

OF ASSURANCE.

Q. XXXVI. *WHAT* are the benefits which flow from sanctification?

A. Assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

The first benefit flowing from sanctification, is assurance of God's love.

2 Pet. i. 10. 'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.' Sanctification is the seed, assurance is the flower which grows out of it: assurance is a consequent of sanctification, the saints of old had it, 1 John ii. 3. 'We know that we know him,' 2 Tim. i. 12. 'I know whom I have believed.' Here was *sensus fidei*, the reflex act of faith: and, Gal. ii. 20. 'Christ hath loved me.' Here was faith flourishing into assurance. Aecolamhadias, when he was sick, pointed to his heart, *Hic fat lucis*, Here I have light enough, meaning comfort and assurance.

Q. 1. *Have all sanctified persons assurance?*

A. They have a right to it, and I do incline to believe that all have it in some degree before their last expiring; though their comfort may be so strong, and their vital spirits so weak, that they cannot express what they feel. But I dare not positively affirm that all have assurance in the first moment of their sanctification: a letter may be written, which is not sealed; so grace may be written in the heart, yet the Spirit may not set the seal of assurance to it. God is a free agent, and may give or suspend assurance *pro licito* as he pleases. Where there is the sanctifying work of the Spirit, he may withhold the sealing work, partly to keep the soul humble; partly to punish our careless walking: we neglect our spiritual watch, grow remiss in duty, and then walk under a cloud; we quench the graces of the Spirit, and God withholds the comforts: and partly to put a difference between earth and heaven. This I the rather speak, to bear up the hearts of God's people, who are dejected because they have no assurance: you may have the water of the Spirit poured on you in sanctification, though not the oil of gladness in assurance; there may be faith of adherence, and not of evidence; there may be life in the root, when there is no fruit in the branches to be seen; so faith in the heart, when no fruit of assurance.

Q. 2. *What is assurance?*

Ans. It is not vocal, any audible voice, or brought to us by

the help of an angel or revelation. Assurance consists of a practical syllogism, where the word of God makes the major, conscience the minor, the Spirit of God the conclusion. The word saith, 'He that fears and loves God, is loved of God;' there is the major proposition: then conscience makes the minor, 'But I fear and love God;' then the Spirit makes the conclusion, 'Therefore thou art loved of God.' And this is that which the apostle calls, 'The witnessing of the Spirit with our spirits, that we are his children,' Rom. viii. 16.

Q. 3. *Whether hath a sanctified soul such an assurance as excludes all doubtings?*

Ans. He hath that which bears up his heart from sinking, he hath such an earnest of the Spirit, that he would not part with it for the richest prize; but his assurance, though it be infallible, it is not perfect. There will be sometimes a trepidation or trembling; he is safe, yet not without fears and doubts; as a ship lies safe at anchor, yet may be a little shaken by the wind. If a Christian had no doubtings, there would be no unbelief in him; had he no doubtings, there would be no difference between grace militant and grace triumphant. Had not David his ebbs sometimes as well as flowings? Like the mariner, who sometimes cries out, *stellam video*, I see a star; sometimes the star is out of sight. Sometimes we hear David say, 'Thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes,' Psal. xxvi. 3. But at another time he was at a loss, Psal. lxxxix. 49. 'Lord, where are thy former loving-kindnesses?' And there may fall out an eclipse in a Christian's assurance, to put him upon longing after heaven; then there shall not be the least doubting; then the banner of God's love shall be always displayed upon the soul; then the light of God's face shall be without clouds, and have no sun-setting; then the saints shall have an uninterrupted assurance, and be ever with the Lord.

Q. 4. *What are the differences between true assurance and presumption?*

Ans. 1. They differ in the method or manner of working: divine assurance flows from humiliation for sin (I speak not of the measure of humiliation, but the truth.) There are in Palermo, reeds growing, in which there is a sugared juice: a soul humbled for sin is the bruised reed, in which grows this sweet assurance. God's Spirit is a spirit of bondage, before it be a spirit of adoption; but presumption ariseth without any humbling work of the Spirit: 'How camest thou by thy venison so soon?' The plow goes before the seed be sown; the heart must be plowed up by humiliation and repentance, before God sow the seed of assurance.

2. He who hath a real assurance, will take heed of that which will weaken and darken his assurance; he is fearful of the for-

bidden fruit : he knows, though he cannot sin away his soul, yet he may sin away his assurance : but he who hath the *ignis fatuus* of presumption, doth not fear defiling his garments, he is bold in sin, Jer. iii. 4, 5. ‘Wilt thou not cry unto me, my Father, Behold, Thou hast done evil things as thou couldst.’ Balaam said, My God, yet a forcerer. A sign he hath no money about him, who fears not to travel all hours in the night ; a sign he hath not the jewel of assurance, who fears not the works of darkness.

3. True assurance is built upon a scripture-basis ; the word saith, ‘The effect of righteousness shall be quietness and assurance for ever.’ Isa. xxxii. 17. A Christian’s assurance is built upon this scripture ; God hath sown the seed of righteousness in his soul, and this seed hath brought forth the harvest of assurance : but presumption is a spurious thing, it hath no scripture to shew for its warrant : it is like a will without seal and witnesses, which is null and void in law : presumption wants both the witness of the word, and the seal of the Spirit.

4. Assurance flowing from sanctification always keeps the heart in a lowly posture : Lord, saith the soul, what am I, that, passing by so many, the golden beams of thy love should shine upon me ? St. Paul had assurance : is he proud of this jewel ? No, Eph. iii. 8. ‘To me who am less than the least of all saints.’ The more love a Christian receives from God, the more he sees himself a debtor to free grace, and the sense of his debt keeps his heart humble ; but presumption is bred of pride. He who presumes, disdains ; he thinks himself better than others, Luke xviii. 11. ‘God, I thank thee I am not as other men are, nor as this Publican.’ Feathers fly up, but God descends : he who hath this golden assurance, his heart descends in humility.

Q. 5. *What is it may excite us to look after assurance ?*

Ans. To consider how sweet it is, and the noble and excellent effects it produceth :

1. How sweet it is. This is the manna in the golden pot ; the white stone, the wine of paradise which cheers the heart. How comfortable is God’s smile ! the sun is more refreshing when it shines out, than when it is hid in a cloud ; it is a prelibation and a foretaste of glory, it puts a man in heaven before his time : none can know how delicious and ravishing it is, but such as have felt it : as none can know how sweet honey is, but they who have tasted it.

2. The noble and excellent effects it produceth : 1. Assurance will make us love God, and praise him : (1.) Love him. Love is the soul of religion, the fat of the sacrifice : and who can love God so, as he who hath assurance ? The sun reflecting its beams on a burning-glass, makes the glass burn that which is near to it : so assurance (which is the reflexion of God’s love

upon the soul) makes it burn in love to God. St. Paul was assured of Christ's love to him, Gal. ii. 20. 'Who hath loved me : ' and how was his heart fired with love ? he valued and admired nothing but Christ, Phil. iii. 8. As Christ was fastened to the cross, so he was fastened to Paul's heart. (2.) Praise him. Praise is the quit-rent we pay to the crown of heaven : who but he who hath assurance of his justification, can bless God, and give him the glory of what he hath done for him ? can a man in a swoon or apoplexy, praise God that he is alive ? can a Christian, staggering with fears about his spiritual condition, praise God that he is elected and justified ? No, 'The living, the living, he shall praise thee,' Isa. xxxviii. 19. Such as are enlivened with assurance, they are the fittest persons to sound forth God's praise.

Effect 2. Assurance would drop sweetness into all our creature enjoyments : it would be as sugar to wine, an earnest of more : it gives a blessing with the venison : as guilt imbitters our comforts, it is like drinking out of a worm-wood cup : so assurance would indulcerate and sweeten all health, and the assurance of God's love are sweet riches, and with the assurance of a kingdom are delectable : nay, a dinner of green herbs, with the assurance of God's love, is princely fare.

Effect 3. Assurance would make us active and lively in God's service : it would excite prayer, quicken obedience. As diligence begets assurance, so assurance begets diligence. Assurance will not (as Papists say) breed security in the soul, but industry : doubting does discourage us in God's service, but the assurance of his favour breeds joy, 'And the joy of the Lord is our strength,' Neh. viii. 10. Assurance makes us mount up to heaven, as eagles, in holy duties : it is like the Spirit in Ezekiel's wheels, that moved them, and lifted them up. Faith would make us walk, but assurance would make us run : we should never think we could do enough for God. Assurance would be as wings to the bird, as weights to the clock, to set all the wheels of obedience a-running.

Effect 4. Assurance would be a golden shield to beat back temptation : assurance triumphs over temptation. There are two sorts of temptations Satan useth : 1. He tempts to draw us to sin : now the being assured of our justification would make this temptation vanish. What, Satan, shall I sin against him who hath loved me, and washed me in his blood ? Shall I return to folly after God hath spoken peace ? Shall I weaken my assurance, wound my conscience, grieve my comforter ? Avoid Satan, tempt no more. 2. Satan would make us question our interest in God ; he tells us we are hypocrites, and God doth not love us. Now there is no such shield against this temptation as assurance ; what, Satan, have I real work of grace in my

heart, and the seal of the Spirit to witness it, and dost thou tell me God doth not love me? Now I know thou art an impostor, who goest about to disprove what I sensibly feel. If faith resists the devil, assurance would put him to flight.

Effect 5. Assurance would make us contented, though we have but a little in the world: he who hath enough is content; he who hath sun-light, is content, though he want torch-light. A man that hath assurance, hath enough: *in uno salvatore omnes florent gemmæ ad salutem*: He hath the riches of Christ's merit, a pledge of his love, an earnest of his glory, he is filled with the fulness of God; here is enough and having enough he is content, Pf. xvi. 5. 'The Lord is the portion of my inheritance; the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage.' Assurance will rock the heart quiet; the reason of discontent, is either because men have no interest in God, or do not know their interest. St. Paul saith, 'I know whom I have believed,' 2 Tim. i. 1. There was the assurance of his interest. And, 2 Cor. vi. 10. 'As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing,' &c. There was his contentment. Get but assurance, and you will be out of the weekly bill of murmurers, you will be discontented no more. We cannot come amiss to him that hath assurance: God is his; hath he lost a friend? his father lives; hath he lost his only child? God hath given him his only Son; hath he scarcity of bread? God hath given him the finest of the wheat, the bread of life; are his comforts gone? He hath the comforter; doth he meet with storms on the sea? He knows where to put in for harbour; God is his portion, and heaven is his haven. Thus assurance gives sweet contentment in every condition.

Effect 6. Assurance would bear up the heart in sufferings, it would make a Christian endure troubles with patience and cheerfulness. With patience, Heb. x. 36. Ye 'have need of patience.' There are some meats (we say) are hard of digestion, and only a good stomach will concoct them: affliction is a meat hard of digestion, but patience (like a good stomach) will be able to digest it; and whence comes patience but from assurance? Rom. v. 5. 'Tribulation worketh patience, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,' with cheerfulness. Assurance is like the mariner's lantern on the deck, which gives light in a dark night. Assurance gives the light of comfort in affliction, Heb. x. 34. 'Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves,' &c. there was assurance. He that hath assurance, can rejoice in tribulation; he can gather grapes of thorns, and honey out of the lion's carcase. Latimer, "When I sit alone, and can have a settled assurance of the state of my soul, and know that God is mine, I can laugh at all troubles, and nothing can daunt me."

Effect 7. Assurance would pacify a troubled conscience: he

who hath a disturbed vexatious conscience, carries an hell about him, *Eheu quis intus scorpio!* but assurance cures the agony, and allays the fury of conscience: conscience, that before was turned into a serpent, now is like a bee that hath honey in its mouth, it speaks peace; *tranquillus deus tranquillat omnia*, Tertul. When God is pacified towards us, then conscience is pacified. If the heavens are quiet, and there are no winds stirring thence, the sea is quiet and calm; so, if there be no anger in God's heart, if the tempest of his wrath do not blow, conscience is quiet and serene.

Effect 8. Assurance would strengthen us against the fears of death; such as want it, cannot die with comfort; they are *in equilibrio*, they hang in a doubtful suspense, what should become of them after death: but he who hath assurance, hath an happy and joyful passage out of the world; he knows he is passed from death to life, he is carried full sail to heaven: Though he cannot resist death, yet he overcomes it.

Q. 6. *What shall they do that want assurance?*

Ans. 1. Such as want assurance, let them labour to find grace. When the sun denies light to the earth, it may give forth its influence: when God denies the light of his countenance, he may give the influence of his grace.

