

DIVINE MEDITATIONS AND HOLY  
CONTEMPLATIONS.

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### NOTE.

The 'Divine Meditations and Holy Contemplations' appeared originally in a small volume (18mo.), published in 1638, having a finely-engraved title-page. A second edition was issued in 1651, and a third in 1658. The last is our text, and its title-page will be found below.\* These 'Meditations' seem to have been taken from Sibbes's Commonplace book, or from his lips as they occurred in his Sermons, as many of them will be found scattered up and down his writings. G.

\* DIVINE  
MEDITATIONS  
And  
HOLY  
CONTEMPLATIONS

BY

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*LONDON*.

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*L O N D O N*,  
Printed for *Simon Miller* at the Starre in  
*S<sup>t</sup> Pauls Church-yard*, near the  
West end. 1658.

## TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

COURTEOUS READER,—Thou hast here meditation upon meditation offered to thy consideration, as a help to thee when thou art privately alone.

As sweet spices yield small savour until they are beaten to powder, so the wonderful works of God are either not at all, or very slightly smelled in the nostrils of man, who is of a dull sense, unless they be rubbed and chafed in the mind, through a fervent affection, and singled out with a particular view; like them which tell money, who look not confusedly at the whole heap, but at the value of every parcel. So then a true Christian must endeavour himself to deliver, not in gross, but by retail, the millions of God's mercy to his soul; in secret thoughts, chewing the cud of every circumstance with continual contemplation. And as a thrifty gardener, which is loath to see one rose leaf to fall from the stalk without stilling;\* so the Christian soul is unwilling to pass, or to stifle the 'beds of spices,' in the garden of Christ, without gathering some fruit, Cant. vi. 2, which contain a mystery and hidden virtue; and our 'camphire clusters' in the vineyards of Engedi,' Cant. i. 14, must be resolved into drops by the still of meditation, or else they may be noted for weeds in the herbal of men, which hath his full of all kinds. But some are slightly passed over, as the watery herbs of vanity, which grow on every wall of carnal men's hearts, and yield but a slight taste how good the Lord is, or should be to their souls. It therefore behoveth us, first, to mind the tokens of his mercy and love, and afterwards for the helping of our weak digestion, to champ and chew by an often revolution, every part and parcel thereof, before we let it down into our stomachs; that by that means it may effectually nourish every vein and living artery of our soul, and fill them full with the pure blood of Christ's body, the least drop whereof refresheth and cheereth the soul and body of him which is in a swoon through his sin, and maketh him apt to walk and talk as one who is now living in Christ.

By this sweet meditation the soul taketh the key where all her evidences lie, and peruses the bills and articles of covenant agreed and condescended unto between God and man. There she seeth the great grant and pardon of her sins, subscribed unto by God himself, and sealed with the blood of Christ.

There he beholdeth his unspeakable mercy to a prisoner condemned to

\* That is, 'distilling.'—G.

die, without which at the last in a desperate case he is led and haled unto execution, by the cursed crew of hellish furies.

Here she learneth how the Holy Land is entailed, and retaileth by discourse the descent from Adam, unto Abraham and his son Isaac, and so forward unto all the seed of the faithful. By meditation the soul prieth into the soul, and with a reciprocal judgment examineth herself and every faculty thereof, what she hath, what she wanteth, where she dwelleth, where she removeth, and where she shall be.

By this she feeleth the pulses of God's Spirit beating in her; the suggestions of Satan; the corruptions of her own affections, who like a cruel step-dame mingleth poisons and pestilent things to murder the Spirit, to repel every good motion, and to be in the end the lamentable ruin of the whole man.

Here she standeth, as it were with Saul upon the mountains, beholding the combat between David and Goliath; between the Spirit and the uncircumcised raging of the flesh, the stratagems of Satan, the bootless attempts of the world.

Here appear her own infirmities, her relapses into sin, herself astonished by the buffets of Satan, her fort shrewdly\* battered by carnal and fleshly lusts, her colours and profession darkened and dimmed through the smoke of affliction, her faith hidden because of such massacres and treasons; her hope banished with her mistrust; herself hovering ready to take flight from the sincerity of her profession.

Here she may discern, as from the top of a mast, an army coming, whose captain is the Spirit, guarded with all his graces; the bloody arms of Christ by him displayed, the trumpets' sound, Satan vanquished, the world conquered, the flesh subdued, the soul received,† profession bettered, and each thing restored to his former integrity.

The consideration hereof made Isaac go meditating in the evening, Gen. xxiv. 63.

This caused Hezekiah to 'mourn like a dove, and chatter like a pye' in his heart, in deep silence, Isa. xxxviii. 14.

This forced David to meditate in the morning, nay, all the day long, Ps. lxxiii. 6, and cxix. 148th verse, as also by night in 'secret thoughts,' Ps. xvi. 7.

This caused Paul to give Timothy this lesson to meditate, 1 Tim. iv. 13, *seq.* And God himself commanded Joshua, when he was elected governor, that he should meditate upon the law of Moses both day and night, to the end he might perform the things written therein, Josh. i. 8.

And Moses addeth this clause, teaching the whole law from God himself, 'These words must remain in thy heart, thou must meditate upon them, both at home and abroad, when thou goest to bed, and when thou risest in the morning,' Deut. vi. 7.

This meditation is not a passion of melancholy, nor a fit of fiery love, nor covetous care, nor senseless dumps, but a serious act of the Spirit in

\* That is, 'injuriously.'—G.

† Qu. 'revived'?—G.

the inwards of the soul, whose object is spiritual, whose affection is a provoked appetite to practise holy things; a kindling in us of the love of God, a zeal towards his truth, a healing our benumbed hearts, according to that speech of the prophet, 'My heart did wax hot within me, and fire did kindle in my meditations,' Ps. xxxix. 3, the want whereof caused Adam to fall, yea, and all the earth, into utter desolation; for there is no man considereth deeply in his heart, Jer. xii. 16. If Cain had considered the curse of God, and his heavy hand against that grievous and crying sin, he would not have slain his own brother. If Pharaoh would have set his heart to ponder of the mighty hand of God by the plagues already past, he should have prevented those which followed, and have foreslowed\* his haste in making pursuit, with the destruction of himself and his whole army.

If Nadab and Abihu had regarded the fire they put in their censers, they might have been safe from the fire of heaven.

To conclude, the want of meditation hath been the cause of so many fearful events, strange massacres, and tragical deaths, which have from time to time pursued the drowsy heart and careless mind; and in these our days is the butchery of all the mischiefs which have already chanced unto our countrymen; for whilst God's judgments are masked, and not presented to the view of the mind by the serious work of the same, though they are keen and sharp, it being sheathed, they seem dull, and of no edge unto us, which causeth us to prick up the feathers of pride and insolency, and to make no reckoning of the fearful and final reckoning which most assuredly must be made, will we, nill we, before God's tribunal. Hence it cometh to pass that our English gentlewomen do brave it with such outlandish manners, as though they could dash God out of countenance, or roist† it in heaven as they carve it here, so that thousands are carried to hell out of their sweet perfumed chambers, where they thought to have lived, and are snatched presently from their pleasant and odoriferous arbours, dainty dishes, and silken company, to take up their room in the dungeon and lake of hell, which burneth perpetually with fire and brimstone.

And for want of this, God's children go limping in their knowledge, and carry the fire of zeal in a flinty heart, which, unless it be hammered, will not yield a spark to warm and cheer their benumbed and frozen affections towards the worship and service of God, and the hearty embracing of his truth.

By this God's works of creation are slipped over, even 'from the cedar to the hyssop that groweth on the wall,' 1 Kings iv. 33.

The sun, the moon, the stars, shine without admiration; the sea and the earth, the fowls, fishes, beasts, and man himself, are all esteemed as common matters in nature. Thus God worketh those strange creatures without that glory performed which is due, and his children receive not that comfort by the secret meditation of God's creation as they might.

\* That is, 'slackened beforehand.'—G.

† That is, 'roister.'—G.

Hence it proceedeth that they are often in their dumps, fearing as though they enjoyed not the light; whereas if they would meditate and judge aright of their estates, they might find they are the sons of God, and heirs of that rich kingdom most apparently\* known and established in heaven, and shall suddenly† possess the same, even then most likely when their flesh thinketh it farthest off; as the heir being within a month of his age, maketh such a reckoning of his lands that no careful distress can trouble him. But this consideration being partly through Satan's, and partly through their own dulness and over-stupidness, they fare like men in a swoon, and as it were bereaved of the very life of the Spirit, staggering under the burden of affliction, stammering in their godly profession, and cleaving sometimes unto the world. Through this they carry Christ's promises like comforts in a box, or as the chirurgeon his salves in his bosom.

Meditation applieth, meditation healeth, meditation instructeth. If thou lovest wisdom and blessedness, meditate in the law of the Lord day and night, and so make use of these Meditations to quicken thee up to duty, and to sweeten thy heart in thy way to the heavenly Jerusalem. Farewell.—Thy friend,

EZEKIEL CULVERWELL.‡

\* That is, 'manifestly.'—G.

† That is, 'quickly,' = 'soon.'—G.

‡ For notice of this profound thinker, see Dr Brown's reprint of 'The Light of Nature,' with Essay by Dr Cairns; and cf. our Bibliographical List of editions of Sibbes's Works at end of this volume, under 'Divine Meditations.'—G.

## DIVINE MEDITATIONS.

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1. THAT man hath made a good progress in religion that hath a high esteem of the ordinances of God; and though perhaps he find himself dead and dull, yet the best things have left such a taste and relish in his soul, that he cannot be long without them. This is a sign of a good temper.

2. A wife, when she marries a husband, gives up her will to him. So doth every Christian when he is married to Christ. He gives up his will and all that he hath to him, and saith, 'Lord, I have nothing but if thou callest for it thou shalt have it again.'

3. When we come to religion, we lose not our sweetness, but translate it. Perhaps before we fed upon profane authors, now we feed upon holy truths. A Christian never knows what comfort is in religion till he come to be downright; as Austin saith, 'Lord, I have wanted of thy sweetness over long; all my former life was nothing but husks.'\*

4. God takes care of poor weak Christians that are struggling with temptations and corruptions. Christ carries them in his arms. All Christ's sheep are diseased, and therefore he will have a tender care of them, Isa. xl. 11.

5. Whatsoever is good for God's children, they shall have it; for all is theirs, to further them to heaven. Therefore if poverty be good, they shall have it; if disgrace be good, they shall have it; if crosses be good, they shall have them; if misery be good, they shall have it; for all is ours, to serve for our main good.

6. God's children have these outward things with God himself. They are as conduits to convey his favour to us; and the same love that moved God to give us heaven and happiness, the same love moves him to give us daily bread.

7. The whole life of a Christian should be nothing but praises and thanks to God. We should neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, but eat to God, and sleep to God, and work to God, and talk to God; do all to his glory and praise.

8. Though God deliver not out of trouble, yet he delivers from the ill *in* trouble, from despair in trouble, by supporting the spirit. Nay, he delivers *by* trouble, for he sanctifies the trouble to cure the soul, and by less troubles he delivers from greater.

9. What are we but a model of God's favours? What do we see, or

\* A frequent plaint of Augustine in the 'Confessions.'—G,

what do we taste, but matter of the mercies of God? The miseries of others should be matter of praise to us. The sins of others should make us praise God, and say, 'Lord, it might have been my case, it might have befallen me.'

10. God pities our weakness in all our troubles and afflictions. He will not stay too long, lest we out of weakness put our hands to some shifts.\* He will not suffer the rod of the wicked to rest upon the lot of the righteous, Ps. cxxv. 3.

11. Is it not an unreasonable speech for a man at midnight to say it will never be day? And so it is an unreasonable thing for a man that is in trouble to say, 'O Lord, I shall never get out of this! it will always be thus with me.'

12. Do the wicked think to shame or fear good men? No; a spirit of grace and glory shall rest upon them. They shall not only have a spirit of grace rest upon them, but a spirit of glory, so that their countenances shall shine as Stephen's did when he was stoned, Acts vi. 15.

13. If God hides his face from us, what shall become of our souls. We are like the poor flower that opens and shuts with the sun. If God shines upon the heart of a man, it opens; but if he withdraws himself, we hang down our heads: 'Thou turnedst away thy face, and I was troubled,' Ps. xxx. 7.

14. When we have given up ourselves to God, let us comfort our souls that God is our God. When riches, and treasures, and men, and our lives fail, yet God is ours. We are now God's Davids, and God's Pauls, and God's Abrahams; we have an everlasting being in him.

15. A special cause of too much dejection is want of resolution in good things, when we halt in religion; for as halting is a deformed and troublesome gesture, so in religion, halting is always joined with trouble and disquiet.

16. God hath made the poorest man that is a governor of himself, and hath set judgment to rule against passion and conscience against sin; therefore reason should not be a slave to passion.

17. It is the peculiar wisdom of a Christian to pick arguments out of his worst condition, to make him thankful. And if he be thankful, he will be joyful; and so long as he is joyful he cannot be miserable.

18. God hath made himself ours, and therefore it is no presumption to challenge him to be our God. When once we have interest in God, he thinks nothing too good for us. He is not satisfied in giving us the blessings of this life, but he gives himself unto us.

19. As we receive all from God, so we should lay all at his feet, and say, 'I will not live in a course of sin that will not stand with the favour of my God;' for he will not lodge in the heart that hath a purpose to sin.

20. God's people have sweet intercourse with God in their callings. When we look for comfort, we shall find it either in hearing, reading, or praying, &c., or else in our callings.

21. We glorify God when we exalt him in our souls above all creatures in the world, when we give him the highest place in our love and in our joy, when all our affections are set upon him as the chiefest good. This is seen also by opposition, when we will not offend God for any creature, when we can ask our affections, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee?' Ps. lxxiii. 25.

\* That is, 'expedients.'—G.



22. There is no true zeal to God's glory but it is joined with true love to men; therefore let men that are violent, injurious, and insolent, never talk of glorifying God so long as they despise poor men.

23. If we do not find ourselves the people of God's delight, let us attend upon the means of salvation, and wait God's good time, and stand not disputing, 'Perhaps God hath not a purpose to save me;' but fall to obedience, casting thyself into the arms of Christ, and say, If I perish, I will perish here.

24. The love of God in Christ is not barren kindness. It is a love that reaches from everlasting to everlasting; from love in choosing us, unto love in glorifying of us. In all the miseries of the world, one beam of this loving-kindness of the Lord will scatter all.

25. Our desires are holy if they be exercised about spiritual things. David desires not to be great, to be rich in the world, or to have power to be revenged upon his enemies, but that he may 'dwell in the house of the Lord, and enjoy his ordinances,' Ps. xxvii. 4.

26. Desires shew the frame of the soul more than anything; as where there is a spring, it discovers itself by vapours that arise; so the breathing of these desires shew that there is a spring of grace in the heart.

27. Desires spring from the will; and the will being as the whole man, it moves all other powers to do their duty, and to see for the accomplishing of that it desires. Those therefore that pretend they have good desires, and yet neglect all means, and live scandalously, this is but a sluggish desire.

28. An hypocrite will not pray always, but a child of God never gives over; because he sees an excellency, a necessity, and a possibility of obtaining that he desires. He hath a promise for it: 'The Lord will fulfil the desires of them that fear him,' Ps. cxlv. 19.

29. Prayer doth exercise all the graces of the Spirit. We cannot pray but our faith is exercised, our love, our patience; which makes us set a high price upon that we seek after, and to use it well.

30. God takes it unkindly if we weep too much, and over-grieve for loss of wife, child, or friend, or for any cross in the things of this life; for it is a sign we fetch not that comfort from him which we should and may do. Nay, though our weeping be for our sins, we must keep a moderation in that. We must with one eye look upon our sins, and with the other eye look upon God's mercy in Christ; and therefore if the best grief must be moderated, what must the other?

31. The religious affections of God's people are mixed; for they mingle their joy with weeping, and their weeping with joy, whereas a carnal heart is all simple. If he joy, he is mad; if he be sorrowful, unless it be restrained, it sinks him; but grace always tempers the joy and sorrow of a Christian, because he hath always something to joy in and something to grieve for.

32. We are members of two worlds. Now, whilst we live here, we must use this world; for how many things doth this poor life of ours need! We are passing away; and, in this passage of ours, we must have necessaries. But yet we must use the world as if we used it not; for there is a danger lest our affections cleave to the things of this life.

