SERMON XXXII.

LUKE 21. 19.

In your Patience possess ye your Souls.

Our Saviour, in the beginning of this Chapter, is foretelling Jerusalem's destruction, ver. 6. but as a forerunner of it, he foretells also his Servants Persecution, that they shall be persecuted by Enemies, v. 12. betrayed by Friends, v. 16. and hated by all, v. 17. As when the Ship, Acts 27. 42. was ready to be wracked, they would first have killed Paul, who alone kept them from drowning: A foolish mistake of a mad World, to do the Godly most hurt, when they should most stand them in stead; when the Night is putting in, to put out the Candle which should give them light; and when the House is falling, to make sure of it, they will needs pull down the Pillars that uphold it [the Holy Seed being רַע יַעַל פְּנֵיהֶם, Is. 6. 13.] So sottish is the World's malice, which otherwise useth to be too ingenious in doing mischief to the Godly, as it were on purpose to undoe themselves.

But although they be such Enemies to themselves, yet Christ is a better Friend to his Servants; and therefore as he encourageth them, telling them, That not an hair of their head shall perish, v. 18. so he directeth them in this 19th Verse, In your Patience possess ye your Souls.

In which words we have three Particulars; which, according to the Metaphor here used, we may call,

1. The Freethorough, and that's their Souls.
2. The Sealing κυπαρισσί. They are to be kept in possession; Possess ye your Souls.
3. The Tenure, and that is the Tenure of Patience; and so ἐν τῇ ζωγραφίᾳ τῶν ζωγραφίων τοῖς ζώοις υμῶν, In your Patience possess ye your Souls.

1. For a little opening of the words, and first for Patience; it's duplex, Active, Passive. The one forbears, the other bears; both suffer, though in a different way.

ZZZ2 Active,
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Alive, so called, in reference to acting, but improperly a minimum agendo, because it acts not when Passion’s Fingers itch, and would fain be doing; and so it’s defined, quae malum non infert, that even when provoked, doth no evil, which the Greeks express by μακροχρόνως, or long suffering. This is eminently and essentially in God, who when we provoke him, is yet Omnibus long-suffering, Exod. 34. 6. even a God of Patience.

But Patience Passive is that, quae malum fert, that quietly suffers evil from others, which is more properly this τακτολογία in the Text, not properly falling upon God, who simply is impossible, but is that which by his Grace he works in his suffering Servants, when in an humble submission to his Will, out of Faith in his Promise, in hope of his assistance and deliverance, they neither sink in despondency under the burden, nor rise up in rage against him, or the Instrument he strikes with, but willingly submit, and quietly wait for the Salvation of God, Lament. 3. 26, 27. If you will have Tully’s description of it, Patientia est honestatis & utilitatis (let us add & Religionis) causa rerum arduarum ac difficilium voluntaria ac diuturna perseverio. Or if rather you would have Bede’s, Patientia vera est aliena mala aequanimitis perpeti, contra eum quoque qui mala irrogat nullum dolore moveri. This is properly this τακτολογία in the Text, by which when dispossessed of all things else, we are even then able to possess our Souls.

2. Καθώσε, Possess ye, so it’s usually read, and so it holds forth a Command; though some read it καθέσε, ye may, or so ye shall possess; and so it contains a Promise. I shall make use of both, and here only add, that this word in the Greek, answerable to בִּי in the Hebrew, signifies both acquirere, and conservare, both to procure and preserve; and Patience both.

F. Illyricus.

Mar.16, 26.
† Gen.46. 15.
Levit.4. 2.
*1 Sam.26, 21.

3. For the last word ἐξ, I need not tell you, that although it most properly signifies the Soul, yet oft in Scripture is put for the whole Man, and sometime for our bodily Life. Your Souls, your selves, your outward Life. Patience, as a sure guard, keeps you in possession of all.

1 Life.

A word for natural Life, which I exclude not in reference to vers. 18. they should not perish; and here patience is a preservative. As God gives us possession of it, so patience helps to keep it. So we find in Scripture, meek Moses and patient Job long-liv’d, whilst bloody and violent Men live not out half their days,
days, Psal. 55. 23. As stormy Winter days use to be short, whilst it's long before the Sun set in a serene calm Summer's day. The Prophet said, In quietness and confidence shall be your strength, Isa. 30. 15, and thereby also their safety, whilst frowardness and hastiness makes haste only to destruction. Job's Wife, when she said, Cursed God and die, spake truth, when she gave bad counsel; for it's cursed and die, there's but a step between discontented cursing and dying. But if there be any such thing, in this frail fading World, as vis repta ad vitam longam, (which the Title of his Book promiseth); amongst other Vertues and Graces, Patience must be one of our Guides and Companions; and this, whether we consider either God, or others, or our selves.

First, For God, we read that with the froward he will deal Reaf. 1. frowardly, Psal. 18. 26. but he delighteth to beautifie the meek with Salvation. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah tears his Prey when it struggles and resists, but spares it when it lies quiet and prostrate; so that if you be weary of your life, you may go to it at sharp; but if you mean to save it, your wisest way is to submit, and quietly to lay down your Weapons. Cruelium medici-

cum, &c. The unruly impatient Patient makes his Physician cruel; and the Child's struggling doth but increase his stripes, whilst a quiet kissing the Rod oft faveth the whipping. Our God is our Physician and Father. We provoke him to Wrath, when we are provoked to impatience by what- ever correction is inflicted by him. But it's meet to be said to him, by every dutiful Child, and in such a Child's Language, I have born chastisement, and I will not offend any more; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more, Job 34. 31, 32. and that's the way to prevent a second bout. With the Bird of Paradise, by a meekned moan, to mourn itself out of the Snare not with the wild Bull in the Net, Isa. 51. 20. to tumble and rave, and so the more to entangle himself in the Snare. When God hears Ephraim bemoaning himself, Ephraim hears God comforting him, and telling him, that he is his dear Son and pleasant Child, that ever since he spake against him, he did earnestly remember him; that his Bowels were troubled for him, and that he would surely have mercy upon him, Jer. 31. 18, 19, 20. Whilst we frowardly struggle, 1. our Hearts are against God; and 2. we would be our own Saviours, and both these betray us to danger. But by a patient lying under God's hand, as we acknowledge his Sovereignty, and righteous Proceedings, so we resign our selves to him, who hath a furer hand than ours.
ours to keep that wherewith it is betrufted. And thus Patience helps to hold our Souls in Life; first in reference to God.

And, secondly, in reference to other Men, whom we are at a contest with, and (it may be) in danger of; for with them (though froward) Solomon’s observation holds good, A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger, Prov. 15. 1. As the soft Wall damps the fiercest Shot, whilst the clashing of two earthen Pitchers breaks either one or both. Patience either wins or wearies the most enraged Enemy, so that either he will not, or he cannot hurt. How easily doth the weak Man, when provoked by patient forbearing, prevent his own mischief? Whilst the passionate Male-content, either by busie buffling begins the Quarrel, or by giving the second stroke makes the Fray; and both ways, as the furious Horse rusheth into the Battel, and so too often sins against his own Life.

But were there none other to hurt us, yet impatience can make ourselves to be our own Executioners. Whether Achitophel was strangul’d with an Halter, or suffocated with some Humors raifed by his grief, some of late dispute. The Hebrew בָּאָר may signify both. But which ever of them it was, I am sure his impatience of a neglect was the cause of it in him; as in both kinds it hath been with divers others. Impatience of Pain; Poverty, Disgrace, and the like, hath proved in this unhappy World one of the great Apollonys and Abaddons, chief Engines in murdering, not only others, but our selves also. What sudden Inflammations, what pining Consumptions, Frenzies, Lethargies, and other spleenick Dilembers hath it cast many a Man into? and so betrayed them sometimes to more gentle and languishing; sometimes to more sudden and violent deaths, and that sometimes by their own hands? Passions with a witness, which make both Body and Soul joint-sufferers, like blustering storms that dash these frail Vessels against the Rocks, or like roaring and rious Guefts and Inmates, that set on fire, and pull down those Houses of Clay, which they are in present possession of.

But on the contrary, A patient or cool Spirit, as Solomon phra-feth it, Prov. 17. 27. how timely doth it prevent these sparks from kindling, or happily quench them when they begin to flame, by composing the mind, that it dare not quarrel with God, nor pitch the Field with a Man’s own self; and so quiets the Body, that it either prevents Bodily Dilembers, or helps to bear them quietly,
quietly, that they do not prove deadly: whilst the unruly sick
Man by raving and tumbling kills himself; another more pa-
tient, by being quiet, doth spire morbum, and by lying still, makes
haste to his recovery. Poissest but thy Soul with Patience, and it
will keep thee in longer possession of the frail Tabernacle of thy
Body. Indeed, short-winded Men are soon at their Journies end,
but they that are longer breathed are so more ways than one,
able through many difficulties to run a longer race, and at last
in a late evening of a long day come to the end of it in peace.
Discontents, I confess, may be long-lived, but so usually are not
froward, impatient, discontented Men. But when the Psalmist
tells us that the Meek shall inherit the Earth; * that Phrase ex-
presseth as a surer title, so a longer continuance; and thus, as our
Souls are sometimes put for our Lives, even so by our Patience
we are kept in possession of them. So καθεσε (as I said some
read it ) you may, you shall.

And therefore for the Application, καθεσε (as the common
reading is ) Christ here commands us to endeavour that we may
possess our lives in Patience. At the best, we are but Tenants at
will; and if some of us consider our Ages, and others our Weak-
ness, and all of us the perilous Times we are cast into, we may
well think that our Leases are fast halting to an expiration. What
Man therefore is he that desirous Life, and loveth many days, let
him seek peace, faith the Psalmist, Psalm. 34. 12, 13, 14. and
let me add; Patience; for Patience is one of the best Preservatives.
Prayers and Tears were wont to be the Churches best offensive
Weapons, and Patience one of the chiefest Defensives. Not by
Might, nor by Power, but by my Spirit, saith God, when he
shilles himself the Lord of Hosts, Zech. 4. 6. And truly the Spirit
of Meekness and Patience hath in it the Spirit of a Conqueror.
As therefore Christ our Lord vanquished the Devil, not by fight-
ing but by dying: so our way to overcome the World, and save
our lives, is rather by patient yeelding and suffering, than by peevishly contending. I mean, not by a base unworthy com-
plying with Mens sins, but by a generous suffering of their rage,
and ever with a silent and meek submission to the righteous Judg-
ment of God. Yeas, in the way of thy Judgments have we waited
for thee, O Lord, said the humbled Church, Isa. 26. 8. And
waiting, as it implyeth a still and quiet attendance, so with God
it ever finds at last a gracious acceptance. Thou wilt never bid
that Beggar stay and wait, whom thou at last intendeft to send
away
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away empty; much less will God make thee content quietly to wait, whom he intends to send away discontented, by wholly frustrating thee of thy Expectation. The prudent shall keep silence in that time, for it is an evil time, faith the Prophet, Amos 5:13. How evil our times are I need not say; and therefore if we would shew our selves prudent and wise for our selves, as we love our lives, let us keep silence; and that's the Expression which in the Old Testament Patience is usually and almost only set out by. Not a malicious silence, (as Absalom's was, 2 Sam. 13:22,) whereby we bite in for the present, but lie in insidiis to watch opportunities of mischief and revenge; but a shame-faced silence, in sense of our own confusion and guilt; an humble meek silence, not murmuring against God's dealings, or an angry clamouring at evil Mens proceedings; but a quiet submitting to his hand, and a patient enduring (as long as God continues it) of their oppressions, saying (if any thing) with the Church, I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him; or rather with our Saviour, though led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, and as the Lamb before the Shearer, so open we not our mouths; as Paulinus to his Friend, Nos tacimus istis loquentes ad Dominum silentio humilitatis, & voce patientiae; & tu ipse qui invictus es, pugnabit pro nobis, & vincet in nobis. So the dumb Dove's mourning in a far Country was heard, and the delivered, if you compare the Argument and the 56th Psalm together. And Christ the meek silent Lamb, though slaughtered, yet shortly after was raised from the dead: to whom if we be Unions in this sweet still-Musicke, we shall for certain have our lives for a prey, either preserved or restored; either kept from death, or if the two Witnesses be now to be slain, shall have part in a better Resurrection: For so if we should take the word in the Text for our lives, so it holds good that by our patience we may, and therefore ought to possess our Souls.

But take the word Soul in its more proper signification, for that nobler part of Man; and so most understand our Saviour's meaning, when he here faith, In your patience possess ye your Souls.

In which words we have these two Particulars considerable.

1. That it's our duty to possess our Souls.
2. That Patience is one special means to keep this possession.

As
As always, so especially in evil and perilous Times (for such Doct. 2. our Saviour here speaks of) whatever else we are deprived or thrust out of, our great care and endeavour must be to possess our Souls. Whatsoever the force be, we must stand to it, and keep possession. Above all keepings, keep thy Heart, faith Solomon, Prov. 4. 23. And keep thy Soul diligently, faith Moses, Deut. 4. 9. Take heed to your Spirit, faith the Prophet, Mal. 2. 15. And so here, In your patience possess ye your Souls, faith our Saviour. A dear and great Pledge it is, which both God and his People do mutually betrust each other with, and both to our present purpose. They him, looking at it as their Jewel, and considering their own weakness and heedlessness, leave it to be kept in his safer Hand. That we may possess it, (as the Child gives the Mother that it would have kept) we put it into God's Hands to keep it for us. And so it's Paul's ἐπιτελείως, 2 Tim. 1. 12. his Depossum which he leaves with God. And our dying Saviour, when now to be dispossessed of his Life, that he might keep possession of his Soul, faith, Father into thy Hands I commend my Spirit, Luke 23. 46.

And he them; it being one of his chief Master-pieces, and therefore as soon as it comes out of his hands, he commends it to every Man's best care, as a great Talent which he betrays us with, and will have at last a strict account of: At our Birth sent out from him, and in Death, Eccles. 12. 7. again to return to him, that he may have an account how it hath been abused or improved, whether kept or lost: When thrust out of this House of Clay, whether we have not lost it, and it Heaven. For so this possession of our Souls includes a double care and endeavour, 1. That it be not utterly lost. 2. No, nor to Dismembered and Disguised, that neither we nor it be our selves.

1. First, I say, our care must be so to possess our Souls, that they be not utterly lost; for so the Scripture speaks of losing the Soul, Mat. 16. 26. And what is quite lost, is then out of our possession. And on the contrary, that in Matthew, He that endures to the end, shall be saved, Chap. 10. 22. and this of the Text, In your patience, possess ye your Souls, are by learned Interpreters made Parallel; so that ἐπιτελείως and ὅ ἐστίν to possess Brugensis. the Soul, and to save it, is one and the same thing. And this therefore should be a great part of our greatest care, that our Souls may be so possessed, as they may be saved: And that, although in dangerous Times, all else may soon be lost, yet Aaaa aaaa
that a sure Course may be taken, that our Souls do not perish eternally.

2. But secondly, This care of a Man's possessing his Soul is not only that it be not wholly lost at first, but that for the present in greatest Distractions he be (as the Latin phrase is) Animi, (or Sui) compos, truly himself, his own Man; yea, master of his own Soul and its Faculties, Passions and Operations, which at such times oft are quite stounded, or prove very wild and unruly. Men dead with fear, as in Nabal; 1 Sam. 25. 27. and there is no Life; drunk with grief, as they Jer. 25. 27. and there's no sense; And mad with Oppression, as even the wise Man sometimes is, as the wisest King tells us, Eccles. 7. 7. But where's then his Wisdom? Which is then swallowed up, Psal. 107. 27. Nay, What's become of his Soul? When, Nec manus, nec pes, &c. when neither the Eye can see what's before it, or the Ear take heed what's said to it; the Man knows not what either he faith, or doth; where he is, or whither he goeth. In these Animi deliquia & deliria the Man is truly Examined, bereft of his Soul; the Mind and Understanding amazed, confused and darkned; the Affections and Passions in a mutiny and perfect uproar: But where's the Soul; that το άγγελονον. all this while, that should keep better order? Is it in being? Or is the Man in possession of it, which is wholly possessed with Amazements and Confusions, as a Town now entred and possessed by a Conquering Enemy? This too often in perils Times is our Sin and Milery. But our Saviour in the Text points out to us what at all times, and even then, is our duty, to take care, that whatever else we lose, that there be not Ejectio firmæ, that we be not so cast out of our Freehold, but that by Faith and Patience (the one as the Fundamentum, and the other as the Suffentaculum of all Virtues, as Anselm distinguisheth them) we may still be our selves, and possess our Souls, not frightened out of our selves by Fears, or sunk below our selves by overmuch Heaviness; but then speak and act with Nehemiah, Chap. 6. 11. like and worthy our selves; with Nebiaphat, when we know not what to do, to be so much our selves, as to know how to do that which is best; not like gaster'd Men to look wildly about us, but with a fixed Eye to God above us; not to be out of our Wits, but to go out to God; and as David, when the sorrows of Death and Hell took hold on him (Psal. 116. 3.) to retire inward to our Hearts with his, Return unto thy rest, O my Soul, even
even when the sorrows of Death and Hell took hold on him, enough to Exanimate him, yet to retire inward, as a Man into his Houle out of the Crowd, in which he was like to be lost; or like a wise Pilot, thrulling his Ship out of the Storm into the Harbour: And then how safely doth he stand firm on the Shoar, whilst he feeth others over-whelmed with the Waves? So to turn into our Souls, and to turn them over to God, and there quietly to rest; this is indeed to be our selves, and to possess our souls, Dumb nobis ipse dominari discimus, hoc ipsum incipimus possidere quod sumus, as Beda speaks. And thus whilst Christ hath held the Heads and Hearts of his Servants, they have been never more themselves, than when besides him they have had least else to rest either Head or Heart upon; never enjoyed themselves, or possessed their Souls more, than when now to be dispossessed of all else besides; as take a Believer on his Death-bed, or a Martyr at the Stake. It's but God's bidding Aaron, go up to Mount Hor, and put off his Garments and die, Numb. 20. 25, 26, 27, 28. No more than a Parent's bidding his Child go up to his Chamber, and put off his Clothes and Sleep. They are fully themselves, nay, then more than ever above themselves; now that the Soul is mantling, and almost upon the Wing, to fly upward in Divine Contemplations and elevated Expressions. (Some of which Milyus gathers up in his Book, which he calls Apophthegmata morientium). When the dying Man's tongue falters, he speaks Apophthegmes, nay Oracles, and though the bodily Eye grows dim in that shadow of death; yet that's but the shutting of the outward window, whilst a more glorious Light is set up within to enlighten that darkness, and so that gloomy Evening is but the dawning of the now hafting Morning of the beatific Vision. O the admirable farewel-speeches of Martyrs at their Sufferings! Those high-raised Expressions, that ravished other Men's hearts, shewed plainly that they then most fully possessed their own Souls. Sure, Stephen was perfectly himself and above himself; that, when the Stones flew so fast at him, he could so quietly and orderly kneel down, and look up to Heaven, and pray for his Murderers, Acts 7. 59, 60. as were Daniel's Companions, Chap. 3. 25. who, when cast into the Furnace, did not fall all along, as Saul, 1 Sam. 28. 20. or down into the Furnace, as their Enemies did, but then walked erect in the midst of the Fire, and as the Apocryphal Addition saith, there sung forth God's Praises; yea, and therein exactly kept time and tune.
And thus in these two Particulars, we see what's meant by this possessing of our Souls, namely when such care is taken that they now be not distempered, nor at last utterly lost.

Which in the Application is that which is further to be pressed upon us, as that which our Saviour here expressly and peremptorily commands us, and (which is to be observed) at such a busy time when you would think his Disciples had something else necessarily to look after, when so Hazed, Persecuted, Betrayed, as in the foregoing Verses, when every way so beset, and so wholly endangered. If Nature and Sense, like Phrygan, as it's ready should put out its hand first, it would find something next hand first to lay hold on; here would be Wife, Children, Parents, Friends, to be provided for: It may be my Estate, yea, my Life to be secured and taken care of. How shall I make such a Friend? or what way to pacifie such an Enemy? How shall I answer when called before such a King and Ruler? v. 12. But our Saviour would take them oft from such distracting cares, &c. &c. as τὸς καρδιάς, &c. In all this unsettledness, settle you your heart not to meditate, v. 14. not to be over-anxious for those things, but here in the Text he would have them to make sure of their Chance. Let Martha, like the good House-Wife, be troubled about many things. But see that you, like wise Christians with Mary, make sure of the one thing necessary, as though he had said, in your getting your other Goods out of the Scarefire, be sure you look that you save your selves. And whatever else Thieves and Robbers run away with, be sure to keep possession of your Souls, that the Man be not first Wounded, and at last Killed out-right, that your Souls be not now Defiled, Distressed, or Dismembered, and at last Perish everlastingly. Let thy Soul be precious in thine Eyes (as 1 Sam. 26. 21.) that it may not be as 1 Kings 20. 39, 40. it missing, thy everlasting Life go for it. This is here our best Friend's advice, and that which his best Servants have followed. What ever else hath comparatively been neglected, yet their God and their Souls have been secured. David was so encompassed with outward Enemies and Dangers, that he had his good Name, Estate, and his very Life to defend and provide for. But his Soul was his Darling, which he tenders as much as he can himself: And because his care and strength was too short, he commends it to God;

God; it in a manner only, it I am sure especially, and that frequently and most pathetically. How often do you hear those sweet strains among his bitter Complaints? Lord, keep my soul, preserve my soul, deliver my soul, leave not my soul destitute. In which places though Life may be in part meant, yet the Soul properly so called, is not to be excluded. And if it be the Will of God that we should know how to possess our Bodies in Health, (1 Thes. 4. 3, 4.) it's all reason that according to the former Particulars, we should endeavour to possess our souls in Patience. And that upon these following Grounds and Considerations.

1. Because all outward Comforts and Possessions may be lost. 2. Even then, if due care be taken, our souls may be secured. 3. Yet they are in greatest danger to be Afflicted. 4. Of such unvaluable worth, that the saving and possessing of them will more than countervail the loss of all else. As on the contrary, the loss of them is both irrecoverable, and unvaluable; not to be made up by all other Enjoyments; and if joyned with other losses makes them complete, and utterly undoing.

1. We had need be careful and watchful to keep possession of our souls, that we may be best possessed of something. Because of all else we may easily be dispossessed. At all Times it's possible, but in perils times too likely and probable. He was but a fool, and that upon Record, that said to his soul, he had Goods Luke 12. 19, laid up for many years, when the following night turn'd him out of possession of all. The Women of my People have you cast out of their pleasant Houses, said the Prophet, Mic. 2. 9. I need not tell you how suddenly Job was partly plundered by the Chaldeens and Sabeans, and partly by an immediate Hand of God stript naked of all. Our Saviour in general, hath said of all Treasures upon Earth, that the Moth and Rust will corrupt, and Treasures in Heaven, that neither Thief nor Thieves can break through and steal.

Thieves break through and steal: Either of themselves will decay, as the Cloth breeds that Moth; and the Iron that Rust which consumes it, or at least some either violent Hand will break through, or some false Fingers will more sily steal and carry away. The Graves will either wither of itself, or be cut down by the Sisbe; so that Sidonius truly affirms, Hominem in Lib. 7. Epist. 4. hunc mundum non tamen editum quam ejiciunt: Like a Ship-wrackt Man, Ship split, his Goods sunk in the Sea, or made a Prey of on the Shoar: And it's well if he scape with his Life, and that sooner or later will be sunk too; for Death will be sure to turn all
all out of Doors, when it seifieth upon us: But when Death thus dispossesseth our very souls of their Bodies, would it not be sorrow upon sorrow, as the Apostle speaks, Phil. 2. 27. for us then to be dispossessed of our souls also, to lose all and our souls to boot? When Out-works are taken, to have no Fort within to flee to: To come to Adrian's animula, vagula, blandula, quam nunc abibis in loca? Not then to know whither our Souls shall go, or to be the more exanimated, if we do, how woful and miserable will it be? Especially be so great an Astronomer, Qui cuncta de se scivit & presevivit; able before-hand to write a Diary of all things that should befall him, until the hour of his death, and then to be at a loss. You have taken away my Gods that I have made, and the Priest, and what have I more, said Micah, when the Children of Dan had plundered him, Judg. 18. 24. Poor wretched undone Man! They took away the Gods that thou hadst made: But wouldst thou have been at such a loss, if thou hadst had an interest in that God that made thee? They had stolen away thy Priest; but if he had not first stolen away thy heart, thou mightest then have possessed thy soul, which might have been both Priest and Temple for thee to have taken Sanctuary in. Which leads to,

2. The second thing propounded, That when all else is lost, yet if due care be taken, the soul even then may be secured. Our Estate and Esteem, yea, our Life it self, though they be our own, yet they are to be Inventoried amongst those πά πάλιν all the things of another Man's, of which our Saviour speaks, Luke 16. 12. because he that cares not for his own Life, may easily be master of mine: But our souls and our God, are that to ιπλάτεγγεν, among those things which are so our own, that, unless it be by our own default, as no Creature gave them, so none can take them away. That violent Hand which takes away Riches, Honours, Friends, and Life it self, doth but with Joseph's Mistress, get the Garment whilst the Man goeth free. If we but as wise as the Serpent, in such a strait we lose but the skin, but find our selves. Job when stript of all, at worst was not a maimed but a naked Man, Chap. 1. 21, but yet himself, a Man still; and by being naked, it may be coming nearer to our first Innocency and Perfection. It's the infinite Perfection of God that he is αὐτός, perfectly Self sufficient, that neither needs, nor indeed can go out of himself for any supply; and as in the soul of Man appears most the Image of God, so herein it bears one
one of the liveliest Resemblances of his Divine Perfection; that, as to all outward things it's Self-sufficient, and that however, in regard of the necessities of the body to which it is joyned, it is forced to go abroad into the World, and thereby too oft is defiled (as Dinah was) in such Excursions, yet it's best when it keeps within at Home, conversing with and enjoying of itself, which it doth most, when it is least troubled with outward things. What therefore it doth of itself in a more gentle way, in abstracting it self from Bodily and outward Objects, the very same is done, though by a more violent hand, when Man or Devil plucks these outward things from it. Thereby it's left in retirement with itself, and never more safe than when so shut up. They are Fools and Children that are afraid, and cry when they are alone: But if the wife Man be Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus; I am sure the Godly Man, if he be wise, is never less lone some than when alone, whilst he hath a good God, and a good Heart to bear him company. If he in a publick deprecation could say, Omnis mea mecum, he carried all that was his with him, when he left all else besides his naked self behind him; I know no reason, but that a Christian may be as Wise and Happy, if he prove not an Out-lier, and live not too much in and upon the World; when all else is plundered, yet his soul may be secured. And accordingly the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4: 19. most fitly and divinely Instrocts them that suffer according to the Will of God, to commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing. He would have them take care that their souls be kept, because he speaks of suffering Times, in which nothing else it may be can be secured; but he makes account their souls may.

And yet (which is a third Argument for our greater care and diligence) though our Souls by a careful watch may be secured, yet there's greater need of it, because they are in greatest danger to be assailed. Many indeed, and horrid have the Miseries been, which the Devil and his Instruments have inflicted on Men's Bodies, but nothing to those innumerable Temptations and deadly Snares, by which they have feizd on their Souls. The precious soul is that which the Adulterer hunts after, Prov. 6: 26. And they are the souls of Men, which the great Whore trades in; Rev. 18. 13. The Devil hath oft possessed Men's Bodies, but far oftner their Souls, and hath not been unwilling to be dispossessed of the one, that he might take more full seisin of the
the other: It being neither great nor small, which the Syrian fights against; not so much those Rivers of Blood which have run down in all the great Wars and Slaughters in the World, which he is satisfied with, as the Blood of Souls which he thirsts after. God desires not the Blood of Goats, and Bulls, Psal. 50. 13. nor doth the Devil principally the Blood of Men, unleas it be of their Souls. And it's then (he thinks) ναίεις ὡς ψάνη, he bath his them under the fifth rib, when like the devilish Assassinate, he kills the Body and damns the Soul together with the same blow. And therefore where the Siege is straitest, and the Assault fiercest, there our Watch needs be strictest, and our Guard strongest. Because the Soul is most laid at, it needs be most looked after, that above all keeping we keep our hearts, Prov. 4. 23. so as rather to be dispossessed of all, than not to possess our souls. (As God above all is to be feared, so the Devil especially to be watched; because both (though in their several ways) when they have destroyed the Body, can cast the Soul into Hell, Luke 12. 5.) Greatest care therefore need be of our souls.

