefore they meet with crosses, and abuses, and wrongs in the world. Because he will not have them perish with the world, he sends them afflictions in the world, and by the world. Thus I might enlarge myself in the condition of God's people, of his saints;§ they shall not be condemned with the wicked world.

*Use.* The use of it is this, *that we should be in love with the state of God's people.*|| Who would not be in love with this condition? I may boldly speak it, my beloved. The meanest poor soul that hath the work of grace upon it, that is taken out of the world, is in a better condition than the greatest worldling. Let a man be as happy as a world¶ can make him; if he be a condemned man, what is his condition? All the time that other men live, that are not in the state of grace, it is but the time between the sentence passing and the execution. Now, that is but a little time. The life of a carnal man, it is but the life of a man condemned at the bar, and is deferred for the execution a while. Another man, that is in the

\* 'Himself' in B, C.—G. † 'Where Christ . . . priest,' not in B, C.—G.

‡ 'Whom Christ vouchsafes a spirit,' &c., in B, C.—G.

§ 'Of his saints' not in B, C.—G. ¶ 'The world' in B, C.—G.

|| 'Holy men' in B, C.—G.

state of grace, he is safe; he shall not be condemned with the world; he is in heaven already; he is sure of it, as if he were there. I beseech you, let this make us in love with the sincerity of religion, and let us never cease labouring till we have gotten out of this cursed state into this happy estate.\* There is but a little flock of Christ. We should never give our temples† quiet, and our souls rest, till we‡ evidence to them that we are of the little number which are taken out of the world; till we see that we are a first-fruits dedicated to God; till we find the beginnings of grace wrought in our souls. Why should we defer one hour till we have gotten this assurance, considering our life is so uncertain?

*Doct. 3.* The third general thing is this, *the course that God takes with his children in this world, whereby they are preserved from damnation, it is corrections and chastisements.* We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world; wherein, as I shewed you, there are these three branches. I will specially speak of the last.§

(1.) *First, that whatsoever God's dealings be with his children, it is but a fatherly correction and chastisement;* and therefore it is in mercy, in discretion; a little punishment is enough of a mother to her child. God hath the wisdom of a father, but he hath the bowels of a mother; and therefore God|| is pitiful and merciful, because he is a Father. There is a wondrous sweet comfort wrapped in that word *Father*. The whole world is not worth this¶ that is yielded to a Christian from this, that a Christian\*\* is the child of God, and that God is his Father. I might enlarge myself in the point, that all are but fatherly corrections. A father, when he sees his child in an evil way, he corrects him; but it is a preventing correction, it is to prevent execution after. A child set at liberty makes his mother and his father ashamed; and so if we should be set too much at liberty, if God should not meet us with seasonable correction, we should shame religion and shame Christ; and therefore God in mercy corrects us with fatherly correction. Oh! it is a wonderful comfort to think, when we are taken into the covenant of grace, all comes from God as a Father then; and having taken us of enemies to be children, will he cast off his children for infirmities? Will a mother cast off her children for breaches, for something that displeaseth her? No! But rather she will be more merciful and more pitiful. But I will not enlarge myself in this point. It is a familiar point; and, I suppose, you hear it often. But, I beseech you, do but think of it, that it may be ready in your hearts and in your memories against temptation, to have a good conceit of God. It overcomes temptation†† oftentimes to have a good conceit of God, to present God to our souls as a father, whereas the devil would present him as a judge, as one that hates us. Oh! take heed of it, this is but fatherly correction. God is our Father: 'Our Father which art in heaven,' saith Christ. Let us help our souls by presenting God to us in these colours, as a father in temptation, and all that we suffer as fatherly corrections. To speak familiarly, we know in the street,‡‡ when one child is corrected, and another is not, we know he is the father that corrects. God doth not use to correct those that are not his children; he lets them go on still, they

\* 'Condition' in B, C.—G.

† That is, = bodies. Cf. 1 Cor. vi. 19.—G.

‡ 'Can evidence' in B, C.—G.

§ 'I will . . . last' not in B, C; nor 'because he is a Father.'—G.

|| 'He' in B, C.—G.

†† 'Temptations' in B, C.—G.

¶ 'The comfort' in B, C.—G.

‡‡ 'When we see in the street' in B, C.—G.

\*\* 'He' in B, C.—G.

are not worth correcting ; \* because they have abused his mercy before, he lets them go on.† When God takes us in our sinful course, and meets with us, and hedgeth our ways with thorns, he shews himself to be a Father. We are bastards, and not sons, if we have not correction, as at large it is sweetly followed, and many arguments to it,‡ Heb. xii. 7, *seq.* God shews himself a Father when he corrects us, or else we are bastards, and not sons.

*Use 1.* Well, let us take all things therefore the better at God's hands, because they are but corrections ; for we need it, the best of us. The best gardens have need of weeding, and the best metals have need of purging, and the best linen hath need of washing. God knows it well enough, and therefore he will purge us. As the Scripture saith, As gold and silver is purged, he will purge out the dross, and all in mercy. We lose nothing by any visitations of God but corruption. The fruit of all his dealing with us is to take sin from us.

2. It is said here in the *second* place, that as *they are corrections*, so *they are from God*. We are chastened of the Lord. I will but touch it in a word, and that to help our forgetfulness in a main point. In the governing of a Christian life we are carried naturally to second causes. Now all second causes are but rods in God's hands. Look therefore to the hand that smites, look to God in all. He chastiseth us, as David said in the matter of Shimei, 2 Sam. xvi. 10 ; and as Job, ' It is the Lord that hath given, and the Lord hath taken away,' Job i. 21. And so in benefits we should see God in all things, and think we are to deal with him. Our work lies in heaven, therefore in any visitation or cross, I beseech you, think of it. We are to deal with the great Mover of heaven and earth, that hath all second causes in his hand ; that hath the hearts of kings in his hand ; § and let us make our peace with him.

*Quest.* Why should we go to the serjeant ? We should make our peace with the judge ; make not peace with the second causes, but with the principal. It is God that chastiseth ; let us make our peace there, || and he will take off the second cause. I cannot follow the point ; I beseech you think of it. We forget it in our practice, and that makes us so atheistical, as if there were not a God to govern the world, but we run presently upon second causes.¶

Let us go on ; God's corrections are but chastenings, and they are from him. And they are sanctified of him, which is the main point, to preserve us from being damned with the world. These corrections are sanctified by God for that end.\*\*

*Quest.* And how is that ?

*Ans. 1.* Because they embitter sinful courses to us. When we are crossed in our sinful courses, sinful courses are embittered unto us ; we grow out of love with them.

*Ans. 2.* And then again, these chastisements, they help us to relish heaven and heavenly things better. Oh ! then the word of God is the word of God indeed ; then Christ is Christ ; then heavenly things are heavenly things ;

\* 'Chastising' in B, C.—G. † 'He lets them go on' not in B, C.—G.

‡ 'And many arguments to it,' with the next sentence, 'God shews,' &c., not in B, C.—G.

§ 'That hath the hearts,' &c., not in B, C.—G.

|| 'Agree with him' in B, C.—G.

¶ 'Inferior things,' and 'I go on,' in B, C.—G.

\*\* 'These . . . end' not in B, C.—G.

then a messenger, one of a thousand, will be heard, as Job xxxiii. 23; then welcome the man of God all that time. When a man cannot relish earthly things, when he cannot take comfort by his friends, then welcome heavenly comforts. Chastisements, therefore, they help us, that we be not damned with the world, by making us out of love with vanities, that we shall not care for them. We see they do us good, to help us to relish heavenly things. Blessed are those corrections that are sanctified that way. We hear with other ears then. When we have been in the fire, and God hath met with us by crosses, we hear with another manner of attention than at other times. Though\* I might be large on the point, for it is very large, rather let us think of it to make use of it. But† first to take away all objections, that I may fasten the comfort upon our souls the better, it may be objected,

*Obj. 1. Oh! but it is such a correction as takes away my friends from me. I cannot have the use of my friends, as sometime in a noisome contagious disease.*

*Ans.* What if thou hast no friends but God and his angels to help thee to heaven? Whatsoever comfort God conveys by friends, he hath it in himself still; and he can convey those immediate comforts which are most sweet, when they come from the spring; when outward comforts fail, those are the best comforts. It is a greater grace for a prince to visit a sick body himself than to send a messenger to visit him. So when no man can come to us, God himself comes from heaven, and visits us by the comforts of the Holy Spirit; and what do we lose‡ then?

*Obj. 2. Oh! but it is a sharp affliction, a sharp cross.*

*Ans.* Oh! but it is a sweet hand it comes from. Shall not I take a cup out of a father's hand? It is a bitter cup, but it is out of a father's hand, and therefore out of a loving hand. It is from love, and it is directed to my good, and it is sweetly tempered and mixed, and moderated; and therefore if it come from love, and be directed to my good, and for the present be mixed and moderated§—why should I complain of the correction, that is for my good, to keep me that I should not be damned with the world?

*Obj. 3. But how can death itself be a correction, when it takes away life, that we have no time to be better?*

*Ans.* I answer, God, to his children, before he takes them out of the world, he|| gives them his Spirit, that they sharply repent, and put much to a little time; and God requires rather truth of heart than length of time. As we see sick bodies shoot out suddenly that did not grow before, so a sick afflicted soul it shoots out suddenly. God visits it with sharp repentance, though it be short, perhaps that they call their ways to account;¶ and though he take them out of the world, yet he saves their souls.

*Obj. 4. But perhaps it is but hypocritical repentance before my death (because many recover, and shew themselves to be hypocrites after); and so if I should die, perhaps I should die an hypocrite.*

*Ans.* Oh! take heed of that. Many do so; as an ancient saith, He that is never good but under the cross (he means *only*), is never good.\*\* He that is good under bonds is never good; if he doth it from fear, and not

\* 'Though' not in B, C.—G. † 'And' in B, C.—G. ‡ Qu. 'lose'?—Ed.

§ 'By him' in B, C.—G. || 'He' not in B, C.—G.

¶ 'Perhaps that . . . account,' not in B, C.—G.

\*\* This reads in B, C, 'He that is never good but under the cross, such a one is never good' in B C.—G.



from hatred of sin. But thou shalt know that it was not in hypocrisy that now thou hast repented in thy sickness, if thou desire rather the grace of God, than to recover. A soul that is sanctified had rather have pardon of sin, and strength against corruption, than to have recovery; and he desires God from his soul: Now, Lord, sanctify this sickness, and this cross before thou take it away; for the plaster would fall off if the wound were healed; and the malady would cease if there were not a ground. I beseech you therefore, those that make that objection, let them consider whether they desire the removal of the cross rather,\* or to have it sanctified, before it be removed from them. A true heart doth so; and it were better that we should be under the cross all the days of our lives, and to have the cross laid more heavy upon us, than that we should grow worse under it, as many do, and are not the better for it. But say thou, 'Nay, Lord, rather sear me, and burn me, and chastise me; save my soul and do what thou wilt.' That is the disposition of a Christian; for God takes a great deal of liberty with our carcasses, and in our outward estate. Such things we must leave behind us, we know not how soon; and† therefore he takes liberty to correct us in them sharply; but so he saves our souls, all is in mercy. It is a blessed correction that draws us nearer to him, that makes us hate sin more, and love the ways of God more.

*Obj. 5.* But it will be objected again, *but I am accessory to my own death, I have been an intemperate man, I have shortened my own days.*

*Ans.* Beloved, a heavy temptation at the hour of death! But be not discouraged. For so blessed Josiah shortened his own days; for he went rashly when he had counsel to the contrary; and so 'the good prophet' shortened his own days when the lion met him and slew him by the way for his disobedience, 1 Kings xiii. 24; and so the good thief. Therefore despair not at that, if the thing should be that thou shouldst fall into some course whereby thou shouldst shorten thine own days, and be accessory to thine own death; as these Corinthians, they were accessory to their own deaths,‡ and they slept before their time; they cut the thread of their own life and they put out their own candle. No question but this was heavy upon the conscience; I brought myself to it. This is the hell of hells of the damned souls; I brought myself hither. So when we are guilty of the punishment and affliction of ourselves, it is most bitter unto us. But, I say, consider the former examples, God hath strange ways to bring his children home to him, and sometimes the furthest way about is the nearest way home.§ God suffers his children to sin, and by sin to shorten their days, and all to occasion repentance and a sight of their corruption, and a hatred of themselves, and of their base courses, and to give themselves to him more thoroughly than before. So infinitely wise and gracious is God to those that belong to him. So that, notwithstanding all objections to the contrary, the position laid down before is true, that God sanctifies corrections to us, that we should not be damned with the world.

*Uses of all.* Use 1. Now to make some general use of all that hath been spoken, and so to end all.|| Is this so? Here we might stand upon a point to instruct our judgment, to shew that *all the corrections of God's children, they come not from vindictive justice, but from a fatherly affection,*

\* 'Or' in B, C.—G.

† 'And' not in B, C.—G.

‡ 'They were accessory to their own deaths' not in B, C, but simply, 'who slept before their time, they cut,' &c.—G.

§ In the margin here, 'As in Israel's forty years' voyage. Cf.

|| 'So' not in B, C.—G.

against that doctrine of popery that maintains satisfaction ; that judgments are for satisfaction. A proud and damnable point. Can a man with a penny deserve a thousand pounds ? Sin deserves eternal damnation. Can we with a little suffering satisfy that ? ' The wages of sin is death,' Rom. vi. 23, eternal death. It is a gross position. No ! They are corrections, not satisfactions ; they come from fatherly affection. This is to rectify our judgment in that point.

*Use 2.* And then again, to help us against Satan's temptations. He useth afflictions as temptations to weaken our faith.

*Obj.* If God did love thee, he would never do so and so ; God hates thee ;\* why doth he follow thee with his judgments, but that he hates thee and hath no delight in thee ? And why should he single out thee more than others ?

*Ans.* Retort back again, Nay ! because God loves me, he deals thus with me ; because he meanst to save my soul, therefore he will not suffer me quietly to run the broad way to destruction. Therefore it is rather an argument of love, from that, whereby Satan would shake our faith. Doth not Satan set upon Christ with this temptation ? He comes with an ' if.' ' If thou be the Son of God,' Matt. iv. 3, *seq.* If thou wert the child of God, shouldst thou be so afflicted ? Whereas, indeed, because we are the sons of God, therefore we are afflicted. Beat back therefore Satan's weapons into his own bosom again. If God corrected his own Son, that is, the author of our salvation (when yet under the signs of his greatest displeasure, his Father loved him), let us think that we may be beloved of God in the signs of his greatest displeasure, as Christ upon the cross, ' My God, my God,' &c.† He apprehended, in the signs of greatest displeasure, God's love, and so should we. Let us answer God's dealing with the like. His dealing is this.§ In the worst condition he calls us children, and he is our father, and loves us. Therefore, in the worst condition, let us trust him, and say with Job. ' Though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee,' Job xiii. 15.

*Quest.* Why ?

*Ans.* Because thou mayest kill me, and yet be a father, and mayest do it in love. I will answer thy dealing by my faith again ; therefore though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee.

*Use 3.* Again, this strengthens our judgment in the point of perseverance, that being once in the state of grace, we shall hold out still. For rather than God's children shall fall away, God will take a course that they should not be damned with the world ; he will correct them. It is most divinely set down, Rom. viii. 35. Saith he, among other things,|| ' Neither life nor death shall be able to separate us from the love of God ;' neither life, nor the vanities of this life.

*Quest.* And what if we give God cause to visit us with death.¶

*Ans.* ' Yet neither life nor death shall separate us from the love of God,' as here the Corinthians they were visited with death ; yet neither life nor death shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ ; and therefore be established in the truth of that point.

*Use 4.* Then again, for a further use, it fenceth the soul against the scandal\*\*

\* ' God hates thee ' not in B, C.—G.

† ' Meaneth ' in B, C.—G.

‡ ' Still ' in B, C.—G.

§ ' His dealing is this ' not in B, C.—G.

|| ' Saith he among other things ' not in B, C.—G.

¶ ' As here the Corinthians were visited ' inserted here in B, C.—G.

\*\* That is, the ' stumblingblock.'—G.

of the cross, and of visitations and sicknesses and crosses that we meet withal in the world; for the scandal is this: shall we be in love with the ways of God, wherein we meet with these and these corrections? Oh, yes! take not scandal\* at that which is sanctified by God to be a means to preserve us from being damned with the world. And the child of God, take him at the lowest, take him at the worst, he is better than a worldling at the best. Take no offence, therefore, at God's dispensation with his children. All is, that they may not be damned with the world. Do not only justify God, but magnify God for his corrections, and after thou shalt receive fruit by them. And we have reason, when we find ourselves more mortified to the world, and to have the quiet fruit of righteousness to magnify God. Hath the Spirit sanctified it to thee to make thee lead another course of life? Say, Blessed be God for sending this cross, for indeed we have oftentimes occasion to bless God more for crosses than for comforts. There is a blessing hidden in the worst things to God's children, as there is a cross in the best things to the wicked. There is a blessing in death; a blessing in sickness; a blessing in the hatred of their enemies; a blessing in their losses whatsoever. There is a blessing hidden in the worst things; and therefore let us not only justify God, but glorify and magnify God for his mercy, that rather than we shall be condemned with the world, he will take this course with us.

