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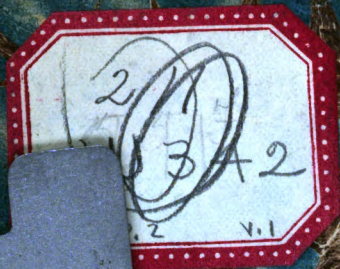
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Trin. very little



THOMAS WATSON
MINISTER OF ST. STEPHEN'S WALBROOK LONDON.

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William Wood

Select
DISCOURSES

ON

IMPORTANT AND INTERESTING SUBJECTS,

BEING THE SELECT WORKS

OF THE

REV. THOMAS WATSON,

LATE MINISTER OF ST. STEPHEN'S, WALBROOK, LONDON;

AUTHOR OF THE 'BODY OF DIVINITY.'

"He being dead yet speaketh." *Heb. iv. 6.*

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THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THERE are some exercises of religion which stand only in a form of godliness, when men draw near with their mouth, and honour God with their lips, and bestow a little bodily exercise and attendance upon him, when in the mean time their hearts are far from him, running after other objects, Isa. xxix. 13. Ezek. xxxiii. 31. Other duties there are which are more spiritual, and wherein the life and power of godliness doth consist. Among these, that of heavenly Meditation is one, when (as the apostle saith of the blessed angels, 1 Pet. i. 12.) the heart desires to look into the mysteries of salvation.

Ever since the fall of Adam, sinful men have had the disposition of Adam, to fly away, and to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord. Natural men are without God in the world, he is 'not in all their thoughts;' they could be well enough content to have him 'cease from before them,' Isa. xxx. 11. He is every where else to be found, only shut out of the hearts of wicked men.

The heart never willingly fixeth on God, till he be the treasure of it; for where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also. It cannot easily meditate but where it doth delight, Ps. cxix. 97. Love is the weight of the soul, it readily moves to the object which it loves. Mary will not away from the

empty sepulchre, where a little before her Lord had lain. Every good man is of David's mind, Psal. xvi. 8. to set the Lord always before him, that he may be in his fear all the day long.

There is nothing of a more unstable and roving temper than the mind of man. Some have prescribed the study of mathematics to fix the volatile agility thereof; but certainly the more serious, the more settled the soul is. Nothing therefore will so balance and compose it, as true holiness, which doth of all other things make it the most serious, the most willing 'to acquaint itself with God, that it may be at peace,' Job xxii. 21. He is the Rest of the soul. The more it knows of him, the more desirous it is to stay with him that it may know more. The more it tasteth of his favour, the more it longeth after his glory, as Moses did, Exod. xxxiii. 17, 18. What the philosopher saith of knowledge, is indeed true only of the knowledge of God and Christ: and therefore our Saviour calleth it eternal life, John xvii. 3. in which alone the soul doth rest.

Now one excellent means of fixing the heart on God, is Meditation, whereby a man calls together 'all that is within him to bless his name,' Psal. ciii. 1. Meditation is the wing of the soul, which carrieth the affections thereof to things above; by this, as Moses, it goeth up to the top of Pisgah to take a view of the promised land. It is, as Clemens Alexandrinus saith of prayer, a conversing with God: as Chrysostom saith of faith, so may we of meditation. It makes God, and Christ, and precepts, and promises ours, by giving us a fuller possession of them. Hereby we hold fast the things which we have learned, we awaken our faith, inflame our love, strengthen our hope, revive our desires, increase our joys in God? we furnish our hearts, and fill our mouths with materials of prayer, we loosen our affections

from the world, we pre-acquaint ourselves with those glories which we yet but hope for, and get some knowledge of that love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Meditation is the palate of the soul whereby we taste the goodness of God; the eye of the soul whereby we view the beauties of holiness; that *askesis* and *gymnasia*, whereby our spiritual senses are exercised, Acts xxiv. 16. Heb. v. 14. it is the key to the wine-cellar, to the banqueting house, to the garden of spices, which letteth us in unto him whom our soul loveth; it is the arm whereby we embrace the promises at a distance, and bring Christ and our souls together.

Though some learned men of former times have written some few things upon this subject, yet of our age, and in our language, I do not remember any who have purposely handled it, but our Christian Seneca, the learned and reverend Bishop Hall, which being one small tract in the midst of a voluminous work, may haply not be in every man's hand to peruse. The necessity, excellency, and usefulness of this christian duty, the reverend author of this book (Mr Watson) hath elegantly described, which is therefore worthy the perusal of such as desire to acquaint and furnish themselves with so excellent a part of christian skill, whereby time may be redeemed and improved unto the prepossession of eternity.

The Lord so fill us with the love of him, and with all the fulness of God, that we may be able continually to say, 'My heart is fixed, O Lord, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise.'

From my Study at Laurence }
Jury, Nov. 7, 1657. }

Thine in the Lord,

EDW. REYNOLDS.

A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF THE
AUTHOR.

IT is sufficiently known to all that have any acquaintance with the histories of the church, that many valuable and useful ministers were ejected for Non-conformity, by the act of Uniformity in the reign of king Charles II. which took place, August 24th, 1662. Among others, the Reverend Mr THOMAS WATSON was ejected from his charge, at St. Stephen's, Walbrook, London; whose character is given by the Reverend Dr. Edmund Calamy, in his Abridgments, vol. II. p. 37; and is as follows:

“ From St. Stephen's, Walbrook. Mr Thomas
“ Watson; he was of Emanuel College in Cam-
“ bridge, where he was noted for being a hard stu-
“ dent; one so well known in the city, viz. Lon-
“ don, for his piety and usefulness, that though he
“ was singled out by the Friendly Debate, he yet
“ carried a general respect for all sober persons a-
“ long with him to his grave. A memorable pass-
“ age, which I have from good hands, must not
“ be passed by: When Mr. Watson was in the
“ pulpit, on a lecture-day, before the Bartholo-
“ mew act took place, among other hearers, there

“ came in that Reverend and learned Prelate, Bi-
 “ shop Richardson, who was so well pleased with
 “ his sermon, but especially with his prayer after
 “ it, that he followed him home, to give him
 “ thanks; and earnestly desired a copy of his
 “ prayer. Alas! said Mr Watson, that is what I
 “ cannot give; for I do not use to pen my pray-
 “ ers; it was no studied thing, but uttered as God
 “ enabled me from the abundance of my heart and
 “ affections, *pro re nata*. Upon which the good
 “ Bishop went away wondering that any man
 “ could pray in that manner, *ex tempore*. After
 “ his ejection, he continued in the exercise of
 “ the ministry in the city, as providence gave op-
 “ portunity, for many years: but his strength
 “ wearing away, he retired into Essex, and there
 “ died suddenly, in his closet, at prayer.”

THE
CHRISTIAN'S CHARTER,
SHewing
THE PRIVILEGES OF A BELIEVER.

1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23.

For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

CHAP. I.

The Porch or Entrance into the Words, together with the Proposition.

HAPPINESS is the mark and centre which every man aims at. The next thing that is sought after Being, is being happy; and surely, the nearer the soul comes to God, who is the fountain of life and peace, the nearer it approacheth to happiness; and who so near to God as the believer, who is mystically one with him? he must needs be the happy man: and if you would survey his blessed estate, cast your eyes upon this text, which points to it, as the finger to the dial: 'For all things are yours.' The text may not unfitly be compared to the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; there are many

precious clusters growing out of this text, and being skilfully improved, will yield much excellent fruit.

In the words we have the inventory of a christian, 'All things are yours:' A strange paradox! when a believer can call nothing his, yet he can say, all things are his. I have often thought a poor christian that lives in a prison, or some old cottage, is like the usurer, who, though he goes poor, and can hardly find himself bread, yet hath thousands out at use: so it is with a child of God, 'as having nothing, yet possessing all things.' What once the philosopher said, Only the wise man is the rich man; gave me leave to say, only the believer is the rich man; here is his estate summed up, 'all things are his.'

Obj. Before I come to the words, there is an objection must be removed; If all things are ours, there seems to be a community; what is one man's is another's.

Ans. The apostle doth not speak here of civil possessions; Paul was no leveller, he did not go about to destroy any man's property; for though he saith, 'all things are yours;' yet he doth not say, what any man hath is yours.

Obj. But is it not said, They had all things common? Acts ii. 44.

Ans. It is true: but first, this was purely voluntary; there was no precept for it.

If it be objected, that this was set down as an example to imitate;

1. I answer; Examples in scripture are not always argumentative: the prophet Elijah called for fire from heaven, to consume the captains and their fifties; but it doth not therefore follow, that when one christian is angry with another, he may call for fire from heaven. Thus the primitive saints, out of prudence and charity, had all things common; it

will not therefore follow, that in every age and century of the church, there should be a common stock, and every one have a share.

2. I answer; Though the disciples had all things common, yet still they held their propriety, as is clear by Peter's speech to Ananias, 'Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?' It is true in one sense, what the primitive church had, was not their own; so much as could be spared, was for the relief of the saints; thus all things were common; but still they kept a part of their estate in their own hand. There is a double right to an estate, a right of Propriety, and a right of Charity. The right of charity belongs to the poor, but the right of propriety belongs to the owner. For instance, God made a law, that a man must not put his sickle into his neighbour's corn. We read that the disciples being hungry when they went through the fields on the Sabbath, did pluck the ears of corn, there was Charity; but they must not put the sickle into the corn, here was Propriety. This I the rather speak, because there are some, that when God hath made an enclosure, would lay all common: it was Satan pulled down Job's hedge. The Lord hath set the eighth commandment as a fence about a man's estate; and he that breaks this hedge, a serpent shall bite him. Thus having taken that objection out of the way, I come now to the next.

And it falls into three parts. 1. The inventory, 'all things,' 2. The proprietors, 'all things are yours.' 3. The tenure, 'Ye are Christ's.' Which three branches will make up this one proposition.

Doct. That all things in heaven and earth are the portion and prerogative of a believer. 'He that overcometh shall inherit all things.' A large inventory! 'All things:' we can have but all; and the apostle useth an ingemination, he doubles

it, to take away all hesitancy and doubting from faith.

CHAP. II.

The Arguments proving the Proposition.

THERE are two reasons which will serve to illustrate and confirm the proposition, 'All things are a believers.'

Reason 1. Because the covenant of grace is his. The covenant is our Great Charter, by virtue of which God settles all things in heaven and earth upon us. By sin we had forfeited all; therefore if all things be ours, the title comes in by a covenant: till then we had nothing to hold by. This covenant is the issue and birth of God's love; it is the legacy of free-grace. This covenant is enriched with mercy, it is embroidered with promises: you may read the Charter, 'I will be their God.' And there is a parallel to it, 'I am God, even thy God:' this is a sufficient dowry. If God be ours, then all things are ours.

He is, 1. *Eminently good*. One diamond doth virtually contain many lesser pearls: the excellencies in the creature are single, and want their adjuncts. Learning hath not always parentage; honour hath not always virtue. No individual can be the receptacle and containant of all perfections; but those excellencies that lie scattered in the creature, are all united and centred in God, as the beams in the sun, the drops in the ocean.

2. He is *Superlatively good*. Whatever is in the creature, is to be found in God after a most transcendent manner. A man may be said to be wise, but God is infinitely so; powerful, but God is eternally so; faithful, but God is unchangeably so. Now in the covenant of grace, God passeth him-

self over to us to be our God, 'I am God, even thy God.'

This expression, 'I am thy God,' imports three things: 1. Pacification. You shall find grace in my sight, I will cast a favourable aspect upon you. I will put off my armour, I will take down my standard, I will be no more an enemy. 2. Donation. God makes himself over to us by a deed of gift, and gives away himself to us: he saith to the believer, as the king of Israel said to the king of Syria, 'I am thine, and all that I have:' this is an hive of divine comfort: all that is in God is ours: his wisdom is ours to teach us; his love is ours to pity us; his Spirit is ours to comfort us; his mercy is ours to save us. When God saith to the soul, 'I am thine,' it is enough, he cannot say more. 3. Duration. I will be a God to thee, as long as I am a God.

Reason 2. All things are a believer's, because Christ is his. Jesus Christ is the pillar and hinge upon which the covenant of grace turns. Without Christ, we had nothing to do with a covenant. The covenant is founded upon Christ, and is sealed in his blood. We read of the mercy-seat, Exod. xxv. 17. which was a divine hieroglyphic, typifying Jesus Christ. 'There will I meet thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, ver. 22. to shew that in Christ God is propitious. From above this mercy-seat he communes with us, and enters into covenant. Therefore it is observable, when the Apostle had said, 'All things are yours,' he presently adds, 'Ye are Christ's.' There comes in the title, we hold all *in capite*. This golden chain, 'Things present, and things to come,' are linked to us, by virtue of our being linked to Christ. By faith we have an interest in Christ; having an interest in Christ, we have an interest in

God; having an interest in God, we have a title to all things.

CHAP. III.

The opening of the Charter. Things present are a Believers.

Question. **A**ND now I come to that great question, What are the things contained in the Charter?

Answer. There are two words in the text that express it, 'Things present, and things to come.' I begin with the first.

1. Things present, are a believer's. Amongst these things present, there are three specified in the text; Paul and Apollos, the world, life, &c. Here is, methinks, a row of pearl: I will take every one of these asunder, and shew you their worth; then see how rich a believer is, that wears such a chain of pearl about him.

Sect. 1. Paul and Apollos are yours.

1. Under these words, 'Paul and Apollos,' by a figure are comprehended all the ministers of Christ, the weakest as well as the eminentest. 'Paul and Apollos are yours,' viz. their labours are for edifying the church. They are the helpers of your faith; the parts of a minister are not given for himself, they are the church's. If the people have a taint of error, the ministers of Christ must season them with wholesome words; therefore they are called 'the salt of the earth.' If any soul be fainting under the burden of sin, it is the work of a minister to drop in comfort, therefore he is said to hold forth the breast as a nurse. Thus Paul and Apollos are yours: all the gifts of a minister, all

his graces, are not only for himself, they are the Church's. A minister must not monopolize his gifts to himself, this is 'to hide his talents in a napkin;' such an one makes an enclosure, where God would have all common. 'Paul and Apollos are yours.' The ministers of Christ should be as musk among linen, which casts a fragrancy; or like that box of spikenard, which being broken filled the house with its odour: so should they do by the savour of their ointments. A minister by sending out a sweet perfume in his doctrine and life, makes the church of God as a garden of spices. 'Paul and Apollos are yours:' they are as a lamp or torch to light souls to heaven. Chrysostom's hearers thought they had better be without the sun in the firmament, than Chrysostom in the pulpit. Paul and Apollos are springs that hold the water of life; as these springs must not be poisoned, so neither must they be shut up or sealed. A minister of Christ is both a granary to hold the corn, and a steward to give it out. 'Tis little better than theft to with-hold the bread of life. The lips of Apollos must be as an honey-comb, dropping in season and out of season. The graces of the Spirit are sacred flowers, which though they cannot die, yet being apt to wither, Apollos must come with his water-pot. It is not enough that there be grace in the heart, but it must be poured into his lips. As Paul is a believer, so all things are his; but as Paul is a minister, so he is not his own, he is the church's. There are three corollaries I shall draw from this.

Use 1. If 'Paul and Apollos are yours,' every minister of Christ is given for the edifying of the church; take heed that ye despise not the least of these, for all are for your profit. The least star gives light, the least drop moistens, the least minister is no less than an angel. There is some use to

be made even of the lowest parts of men: there are 'gifts differing,' but all are yours. The weakest minister may help to strengthen your faith. In the law, all the Levites did not sacrifice, only the priests, as Aaron, and his sons; but all were serviceable in the worship of God: those that did not sacrifice, yet helped to bear the ark. As in a building, some bring stones, some timber, some perhaps bring only nails; yet these are useful, these serve to fasten the work in the building. The church of God is a spiritual building, some ministers bring stones, are more eminent and useful; others timber; others less, they have but a nail in the work, yet all serve for the good of this building. The least nail in the ministry serves for the fastening of souls to Christ, therefore let none be contemned. Though all are not apostles, all are not evangelists, all have not the same dexterous abilities in their work; yet remember, 'All are yours,' all edify. Oftentimes God crowns his labours, and sends most fish into his net, who though he may be less skilful is more faithful; and though he hath less of the Brain, yet more of the Heart. An ambassador may deliver his message with a trembling lip, and a stammering tongue, but he is honourable for his work's sake, he represents the king's person.

Use 2. If 'Paul and Apollos are yours,' all Christ's ministers have a subserviency to your good, they come to make up the match between Christ and you; then love Paul and Apollos. All the labours of a minister, his prayers, his tears, the pregnancy of his parts, the torrent of his affections, all are yours; then by the law of equity there must be some reflections of love from your hearts towards Paul and Apollos, such as are 'set over you in the Lord.' And shew your love,

1. By honouring them. Manoah would know the angel's name, that he might honour him.

And the apostle calls for this, 'We beseech you, brethren, know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and esteem them very highly.' They are co-workers with God. God and his ministers (to speak with reverence) drive one and the same trade; and 'they labour among you,' therefore esteem them very highly. Next to sending out Christ and the Spirit, God never honoured the world more than in sending out his Pauls' and Apollos'. Kings may be your fathers to nurse you up in peace, but ministers are your fathers to beget you to Christ: the earthly father is an instrument of conveying nature, the spiritual father of conveying grace. Therefore Chrysostom wonders how it comes to pass that the ministers are not only more revered than kings and judges, but than our natural parents. What shall we say then to those who make no more reckoning of their ministers, than the Egyptians did of their shepherds? 'Every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians.' 'Know them' (saith the apostle) 'that labour among you;' many can be content 'to know them' in the meanness of their parentage; 'Is not this the carpenter's son?' to know them in their infirmities, but not to know them in the apostle's sense, so as to give them double honour. Surely, were it not for the ministry you would not be a vineyard, but a wilderness; were it not for the ministry, you would be destitute of the two seals of the covenant, baptism and the Lord's supper; you would be infidels, for 'faith comes by hearing,' and 'How shall they hear without a preacher?' O therefore honour Paul and Apollos; though their persons may be mean, yet their office is honourable.

2. Shew your love to the ministers, by pleading their cause, when they are unjustly traduced and calumniated. It is counted by some a piece of their

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religion (as Justin Martyr speaks) neatly and handsomely to defame a minister. Others who would be thought more modest, though they do not raise a report, yet they can receive it as a welcome present. This is contrary to that apostolical rule, 'against an elder' (or minister) 'receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.' Constantine was a great honourer of the ministry; it is reported of him, that he would not read the envious accusations brought in against them, but did burn them. O, if you love Paul and Apollos, stand up in their defence, become their advocates; it was a law the Egyptians made, that if a man found another in the hands of thieves, and did not deliver him when it was in his power, he was condemned to die; when your ministers fall among thieves who would rob them of their good name, do you seek to deliver them. We have too many who labour to clip the credit of God's ministers, to make them weigh lighter: O, do you put some grains into the scales; do they open their mouths to God for you, and will not you open your mouths in their behalf? Certainly if they labour to save your souls, you ought to save their credit.

2. Shew your love to your ministers, by encouraging them, and by being a screen to keep off injuries from them. If they seek your Establishment, you must seek their Encouragement; if they endeavour your Salvation, you must endeavour their Safety; the very name of an ambassador, hath been a protection from wrongs. What an unnatural thing is it, that any should strive to bring them to death, whose very calling is to bring men to life? The minister is a spiritual father; it was a brand of infamy on them, 'For this people are as they that strive with their priest.' Was there none to fall out with but the priest, even he that offered up their sacrifices for them? and what is it think ye,

for men to quarrel with their spiritual fathers? even those whom they once had a venerable opinion of, and acknowledged to be the means of their conversion? Either love your spiritual fathers, or there is ground of suspicion that yours was but a false birth.

Use 3. If 'Paul and Apollos are yours,' they are for the building you up in your faith; then endeavour to get good by the labours of Paul and Apollos, I mean such as labour in the word and doctrine. Let them not plough upon the rock; answer God's end in sending them among you. 'Labour to profit:' you may get some knowledge by the word, such as is discursive and polemical, and yet not profit.

Quest. What is it to profit?

Ans. The apostle tells us, 'When we mingle the word with faith,' that is, when we so hear that we believe, and so believe that we are transformed into the image of the word: 'Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine into which ye were delivered.' It is one thing for the truth to be delivered to us, and another thing for us to be delivered into the truth: the words are a metaphor taken from lead or silver cast into a mould. This is to profit when our hearts are cast into the mould of the word preached: as the seed is spiritual, so the heart is spiritual. We should do as the bee, when she hath sucked sweetness from the flower, she works it in her own hive, and so turns it to honey: thus when we have sucked any precious truth, we should by holy meditation work it in the hive of our hearts, and then it would turn to honey: we should profit by it. O, let the labours of Paul and Apollos have an influence upon us. A good hearer should labour to go out from the ministry of the word, as Naaman out of Jordan; his leprous flesh was healed, and became as the other: so

though we came to the word proud, we should go home humble; though we came to the word earthly; we should go home heavenly: our leprosy should be healed. Ambrose observes of the woman of Samaria, that came to Jacob's well, she came a sinner, she went away a prophetess. Such a metamorphosis should the word of God make. Let not the ministers of Christ say upon their deathbeds, the bellows are burnt, and the lead consumed; they have spent their lungs and exhausted their strength; but know not whether they have done any thing, unless preached men to hell. It is Austin's note upon those words of the apostle, 'That they may give up their accounts with joy.' When (saith he) doth a minister give up his account with joy, but when he hath been working in the vineyard and sees fruit appear? Brethren, this will be his joy, and your joy too in the day of the Lord. O, labour to grow; some grow not at all, others grow worse for hearing; 'Evil men shall wax worse and worse,' as Pliny speaks of some fish that swim backward: they grow dead-hearted in religion, they grow covetous, they grow apostates. It were far easier to write a book of apostates in this age, than a book of martyrs; men grow riper for hell every day. O, labour to thrive under the spiritual dew that falls upon you. Let not the ministers of Christ be as those 'which beat the air.' Is it not sad when the spiritual clouds shall drop their rain upon a barren heath? When the minister's tongue 'is as the pen of a ready writer, and the peoples' heart is like oiled paper that will take no impression. O, improve in grace: if you have a barren piece of ground, you do all you can to improve it, and will you not improve a barren heart? it is a great encomium and honour to the ministry, when people thrive under it: 'Need we as some others, epistles of commendation? Paul

esteemed the Corinthians his glory and his crown; hence saith he, though other ministers have need of letters of commendation, yet he needed none; for when men should hear of the faith of these Corinthians, which was wrought in them by Paul's preaching; this was sufficient certificate for him, that God had blessed his labours, there should need no other epistle; they themselves were walking certificates, they were his letters testimonial. This was an high commendation; what an honour is it to a minister, when it shall be said of him as once of Octavius when he came to Rome, he found the walls of brick, but he left them walls of marble? So when the minister came among the people, he found hearts of stone, but he left hearts of flesh. On the other side, it is a dishonour to a minister when his people are like Laban's lambs, or Pharaoh's kine. There are some diseases which they call the reproach of physicians; and there are some people who may be called the reproach of ministers: what greater dishonour to a minister, than when it shall be said of him, he hath lived so many years in a parish, he found them an ignorant people, and they are so still; he found them a dull slothful people, (as if they went to the temple as some use to go to the apothecary's shop, to take a recipe to make them sleep) and they are so still; he found them a profane people, and so they are still. Surely there is some fault, or God doth not go forth with his labours; such a people are not a minister's crown, but his heart-breaking. Beloved, when God's stars shine in the firmament of the church, will you still walk in the dark? when for the work of Christ they are 'nigh unto death,' will you be as nigh unto hell as ever? when these golden bells of Aaron sound, shall they not chime in with Christ? I beseech you, 'let your profiting appear to all.' God sends Paul and Apollos as bless-

ings among a people, they are to be helpers of your faith; if they toil all night and take nothing,' 'tis to be feared that Satan caught the fish ere they came at their net.

Sect. 2. Shewing, *That the World is a Believer's.*

2. The next thing is, the world is yours.

1. The lawful use of the world }
2. The special use of the world } is a believer's.

1. The 'lawful use of the world' is yours.' The gospel doth somewhat enlarge our charter. We are not in all things so tied up as the Jews were; there were several sorts of meat that were prohibited them; they might eat of those beasts only that did chew the cud, and part the hoof; they might not eat of the swine, because though it did divide the hoof, yet it did not chew the cud; nor of the hare, because though it did chew the cud, yet it did not divide the hoof, it was unclean; but to Christians that live under the gospel, there is not this prohibition. 'The world is yours,' the lawful use of it is yours; every creature 'being sanctified by the word and prayer,' is good, and we may eat, asking no question for conscience sake. The world is a garden; God hath given us leave to pick off any flower. It is a paradise; we may eat of any tree that grows in it, but the forbidden, that is sin; yet even in things lawful, beware of excess. We are apt to offend most in lawful things. The world is yours to traffic in; only let them that buy, 'be as if they bought not.' Take heed that you do not drive such a trade in the world, that you are like to break in your trading for heaven.

2. The special use of the world is yours.

1. The world was made for your sake.

2. All things that fall out in the world are for your good.

1. The world 'was made for your sake.' God hath raised this great fabric chiefly for a believer. The saints are 'God's jewels.' The world is the shrine or cabinet where God locks up these jewels for a time. The world is yours, it was made for you. The creation is but a theatre to act the great work of redemption upon. The world is the Field, the saints are the Corn, the ordinances are the Showers, the mercies of God are the Sunshine that ripens this corn, death is the Sickle that cuts it down, the angels are the Harvesters that carry it into the barn. The world is yours; God would never have made this field, were it not for the corn growing in it. What use then is there of the wicked? They are as an hedge to keep the corn from foreign invasions, though oftentimes they are a thorn hedge.

Quest. But alas, a child of God hath oft the least share in the world; how then is the world his?

Ans. If thou art a believer, that little thou hast, though it be but an handful of the world, it is blest to thee. If there be any consecrated ground in the world, that is a believer's. The world is yours; Esau had the venison, but Jacob got the blessing: a little blest is sweet. A little of the world with a great deal of peace, is better than the 'revenues of unrighteousness.' Every mercy a child of God hath, swims to him in Christ's blood, and this sauce makes it relish the sweeter. Whatever he tastes is seasoned with God's love; he hath not only Corn but Money in the mouth of the sack; not only the Mercy but the blessing: so that the world is a believer's. An unbeliever that 'hath the world at will,' yet the world is not his, he doth not taste the quintessence of it. 'Thorns and thistles doth the ground bring forth to him.' He feeds upon the fruit of the curse, 'I will curse your blessings;' he eats 'with bitter herbs:' so that properly the world is a believer's. He only hath a scripture-tenure, and that little he

hath turns to cream: every mercy is a present sent him from heaven.

2. All things that fall out in the world, are for your good.

1. The want of the world } is for your good.
2. The hatred of the world }

1. The Want of the world is for your good. By wanting the honours and revenues of the world, you want the temptations that others have. Physicians observe that men die sooner by the abundance of blood, than the scarcity; it is hard to say which kills most, the sword or surfeit; a glutton with his teeth digs his own grave. The world's beauty tempts, but it is like the *Rhododaphne*, a fair plant to the eye, but pison to the taste. The want of the world is a mercy.

2. The Hatred of the world is for your good. Wicked men are instruments in God's hand for good, (albeit they mean not so;) they are flails to thresh off our husks, files to brighten our graces, leeches to suck out the noxious blood. Out of the most poisonous drug, God distils his glory and our salvation. A child of God is beholden even to his enemies; 'The ploughers ploughed upon my back;' if they did not plough and harrow us, we should bear but a very thin crop: after a man hath planted a tree, he prunes and dresseth it. Persecutors are God's pruning-hooks, to cut off the excrescences of sin, and evermore the bleeding vine is most fruitful; the envy and malice of the wicked shall do us good: God stirred up the people of Egypt to hate the Israelites, and that was a means to usher in their deliverance. The frowns of the wicked make us the more ambitious of God's smile; their incensed rage, at it shall carry on God's decree (for while they sit backward to his command, they shall row forward to his decree) so it shall have a subserviency to our good. Every cross wind

of Providence shall blow a believer nearer to the port of glory. What a blessed condition is a child of God in! kill him, or save him alive, it is all one. The opposition of the world is for his good. The world is yours.

Sect. 3. Shewing, *That Life is a Believers.*

3. The next thing is, 'Life is yours.' Hierom understands it of the life of Christ. It is true, Christ's life is ours; the life which he lived on earth, and the life which he now lives in heaven; his satisfaction and his intercession both are ours, and they are of unspeakable comfort to us. But I conceive by Life in the text, is meant natural life, that which is contradistinguished to death: so Ambrose. But how is life a believer's? Two ways.

1. The Privilege of life is his. 2. The comfort of life is his.

1. The privilege of life is a believer's: that is, life to a child of God is an advantage for heaven: this life is given him to make provision for a better life. Life is the porch of eternity; here the believer dresses himself, that he may be fit to enter in with the Bridegroom. We cannot say of a wicked man (unless catchrestically) that life is his. Though he lives, yet life is not his, he is 'dead while he lives.' He doth not improve the life of nature to get the life of grace; he is like a man who takes the lease of a farm, and makes no benefit of it; he hath been so long in the world, but he hath not lived. He was born in the reign of such a king, his father left him such an estate, he was of such an age, and then he died; there is an end of him, his life was not worth a prayer, nor his death worth a tear. But life is yours; it is a privilege to a believer; while he hath natural life, he lays hold upon eternal life: how doth he work out his salvation? what ado to is there get his evidences

sealed? what weeping? what wrestling? how doth he even take heaven by storm? so that life is yours: it is to a child of God a season of grace, the seed-time of eternity; the longer he lives, the riper he grows for heaven. The life of a believer spends as a lamp, he doth little good. The life of the one is as a figure engraven in marble; the life of the other, as letters written in dust.

2. The comfort of life is a believer's. 'As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing:' take a child of God at the greatest disadvantage, let his life be over-cast with clouds, yet if there be any comfort in life, the believer hath it. Our life is oft imbecile and weak, but the spiritual life doth administer comfort to the natural. Man (saith Augustine) is compounded of the mortal part, and the rational part; the rational serves to comfort the mortal. So, I may say, a christian consists of a natural life, and a spiritual; the spiritual revives the natural. Observe how the spiritual life destils sweetness into the natural, in three cases.

1. In case of Poverty. This oft eclipses the comfort of life. But what though poverty hath clipped thy wings? 'poor in the world, yet rich in faith,' James ii. 5. The one humbles, the other revives.

2. In case of Reproach. This is an heart-breaking, Ps. lxi. 20. 'Reproach hath broken my heart.' Yet a christian hath his cordial by him, 2 Cor. i. 12. 'For this is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience.' Who would desire a better jury to acquit him than God and his own conscience?

3. In case of Losses. It is in itself sad, to have an interposition between us and our dear relations. A limb as it were pulled from our body, and sometimes our estates strangely melted away; yet a believer hath some gleanings of comfort left, and such gleanings as are better than the world's vintage. 'Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven a better and an enduring

substance,' Héb. x. 34. They had lost their estate, but not their God. Here is you see, the dry rod blossoming. The spiritual life distils comfort into the natural. Take the sourest part of a christian's life, and there is comfort in it. When you hear him sighing bitterly, it is for sin; and such a sigh, though it may break the heart, yet it revives it. The tears of the godly are sweeter than the triumph of the wicked. The comfort that a wicked man hath is only imaginary, it is but a pleasant fancy; as rejoicing, yet always sorrowing: he hath that within spoils his music. But life is yours. When a believer's life is at the lowest ebb, yet he hath a spring-tide of comfort.

CHAP. IV.

The Augmentation of the Charter.

AMONG these 'things present,' there are yet two other eminent privileges which are in the believer's charter.

1. Remission. 2. Regeneration.

Sect. 1. *Shewing, That Remission of Sin is a Jewel of the Believer's Crown.*

1. The remission of his sin. To pardon sin is one of the Royalties belonging only to God. Pope's pardons are like blanks in a lottery, good for nothing but to be torn. Who can forgive sins but God only? Mark ii. 7. Now this remission or pardon is,

1. A costly mercy. 2. A choice mercy.

1. It is a costly mercy. That which enhanceth the price of it is, it is the great fruit of Christ's blood: 'Without shedding of blood is no remission.' Christ did bleed out our pardon: he was not only 'a lamb without spot,' but a lamb slain. Every pardon a sinner hath, is written in Christ's blood.

2. It is a choice mercy. This jewel God hangs upon none but his elect. It is put into the charter; 'I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.' This is an enriching mercy, it entitles us to blessedness; 'Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not his sin.' Of all the debts we owe, our sins are the worst; now to have the book cancelled and God appeased; to hear God whisper by his Spirit, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven;' I will not blot thy Name out of my book, but I will blot thy Sins out of my book: this is a mercy of the first magnitude. 'Blessed is that man;' in the original it is in the plural, 'blessednesses.' Hast thou but one blessing, my father, saith Esau; Lo, here is a plurality, a whole chain of blessings. Pardon of sin draws the silver link of grace, and the golden link of glory after it. It is a voluminous mercy, there are many mercies bound up with it. You may name it Gad, for behold 'a troop cometh.' When God pardons a sinner, now he puts on (if I may so speak) his brightest robe: therefore when he would proclaim himself in his glory to Moses, it was after this manner, 'The Lord, the Lord merciful.' Exod. xxxiv. 6. His mercy is his glory: and if you read a little further, you shall see it was no other than pardoning mercy: 'Forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin,' &c. This is an high act of indulgence. God seals the sinner's pardon with a kiss. This made David put on his best clothes and anoint himself. It was strange his child newly dead, and God had told him, that the sword should not depart from his house, yet now he falls anointing himself: the reason was, David had heard good news, God sent him his pardon by Nathan the prophet; 'The Lord hath put away thy sin.' This oil of gladness which God had poured into his heart, made way for the anointing oil.

Quest. How shall I know that this privilege is mine?

Ans. He whose sins are pardoned, hath something

to shew for it. There are three scripture-evidences;
 1. The pardoned sinner is a weeping sinner. Never did any man read his pardon with dry eyes: look upon that weeping penitent, 'She stood behind Christ weeping.' Her heart was a sacred limbeck, out of which those tears were distilled. O, how precious were Mary's tears! surely more costly in Christ's esteem than her ointment: they dropped from her as so many pearls. Her amorous eyes, whose sparkles had so oft set on fire all her lovers, she now seeks to be revenged on them, and washeth Christ's feet with her tears. Her embroidered hair, which with its curling and crisping had so oft as a net ensnared others, she now takes penance of it, and makes it a towel to wipe Christ's feet; here was a pardoned penitent. A pardon will make the hardest heart relent, and is able to turn the stone into a spring. O sinner, ask thyself the question, Is thy heart dissolved into tears? doth it melt for sin? God seals his pardons only upon melting hearts.

Quest. But to what purpose is all this cost? what needs weeping after pardon?

Ans. Because now sin and mercy are drawn forth in more lively colours than ever. The Spirit comes thus to a sinner; Thou hast sinned against God, who never intended thee evil, thou hast abused that mercy that saves thee; all this thou hast done, yet behold, here is thy pardon; I will set up my mercy above thy sin, nay, in spite of it. The sinner being sensible of this, falls a weeping, and wisheth himself even dissolved into tears. He looks upon a bleeding Christ with a bleeding heart. Nothing can so melt the heart of a sinner as the love of God, and the blood of Christ.
 2. He whose sins are pardoned, his heart burns in a flame of love. Thus we read of Mary Magdalene, as her eyes were broached with tears, so her heart was red with love to Christ; 'for she loved much.' God's love in pardoning a sinner is attractive: the law hath

a driving power, but love hath a drawing power. 3. He whose sins are pardoned, is willing to pardon others; he doth forbear and forgive those that have offended him, Eph. iv. 32. Some will pray, go to church, give alms, &c. any thing but Forgive; it is the brand set upon the heathens, 'implacable,' Rom. i. 31. Those who live out of charity, cannot pray the Lord's prayer, or if they do, they must pray against themselves; they pray that God will forgive them 'as they forgive others,' which is in effect to pray that God will not forgive them. Surely he that hath tasted of pardon will think it but rational and christian, that he should forgive his offending brother.

Sect. 2. Shewing, *That Regeneration goes along with Remission, and is a Branch of the Charter.*

Privilege 2. Regeneration; which is nothing else but the transforming the heart, and casting it into a new mould: you have a pregnant place for this, Rom. xii. 2. 'Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.' In the Incarnation, Christ did assume our human nature; and in Regeneration, we partake of his divine nature.

This blessed work of regeneration, is in scripture called sometimes the 'new birth,' because it is begotten of a new seed, the Word, Jam. i. 18. and sometimes the 'new creature;' new, not in substance but in quality. This is the great promise, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 'A new heart also will I give you.' Observe, remission and regeneration are two twins: when God pardons he takes away the rebel's heart. Where this work of regeneration is wrought, the heart has a new bias, and the life a new edition. How great a privilege this is, will appear two ways. Till this blessed work of regeneration, we are in a spiritual sense,

1. Still-born. 2. Illegitimate.

1. Still-born; 'dead in trespasses and sins,' Eph. ii. 1. A man in his pure naturals is dead;

1. In respect of working. 2. In respect of honour:

1. In respect of Working. A dead man cannot work. The works of a sinner in scripture are called 'dead works;' bid a natural man do any thing, you had as good set a dead man about your work; bring him to a sermon, you do but bring a dead corpse to church; bring him to the sacrament, he poisons the sacramental cup; he may receive the elements, but nothing concocts: it is as if you should put bread and wine into a dead man's mouth. 'Reprove him sharply for sin;' to what purpose do you strike a dead man?

2. He is dead in respect of Honour. He is dead to all privileges; he is not fit to inherit mercy. Who sets the crown upon a dead man? The apostle calls it the crown of life, Rev. ii. 10. It is only the living christian shall wear the crown of life.

2. A man unregenerate is spiritually Illegitimate; the Devil is his father: 'Ye are of your father the Devil.' Thus it is till Christ be formed in the heart of a sinner; then his reproach is rolled away from him. Regeneration doth ennoble a person; therefore such an one is said to be 'born of God,' 1 John iii.

9. O how beautiful is that soul! I may say with Bernard, O divine soul, invested with the image of God, espoused to him by faith, dignified with the Spirit! A person regenerate is embroidered with all the graces; he hath the silver spangles of holiness, the angels' glory shining in him: he hath upon him the reflex of Christ's beauty. The new creature is a new paradise set full of the heavenly plants. An heart ennobled with grace (to speak with reverence) is God's lesser heaven.

CHAP. V.

Shewing that Things to come are a Believer's.

AND so I slide into the second part of the text, 'Things to come,' are yours: here is portion enough! It is a great comfort that when things pre-

sent are taken away, yet things to come are ours. Methinks the very naming this word, 'things to come,' should make the spirits of a christian revive. It is a sweet word; our happiness is in reversion, the best is behind, all is not yet come that is promised. Truly if we had nothing but what we have here, we were miserable; here are disgraces, martyrdoms; we must taste some of that gall and vinegar which Jesus Christ drank upon the cross; but, O christian, be of good cheer, there is something to come: the best part of our portion is yet unpaid: 'all things to come are yours.' God deals with us as a merchant that shews the worst piece of cloth first. We meet sometimes with coarse usage in the world; that piece which is of the finest spinning, is kept till we come at heaven. It is true, God doth chequer his work in this life, white and black; he gives us something to sweeten our pilgrimage here, the prelibations and tastes of his love: these are the earnest and first-fruits; but what is this to that which is to come? 'Now we are the sons of God, 1 John iii. 2. But it doth not yet appear what we shall be:' expect that God should keep his best wine till last; 'things to come are yours.'

CHAP. VI.

The First Prerogative; to come.

BUT what are those things that are to come?

Ans. There are twelve things yet to come, the which I call twelve prerogatives royal, wherewith the believer shall be invested. The first is set down in the text, which I will begin with. 1. 'Death is yours.' 1. Death in scripture is called an enemy, 1 Cor. xv. 26. Yet here it is put in a Christian's inventory, 'death is yours.' It is an enemy to the mortal part, but a friend to the spiritual: it is one of our best friends next to Christ; death is a part of the jointure. When

Moses saw his rod turned into a serpent, it did at the first affright him, and he fled from it; but when God bade him take hold of it, he found by the miraculous effects which it wrought, it did him and the people of Israel much good; so death at the first sight is like the rod turned into a serpent; it affrights, but when by faith we take hold of it, then we find much benefit and comfort in it. As Moses' rod divided the waters, and made a passage for Israel into Canaan; so death divides the waters of tribulation, and makes a passage for us into the 'land of promise.' Death is called the king of terrors, but it can do a child of God no hurt; this snake may hiss and wind about the body, but the sting is pulled out: the bee by stinging loseth its sting. While death did sting Christ upon the cross, it hath quite lost its sting to a believer; it can hurt the soul no more than David did king Saul, when he cut off the lap of his garment. Death to a believer is but like the arresting of a man for debt, after the debt is paid; death, as God's serjeants at arms, may arrest us, and carry us before God's justice; but Christ will shew our discharge: the debt-book is crossed in his blood.

Quest. How is death ours?

Ans. Two ways,

1. It is the out-let to sin. 2. It is the in-let to happiness.

1. Death to a believer, is an out-let to sin. We are in this life under a sinful necessity; even the best saint: 'There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not.' Evil thoughts are continually arising out of our hearts, as sparks out of a furnace. Sin keeps house with us whether we will or not; the best saint alive is troubled with inmates; though he forsakes his sins, yet his sins will not forsake him. 1. Sin doth indispose to good: 'How to perform that which is good I find not,' Rom. vii. 18. When we would pray, the heart is a viol out of tune: when we

would weep, we are as clouds without rain. 2. Sin doth irritate to evil; 'The flesh lusts against the spirit.' There needs no wind of temptation, we have tide strong enough in our hearts to carry us to hell. Consider sin under this three-fold notion.

1. Sin is a 'body of death,' and that not impertinently. First, it is a body for its weight. The body is an heavy and weighty substance: so is sin a body, it weighs us down. When we would pray, the weights of sin are tied to our feet that we cannot ascend. Anselm, seeing a little boy playing with a bird, he let her fly up, and presently pulls the bird down again by a string: so, saith he, it is with me as with this bird; when I would fly up to heaven upon the wings of meditation, I find a string tied to my leg; I am overpowered with corruption; but death pull off these weights of sin, and lets the soul free. Secondly, sin is a body of death, for its annoyance. It was a cruel torment that one used, he tied a dead man to a living, that the dead man might annoy and infest the living. Thus it is with a child of God, he hath two men within him, flesh and spirit, grace and corruption; there is the dead man tied to the living; a proud sinful heart is worse to a child of God than the smell of a dead corpse. Indeed to a natural man sin is not offensive; for, being 'dead in sin,' he is not sensible: but where there is a vital principle, there is no greater annoyance than the body of death: in-somuch that the pious soul oft cries out, as David, 'Wo is me, that I dwell in Mesech, and sojourn in the tents of Kedar.' So saith he, Wo is me, that I am constrained to abide with sin! How long shall I be troubled with inmates? How long shall I offend that God whom I love? When shall I leave these tents of Kedar?

2. Sin is a tyrant, it carries in it the nature of a law; the apostle calls it the 'law in his members.' Rom. vii. 14. There is the law of pride, the law of unbelief; it hath a kind of jurisdiction, as Cæsar over the senate.

‘What I hate, that do I;’ ver. 15. The apostle was for the present like a man carried down the stream, and was not able to bear up against it. Whence are our carnal fears? whence our passions? whence is it that a child of God doth that which he allows not? yea, sometimes against knowledge? The reason is, he is captivated under sin; but be of good cheer, where grace makes a combat, death shall make a conquest.

3. Sin is a leprous spot. It makes every thing we touch unclean: we read that, when the leprosy did spread in the walls of a house, the priests commanded to take away the stones in the wall in which the plague was, and take other stones, and put in the place of those stones, and take other mortar, Levit. xiv. 42. But when the plague spread again in the wall, then he must break down the house with the stones and timber thereof, ver. 45. Thus in every man naturally, there is a fretting leprosy of sin, pride, unbelief, impenitency, &c. These are leprous spots; now in conversion, here God doth, as it were, take away the old stones and timber, and put new in the room; he makes a change in the heart of a sinner, but still the leprosy of sin spreads; then at last death comes and pulls down the stones and timber of the house, and the soul is quite freed from the leprosy. Sin is a defiling thing, it makes us red with guilt, and black with filth; it is compared to a ‘menstruous cloth;’ we need carry it no higher. Pliny tells us that the trees with touching of it would become barren; and Hierom saith, there was nothing in the law more unclean than the menstruous cloth: this is sin. Sin draws the Devil’s picture in a man; malice is the Devil’s eye; oppression is his hand; hypocrisy is his cloven foot; but behold death will give us our discharge; death is the last and best physician, which cures all diseases; the aching head and the unbelieving heart. Sin was the midwife that brought death into the world, and death shall be the grave to bury sin; O the privilege of a believer! he is not taken

away in his sins; but he is taken away from his sins. The Persians had a certain day in the year, wherein they used to kill all serpents and venomous creatures: such a day as that will the day of death be to a man in Christ. This day the old serpent dies in a believer, that hath so often stung him with his temptations: this day the sins of the godly, these venomous creatures, shall all be destroyed; they shall never be proud more; they shall never grieve the Spirit of God more; the death of the body shall quite destroy the body of death.

2. Death to a believer is an inlet to happiness: Samson found an honey-comb in the lion's carcase; so may a child of God suck much sweetness from death. Death is the gate of life; death pulls off our rags, and gives us change of raiment: all the hurt it doth us, is to put us into a better condition. Death is called in scripture a sleep, 1 Thess. iv. 14. 'Those that sleep in Jesus;' as after sleep the spirits are exhilarated and refreshed, so after death, 'the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord.' Death is yours. Death is a believer's ferryman, to ferry him over to the land of rest; it opens the portal into heaven, (as Tertullian speaks.) The day of a christian's death is the birth-day of his heavenly life; it is his ascension-day to glory; it is his marriage-day with Jesus Christ. After his funeral begins his marriage: well then might Solomon say, 'Better is the day of a man's death, than the day of his birth.' Death is the spiritual man's preferment, why then should he fear it? Death, I confess, hath a grim visage to an impenitent sinner; so it is ghastly to look upon; it is a pursuivant to carry him to hell: but to such as are in Christ, 'death is yours:' it is a part of the jointure. Death is like the 'pillar of cloud,' it hath a dark side to a sinner: but it hath a light side to a believer. Death's pale face looks ruddy, when the 'blood of sprinkling' is upon it; in short, faith gives us a propriety in hea-

ven, death gives us a possession: fear not your privilege, the thoughts of death should be delightful. Jacob, when he saw the waggons, his spirits revived: death is a waggon or chariot to carry us to our Father's house. What were the martyrs' flames but a fiery chariot to carry them up to heaven? How should we long for death? this world is but a desert we live in; shall we not be willing to leave it for paradise? We say, 'it is good to be here; we affect an earthly eternity: but grace must curb nature. Think of the privileges of death. The planets have a proper motion and a violent; by their proper motion they are carried from the west to the east; but by a violent motion they are over-ruled by the *primum mobile*, and are carried from the east to the west. So, though naturally we desire to live here, as we are made up of flesh? yet grace should be as the *primum mobile*, or master wheel, that sways our will, and carries us in a violent motion, making us long for death. Saint Paul desired to be dissolved; 2 Cor. v. 2. 'In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: we would put off the earthly clothes of our body, and put on the bright robe of immortality. 'We groan,' it is a metaphor taken from a mother, who being pregnant, groans and cries out for delivery. Austin longed to die, that he might see that head which was once crowned with thorns. We pray, 'Thy kingdom come;' and when God is leading us into his kingdom, shall we be afraid to go? The times we live in should, methinks, make us long for death; we live in dying times, we may hear, as it were, God's passing bell ringing over these nations. As Hierom said in his time, Nepotian is an happy man that doth not see the evils which befall us: they are well that are out of the storm and are gotten already to the haven.

Quest. But who shall have this privilege?

Ans. Death is certain; but there are only two sorts

of persons to whom we may say 'Death is yours.' It is your preferment.

1. Such as die daily: we are not born angels; die we must, therefore we had need carry always a death's head about us. The basilisk if it see a man first, it kills him; but if he see it first, it doth him no hurt. The basilisk death, if it sees us first, before we see it, it is dangerous; but if we see it first by meditating upon it, it doth us no hurt; study death, often walk among the tombs. It is the thoughts of death before-hand, that must do us good. In a dark night, one torch carried before a man is worth many torches carried after him: one serious thought of death before-hand, one tear shed for sin before death is worth a thousand shed after, when it is too late. It is good to make death our familiar, and in this sense to be in deaths oft: that if God should presently seal a lease of ejectment, if he should send us a letter of summons this night to surrender, we might have nothing to do but to die.

Alas, how do we adjourn the thoughts of death! It is almost death to think of it. There are some that are in the very threshold of the grave, who have one leg in the earth, and another leg in hell; yet 'put far from them the evil day.' I have read of one Lysicrates, who in his old age died his gray hairs black, that he might seem young again. When we should be building our tombs, we are building our tabernacles: die daily, lest you die eternally. The holy patriarchs in purchasing for themselves a burying place, shewed us what thoughts they still had of death. Joseph of Arimathea erected his sepulchre in his garden: we have many that set up the trophies of their victories; others that set up their scutcheons, that they may blaze their honour: but how few that set up their sepulchres; who erect in their hearts the serious thoughts of death: O remember when you are in your gardens, in places

most delicious and fragrant, to keep a place for your tomb-stone; die daily. There is no better way to bring sin into a consumption, than by oft looking on the pale horse, and him that sits thereon. By thinking on death, we begin to repent of an evil life; and so we disarm death before it comes, and cut the lock where its strength lies.

2. Such as are in heaven before they die; death is yours. If we will needs be high-minded, let it be in setting our mind upon heavenly things. Heaven must come down into us before we go up thither. A child of God breathes his faith in heaven; his thoughts are there: 'when I awake I am still with thee,' Psal. cxxxix. 17. David awaked in heaven; his conversation is there; Philip. iii. 20. 'For our conversation is in heaven.' The believer often ascends mount Tabor, and takes a prospect of glory. O that we had this celestial frame of heart! When Zaccheus was in the croud, he was too low to see Christ; therefore he climbed up into the Sycamore tree: When we are in a croud of worldly business, we cannot see Christ: Climb up into the tree by divine contemplation: If thou wouldest get Christ into thy heart, let heaven be in thy eye: 'Set your affections upon things above,' Col. iii. 2. There needs no exhortation to set our hearts on things below. How is the curse of the serpent upon most men? 'Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.' Those that feed only upon dust, golden dust, will be unwilling to return to dust: Death will be terrible.

The tribes of Reuben and Gad desired Moses, that they might stay on this side Jordan, and have their portion there; it being a place convenient for their cattle: It seems they minded their cattle more than their passage into the holy land: So many Christians, if they may have but a little grazing here in the world, in their shops, and in their farms, they are content

to live on this side the river, and mind not their passage into the land of promise: you that are in heaven before you die, death is yours.

An earthly saint is a contradiction. The Greek word for saint signifies a man refined and separated from the earth: if an astronomer, instead of observing the planets, and the motions of the heavens, should take a reed in his hand, and fall a measuring of the earth, would not this be counted a solecism? and is not it as great a solecism in religion, when men that pretend to have Christ and heaven in their eye, yet mind earthly things? Phil iii. 19. Our souls, methinks should be like to a ship, which is made little and narrow downwards, but more wide and broad upwards: So our affections should be very narrow downwards to the earth, but wide and large upwards towards heavenly things. Thus we see death is a privilege to believers; death is yours. The heir while he is under age, is capable of the land he is born to: but he hath not the use or the benefit of it, till he comes of age; be as old as you will, you are never of age till you die: Death brings us of age, and then the possession comes into our hands.

CHAP. VII.

The Second Prerogative Royal of a Believer.

NOW I proceed to the second prerogative, which is yet to come: what holy David saith of Sion, 'Glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God,' Psal. lxxxvii. 3. I may apply to these blessed things in reversion.

2. The second prerogative royal of a Christian, is, he shall be carried up by the angels. In this life, a believer is carried by the saints; they lift him upon the wings of their prayers; and when they can carry

him no longer, after death the angels take him, and carry him up: wicked men, who are of the devil's life-guard, when they die, they shall have a black guard of angels to carry them: thou who art an old sinner (that hast an hoary head, but thy heart is as young in sin as ever) I may say to thee as Christ said in another sense to Peter: 'When thou art old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.' So I say, Thou old sinner, the time is shortly coming, when thou shalt stretch forth thy hands on thy death-bed, and another shall bind thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not; thou shalt be carried by a black guard: but a believer shall be carried by the angels into heaven: 'The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.' Abraham's bosom is a figurative speech, representing the seat of the blessed: thither was he carried by the angels: poor Lazarus, when he was upon earth, he had no friends but dogs to come at him; but when he was dead, he had a convoy of angels. After our fall, the angels (as well as God) fell out with us, and became our enemies; hence we read that the angels (set out by the cherubims) stood with a flaming sword, to keep our first parents out of Paradise, Gen. iii. 24. but being at peace with God, we are at peace with the angels: therefore the angel comes with an olive-branch of peace in his mouth, and proclaims with triumph the news of Christ's incarnation, Luke ij. 11. 'For unto you is born, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord: the angels bless God for man's redemption, ver. 13. 'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, glory be to God in the highest. The angels love mankind (especially where there is the new man) and are ready to do all friendly offices for us. As in our

life-time, they are our supporters, Psal. xci. 11. 'He shall give his angels charge to keep thee:' so after death they are our porters: Lazarus was carried by the angels. The angels are called ministering spirits; they are willing to minister for the good of the saints. Hence some observe, it is said, Lazarus was carried by the angels, in the plural, not by one angel: as if the angels had been ambitious to carry Lazarus, and every one strived which should have a part: wicked men do not strive more, who shall have a part in the death of the godly, than the angels do who shall bear a part in their ascension. O in what pomp and triumph did Lazarus's soul now ride! never was Dives so honoured in his life, as Lazarus was at his death. For a king to help to carry the hearse of one of his subjects, were an high honour; but a believer shall have a guard of angels to conduct him. Amasis king of Egypt, that he might set forth his magnificence, would have his chariot drawn by four princes, which he had conquered in the war: but what was all this to the chariot in which Lazarus, and the soul of every believer, shall be drawn at their death? they shall be carried by the angels of God.

CHAP. VIII.

The Third Prerogative Royal of a Believer.

THE next great prerogative is, the believer shall be with Christ in glory,' Phil. i. 23. I desire to be dissolved, or loosen anchor, and to be with Christ. This is a privilege of the first magnitude: surely we can be no losers by being with Christ. A graft or scion, though it be taken out of the tree, it doth not perish, but is set into a better stock: thus it is with a Christian, while he is here, (even after conversion) there is much of the wild olive still in

him; now when this scion, by death is cut off, he doth not perish, but is set into a more noble and generous stock, he is with Christ, which is far better: and well might the apostle say, 'it is far better.' Is not a state of perfection better than a state of imperfection, our graces are our best jewels, but they are imperfect, and do not give out their full lustre; grace is but in its infancy and minority here, it will not be of full growth till we are with Christ: the best christian is like a child put out to nurse. Here we have but some imperfect buddings of grace; when we are with Christ our graces shall be fully ripe and blown; in this life we are said to receive but 'the first fruits of the Spirit.' We must not expect a full crop till we are with Christ: grace while we are here is mingled with corruption. It is like gold in the ore, or as the pillar of cloud, it hath its dark side as well as its light; our faith is mingled with unbelief; our humility is stained with pride: the flame of grace is not so pure but it hath some smoky vapours. Our life of grace is said to be hid; it is hid indeed under much corruption, as the sun is hid under a cloud, as the corn is hid under chaff, or as a pearl may be hid in the mire. Though grace cannot be lost, yet it may be hid. David so clouded his graces by sin, that others could hardly see the cloth of gold under the filthy garments. Is it not far better to be with Christ? our graces then shall shine forth in their perfection. This is a glorious privilege, we shall be with Christ.

It is a blessed thing to be with Christ while we are here. 'I am ever with thee.' What is it the pious soul desires in this life? is it not to have the sweet presence of Christ? he cares for nothing but what hath something of Christ in it; he loves duties only as they are manuductions to Christ: why is prayer so sweet, but because the soul hath private conference with Christ? why is the word precious

but because it is a means to convey Christ? he comes down to us upon the wings of the Spirit; and we go up to him upon the wings of faith: an ordinance without Christ, is but feeding upon the dish instead of the meat. Why doth the wife love the letter, but because it brings news of her husband? Here we enjoy Christ by letters, and that is sweet; but what will it be to enjoy his presence in glory? Here is that which may amaze us, we shall be with Christ; Christ is all that is desirable: nay, he is more than we can desire. A man that is thirsty, he desires only a little water to quench his thirst; but bring him to the sea, and here he has more than he can desire. In Christ there is not only a fulness of sufficiency, but a fulness of redundancy; it overflows all the banks: a christian that is most sublimated by faith, hath neither a head to devise, nor an heart to desire all that which is in Christ; only when we come to heaven, God will enlarge the vessel of our desire, and will fill us as Christ did the water-pots with wine, 'up to the brim.' Now this privilege of being with Christ, hath six privileges growing out of it.

SECT. 1. *The First Privilege of being with Christ.*

1. Vision, Job xix. ver. 26. 'In my flesh shall I see God;' the sight of Jesus Christ will be the most sublime and ravishing object to a glorified saint. When Christ was upon earth, his beauty was hid. 'He hath no form or comeliness:' the light of the divine nature was hid in the dark lanthorn of the human: it was hid under reproaches, sufferings; yet even at that time there was enough of beauty in Christ to delight the heart of God. 'My Elect in whom my soul delighteth:' his veil was then upon his face; but what will it be when the veil shall be taken off, and he shall ap-

pear in all his embroidery? It is heaven enough to see Christ. 'Whom have I in heaven but thee?' There are, saith Musculus, angels and arch-angels: aye, but they do not make heaven: Christ is the most sparkling diamond in the ring of glory.

SECT 2. *The Second Privilege of being with Christ.*

The next privilege is Union; our bring with Christ is not only local, but conjugal: we shall so behold him, as to be made one with him. What nearer than union? what sweeter? Union is the spring of joy, the ground of privilege; by virtue of this blessed union with Christ, all those rare beauties wherewith the human nature of the Lord Jesus is bespangled shall be ours. Let us compare two scriptures, John xvii. 24. 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.' That is, the glory of the human nature; but this is not all, ver. 22. 'The glory that thou hast given me I have given them.' Christ hath not his glory only for himself, but for us; we shall shine by his beams: here Christ puts his graces upon his spouse, and in heaven he will put his glory upon her. No wonder then the king's daughter is 'all glorious within,' and 'her clothing of wrought gold.' How glorious will the spouse be, when she hath Christ's jewels upon her? Judge not of the saints by what they are, but by what they shall be: 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be,' 1 John iii. 1. Why, what shall we be? 'we shall be like him.' The spouse of Christ shall not only be made one with Christ, but she shall be made like Christ; in other marriages, the spouse changeth her condition, but here she changeth her complexion: not that the saints in glory shall receive of Christ's essence, they shall

have as much glory as the human nature is capable of; but though Christ conveys his image, yet not his essence. The sun shining upon a glass, leaves a print of its beauty there; and it is hard to distinguish between the glass and the sun-beam: but the glass is not the beam, the sun conveys only its likeness, not its essence.

SECT. 3. *The Third Privilege of being with Christ.*

The next privilege is Nobility; which consists in two things.

1. The saints shall sit with Jesus Christ when he judgeth the world: 'Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?' The saints shall sit with Christ in judicature, as the justices of peace with the judge: the saints are Christ's assessors; they shall be with him upon the bench, applauding his righteous sentence. O what a glorious tribunal will that be! here the world judgeth the saints, but there the saints shall judge the world.

2. They shall sit nearer the throne than the angels. The angels are noble and sublime spirits, but by virtue of our marriage union, Christ having taken our flesh, and the knot being tied between the divine and human nature in the virgin's womb, we shall be ennobled with greater honour than the angels: the angels are Christ's friends, but not his spouse: this honour have all his saints. As the saints' robes in glory shall be brighter than the angels' theirs being only the righteousness of creatures, but these having upon them the righteousness of God) so their dignity shall be greater. O infinite! here we are prisoners at bar, but there favourites at court: the saints shall sit down in glory above the angels.

SECT. 4. *The Fourth Privilege of being with Christ.*

The next privilege is Joy. This joy of the saints proceeds from union; when our union with Christ is perfect, then our joy shall be full, Rev. xxi. 4. 'And God shall wipe away all tears, and there shall be no more sorrow.'

1. There shall be no weeping. Jesus Christ hath provided a handkerchief to wipe off the tears of the saints. Here the spouse is in sable, it being a time of absence from her husband: but in heaven Christ will take away the spouse's mourning; he will put off all her black and bloody apparel, and will clothe her in white robes, Rev. vii. 13. White, as it is an emblem of the saints purity, so it is a type of their joy; heaven would not be heaven if there were weeping there; hell indeed is called a place of weeping; they that would not shed a tear for their sins while they lived, shall have weeping enough; but we never read of weeping in heaven. Christ will take down our harps from the willows; there he will call for his heralds and trumpeters: the angels, those blessed choiristers, shall sing the divine anthems of praise, and the saints shall join in that heavenly concert. If it were possible that any tears could be shed when we are with Christ, they should be the tears of joy, as sometimes we have seen a man weep for excessive joy: Christ will turn all our water there into wine.

2. There 'shall be no sorrow; one smile from Christ's face will make us forget all our afflictions: sorrow is a cloud gathered in the heart, upon the apprehension of some evil: and weeping is the cloud of grief dropping into rain: but in heaven the sun of righteousness shall shine so bright, that there shall not be the least interposition of any cloud; there shall be no sorrow there, nor any thing to breed it:

there shall be no sin to humble : heaven is such a pure soil that the viper of sin will not breed there : there shall be no enemy to molest. When Israel had conquered Canaan, yet they could not get rid of all the Canaanites, they would live among them ; ‘ But the Canaanites would dwell in that land : ’ but when we are with Christ, we shall never be troubled with Canaanites more. ‘ In that day (I may allude to that of the prophet) there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord.’ God will keep the heavenly paradise with a flaming sword, that none shall come near to hurt : ‘ Upon all that glory shall be a defence.’ There shall be nothing to breed sorrow in heaven. There are two things that usually raise the clouds of sorrow, and both shall be removed when we are with Christ.

1. The frowns of great men : how ambitious are men of the Prince’s smile ? but alas, that quickly sets in a cloud, and then their comforts are in the wain, they are sad ! but when we are with Christ, we shall have a perpetual smile from God : the saints shall never be out of favour, Jesus Christ is the great favourite at court ; and as long as God smiles upon Christ, so long he will smile upon the saints, they having on Christ’s beauty ; and being part of Christ.

2. The loss of dear friends : a friend imparts secrets ; friendship is the marriage of affections, it makes two become one spirit. David and Jonathan took sweet counsel together, their heart was knit in one : now here is the grief, when this precious knot must be untied : but be of good cheer, if thy friend belong to the election, after thou hast parted with thy sins, thou shalt meet with him and never part. If thy friend be wicked, though he were thy friend on earth, thou wilt cease to be his friend in heaven. The pious wife will not complain she hath lost her husband, nor the religious parent,

that he hath lost his child; all relations are infinitely made up in Christ, as the whole constellation in the sun, that great lamp of heaven. When a man comes to the sea, he doth not complain that he wants his cistern of water: Though thou didst suck comfort from thy relations; yet when thou comest to the ocean, and art with Christ, thou shalt never complain that thou hast left thy cistern behind: there will be nothing to breed sorrow in heaven; there shall be joy, and nothing but joy. Heaven is set out by that phrase, 'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' Here joy enters into us, there we enter into joy: the joys we have here are from heaven; those are in heaven: the joys that we shall have with Christ, are without measure and without mixture. 'In thy presence is fulness of joy,' Ps. xvi. 11. *fountain*

1. The heart shall be filled. Nothing but Christ can replenish the heart with joy: the understanding, will, affections, are such a triangle, that none can fill but the Trinity. As Christ's beauty shall amaze the eye, so his love shall ravish the heart of a glorified saint: must it not needs be joy to be with Christ? what joy when a christian shall see the great gulf shot between heaven and hell? what joy when Christ shall take a believer into the wine cellar, and kiss him with the kisses of his lips? what joy when the match shall be at once made up, and solemnized between Christ and the soul? these are the more noble and generous delights.

2. All the senses shall be filled with joy; and, at once: the eye shall be filled; what joy to see that orient brightness in the face of Christ? there you may see the lilly and the rose mixed, white and ruddy, Cant. v. 10. The ear shall be filled; what joy to the spouse to hear Christ's voice? the voice of God was dreadful to Adam, after he had listened to the serpent's voice? 'I heard thy voice in the garden, and was afraid,' Gen. iii. 10. But how

sweet will the bridegroom's voice be? What joy to hear him say, My love, my dove, my undefiled? What joy to hear the music of angels, even the heavenly host praising God? If the eloquence of Origin, the golden mouth of Chrysostom, did so affect and charm the ears of their auditors, O then what will it be to hear the glorious tongues of saints and angels, as so many divine trumpets sounding forth the excellencies of God, and singing hallelujahs to the lamb? The smell shall be filled; what joy to smell that fragrancy and perfume that comes from Christ? all his garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. The sweet breath of his Spirit blowing upon the soul, shall give forth its scent as the wine of Lebanon. The taste shall be filled; Christ will bring his spouse into the banqueting-house, and she shall be inebriated with his love; O what joy to be drinking in this heavenly nectar! This is the water of life: This is the wine on the lees well refined. The touch shall be filled; the saints shall be ever in the embraces of Christ; 'Behold my hands and my feet; handle me, and see me,' Luke xxiv. 39. That will be our work in heaven; we shall be ever handling the Lord of life: Thus all the senses shall be filled with joy. Well might the apostle say, to be with Christ is far better. If Christ's sufferings are full of joy, what then are his embraces? If the dew of Hermon hill be so sweet, the first fruits of Christ's love; what will the full crop be? In short, there will be nothing in heaven but what shall add infinitely to the joy of the saints. The very torments of the damned shall create matter of joy and triumph. I may allude to that of the Psalmist, 'The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance;' the Elect shall rejoice upon a double account to see God's justice magnificently exalted, and to see themselves miraculously delivered. There shall be no unpleasant object represented; nothing but joy.

Such will that joy be, when we are with Christ, that it is not possible, so neither is it fit for a man to speak, 2 Cor. xii. 4. We read that Joseph gave his brethren money and provisions for the way; but the full sacks were kept till they came to their Father's house; God gives us something by the way; some of the hidden manna: some taste of his heavenly joy in this life, but the full sacks of corn are kept for heaven. O what joy to be with Christ! surely if there were such joy and triumph at Solomon's coronation, that all the earth rang with the sound of it, what joy will be on the saints' coronation-day, when they shall be eternally united to Jesus Christ?

SECT. 5. The Fifth Privilege of being with Christ.

I proceed to the next privilege which is Rest. A Christian in this life is like quick-silver, which hath a principle of motion in itself, but not of rest: we are never quiet, but as the ball upon the racket, or the ship upon the waves. As long as we have sin this is like the quick-silver: A child of God is full of motion and disquiet; 'I have no rest in my bones by reason of my sin,' Psal. xxxviii. 3. While there are wicked men in the world, never look for rest. If a man be poor, he is thrust away by the rich: if he be rich, he is envied by the poor; sometimes losses disquiet, sometimes law-suits vex; it is only the prisoner lives in such a tenement as he may be sure none will go about to take from him: the saints in this life are in a pilgrim condition: the apostles had no certain dwelling place, 1 Cor. iv. 11. We are here in a perpetual hurry, in a constant fluctuation: our life is like the tide, sometimes ebbing, sometimes flowing: here is no rest: and the reason is, because we are out of centre; every thing is in motion till it comes at the centre; Christ is the centre of the soul: the needle

of the compass trembles, till it turns to the North pole. Noah's dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, till she came at the ark. This ark was a type of Christ; when we come to heaven, the kingdom that cannot be shaken, we shall have rest, Heb. iv. 9. 'There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. Heaven in scripture is compared to a granary, Matt. iii. 12. an emblem of rest. Wheat, while it stands on the ground, is shaken to and fro with the wind, but when it is laid up in the granary it is at rest: The elect are spiritual wheat, who while they are in the field of this world are never quiet, the wind of persecution shakes this wheat. and every one that passeth by will be plucking these sacred ears of corn, but when the wheat is in the heavenly garner, it is at rest; There remains a rest, &c. Not but that there shall be motion in heaven, (for spirits cannot be idle) but it shall be without lassitude and weariness. It shall be a labour full of ease, a motion full of rest. When a believer is in heaven, he hath his *Quietus est*. The lower region is windy and tempestuous; when we are once gotten into the upper region of glory, there are no winds or noxious vapours, but a serene calmness; this is to be with Christ.

SECT. 6. *The Sixth Privilege of being with Christ.*

The last is *Security*. It is possible a man may have a few minutes of rest; but he is not secure; he knows not how soon eclipses and changes may come: he is still in fear, and fear makes a man a servant, (saith the philosopher) though he know it not. There is torment in fear, 1 John iv. 18. He that hath great possessions thinks thus: but how soon may I fall from this pinnacle of honour? how soon may the plunderer come? Nay, a believer that hath dur-

able riches, yet is still pendulous and doubting concerning his condition.

1. He sometimes questions whether he be in the state of grace or no; and thus he thinks with himself; perhaps I believe, perhaps I do not believe: I have something that glisters, perhaps it is but a counterfeit chain of pearl; my faith is presumption, my love to Christ is but self-love; and when the Spirit of God hath wrought the heart to some sound persuasion, he is soon shaken again; as a ship that lies at anchor, though it be safe, yet it is shaken and tossed upon the water; and these fears leave impressions of sadness upon the heart.

2. But secondly, he fears that though he be in the state of grace, yet he may fall into some scandalous sin, and so grieve the Spirit of God, sadden the hearts of the righteous, wound his own conscience, harden sinners, discourage new beginners, put a song into the mouth of the profane, and at last God hide his face in a cloud. A child of God after a sad declension, having by his sin put black spots in the face of religion, though I deny not but he hath a title to the promise; yet he may be in such a condition, that he cannot for the present apply any promise, he may go weeping to his grave.

These sad fears like black vapours, are still arising out of a gracious heart; but when once a believer is with Christ, there is full security of heart; he is not only out of danger, but out of fear. Take it thus; a man that is upon the top of a mast, he may sit safe for the present, but not secure. Perhaps the pirates may shoot at the ship, and take it; perhaps the winds may arise suddenly, and the ship may be cast away in the storm; but a man that is upon a rock, he stands impregnable; his heart is secure. A christian in this life is like a man upon the top of a mast; sometimes the pirates come aboard, viz. cruel persecutors, and they shoot at his ship,

and oft, though the passenger (the precious soul) escapes, yet they sink the ship; sometimes the winds of tentation blow; those northern winds; and now the christian questions whether God loves him, or whether his name be enrolled in the book of life; and though being in Christ, there is no danger, yet his heart doth hesitate and tremble: but when he is with Christ, off from the top of the mast, and is planted upon the rock, his heart is fully secure; and you shall hear him say thus, now I am sure I have shot the gulf, I am now passing from death unto life, and none shall pluck me out of my Saviour's arms.

CHAP. IX.

The Fourth Prerogative Royal.

LET the Lucianists and Epicures place their happiness in this life; a believer's is in reversion; the golden world is yet to come. I pass to the next prerogative, which is:

4. The blessed inheritance, Col. i. 12. 'Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.' This world is but a tenement, which we may be soon turned out of; heaven is an inheritance, and a glorious one. Heaven hath no hyperbole; if the skirts and suburbs of the palace, viz. the stars and planets be so glorious, that our eyes cannot behold the dazzling lustre of them; what glory then is there in the chamber of presence? What is the sanctum sanctorum? Of this blessed place we have a figurative description, Rev. 21. John was carried away in the Spirit, and had a vision of heaven, ver. 2. That it was the Hierusalem above, is clear, if we consult with ver. 22. 'And I saw no temple therein:' while we dwell upon earth, there is need

of a temple, we shall not be above ordinances till we are above sin; but in heaven, God will be instead of a temple, 'he shall be all in all.' And ver. 25. 'there shall be no night there:' no city is to be found, not the most glorious metropolis under heaven, where it is always day: for though some regions which lie immediately under the pole, have light for several months together; yet when the sun withdraws from the horizon, they have as long a night as before they had a day: but saith the text, 'There shall be no night there.' In hell it is all night, but in heaven the day will be ever lengthening. Now this blessed inheritance which the saints shall possess, hath eight properties, or rather privileges worth our serious thoughts.

1. Sublimeness. It is set out by a great and high mountain, Rev. xxi. 10. It is placed above the aery and starry heaven, saith Musculus; it is the empyræan heaven which Saint Paul calls the third heaven. For the situation of it; it is far above all heavens, where Christ himself is: this is the royal palace where saints shall dwell. The men of this world are high in power and in pride; but if they could build their nests among the stars, the elect shall shortly be above them; they shall take their flight as high as Christ: here is a preferment worth looking after.

2. Magnificence. It is set out by pearls and precious stones, the richest jewels. If the streets are of gold, what is the furniture and hangings? what is the cabinet of jewels? I wonder not that 'the violent take it by force,' Mat. xi. 12. I rather wonder others are not more violent: what are all the rarities of the world to this? The coasts of pearl, the islands of spices, the rocks of diamonds? what a rich place must that needs be, where God will lay out his cost? where wisdom doth contrive, and bounty doth disburse?

Fulgentius beholding the pomp and splendour of the Roman senate-house, cried out, O how beautiful is the celestial Hierusalem, if the terrestrial senate-house be so glorious! In this blessed inheritance there is nothing but glory; there is the king of glory; there are the vessels of glory; there are the thrones of glory; there is the weight of glory; there are the crowns of glory; there is the kingdom of glory; there is the brightness of glory: this is a purchase worth getting. What will not men adventure for a kingdom? the worst come to the worst, it is but venturing our blood, we need not venture our conscience.

3. Purity. Heaven is set forth under the metaphor of 'pure gold, and transparent glass,' Rev. xxi. 11. the apostle calls it 'an inheritance undefiled.' Heaven is a pure place; it is compared to the sapphire, xxi. 19. the sapphire is a precious stone of a bright sky colour, and it hath a virtue in it, saith Pliny, to preserve chastness and purity. Thus heaven is represented by the sapphire; it is a place where only the refined sublimated spirits do enter. And heaven is compared to the emerald, ver. 19. which (as writers say) hath a precious virtue to expel poison. Heaven is such a pure soil, that as no fever of lust, so no venom of malice shall be there; with the emerald it will expel poison. There shall not enter into it any thing, 'that defileth,' Rev. xxi. 27. It is a kingdom wherein 'dwells righteousness,' 2 Pet. iii. 13. In this lower region of the world there is little righteousness; 'They set up wickedness by a law,' Ps. xciv. 20. and the wicked devours his neighbour, 'which is more righteous than he,' Hab. i. 13. The just man is oppressed because he is just. One saith, there is more justice to be found in hell than here among them: for in hell no innocent person is oppressed; but here righteousness is the thing that is persecuted. A man can

hardly tread two steps, but either into sin or into suffering. In this world, the sinner need not fear any punitive vindictive act of justice; rather he that reproves sin may fear. Holiness is the white that the Devil shoots at: but heaven is a kingdom wherein dwells righteousness; there is the judge of the world, 'who puts on righteousness as a breast-plate; who loves righteousness.'

4. Peaceableness. The word Peace, comprehends all blessings. Peace is the glory of a kingdom: this white lily is the best flower of a prince's crown. How happy was the reign of Numa Pompilius, when the bees made their hives in the soldiers' helmets! but where shall we find an uninterrupted peace upon earth? either divisions at home, or wars abroad, the beating of the drums, the roaring of the cannons, the sounding of the trumpets. Solomon's kingdom was peaceable a while, but how soon had he an alarm given him! 1 Kings xi. 14. 'The Lord stirred up an adversary against him.' How soon do the clouds of blood drop after a little sun-shine of peace! but the inheritance to come is peaceable; there is the 'Prince of Peace;' there the saints enter into peace. The harp, in ancient times, was made the hieroglyphic of peace; in heaven there shall be the 'voice of harpers harping.' The saints in this life wear 'garments rolled in blood;' but in a state of glory, they are said to wear 'white robes,' which shall not be stained with the blood of war any more: in heaven righteousness and peace shall kiss each other.

6. Amplitude. The inheritance is sufficiently spacious for all the saints. The garner wide enough to receive all those infinite grains of wheat that shall be laid in it: 'And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, &c. The city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth, and he measured the city with the reed

twelve thousand furlongs.' Or, as I find it in some Greek copies, 'twelve times twelve thousand furlongs.' Here is a finite put for an infinite; impossible it is that any arithmetician should number these furlongs: it is a phrase only that darkly shadows out the amplitude and largeness of this celestial city. Though there be innumerable companies of saints and angels in heaven, yet there is infinitely room enough to receive them: 'In my Father's house are many mansions.' Some are of opinion that every believer shall have a particular mansion in glory. Every saint shall have his kingdom, saith Jansenius. We know our Saviour told his apostles that they should sit upon twelve thrones. Certainly the saints shall not be straitened for room. The continent of glory is wide enough for the most sublime spirits to expatiate in.

6. Safety. It is an inheritance that the saints cannot be defrauded of; it is in safe hands. God keeps the inheritance for them, 1 Pet. i. 4. and keeps them for the inheritance, 1 Pet. i. 5. so that there can be no defalcation, nothing can hinder the saints from taking possession.

7. Light. It is called an inheritance 'in light.' If every star were a sun, it could never shadow out the bright lustre of this celestial paradise. Light is a glorious creature; what were all the world without light but a dark prison? What beauty is there in the sun when it is masked with a cloud? Light doth actuate the colours, and makes every flower appear in its fresh beauty. Heaven is a *diaphanum* or bright body, all over embroidered with light; not like *cælum stellatum*, or starry heaven, here and there bespangled with stars, but other parts of it like chequer-work interwoven with darkness. Here Christ as a continual sun shall give light to the whole heaven. 'The Lamb shall be the light thereof;' indeed all other light, in comparison of this, is but

like the twilight, or rather the midnight. Here alone are the shining rays of beauty, which every glorified eye shall be enabled both to behold and to possess; and this light shall have no night to eclipse or extinguish it; when once the Sun of Righteousness hath risen upon the soul, it shall never set any more. This is an high gradation of the glory of heaven, it is an inheritance in light. When the scripture would set forth the blessedness of God himself, it makes it consist in this, 'He dwelleth in light.'

8. Permanency. It is an inheritance incorruptible. It runs parallel with eternity; eternity is a circle that hath neither beginning nor end; a sea that hath neither bottom nor banks. This is the glory of the celestial paradise, it abides for ever. If we could by our arithmetic reckon up more millions of ages than there have been minutes since the creation, after all this time (which were a short eternity) the inheritance of the saints shall be as far from ending as it was at the beginning. 'The world passeth away,' 1 John ii. 17. every thing is passing: It is good to look upon the world as the heathens did upon pleasure; they looked upon the back parts of pleasure, and saw it going away from them and leaving a sting. The world is passing away, but heaven never passeth, therefore surpasseth. Evil things, (as pain and misery,) length of time makes them worse; but good things, (as joy and pleasure,) length of time makes them better: heaven's eminency is its permanency. Things are prized and valued by the time we have in them; lands or houses in fee-simple, which are to a man and his heirs for ever, are esteemed far better than leases, which soon expire. The saints do not lease heaven; it is not their landlord's house, but their Father's house: and this house never falls to decay; it is a mansion-house, John xiv. 2. There is nothing excellent (saith Na-

zianzene) that is not perpetual; the comforts of the world are fluid and uncertain, like a fading garland, therefore they are shadowed out by the tabernacle, which was transient; but heaven is set out by the temple, which was fixed and permanent: it was made of strong materials, built with stone, covered with cedar, over-laid with gold. Eternity is the highest link of the saint's happiness; the soul of a believer shall be for ever bathing itself in the pure and pleasant fountain of bliss. The lamp of glory shall be ever burning, never wasting: as there is no intermission in the joys of heaven, so no expiration. When once God hath set his plants in the celestial paradise, he will never pluck them up any more; he will never transplant them: never will Christ lose any member of this body; you may sooner separate light from the sun, than a glorified saint from Jesus Christ. O eternity, eternity! what a spring will that be, that shall have no autumn? what a day, that shall have no night! Methinks I see the morning-star appear, it is break of day already. Concerning the glory of this blessed inheritance, let me super-add these four things.

1. The glory of heaven is ponderous and weighty; it is called 'a weight of glory,' 2 Cor. iv. 17. God must make us able to bear it. This weight of glory should make sufferings light: this weight should make us throw away the weights of sin out of our hands, though they be golden weights: who would for the indulging of a lust, forfeit so glorious an inheritance? lay the whole world in scales with it, it is lighter than vanity.

2. It is infinitely satisfying. There is no vacuity or indigency; this can be said properly of nothing but heaven. You that court the world for honour and preferment, remember the creature saith concerning satisfaction, It is not in me. Heaven only is commensurate to the vast desires of the soul. Here

the christian cries out in a divine extacy, I have enough, my Saviour, I have enough. Thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleasures; not drops, but rivers, and these only can quench the thirst. It shall be every day festival in heaven; there is no want at a feast: there shall be excellency shining in its perfection. The world is but a jail; the body is the fetter with which the soul is bound; if there be any thing in a jail to delight, what is the palace and the throne? what is heaven? If we meet with any comfort in Mount Horeb, what is in Mount Zion? All the world is like a landscape; you may see orchards and gardens curiously drawn in the landscape, but you cannot enter into them; you may enter into this heavenly paradise, 2 Pet. i. 11. 'For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom,' &c. Here is soul-satisfaction.

3. Though an innumerable company of saints and angels have a part in this inheritance, there is never the less for thee. Here is a propriety in a community; another man's beholding the sun doth not make me to have the lesser light: thus will it be in glory. Usually here, all the land goes to the heir, the younger are put off with small portions. In heaven all the saints are heirs; the youngest believer is an heir, and God hath land enough to give to all his heirs. All the angels and arch-angels have their portion paid out; yet a believer shall never have the less. Is not Christ the heir of all things? Heb. i. 2. and the saints co-heirs? Rom. viii. 17. they share with Christ in the same glory. It is true, one vessel may hold more than another, but every vessel shall be full.

4. The souls of the elect shall enter upon possession immediately after death, 2 Cor. v. 8. 'We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.' There are some that

say, the souls of the elect sleep in their bodies, but the apostle here confutes it; for if the soul be absent from the body, how can it sleep in the body? There is an immediate transition and passage from death to glory, 'the soul returns to God that gave it.' Christ's resurrection was before his ascension; but the saints' ascension is before their resurrection. The body may be compared to the bubble in the water, the soul to the wind that fills it; you see the bubble riseth higher and higher, at last it breaks into the open air; so the body is but like a bubble, which riseth from infancy to youth, from youth to age, higher and higher; at last this bubble breaks, and dissolves into dust, and the spirit ascends into the open air: it returns unto God that gave it.

Be of good comfort, we shall not stay long for our inheritance; it is but winking, and we shall see God. O the glory of this paradise! When we are turned out of all, let us think of this inheritance which is to come; faith itself is not able to reach it: it is more than we can hope for. I may say of this celestial paradise, as once the children of Dan said of Laish, Judg. xviii. 9, 10. 'We have seen the land, and behold it is very good; a place where there is no want of any thing.' Faith being sent out as a spy to search the land of promise, returns this answer, 'There is no want of any thing.' There can be no want where Christ is, who is 'all in all,' Eph. iii. 11. In heaven there is health without sickness, plenty without famine, riches without poverty, life without death. There is unspotted chastity, unstained honour, unparalleled beauty. There is the tree of life in the midst of paradise; there is the river that waters the garden; there is the vine flourishing, and the pomegranates budding, Cant. vi. 11. There is the banqueting house, where are all those delicacies and rarities, wherewith God himself is delighted: while we are sitting at that table, Christ's

‘spikenard will send forth its smell,’ Cant. i. 12. There is the bed of love, there are the curtains of Solomon, there are the mountains of spices, and the streams from Lebanon, there are the cherubims, not to keep us out, but to welcome us into paradise; there shall the saints be adorned, as a bride with pearls of glory; there will God give us abundantly, ‘above all that we are able to ask or think,’ Eph. iii. 20. Is not here enough? What cannot an ambitious spirit ask? Haman’s aspiring heart could have asked not only the king’s royal robe, and the ring from his hand, but the crown from his head too; a man can ask a century of kingdoms, a million of worlds: but in heaven God will give us more than we can ask; nay, more than we can think: an high expression! what cannot we think? We can think, what if all the dust of the earth were turned to silver, what if every stone were a wedge of gold, what if every flower were a ruby, every pile of grass a pearl, every sand in the sea a diamond! yet what were all this to the ‘New Jerusalem which is above?’ It is as impossible for any man in his deepest thoughts to comprehend glory, as it is ‘to mete the heaven with a span,’ or drain the great ocean. ○ incomparable place! Methinks our souls should be big with longing for this blessed inheritance! All this that I have told you of heaven, may make you say as Monica, Austin’s mother, what do I do here? why is my soul any longer held with the earthen fetter of this flesh? Cleombrotus having read Plato’s piece of the immortality of the soul, being ravished with desire of those golden delights in the other world, killed himself. Though we must not break prison till God open it, yet how should we long for a jail delivery! how should we be inflamed with desire to taste of those rare and sweet delicacies, which are above at God’s right hand! O what madness is it for men to spin out their time, and tire out

their strength in the things of this world! which is to imitate Dionysius, who busied himself in catching flies. Surely, were we 'carried away in the Spirit,' I mean, elevated by the power of faith, to the contemplation of this royal and stately palace of glory; I know not whether we should more wonder at the lustre of heaven, or at the dulness of such as mind earthly things. How is the world adored, which is but a pageant or apparition! It is reported of Cæsar, that travelling on a time through a certain city, as he passed along, he saw the women, for the most part, playing with monkies and parrots; at which sight he said, What! have they no children to play with? So I say, when I see men toying with these earthly and beggarly delights; what! are there not more glorious and sublime things to look after? That which our Saviour said to the woman of Samaria, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water;' the same may I say, did men know these eternal mansions, and what it were to be digging in these rich mines of glory. Would God give them a vision of heaven a while, as he did Peter, who saw 'heaven opened,' Acts x. 11. how would they fall into a trance, (being amazed and filled with joy!) and being a little recovered out of it, how importunately would they beg of God, that they might be adopted into this stately inheritance! But why do I expatiate? these things are unspeakable and full of glory. Had I as many tongues as hairs on my head, I could never sufficiently set forth the beauty and resplendency of this inheritance. Such was the curious art of Apelles in drawing of pictures, that if another had taken up the pencil to draw, he had spoiled all Apelles' work. Such is the excellency of this celestial paradise, that if the angels should take up their pencil to delineate it in

its colours, they would but stain and eclipse the glory of it. I have given you only the dark shadow in the picture, and that but rudely and imperfectly: such is the beauty and bliss of this inheritance, that as Chrysostom saith, if it were possible that all the sufferings of the saints could be laid upon one man, it were not worth one hour's being in heaven.

Some of the learned are of opinion, that we shall know our friends in heaven: nor to me doth it seem improbable; for surely our knowledge there shall not be eclipsed or diminished, but increased. And that which Anselm doth assert, that we shall have a knowledge of the patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, all that were before us, and shall be after us, our predecessors and successors, to me seems very rational; for society without acquaintance is not comfortable, and methinks the scripture doth hint this much; if Peter and James, having but a glimpse of glory, (when our Lord was transfigured on the mount), were able to know Moses and Elias, whom they had never seen before, how much more shall we, being infinitely irradiated and enlightened with the Sun of Righteousness, know all the saints, though we were never acquainted with them before? and this will be very comfortable. Certainly there will be nothing wanting that may complete the saints' happiness.

Now that this glorious inheritance is the saints' prerogative, I shall evince by two arguments.

It is so, 1. In respect of the many obligations that lie upon God for performing this. As, 1. In regard of his promise, Tit. i. 2. 'In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promised.' God's promise is better than any man's bond. 2. In regard of his oath: 'He who is truth hath sworn,' Heb. vi. 17. 3. In regard to the price that is paid for it, Christ's blood. Heaven is not only a promised possession, but a purchased possession, Eph. i.

14. 4. In regard of Christ's prayer for it: 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.' Now God can deny Christ nothing, being the only favourite: 'I know thou always hearest me,' John xi. 42. 5. In regard of Christ's ascension. He is gone before us to take possession of heaven for us: he is now making preparations against our coming, John xiv. 2. 'I go before to prepare a place for you.' We read that our Lord sent two of his disciples before to make ready 'a large upper room for the passover,' Mark xiv. 15. So Jesus Christ is gone before to make ready a large upper room in heaven for the saints. 6. In regard of the anticipation of the Spirit in the hearts of the godly, giving them an assurance of, and stirring up in them passionate desires after this glorious inheritance; hence it is, we read of the earnest of the Spirit, 2 Cor. i. 22. and the first-fruits of the Spirit, Rom. viii. 23. and the seal of the Spirit, Eph. i. 13. God doth not still his children with rattles. Heaven is already begun in a believer, so that the inheritance is certain. You see how many obligations lie upon God, and to speak with reverence, it stands not only upon God's mercy, but upon his faithfulness to make all this good to us.

The second argument is in respect of the union which the saints have with Jesus Christ. They are members of Christ, therefore they must have a part in this blessed inheritance: the member must be where the head is. Indeed the Arminians tell us, that a justified person may fall finally from grace, and so his union with Christ may be dissolved, and the inheritance lost. But how absurd is this doctrine? is Christ divided? can he lose a member of his body? then his body is not perfect; for how can that body be perfect which wants a limb? and if Christ may lose one member from his body, why

not as well all by the same reason? and so he shall be a head without a body. But be assured, the union with Christ cannot be broken, John xvii. 12. and so long the inheritance cannot be lost. What was said of Christ's natural body, is as true of the mystical: 'a bone of it shall not be broken.' Look how every bone and limb of Christ's natural body was raised up out of the grave, and carried into heaven: so shall every member of his mystical body, joined to him by the eternal Spirit, be carried up into glory. Fear not, O ye saints, neither sin nor Satan can dissolve your union with Christ, nor by consequence hinder you of that blessed place where your Head is.

Quest. Here it will be asked, 'Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?' Psal. xxiv. 3. who shall be a citizen of this new Hierusalem which is above?

Ans. The new creature: this you read of, 2 Cor. v. 17. This new creature doth prepare us for the new Hierusalem. This is the divine and curious artifice of the Holy Ghost in our hearts, forming Christ in us: the same Holy Ghost that overshadowed the Virgin Mary, and formed the human nature of Christ in her womb, doth work and produce this new creature. O thou blessed man and woman, in whom this new creature is formed! I may say to thee, as the angel to Mary, 'That which is conceived in thee, is of the Holy Ghost.' Of all God's creatures, the new creature is the best: then let me ask, art thou a new creature? art thou a scion cut off from the wild olive of nature, and ingrafted into a new stock, the tree of life? Hath God defaced and dismantled the old man in thee? doth some limb drop off every day? hast thou a new heart? Till then thou art not fit for the new heaven. Art thou new all over? hast thou a new eye to discern the things that differ? hast thou a

new appetite? doth the pulse of thy soul beat after Christ? It is only the new creature which shall be their of the New Jerusalem. When thou wast sailing to hell, (for we have both wind and tide to carry us thither), hath the north and south wind awaked? hath the gale of the Spirit blown upon thee, and turned thy course? art thou now sailing to a new port? hath the seal of the word stamped a new and heavenly print upon thee? Then I am speaking all this while to thee; this blessed inheritance is entailed upon thee.

But if thou art an old sinner, expect that heaven should be kept, as paradise, with a flaming sword, that thou may est not enter. Be assured, God will never put the new wine of glory into an old musty bottle: heaven is not like Noah's ark, that received clean beasts into it, and unclean: nor like Pharaoh's court, where the vermin came: this inheritance doth not receive all comers. It is only the wheat that goes into Christ's garner; what hath the chaff to do there? this inheritance is only for 'them that are sanctified,' Acts xx. 32. Is thy heart consecrated ground? We read that in the time of Ezra, after the return of the people from the captivity, some who were ambitious of the priesthood, sought the writings of the genealogies, but they were not found among the numbers of the priests, 'therefore they were put by as polluted from the priesthood:' so whosoever they be that think to have a part in this blessed place, if their names be not found; that is, if they are not enrolled among the new creatures, they shall be put away as polluted from this inheritance.

CHAP. X.

The Fifth Prerogative Royal.

I Pass on to the next prerogative royal, which is :
 5. Our knowledge shall be clear. Knowledge is a beautiful thing; such was Adam's ambition to know more, that by tasting the tree of knowledge, he lost the tree of life: In heaven our knowledge shall be clear. Religion is a continued riddle; many things we have now but in the notion, which then we shall see perfectly; now, 'we know but in part.' The best christian hath a veil on his eye, as the Jews have upon their heart; hereafter the veil shall be taken off. Here we see through a glass darkly, in a riddle, mystery, then, face to face; that is, clearly.

There are five mysteries which God will clear up to us when we are in heaven.

1. The great mystery of the Trinity : this we know but in part. Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, where one makes three, and three make but one: this is bad arithmetic, but good divinity ; we have but dark conceptions of it : it is a mystery so deep, that we may soon wade beyond our depth.

Augustine being to write his books of the Trinity, was taught modesty by a child, who was lading the sea into a little spoon; to whom Augustine said, that he laboured in vain; for his little spoon would not contain the sea; to whom the child answered, my little spoon will sooner hold this vast ocean, than your shallow brain can contain the depth of the Trinity. How little a portion is known of God? If Job asked the question, who can understand the thunder? we may much more ask, who can understand the Trinity? but in heaven we shall see God as he is, that is, perfectly.

Quest. But shall every saint enjoy God so perfectly, that he shall have the same knowledge that God hath?

Ans. The infinite essence of God shall appear to the saints *tota*, but not *totaliter*; we shall have a full knowledge of God, but not know him fully, yet we shall take in so much of God as our human nature is capable of; it will be a bright and glorious knowledge: here we know him but by his power, wisdom, mercy: we see but his back-parts; there we shall see him face to face.

2. - The mystery of the incarnation; Christ assuming our human nature, and marrying it to the divine. Therefore called God-man, God with us. A mystery which the angels in heaven adore. God said, 'The man is become as one of us, Gen. iii. 22. but now we may say, God himself is become as one of us! it was not only *mirandum*, but *miraculum*. There was nothing within the sphere of natural causes to produce it. The incarnation of Christ is *catena aurea*, a golden chain made up of several links of miracles. For instance, that the Creator of heaven should become a creature; that eternity should be born; that he whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, should be enclosed in the womb; that he who thunders in the clouds, should cry in the cradle; that he who rules the stars, should suck the breasts; that he who upholds all things by the word of his power, should himself be upheld; that a virgin should conceive; that Christ should be made of a woman, and of that woman which himself made; that the creature should give a being to the Creator; that the star should give light to the sun; that the branch should bear the vine; that the mother should be younger than the child she bare; and the child in the womb bigger than the mother; that he who is a Spirit, should be made flesh; that Christ should be without fa-

ther, and without mother, yet have both; without mother in the God-head, without father in the manhood; that Christ being incarnate, should have two natures, (the divine and human), and yet but one person; that the divine nature should not be infused into the human, nor the human mixed with the divine, yet assumed into the person of the Son of God; the human nature not God, yet one with God. Here is, I say, a chain of miracles.

I acknowledge the mercy of the incarnation was great, we having now both affinity and consanguinity with Jesus Christ: Christ's incarnation is the saint's inauguration.

The love of Christ in the incarnation was great; for herein he did set a pattern without a parallel; in clothing himself with our flesh, which is but walking ashes, he hath sewed, as it were, sackcloth to cloth of gold, the humanity to the Deity. But though the incarnation be so rich a blessing, yet it is hard to say which is the greater, the mercy or the mystery. It is a sacred depth, how doth it transcend reason, and even puzzle faith! We know but in part, we see this only in a glass darkly, but in heaven our knowledge shall be cleared up, we shall fully understand this divine riddle.

3. The mystery of scripture: the hard knots of scripture shall be untied, and dark prophecies fulfilled. There is a sacred depth in scripture which we must adore: some places of scripture are hard in the sense, others dark in the phrase, and cannot well be translated in regard of ambiguity; one Hebrew word having such various, and sometimes contrary significations, that it is very difficult to know which is the genuine sense. As it is with a traveller which is not skilled in his way, when he comes to a turning where the way parts, he is at a stand, and knows not which of the ways to take; such difficulties and labyrinths are there in scrip-

ture. It is true, all things purely necessary to salvation, are clear in the word of God; but there are some sacred depths that we cannot fathom, and this may make us long after heaven, when our light shall be clear. So for prophecies, some are very abstruse and profound; divines may shoot their arrows, but it is hard to say how near they may come to the mark: it is dubious whether in such a particular age and century of the church, such a prophecy was fulfilled. The Jews have a saying when they meet with an hard scripture they understand not, Elias will come and interpret these things to us; we expect not Elias; but when we are in heaven, we shall understand prophecies; our knowledge shall be clear.

4. The great mystery of providence shall be cleared up. Providence is the queen of the world; it is the hand that turns all the wheels in the universe; Chrysostom calls it the pilot that steers the ship of the creation. Providences are often dark; God writes sometimes in short-hand: the characters of providence are so various and strange, and our eyes are so dim, that we know not what to make of providence: hence we are ready to censure that which we do not understand: we think that things are very eccentric and disorderly; God's providence is sometimes secret, always wise. The dispensations of providence are often sad, 'Judgment beginning at the house of God,' and the 'just man perishing in his righteousness,' Eccles. vii. 15. that is, while he is pursuing a righteous cause: though his way be pious, it is not always prosperous: and on the other side, those that work wickedness 'are set up, yea, they that tempt God are delivered,' Mal. iii. 15. Though now our candle be in a dark lanthorn, and the people of God cannot tell what God is a doing, yet when they are in heaven they shall see the reason of these transactions: they shall see that every

providence served for the fulfilling of God's promise, viz. 'That all things shall work together for good,' Rom. viii. 28. In a watch the wheels seem to move cross one to another, but all carry on the motion of the watch, all serve to make the alarm strike; so the wheels of providence seem to move cross, but all shall carry on the good of the elect; all the lines shall meet at last in the centre of the promise; in heaven, as we shall see mercy and justice, so we shall see promises, and providences kissing each other: Our light shall be clear. When a man is at the bottom of an hill, he cannot see very far: but when he is on the top, he may see many miles distant. Here the saints of God are in the valley of tears, they are at the bottom of the hill, and cannot tell what God is a doing; but when they come to heaven, and shall be on the top of the mount, they shall see all the glorious transactions of God's providence; never a providence but they shall see either a wonder or a mercy wrapt up in it. A limner, at the first makes a rude draught in the picture, here an eye, there an hand; but when he hath limned it out in all its parts and lineaments, and laid them in their colours, it is beautiful to behold. We that live in this age of the church, see but a rude draught, as it were some dark pieces of God's providence represented, and it is impossible that we should judge of God's work by pieces; but when we come to heaven, and see the full body and portraiture of God's providence drawn out in its lively colours, it will be a most glorious sight to behold: providence shall be unriddled.

5. The mystery of hearts. We shall see an heart-anatomy, Eccles. xii. 14. 'For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing.' We shall see the designs and cabinet-counsels of mens' hearts discovered; then the hypocrite's mask

shall fall off. Oh the black conclave that is in the heart of man! The heart is deep: it may be compared to a river which hath fair streams running on the top, but when this river comes to be drained, their lies abundance of vermin at the bottom: thus it is with man's heart, there are fair streams running on the top, a civil life, a religious profession; but at the day of judgment, when God shall drain this river, and make a discovery of hearts, then all the vermin of ambition, covetousness, shall appear, all shall come out: then we shall see whether Jehu's design was zeal for God, or the kingdom; we shall see clearly whether Jezabel had more mind to keep a fast, or to get Naboth's vineyard: then we shall see whether Herod had more mind to worship Christ, or to worry him; all the secrets of mens' hearts shall be laid open; methinks, it would be worth dying to see this sight. We shall then see who is the Achan, who is the Judas; the womens' paint falls off from their faces when they come near the fire; before the scorching heat of God's justice, the hypocrite's paint will drop off, and the treason hid in his heart will be visible; these mysteries will God reveal to us: our knowledge shall be clear.

CHAP. XI.

The Sixth Prerogative Royal.

THE next privilege, is, our love shall be perfect: love is the jewel with which Christ's bride is adorned: in one sense it is more excellent than faith; for love never ceaseth, 1 Cor. xiii. 8. The spouse shall put off her jewel of faith, when she goes to heaven: but she shall never put off her jewel of love: love shall be perfect.

1. Our love to God shall be perfect: the saint's love shall be joined with reverence; for a filial dis-

position shall remain, but there shall be no servile fear in heaven. Horror and trembling is proper to the damned in hell; though in heaven there shall be a reverencing fear, yet a rejoicing fear: we shall see that in God which will work such a delight that we cannot but love him: and this love to God shall be, 1. A fervent love. Our love to God in this life is rather a desire, but in heaven the smoke of desire shall be blown up into a flame of love; we shall love God with an intenseness of love, and thus the saints shall be like the seraphims who are so called from their burning. