

(like Castor and Pollux) appear together, they preface much good and happiness that will befall a Christian.



## WHO ARE IN CHRIST, ARE NEW CREATURES.

1 COR. v. 17. *Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.*

In this scripture consists the essence, and soul of religion. I note here two things.

1. DOCT. *That the true definition of a Christian is to be in Christ.*

'If any man be in Christ.' He may be in the church visible, yet not in Christ; it is not to be baptized into Christ's name, makes a true Christian; but to be in Christ, that is to be grafted into him by faith. And if to be in Christ makes a Christian, then there are but few Christians: Many are in Christ nominally, not really: they are in Christ by profession, not by mystical union. Are they in Christ that do not know him? Are they in Christ who persecute them that are in Christ? Sure such an holy head as Christ will disclaim such spurious members.

2. DOCT. *That whosoever is in Christ, is a new creature.*

For illustration, I shall shew, I. What a new creature is; II. What kind of work it is.

I. What a new creature is: it is a second birth added to the first, John iii. 3. It may be thus described: it is a supernatural work of God's Spirit, renewing and transforming the heart into the divine likeness.

1. The efficient cause of the new creature, is the Holy Ghost: no angel or archangel is able to produce it. Who but God can alter the hearts of men, and turn stones into flesh? If the new creature were not produced by the Holy Ghost, then the greatest glory in a man's conversion would belong to himself: but this glory God will not give to another. The turning of the will to God is from God, Jer. xxxi. 19. 'After I was turned, I repented.'

2. The organical cause, or instrument by which the new creature is formed, is the word of God, James i. 18. 'Of his own will begat he us, by the word or truth.' The word is the seed, out of which springs the flower of the new creature.

3. The matter of which the new creature consists, is the restoring God's image lost by the fall.

Qu. *But doth God in the new creature, give a new soul?*

Ans. No; he doth not bestow new faculties, but new quali-

ties. As in the altering of a lute, the strings are not new, but the tune is mended; so, in the new creature, the substance of the soul is not new, but is new tuned by grace: the heart that before was proud, is now humble; the eyes, that before were full of lust, are now full of tears. Here are new qualities infused.

II. What kind of work the new creature is.

1<sup>st</sup>, The new creature is a work of divine power; so much it imports, because it is a creation. The same power which raised Christ from the grave, goes to the production of the new creature, Eph. i. 20. It is a work of greater power to produce the new creature, than to make a world. It is true, in respect of God, all things are alike possible to him: but, as to our apprehension, it requires a greater power to make a new creature, than to make a world: For,

1. When God made the world, he met with no opposition: but when God is about to make a new creature, he meets with opposition; Satan opposeth him, and the heart opposeth him.

2. It cost God nothing to make the world, but to make the new creature costs him something: Christ himself was fain to become man. In making the world, it was but speaking a word; but in making the new creature, it cost Christ the shedding of his blood.

3. God made the world in six days; but he is carrying on the new creature in us all our lives long. The new creature is but begun here, it is not perfected or drawn in all its orient colours till it come to heaven.

2<sup>dly</sup>, The new creature is a work of free-grace. There is nothing in us to move God to make us anew; by nature we are full of pollution and enmity, yet now God forms the new creature. Behold the banner of love displayed? The new creature may say, By the grace of God I am what I am. In the creation we may see the strength of God's arm, in the new creature we may see the working of God's bowels. That God should consecrate any heart, and anoint it with grace, is an act of pure love: that he should pluck one out of the state of nature and not another, must be resolved into free-grace, Mat. xi. 26. 'Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' This will increase the saints' triumphs in heaven, that the lot of free-grace should fall upon them, and not on others.

3<sup>dly</sup>, The new creature is a work of rare excellency. A natural man is a lump of earth and sin; God lothes him, Zech. xi. 8. but upon the new creature is a spiritual glory, as if we should see a piece of clay turned into a sparkling diamond, Cant. iii. 16. 'Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke perfumed with myrrh and frankincense?' That is the natural man coming out of the wilderness of sin, perfumed

with all the graces of the Spirit. The new creature must needs be glorious, for it partakes of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. A soul beautified with holiness, is like the firmament bespangled with glittering stars. It is God's lesser heaven, Isa. lvii. 15. In the incarnation, God made himself in the image of man; in the new creation, man is made in the image of God; by our being creatures, we are the sons of Adam; by being new creatures, we are the members of Christ. Reason makes one live the life of a man, the new creature makes him live the life of God: a new creature excels the rational nature, and equals the angelical. It is excellent to hear of Christ being crucified for us, but more excellent to have Christ formed in us.