33. It is a poorness of spirit in a Christian to be over joyful, or over-grieved for things worse than ourselves. If a man hath any grace, all the world is inferior to him; and therefore what a poorness of spirit is it to be over joyful, or over-much grieved, when all things are fading and vanish

away. Let us therefore bear continually in our minds, that all things here below are subordinate.

34. A sincere heart that is burdened with sin, desires not heaven so much as the place where he shall be free from sin, and to have the image of God and Christ perfected in his soul; and therefore a sincere spirit comes to hear the word, not so much because an eloquent man preacheth, as to hear divine truths: because the evidence of [the] Spirit goes with it, to work those graces. You cannot still a child with anything but the breast; so you cannot still the desires of a Christian, but with divine truths, as, Isa. xxvi. 8, 'The desires of our souls is to thy name and to the remembrance of thee.'

35. There is a thousand things that may hinder good success in our affairs. What man can apply all things to a fit issue, and remove all things that may hinder? Who can observe persons, times, places, advantages, and disadvantages; and when we see these things there is naturally a passion, that it robs us of our knowledge: as, when a man sees any danger, there is such a fear or anger, that he is in a mist. So that, unless God give a particular success, there is none. As it is in the frame of a man's body; it stands upon many joints, [and] if any of these be out of frame it hinders all the rest.

36. If we will hold out, because the error is in want of deep apprehension of the miseries we are in by nature; let us labour therefore to have our hearts broken more and more. Upon this fault it was that the stony ground spoken of in the gospel wants rooting. Therefore it is Christian policy to suffer our souls to be humbled, as deep as possible may be, that there may be mould enough; otherwise there may be a great joy in divine truths, and they may be comfortable, but all will be sucked up like dew when persecution comes, if it be not rooted.

37. What is the reason that God's children sink not to hell when troubles are upon them? Because they have an inward presence strengthening them: for the Holy Ghost helps our infirmities, not only to pray, but to bear crosses, sweetening them with some glimpse of his gracious countenance. For what supports our faith in prayer, but inward strength from God.

38. In prosperity, or after some deliverance, it is the fittest time for praise; because then our spirits are raised up and cheered in the evidence of God's favour: for the greater the cross is from which we have been delivered, the more will the spirit be enlarged to praise God.

39. Whenever we receive any good to our souls, or to our bodies, whoever is the instrument, let us look to the principal; as in the gifts we receive, we look not to the bringer but to the sender.

40. Take heed of Satan's policy, 'That God hath forgotten me because I am in extremity;' nay, rather God will then shew mercy, for now is the special time of mercy, therefore beat back Satan with his own weapons.

41. Whatsoever God takes away from his children, he either supplies it with a great earthly favour, or else with strength to bear it. God gives charge to others to take a care of the fatherless and widow, and will he neglect them himself?

42. That is spiritual knowledge, which alters the taste and relish of the soul: for we must know there is a bitter antithesis in our nature, against all saving truths; there is a contrariety between our nature and that doctrine, which teacheth us, that we must 'deny ourselves,' Titus ii. 12, and be saved by another. Therefore the soul must first be brought to

relish, before it can digest : there must be first an holy harmony between our nature and truth.

43. If we walk aright in God's ways, let us have heaven daily in our eye, and the day of judgment, and times to come, and this will stern\* the course of our lives, and breed love in the use of the means, and patience to undergo all conditions. Let us have our eye with Moses upon him that is invisible, Heb. xi. 27.

44. A man may know that he loves the world, if he be more careful to get than to use. For we are but stewards, and we should consider, I must be as careful in distributing as in getting: for when we are all in getting, and nothing in distributing, this man is a worldling; though he be moderate in getting, without wronging any man, yet the world hath gotten his heart, because he makes not that use of it he should.

45. It is a sottish conceit to think that we can fit ourselves for grace, as if a child in the womb could forward its natural birth. If God hath made us men, let us not make ourselves gods.

46. As natural life preserves itself by repelling that which is contrary to it, so, where the life of grace is, there is a principle of skill, of power, and strength to repel that which is contrary.

47. It is the nature of the soul, that when it sees a succession of better things, it makes the world seem cheap; when it sees another condition, not liable to change, then it hath a sanctified judgment to esteem of things as they are; and so it overcomes the world.

48. In the covenant of grace, God intends the glory of his grace above all. Now faith is fit for it, because it hath an uniting virtue to knit us to the mediator, and to lay hold of a thing out of itself; it empties the soul of all conceit of worth, or strength, or excellency in the creature: and so it gives all the glory to God and Christ.

49. What we are afraid to speak before men, and to do for fear of danger, let us be afraid to think before God. Therefore we should stifle all ill conceits in the very conception, in their very rising: let them be used as rebels and traitors, smothered at the first.

50. The heart of man, till he be a believer, is in a wavering condition, it is never at quiet, and therefore it is the happiness of the creature to be satisfied, and to have rest: for perplexity makes a man miserable. If a man have but a little scruple in his conscience, he is like a ship in the sea, tossed with contrary winds, and cannot come to the haven.

51. The righteousness of works leaves the soul in perplexity. That righteousness which comes by any other means than by Christ, leaves the soul unsettled, because the law of God promiseth life only upon absolute and personal performance. Now the heart of man tells him, that this he hath not done, and such duties he hath omitted; and this breeds perplexity, because the heart hath not whereon to stay itself.

52. Glory follows afflictions, not as the day follows the night, but as the spring follows winter; for the winter prepares the earth for the spring: so doth afflictions sanctified prepare the soul for glory.

53. This life is not a life for the body, but for the soul; and therefore the soul should speak to the body, and say, 'Stay, body, for if thou movest me to fulfil thy desires now, thou wilt lose me and thyself hereafter.' But if the body be given up to Christ, then the soul will speak a good word for it in heaven; as if it should say, 'Lord, there is a body of mine in the

\* That is, 'steer,' = place a helm at the stern.—G.

earth, that did fast for me, and pray with me:' it will speak for it as Pharaoh's butler to the king for Joseph, Gen. xli. 9.

54. Afflictions makes a divorce and separation between the soul and sin. It is not a small thing that will work sin out of the soul; it must be the spirit of burning, the fire of afflictions sanctified: heaven is for holiness, and all that is contrary to holiness afflictions works out, and so frames the soul to a further communion with God.

55. When the soul admires spiritual things, it is then a holy frame; and so long it will not stoop to any base comfort. We should therefore labour to keep our souls in an estate of holy admiration.

56. All those whom Christ saves by virtue of his merit and payment, to those he discovers their wretched condition, and instead thereof a better to be attained; he shews by whom we are redeemed, and from what, and unto what condition: the Spirit informing us thoroughly, that God enters into covenant with us.

57. Spiritual duties are as opposite to flesh and blood as fire to water; but, as anointing makes the members nimble, and strong, and cheerful, so, where the Spirit of God is in any man, it makes him nimble, and strong, and cheerful to good duties. But when we are drawn to them as a bear to the stake, for fear, or an inbred natural custom, this is not from the Spirit; for where the Spirit is, there duties are performed without force, fear, or hopes. A child needs no extrinsecal motion to make him please his father, because it is inbred and natural to him.

58. As the weights of a clock makes all the wheels to go, so artificial Christians are moved with things without them; for they want this inward principle to make them do good things freely. But where the Spirit of God is, it works a kind of natural freedom.

59. As the woman in the law, when she was forced by any man, if she cried out she was blameless, so if we unfeignedly cry unto Christ, and complain of our corruptions, that they are too strong for us, this will witness to our hearts that we are not hypocrites.

60. Good duties come from unsound Christians as fire out of the flint; but they flow from a child of God, as water out of a spring; yet because there is flesh in them as well as spirit, therefore every duty must be gotten out of the fire. And yet there is a liberty, because there is a principle in them that resists the flesh.

61. God's children are hindered in good duties by an inevitable weakness in nature, as after labour with drowsiness; therefore 'the spirit may be willing when the flesh is weak,' Mat. xxvi. 41. If we strive therefore against this deadness and dullness, Christ is ready to make excuse for us, if the heart be right, as he did for his disciples.

62. A child of God is the greatest freeman, and the best servant, even as Christ was the best servant, yet none so free; and the greater portion that any man hath of his Spirit, the freer disposition he hath to serve every one in love.

63. Sight is the most noblest sense. It is quick: it can see from earth to heaven in a moment. It is large: it can see the hemisphere of the heavens with one view. It is sure and certain: for in hearing we may be deceived. And, lastly, it is the most affecting sense. Even so is faith the quickest, the largest, the most certain, and most affecting. It is like an eagle in the clouds: at one view it sees Christ in heaven, and looks down into the world. It sees backward and forwards: it sees things past, present, and to come; and therefore it is, that faith is expressed by beholding.

64. A veil or covering had two uses amongst the Jews. One was subjection, and therefore the women were veiled; another was obscurity, and therefore was the veil on Moses's face. Both these are now taken away in Christ; for we serve God as 'sons,' and as a spouse her husband. We are still in subjection, but not servile; and now also with 'open face' we behold the glory of the Lord. We behold the things themselves; they are now clearly laid open; the veil is taken away.

65. Our happiness consists in our subordination and conformity to Christ; and therefore let us labour to carry ourselves, as he did to his Father, to his friends, to his enemies. In the days of his flesh he prayed whole nights to his Father. How holy and heavenly-minded was he, that took occasion from vines, and stones, and sheep, to be heavenly-minded. And when he rose from the dead, his talk was only of things concerning the kingdom of God. For his carriage to his friends, 'he would not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed,' Mat. xii. 20. He did not cast Peter in the teeth with his denial. He was of a winning and gaining disposition to all. For his carriage to his enemies, he did not call for fire from heaven to destroy them, but shed many tears for them that shed his blood. 'O Jerusalem,' &c., Mat. xxiii. 37; and upon the cross, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' Luke xxiii. 34. So that if we will be minded like unto Christ, consider how he carried himself to his Father, to his friends, to his enemies, yea, to the devil himself. When he comes to us in wife, children, friends, &c., we must do as Christ did, bid 'Avoid, Satan;' and when we have to deal with those that have the spirit of the devil in them, we must not render reproach for reproach, but answer them, 'It is written.'

66. When we find any grace wrought in us, we should have a holy esteem of ourselves, as when we are tempted to sin. What! I that am an heir of heaven, a king, a conqueror, the son of God, a freeman, shall I stain myself? God hath put a crown upon my soul, and shall I cast my crown into the dirt? No; I will be more honourable. These are no proud thoughts, but befitting our estate.

67. Those that are besotted with the false lustre of the world, do want spiritual light. Christ himself, when he was here upon the earth, he lived a concealed life; only at certain times some beams broke out. So let it comfort us that our glory is hid in Christ. Now it is clouded with the malice of wicked men, and with our own infirmities. But let us comfort ourselves with this, that we are glorious in the eyes of God and his angels.

68. As men after a fit of sickness grow much, so God's children grow, especially after their falls, sometimes in humility, sometimes in patience. As we may observe in plants and herbs, they grow at the root in winter, in the leaf in summer, and in the seed in autumn; so Christians appear, sometimes humble, sometimes spiritual and joyful, and sometimes they grow in spiritual courage.

69. That which we drew from the 'first Adam' was the displeasing of God, but we draw from the 'second Adam' the favour of God. From the 'first Adam' we drew corruption, from the 'second Adam' we drew\* grace: from the 'first Adam' we drew misery and death, and all the miseries that follow death. We draw from the 'second Adam' life and happiness. Whatsoever we had from the 'first Adam' we have it repaid more abundantly in the second.

70. Grace makes us glorious, because it puts glory upon the soul. It

\* Qu. 'draw'?—ED.

carries the soul above all earthly things : it tramples the world under her feet : it prevails against corruptions, that foil ordinary men. A man is not more above beasts than a Christian that hath grace is above other men.

71. It is an evidence that we are gracious men, if we can look upon the lives of others that are better than we, and love and esteem them glorious. A man may see grace in others with a malignant eye ; for natural men are so vain-glorious, that when they see the lives of other men outshine theirs, instead of imitation they darken. What grace they will not imitate, they will defame. Therefore those that can see grace in others, and honour it in them, it is a sign they have grace themselves. Men can endure good in books, and to hear good of men that are dead, but they cannot endure good in the lives of others to be in their eyes, especially when they come to compare themselves with them. They love not to be out-shined.

72. As the sun goes its course, though we cannot see it go ; and as plants and herbs grow, though we cannot perceive them : even so it follows not, that a Christian grows not, because he cannot see himself grow. But if they decay in their first love, or in some other grace, it is that some other grace may grow and increase, as their humility, their broken-heartedness. Sometimes they grow not in extension, that they may grow at the root. Upon a check, grace breaks out more ; as we say after a hard winter, usually there follows a glorious spring.

73. God's children never hate corruption more than when they have been overcome by corruption. The best men living have some corruptions, which they see not till they break out by temptations. Now when corruptions are made known to us, it stirs up our hatred, and hatred stirs up endeavour, and endeavour revenge ; so that God's children should not be discouraged for their falls.

74. When the truth of grace is wrought in a Christian, his desires go beyond his strength, and his prayers are answerable to his desires. Whereupon is it that young Christians oftentimes call their estate in question, because they cannot bring heaven upon earth, because they cannot be perfect ; but God will have us depend upon him for increase of grace in a daily expectation.

75. Christ is our pattern, whom we must strive to imitate. It is necessary that our pattern should be exact, that so we might see our imperfections, and be humbled for them, and live by faith in our sanctification.

76. Consider Christ upon the cross as a public person, that when he was crucified, and when he died, he died for my sins, and this knowledge of Christ will be a crucifying knowledge. This will stir up my heart to use my corruptions, as my sins used Christ. As he hated my sin, so it will work the same disposition in me, to hate this body of death, and to use it as it used Christ, answerably. As we see this clearly, it will transform us.

77. With our contemplation let us join this kind of reasoning. God so hated pride, that he became humble to the death of the cross, to redeem me from it, and shall I be proud ? And when we are stirred up to revenge, consider that Christ prayed for his enemies. When we are tempted to disobedience, think God in my nature was obedient to the death, and shall I stand upon terms ? And when we grow hard-hearted, consider Christ became man, that he might shew bowels of his mercy. Let us reason thus when we are tempted to any sin, and it will be a means to transform us from our own cursed likeness into the likeness of Christ.

78. When we see God blasphemed, or the like, let us think, how would Christ stand affected if he were here ? When he was here upon earth, how

zealous was he against profaneness, and shall I be so cold? When he saw the multitude wander as sheep without a shepherd, his bowels yearned; and shall we see so many poor souls live in darkness, and our bowels not yearn? Mat. ix. 36.

79. We must look upon Christ, not only for healing, but as a perfect pattern to imitate; for wherefore else did he live so long upon earth, but to shew us an example. And let us know that we shall be countable\* for those good examples which we have from others. There is not an example of an humble, holy, and industrious life, but shall be laid to our charge; for God doth purposely let them shine in our eyes, that we might take example by them.

80. As the spirits in the arteries quickens the blood in the veins, so the Spirit of God goes along with the word, and makes it work. St Paul speaks to Lydia, but the Spirit speaks to her heart. As it was with Christ himself, so it is with his members. He was conceived by the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, sealed by the Spirit. He was led into the wilderness by the Spirit. He offered up himself by the Spirit, and by the Spirit he was raised from the dead. Even so the members of Christ do answer unto Christ himself. All is by the Spirit: we are conceived by the Spirit. The same Spirit that sanctified him sanctifies us; but first we receive the Spirit by way of union, and then unction follows after. When we are knit to Christ by the Spirit, then it works the same in us as it did in him.

81. When a proud wit and supernatural truths meet together, such a man will have something of his own. Therefore in reading and studying of heavenly truths, especially the gospel, we must come to God for his Spirit, and not venture upon conceits of our own parts; for God will curse such proud attempts.

82. Many men think that the knowledge of divine truths will make them divine, whereas it is the Holy Ghost only that gives a taste and relish, for without the Spirit their hearts will rise when the word comes to them in particular, and tells them you must deny yourself, and venture your life for his truth.

83. When men understand the Scriptures, and yet are proud and malicious, we must not take scandal† at it, for their hearts were never subdued. They understand supernatural things by human reason, and not by divine light.