Q. *How shall we know we have a real work of grace, and so have a right to assurance?*

Ans. If we can resolve two queries, 1. Have we high appreciations of Jesus Christ? 1 Pet. ii. 7. 'To you that believe he is precious.' Christ is all made up of beauties and delights; our praises fall short of his worth, and is like spreading canvass upon cloth of gold. How precious is his blood and incense? The one pacifies our conscience, the other perfumes our prayers. Can we say we have endearing thoughts of Christ? Do we esteem him our pearl of price, our bright morning-star? Do we count all our earthly enjoyments but as dung in comparison of Christ? Phil. iii. 8. Do we prefer the worst things of Christ, before the best things of the world; the reproaches of Christ before the world's embraces? Heb. xi. 26. *Quer.* 2. Have we the indwelling of the Spirit? 2 Tim. i. 14. 'The Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.'

Q. *How may we know that we have the indwelling presence of the Spirit?*

Ans. Not by having sometimes good motions stirred up in us by the Spirit; it may work in us yet not dwell: but by the sanctifying power of the Spirit in our heart: the Spirit infuseth *divinam indolem*, a divine nature; it stamps its own impress and effigies on the soul, making the complexion of it holy. The Spirit ennobles and raiseth the heart above the world. When Nebuchadnezzar had his understanding given him, he grazed no

longer among the beasts, but returned to his throne, and minded the affairs of his kingdom: when the Spirit of God dwells in a man, it carries his heart above the visible orbs; it makes him *superna anhælere*, thirst after Christ and glory. If we can find this, then we have grace, and so have a right to assurance.

2. If you want assurance, wait for it. If the figures are graven on the dial, it is but waiting a while, and the sun shines; when grace is engraven in the heart, it is but waiting a while, and we shall have the sunshine of assurance. 'He that believes makes not haste,' Isa. xxviii. 16. He will stay God's leisure. Say not, God hath forsaken you, he will never lift up the light of his countenance; but rather say, as the church, Isa. viii. 17. 'I will wait upon the Lord, which hideth his face from the house of Jacob.' 1. Hath God waited for your conversion, and will not you wait for his consolation? How long did he come a-wooing to you by his Spirit? He waited till his head was filled with dew: he cried, as Jer. xiii. 27. 'Wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?' O! Christian, did God wait for thy love, and canst not thou wait for his? 2. Assurance is so sweet and precious, that it is worth waiting for; the price of it is above rubies, it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir. Assurance of God's love is a pledge of election, it is the angels' banquet: what other joy have they! as Micah said, Judg. xviii. 24. 'What have I more;' so, when God assures the soul of his eternal purposes of love, what hath he more to give? Whom God kisseth, he crowns. Assurance is the first fruits of paradise: one smile of God's face, one glance of his eye, one crumb of the hidden manna is so sweet and delicious; that it deserves our waiting. 3. God hath given a promise that we should not wait in vain, Isa. xlix. 23. 'They shall not be ashamed that wait for me.' Perhaps God reserves this cordial of assurance for a fainting time; he keeps sometimes his best wine till last. Assurance shall be reserved as an ingredient to sweeten the bitter cup of death.

Q. 7. *How may deserted souls be comforted, who are cast down for want of assurance? They have the day-star of grace risen in their souls; but as Job complains, 'I went mourning without the sun,' Job xxx. 28. They go mourning for want of the sun-light of God's face: their joy is eclipsed, they walk in darkness, and see no light, Ija. 1. 18. How shall we comfort such as lie bleeding in desertion, and are cast down for want of assurance?*

A. 1. Want of assurance shall not hinder the success of the faints' prayers. Sin lived in, doth put a bar to our prayer; but want of assurance doth not hinder prayer; we may go to God still in an humble, fiducial manner. A Christian perhaps may think, because he doth not see God's smiling face, therefore

God will not hear him : this is a mistake, Pſal. xxxi. 22. ‘ I ſaid in my haſte, I am cut off from before thine eyes, nevertheless thou heardſt the voice of my ſupplication.’ If we pour out ſighs to heaven, God hears every groan ; though he doth not ſhew us his face, he may lend us his ear.

2. Faith may be ſtrongeſt when aſſurance is weakeſt ; the woman of Canaan had no aſſurance, but a glorious faith ; ‘ O woman, great is thy faith,’ Mat. xv. 28. Rachel was more fair, but Leah was more fruitful. Aſſurance is more fair and lovely to look upon, but a fruitful faith God ſeeth it better for us, John xx. 28. ‘ Bleſſed are they that believe, and feel not.’

3. When God is out of ſight, yet he is not out of covenant, Pſal. lxxxix. 28. ‘ My covenant ſhall ſtand faſt.’ Though a wife doth not ſee her husband’s face in many years, yet the marriage-relation holds, and he will come again to her after a long voyage. God may be gone from the ſoul in deſertion, but the covenant ſtands faſt, Iſa. liv. 10. ‘ The covenant of my peace ſhall not be removed.’ Quer. *But this promiſe was made to the Jews, and doth not belong to us.* Yes, ver. 17. ‘ This is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord.’ This is made to all the ſervants of God, thoſe who are now living, as well as thoſe who lived in the time of the Jews.

Q. 8. *What ſhould we do to get aſſurance ?*

Anſ. 1. Keep a pure conſcience, let no guilt lie upon the conſcience unrepented of. God ſeals no pardons before repentance : God will not pour in the wine of aſſurance into a foul veſſel, Heb. x. 22. ‘ Let us draw near in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience.’ Guilt clips the wings of comfort : he who is conſcious to himſelf of ſecret ſins, cannot draw near to God in full aſſurance ; he cannot call God father, but judge : keep conſcience as clear as your eye, that no duſt of ſin fall into it.

2. If you would have aſſurance, be much in the actings of grace, 1 Tim. iv. 7. ‘ Exerciſe thyſelf unto godlineſs.’ Men grow rich by trading ; by trading in grace, we grow rich in aſſurance, 2 Pet. i. 10. ‘ Make your election ſure.’ How ? ‘ Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge.’ Keep grace upon the wing, it is the lively faith flouriſheth into aſſurance. No man will ſet up a great ſail into a ſmall boat, but in a large veſſel : God ſets up the ſail of aſſurance in an heart enlarged with grace.

3. If you would have aſſurance, cheriſh the Holy Spirit of God. When David would have aſſurance, he prays, ‘ take not away thy Spirit from me,’ Pſal. li. 11. He knew that it was the Spirit only that could make him hear the voice of joy ; the Spirit is the Comforter, he ſeals up aſſurance, 2 Cor. i. 22. Therefore make much of the Spirit ; do not grieve it : as Noah

opened the ark to receive the dove, so should we open our hearts to receive the Spirit; this is the blessed dove which brings an olive-branch of assurance in its mouth.

4. Let us lie at the pool of the ordinances, frequent the word and sacrament, Cant. ii. 2. 'He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love.' The blessed ordinances are the banqueting-house, where God displays the banner of assurance. The sacrament is a sealing ordinance; Christ made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread; so, in the holy supper, in the breaking of bread, God makes himself known to us, to be our God and portion.

Q. 9. How should they carry themselves who have assurance?

Ans. 1. If you have assurance of your justification, do not abuse assurance: 1. It is an abusing of assurance, when we grow more remiss in duty; as the musician, having money thrown him, leaves off playing. By remissness, or intermitting the exercises of religion, we grieve the Spirit, and that is the way to have an embargo laid upon our spiritual comforts. 2. We abuse assurance, when we grow presumptuous and less fearful of sin. What, because a father gives his son an assurance of his love, and tells him he will entail his land upon him, shall the son therefore be wanton and dissolute? This were the way to lose his father's affection, and make him cut off the entail: it was an aggravation of Solomon's sin, 'his heart was turned away from the Lord, after he had appeared to him twice,' 1 Kings xi. 9. It is bad to sin, when one wants assurance, but it is worse to sin when one hath it. Hath the Lord sealed his love with a kiss? Hath he left a pledge of heaven in your hands, and do you thus requite the Lord? Will you sin with manna in your mouth? Doth God give you the sweet clusters of assurance to feed on, and will you return him wild grapes? It much pleaseth Satan, either to see us want assurance, or abuse it: this is to abuse assurance, when the pulse of our souls beats faster in sin, and slower in duty.

2. If you have assurance, admire this stupendous mercy. You deserved that God should give you gall and vinegar to drink, and hath he made the honey-comb of his love to drop upon you? O fall down and adore his goodness; say, Lord, how is it that thou shouldest manifest thyself to me, and not to other believers! those whom thou lovest as the apple of thine eye, yet thou holdest them in suspense, and givest them no assurance of thy love; though thou hast given them the new name, yet not the white stone; though they have the seed of grace, yet not the oil of gladness; though they have the Holy Ghost, the sanctifier, yet not the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. Lord, whence is it that thou shouldest manifest thyself to me, and

make thy golden beams of assurance shine upon my soul? O admire God! this will be the work of heaven.

3. Let your hearts be endeared in love to God. If God gives his people correction, they must love him; much more when he gives them assurance, Pf. xxxi. 23. 'O love the Lord, ye his saints.' Hath God brought you to the borders of Canaan, given you a bunch of grapes, crowned you with loving-kindness, confirmed your pardon under the broad seal of heaven? How can you be frozen at such a fire? How can you chuse but to be turned into seraphims burning in divine love? Say, as St. Austin, *animam meam in odio haberem*, I would hate my own soul, if I did not find it loving God. Give God the cream and quintessence of your love, and shew your love by being willing to lose all for his sake.

4. If you have assurance, *improve it for God's glory*, several ways: 1. By encouraging such as are yet unconverted; tell them how sweet this hidden manna is; tell them what a good master you serve, what vials you have had; tell them, God hath carried you to the hill of myrrh, to the mountains of spices: he hath given you not only a prospect of heaven, but an earnest. O persuade sinners, by all the love and mercy of God, that they would enroll their names in his family, and cast themselves upon him for salvation; tell them, God hath met with you, and unlocked the secrets of free grace, and assured you of a land flowing with those infinite delights which the eye hath not seen. Thus, by telling others what God hath done for your soul, you may make them in love with the ways of God, and cause them to turn profelytes to religion. 2. *Improve assurance, by comforting such as want it*: Be as the good Samaritan, pour wine and oil into their wounds. You who have assurance, are gotten, as it were, to the haven; you are sure of your happiness: but do you not see others who are struggling with the waves of temptation and desertion, and are ready to sink? O now sympathize with them, and do what you can to comfort them when they are in this deep ocean, 2 Cor. i. 6. 'Whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation.' The comfortable experience of one Christian, being communicated to another doth much revive and bear up his fainting heart: 'Our comfort,' saith the apostle, 'is for your consolation.' 3. *Improve assurance, by walking more heavenly*. You should scorn these things below; you who have an earnest of heaven, should not be too earnest for the earth: you have angels' food; and it becomes not you with the serpent to lick the dust. The wicked are all for corn, wine and oil; but you have that which is better: God hath lifted up the light of his countenance; will you hanker after the world, when you have been feeding upon the grapes and pomegranates of the holy land? Do you now lust after the garlic and

ions of Egypt? When you are clothed with the sun, will you set the moon and stars above you? O let them scramble for the world, who have nothing else but husks to feed on. Have you assurance of heaven, and is not that enough? Will not a kingdom satisfy you? Such as are high in assurance, should be in the altitudes, live above the world. 4. *Improve assurance by a cheerful walking*: It is for condemned persons to go hanging down their heads: but hast thou thy absolution? Doth thy God smile on thee? Cheer up, 2 Sam. xiii. 4. 'Why art thou, being the king's son, lean?' Art thou the king's son? Hath God assured thee of thy adoption? And art thou sad? Assurance should be an antidote against all trouble: what though the world hate thee? Yet thou art assured that thou art one of God's favourites. What though there is but little oil in the cruise, and thou art low in the world? Yet thou art high in assurance: O then rejoice! How musical is the bird? How doth it chirp and sing, that knows not where to pick up the next crumb! and shall they be sad and discontented, who have God's bond to assure them of their daily bread, and his love to assure them of heaven? But certainly those who have assurance, cannot be but of a sanguine complexion.

5. If you have an assurance of salvation, let this make you long after a glorified state: he who hath an earnest in his hand, desires the whole sum to be paid: that soul who hath tasted how sweet the Lord is, should long for a fuller enjoyment of him in heaven. Hath Christ put this ring of assurance on thy hand, and so espoused thee to himself? how shouldst thou long for the marriage-supper of the Lamb? Rev. xix. 9. O Christian, think with thyself, if a glimpse of heaven, a smile of God's face be so sweet, what will it be, to be ever sunning thyself in the light of God's countenance! certainly, you who have an assurance of your title to heaven, cannot but desire possession. Be content to live, but willing to die.

6. If you have assurance, be careful you do not lose it; keep it; for it is your life, viz. *Bene esse*, the comfort of your life. Keep assurance, 1st, By prayer, Pl. xxxvi. 10. 'O continue thy loving-kindness:' Lord, continue assurance; do not take away this privy-seal from me. 2dly, Keep assurance by humility: pride estrangeth God from the soul; when you are high in assurance, be low in humility. St. Paul had assurance, and he baptizeth himself with this name, 'Chief of sinners,' 1 Tim. i. 15. The jewel of assurance is best kept in the cabinet of an humble heart.