*Use 5.* And then here again, *you have a ground of impregnable comfort in all temptations whatsoever*; a wondrous comfort, that God will take a course with his to bring them to heaven. What a blessed course is this, that† the time to come we may take in trust of God, as well as the time past? That now in the state of grace, rather than he will condemn us, he will take one course or other to bring us to heaven? Rather than David shall live in his sin, he will send Nathan to him; rather than Peter shall not repent, Christ will look back upon him; rather than God's children shall go the broad way, God‡ will send the devil himself to annoy them, and to infest them, and to vex them. God will be sure to lose none of his. What a comfort is this? and therefore never think that we can be in such a condition wherein there is true ground of despair. No! We cannot. We are under hope in the most woeful condition in the world. We are under hope still;§ for there is more mercy in God than can be sin and evil in us; and he is infinitely wise to rule all to his own ends. What if things seem untoward? They are in his hands; he hath a powerful hand to manage the worst things|| to good. So gloriously wise and powerful is God, that he sways the worst things. 'All things work for the best for those that love God,' Rom. viii. 28, even the worst things in this world.

*Obj.* Oh! but profane spirits will object and say, 'If this be so, we may be careless; if our salvation be made sure, that we shall not be condemned with the world, that God will take care even to bring us to heaven.'

*Ans.* Oh! but the text takes away that objection of profane spirits that take liberty from this blessed truth of God. For though God do not damn his with the world, yet he sharply corrects them here.¶ By a careful sober

\* 'Take no offence' in B, C.—G.

† 'For,' and 'we may trust God,' in B, C.—G.

‡ 'He' in B, C.—G.

§ 'We are under hope still' not in B, C.—G.

|| 'All evil' in B, C.—G.

¶ 'That by,' &c., in B, C.—G.

life they might obtain many blessings, and prevent many judgments, and make their pilgrimage more comfortable. Therefore it argues neither grace, nor wit to argue so, because God will save me, therefore I will take liberty. No ! Though God will save thee, yet he will take such a course that thou shalt endure such sharpness for thy sin, that it shall be more bitter than the sweetest of it was pleasant. There is no child of God that ever came to heaven, but God hath made their sinful courses more bitter to them than ever they have had benefit by them, though their souls have been safe. Put the case a man were sure not to be executed, yet to be branded, to be stigmatised, or to be disgraced in the country, would he for a paltry thing, not worth the speaking of, do wrong, because he should not be executed, and have friends to keep him from that ? Who would\* do such a thing as that, to bring himself to shame for a thing of nothing ? So put the case thou shalt not be damned, thou art sure of that ; yet thou mayest fall into such a course as God may brand thee ; and thou mayest bring disgrace to religion ; and mayest weaken the comfort of thine own soul ; and mayest make Satan rejoice ; and mayest grieve the angels about thee ; and mayest vex the Spirit in thee ; we may put a sting to the affliction we suffer, we may deprive ourselves of comfort in the midst of comforts for our boldness. Who, that hath the use of his wits, would do this for the pleasures of sin for a season ?

Oh ! therefore, when you go about to sin, consider what you go about. I go about to grieve God's Spirit, to provoke my heavenly Father ; I go about to force out of his hand some rod, some correction ; I go about to rejoice Satan ; to grieve the angels, that are about me for my custody ; to put a sting to my trouble, and to embitter it. This is the ill of ills, when a man is in affliction ; my own wickedness brought me to this. Let us wisely consider this : though God save our souls, yet he will take such a course in this world, as we shall wish that we had not tried conclusions with God. David gave liberty to his lusts, but he wished (no doubt a thousand times), that he had not bought his pleasure at so dear a rate. Therefore, this I add, to fence this truth from the offence that a carnal heart takes at it. But to come to the proper and native use of it. Consider, I beseech you, how this doctrine is a fence against the rock of despair, and against the rock of presumption.

*First, Against the rock of presumption.* The soul may say, shall I be bold to sin ? Surely I shall buy the pleasures of sin at a dear rate ;† God will correct me sharply. And shall I force‡ God for such a pleasure, and for such a profit ? No ! I will not buy sin at that rate. So it fenceth the soul from presumption.

*Again, it fenceth the soul from despair.* Oh ! but I have sinned ; my own weakness hath given me the foil ; and Satan he joins with my weakness and hath foiled me. Oh ! but do not you yet despair, for therefore we are corrected, that we should not be condemned with the world ; as I said before,§ a Christian is never so low, but mercy triumphs over the ill in him. There is more abundant mercy|| in God, than there can be ill in us. So happy a condition it is to be in Christ, that¶ in the covenant of grace, God

\* 'Could' in B, C.—G.

† 'Dearly' in B, C.—G.

‡ 'Provoke him' in B, C.—G.

§ 'As I said before' not in B, C.—G.

|| 'Goodness' in B, C.—G.

¶ 'That' not in B, C ; and 'wherein God sets,' &c.—G.

sets himself to triumph over the greatest ills, over sin, and over affliction. There can be no ill so great, but it yields to his mercy in Jesus Christ, and therefore be not discouraged,\* whatsoever ill we suffer. And so it keeps us from these two rocks of presumption and despair. Let us therefore for a conclusion of all take this course.

First of all, *be sure, beloved, that we get out of the world,† get out of Sodom, get out of the condition we are in by nature.* Trust not to a formal profession of religion. Do not deceive your souls; it will deceive you. Get out of the world, and get into Christ; get something by attending upon the means, and by prayer, and by crossing your corruptions; get somewhat in‡ you, that may evidence that you are taken out of the world, and that you are in Christ, being led with a better spirit than your own.

In the next place, *when you are in the state of grace, honour that condition.* Walk worthy of that glorious condition.§ Oh! the state of a Christian, it is a glorious state. It requires much holy wisdom to manage the state of Christianity. If we be Christians, let us carry ourselves like Christians worthily; if we will have good of our profession. Let us carry ourselves so, as that we may not go so far in religion, as may minister God more matter to damn us. What good is it to have so much knowledge, and so much profession as shall damn us the more? But if we will be religious, let us be religious to purpose,|| and let us walk worthy of this glorious state.

*Obj.* Oh! but in the next place, I have not done it,¶ I have forgotten my condition, forgotten my hopes, forgotten my state, and\*\* regarded my base lusts more; I have been surprised, and catched.

*Sol.* Then take this course: judge yourselves, if you have been overtaken; take the counsel of the apostle, while there is hope, and judge yourselves.††

*Obj.* But I see now, God is ready to take me out of the world, and I have not judged myself as I should; though I be out of love with my courses, and am in league with no evil‡ course, yet I have been‡‡ faulty.

*Sol.* Oh! comfort thyself, let not Satan swallow thee up in despair; mark what the apostle saith, God sends this, that we should not be condemned with the world; and therefore presently make a covenant with him, renew thy purposes presently, as Ps. xxv. 1, *seq.* All his ways to his children are mercy and truth; his ways of correction and his ways of love, all his ways§§ are mercy. And therefore take heed that we never deny our own mercy, that we never forsake our own mercy; let not Satan prevail so much. We have need of all this, beloved, especially to remember it||| in the time of temptation, in spiritual desolation, when we gasp for comfort; let us labour to learn this spiritual wisdom, to present to our own souls the promises of the gospel, and the relation that God hath put upon himself,

\* 'Whatsoever . . . therefore' not in B, C; and the latter sentence 'won for a conclusion.'—G.

† 'Be sure . . . world' not in B, C.—G.

‡ 'To' in B, C.—G.

§ 'Calling' in B, C.—G.

|| 'In deed and not in word only' in B, C; but 'and let us,' &c., omitted.—G.

¶ 'This' in B, C.—G.

\*\* 'And' not in B, C; but with this addition, 'and walked loosely with God.'—G.

†† 'Repent speedily' in B, C.—G.

‡‡ 'Exceeding' not in B, C.—G.

§§ 'All his ways to his' in B, C.—G.

||| 'To remember it' not in B, C.—G.

to be a father ; his dealings to us, that they are fatherly corrections. Let not Satan wring these comforts out of our souls. But let us honour God by trusting him in life and death, and say with Job, ' Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him,' Job xiii. 15. So sweet and powerful is the death of Christ, that it turns all things, even the bitterest, to the greatest good. But this may be sufficient by the blessing of God's Spirit.