84. Those that measure lands are very exact in everything, but the poor man whose it is knows the use of the ground better, and delights in it more, because it is his own. So it is with those ministers that can exactly speak of heavenly truths, yet have no share in them; but the poor soul that hears them rejoiceth, and saith, These things are mine.

85. This life is a life of faith; for God will try the truth of our faith, that the world may see that God hath such servants as will depend upon his bare word. It were nothing to be a Christian if we should see all here. But God will have his children to live by faith, and take the promises upon his word.

86. The nature of hope is to expect that which faith believes. What could the joys of heaven avail us if it were not for our hope? It is the anchor of the soul, which being cast into heaven, it stills the soul in all troubles, combustions, and confusions that we daily meet withal.

87. It is too much curiosity to search into particulars, as what shall be the glory of the soul, and what shall be the glory of the body. Rather

\* That is, 'accountable.'—G.

† That is, must not make it a 'stumbling-block.'—G.

study to make a gracious use of them, and in humility say, 'Lord, what is sinful man, that thou shouldst so advance him?' Ps. viii. 4. The consideration of this should make us abase ourselves, and in humility give thanks aforehand, as Peter did, 1 Peter i. 1. When he thought of an inheritance immortal and undefiled, and that fadeth not, he gives thanks, 'Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us,' &c.

88. When we see men look big and swell with the things of this life, let us in a holy kind of state think of our happiness in heaven, and carry ourselves accordingly. If we see anything in this world, let us say to our souls, This is not that I look for; or when we hear of anything that is good, let us say, I can hear this, and therefore this is not that I look for; or when we understand anything here below, this is not the thing I look for: 'But for things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor that ever entered into the heart of man,' 1 Cor. ii. 9.

89. There are four things observable in the nature of love: first, an estimation of the party beloved; secondly, a desire to be joined to him; thirdly, a settled contentment; fourthly, a desire to please the party in all things. So there is first in every Christian an high estimation of God and of Christ. He makes choice of him above all things, and speaks largely in his commendations. Secondly, he desires to be united to him, and where this desire is, there is an intercourse. He will open his mind to him by prayer, and go to him in all his consultations for his counsel. Thirdly, he places contentment in him alone, because in his worst conditions he is at peace and quiet if he may have his countenance shine upon him. Fourthly, he seeks to please him, because he labours to be in such a condition that God may delight in him. His love stirs up his soul to remove all things distasteful. It seeks out, as David did: 'Is there never a one left of the house of Saul to whom I may do good for Jonathan's sake?' 2 Sam. ix. 1.

90. Infirmities in God's children preserves their grace. Therefore it is that in God's Scripture, where God honours the saints, their weaknesses are made known. Jacob wrestled with God and prevailed, but he halted, Gen. xxxii. 24; and Peter, 'Upon this rock will I build my church,' Mat. xvi. 18; yet, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' Mat. xvi. 23. 'Paul was exalted above measure with revelations, but he had the messenger of Satan to buffet him,' 2 Cor. xii. 7.

91. It is the poisonful nature of man to quench a great deal of good for a little ill. But Christ cherishes a little grace, though there be a great deal of corruption, which yet is as offensive to him as smoke. Therefore we should labour to gain all we can by love and meekness.

92. Christians find their corruptions more offensive to them than when they were in the state of nature, and therefore it is that they think their estate is not good, but then corruption boils more, because it is restrained.

93. The more will, the more sin. When we venture upon sinful courses, upon deliberation, it exceedingly wastes our comfort. When we fall into sin against conscience, and abuse our Christian liberty, God fetches us again by some severe affliction. There shall be a cloud between God's face and us, and he will suspend his comforts for a long time. Therefore let no man venture upon sin, for God will take a course with him that shall be little to his ease.

94. The reason why mean Christians have more loving souls than men of greater parts, is because great men have corruptions answerable to their parts. Great gifts, great doubts. They are entangled with arguments,



and study to inform their brains, when others are heated with affection. A poor Christian cares not for cold disputes. Instead of that he loves; and that is the reason why a poor soul goes to heaven with more joy whilst others are entangled.

95. Many men are troubled with cold affections, and then they think to work love out of their own hearts, which are like a barren wilderness, but we must beg of God the Spirit of love. We must not bring love to God, but fetch love from him.

96. When we love things baser than ourselves it is like a sweet stream that runs into a sink. As our love therefore is the best thing we have, and none deserves it more than God, so let him have our love, yea, the strength of our love, that we may love him 'with all our souls, and with all our mind, and with all our strength,' Lev. xix. 18.

97. As the sun when it hath gotten to any height it scatters the clouds, so a Christian is then in his excellency when he can scatter doubts and fears, when in distress he can do as David did, comfort himself in the Lord his God.

98. Many men would be in Canaan as soon as they are out of Egypt, they would be at the highest pitch presently. But God will lead us through the wilderness of temptations and afflictions till we come to heaven. And it is a part of our Christian meekness to submit to God, and not to murmur, because we are not as we would be. But let us rather magnify the mercies of God that works in us any love of good things, and that he vouchsafes us any beginnings.

99. As noblemen's children have tutors to guide them, so God's children have the Spirit telling them, This you should do, and that you should not do. The Spirit not only changeth, but leads forward unto holiness. Wicked men have the Spirit knocking, and fain would enter, but they will not hear; but God's children have the Spirit dwelling in them.

100. A Christian is now in his nonage, and therefore not fit to have all that he hath a title to. But yet so much is allotted to him as will conduct him, and give him a passage to heaven. If therefore he be in want he hath contentment, and in suffering he hath patience, &c. All things are his, as well what he wants as what he hath.

101. The word of God is then in our hearts, when it rules in the soul, when it rules our thoughts, affections, and conversations, so that we dare not do anything contrary but we shall be checked. Who shall get out that which God's finger hath written in our hearts? No fire nor faggot, no temptation whatsoever.

102. We shall never be satisfied to our comfort, that the Scripture is the word of God, unless we know it from itself by its own light, and it shews itself abundantly to a believer in casting down the soul, and altering the mind and conversation. When the word is only in the brain, if there come a temptation stronger than our faith, then we despair. The word is far off from those that can only discourse and talk of it, when they see it only as a natural truth, when they look upon holy things, not in a divine, but in a human manner.

103. When the word dwells as a familiar in the heart, to direct, counsel, and comfort, then it is a sign it is there. The devil knows good and hates it, therefore knowledge alone is nothing. But when the promise doth alter the temper of the heart itself, then it is engrafted.

104. God excepts against none, if we do not except ourselves. Therefore thou, and thou, whosoever thou art, if thou beest a man or a woman,

and wilt come and take Christ upon his own terms, for thy Lord and husband, for better for worse, with persecutions, afflictions, crosses, &c. Take Christ thus, and take him for ever, and then thou shalt be saved.

105. When we believe divine truths by the Spirit, they work upon the heart and draw the affections after them. Therefore, if we spiritually believe the story of the gospel, we shall have our souls carried to love, and embrace it with joy and comfort,

106. We may be brought very low, but we shall not be confounded; yet we shall be brought as near confusion as may be, to shew us the vanity of the creature. In the judgment of the world we may be confounded, but a hand of mercy shall fetch us up again. Let the depth of misery and disconsolation be what it will be, we shall not be ashamed.

107. The reason why God's children do oftentimes with great perplexity doubt of their salvation, is because they have a principle of nature in them as well as of grace. Corruption will breed doubtings. As rotten wood breeds worms, and as vermin comes out of putrefaction, so doubtings and fears come from the remainder of corruption.

108. For want of watchfulness God oftentimes gives us up to such a perplexed estate, that we shall not know that we are in grace, and though we may have a principle of grace in us, yet we shall not see it, but may go out of the world in darkness.

109. We ought not at any time to deny the truth, nor yet at all times to confess it. For good actions and graces are like princes that come forth attended with circumstances, and if circumstances in confession be wanting, the action is marred. It is true of actions as of words: 'A word spoken in season is like apples of gold with pictures of silver,' Prov. xxv. 11. Therefore discretion must be our guide, for speech is then only good when it is better than silence.

110. It is not lawful for any weak one to be present at the mass. Dinah ventured abroad, and came cracked home. It is just with God, that those that dally with these things should be caught, as many idle travellers are. It is pity but those should perish in danger that love danger.

111. He that will not now deny himself in a lust, in a lawless desire, will not deny himself in matter of life in time of trial. He that hath not learned the mortification of the flesh in time of peace will hardly be brought to it in time of trouble.

112. We must not only stand for the truth, but we must stand for it in a holy manner, and not swagger for it, as proud persons do. We must observe that in the first [Epistle] of Peter, iii. 15, to do it 'in meekness and fear.' We must not bring passion to God's cause, nor must our lives give our tongues the lie.

113. There is such a distance between corrupt nature and grace, that we must have a great deal of preparation; and though there be nothing in preparation to bring the soul to have grace, yet it brings the soul to a nearer distance than those that are wild\* persons.

114. Nature cannot work above its own powers, as vapours cannot ascend higher than the sun draws them. Our hearts are naturally shut, and God doth open them by his Spirit in the use of the means. The children of Israel in the wilderness saw wonders upon wonders, and yet when they came to be proved they could not believe.

115. It is God's free love that hath cast us into these happy times of the gospel; and it is his further love that makes choice of some, and

\* That is = 'in a state of nature.'—G.

refuses others. This should therefore teach us sound humility, considering that God must open or else we are eternally shut.

116. Seeing grace is not of our own getting, therefore this should teach us patience towards those that are under us, waiting if God at any time will give them repentance. Though God work not the first time, nor the second time, yet we must wait, as the man that lay at the pool of Bethesda for the moving of the water.

117. He that attends to the word of God, doth not only know the words, which are but the shell, but he knows the things. He hath spiritual light, to know what faith and repentance is. There is at that time a spiritual echo in the soul,—as Ps. xxvii. 8, ‘When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart answered, Thy face, Lord, will I seek,’—and therefore must men judge of their profiting by the word; not by their carrying of it in their memories, but by how much they are made able by it to bear a cross, and how they are made able to resist temptation, &c.

118. There should not be intimate familiarity but where we judge men faithful; and those whom upon good grounds we judge faithful, we must be gentle towards them, and easy to be entreated; and we wrong them if we shew ourselves strange unto them.

119. True faith works love, and then it works by love. When it hath wrought that holy affection, it works by it; as when the plant is engrafted and takes, it grows presently, and shews the growth in the fruits.

120. The word of God is ancients than the Scripture; for the first word of the Scripture was the promise, ‘The seed of the woman should break the head of the serpent,’ Gen. iii. 15. The Scripture is but that *modus*, that manner of conveying the word of God. This Scripture is the rule whereby we must walk, and the judge also of all controversies of religion; and in spite of the Church of Rome, it will judge them. St Augustine hath an excellent discourse: ‘When there is contention betwixt brethren, witnesses are brought; but in the end, the words, the will of the dead man is brought forth, and these words determine. Now, shall the words of a dead man be of force, and shall not the word of Christ determine? Therefore look to the Scripture’ (a).

121. All idolaters shall be ashamed that worship images, that trust to ‘broken cisterns.’ Let those be ashamed that trust to their wits and policies. All those shall be ashamed that bear themselves big upon any earthly thing, for these crutches will be taken away, and then they fall. These false reports shall make them all ashamed.

122. The way to bring faith into the heart is, first, there must be a judicious,\* convincing knowledge of the vanity of all things within us and without us that seems to yield any support to the soul, and then the soul is carried to lay hold on Christ; as David saith, ‘I have seen an end of all perfection,’ Ps. cxix. 96. Secondly, the soul must be convinced of an excellency in religion above all things in the world, or else it will not rest, for the heart of man would choose the best; and when it is persuaded that the gain in religion is above the world, then it yields. And, thirdly, a consideration of the firmness of the ground whereupon the promise is built. Put God to it, therefore, either to make his promise good, or to disappoint us; and he will be sure to make it good in our forgiveness of sin, proceeding in grace and strength, against temptations in time of trouble.

123. Man is naturally of a short† spirit; so that if he have not what he would, and when he would, he gives up, and shakes off all. There is not

\* Qu. ‘judicial’?—G.

† This is, ‘hasty.’—G.

a greater difference between a child of God and one that wants faith, than to be hasty. Such men, though they may be civil, yet they are of this mind. They will labour to be sure of something here; they must have present pleasures and present profits. If God will save them in that way, so; if not, they will put it to a venture.

124. There be many things to hinder this grace of waiting. There is a great deal of tedious time, and many crosses we meet with; as the scorn and reproach of this world, and many other trials. God seems also to do nothing less than to perform his promise; but let us comfort ourselves with this, that he waits to do them good that wait on him.

125. We should labour to agree mutually in love, for that wherein any Christian differs from another is but in petty things. Grace knows no difference; the worms know no difference; the day of judgment knows no difference. In the worst things we are all alike base, and in the best things we are all alike happy. Only in this world God will have distinctions, for order's sake; but else there is no difference.

126. Christians are like to many men of great means, that know not how to make use of them. We live not like ourselves. Bring large faith, and we shall have large grace and comfort. We are scant in our own bowels, therefore labour to have a large faith, answerable to our large riches. And though Christians be low enough in outward things, and oftentimes poorer than other men, yet they are rich; for Christ is rich unto them, in their crosses and abasements. That which they want in this world shall be made up in grace and glory hereafter.

127. We ought daily to imitate Christ in our places, to be good to all; as the apostle saith, 'Be abundant always in the works of the Lord,' 1 Cor. xv. 58. Let us labour to have large hearts, that we may do it seasonably, and abundantly, and unweariedly. The love of Christ will breed in us the same impression that was in him.

128. None come to God without Christ; none come to Christ without faith; none come to faith without the means; none enjoy the means but where God hath sent it. Therefore where there was no means of salvation before the coming of Christ, there was no visible intendment\* of God ordinarily to save them.

129. Preventing mercy is the greatest. How many favours doth God prevent us with! We never asked for our being, nor for that tender love which our parents bore towards us in our tender years. We never asked for our baptism and engrafting into Christ. What a motive therefore is that to stir us up, that when we come to years, we may plead with the Lord, and say, 'Thou hadst a care of me before I had a being; and therefore much more wilt thou now have a care of me, whom thou hast reconciled unto thyself, and remember me in mercy for time to come.'

130. If God's mercy might be overcome with our sins, we should overcome it every day. It must be a rich mercy that must satisfy; and therefore the apostle never speaks of it without the extensions of love, 'the height and depth.' We want words, we want thoughts, to conceive of it. We should therefore labour to frame our souls to have rich and large conceits and apprehensions of so large mercy.

131. God is rich in mercy, not only to our souls, but in providing all we stand in need of. He keep us from ill, and so he is called a 'buckler;' he gives all good things, and so he is called a 'sun.' He keeps us in good estate, and advanceth us higher, so far as our nature shall be capable.

\* That is, 'design,' or 'intention.'—G.

132. The sun shines on the moon and stars, and they shine upon the earth; so doth God shine in goodness upon us, that we might shine in our extensions of goodness unto others, especially unto them of the household of faith.

133. We are styled in Scripture to be good and righteous, because our understandings, our wills, and affections are our own; but so far as they are holy, they are the Holy Ghost's. We are the principal in our actions, as they are actions; but the Holy Ghost is principal of the holiness of the action. The gracious government of the new creature is from the Spirit. If the Holy Ghost take away his government, and do not guide and assist us in every holy action, we are at a stand, and can go no further.

134. Every man naturally is a god unto himself, not only in reflecting all upon himself, but in setting upon divine things in his own strength, as if he were principal in his own actions, coming to them in the strength of his own wit and in the strength of his own reason. This seed is in all men by nature, until God have turned a man out of himself, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

135. Those that care not for the word, they are strangers from the Spirit; and those that care not for the Spirit, never make right use of the word. The word is nothing without the Spirit; it is animated and quickened by the Spirit. The Spirit and the word are like the veins and arteries in the body, that give quickening and life to the whole body; and therefore where the word is most revealed, there is most Spirit; but where Christ is not opened in the gospel, there the Spirit is not at all visible.

136. When Christ comes into the soul by the Spirit, then he carries himself familiarly, discovering the secrets of God the Father, and shewing what love there is in God toward us. It teacheth us how to carry ourselves in all neglects, and when we are at a loss it opens a way for us; it resolves our doubts, it comforts us in our discouragements, and makes us go boldly to God in all our wants.

137. As we may know who dwells in a house by observing who goes in and them that come out, so we may know that the Spirit dwells in us by observing what sanctified speeches he sends forth, and what delight he hath wrought in us to things that are special, and what price we set upon them. Whereas a carnal man pulls down the price of spiritual things, because his soul cleaves to something that he joys in more; and this is the cause why he slights the directions and comforts of the word. But those in whom the Spirit dwells, they will consult with it, and not regard what flesh and blood saith, but will follow the directions of the word and Spirit.

138. A Christian will not do common things, but, first, he sanctifies them, and dedicates himself, his person, and his actions to God, and so he sees God in all things. Whereas a carnal man sees reason only in all that he doth; but a Christian sees God in crosses to humble him, and everything he makes spiritual. Yet because there is a double principle in him, there will be some stirring of the flesh in his actions, and sometimes the worse part will appear most. But here is the excellency of a Christian's estate, that the Spirit will work it out at last. It will never let his heart and conscience alone till it be wrought out by little and little.

139. The Spirit of God may be known to be in weak Christians. As the soul is known to be in the body by the pulses, even so the Spirit discovers itself in them by pulses, by groaning, sighing, complaining, that it is so with them, and that they are no better; so that they are out of love with themselves. This is a good sign that the Spirit is there in some measure.

140. Where the Spirit dwells largely in any man, there is boldness in God's cause, a contempt of the world: 'He can do all things through Christ that strengthens him,' Philip. iv. 13. His mind is content and settled. He can bear with the infirmities of others and not be offended, for it is the weak in spirit that are offended. He is ready in his desires to say, 'Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly,' Rev. xxii. 20. But where corruption bears sway there is, 'Oh stay a little, that I may recover my strength,' Ps. xxxix. 13; that is, stay a while that I may repent. For the soul is not fit to appear before God but where the Spirit dwells in grace and comfort.

141. When we are young carnal delights lead us, and when we are old covetousness drowns us; so that if our knowledge be not spiritual, we shall never hold out. And the reason why at the hour of death so many despair, is because they had knowledge without the Spirit.

142. God gives comforts in the exercise and practice of grace. We must not therefore snatch comforts before we be fit for them. When we perform precepts, then God performs comforts. If we will make it good indeed that we love God, we must keep his commandments. We must not keep one, but all. It must be universal obedience fetched from the heart root, and that out of love.

143. It is a true rule in divinity, that God never takes away any blessing from his people but he gives them a better. When Elijah was taken from Elisha into heaven, God doubled his Spirit upon Elisha. If God take away wife or children, he gives better things for them. The disciples parted with Christ's bodily presence, but he sent them the Holy Ghost.

144. God will be known of us in those things wherein it is our comfort to know him. In all our devotions, the whole counsel of heaven comforts us jointly. The second person prays to the Father, and he sends the third, and as they have several titles, so they all agree in their love and care to comfort.

145. In trouble, we are prone to forget all that we have heard and read that makes for our comfort. Now, what is the reason that a man comes to think of that which otherwise he should never have called to mind? The Holy Ghost brings it to his remembrance. He is a comforter, bringing to mind useful things at such times when we have most need of them.

146. Those that care not for the word of God, reject their comfort. All comfort must be drawn out of the Scriptures, which are the breasts of consolation. Many are bred up by education that they know the truth and are able to discourse of it, but they want the Spirit of truth; and that is the reason why all their knowledge vanisheth away in time of trial and temptation.

147. No man is a true divine but the child of God. He only knows holy things by a holy light and life. Other men, though they speak of these things, yet they know them not. Take the mystical points in religion, as justification, adoption, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, the sweet benefit of communion of saints, the excellent estate of a Christian in extremity, to know what is to be done upon all occasions, inward sight and sorrow for sin, they know not what those things mean. For howsoever they may discourse of them, yet the things themselves are mysteries. Repentance is a mystery, joy in the Holy Ghost is a mystery. No natural man, though he be never so great a scholar, knows these things experimentally; but he knows them as physicians know physick, by their books, but not as a sick man by experience.

148. It is a great scandal to religion that men of great learning and parts

are wicked men. Hereupon the world comes to think that religion is nothing but an empty name; so that, without this inward anointing, they never see spiritual things experimentally; but though they know these things in the brain, yet secretly in their hearts they make a scorn of conversion and mortification; and though for his calling he may speak of these things excellently, and with admiration, yet in particular he hath no power of them in his heart.

149. It is good and comfortable to compare our condition with the condition of the men of the world; for howsoever they may excel in riches and learning, yet we have cause to bless God, as Christ saith in the 11th of St Matthew, ver. 25, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' It is good in all outward discouragements, when things go not well with us, thus to reason with ourselves. Wilt thou change thy estate with the men of the world? God hath advanced thee to a higher order. Let them have their greatness. Alas! they are miserable creatures, notwithstanding all that they do enjoy.

150. If we desire to have the Spirit, we must wait in doing good, as the apostles waited many days before the Comforter came. We must also empty our souls of self-love, and the love of the things of the world, and willingly entertain those crosses that bring our souls out of love with them. The children of Israel in the wilderness had no manna till they had spent their onions and garlic; so this world must be out of request with us before we can be spiritual. Let us therefore labour to see the excellency of spiritual things, and how cheap and poor all the glory of the world is to those. These things, thought and considered on, will make us more and more spiritual.

151. The Holy Ghost would not come till Christ, by his death, had reconciled his Father, and after that as an argument of full satisfaction had risen again, because the Holy Ghost is the best gift of God; and whatsoever grace or comfort was received before was by virtue of this; so that the sending of the Holy Ghost is the best fruit of God's reconciliation.

152. Let a particular judgment come upon any man, presently his conscience recalls back what sins have been committed by him; so that this waking of conscience shews that we are sinful creatures.

153. Every man by nature, though the wisest, till he be in Christ, is a slave to the devil, who abuses his wits and parts, and makes him work out his own damnation. This is not the condition of a few fools; but the greatest and wisest in the world. Satan leads them to honours and voluptuousness, as a sheep is led by a green bough. He goes with the stream of man's nature, and so is never discerned.

154. As a man that is called before a judgment-seat, being guilty of many crimes, yet the judge offers him his book, as meaning to save him by that means; but he cannot read. Now he is condemned, partly for his former faults, but especially because he cannot read, and cannot have the benefit of the law (*b*); so therefore a wicked man, not believing in Christ, because the remedy is prepared, and he takes no hold of it. In this sense, as some divines speak, no sin but infidelity condemns a man; for if a man could believe and repent, no sin should be prejudicial to his salvation. We had need, therefore, to look to our faith, when want of belief seals a man up under sin. A man is imprisoned in his conscience until he come to Christ, and his conscience is his jailor. His conscience, enlightened by the law, tells him that he is guilty of such and such sins, and hereupon keeps him to further judgment.

155. There is a miserable cosenage in sin. Naturally, men will deny sin, or else mince it, as Adam did, and as Saul, when Samuel came to convince him; 'I have,' saith he, 'done the commandment of the Lord;' and when he was driven from that, then 'he did but spare them for sacrifice;' but when nothing could satisfy, 'then, I pray thee, honour me before the people,' 1 Sam. xv. 30. Things that we cannot justify, yet we will excuse them, unless God come by his Spirit. We are ready to shift them off. But when the Spirit comes, and takes away all these fig-leaves, then it convinces him of his miserable condition, not only in general, but the Spirit, working together with the word, brings him to confess, 'I am the man.'

156. The affections of grief and sorrow follow upon the discovery of sin by the ministry of the word. Where the judgment is convinced, the affections are stirred up with hatred against that sin; and where this is not, there is no convincing. When a man cries for mercy as for life, this is an argument of sound condition. He that is truly convinced will be as glad of a pardon as a malefactor that stands at the bar condemned.

157. It is the policy of the devil to labour to make us slight the gracious work of conviction; for he knows that whatsoever is built upon a false foundation will come to nothing, and therefore he makes us slight the work of self-examining and searching of ourselves. But slight this, and slight all; for if thou beest slight in searching and examining thyself, thou wilt also be slight in thy repentance and obedience.

158. Naturally, men labour to put out all checks of conscience by sensuality. Men are loath to know themselves to be as they are. 'They are of the devil's mind, they would not be 'tormented before their time,' Mat. viii. 29. Such men, when they are alone, are afraid of themselves. As the elephant will not come near the waters because he hath an ill shape, he would not see himself, so men, by nature, will not come near the light, lest they should see their ill deformities. For nature is so foul, that when a man sees himself, unless he be set in a better condition, it will drive him to despair.

159. We ought to have especial high conceits of the lordship of Christ, as lord paramount over all our enemies, the fear of death, and wrath of God; yea, whatsoever is terrible indeed. He hath freed us from the fear of it.

160. No sin is so great, but the satisfaction of Christ and his mercy is greater. It is beyond comparison of father or mother. They are but beams and trains to lead us up to the mercy of God in Christ.

161. The greatest spite of a carnal man is, that he cannot go to heaven with his full swing; that he cannot enjoy his full liberty; and therefore he labours to suppress all the ordinances of God as much as he can.

162. The quintessence and the spirits of the things we ask in prayer are in God, as joy, and peace, and contentedness; for without this joy and peace, what are all the things in the world? and in the want of these outward things, if we have him we have all, because the spirits of all is in him.

163. Prayer is a venting of our desires to God, from the sense of our own wants, and he that is sensible of his own wants is empty. 'A poor man speaks supplications,' Prov. xviii. 23.

164. It is not so easy a matter to pray as men think, and that in regard of the unspiritualness of our nature, compared with the duty itself, which is to draw near to a holy God. We cannot endure to sever ourselves from our lusts. There is also a great rebellion in our hearts against anything



that is good. Satan also is a special enemy; for when we go to God by prayer, he knows we go to fetch help and strength against him, and therefore he opposeth all he can. But though many men do mumble over a few prayers, yet indeed no man can pray as he ought, but he that is within the covenant of grace.

165. A child of God may pray and not be heard, because at that time he may be a child of anger. If any sin lie unrepented of, we are not in a case fit to pray. Will a king regard the petition of a traitor that purposeth to go on in his rebellion? Therefore, when we come to God, we should renew our purposes of better pleasing him, and then remember the Scripture, and search all the promises as part of our best riches; and when we have them, we should challenge God with his promise, and this will make us strong and faithful in our prayers, when we know we never pray to him in vain.

166. When we pray, God oftentimes refuseth to give us comfort, because we are not in good terms with him; therefore we should still look back to our life past. Perhaps God sees thee running to this or that sin, and before he will hear thee, thou must renew thy repentance for that sin: for our nature is such, that it will knock at every door, and seek every corner before we will come to God; as the woman in the Gospel, she sold all before she came to Christ, Mat. ix. 20, *seq.* So that God will not hear before we forsake all helps, and all false dependence upon the creature; and then he gets the greatest glory, and we have the greatest sweetness to our souls. That water that comes from the fountain is the sweetest; and so divine comforts are the sweetest, when we see nothing in the creature, and he is the best discerner of the fittest time when to give us comfort.

167. When God means to bestow any blessing on his church or children, he will pour upon them the Spirit of prayer; and as all pray for every one, so every one prays for all. This is a great comfort to weak Christians; when they cannot pray, the prayers of others shall prevail for them.

168. A fool's eye is in every corner, and fools' afflictions are scattered. The only object of the soul is that 'one thing needful,' Luke x. 42, and this will fill all the corners of it. When a man hath sucked out the pleasure of worldly contentments, they are then but dead things; but grace is ever fresh, and always yields fresh and full satisfaction.

169. Desires are the spiritual pulse of the soul, always beating to and fro, and shewing the temper of it; they are therefore the characters of a Christian, and shew more truly what he is than his actions do.

170. In the ark there was manna, which was a type of our sacraments; and the Testament, which was a type of the word preached; and the rod of Aaron was a type of government. Wheresoever, therefore, there is spiritual manna, and the word preached, and the rod of Aaron in the government, there is a true church, though there be many personal corruptions.

171. The bitterest things in religion are sweet. There is a sweetness in reproofs; when God meets with our corruptions, and whispers to us that those and those things are dangerous, and that if we cherish them, they will bring us to hell. The word of God is sweet to a Christian, that hath his heart touched. Is not pardon sweet to a condemned man, and riches sweet to a poor man, and favour sweet to a man in disgrace, and liberty sweet to a man in captivity? So all that comes from God is sweet to a Christian, that hath his heart touched with the sense of sin.

172. It is not happiness to see, but sight with enjoyment, and interest. There are but two powers of the soul, understanding and will. When both

these have their perfection, that is happiness: when the understanding sees, and the will draws the affections. So there are these things concur to make up our everlasting happiness, the excellency of the thing, with the sight of it, and interest in it.

173. We see by experience that there is a succession of love. He that loves for beauty will despise when he sees a better; so it is in the soul, between heavenly and earthly things: when the soul sees more excellency, and more fruitfulness in heavenly things, then the love of earthly things falls down in his heart, as Saint Paul saith, Philip. iii. 7, 'I account all things dross and dung in comparison of Christ.'

174. In prayer we tempt God, if we ask that which we labour not for. Our endeavour must second our devotion; for to ask maintenance, and not put our hands to the work, it is as to knock at the door, and yet pull the door unto us that it open not. In this case, if we pray for grace and neglect the spring from whence it comes, how can it speed? It was a rule in the ancient time, 'Lay thy hand on the plough and then pray' (c). No man should pray without ploughing, nor plough without praying.

175. Wisdom is gotten by experience in variety of estates. He that is carried on in one condition, he hath no wisdom to judge of another's estate, or how to carry himself to a Christian in another condition; because he was never abased himself, he looks very big at him. And therefore, that we may carry ourselves as Christians, meekly, lovingly, and tenderly to others, God will have us go to heaven in variety, not in one uniform condition, in regard of outward things.

176. There is no condition but a Christian picks good matter out of it, as a good artisan sometimes will make a good piece of work of an ill piece of matter, to shew his skill. A gracious man is not dejected over-much with abasement, nor lifted up over-much with abundance, but he carries himself in an uniform manner, becoming a Christian, in all conditions; whereas those that have not been brought up in Christ's school, nor trained up in variety of conditions, they learn to do nothing. If they abound, they are proud; if they be cast down, they murmur and fret, and are dejected, as if there were no providence to rule the world.

177. There is a venom and a vanity in everything, without grace, wherewith we are tainted; but when grace comes, it takes out the sting of all ill, and then it finds a good in the worst.

178. Christianity is a busy trade. If we look up to God, what a world of things are required in a Christian, to carry himself as he should do: a spirit of faith, a spirit of love, a spirit of joy and delight in him above all. And if we look to men, there are duties for a Christian to his superiors, a spirit of subjection; to equals he must carry a spirit of love; and to inferiors a spirit of pity and bounty. If we look to Satan, we have a commandment to resist him, and to watch against the tempter. If we look to the world, it is full of snares. There must be a great deal of spiritual watchfulness, that we be not surprised. If we look to ourselves, there are required many duties to carry our vessels in honour, and to walk within the compass of the Holy Ghost; to preserve the peace of our consciences; to walk answerable to our worth, as being the sons of God and coheirs with Christ. He must dispense with himself in no sin; he must be a vessel prepared for every good work; he must baulk in no service that God calls him unto: and therefore the life of a Christian is a busy trade.

179. Sincerity is the perfection of Christians. Let not Satan therefore abuse us. We do all things, when we endeavour to do all things, and

purpose to do all things, and are grieved when we cannot do better, than\* in some measure we do all things.

180. A Christian is able to do great matters, but it is in Christ that strengthens him. The understanding is ours, the affections are ours, the will is ours; but the sanctifying of these, and the carrying of these supernaturally, to do them spiritually, that is not ours, but it is Christ's.

181. We have not only the life of grace from Christ at the first, and then a spiritual power answerable to that again, whereby our powers are renewed, so as we are able to do something in our will, but we have the deed itself: the doing is from Christ, he strengtheneth us for the performance of all good.

182. God preserves his own work by his Spirit: first, he moves us to do, and then he preserves us in doing, and arms us against the impediments.

183. Though Christ be a head of influence that flows into every member, yet he is a voluntary head, according to his own good pleasure, and the exigents† of his members. Sometimes we have need of more grace, and then it flows into us from him accordingly. Sometimes we have need to know our own weakness, and then he leaves us to ourselves, that we may know that without him we cannot stand; and we may know the necessity of his guidance to heaven in the sense of our imperfections, that we may see our weakness and corruptions, that we had thought we had not had in us; as Moses, by God's permission, was tempted to murmur, a meek man, and David to cruelty, a mild man, that thought they had not had those corruptions in them.

184. God is forced to mortify sins by afflictions, because we mortify them not by the Spirit; and in the use of holy means God doth us favours from his own bowels, but corrections and judgments are always forced.

185. We may for the most part read the cause of any judgment in the judgment itself; as, if the judgment be shame, then the cause was pride; if the judgment be want, then our sin was in abundance: we did not learn to abound as we should when we had it.

186. 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 time of sickness, or in the hour of death; and therefore take heed of sinning upon vain hope, that thou shalt wear it out, for one time or other it will stick to thee.

187. When God visits with sickness, we should think our work is more in heaven with God than with men or physie. When David dealt directly and plainly with God, and confessed his sins, then God forgave him them, and healed his body too, Ps. xxxii. 5.

188. 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.

189. It is an art wherein we should labour to be expert, to consider God's gracious dealing in the midst of his corrections; that in the midst of them we might have thankful and cheerful, and fruitful hearts, which we shall not have, unless we have some matter of thankfulness. Consider, therefore, doth God make me weak, he might have struck me with death;

\* Qu. 'then'?—ED.

† That is, 'exigencies.'—G.

or, if not taken away my mortal life, yet he might have given me up to a spiritual death, to an hard heart, to desperation.

190. In this latter age of the world, God doth not use the same dispensation. He doth not always outwardly visit for sin ; for his government is now more inward. Therefore we should take the more heed, for he may give us up to blindness, to deadness, to security, which are the greatest judgments that can befall us.

191. We should 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. Let these humble our hearts ; for when we make not conscience of spiritual sins, God gives us up to open breaches that stain and blemish our profession.

192. Many men put off the power of grace, and rest in common civil things, in outward performances ; but when we regard not the manner, God regards not the matter of the things we do ; and therefore oftentimes he punishes for the performance of good duties, as we see in 1 Cor. xi. 30, 31.

193. Our whole life under the gospel should be nothing but thankfulness and fruitfulness. Take heed, therefore, of turning the grace of God to wantonness. The state of the gospel requires 'that we should deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live righteously and soberly and godly in the present world,' &c., Titus ii. 12. Therefore, when we find ourselves otherwise, we should think, Oh ! this is not the life of a Christian under the gospel : the gospel requires a more fruitful, a more zealous carriage, more love to Christ, &c.

194. If any man be so uncivil, when a man shews him a spot on his garment, that he grows cholerick, will we not judge him 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 we live. This was David's disposition, when he was told of the danger, going to kill Nabal and his household. 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.

195. 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.

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

197. God takes a safe course with his children, 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 not love the world, but be crucified to the world. He makes the world to 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.

198. If God should not meet with us with seasonable correction, we

should shame religion, and shame Christ; and therefore God in mercy corrects us with fatherly correction.

199. In the governing of a Christian life we are carried naturally to second causes, whereas they are all but as rods in God's hands. Look, therefore, to the hand that smites; look to God in all. He chastiseth us, as David saith in the matter of Shimei, 2 Sam. xvi. 10; and as Job saith, 'It is the Lord that hath given, and the Lord that hath taken away,' Job i. 21.

200. 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 our enemies, a blessing in all losses whatsoever; and therefore in our affections we should not only justify God, but glorify and magnify him for his mercy, that rather than we should be condemned with the world, he will take this course with us.

201. Though our salvation be sure, and that we shall not be condemned with the world, yet the knowledge of this doth not make us secure; for though God doth not damn us with the world, yet he will sharply correct us here. And by a careful, sober life we might obtain many blessings, and prevent many judgments, and make our pilgrimage more comfortable. Therefore it argues neither grace nor wit, that because God will save me, therefore I will take liberty. No; though God will save thee, yet he will [take] such a course with thee, thou shalt endure such sharpness for thy sin, that it shall be more bitter than the sweetest of it was pleasant.

202. Gracious persons in times of peace and quiet do often underprize themselves, and the graces of God in them, thinking that they want faith, patience, and love, who yet, when God calleth them out to the cross, shine forth in the eyes of others, in the example of a meek and quiet subjection.

203. God oftentimes maketh wicked men friends to his children without changing their disposition, by putting into their hearts some conceit for the time, which inclineth them to favour, as Nehemiah ii. 8. God put it into the king's heart to favour his people; so Gen. xxxiii. 4, Esau was not changed, only God for the time changed his affections to favour Jacob. So God puts into the hearts of many groundedly naught,\* to favour the best persons.

204. Usually in what measure we in the times of our peace and liberty inordinately let loose our affections, in that measure are we cast down, or more deeply in discomfort. When our adulterous hearts cleave to things more than become chaste hearts, it makes the cross more sharp and extreme.

205. A man indeed is never overcome, let him be never so vexed in the world by any, till his conscience be cracked. If his conscience and his cause stand upright, he doth conquer, and is more than a conqueror.

206. Partial obedience is no obedience at all. To single out easy things that do not oppose our lusts, which are not against our reputation, therein some will do more than they need. But our obedience must be universal to all God's commandments, and that because he commands us.

207. In every evil work that we are tempted unto we need delivering grace, as to every good work assisting grace.

208. That Christian who is privy to his own soul, of good intentions to abstain from all ill, he may presume that God will assist him against all ill works for the time to come.

\* That is, 'fundamentally wicked.'—G.

209. We should watch and labour daily to continue in prayer, strengthening and backing them with arguments from the word and promises, and marking how our prayers speed. When we shoot an arrow, we look to the fall of it; when we send a ship to sea, we look for the return of it; and when we sow seed, we look for a harvest; and so when we sow our prayers into God's bosom, shall we not look for an answer, and observe how we speed? It is a seed of atheism to pray, and not to look how we speed. But a sincere Christian will pray, and wait, and strengthen his heart with promises out of the word, and never leave till God do give him a gracious answer.

210. Take a Christian, and whatsoever he doth he doth it in fear. If he call God Father, it is in fear. He eats and drinks in fear, as St Jude speaks of them that eat 'without fear,' ver. 12. The true servant of God hath fear accompanying him in all his actions, in his speeches and recreations, in his meat and drink. But he that hath not this fear, how bold is he in wicked courses, and loose in all his carriages! But mark a true Christian, and you shall always see in him some expressions of an holy fear.

211. The relation of servant is of great consequence to put us in mind of our duty. If we will be God's servants, we must make it good by obedience, we must resolve to come under his government, and be at his command, or else he will say to us, as to them in the 10th of Judges, 'Go to the gods whom you have served,' x. 14. Therefore empty relations are nothing to purpose. If we profess ourselves God's servants, and [do] not shew it by our obedience, it is but an empty title. Therefore let us make our relations good, at least in our affections, that we may be able to say, 'I desire to fear thy name,' Ps. lxxxvi. 11.

212. In reading of the Scriptures, let us compare experiments\* with rules: Neh. i. 8, 9, 'If you sin, you shall be scattered; and if you return again, I will be merciful.' We should practise this in our lives, to see how God hath made good his threatenings in our corrections, and his promises in our comforts.

213. Those that have had a sweet communion with God, when they have lost it, do count every day ten thousand till they have recovered it again; and when Christ leaves his spouse, he forsakes her not altogether, but leaves something on the heart that maketh her to long after him. He absents himself that he may enlarge the desires of the soul, and after the soul hath him again, it will not let him go. He comes for our good, and leaves us for our good. We should therefore judge rightly of our estates, and not think we are forsaken of God when we are in a desertion.

214. When men can find no comfort, yet when they set themselves to teach weaker Christians by way of reflection, they receive comfort themselves, so doth God reward the conscionable† performance of this duty of discourse, that those things we did not so sweetly understand before, by discourse we understand them better. This should teach us to be in love with holy conference, for besides the good we do to others we are much bettered ourselves.

215. We may use God's creatures, but not scrupulously, nor superstitiously, singling out one creature from another, nor yet may we use them as we list. There is a difference between right, and the use of right. The magistrate may restrain the use of our right, and so may our weak brother in case of scandal. So that all things be ours, yet in the use of them we must be sober, not eating nor drinking immoderately, nor using

\* That is, 'experiences.'—G.

† That is, 'conscientious.'—G.

anything uncharitably, whereby others may take offence ; for albeit we have a right to God's bounty, yet our right and use must be sanctified by the word and prayer.

216. Many men fall to questioning, Oh that I had assurance of my salvation ! Oh that I were the child of God ! Why, man, fall to obedience. Ay, but I cannot ; for it is the Spirit that enables. But yet come to holy exercises, though we have not the Spirit ; for many times in the midst of holy exercises God gives the Spirit ; and therefore, attend upon the means until we have strength to obey. Wait upon God's ordinances till he stirs in thy soul. All that love your souls, attend upon the means, and have a care to sanctify the Lord's day : Rev. i. 10, 'John was ravished in the Spirit on the Lord's day.'

217. God takes nothing away from his children, but instead thereof, he gives them that which is better. Happy is that self-denial that is made up with joy in God. Happy is that poverty that is made up with grace and comfort. Therefore let us not fear anything that God shall call us unto in this world. It is hard to persuade flesh and blood hereunto ; but those that find the experience of this as Christians, do find withal particular comforts flowing from the presence of Christ's Spirit. St Paul would not have wanted his whippings to have missed his comforts.

218. Christ doth chiefly manifest himself unto the Christian soul in times of affliction, because then the soul unites itself most to Christ ; for the soul in time of prosperity scatters and loseth itself in the creature, but there is an uniting power in afflictions to make the soul gather itself to God.

219. Christ took upon him our nature, and in that nature suffered hunger, and was subject to all infirmities. Therefore, when we are put to pains in our callings, to troubles for a good conscience, or to any hardship in the world, we must labour for contentment, because we are hardly\* made conformable unto Christ.

220. There is not any thing or any condition that befalls a Christian in this life but there is a general rule in the Scripture for it, and this rule is quickened by example, because it is a practical knowledge. God doth not only write his law in naked commandments, but he enlivens these with the practice of some one or other of his servants. Who can read David's Psalms but he shall read himself in them ? He cannot be in any trouble but David is in the same, &c.

221. As children in the womb have eyes and ears, not for that place, but for a civil life afterwards among men, where they shall have use of all members, even so our life here is not for this world only, but for another. We have large capacities, large memories, large affections, large expectations. God doth not give us large capacities and large affections for this world, but for heaven and heavenly things.

222. Take a Christian that hath studied mortification, you shall see the life of Jesus in his sickness, in a great deal of patience and heavenly-mindedness, when his condition is above his power, his strength above his condition.

223. As men do cherish young plants at first, and do fence them about with hedges and other things to keep them from hurt, but when they are grown, they remove them, and then leave them to the wind and weather, so God, he besets his children first with props of inward comforts, but afterwards he exposes them to storms and winds, because they are better able to bear it. Therefore let no man think himself the better because he is free from troubles. It is because God sees him not fit to bear greater.

\* That is, 'with difficulty.'—G.

224. When we read the Scriptures, we should read to take out something for ourselves ; as when we read any promise, This is mine ; when we read any prerogative, This is mine, it was written for me ; as the apostle saith, 'Whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning,' &c., Rom. xv. 4.

225. As the Spirit is necessary to work faith at the first, so is it necessary also to every act of faith ; for faith cannot act upon occasion but by the Spirit ; and therefore we should not attempt to do or to suffer anything rashly, but beg the Spirit of God, and wait for the assistance, because according to the increase of our troubles must our faith be increased ; for the life of a Christian is not only to have the Spirit work faith at first, but upon all occasions to raise up our former graces. For faith stirs up all other graces, and holds every grace to the word ; and so long as faith continues, we keep all other graces in exercise.

226. There is no true Christian but hath a public spirit to seek the good of others, because as soon as he is a Christian, he labours for self-denial. He knows he must give up himself and all to God, so that his spirit is enlarged in measure unto God and to the church ; and therefore the greater portion a man hath of the Spirit of Christ, the more he seeks the good of others.

227. If we would have hearts to praise God, we must labour to see everything we receive from God to be of grace, and abundance of grace answerable to the degrees of good. Whatsoever we have more than nature is abundant grace. Whatsoever we have as Christians, though poor and distressed in our passage to heaven, is abundant grace.

228. There are three main parts of our salvation : first, a true knowledge of our misery ; and secondly, the knowledge of our deliverance ; and then, to live a life answerable. The Holy Ghost can only work these. He only convinceth of sin ; and where he truly convinceth of sin, there also of righteousness, and then of judgments.

229. That we may be convinced of sin, the Spirit must work a clear and commanding demonstration of our condition in nature. It takes away therefore all cavils, turnings, and windings ; even as when we see the sun shine we know it is day. The Spirit not only convinceth in generals that we are all sinners, but in particulars, and that strongly, 'thou art the man.' This convincing is also universal, of sins of nature, of sins of life, sins of the understanding, of the will, and of the affections ; of the misery of sin, of the danger of sin, of the folly and madness of sin, of sins against so many motives, so many favours. Proud nature arms itself with deftness,\* strong translations,† strong mitigations. It is necessary therefore that the Holy Ghost should join with men's consciences to make them confess, 'I am the man.'

230. The convincing of the Spirit may be known from common conviction of conscience by this, that natural conviction is weak like a little spark, and convinceth only of breaches of the second table, and not of evangelical sins. Again, common conviction is against a man's will : it makes him not the better man, only he is tortured and tormented. But a man that is convinced by the Spirit, he joins with the Spirit against himself ; he accuseth himself ; he takes God's part against himself. He is willing to be laid open, that he may find the greater mercy.

231. It is not enough to know that there is a righteousness of Christ, but the Spirit must open the eyes of the soul to see, else we shall have a

\* That is, 'dexterity.'—G.

† That is, 'transferences.' Cf. Gen. iii. 12, *seq.*—G.



natural knowledge of supernatural things. It is necessary to have a supernatural sight to see supernatural things, so as to change the soul; and therefore the Spirit only works faith to see Christ is mine. Further, only the Spirit can work the conscience to be quiet, because he is greater than the conscience, and can answer all inward objections and cavils of flesh and blood. Unless, therefore, the Holy Ghost apply what Christ hath done, the conscience will not be satisfied.

232. The best men in the estate of grace would be in darkness, and call their state into question, if the Holy Ghost did not convince them, and answer all cavils for them; and therefore we must not only be convinced at the first by the Spirit, but in our continued course of Christianity. This, therefore, should make us to come to God's ordinances with holy devotion. O Lord, vouchsafe the Spirit of revelation, and take the scales from mine eyes, that as these are truths, so they may be truths to me! Do thou sway my soul, that I may cast myself upon thy mercy in Christ!

233. Spiritual convincing is not total in this life, but always leaves in the heart some dregs of doubting, though the soul be safe for the main. As a ship that rides at anchor is tossed and troubled, but the anchor holds it, so it is with the soul that is convinced weakly: it is sure of the main, yet it is tossed with many doubts and fears, but the anchor is in heaven.

234. The Spirit of God doth so far convince every Christian of the righteousness of Christ, as preserves in him such a power of grace, as to cast himself upon the mercy of God. God will send his Spirit so far into the heart, as it shall not betray itself to despair. He will let such a beam into the soul, as all the powers of hell shall not quench.

235. When we neglect prayer, and set upon duties in our own strength, and in confidence of our own parts; if we belong to God we shall be sure to miscarry, though another man perhaps may prosper; and therefore we should be continually dependent upon God for his direction and for his blessing in whatsoever we go about.

236. As many women, because they will not endure the pain of childbirth, do kill their children in the womb, so many men, who will not be troubled with holy actions, do stifle holy motions. Therefore, let us take heed of murdering the motions of the Holy Spirit, but let us entertain them, that when they are kindled, they may turn to resolution, and resolution into practice.

237. This is a common rule, that we cannot converse with company that are not spiritual, but if they vex us not they will taint us, unless we be put upon them in our callings. We should therefore make special choice of our company, and walk in a continual watchfulness.

238. It is rebellion against God for a man to make away himself. The very heathens could say, that we must not go out of our station till we be called. (*d*). It is the voice of Satan, 'Cast thyself down.' But what saith St Paul to the jailor? 'Do thyself no harm, for we are all here,' Acts xvi. 28. We should so carry ourselves, that we may be content to stay here till God hath done that work he hath to do in us and by us; and then he will call us hence in the best time.

239. He is a valiant man that can command himself to be miserable; and he that cannot command himself to endure some bondage and disgrace in the world, it argues weakness. Christ could have come down from the cross, but he shewed his strength and power by enduring their reproaches and torments.

240. The reason why many Christians stagger, and are so full of doubts, is because they are idle, and labour not to grow in grace. There-

fore we should labour to grow in knowledge and mortification, for in that way we come to assurance.

241. Whatsoever good is in a natural man, is depraved\* by a self-end. Self-love rules all his actions. He keeps within himself, and makes for himself: he is a god to himself: God is but his idol. This is true of all natural men in the world. They make themselves their last end; and where the end is depraved, the whole course is corrupted.

242. The sense of assured hope cannot be maintained without a great deal of pains, diligence, and watchfulness: 2 Pet. i. 10, 'Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure,' insinuating that it will not be had without it. It is the diligent and watchful Christian that hath this assurance; otherwise the Holy Ghost will suffer us to be in a damp,† and under a cloud, if we stir not up the graces of the Spirit. It is grace in the exercise, and love in the exercise, that is an earnest, and so faith and hope in the exercise is an earnest. If grace be asleep, you may have grace, and not know it. Therefore we should labour to put our graces into exercise.

243. Those that have assurance of their salvation have oftentimes troublesome distractions, because they do not always stand upon their guard. Sometimes they are lifted up to heaven, and sometimes cast down even to hell; yet always in the worst condition there is something left in the soul, that suggests to it that it is not utterly cast off.

244. He to whom this pilgrimage is over-sweet, loves not his country; yet the pleasures of this life are so suitable to our nature, that we should sit by them, but that God follows us with several crosses. Therefore let us take in good part any cross, because it is out of heavenly love that we are exercised, lest we should surfeit upon things here below.

245. In melancholy distempers, especially when there goes guilt of spirit with it, we can see nothing but darkness in wife, children, friends, estate, &c. Here is a pitiful darkness, when body, and soul, and conscience, and all are distempered. Now let a Christian see God in his nature and promises, and though he cannot live by sight in such a distemper, yet let him then live by faith.

246. Though God do personate an enemy, yet faith sees a fatherly nature in him. It apprehends some beams of comfort. Though there be no sense and feeling, yet the Spirit works a power in the heart, whereby the soul is able to clasp with God, and to allege his word and nature against himself.

247. The reason why the world seeth not the happy condition of God's children is, because their bodies are subject to the same infirmities with the worst of men; nor are they exempted from troubles. They are also subject to fall into gross sins, and therefore worldly men think, Are these the men that are happier than we? They see their crosses, but not their crowns; they see their infirmities, but not their graces; they see their miseries, but not their inward joy and peace of conscience.

248. To walk by faith is to be active in our walking, not to do as we list, but it is a stirring by rule. Since the fall, we have lost our hold of God, and we must be brought again to God by the same way we fell from him. We fell by infidelity, and we must be brought again by faith, and lead our lives upon such grounds as faith affords. We must walk by faith, looking upon God's promise, and God's call, and God's commandments, and not live by opinion, example, and reason.

249. In the exercise of our callings, when we think we shall do no good,

\* That is, 'vitiated.'—G.

† Qu. 'dump'?—G.

but all things seem contrary, yet faith saith, God hath set me here ; I will cast in my net at thy commandment, Luke v. 5. Let us look upon God, and see what he commands, and then cast ourselves upon him.

250. A Christian hath sense and experience of God's love, together with his faith. It is not a naked faith without any relish, but that sense and experience we have here is given to strengthen faith for time to come ; and therefore when we have any sweet feelings, we must not rest in them, but remember they are given to encourage us in our way, and to look for fulness in another world.

251. There is a double act of faith : first, the direct act, whereby I cast myself upon Christ, and there is a reflect act, whereby I know that I am in an estate of grace by the fruits of the Spirit. It is by the first act that we are saved. Feelings are oftentimes divided from the first act ; for God may enable a man to cast himself upon Christ, and yet for some ends he shall not know it, because he will humble him. God gives the reflect act, which is assured hope, as a reward of exact walking, but we must trust to that closing act of faith as to that which saveth us. We ought to live by this direct act of faith till we come to heaven, but add this, that there is no man walks by faith that wants comfort.

252. God oftentimes defers to help his children until they be in extremity, till they be at their wits' end, because he will have them live by faith and not by sight ; as good Jehoshaphat, ' We know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee,' 2 Chron. xx. 12. So St Paul received the sentence of death in himself, that he might trust in the living God, 2 Cor. i. 9. This is the cause of divine desertsions, why God leaves his children in desperate plunges, seeming to be an enemy to them, because he will have us live by faith ; and when we live by it, then he rewards us.

253. Howsoever things are in sight, yet we should give God the honour to trust to his promises. Though his dealings towards us seem to be as to reprobates, yet let us believe his word. He cannot deny it. Say, ' Lord, remember thy promise to thy servant, wherein thou hast caused me to trust,' Ps. cxix. 49. Therefore wrestle with God, for thereby he doth convey secret strength to his children, that they may be able to overcome him.

254. The reason why many men at the hour of death are full of fears and doubtings, and their hearts are full of misgivings, is, because in their lifetime they have not been exercised in living by faith.

255. Confidence doth then arise from faith, when troubles make it the stronger. Therefore it is a true evidence, when confidence increaseth with opposition, great troubles breeding great confidence. Again, it is a sign a man's confidence is well bred, when a man can carry himself equal in all conditions, when he hath learned to want and to abound. He needs a strong brain that drinks much strong water. Now when a man hath an even spirit, to be content in all conditions, it argues a well-grounded confidence.

256. None can be truly confident but God's children. Other men's confidence is like a madman's strength. He may have the strength of two or three for a time, but it is a false strength ; and it is when they are lifted up upon the wings of ambition and favour of men, but these men in the time of trial sink : ' The hope of the hypocrite shall perish,' Prov. xi. 7.

257. Wicked men depart out of this world like malefactors that are unwilling to go out of prison. But God's children, when they die, they die in obedience : ' Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word,' Luke ii. 29. To be in the body is a good condition, because

we live by faith ; but it is better to be with the Lord, because then we shall live by sight.

258. An ambitious man is an underminer of others, and if any stand in his way, he will make way through blood, he will tread upon his friends to get to honour, so a soul that is graciously ambitious considers what stands in his way. He hates father and mother, nay, his own life ; he pulls out his right eye, he cuts off his right hand, he offers violence to everything that stands betwixt him and his God.

259. We should study the Scriptures, that we may find what is acceptable to God and Christ. Now that which most pleaseth God is holiness. So doth grace and mercy. Therefore we should study to be holy, and gracious, and merciful. 'This is the will of God,' saith the apostle, 'even your sanctification, that is, to be holy as God is holy,' 1 Thes. iv. 3. Those that will be acceptable to God must be good in private, in their closet, because sincerity supposeth that God sees all. They must be humbled for the rising of sin, because these things are seen of Christ with grief and hatred.

260. If in our recreations or other lawful things we be so religious as we should, we will then have Christ in our eye, and see how this may further me in his service, or how this may hinder me ; for the most glorious actions of religion are no service at all if not done in faith, and with respect to Christ.

261. Let no man be discouraged in the doing of good actions, though otherwise they may be bad men, having no interest in Christ ; for so far as any outward action is outwardly good it shall be rewarded. The Scribes and Pharisees had the promise of men for their reward. The Romans were straight\* in their civil government, and God so blessed them for it, that their commonwealth flourished for many hundred years. Let the people be what they will, if civil,† they shall have their reward suitable to that good they do. As for heaven and happiness in another world, they care not for it ; yet every man shall have his 'penny,' Mat. xx. 13.

262. It is a great art in faith to apprehend Christ suitable to our present condition ; as when we are fallen into sin, think of the terrors of the law, but when we are broken-hearted, then present him as a sweet Saviour, inviting all to come unto him ; and thus neither shall Christ be dishonoured nor our souls wronged.

263. It is much to be desired that there were that love in all men to teach what they know, and that humility in others to be instructed in what they know not. God humbles great persons to learn of meaner ; and it is our duty to embrace the truth whosoever brings it ; and oftentimes mean persons are instruments of comfort to greater than themselves ; as Aquila and Priscilla instructed Apollos, Acts xviii. 26.

264. He that seeks us before we sought him, will he refuse us when we seek after him ? Let no man therefore despair or be discouraged. If there be in thee the height and depth, and length and breadth of sin, there is also much more the height and depth, and length and breadth of mercy in God. And though we have played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again : Jer. iii. 1, 'For his thoughts are not as ours,' and his mercies are the mercies of a reconciled God.

265. When we are under a cloud of temptations, let us take heed of opposing our comforts ; for it wrongs Christ's intention, who would not have us at any time to be uncomfortable ; and besides, whilst we are in such a condition, we are unfit to glorify God, for fear doth bind up the

\* That is, 'exact,' 'strict.'—G.

† That is, 'moral,' or 'equitable.'—G.

soul, and makes it in a palsy temper. We are not fit to do anything as we ought without some love and some joy; and though we be at present under a cloud, yet the sun is always the same. We may therefore for a time want the light of his gracious countenance, but never his sweet influence.

266. Most men if they could they would always live here, but whosoever is partaker of Christ's resurrection, his mind doth presently ascend; and here we are always enlarging our desires, because we are under a state of imperfection.

267. Many men that make a profession are like kites, which ascend high, but look low. But those that look high as they ascend high are risen with Christ. For a Christian being once in the estate of grace, he forgets what is behind, and looks upon ascending higher and higher, till he be in his place of happiness; and as at Christ's rising there was an earthquake, so such as are risen with him do find a commotion and division between the flesh and the spirit.

268. Christ hath an especial care of his children, when by reason of the guilt of sin they have most cause to be disconsolate; and therefore, where the heart of any man is upright towards God, it is not to be expressed what indulgence there is in him towards such a poor sinner; for though Peter had denied him, yet in Mark xvi. 7, 'Go tell his disciples, and tell Peter,' so that Christ took great care to secure him of his love, though he had most shamefully denied him.

269. God hath not in vain taken upon him the name of a Father, and he fills it up to the full. It is a name of indulgence, a name of hope, a name of provision, a name of protection. It argues the mitigation of punishment. A little is enough from a father. Therefore in all temptations it should teach us by prayer to fly under the wings of our heavenly Father, and to expect from him all that a father should do for his child, as provision, protection, indulgence, yea, and seasonable corrections also, which are as necessary for us as our daily bread; and when we die we may expect our inheritance, because he is our Father. But yet we must understand also, that the name of Father is a word of relation. Something also he expects from us. We must therefore reverence him as a Father, which consists in fear and love. He is a great God, and therefore we ought to fear him; he is also merciful, yea, hath bowels of mercy, and therefore we ought to love him. If we tremble at him, we know not that he is loving, and if we be over bold, we forget that he is a great God. Therefore we should go boldly to him with reverence and godly fear.

270. Those that are at peace in their own consciences will be peaceable towards others. A busy, contentious, querulous disposition argues it never felt peace from God; and though many men think it commendable to censure the infirmities of others, yet it argues their own weakness. For it is a sign of strength, where we see in men any good, to bear with their weaknesses. Who was more indulgent than Christ? He bore with the infirmities of his disciples from time to time. Therefore we should labour to carry ourselves lovingly towards them that are weak, and know that nothing should raise us so high in our esteem above others, so as to forget them to be brethren, inasmuch as those infirmities we see in them shall be buried with them.

271. Many men will make much of eminent persons, and men of excellent parts, but there may be a great deal of hypocrisy in that, and therefore the truth of our love is tried in this, if we bear a sincere affection to all the saints, Eph. vi. 18.

272. We must take heed of coming to God in our own persons or

worthiness, but in all things look at God in Christ. If we look at God as a Father, we must see him Christ's Father first. If we see ourselves acquitted from our sins, let us look at Christ risen first. If we think of glorification in heaven, let us see Christ glorified first, and when we consider of any spiritual blessing, consider of it in Christ first. All the promises are made to Christ. He takes them first from God the Father, and derives\* them to us by his Spirit. The first fulness is in God, and then he empties himself into Christ. 'And of his fulness we all receive grace,' &c.

273. God is said to be our God, or to be a God unto us, whenas he applies for the good of his creature, that all-sufficiency that is in himself. God is our God by covenant, because he hath made over himself unto us. Every believing Christian hath the title passed over to him, so that God is his portion, and his inheritance. There is more comfort in this, that God is our God, than the heart of man can conceive. It is larger than his heart, and therefore though we cannot say, that riches, or honours, or friends, &c., are ours, yet if we be able to say by the Spirit of faith that God is ours, then we have all in him. His wisdom is ours to find out a way to do us good. If we be in danger, his power is ours to bring us out; if under the guilt of sin, his mercy is ours to forgive us; if any want, his all-sufficiency is ours to supply, or to make it good. If God be ours, then whatsoever God can do is ours, and whatsoever God hath is ours.

274. God is the God and Father of all the elect, and he is also a God and a Father unto every one of the elect. God is every saint's *solidum*. Even as the sun is wholly every man's, so is God. He cares for all as one, and for every one as if he had but one.

275. There is not only a mystery, but a depth in the mystery; as of election and reprobation, so of providence. There is no reason can be given why some of God's children are in quiet and others are vexed, why one should be poor and another rich. In Ps. xvii. 2, 'clouds and darkness are round about him.' You cannot see him, he is hid in a cloud; ay, but righteousness and judgment are the foundation of his throne. Howsoever he wrap himself in a thick cloud, that none can see him, yet he is just and righteous. Therefore when anything befalls us, for which we can see no reason, yet we must reverence him and adore his counsels, and think him wiser than we.

276. When we are diligent in our calling, keeping a good conscience and labouring for a carriage answerable; when these three meet together, calling, and standing, and wise carriage: then whatsoever befalls us, we may with comfort say, 'The will of the Lord be done.' We are now in his way, and may then expect a guard of angels without, and a guard of his Spirit within.

277. All the contentions between the flesh and the spirit lies in this, whether God shall have his will or we ours. Now God's will is straight, but ours is crooked, and therefore if God will have us offer up our Isaac we must submit to him, and even drown ourselves in the will of God, and then the more we are emptied of ourselves, the freer we are by how much we are made subject to God. For in what measure we part with anything for him, we shall receive even in this world an hundredfold in joy and peace, &c.

278. Whatsoever outward good things we have, we should use them in a reverent manner, knowing that the liberty we have to enjoy them is purchased with the blood of Christ, as David, when he thirsted for the waters of Bethlehem, would not drink it, because it was the blood of his three worthies, 2 Sam. xxiii. 15, *seq.* So though we have a free use of the creatures, yet we must be careful to use them with moderation and reverence.

\* That is, 'communicates.'—G.

279. There is nothing of God can please the world, because the best things are presented to the heart of a carnal man as foolishness. Man's nature above all things would avoid the imputation of folly, and rather than he will be counted a fool he will slander the ways of God to be\* foolishness. Now the law of Christ constrains us, and makes us do many things for which the world doth think us out of our wits, and therefore we should labour to quit our hearts, and account of it a greater favour from God, when the Michals of this world scoff at us for our goodness, 2 Sam. vi. 22; for when they are offended at us God is delighted with us.

280. To discern of our estate in grace, let us chiefly look to our affections, for they are intrinsecal, and not subject to hypocrisy. Men of great parts know much, and so doth the devil, but he wants love. In fire all things may be painted but the heat. So all good actions may be done by an hypocrite, but there is a heat of love which he hath not. We should therefore chiefly examine the truth and sincerity of our affections.

281. We may apprehend the love of God, but we cannot comprehend it. All the fruits of his love passes our common understanding, and therefore we have the Holy Spirit given to us to take away the veil, and to make report of it to the soul; and then as soon as this love of Christ is apprehended, it constrains us to all holy duties, not as fire out of flint, but as water out of a spring. The love of a wife to her husband may begin from the supply of her necessities, but afterwards she may love him also for the sweetness of his person. So the soul doth first love Christ for salvation, but when she is brought to him, and finds that sweetness that is in him, then she loves him for himself.

282. It should be our continual care to manifest the sincerity of our hearts to God in our several places and callings, and this is done when we look at God in every action, and endeavour to yield our whole soul to the whole will of God, serving him in our spirits, and performing the works of our callings by his Spirit, according to his word, and unto his glory; and if we thus labour to approve ourselves to him, whatsoever be the issue, we shall be endued with a holy boldness, with inward peace and comfort, having carried ourselves as in the sight of God.

283. That a man may be fit to persuade others he must have love to their persons, a clear knowledge of the cause, and grace, that he may be able to speak in wisdom to their souls and consciences. As we are saved by love, so we are persuaded by the arguments of love, which is most agreeable to the nature of man, that is led by persuasion, not by compulsion. Men may be compelled to the use of the means, but not to faith. Many men labour only to unfold the Scriptures, for the increasing of their knowledge, that they may be able to discourse, whereas the special intent of the ministry is to work upon the heart and affections.

284. As we must approve ourselves to God and to our own consciences, so also to the consciences of others,—not to their humours and fancies,—that they may witness for us, that we love them and deal faithfully with them. We should labour to do all the good we can, especially to the souls of men that are redeemed with the blood of Christ. If we deserve well of them, they will give evidence for us; but if we walk scandalously, they will evidence that we by our ill courses and examples drew them to ill courses, and hardened them in evil. It should be our care therefore to approve ourselves to the consciences of men, that we may have them to witness for us, that such men of whom we have deserved well may be our crown at the last day.

\* That is, = *as* foolishness.—G.

285. A man doth then keep a good conscience in relation to others, when he makes it appear that he can deny himself to do them good ; when the consciences of other men shall think thus, Such a man regards my good more than his own ; he seeks no advantage to himself ; he lives so as that the world may see he is in good earnest ; he speaks so as that he makes it good by his life. Now if our care be to walk thus, we shall approve ourselves to the consciences of men.

286. There are many that will give some way to divine truths, but they have a reservation of some sin. When Herodias is once touched, then John Baptist's head must off, Mat. xiv. 6. Such truths as come near makes them fret, because their conscience tells them they cannot yield obedience to all. The lust of some sins hath gotten such domination over their affections, that the conscience saith, I cannot do this ; and then that hatred that should be turned upon the sin, is turned upon the word and the minister. Like unto some vermin, that when they are driven to a stand, they will fly in a man's face, so these men, when they see they must yield, they grow malicious, so that what they will not follow, that they will reproach ; therefore it should be our care at all times to yield obedience, according to what we know.

287. There is a generation of churlish people, such as watch for offences, because they would go to hell with some reason. They will not see who are weak, and who are hypocrites, but they cast reproach upon all ; and therefore oftentimes God in justice to them suffers good men to fall, that such men may take 'scandal' at them to their ruin.

288. A man may know that the word hath wrought upon his conscience, when he comes to it, that he may hear and learn and reform. A man that hath a heart without guile, is glad to hear the sharpest reproofs, because he knows that sin is his greatest enemy ; but if we live in a course that we are loath should be touched, it is a sign our hearts are full of guile. Corrupt men they mould their teachers, and fashion them to their lusts ; but a good and upright heart is willing that divine truths should have their full authority in the soul, giving way to our duty, though never so contrary to flesh and blood.

289. It is the duty of ministers to labour to prevent objections that may arise in the hearts of the people, so as to hinder the passage of their doctrine ; and that truths may more readily come into the heart, we should labour to relish the person, for secret surmises are stones to stumble at ; therefore both ministers and people should be careful to remove them.

290. A man ought not to commend himself, but in some special cases : first, because pride and envy in others will not endure it ; secondly, it toucheth upon God's glory, and therefore we should take heed ; thirdly, it deprives us of comfort, and hinders the apology\* of others. The heathens could say, that the praising of a man's self is a burdensome hearing (*e*) ; let us take heed, therefore, that we snatch not our right out of God's hand. But now, on the contrary in some cases, we may praise and commend ourselves, as when we have a just calling to make an apology in way of defence, and for the conviction of them that unjustly speak evil of us ; secondly, we may speak well of ourselves in way of example to others, as parents to their children ; and this doth well become them, because it is not out of pride or vain glory, because the end is discovered to be out of love unto them.

291. It is the duty of those that are God's children, when they have just occasion, to take the defence of others upon them : and thus did the blind

\* That is, 'defence.'—G.



man, John ix. 30 ; he defended Christ against the Pharisees ; and Jonathan spoke to his father in the behalf of David, 2 Sam. xx. 30. Though he was the son of a rebellious woman, yet he knew that he ought\* this unto the truth. God hath a cause in the world that must be owned, and therefore when the cause of religion is brought upon the stage, then God seems to say as Jehu did, ' Who is on my side, who ? ' 2 Kings ix. 32. God commends his cause and his children to us ; and therefore ' Curse ye Meroz, saith the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty,' Judges v. 23. So a curse lies upon those that, when the truth suffers, have not a word to defend it.

292. Usually the defamers of others are proud, vainglorious persons. If a man will search for the spirit of the devil in men, let him look for it amongst vainglorious teachers, heretics, and superstitious persons. The ground of it is from the nearness of two contraries. There the opposition is the strongest, as fire and water when they are near make the strongest opposition ; and who are so near God's children as vainglorious teachers that are of the same profession ? Pilate, a heathen, shewed more favour to Christ than the Pharisees. And this use we should make of it, not to take scandal when we see one divine deprave† another, for it hath been so, and will be so to the end of the world.

293. All things out of God are but grass. When we joy in anything out of God, it is a childish joy, as if we joyed in flowers, that after we have drawn out the sweetness, we cast them away. All outward things are common to castaways as well as to us ; and without grace they will prove snares ; at the hour of death what comfort can we have in them, further than we have had humility and love to use them well. Therefore if we would have our hearts seasoned with true joy, let us labour to be faithful in our places, and endeavour according to the gifts we have to glorify God.

294. To glory in anything whatsoever, is idolatry, because the mind sets up a thing to glory in, which is not God ; secondly, it is spiritual adultery to cleave to anything more than God ; thirdly, it is false-witness-bearing to ascribe excellency where there is none. We have a prohibition, ' Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches,' Jer. ix. 23. God will not give his glory to another ; and therefore when men will be meddling with glory, which belongs to God alone, he blasts them, and sets them aside, as broken vessels, and disdains to use them.

295. A Christian joys aright, when it proceeds from right principles, from judgment and conscience, not from fancy and imagination ; when judgment and conscience will bear him out ; when there is good terms between God and him : for our joy must spring from peace : Rom. v. 1, ' Being justified by faith, we have peace towards God.' The apostles begin their Epistles with mercy, grace, and peace : mercy in forgiveness ; grace to renew our natures ; and peace of conscience here. These are things to be gloried in. If we find our sins pardoned, our persons accepted, and our natures altered, then we may comfort ourselves in anything, in health, in wealth, in wife, in children, in anything, because all come from the favour of God. We may joy in afflictions, because there is a blessing in the worst things, to further our eternal happiness ; and though we cannot joy in affliction itself, as being a contrary to our nature, yet we may joy in the issue. So that we may joy aright, when having interest in God, we

\* That is, ' owed.'—G.

† That is, ' undervalue.'—G.

glory in the testimony of a good conscience ; when looking inward we find all at peace ; when we can say upon good grounds, that God is mine, and therefore all is mine, both life and death and all things, so far as they may serve for good.

296. The hearts of men, yea, of good men, are apt to be taken up with outward things : when the weak disciples had cast out devils, they were ready to be proud ; but Christ quickly spies it, and admonisheth them, ' not to rejoice that the devils were subject to them, but that their names were written in the book of life,' Luke x. 20. Therefore, when we find the least stirrings to glory in anything, we must check ourselves, and consider what grace we have to temper them ; what love we have to turn these things to the common good ; for whatsoever a man hath, if he have not withal humility and love to use it aright, it will turn to his bane.

297. It hath been an old imputation to lay distractedness upon men of the greatest wisdom and sobriety. John the Baptist was accused to have a devil, and Christ to be besides\* himself, and the apostles to be full of new wine, and Paul to be mad ; and the reason of this is, because as religion is a mystical and spiritual thing, so the tenets of it seem paradoxes to carnal men : as, first, that a Christian is the only freeman, and other men are slaves ; that he is the only rich man, though never so mean in the world ; that he is the only beautiful man, though outwardly never so deformed ; that he is the only happy man in the midst of all his miseries. Now these things, though never so true in themselves, seem strange to natural men. And then again, when they see men earnest against sin, or making conscience of sin, they wonder at this commotion for trifles, as if we made tragedies of toys.† But these men go on in a course of their own, and make that the measure of all : those that are below them are profane, and those that are above them are indiscreet ; by fancies and affections, they create excellencies, and then cry down spiritual things as folly ; they have principles of their own, to love themselves, and to love others only for themselves, and to hold on the strongest side, and by no means to expose a man's self to danger. But now when men begin to be religious, they deny all their own aims, and that makes their course seem madness to the world, and therefore they labour to breed an ill conceit of them, as if they were madmen and fools.

298. God's children are neither madmen nor fools, as they are accounted. It is but a scandal cast upon them by the madmen of the world. They are the only wise men, if it be well considered ; for, first, they make the highest end their aim, which is to be a child of God here, and a saint hereafter in heaven. Secondly, they aim to be found wise men at their death, and therefore are always making their accounts ready. Thirdly, they labour to live answerable to their rules. They observe the rule of the word, to be governed according to the same. Fourthly, they improve all advantages to advance their end ; they labour to grow better by blessings and crosses, and to make a sanctified use of everything. Fifthly, they swim against the stream of the times, and though they eat, and drink, and sleep as others do, yet, like the stars, they have a secret course and carriage of their own, which the world cannot discern ; and therefore a man must be changed, and set in a higher rank, before he can have a sanctified judgment of the ways of God.

299. Those that lay the imputation of folly and madness on God's children will be found to be fools and madmen themselves. Is not he a fool

\* That is, 'beside.'—G.

† That is, 'trifles.'—G.

that cannot make a right choice of things? and how do carnal men make their choice, when they embrace perishing things for the best? Secondly, a carnal man hath not parts to apprehend spiritual things aright. He cannot see things invisible. Thirdly, in his heart he accounts it a vain thing to serve the Lord. Fourthly, he judges his enemies to be his best friends, and his best friends to be his worst enemies. Fifthly, the principles of all his actions are rotten, because they are not directed to the right object; therefore all his affections are mad, as his joy, his love, his delight. His love is but lust, his anger vexation; for his confidence he calls God's love into question; but if a false suggestion comes from the devil, that he embraces, and therefore is he not now a madman? And this is the condition of all natural men in the world.

300. True freedom is when the heart is enlarged, and made subordinate to God in Christ. A man is then in a sweet frame of soul when his heart is made subject to God; for he, being larger than the soul, sets it at liberty. God will have us make his glory our aim, that he may bestow himself upon us.

301. When the love of Christ is manifested to me, and my love again to Christ is wrought by the Spirit, this causes an admiration to the soul, when it considers what wonderful love is in Christ; and the Spirit shall witness that this love of Christ is set upon me; from hence it begins to admire,\* 'Lord, wherefore wilt thou shew thyself to us, and not to the world?' John xiv. 22. What is the reason thou lovest me, and not others? When the soul hath been with God in the mount, and when it is turned from earthly things, then it sees nothing but love and mercy, and this constrains us to do all things out of love to God and men.

302. When Joshua cursed the man that should build the walls of Jericho, he was not in commotion and fury, but in a peaceable temper, Joshua vi. 26. So that, when cursing comes from such a one, he is a declaratory instrument, and the conveyer of God's curse. Therefore every man must not take upon him to curse, for men oftentimes curse where they should bless, which is an arrow shot upright, that falls down upon his own head; but those that come in the name of the Lord, and are qualified for that purpose, their cursings or blessings are to be esteemed, for they are a means oftentimes to convey God's blessings or his cursings upon us.

303. It is over-curious to exact the first beginnings of grace, because it falls by degrees, like the dew, undiscernibly; and further, there is a great deal of wisdom as well as power in the working of grace. God offers no violence to the soul, but works sweetly yet strongly, and strongly yet sweetly. He goes so far with our nature, that we shall freely delight in grace. So that now he sees great reason why he should alter his course, God doth not overthrow nature. The stream is but changed, the man is the same.

304. When the soul desires the forgiveness of sin, and not grace to lead a new life, that desire is hypocritical; for a true Christian desires power against sin as well as pardon for it. If we have not sanctifying grace, we have not pardoning grace. Christ came as well by water to regenerate as by blood to justify. It should therefore be our continual care and endeavour to grow and increase in grace, because without it we shall never come to heaven. Without this endeavour our sacrifices are not accepted; without this we cannot withstand our enemies, or bear any cross; without it we cannot go on comfortably in our course; without this we cannot do anything acceptable and pleasing to God.

\* That is, 'wonder.'—G.

305. God will be 'as the dew unto Israel, and he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon,' Hos. xiv. 5. These are not words wastefully spent; for we have great need of such promises, especially in a distressed state, for then our spirits are apt to sink and our hearts to faint, and therefore we have need to have the same comforts often repeated. Profane hearts think, what need all this? but if ever thou beest touched in conscience for thy sins, thou wilt then be far from finding fault, when God useth all the secrets in the book of nature, and translates them, to assure us of his mercy and love.

306. God's children are strengthened by their falls. They learn to stand by their falls. Like tall cedars, the more they are blown, the deeper they are rooted. That which men think is the overthrow of God's children, doth but root them deeper; so that, after all outward storms and inward declinings, this is the issue, 'They take root downward, and bring forth fruit upwards.'

307. A Christian in his right temper is compared to the best of everything. If to a lily, the fairest; if to a cedar, the tallest; if to an olive-tree, the most fruitful: 'And his smell shall be as Lebanon.' We should therefore make use of all natural things, and apply them to spiritual. If we see a lily, think of God's promise and our duty; we shall grow as lilies. When we see a tall tree, think, I must grow higher in grace; and when we see a vine, think, I must grow in fruitfulness. When we go into our orchards or gardens, let the sight of these things raise our thoughts higher unto a consideration of what is required of us.

308. As it is the glory of the olive-tree to be fruitful, so it is the glory of a Christian to be fruitful in his place and calling; and the way to be fruitful, is to esteem fruitfulness a glory. It is a gracious sight to see a Christian answer his profession, and flourish in his own standing; to be fruitful, and shine in good works. When ability, and opportunity, and a heart answerable to all, meet for doing good, this is glorious.

309. When we go about any action or business, let us always ask our souls this question, Is this suitable to my calling, to my hopes? But if not, Why do I do it? I that am a king to rule over my lusts, doth this agree with my condition? This base act, this base company, shall such a man as I do this? When a man brings his heart to reason thus with himself, it will breed Ephraim's resolution, 'What have I any more to do with idols?' And in walking thus circumspectly, we shall find a heat of comfort accompanying every good action; and a sweet relish upon the conscience, with humility and thankfulness, acknowledging all the strength we have to be from the dew of his grace.

310. In times of calamity, God will have a care of his fruitful trees; as in chap. xx. of Deut., ver. 19, the Israelites were commanded that they should not destroy the trees that bare fruit. So though God's judgments come amongst us, yet God will have a special care of his children that be fruitful, but the judgments of God will light heavy upon barren trees. And howsoever God may endure barrenness in the want of means, yet he will not in the use of means. It were better for a bramble to be in the wilderness than in an orchard; nothing will bear us out but fruitfulness.

311. It may be observed that old men seem not to grow, nor to be so zealous as many young Christians; but the reason is, because there is in young Christians a greater strength of natural parts, and that shews itself, and makes a great expression. But aged men they grow in strength and stableness, and are more refined. Their knowledge is more clear, their

actions more pure, their zeal more refined, and not mingled with wild-fire; and therefore, though old Christians be not carried with a full stream, yet they are more stable and judicious, more heavenly-minded, more mortified. They grow in humility, out of a clearer sight of their own corruptions.

212. In true conversion the soul is changed to be of the same mind with Christ, that as he is affected, so the soul of such a one is affected; and as he loathes all ill, so upon this ground there must be a loathing of whatsoever is evil. But a carnal man is like a wolf driven from the sheep, that yet retains his wolfish nature; so these men that are driven from their sins only out of terror of conscience, they are affrighted with sin, but they do not hate it; therefore a loathing of evil is required as well as the leaving of it.

313. If we would make it evident that our conversion is sound, we must loathe and hate sin from the heart. Now, a man shall know his hatred of evil to be true, first, if it be universal; he that hates sin truly hates all sin. Secondly, where there is true hatred it is unappeasable; there is no appeasing of it but by abolishing the thing it hates. Thirdly, hatred is a more rooted affection than anger; anger may be appeased, but hatred is against the whole kind. Fourthly, if our hatred be true, it hates all ill in ourselves first, and then in others; he that hates a toad, hates it most in his own bosom. Many, like Judah, are severe in censuring of others, but are partial to themselves. Fifthly, he that hates sin truly, hates the greatest sin in the greatest measure; he hates it in a just proportion. Sixthly, our hatred is right if we can endure admonition and reproof for sin, and not be in rage with him that tells us of it; therefore those that swell against reproof hate not sin; only with this caution, it may be done with such indiscretion and self-love, that a man may hate the proud manner. Therefore in discovering our hatred of sin in others, we must consider our calling. It must be done in a sweet temper, with reserving due respect of those to whom we shew our dislike, that it may be done out of true zeal, and not out of wild-fire.

314. All love and associations that are not begun on good terms, will end in hatred. We should take heed whom we join in league and amity withal. Before we plant our affections, consider the persons what they are. If we see any signs of grace, then it is good; but if not, there will be a rent. Throughout our whole life this ought to be our rule. We should labour in all companies either to do good or receive good; and where we can neither do nor receive good, we should take heed of such acquaintance. Let men therefore consider and take heed how they stand in combination with wicked persons.

315. 'Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution,' 2 Tim. iii. 12. He must have his nature changed, and carry his hatred against all opposite courses; and therefore to frame a religion that hath no trouble with it, is to frame an idol. But neuters in religion are like unto bats, that men can scarce distinguish from mice, or flying fowl, because they have a resemblance of both. Take heed therefore of neutrality in religion. After the first heat many become lukewarm, and from that they fall into coldness; let us therefore look to our beginnings. Pure affection in religion must also be zealous.

316. Wise men will do nothing without great ends; and the more wise, the greater are their ends. Shall we attribute this to men, and not to the wisdom of God? Christ would never have appeared in our nature, and suffered death, but for some great end. Shall we think that this mystery

of God taking flesh upon him, was for a slight purpose? Now, the end of his coming was to save sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15; he came to bring us to God, 1 Peter iii. 18; but he that will save us must first bring us out of Satan's bondage, therefore Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, 1 John iii. 8. It must needs follow therefore that the salvation of our souls is of great consequence, seeing for this only end Christ took our nature upon him and suffered for us.

317. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil in us, but yet he makes us kings under him, to fight his battles; and as by his Spirit in us he destroys the works of the devil, so he doth it in the exercise of all the powers and parts of soul and body, and by exercising the graces of his Spirit in us. 'He hath made us kings and priests,' not that we should do nothing, but that we should fight, and in fighting overcome. The chiefest grace that God doth exercise in overcoming our corruptions is faith. We fell by infidelity and disobedience. Now, Christ comes and displants infidelity, and instead thereof he plants faith, which unites us to him; and then by a divine skill, it draws a particular strength from Christ, to fight his battles against corruption.

318. Temptations at first are like Elias's cloud, no bigger than a man's hand; but if we give way to them, they overspread the whole soul. Satan nestles himself when we dwell upon the thoughts of sin. We cannot withstand sudden risings, but by grace we may keep them that they do not abide there long. Let us therefore labour as much as we can to be in good company and good courses; for as the Holy Ghost works by these advantages, so we should wisely observe them.

319. It is hard to discern the working of Satan from our own corruptions, because for the most part he goes secretly along with them. He is like a pirate at sea; he sets upon us with our own colours; he comes as a friend; and therefore it is hard to discern, but it is partly seen by the eagerness of our lusts, when they are sudden, strong, and strange, so strange sometimes, that even nature itself abhors them. The Spirit of God leads sweetly, but the devil hurries a man like a tempest, that he will hear no reason; as we see in Ammon, for his sister Tamar. Again, when we shake off motions of God's Spirit, and mislike his government, and give way to passion, then the devil enters. Let a man be unadvisedly angry, and the devil will make him envious and seek revenge. When passions are let loose, they are chariots in which the devil rides. Some by nature are prone to distrust, and some to be too confident. Now, the devil he joins with them, and so draws them on further. He broods upon our corruptions; he lies as it were upon the souls of men, and there broods and hatches all sin whatsoever. All the devils in hell cannot force us to sin. He works by suggestions, stirring up humours and fancies; but he cannot work upon the will. We betray ourselves by yielding before he can do us any harm, yet he ripens sin.

320. There are some sins that let Satan loose upon us; as, first, pride; we see it in Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 7. Secondly, conceitedness and presumption; as we may see in Peter, Mat. xxvi. 33. Thirdly, security; which is always the forerunner of some great punishment or great sin, which also is a punishment, as we see in David. Fourthly, idleness; it is the hour of temptation, when a man is out of God's business. Fifthly, intemperance, either in looseness of diet or otherwise; therefore Christ commands us to be 'sober, and watch,' and look to sobriety in the use of the creatures. Sixthly, there is a more subtle intemperance of passion, for in what degree

we give way to wrath, and revenge, and covetousness, in that degree Satan hath advantage against us. Seventhly, when a man will not believe and submit to truths revealed, though but a natural truth; therefore God gave them up to vile affections, Rom. i. 26, because they would not cherish the light of nature, much more when we do not cherish the light of grace.

321. As Christ wrought our salvation in an estate of baseness, so in our way to glory we must be conformable to our Head, and pass through an estate of baseness. We are chosen to a portion of afflictions, as well as to grace and glory. God sees it needful also, because we cannot easily digest a flourishing condition. We are naturally given to affect\* outward excellencies. When we are trusted with great matters, we are apt to forget God and our duty to others. This should therefore teach us to justify God when we are any ways abased in the world.

322. There are a world of poor, who yet are exceeding proud; but God sanctifies outward poverty unto his children, so as it makes way for poverty of spirit; that as they are poor, so they have a mean esteem of themselves. It makes them inwardly more humble and more tractable. Therefore when we are under any cross, observe how it works; see whether we join with God or no. When he afflicts us outwardly, whether inwardly we be more humble; when he humbles us and makes us poor, whether we be also poor in spirit; when God goes about to take us down, we should labour to take down ourselves.

323. Poverty of spirit should accompany us all our life long, to let us see that we have no righteousness of our own to sanctification; that all the grace we have is out of ourselves, even for the performance of every holy duty. For though we have grace, yet we cannot bring that grace into act without new grace; even as there is a fitness in trees to bear fruit, but without the influence of heaven they cannot. That which oftentimes makes us miscarry in the actions of our calling, is because we think we have strength and wisdom enough; and then what is begun in self-confidence, is ended in shame. We set upon duties in our own pride and strength of parts, and find success accordingly. Therefore it is a sign that God will bless our endeavours, when out of the sense of our own weakness we water our business with prayer and tears.

324. It is not sufficient for a Christian to have habitual grace. There is no vine can bring forth fruit without the influence of heaven, though it be rooted; so we cannot bring forth fruit unless God blow upon us. Our former strength will not serve when a new temptation comes. It is not enough to have grace, but we must use it. We must exercise our faith, love, patience, humility; and for this purpose God hath furnished us with the Spirit of all grace. Let us therefore remember, when we have any duty to do, to pray unto Christ to blow upon us with his Spirit.

325. God doth not so much look at our infirmities as at our uprightness and sincerity; and therefore when we are out of temptations, we should consider and examine what God hath wrought in us. And then though there be infirmities and failings, yet if our hearts be upright, God will pardon them; as we find that David and others were accounted upright, and yet had many imperfections.

326. Watching is an exercising of all the graces of the soul, and these are given to keep our souls awake. We have enemies about us that are not asleep, and our worst enemy is within us; and so much the worse,

\* That is, 'love,' choose.—G.

because so near. We live also in a world full of temptations, and wicked men are full of malice. We are passing through our enemy's country, and therefore had need to have our wits about us. The devil also is at one end of every good action, and therefore we had need to keep all our graces in perpetual exercise. We should watch in fear of jealousy, taking heed of a spirit of drowsiness; labouring also to keep ourselves unspotted of the world.

327. It may be asked, how we shall know the Scripture to be the word of God? For answer, do but grant, first, that there is a God, it will follow then that he must be worshipped and served; and that this service must be discovered to us, that we may know what he doth require; and then let it be compared what the word of God can come near to be the same with this. Besides, God hath blessed the superstition of the Jews, who were very strict this way, to preserve it for us; and the heretics, since the primitive church, have so observed one another, that there can be no other to this word. But now we must further know, that we must have something in our souls suitable to the truths contained in it, before we can truly and savingly believe it to be the word of God, as that we find it to have a power in working upon our hearts and affections: Luke xxiv. 32, 'Did not our hearts burn within us, when he opened to us the scriptures?' Again, it hath a divine operation to warm and pacify the soul, and a power to make a Felix tremble. It hath a searching quality, to divide between the marrow and the bone. We do not therefore only believe the Scriptures to be the word of God because any man saith so, or because the church saith so; but also and principally because I find it by experience working the same effects in me that it speaks of itself. And therefore let us never rest, till, when we hear a promise, we may have something in us by the sanctifying Spirit that may be suitable to it; and so assuring of us that it is that word alone that informs us of the good pleasure of God to us, and our duty to him.

328. There is in God a fatherly anger. After conversion he retains that; and this fatherly anger is also turned away when in sincerity we humble ourselves. There is one saith well, 'A child of anger, and a child under anger' (*f*). God's children are not children of wrath, but sometimes they are under wrath,—when they do not carry themselves as sons, when they venture on sins against conscience, &c. But if they humble themselves and reform, and fly to God for mercy, then they come into favour again, and recover the right of sons.

329. We may know that God loves us, when by his Spirit he speaks friendly to our souls, and we by prayer speak friendly to him again; when we have communion and familiarity with him. Whom God loves, to them he discovers his secrets, even such secrets as the soul never knew before. He reveals them to us when our hearts are wrought to an ingenuous confession of sin, and when we have no comfort but from heaven. Even as a father discovers his bowels most to his child when it is sick, so God reserves the discovery of his love, especially until such a time when we renounce all carnal confidence. Therefore if we can assure our souls that God loves us, let us then be at a point for anything that shall happen to us in this world, whether it be disgrace or contempt, or whatsoever, because we may fetch patience and contentedness from hence, that God's love supplies all wants whatsoever.

330. After a gracious pardon for sin, there are two things remaining in us, infirmities and weaknesses. Infirmities are corruptions stirred up,



which hinders us from good, and puts us forward to evil. But yet they are so far resisted and subdued, that they break not forth into action. Weakness is when we suffer an infirmity to break out for want of watchfulness; as if a man be subject to passion, when this is working disturbance in the mind, it is infirmity; but when, for want of watchfulness, it breaks forth into action, then it is weakness. And these diseases are suffered in us, to put us in mind of the bitter root of sin; for if we should not sometimes break forth into sin, we should think that our nature were cured. Who would have thought that Moses, so meek a man, could have so broken out into passion? We see it also in David, and Peter, and others; and this is to shew that the corruption of nature in them was not fully healed. But there is this difference between the slips and falls of God's children and of other men. When other men fall, it settles them in their dregs; but when God's children fall, they see their weaknesses, they see the bitter root of sin, and hate it the more, and are never at quiet till it be cast out by the strength of grace and repentance. Therefore let no man be too much cast down by his infirmities, so long as they are resisted, for from hence comes a fresh hatred of corruption; and God looks not upon any sin but sin ungrieved for, unresisted; otherwise God hath a holy end in suffering sin to be in us, to keep us from worse things.

331. There is none that out of sincerity do give themselves to holy conference but are gainers by it. Many men ask questions, and are inquisitive to know, but not that they might put in practice. This is but a proud desire to taste of the tree of knowledge; but the desire of true-affected Christians is to know that they might seek Christ. We gain oftentimes by discourse with those that are punies in religion. St Paul desires to meet with the Romans, though they were his converts, that he might be strengthened by their mutual faith, Rom. i. 12.

332. When once the Spirit doth fasten the wrath of God upon the conscience of one whom he means to save, then there follows these afflicting affections of grief and shame; and from hence comes a dislike and hate of sin; hence begins a divorce between the soul and the beloved sin; so that whereas there was before a sceptre of sin in the soul, now God begins to dispossess that strong man, and then follows a strong desire to be better, and a holy desperation, that if God in Christ be not merciful, then the soul saith, What shall become of me! and as the Spirit lets in some terrors, so he lets in also some hopes, as, 'What shall I do to be saved?' implying a resignation of the will to take any course, so he may be saved; and then all the world for one drop of mercy.

333. Christ never comes into any heart but where he is valued and esteemed; yet he delights not to hide himself from his poor creature. But when we are fit, when we truly judge ourselves unworthy of any favour, then he receives us. Here is comfort, therefore, for the worst of men; if they will come in, and submit to God's ordinances, they will be effectual to subdue our corruptions; and when once God hath taken up the heart of man for his temple, he will then bring into it all his treasures. There will be a mutual fellowship between God and the soul when we are once subdued.

334. God is so powerful an agent that he can overthrow all. He can overthrow the carnal principles of reason, which every natural man hath in the fort of his soul. He presents to men the condition they are in by nature, and lets in a taste of his vengeance. When God in his ordinances shews greater reasons for goodness than Satan can in his carnal courses, then all falls down. Those, therefore, that are not fully subdued, yet let

them come to the ordinances, for then they are within God's reach. When the word of God discovers the baseness, vileness, and danger of sin, then the soul stoops. Therefore let none despair; for though thy heart be stone, yet God can work powerfully. Nothing is difficult to infirmities; but it is a divine work to pull down a wicked sinner.

335. However we take pains in our callings, yet the ability and blessing comes from God. We pray for daily bread, and yet he gives it, though we labour for it. There is a gift of success, which, unless it be given us from above, we shall, with the disciples, 'catch nothing,' Luke v. 5.

336. Gifts are for grace, and grace for glory. Gifts are peculiar to some men, but grace is common to all Christians. Gifts are peculiar to many, and common to such as are not good. Gifts are joined with great sins, but grace hath love and humility to take down the soul. The devil hath lost little of his acuteness, but yet he remains mischievous. So many men have great parts, but they have also a devilish spirit. Grace comes from more special love, and yet men had rather be accounted devils than fools. Account them men of parts, and then count them what you will.

337. It is a hard matter to find out the least measure of grace and the greatest degree of formality; for as painting oftentimes exceeds the thing, so doth an hypocrite oftentimes make a greater show; but the least measure of saving grace is from desires. And these are known to be saving, if they proceed from a taste of the thing, and not merely from the object; and therefore we must distinguish between affections stirred up and the inward frame; for those that are suddenly stirred up do presently return. The waters in the bath\* have a natural hotness, but water, when it is heated, will return to its former coldness.

338. Though we be sure of victory over our spiritual enemies, yet we must fight. The conquered kings must be fought withal. Christ, that fights for us, fights with us and in us, and crowns us when all is done. And the time will come, ere long, when we shall say of our enemies as Moses said of the Egyptians, 'Those enemies that we now see, we shall see them no more for ever,' Exod. xiv. 13; 'Be strong therefore in the Lord, and in the power of his might,' Eph. vi. 10.

\* That is, 'hot-spring.'—G.

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#### NOTES.

(a) P. 197.—'St Augustine hath an excellent discourse,' &c. A reminiscence rather than quotation of a frequent illustration from this Father. Cf. any Index of his works *sub vocibus*.

(b) P. 201.—'As a man that is called,' &c. See note a, Vol. V. p. 408.

(c) P. 204.—'It was a rule in the ancient time, "Lay thy hand,"' &c. As already noticed, this 'rule' is embodied in the *sentiment* 'Speed the plough.'

(d) P. 211.—'The very heathens could say, that we must not go out of our station till we be called.' A commonplace of Cicero and others of the ancients who have written striking things against suicide.

(e) P. 218.—'The heathens could say, that the praising of a man's self is a burdensome hearing.' This idea is found in Demosthenes' great speech 'De Coronâ.' [Reiske ed., p. 226, line 20; Bekker, § 4.]

(f) P. 226.—'There is one saith well, "A child of anger, and a child under anger."' Bernard and Augustine furnish the *thought*, and the distinction is common to all the Fathers.