4. And this as in regard of the danger of them, so also of the inestimable worth of them. מִיָּדִי בְּלֵבָנִי My soul's my glory, faith Jacob, Gen. 49. 6. where the Chaldee hath יְדֵי my precious ones, יְדוּעַי my Soul is my Darling, or mine only One, faith David, Psal. 22. 20. But should we go no further than the Text; this Phrase of possessing the soul faith, that the soul it self is a great possession. I may not now insist on all its Worth and Excellencies, that it is Divina partula aure, a Sparkle of Heaven, a Glimps of God, in which you may see most of his Image, and one of the Master-pieces of all his Works; of a Spiritual immaterial Constitution, of an everlasting Continuance and Duration, so that if it be not possessed, but lost one way, it will not be lost in another: In its Nature far above all this Terrestrial World, in its Apprehensions, that which a World cannot fliet, nor in its Desires a thousand Worlds satistie, made for God, and only to be filled with God: So Capacious, as if possessed and saved, can take in much of God, and if neglected and lost, will take in as much of his Curse and Wrath: So admirable in its Operations, that it's a shame, if for want of possessing it, it should like a Drunken Man be so disquieted and distempered, as to be hindered from them for a time. But so precious in it self, that it's a thousand pities that any of us should fall so short of possessing our souls, that
such a glorious Creature should be lost and perish Eternally. It's in Mundo animarum, in that World of Souls, in which we shall hereafter see more fully the worth of souls: In Mundo umbrarum, in this world of Shadows, it's but little we see, or know either of them, or their Excellencies. But yet so much (if we be not grown wholly Brute) as may exceedingly shame us, that when others look so much to the Cabinet, we take no more care of the Jewel; that when others, nay, our selves are so diligent to keep the Body in health and life; the precious everlasting Soul is no better provided for, to be kept in a better condition, than Physicians of the Body so honoured; and Physicians of the Soul so slighted. The Body decked, and the Soul neglected and starved, nay, by the Bodies being cram'd, the Soul to be pined or surfeited: That when we see sometimes so much Watch and ward to keep possession of some sorry House, or small Cottage, and which, it may be most, we have but a short time in; we should either carelessly or wilfully yeeld possession to the World, the Devil, and the Flesh, of these spiritual immortal Souls of ours, which, if we look to it, may be the glorious Mansions of the Blessed God to dwell in, and which to be sure we must dwell with, either in weal or woe to Eternity. Had we nothing else to say, these two words might heighten our Souls' worth, and should our care in possessing of them:

1. They are the purchase of the Blood of the Son of God. (And shall we trample under foot his Blood in so neglecting our Souls, which were purchased by the Blood of the Shepherd of Souls? 1 Pet. 2. 25.)

2. And this that they might be holy and glorious Temples for the Blessed Spirit of God. O then! be sure to keep possession for so happy a Guest, that the Devil may not prove an Intruder. And thou that wilt be stiff, and earnest, and peremptory, to maintain thine Interest in what thy Father or Friend left thee, do not so under-value either thy Saviour or thy Soul, as not to keep possession of that, which He at so dear a rate hath purchased. Our Souls should be precious, that were purchased by Blood so precious. Let that be said to every incroaching Enemy, what Jepthah said to the invading Ammonites, Judg. 11. 23. The Lord hath dispossessed the Amorites before his People, and shouldst thou possess it? And let their resolution, ver. 24. be ours, Wilt thou not possess that which Chemosh thy God giveth thee to possess? And so, Whosoever the Lord our God hath given to us, that will...
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we possess. Our Souls he first made, Jer. 38. 16. which we afterward lost, which he repurchased by the Blood of his Son, and restored to us to be kept as an everlasting pledg of his Love; and therefore whatever else we lose, look to it that we here keep possession.

But to the quickening of our care herein, I need not seek for more particulars to set forth the Soul’s worth, than what I there propounded.

1. Such, as the saving and possessing of it,

1. Crowns all other Enjoyments. Wisdom with an Inheritance doth well, Eccles. 7. 11. but if mens sana in corpore sano, it’s much better. It was a Solomon’s happiness, that amidst all his delights of the Sons of Men, his Wisdom also remained with him. It’s an happy saving Bargain indeed, if a Man, especially in losing times, when he saves his Estate and his Life, can save his Soul too, without which a Man with all his other Gettings and Enjoyments is but like a dead Body stuck with Flowers; or as a Room round-about-hung, and richly furnish’d, and nothing but the dead Master’s Hearse in the midst of it.

2. Countervails all other Losses. David’s Mouth praiseth God with joyful Lips, though in a dry and thirsty Land, when his Soul is filled with sorrow and faintness, Psal. 63. 1, 5. And though he was for the outward Man at a weak pass, yet it was a sufficient support that God had strengthened him with strength in his Soul, Psal. 138. 3. Though I possess mouths of vanity, Job 7. 3. and with him be ejected out of all; if yet in possession of my Soul, I am no harbourless Object. Though the invading Enemy hath quite broke down the Fence, and laid all open and waste; yet as long as with the Christians in Justin Martyr, we have οἴεω ἐν τῇ συνεδρίᾳ τετεθαμένον; When they have possessed themselves, and taken away all with them, if they have left but a good God, and a good Conscience; a Soul, and a Saviour, it’s but the Casket that’s lost, the Treasure is saved, and lends them a Key for Paul’s Riddle of having nothing, and yet possessing all things. In this sense dum Animal est, Spes est, as long as my Soul is mine own, I am not only in hope, but in possession. No cause to faint, though the outward Man perishes, if the inward Man be renewed, 2 Cor. 4. 16. nor to complain, if the same hand that calls the Christian’s Body to the Beasts, calls his Soul at the same time into his Saviour’s Bosom. Paul meant not to kill, but to cure the incestuous Person, when he would have him delivered.
Vered even to Satan to the destruction of the flesh, if his Spirit may but thereby be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. 5:5, and that will make amends for all. Thus we see that the saving and possessing of the Soul crowns all Enjoyments, more than Countervails all other losses.

2. But on the contrary, the loss of it.

1. Complicats all other losses and miseries, and makes them utterly undoing. David speaks of his Enemies spoiling of his Soul, as their greatest cruelty, and his chiefest misery, Psal. 35. 12. The Prophet, Lam. 3:65. when he had given that heavy blow, that made the heart ake, Lord give them sorrow of heart; he strikes the Nail to the Head, when he adds, thy Curse unto them. O woe unto thee, shew hast added grief unto thy sorrow, Jer. 45. 3; and a curse to both, when by thy riotous, unclean; or otherwise vicious courses, thou hast lost (it may be) thine Estate, thy good Name, the health and strength of thy Body, and which is worst of all, thy Soul and all. Undone wretch! It was a desperate prodigal expense, which all the Money in thy Purse, and thy whole other Substance could not discharge; but thy Soul also must go in to pay the reckoning. Thy Saviour's Soul being heavy to the death, was more sad than all his bodily Sufferings, and that thirst which lets out the heart-blood of thy Soul, is far beyond all other Wounds, and makes them deadly.

To see an Enemy in the Habitation, is one of Eli's forest Affiliations, 1 Sam. 2:32. and to be a possession to Enemies is Edom's heaviest Curse, Num. 24:18. but not so heavy, as to see an Enemy possessed of this inward Mansion. The loss of the Soul compleats all other losses and miseries.

2. Cannot be made up and recompenced with all other Gains and Enjoyments. The round World is but a Cipher to it. For what is a Man profited, if he should gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? saith our Saviour, Matt. 16:26. He that tenders a whole World, makes a great offer; but he that loseth his Soul for it, sustains a greater loss; for that World which cannot satisfy the desires of a Soul before it be lost, cannot satisfy for the loss of a Soul when it is. And therefore the rich Man, Luke 12. 19, 20. was but a Fool for all his Riches; and the Hypocrite, Job 27:8. is brought in as a desperate Fool for all his Gain, when God took away both their Souls. How miserable! when dead, to have so many Friends to accompany the Body to the Grave, and Devils only the Soul to Hell, such Funeral Pomp and Tombs?
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He that hath lost his Soul, is a poor undone Man; though with the Young Man in the Gospel he have never so great possessions: For a Silk Stocken will not cure a broken Leg, nor daintieft Meat make the sick Man well, nor all the choicest Extractions from the whole Body and Bulk of the Creature, afford a Cordial strong enough to revive a languishing loft Soul. And therefore as the Arabick Proverb adviseth, Noli gemman perdere in die festo; in our greatest Feasts it would not have us lose our Jewel, because it's of such worth, that all the delight we can have in the costliest Meal, cannot countervail the loss of it; so in all the richest of the World's entertainments let us be so merry and wise together, as to be sure to look to our Jewel, to our Souls, the loss of which all else can no way compensate.

3. As being in the last place irrecoverable. When our Saviour said, What will it profit a Man, if he win the whole World, and lose his own Soul? In those words he tells us, that the loss of it is inestimable: But when he adds, or What shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul? He would thereby assure us, that if after the price of Purchase, which he laid down to redeem our Souls, and repossefs us of them, they shall yet be so neglected, as that they come indeed to be lost, that Mortgage will never be able again to be bought out. No αὐτολλαχαμα to be given in exchange, but the loss absolute and irreparable. But shall then such precious Souls be lost for want of looking to; pawned for Toys, nay fold outright for Trifles? That thou mayest take thy pleasure, carest not (as sometimes thou profanely sayest) if the Devil take thy Soul. Is not this χρυσα παλαιων more costly than the Indians exchanging Gold for Glass, and more profane than Esau's selling his Birth-right for a Mess of Pottage; by Drunkenness, Passions, Droulnefles, Lust, putting our selves out of possession of the use of our Souls for the present, or by these and such-like courses hazarding the utter loss of them for ever. Should this be the sad lot of any, as it will be of too many, let it be of such Sensual Brutes that know not the worth of a Soul, that can so easily part with it; of such fardid Muckworms, quibus anima sanitatem est pro sale, whose Souls serve only to keep them alive, and to preferve their Bodies from stinking; and who are (as such) something distinct from their Souls, as it's intimated of the Fool in the Gospel, to whom God said, This night shall they fetch thy Soul from thee, Luke 12. 20. But for Christians, that believe that the Blood of the Son of God was shed to save Souls; for
for Scholars, whose Souls are themselves (Animus eujusque is est quisque) who study the nature of Souls, and therefore should know the worth of them; for Divines, whose traffic is in trading for Souls; let us have ground to hope better things of you, and such as are εὐμενὰ σώματα, that accompany Salvation, Heb. 6.9. whilst like wise Men, Prov. 11.30. you labour to win other Mens Souls, be not such Fools as to lose your own. It's his Disciples and Apostles that our Saviour especially directs his Speech to in the words of the Text, in which there is a double οὐμών, ἐν τῇ οἰκομον υμῶν κτισε θεὸς τοῖς υμῖν. Whatever others do, yet you above all in your patience possess ye your Souls.