Concerning the new creature I shall lay down two positions.

*1st Post.* That it is not in the power of a natural man to convert himself; because it is a new creation. As we cannot make ourselves creatures, so not new creatures.

*Qu.* But why doth God command us to convert ourselves, if we have no power? Ezek. xviii. 31. 'Make you a new heart.'

*Ans.* 1. We once had power. God gave us a stock of holiness, but we lost it. If a master give his servant money to employ in his service, and he waste and embezzle it, may not the master require his money of him? Though we have lost our power to obey, God hath not lost his right to command.

2. Though men cannot convert themselves, and make themselves new creatures, yet they may do more than they do in a tendency to it: they may avoid temptations, they may read the word; the same feet that carry them to a play, will carry them to a sermon; they may implore divine grace: but they do not what they are able; they do not improve the power of nature to the utmost, and put God to the trial whether he will give grace.

3. God is not wanting to them who seek to him for grace. *Deus volentibus non deest*; he is willing to put to his helping hand. With his command there goes a promise, Ezek. xviii. 31. 'Make you a new heart;' and there is a promise, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 'A new heart will I give you.'

*2d Post.* When God converts a sinner, he doth more than use a moral persuasion.

For conversion is a new creation, Eph. iv. 24. The Pelagians talk much of free-will; they say, "the will of man is by nature asleep, and conversion is nothing but the awakening a sinner out of sleep, which is done by moral persuasion." But 'man is by nature dead in sin,' Eph. ii. 1. And God must do more than awaken him, he must enliven him before he be a new creature.

*1st Use.* Terror to such as are not new creatures. Such as are still growing upon the stock of old Adam, who continue in

their sins, and are resolved so to do, these are in the gall of bitterness, and are the most miserable creatures that ever God made, except the devils. These stand in the place where all God's arrows fly; these are the centre where all God's curses meet. An unregenerate person is like one in debt, that is in fear to be arrested; he is every hour in fear to be arrested by death, and carried prisoner to hell. Can that traitor be happy, who is fed by his prince in prison, only to be kept alive for execution? God feeds the wicked as prisoners, they are reserved for the day of wrath, 2 Per. ii. 9. How should this fright men out of their natural condition, and make them restless till they are new creatures.

*2d Use. Trial.* Whether we are new creatures; our salvation depends upon it.

I. I shall shew you the counterfeits of the new creature, or that which seems to be the new creature, and is not.

*1st, Counterfeit natural honesty, moral virtue, prudence, justice, liberality, temperance;* these make a glorious shew in the eye of the world, but differ as much from the new creature, as a meteor from a star. Morality indeed is commendable, and it were well if there were more of it; this our Saviour loves, Mark x. 21. 'Then Jesus beholding him, loved him.' It was a love of compassion, not election. Morality is but nature at best, it doth not amount to grace (1.) There is nothing of Christ in morality; and that fruit is sour which grows not on the root Christ. (2.) Moral actions are done out of a vain-glorious humour, not any respect to God's glory. The apostle calls the heathen magistrates unjust, 1 Cor. vi. 1. While they were doing justice in their civil courts, they were unjust: their virtues became vices, because faith was wanting, and they did all to raise them trophies for their own praise and fame. So that morality is but the wild olive of nature, it doth not amount to grace. Heat water to the highest degree, you cannot make wine of it, it is water still; so, let morality be raised to the highest, it is nature still; it is but old Adam put in a better dress. I may say to a civil man, 'yet lackest thou one thing,' Mark x. 21. Moral virtue may stand with the hatred of godliness. A moral man doth as much hate holiness, as he doth vice. The Stoicks were moralists, and had sublime notions about virtue, yet were the deadliest enemies St. Paul had, Acts xvii. 18. So that this is a counterfeit jewel.

*2d, Religious education is not the new creature.* Education doth much cultivate and refine nature: education is a good wall to plant the vine of grace against, but it is not grace. King Joash was good as long as his uncle Jehoiada lived; but when Jehoiada died, all Joash's religion was buried in his uncle's grave, 2 Kings xii. 2. Have not we seen many who have been

trained up religiously under their parents, and were very hopeful, yet these fair blossoms of hope have been blown off, and they have lived to be a shame to their friends?

3d, A form of godliness is not the new creature. Every bird that hath fine feathers, hath not sweet flesh; all that shine with the golden feathers of profession, are not saints, 2 Tim. iii. 5. 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power.' What is a lifeless form? Formality is the ape of piety: formalists may perform all the external parts of religion: pray, fast, give alms. Whatever duties a believer doth in sincerity, the same may a formalist do in hypocrisy. How devout were the Pharisees? How humble was Ahab? What a reformer was Jehu? Yet this was but a formal show of religion. Dædalus, by art, made images to move of themselves, insomuch that people thought they were living: formalists do so counterfeit, and play a devotion, that others think they are living saints: they are religious mountebanks.

4th, Every change of opinion doth not amount to the new creature: man may change from error to truth, yet be no new creature; here is a change in the head but not in the heart: one may be orthodox in his judgment, yet not cordially embrace the gospel; he may be no papist, yet no true believer. He who is changed only in opinion, is but almost a Christian, and shall be but almost saved.

5th, Every sudden passion, or stirring of the affections, is not the new creature. There may be affections of sorrow: some, upon the reading the history of Christ's passion, may be ready to weep; but it is only a natural tenderness, which relents at any tragical sight. Affections of desire may be stirred, John vi. 'Lord, evermore give us this bread:' but these basely deserted Christ, and would walk no more with him, ver. 66. Many desire heaven, but will not come up to the price. Affections of joy may be stirred; in the parable, the second sort of hearers are said to 'receive the word with joy,' Matth. xiii. 20. What was this but to have the affections moved with delight in hearing? Yet, that this did not amount to the new creature, is plain, 1. Because those hearers are said to have no root. 2. Because they fell away, ver. 21. king Herod did hear John Baptist gladly; he was much affected with John's preaching; Where then was the defect? Why was not Herod a new creature? The reason was, because Herod was not reformed by the Baptist's preaching; his affections were moved, but his sin was not removed. Many have sweet motions of heart, and seem to be much affected with the word, but their love to sin is stronger than their love to the word; therefore all their good affections prove abortive, and come to nothing.

6th, One may have trouble for sin, yet not be a new creature.

Trouble of spirit may appear, while God's judgments lie upon men; when these are removed their trouble ceaseth, Pr. lxxviii. 34. 'When he slew them, then they sought him: nevertheless they did flatter him with their lips.' Metal that melts in a furnace, take it out of the furnace, and it returns to its former hardness: many, in time of sickness, seem to be like melted metal; What weeping and wringing of hands? What confessions of sin will they make? Do not these look like new creatures? But, as soon as they recover, they are as bad as ever; their pangs go off again, and it never comes to a new birth.

7th, A man may have the Spirit, yet not be a new creature. The apostle supposeth a case, that one might be made partaker of the Holy Ghost, yet fall away, Heb. vi. 4. A man may have some slight transient work of the Spirit, but it doth not go to the root: he may have the common gifts of the Spirit, but not the special grace; he may have the Spirit to convince him, not to convert him: the light he hath is like a winter sun, which hath little or no influence, it doth not make him more holy; he hath the motions of the Spirit, but walks after the flesh.

8th, Every abstaining from sin is not the new creature. This abstaining may be, (1.) From restraining grace, not renewing grace: as God with-held Laban from hurting Jacob, Gen. xxxi. 24. The Lord may restrain men from sin, by the terror of a natural conscience. Conscience stands as the angel with a drawn sword, and saith, Do not this evil. Men may be frightened from sin, but not divorced. (2.) Men may abstain from sin for a while, and then return to it again; as Saul left off pursuing David for some time, and then hunted him again. This is like a man that holds his breath under water, and then takes breath again, Jer. xxxiv. 15, 16. 'Ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight: but ye turned and polluted my holy name.' (3.) Men may leave gross sin, and yet live in more spiritual sins: leave drunkennes, and live in pride: leave uncleanness, and live in malice: The Pharisee boasted he was no adulterer, but he could not say he was not proud or superstitious; here he left gross sin, and lived in spiritual sins. (4.) Men may leave sin partially: abstain from some sins, not all: they feed some sin in a corner. Herod left many sins, but one sin he lived in, viz. incest. All this doth not amount to the new creature.

II. I shall shew you wherein the essence of the new creature consists.

1st, In general. To the constituting of the new creature, there must be a great change wrought. He who is a new creature, is not the same man he was. *Alter idem.* He is of another spirit, Numb. xiv. 24. 'My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit.' When the harlot Lais came to one of her old

acquaintance after he was converted, and tempted him to sin, *ego non sum ego*, saith he, "I am not the same man."

When one becomes a new creature, there is such a visible change, that all may see it; therefore it is called a change from darkness to light, Acts xxvi. 18. Paul a persecutor, when converted, was so altered, that all who saw him, wondered at him, and could scarce believe that he was the same man, Acts ix. 21. as if another soul had lived in the same body. Mary Magdalene, an unchaste sinner, when once savingly wrought upon, what a penitent creature did she become? Her eyes, that were enticement to lust, she takes penance of them, and washed Christ's feet with her tears: her hair, which she was proud of, and which was a net to entangle her lovers, she now takes penance of it, and wipes Christ's feet with it. Thus the new creature makes a visible change. Such as are the same as they were, as vain and proud as ever, here is no new creature to be seen; for then a mighty change would appear, 1 Cor. vi. 11. 'And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified,' &c.

But every change doth not evidence the new creature. (1.) There is a change from one extreme to another, from a prodigal to an usurer; from a Turk to a Papist. This is as if one should recover of one disease and die of another. (2.) There is an outward change, which is like the washing of a swine. Ahab was much changed to outward view, when he 'rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth,' 1 Kings xxi. 27. insomuch that God stands and wonders at him: 'Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself:' Yet, for all this, he was but an hypocrite.

*Qu.* What change then is that which is requisite in the new creature?

*Ans.* It is an inward change, a change of heart. Though the heart be not new-made, it is new-moulded, Jer. iv. 14. 'Wash thy heart, O Jerusalem.' Ahab's clothes were rent, but not his heart. The outward change will do no good without the inward: what will become of them then, who have not so much as an outward change?

Thus you see in general, that in the production of the new creature, there must be a change.

2dly, More particularly, the change in the new creature consists in two things; and they are both set down in the text: 'old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.'

I. 'Old things are passed away.' Old pride, old ignorance; old malice: the old house must be pulled down ere you can set up a new.

*Obj.* But if all old things must pass away, then there are no

*new creatures : who can be quite freed from sin ? Doth not Paul complain of a body of death ?*

*Ans.* We must know that the change wrought in the new creature, though it be a thorough change, yet it is not a perfect change ; sin will remain. As there is a principle of grace, so of corruption ; like wine and water mixed, there is in the regenerate flesh as well as spirit. Here is a question ariseth.

*Qu.* *If sin in the regenerate is not quite done away, then how far must one put off the old man, that he may be a new creature ?*  
Of which hereafter.

‘ Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.’

*Doct.* *That whosoever is in Christ is a new creature.*

We are now upon the trial of the new creature. In it there is a change wrought, and this change consists in two things : which are set down in the text, viz. 1. ‘ Old things are passed away,’ 2. ‘ All things are become new.’

I. ‘ Old things are passed away.’ Old pride, old ignorance, old malice. The old house must be pulled down ere you can set up a new.

*Obj.* *But if all old things must pass away, then there are no new creatures. Who can be quite freed from sin ? Doth not Paul complain of a body of death ?*

*Ans.* We must know the change wrought in the new creature is but imperfect ; as there is a principle of grace, so of corruption ; like wine and water mixed, there is in the regenerate flesh as well as spirit.

*Qu.* *If sin in the regenerate is not quite done away, then how far must one put off the old man that he may be a new creature ?*

*Ans.* 1. There must be a grieving for the remains of corruption, Rom. vii. 24. ‘ O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death ?’ Paul did not cry out of his sufferings, his being beaten with rods, shipwrecked, stoned ; but (like the bird of paradise) he bemoaned himself for sin. In the new creature there must be *quotidianus mugitus*, a daily mourning for the indwelling presence of corruption ; a child of God doth not wear sin as a gold chain, but as a fetter.

2. In the new creature there must be a detestation of old things ; as one would detest a garment in which is the plague : it is not enough to be angry with sin ; but we must hate it. Psa. cxix. 162. ‘ I hate and abhor lying.’ Hatred is the highest degree of enmity ; and we must hate sin not only for its hurtful effect, but its loathsome nature ; as one hates a toad for its poisonous quality.

3. In the new creature there is an opposition against all old

things: a Christian not only complains of sin, but fights against it, Gal. v. 17.

Qu. *But may not a natural man oppose sin?*

Ans. Yes: but there is a great difference between his opposing sin, and the new creatures opposing it.

1<sup>st</sup>, There is a difference in the manner of opposition. (1.) The natural man opposeth sin, only for the shame of it, as it eclipseth his credit; but the new creature opposeth sin for the filth of it; it is the spirit of mischief; it is like rust to gold, or as a stain to beauty.

2. The natural man doth not oppose all sin. (1.) He doth not oppose inward sins, he fights against such sins as are against the light of a natural conscience; but not against heart sins, the first risings of vain thoughts, the stirrings of anger and concupiscence, the venom and impurity of his nature. (2.) He doth not oppose gospel sins; pride, unbelief, hardness of heart, spiritual barrenness: he is not troubled, that he can love God no more. (3.) He opposeth not complexion-sins; such as the bias of his heart carries him more strongly to, as lust or avarice: he saith of his constitution-sins, as Naaman, 2 Kings v. 18. 'In this thing, the Lord pardon thy servant.' But the new creature opposeth all kinds of sin, *odiunt circum speciem*; as he that hates a serpent, hates all kinds of serpents, Psal. cxix. 140. 'I hate every false way.'

2<sup>dly</sup>, There is difference between the natural man's opposing sin, and the new creature's opposing sin, in regard of the motives.

A natural man opposeth sin from carnal motives; to stop the mouth of conscience, and to prevent hell.

But the new creature opposeth sin upon more noble motives; out of love to God, and fear of dishonouring the gospel.

4. In the new creature there is mortifying old corrupt lusts, Gal. v. 24. 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh.' The new creature is said to be 'dead to sin,' Rom. vi. 11. He is dead as to the love of sin, that it doth not bewitch: and as to the power of it, that it doth not command. The new creature is continually crucifying sin: some limb of the old Adam every day drops off: though sin doth not die perfectly, it dies daily.

A gracious soul thinks he can never kill sin enough: he deals with sin as Joab with Absalom, 2 Sam. xviii. 14. 'He took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom.' So, with the three darts of faith, prayer, and repentance, a Christian thrusts through the body of sin; he never thinks this Absalom is enough dead.

Try then, if we have this first sign of the new creature, 'old

things are passed away.' There is a grieving for sin, a detesting it, an opposing it, a mortifying it; this is the passing away of old things, though not in a legal sense, yet in an evangelical; and though it be not to satisfaction, yet it is to acceptance.

The second trial of the new creature, is 'all things are become new.' The new creature is new all over: grace, though it be but in part, yet it is in every part.

By nature every branch of the soul is defiled with sin, as every part of wormwood is bitter; so, in regeneration, every part of the soul is replenished with grace; therefore grace is called the new man, Eph. iv. 24. Not a new eye, or a new tongue, but a new man; there are new dispositions, new principles, new aims; 'all things are become new.'

I. In the new creature there is a new understanding, Eph. iv. 23. 'Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind.' The first thing a limner draws in a picture, is the eye: when God newly limns us, and makes us new creatures, the first thing he draws in our souls is a new eye; the new creature is enlightened to see that which he never saw before.

1. He knows Christ after another manner. An unconverted man, by the light of common grace, may believe Christ to be the Son of God; but the new creature knows Christ after another guise manner, so as to esteem him above all, to adore him, to touch him by faith, to fetch an healing virtue from him.

2. The new creature knows himself better than he did. When the sun shines into a room, it discovers all the dust and cobwebs in it; so, when the light of the Spirit shines into the heart, it discovers that corruption which before lay hid; it shews a man his own vileness and nothingness, Job xl. 4. 'Behold, I am vile.' A wicked man, blinded with self-love, admires himself; like Narcissus, that seeing his own shadow upon the water, fell in love with it. Saving-knowledge works self-abasement; 'Lord, thou art in heaven, and I am in hell,' said a martyr. Hath this day-star of knowledge shined on our mind;

II. The new creature is renewed in his conscience; the conscience of a natural man is either blind, or dumb, or seared; but conscience in the new creature is renewed. Let us examine, Doth conscience check for sin? The least hair makes the eye weep; and the least sin makes conscience smite. How did David's heart smite him for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment! a good conscience is a star to guide, a register to record, a judge to determine, a witness to accuse or excuse; if conscience doth all these offices right, then it is a renewed conscience, and speaks peace.

III. In the new creature the will is renewed. An old bowl may have a new bias put into it; the will having a new bias

of grace put into it, is strongly carried to good. The will of a natural man opposeth God ; when the wind goes one way, and the tide another, then there is a storm : so it is, when God's will goes one way, and ours another ; but when our will goes with God's, as the wind with the tide, then there is a sweet calm of peace in the soul ; the sanctified will answers to God's will, as the echo to the voice, Psal. xxvii. 28. ' When thou saidst, seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, thy face, Lord, will I seek.' And the will being renewed, like the *primum mobile*, it carries all the affections along with it.

IV. The new creature hath a new conversation. Grace alters a man's walk ; before, he walked proudly, now humbly : before, loosely, now holily ; he makes the word his rule, and Christ's life his pattern, Phil. iii. 20. ' Our conversation is in heaven.' As a ship that is sailing eastward, there comes a gale of wind and blows it westward ; so, before a man did sail hellward, and on a sudden the Spirit of God comes upon him, and blows him heaven-ward ; here is a new conversation. It was a speech of Oecolampadius " I would not speak or do any thing that I thought Jesus Christ would not approve of, if he were here corporeally present." Where there is circumcision of heart, there is circumspection of life ; if we find it thus that ' all things are become new,' then we are new creatures, and shall go to the new Jerufalem when we die.

*Uſe 3. Exhortation.* Labour to be new creatures ; nothing else will avail us, Gal. vi. 14. ' Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.' We are for new things ; we love new fashions, and why not new hearts ? but people are full of prejudices against the new creature.

*Obj. 1.* *If we are new creatures, there muſt be ſo much ſtrictneſs in religion, ſo much praying and watching, as diſcourageth.*

*Anſ.* (1.) Is there any thing excellent to be obtained without labour ? What pains is taken in ſearching for a vein of ſilver, or ſeeking the pearl ? Men cannot have the world without labour ; and would they have ſalvation ſo ? (2.) The labour in religion bears no proportion with the reward. What are a few tears ſhed to a weight of glory ? The ſoldier is content to wreſtle with difficulties, and undergo a bloody fight, for a glorious victory. In all labour for heaven, there is profit : it is like a man that digs in a gold mine, and carries away all the gold. (3.) Men take more pains to go to hell : what pains doth an ambitious man take to climb to the pinnacle of honour ? Tullia rode over the dead body of her father, to be made queen. How doth the covetous man tire himſelf, break his ſleep, and his peace, to get the world ? Thus ſome men take more pains in the ſervice of ſin, than others do in purſuit of holineſs. Men talk of pains in religion ; when God's Spirit comes into one, it turns labour

into delight. It was Paul's heaven to serve God, Rom. vii. 22. 'The ways of wisdom are pleasantness,' Prov. iii. 17. It is like walking among beds of spices, which cast forth a sweet perfume.

Obj. 2. *But if we leave our old company, and become new creatures, we shall be exposed to many reproaches.*

Ans. Who are they that speak evil of religion but such as are evil? *Male de me loquuntur, sed mali*, said Seneca. Besides, is it not better that men reproach us for being good, than that God damn us for being wicked! Matth. v. 11. 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you.' Stars are never the less glorious, though they have ugly names given them, as the bear and the dragon. A saint's reproaches are like a soldier's scars, honourable, 1 Pet. iv. 14. 'If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, the Spirit of God and of glory rests upon you.' While men clip your credit to make it weigh lighter, they make your crown heavier.

Having answered these objections, I come now to re-assume the exhortation, above all things labour do be new creatures.

#### MOTIVES.

1<sup>st</sup>, In this, true Christianity doth consist. It is not baptism makes a Christian; many are no better than baptised heathens. The essential part of religion lies in the new creature, Rom. ii. 29. 'Circumcision is that of the heart.' Every thing hath a name from the better part; we call a man a reasonable creature, because of his soul, which is the more noble part; so one is called a Christian, because he acts from a principle of the new creature, which the carnal man doth not.

2<sup>dly</sup>, It is the new creature fits us for communion with God; we cannot converse with God till then. Birds cannot converse with men unless they had a rational nature put into them, nor can men converse with God, unless, being made new creatures, they partake of the divine nature. Communion with God is a mystery to most: every one that hangs about the court doth not speak with the king; all that meddle with holy duties, and, as it were, hang about the court of heaven, hath not communion with God: it is only the new creature enjoys God's presence in ordinances, and sweetly converses with him, as a child with a Father.

3<sup>dly</sup>, The necessity of being new creatures.

1. Till then we are odious to God, Zech. xi. 8. 'My soul loathed them.' A sinner is to God worse than a toad; a toad hath no poison, but what God hath put into it; but a sinner hath that which the devil hath put into him, Acts v. 3. 'Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie?' A wicked man is possessed with an evil spirit, one man is possessed with the devil of pride, another with the devil of malice; this must needs make persons

odious to God, to be possessed with the devil. Thus it is till we become new creatures.

2. Till we are new creatures, our duties are not accepted with God; they are but wild grapes, (1.) Because God accepts no man, but where he sees his image. The new creature is called the 'renewing of God's image,' Eph. iv. 24. When they brought Tamerlane a pot of gold, he asked what stamp it had on it, and when he saw the Roman stamp on it, he refused it: so, if God doth not see his own stamp and image on the soul, he rejects the most specious services. (2.) Duties of religion are not accepted without the new creature, because there is that wanting which should make them a sweet favour to God. The holy oil for the tabernacle was to be made of several spices and ingredients, Exod. xxx. 23. Now, if any of these spices had been left out, it had not been pleasing. The unregenerate man leaves out the chief spice in his duties, and that is faith. And, Heb. xi. 6. 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' Faith lays hold on Christ, and so is accepted.

3. Such as are not new creatures, but grow upon the stock of old Adam, get no benefit by ordinances: they are to them as diascordium in a dead man's mouth; they lose their virtue: nay, not only ordinances do them no good, but hurt. It were sad, if all a man did eat should turn to poison. The word preached is a 'favour of death;' it is not healing, but hardening: nay, Christ himself is accidentally a 'rock of offence,' 1 Pet. ii. 7. The wicked stumble at a Saviour, and suck death from the tree of life.

4. Without being new creatures, we cannot arrive at heaven, Rev. xxi. 27. 'There shall in no-wise enter into it any thing that defileth.' Heaven is not like Noah's ark, that received clean and unclean. A sinner is compared to swine, 2 Pet. ii. 22. and shall a swinish creature tread upon the golden pavement of heaven. Indeed the frogs came into king Pharaoh's court, but in heaven there is no entertainment for such vermin.

It is only the new creature qualifies us for glory: this consecrates the heart, and only the pure in heart shall see God. The new creature elevates the soul, as the loadstone elevates the iron. A soul renewed by grace, is fit to ascend to the heavenly glory.

*4thly,* The excellency of the new creature. (1.) The nobility. (2.) The immortality. (1.) The nobility. The new creature fetcheth its pedigree from heaven; it is born of God; God counts none else of the blood royal: it ennobles a man's spirit: he aspires after the favour of God, and looks no lower than a crown. The new creature raiseth one to honour: he excels the princes of the earth, Psal. lxxxix. 27. and is fellow-commoner with angels.

(2.) The immortality. The new creature is begotten of the

incorruptible seed of the word, and never dies; it lasts as long as the soul, as angels, as heaven. God hath laid out much cost upon it, and if it perish, he should lose all his cost. When Xerxes destroyed all the temples in Greece, he caused the temple of Diana to be preserved for its beautiful structure; the new creature is God's temple adorned with all the graces, which he will not suffer to be demolished. Riches take wings; kings' crowns tumble in the dust: nay, some of the graces may cease; faith and hope shall be no more, but the new creature abideth for ever, 1 John ii. 27.

*5thly*, The misery of the unregenerate creature; dying so, I may say so of him, as Christ said of Judas, Mark xiv. 21. 'It were good for that man if he had not been born.' Better have been a toad, a serpent, any thing, if not a new creature; the old sinner must go into old tophet, Isa. xxx. 33.

Damned caitiffs will have nothing to ease their torments: not one drop of honey in all their gall. In the sacrifice of jealousy there was no oil put to it, Numb. v. In hell there is no oil of mercy put to the sufferings of the damned to lenify them.

Therefore get out of the wild olive of nature: labour to be new creatures, lest you curse yourselves at last. A sinful life will cause a despairing death.

*Qu. What shall we do to be new creatures?*

*Ans. 1.* Wait on the ordinances. The preaching of the word is the seed of which the new creature is formed; this is the trumpet which must make the dead in sin come out of their grave.

*2.* Pray earnestly for the new creature; 'Lord, thou hast made me once, make me again; what shall I do with this old heart? It defiles all it toucheth.' Urge God with his promise, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 'A new heart will I give you.' Say, Lord, I am as the dry bones, but thou didst cause breath to come into them, Ezek. xvii. 10. Do the same to me: breath a supernatural life of grace into me.

*Uſe 4.* Thankfulness. Let such as are new creatures, stand upon mount Gerizzim, blessing and praising God: ascribe all to the riches of God's love; set the crown upon the head of free grace; God hath done more for you, than if he had made you kings and queens; though you have not so much of the world as others, you are happier than the greatest monarchs upon earth; and, I dare say, you would not change with them. The apostles seldom speak of the new creation, but they join some thankful praises with it, 1 Pet. i. 3. 'Blessed be God, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope,' Col. i. 12. 'Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet for the inheritance in light.' The new creature is a sign of election, a badge of adoption. What distinguishing

love is this, that God should make any of us new creatures, when he hath left the greatest part of the world to perish in their sins? Such as are patterns of mercy, should be trumpets of praise.



## THE ART OF DIVINE CONTENTMENT.

### CHAP. I.

#### THE INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXT.

PHIL. iv. 11. *I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

THESE words are brought in by way of prolepsis, to anticipate and prevent an objection. The apostle had, in the former verses, laid down many grave and heavenly exhortations; among the rest, 'to be careful for nothing,' ver. 6. Not to exclude, 1. A prudential care; for, 'he that provideth not for his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,' 1 Tim. v. 8. Nor, 2. A religious care; for, we must give all 'diligence to make our calling and election sure,' 2 Pet. i. 10. But, 3. To exclude all anxious care about the issues and events of things; 'take no thought for your life, what you shall eat,' Matth. vi. 25. And in this sense it should be a Christian's care not to be careful. The word in the Greek [careful] comes from a primitive, that signifies "to cut the heart in pieces," a soul-dividing care; take heed of this. We are bid to 'commit our way unto the Lord,' Psal. xxxvii. 5. The Hebrew word is, 'roll thy way upon the Lord.' It is our work to cast care, 1 Pet. v. 7. And it is God's work to take care. By our immoderacy we take his work out of his hand.

Care, when it is eccentric, either distrustful or distracting, is very dishonourable to God; it takes away his providence, as if he sat in heaven and minded not what became of things here below; like a man that makes a clock, and then leaves it to go of itself. Immoderate care takes the heart off from better things; and usually, while we are thinking how we shall do to live, we forget how to die. Care is a spiritual canker, that doth waste and dispirit; we may sooner by our care add a furlong to our grief, than a cubit to our comfort. God doth threaten it as a curse, 'They shall eat their bread with carefulness,' Ezek. xii. 19. Better fast than eat of that bread. 'Be careful for nothing.'

Now, lest any one should say, yea, Paul thou preacheest that