SERMON XXXIII.

LUKE 21. 19.

In your Patience possess ye your Souls.

Tertullian begins his Book of Patience with an ingenuous acknowledgment of his own unfitness, Homo nullius bona, & aegor doloribus impatienic, &c. And so may I well begin my Sermon of the same Argument with the like Apology: but as he there adds, The rich Man that so much desires health must be born with, if he be speaking of it, especially if his speaking help to instruct him in the Cure. And therefore in the handling of this Text of Patience, having dispatched the two first parts of it the last time, which I called the Free-bold and the Seisin; and from them held forth our duty to possess our Souls, I now close with the third, viz. the Tenure of it, and that's of Patience. In your Patience possess ye your Souls. All Graces indeed are of the Soul's Life-Guard; and Faith is the Captain of them all, according to that Heb. 10.39. ἀλλὰ πίσεως ἐστὶν τῇ ἐκκλησίας κατα-μαρτυρίας, &c. And that of them that believe to the saving of the Soul. But under Faith in perilous times Patience in an especial manner is here by our Saviour set upon the Guard. And therefore he faith, ἐν ἀναμνησθῇ ὑμῶν, &c. in your Patience possess ye your.
your souls. (And so James 5. 8. Be ye also patient, establish your hearts.)

υπομονη ὑμων, Your Patience]. What's that? As they are your souls; so is it your patience? Yes. Thus far in the general: Both, their's Subjective, but neither of them Causaliter. Both Patience and Soul's theirs; but so, as both from God; the one from him as an Almighty Creator, and Father of Spirits, Hebr. 12. 9. the other as a gracious Sanctifier, and a God of Patience, Rom. 15. 5. most patient in himself, not forward to inflict any evil; And the Giver of Patience to his afflicted Servants, whereby they are ready to endure all, according to that Col. 1. 11. Strengthened with all Might, according to his Glorious Power, unto all Patience and Long-suffering, with joyfulness.

Your Patience therefore; as thus, 1. Subjective, yours from God's gift in possession. And, 2. Specificative, yours by way of Dintinction, and that (as some would have it) from a Fourfold other kind of Patience, viz. 1. Sinful. 2. A Natural. 3. A Moral. 4. A Legal Patience.

De patientia. c. 16.

1. There is a Sinful Patience: Falsa & probostra, as Tertullian calls it: When Men, as heinstancesthe, are Patientes rivalium, & divinum, & invitatorium; impatientes solius Dei: Impatient only of Christ's Yoke, and God's Commands and Chastisements: But bately patient of the Tyranny, both of their own and other Mens Lufts; can endure nothing for God's Cause, but any thing for their own, for Profit, Pleasure, or Preferment fake; can patiently here and see God blasphemed and dishonoured, namely prostitutum Body, Soul, Conscience, the Honour and Peace of them all: The Parasite patient of Abuse and Scorn for his Belly-fake. The Courtier can receive an Injury, and give thanks, for his Preferment's fake: Those κληρονόμοι in Plutarch, to raise themselves, make their Backs their Mistress's Footstools. Even Patibici are in Authors often Patientes. Happy we, if we were but as patient in God's Service, as too many are in the Devil's drudgery. But this Bastard-patience, the meekest Christian Spirit is impatient of, as of that which, in stead of possessing the Soul, betrays and enslaves it, that it's no more itself, than the Galley-slave his own Man. The Coolest Spirit in its own Cause is warm in God's; as we see in meek Moses, Exod. 32. 19. Nor did Christ speak Contradictions, Rev. 2. 2. when he said of the Church of Ephesus, ισα σου υπομονην σε,

I know thy patience, and that thou canst not bear them which are evil. But what cannot Patience bear? Any thing for God, but nothing against him; It's Impatient of that for which God is angry.

2. There is a second kind of Patience, which may be called Natural, arising from the natural Constitution of the Body, or Mind, as in a Disease of the Body, (as a Lethargy, or Palsy) that feels nothing; or from a natural Dulness and Brawniness, that is not so sensible of pain and pressure, as in the Brawniness of the Hand or Foot, in an Ox patient of labour, and the dull Ass under a heavy burden; Or from the hardines of the Body, patient of Cold, and other outward Grievances; and from the courage and valour of the Mind, patient of wounds and hardship. But this is Tolerance rather than Patience; ἀπάθεϊα, rather than ἐυθυμία, and it will not possess the Soul.

1. In greatest Extremities, if long continued. The Ox that stands the Butcher's stroke with his Ax twice, falls flat at the third. The Brawn, when cut through to the quick, proves sensible. And Saul, though a Stout Man, at last falls all along, 1 Sam. 28. 20.

2. This Stoutness, though it indure pain, yet not disgrace, but Christian patience can, Acts 5. 41.

3. There is that which I called a Moral Patience, such as the Heathen Philosophers, and the Stoicks, especially gloried of, by which (they will tell you) they attained to such an ἐυθυμία, such a tranquillity of Mind, that no Injury could betide them. [See Seneca, lib. Quod in sapiens non cadit injuria, Maximus Tyrius dissent. 2.] Nothing could trouble them; but that, like the upper Region, they were always serene; Hominis quadrati, which way forever pitch'd, stood immovable. But as their wise Man was a Notion rather than a Reality; so this steady evenness of Mind was sooner to be found in their Books and Disputes, than in their Lives and Practices; especially when it came to a pinch indeed, in the Storm when the poor Skipper was cheerless, their great Philosopher's heart funk within him: The more Wise and Knowing they were, the more sensible they were of their Danger, and being always proudly conceited of their own Worth, the more fearful they were of their Loss; and so the more erect they stood upon their Tip-toes, the more flat they fell under that burden, which they could not undergo: As Saul higher by the Head than others, when such a weight fell upon them,
them, with him, they fell all along, and there was no spirit in them, 1 Sam. 28. 20. for although in ordinary cases the spirit of a Man can bear his infirmities, Prov. 18. 14. yet in extraordinary Stresses and Exigencies, it's not a natural stoutness, nor a moral composedness of spirit, but only Christian faith and patience, that will be able to keep it up from sinkings, so that it's indeed a great commendation of patience, (as Tertullian observes) that these Heathen Grandees affected the counterfeet of it, as the chief piece of their bravery; yet in truth (as Cyprian affirms) it was only insolens affectata libertatis audacia, & exercitio & seminum peloris inurecunda jactantia. A vapouring humour rather than any solid settlement of spirit, because upon no good foundation: Blown up by pride in themselves, and heartned by Applause of others; and so not able to keep possession of the soul in all emergencies, though it may be sometimes patient of love and pain, yet usually impatient of disgrace; so that if cut in that vein, none bled more deadly.

4. There is a legal patience, such as the law requires, or rather which the legal pedagogie trained them up unto, which (I think) Tertullian somewhat too boldly under-values, nay, accuses, as that which trained them up to a kind of revenge, in allowing to take eye for eye, and tooth for tooth, &c. Though that was in a way of publick justice, and not of private revenge. Sure I am, the law of God was holy, just, and good; and could they have kept it, it would have kept them, so as to have possessed their souls with patience. This defect was not in the law, but them that lived under it; in degree, not in kind.

And accordingly Job then, whom Chrysostom calls ἄριστος ὑπομονηστὴς καὶ ἀμφιστὴς, is by the apostle held forth to the whole world now, in the time of the Gospel, as a mirror of patience, James 5. 11. And truly, when we read and think of Abraham's faith, and Job's patience, and Moses his meekness, &c. the eminency of some of them then, may justly cast shame on the deficiency of many of us now, that their twilight should out-shine our noon-day, as though they had lived under the grace of the Gospel, and not we, who fall so exceedingly short of that conformity to the law, which some of them in a greater measure attained to. But yet to my purpose, that of Ilyricus is observable. Quomodo autem V. T. & Hebræi hanc patientiam vocant ignoro, nec eiam locum novi ubi describatur. Patience is seldom mentioned in the Old Testament, and they scarce have a proper name.
Name for it, but when they speak of it, most commonly make use of the word Silence to express it, as though for the most part of Men it was then more rare, and less known under the Law, than it is, or at least should be, now under the Gospel. And therefore although it was a great measure of Patience which the Lord enabled some of the Faithful then unto, when ἐκβὰ ἀκόν ἐπὶ ἀνθρώπων, εὐεργετάρχων, &c. when they were Stoned, and Sawn asunder, and Tempted, &c. Heb. 11. 36, 37. Yet it was nothing to that which many Christian Martyrs by the Grace of the Gospel were raised up to under heavier Sufferings.

5. And therefore in the last place, it's Christian Patience, Gospel-Christian Patience: ὑπομονή ὑπάρχω, Signanter dictum, Your patience; yours as Apostles, as Followers, as Servants of Jesus Christ, by which, when you are forced (it may be) to let all else go, you may even then keep possession of your Souls. Nothing else can do it: But that can. That whereas Impatience usurps a domineering power over the Man (according to that of Tertullian, speaking of Adam) Facile usurpari ab impatien-tia cepit, c. 5. Sopita ratione, & excitato fomite, quouo vult dominum versat, Cerda. I say, Impatience usurps over the Man, and then betrays all: On the contrary Patience keeps all, the Soul at least above all in a quiet possession; and accordingly Albertus Magnus makes Prudence and Patience, those two Wings of the great Eagle, by which the Woman, Rev. 12. 14. fled into the Wilderness, and was nourished from the Face of the Serpent.

And that's the Truth which I am now to prosecute. In which I shall, 1. Explain what I mean by this Gospel-Christian Patience. 2. Wherein it may be said to keep us in possession of our Souls. 3. How it doth it. And then, 4. Conclude with a short Application.

1. For the first, What Patience is was shewed before, and I now only mind you, that it relates,

1. Either to God, according to that, Psal. 37. 7. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him; when it neither swells, nor sinks under his Hand, but silently waits his pleasure.

2. Or to Man, according to that, 1 Thes. 5. 14. Now we exhort you Brethren, be patient to all Men.

But it's called Gospel-Christian-Patience, as it is found in a Christian now in the time of the Gospel: And this
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1. As he is directed and animated by the Example of Christ; for he hath also suffered for us, leaving us an Example that we should follow his steps, 1 Pet. 2. 21. *viz.* in patient suffering, as it is, ver. 20. his Steps having troden out to us a Path, that we need not be at a loss in the most unknown Way; and if the Souldier be heartned by his Fellow-Souldiers courage and company, as Paul said, *many of the Brethren waxed bold by his Bonds*, (Phil. 1. 14.) then sure, by looking to Jesus the Captain of our Salvation, enduring the Cross, and despising the shame, we may well run with patience the Race that is set before us, Heb. 12. 1, 2. and without danger or distraction follow on; when our *Abimelek*, our Father-King (for Christ is both) hath Marched before, and given us that word יִשָּׁר לְחָדֹּר. Do as I have done, as that other Abimelek did, Judg. 9. 48.

2. As enabled by the Grace and Spirit of Christ, according to that, Col. 1. 11. Strengthened with all might unto all patience, and Long-suffering with joyfulness; but is ἡσαΐας ἡ ἀληθινὴ, according to his Glorious power, and that Power the more Glorious, in that out of weakness they have been made strong, as the Apostle speaks, Heb. 11. 34. The fearfulllest and every way weakest Ages, Sexes, Constitutions, have oft in Suffering Times been enabled with most Courage and Wisdow, γενναίον ἐνφυσίν τὸ συμμείαντο, as Chrysostom speaks, which plainly manifesteth that it was Christ’s Spirit that kept them so in possession of their own: And if the strong Man armed keep his Palace, all is in peace, Luke 11. 21. If the Spirit of the Almighty God undertake to keep possession, who shall be able to make an Ejectment? It’s a deadly aking Head that is distracted, if God with his own Hand do but hold it. It is an over-grown Burden that sinks me, if underneath be an everlasting Arm. Such a Back of Steel will sufficiently strengthen a very weak Bow. Though Paul be nothing, yet by Christ strengthening him, he can do, yea, and suffer all things.

3. As heartned by the Comforts of the Spirit of Christ, for the Joy of the Lord is our strength, Neh. 8. 10. *Farina in alia, Meal in the Pot,* that takes away the deadly intoxicating bitterness of it: *Vinum in peitoris,* the Cordial that Antidotes these *Animi deliquia,* these Swoonings, and fainting Fits, according to that, 2 Cor. 4. 1. καθαρὸς ὑπέκαθεν ἐν ἐνυπακοήν, according as we have received Mercy, we faint not; such sweet Morsels strengthen the heart, that it can go on in its work and way, and
not sink under its burden. Thus we had Patience and Joyfulness joined together, Col. 1. 11. as mutually begetting and strengthening each other.

Patience much furthering our Joy: So the Apostle, we rejoice (or glory) in Tribulation, if it work patience, Rom. 5. 3. And so Tertullian speaks of a Sagina voluptatis, of Patience fasting the Soul with delight, and brings it in as the sick Man's Nurse that sits by him, and cherisheth him.

And Joy much strengthening and confirming our patience, whilst sense of Mercy drowns the sense of Misery, makes the Martyr lie quietly on the Grid-Iron, when it is with delight, as on a Bed of Roses: Whiffs and silenceeth all discontented complaints of Pain, Loss, Disgrace, &c. whilst he is sensible of the saving health of God's Countenance: can rejoice in his spiritual Gains, yea, and can Glory that he is accounted worthy to suffer Shame for the Name of Christ with them, Acts 5. 41. When this Candle of the Lord shines upon our head and heart, we are able with Job to walk through darkness, even dance in the dark without trembling. And then with more ease lie down quietly, and sleep sweetly in the darkest Night.

Thus Patience animated by the Example of Christ, and spirited by the Grace and Comfort of the Spirit of Christ, becomes true Christian Patience: Which was the first thing propounded, and so, as such, in most troublesome Times helps us to possess our Souls.

2. But wherein doth that consist? Which was the second Particular.

I answer, especially in two things, viz. 1. In so keeping the Soul, that it be not at last utterly lost. 2. That for the present, whatever the occasion be, it be not so Disguised and Distempered, but that it may be it self, and we still our own Men. This was shewn in the general in the former Point: And now in the second we are particularly to shew, that Christian-Patience is able to do both these.

1. Patience keeps possession of the Soul, in taking care that it be not lost and perish eternally. So that we find, that patient continuance in well-doing ends in eternal Life, Rom. 2. 7. And the Apostle, Heb. 10. 36. faith, that we have need of patience, that, after we have done the Will of God, we may receive the Promise. There is absolute need, especially in evil Times, that the Soul be possessed with patience, if it would at last be possessed of Glory, as will clearly appear from the contrary. Take an impa-
tient Man, and let him meet with Trials and Exercises, and he presently chuseth Sin rather than Affliction, as the phrase is, Job 36. 21. He cannot Suffer, and therefore he must Sin, nor is there the most dreadful and damning Sin, which in that fright and hurry he will stick at, or set him at a stand; but over Hedge and Ditch, though with no many break-neck Falls to his Soul, that he may but escape that outward danger that he is more afraid of. Cyprian, in his Book De bono Patience, and his Master Tertullian, before him, in his Book of the like Argument, are large in this, to shew that Impatience is not only a Sin, but a Mother-sin; that at first undid the Devil, and afterward Adam; thrust on Cain to his murder, Esau to his profaneness, the Jews to crucifie Christ, and all Heretics to corrupt and blaspheme the Truth of Christ, which was but impatience to withstand their own Lusts; but in suffering time to withstand the rage and lusts of the Devil and Men, this the fearful unbelieving impatient Soul finds it oft an harder task: and therefore rather than stand out basely, yield up all, and itself and all; will be content to do all rather than suffer anything. We may tremble, when we think of David counterfeiting the Mad-man; Peter denying and forswearing his Lord and Master; Cranmer subserbing, and others of the choicest Servants of Christ faultering and fowly miscarrying in times of straits and dangers: Even their Souls had hereby been lost, if Christ had not saved them. Peter had utterly sunk in that great Wave, had not Christ reached out his hand and re-saved him. But bow, then ye Fir-Trees, if the Cedars be fallen. If the Righteous be scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and sinners appear? If the Godly for want of the exercise of Patience run such a hazard of their Souls, how will the ungodly, that wholly want the grace of Patience, avoid the utter loss of theirs? Upon two grounds, 1. Their over-prizing outward things, which they cannot be without. 2. Undervaluing their Souls, especially seeing it is their Souls that they least of all look after, and expose them to danger and loss rather than any thing else, deal with them as the Levite did with his Concubine, Judg. 19. 25. who, to save himself, did prostitute her to their lust to be abused to the very death, (as the Castror bites off and leaves that part of his Body which they most hunt after to save the rest.) Or, like a Forlorn, left to face and entertain the Enemy, whilst they draw off their Bag and Baggage, that they may secure Body, Life, Estate, Esteem, and the

The like, leave the soul at stake to be wounded and defiled with the foulness and most horrid sins, even to deny Christ, and utterly to apostatize from him, his truth, and grace, and so, merely for want of faith and patience, εἰ καταρθῇ πεπολεμάθη, in such a Luke 8. 13. sima and pinch of temptation, such fall away: And so the best bargain they make of it is, but to gain the world, and lose the soul. But our Saviour in the place parallel to the text faith, Ἡ ζωομεθας endures to the end shall be saved. Now ζωομον ζωομεθα, patience is the enduring grace, and therefore is the saving grace, at least saves the soul, when it can secure nothing else; dare suffer, and thereby may expose the outward man to danger and misery; but dare not sin, and thereby provides for the soul's safety, and so keeps possession, that it be not lost at last.

2. That it be not distemper'd and disguised for the present, how distracting and intoxicating, ever the exercise and affliction be, Ἰρα συγκροισις. As anger is a madness, so impatience is an angry sore that swells and burns, (Semper ager caloribus impatienzie, as Tertullian speaks of himself) and so calls the soul into a burning fever, and thereby brings the man to a perfect μαυρία, he is so distempered, that he knoweth not what he faith or doth. And so Asaph in this case by his own confession becomes like a beast; Psal. 73. 22. And Heman, though he continues a man, yet a distracted man, Psal. 88. 15. David, when his heart was hot, and the fire burned, he faith, he spake with his tongue, Psal. 39. 3. And (as some expound that place) more than his share. I am sure even Job himself, when his patience began a little to be inflamed into passion, spake over; he confessesthat he uttered that he understood not, Chap. 42. 3. And if these, that were of so sober and gracious a spirit, were, whilst in this case, so much besides themselves, then how stark wild may you expect to find such, who have no such inward bridle to check such a wild horse, but lay the reins loose on the neck of passion and rage? And what is it that you then see? A man in his right wits? No: but a wild boar foaming at the mouth, a lion sparkling with his eyes, a very Bedlam in the height of his phrensy. And how is the soul then kept in possession?

But patience cools such hot dis TEMPERS, and being spiritualis incolumitas, (as he calls it) the very health of the soul, it either prevents or cures such phrenses; keeps the soul in a due temper that the man is still himself; as our Saviour, That his patience might have its perfect work in his sensible sufferings of the extreme...
mity of his torments, refused that ἔμεινα πρὸς μὲν ουκ χρῆν, Mar. 15. 23. which some say was wont to be given to Men, when they suffered, to intoxicate and make senseless. No better Receipt than a Patient Spirit against a light Head under heaviest Burdens and Afflictions; though Job's Messengers trod one on the heel of another, and that so long, till at last they had nothing more to say, because he had almost nothing more to lose: yet, as long as his Patience received their Messages, and he heard them by that Interpreter (though indeed at last he started up and rent his Mantle, and shaven his Head, and fell down upon the Ground; and Satan that stood looking on, to see how his Train, that he had laid, took, it may be might now think that the distracted Man began his Anticks, yet he fell short of his Hopes.) It's added, that after Job had done all this, he worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked shall I return thither: The Lord bath given, and the Lord bath taken away: Blessed be the Name of the Lord, Job 1. 20, 21. Now, (as they said) these are not the words of him that bath a Devil; so those words of Job, have they the least touch or air of a Distraction or Distemper?

John 10. 21.

Deut. 28. 34. Moses' faith, even mad for the sight of his eyes, which he seeth: yet even then a truly patient Christian is so fully and perfectly himself, that he can freely enjoy himself; with the Martyr, sleep as soundly the night before his Suffering, as at any other time, and with as much strength and freedom of Spirit pray and meditate, converse with God, and walk on in his way before Man, as if there were nothing to disturb and interrupt him; like an Archimedes, be hard at his Study, and intent on his Demonstration, when the Enemy hath now taken the Town, and takes away his life together; or rather as a Man in an impregnable Garison, may be every whit as quiet, and as little troubled, when the Cannons roar, and the Enemies fall on, as if there were none at all to molest him: But he may thank his safe Garison for it, which he is possessed of; and so must a Christian his Patience, which, as our
our Saviour here sheweth, is that which keepeth both himself and
Soul in possession.

3. The third enquiry is, How Patience doth this? I answer
two ways. 1. As it's enabled to suffer. 2. As it's trained up
to wait with expectation; and the word ἔχομαι hints both.

1. Patience is a suffering Grace, and therefore in Scripture
joined with long-suffering. Col. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 3. 10. can bear
much. So ἐγκατάστης ἔχεις ἔχομαι ἔχεις, Thou hast born, and
hast patience, faith Christ to the Church of Ephesius, Rev. 2. 3.
as the patient Ox endures the Yoke without kicking or fainting:
and so the patient Christian, because he can endure much; there-
fore it is that he is not much discomposed. A cool Spirit doth
not diffuse in greatest beats of Persecution: [In this like a Man
that hath so strong a Brain that he can bear much Drink, is not
so soon drunk;] so that, though with Job he possess months of Job 7. 3.
Vanity, yet he possesseth his own Soul, and keeps all safe and in due
temper: For what's the reason that many Men in evil Times
are so much besides themselves, mad with Rage, drunk and swal-
lowed up with Grief, and dead with Fear, come to deny Christ,
to apostatize from the Profession of his Truth and Grace, stick
at nothing, swallow any thing, though never so deadly and de-
structive? But only because they are either so weak, or so ten-
der and delicate, that they would ἐπισκευάζωνται ἐν στάσει,
and so cannot suffer persecution for the Cross of Christ, Gal. 6. 12.
The Cross is too heavy for them, and therefore they sink under
it: They are impatient of Pain, and Shame, and Loss, dare
not, cannot lose their Lives, and so cowardly, and yet despera-
ely lose their Souls.

But what said Christ in the former place? έστω ἐγκατάστης
κατακόρυφος, and yet, ἐγκατάστης, ver. 3. Thou canst not bear; and Rev. 2
yet, Thou hast born. Patience cannot endure to sin, because it
cannot endure to suffer; doth not betray the Soul and yield up pos-
session, because it's able to withstand the assault of the Enemy;
Doth not sink under the burden, because able to bear it. And
this in a double respect, 1. Because it lightens the burden,
2. Strengthens the bearer.

1. It lightens the burden, which Impatience doubles and ag-
gravates; makes a Mile-hill, a Mountain, and a Day, a Year;
looks at the wrong end of the Perspective, or through a Mag-
nifying-Glafs, and calls Little, Great; and Short, Long; usual
and light Afflictions, strange, and unsupportable: Like an evil
Spie,
Spie, makes it self a Grass-hopper, and every Enemy a Son of
Anak, whilst patience with Caleb stills the uproar, and faith,
we are well able to overcome them. How doth the least weight
gall a sore shoulder? And a drop of Vinegar fret where the
Skin is off? Whilst a sound part feels no smart, though never so
much be poured on it. Mollius fit patiencia, &c. Faith and Pa-
tience add weight to Mercies, but lighten burdens, and so better
bear them. As patient Job, when Miseries fell so thick and
heavy upon him, as might plane obruere animam, yet when he
had lost all other his possessions, his patience kept him on his Legs,
and in possession of his Soul, by suggesting to him alleviating con-
siderations. Naked came I out of my Mothers Womb, and naked
shall I return thither. I am but Naked, not Wounded: I am but
reduced to my first condition of Nature; and such a motion,
though seemingly violent, should not be troublesome, nor I be
troubled to go as naked to Bed at night, as I arose from it in the
morning. And again, The Lord bath given, and the Lord bath
taken away. It's his Sovereignty, as Lord, to do what he will,
especially seeing what he doth is nothing but common Equi-
ity, in his own time to call home his own, which he at first lent
me: And therefore no cause for me to Curse God for taking it
away so soon, but to Bless him, that he continued the Loan of
it so long; and therefore, Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Thus
Patience helps to lighten the Burden.

2. And strengthens the Bearer; so it's laid to stabilis the heart,
Jam. 5. 8. that such a composed quietness is our strength,
משמך נבורה, Isa. 30. 15. And so by patience we are
enabled to run the race, Heb. 12. 1. as a long-breathed Man holds
out to the end, when one that is short-winded is ready to faint
and sink at every step. Great is the advantage that a patient
considerate Man hath against his Adversary, either in a Dispute,
or any other more rough Conflict. And great is the help that
Patience affords.

Partly as it encourageth and comforteth the Heart, (as we
read Rom. 15. 4. Patience and Comfort joynd together) and that
strengthens it. For the Joy of the Lord is our strength, Neh. 8.
10. Such a Cordial doth restore (or bring back)
the Soul, which in such swooning fits is going away, and keeps
it in possession.

But especially as it hath the Company and Assistance of all
other Graces, that are most reviving and strengthening: Ac-
cord-

Psal. 23. 3.
Lam. 1. 11.
According to that of Bede, Idcirco possesso anima in virtute patiemie ponitur, quia radix omnium, custosque patientiæ est. It’s Mother or Nurse of all other Graces, Fidei munus, præcen gubernat, dilectionem adjutat, humilitatem instruit, &c. as Tertullian goeth on: And as he in another place calle’s Impatience, Delitiàtem Excitram: There’s no sin so horrid, but Impatience is ready to hurry a discontented Man into, makes him blaspheme God, wrong others, undo himself; so there is no Grace which Patience doth not either receive life from, or give life to, or both.


And the like I may say of Hope. Sometimes in Scripture Patience seems to be made the fruit of Hope, Rom. 8. 25. 1 Thes. 1. 3. and sometimes Hope the effect of Patience, Rom. 5. 4. & 15. 4.

And so I might shew of other Graces: But that of Cyprian in the general, may suffice. De unius quidem nominis fonte, profisciatur, sed exundantibus venis per multa gloriarum itineriis diffunditur. This one blessed Fountain spreads it self into many happy streams. The patient Man, as such, believes and hopes, is Loving, Humble, Meek, Wise, Valiant, by it approved to be sincere, and trained up to be Heavenly-minded: And so of the rest, that the Soul, that is thus guarded, need not fear to be kept in possession. How sweetly and fully doth that happy Soul enjoy it self, while Patience takes time, and by what it suffers opportunity and advantage, to exercice all other Graces? And whilst it’s suffered to have its perfect work, so fully completes our happiness, that we are as the Apostle expresseth it, Jam. 1. 4. Tæleoi ὄλοιονες, ἐν μυθεὶ λεπτᾶς, Perfect, Entire, and wanting nothing. And sure there is full possession kept, where there is nothing wanting. And thus Patience doth first, as it is a suffering Grace.

2. As it is a waiting and expecting Grace. So the Husbandman ἐνεῖθεται μακροθυμῶν, waits and expects a Crop in his Wait patientio long patientia, Jam. 5. 7. And so with Chriftians that for by Psal. 37. 7. Eternity, though it be in tears of Affliction, yet it’s with patience, because with expediency of a better Harvest. Εἰ δὲ εὐπροφόροι, δι’ ὑπομονῆς αὐτίκως, If we hope for it, then with patience we wait for it, Rom. 8. 25.
Christian Patience, though it suffer much, yet is full of Hope, and thereby full of Heart: And so keeps the Soul in life, according to that of the Prophet, The just shall live by his faith, Hab. 2. 4. and he there speaks of dying Hours. Even in them the Heart may live, Psal. 22. 26. and that it doth, as long as the Man hath in him that lively Hope the Apostle speaks of, 1 Pet. 1. 3. and in this a Christian's Patience so much exceeds that of the choicest Heathens, as his Hope exceeds theirs. They sometimes with patience suffered much, it may be out of love of Virtue, and hope of Applause; But he may more patiently suffer more, when it's out of love of Christ, and hope of Glory.

Nothing more exanimates and dispossesses a Man of himself than Despair: makes Cain run wild out of God's presence, Gen. 4. And them, Rev. 16. 10, 11. gnaw their Tongues, and blaspheme God like Mad men: And he that you read of, 2 Kings 6. when he hopes for no relief from God, in stead of keeping possession, he gives up all for lost, is short-winded, and will not wait on the Lord any longer: But a patient Christian, though he sorrows, yet it is not as others that have no Hopes and here then invent the saying, Dumbæs est, anima est: Till he is Hopeless, he is not Heartless. He keeps possession of his Soul, as long as it's possessed with a lively assurance of an happy close at last: οὐ ταλαιθέως was said (you know) to animate some to patience and courage. Suitable to which, is that of the Apostle: You have heard of the patience of Job, το τέλος κυρίες εἰδε, and have seen what end the Lord made, Jam. 5. 11. and his expectation of such an end, was that which helped him to possess his Soul with such patience. And well may the Soul be possessed with that patience now, which assures that at last it shall be possessed of Glory. It's through Faith and Patience that some inherited the Promises, as the Apostle speaks, Heb. 6. 12. Promises are of things to come; and therefore patience is put to stay and wait, but saints not away in waiting, because it's joyned with Faith, and so is assured of inheriting it at last, and therefore mean-while keeps the Soul in quiet possession. And this, I say, in these two respects, 1. As it's enabled to suffer much from Man. 2. To expect more from God. So that what the Apostle said of Charity, 1 Cor. 13. 7. that Charity beareth all things, endureth all things, and withal believeth all things, and hopeth all things, ver. 7. and thereupon in the very next words adds, that Charity never faileth; may fitly according to the former particulars be applied to Pati-
Because it, "Bear and endure all things." And, 2. Believe and hope all things; it therefore never faileth, nor will suffer the Christian's Heart to fail, that the spoiling of his Goods, Heb. 10. 34. Should come to the spoiling of his Soul, Psal. 35. 12. But that in greatest Directions and Depredations he may in patience possess his Soul.

Which (for Application) calleth upon us for an earnest endeavour after this Grace, and such a due exercise of it, that whatever we lose, we may be kept in possession of our Souls by it. The Apostle's word is strong, and very general, Let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect, and entire, wanting nothing, Jam. 5. 4. Some Christians then were forward and quick at the first Assaults; but when the Battery continued long, were too ready to faint, and so by giving out in the Race, fell short of the Prize: For want of patience, too soon plucked off the Plaister: And so came not to a perfect Cure. And therefore the Apostle's advice is, that they would but stay, that it might have its perfect work; and then assures them, that it will make them perfect, and to entire, that when come to the worst, it will come to a Nec habeo, nec carco: that even when they have nothing, they shall then want nothing. Such a perfect and perfecting Grace, is this Grace of patience, that by its persevering it sets the Crown upon the head of all other Graces: For Omnes virtutes certant, sola perseverantia vincit et coronatur.

The Arguments, by which the Ancients much commend this Grace to us, are many.

The Example,

Of God, who with much long-sufferance doth not only bear his undutiful Children's manners, Acts 13. 18. but his professed Enemies' rebellions and insolencies, forbearing to punish them when their sins would enforce him, and causing his Sun to shine, Justis simili- and his Rain equally to fall on them, and on them that are dear- est to him; inasmuch that he suffereth, because they do not, and that even by them too, whilst they are ready to think, that he is like them, or at least is not much displeased with them, because Cyprian, he doth so much forbear them, Psal. 50. 21.

Of Christ, in whose whole Progress from his coming down Rev. 1. 9.
from Heaven, till his returning thither again, the Fathers are wont to observe a Signature of patience in every step all along in the Way: But especially in and towards his Journeys end, to induce a Traitor Judas in his Bosom, though fully known to him, yet not to discover him to others; and when he had betrayed himself in betraying his Master, to entertain him with the compellation of a Friend, who was to be reckoned amongst the worst of Enemies; to endure so much of the Jews malice and rage with so much meekness and love, notwithstanding all that pain and shame, those buffetings, scourgings, spittings upon, those railings and blasphemies; as the dumb Lamb, not to open the mouth, or if at all, in that heat of his agony to breath such sweet breath, as, Father, not my Will, but thine be done: And again, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. That still voice speaks aloud Christ to be God, even a God of Patience, who was Water to those Sparks, to which the meekest of us would have been Gun-Powder.

Nor yet so, fors ut de supernis estimetur, as Tertullian speaks; as though this were so far above us, as nothing belonging to us; for (in the third place) they find Examples and Patterns of Patience, not only in God and Christ, but in the Servants of God, in Moses, David, Job, Jeremiah, Stephen, Paul: In the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, all so long-breathed, that we shall scarce approve our selves to be of the same piece, and to have the same Spirit, if we be shorter-winded.

They are wont also, the better to compose our Spirits to a meekned Patience under sufferings, to put us in mind of our condition, either as fallen in Adam, and so we are born to trouble, or as restored by Christ; and so it's the Patience and Kingdom of Jesus Christ, Rev. 1. 9. An inraged Devil and World will have the Cross to be our Companion, which therefore we should not quarrel at, especially seeing it is such a Companion, as proves a very faithful Friend. It would be endless to go about to repeat all those benefits, which the Cross and our patient bearing of it brings in to us, whether for Grace or Peace here, or Salvation in Heaven hereafter: Affliction is very sharp, but a much improving School. And Faith and Patience help us to take out many an happy Lesson in it. It inherits Promises, Heb. 6. 12. brings Glory, 2 Thess. 1. 4, 5. And so whatever it meets with in the way, yet to be sure it ends well, Jam. 5. 11. And all's well that ends well.
But I omit all other Particulars, as being sensible of what Cyprian faith in the beginning of his Treatise of this Argument, [De patientia locuturus, &c. unde potius incipiam, quam quod nunc quoque ad audientiam vestram patientiam video esse necessariam, &c.] That our Hearers, whilst we preach of Patience, have need to exercise their Patience, and therefore I'll not tire out yours. And therefore shall touch only upon two things, which partly the Context, and partly the Text afford us.

1. And the first concerns the present time and season. It was, when Jerusalem was now near to be destroyed, and as a forerunner of it, that his Disciples should be hated, betrayed, and persecuted, in the foregoing part of the Chapter, that our Saviour prescribes this Receipt in the Text, that the Malady might not prove mortal, that in patience they possess their Souls. And of the same time and day (some think) the Apostle speaks, Heb. 10. 25. And after shewing how great a fight of Afflictions they incurred in reproaches, and spoiling of their Goods, &c. v. 32, 33, 34. he at last concludes, φρονομένος γὰρ ἔχετε χρησιν, that they had need of Patience, v. 36. And so for certain have we now, or may have ere long, as Capito in his time to Farel, Durà patientiæ nobis opus est in hac dissolutione quæ versamur, &c. How near the destruction of our Jerusalem is, I dare not fore-prophesy. The God of Peace make and keep it a true Jerusalem; a Vision of Peace both now and to perpetuity. But if Wars, and rumours of Wars, if false Prophets, and false Christs, if the betraying, and bating, and spoiling of the Ministers and Servants of Christ be the sad prefaces and forerunners of it, then (unless God be the more merciful) it may not be long before we hear of it, when it may come again to be said, as Rev. 13. 10. & 14. 12. Here is the Patience and Faith of the Saints; when no remedy but Faith and Patience; so that either already we have, or then may have very great need of it. And happy we, if, when the worst comes, we can but be able to possess our Souls by it.

2. And that's the second Particular in the Text, viz. the great benefit and advantage of it, that whatever other loss we sustain, yet the main chance may be saved; our Souls possessed by it. And God thought he allowed Barnabas fair, though he did not grant him those great things he sought for, if he might have his life for a prey, Jer. 45. 5. Straits may be such, that it may be a great mercy, if we may but have our lives: but if so as withal to possess
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posses our Souls, that they be not endangered or lost to eternity, nor for the present to BE affrighted or distempered, but that in greatest distractions we may be own Men, and do, yea, and suffer like Christians. So to possess the Soul, even when we have lost all else, is such a Mercy, that with much thankfulness and comfort we may say with the Psalmit, Return unto thy rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee, Psal. 116. 7. A rich bounty and largesse, if through Patience keeping possession, we may be able to turn into our Souls, and they return to their rest in God, even when it comes to the Apostles ἀστετώμεν, 1 Cor. 4. 11. When cast out of all, we have no certain dwelling-place: but with the faithful of old, Heb. 11. 37, 38. we should wander in Deserts, and Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth: If it should come to that pass, that (as you use to say) no Remedy but Patience; you will have no cause to complain, for it is a very sufficient one: even then we shall not be altogether har- bourless out-casts, as long as we can by Faith take Sanctuary in God, and by Patience keep possession of our Souls. For certain our Saviour thought so, when against all those animi deliquia, those sick fainting Fits in the former part of the Chapter, he prescribes only this Cordial in the Text, In your Patience posseste ye your Souls.

Superaddenda.

Should our Spirits sometimes grow hasty; and not willing patientely to wait God’s leasure; Consider,

1. That God’s Retribution will be full.

2. The day of it certain, Hab. 2. 3. Heb. 10. 36, 37.

3. Though it stay, yet let this stay our Stomachs, That medium vindicatus est ipse qui vindicatur: Christ himself, who hath been more wronged than we, and who will at last fully vindicate both himself and us, is not yet righted: but to this day he waits till his Enemies become his Footstool, Heb. 10. 13. And therefore be not so bold to desire, that the Servant should be served before his Lord, Nec defundi ame Dominum Servi irreligiosa & inurecundâ festinatione properemus. Cyprian S. 15.

Dr. Hammond on Matt. 10. Annot. f. makes not this a
Precept, but an Affirmation or Prediction; that there was
no such way to keep or preserve their lives from that
common destruction coming on the People of the
Jews, as persevering faithful adhering to Christ.

Patient Men are the only Free-holders.
Their Comforts forfeited to God their Lord,
Who can best keep them for them,

Surrendered by them,
Purchased by Christ.

And as the Philosopher's Scholar, who having given himself
to his Master to teach him, when taught, was by his Master gi-
ven back again to be his own Man.

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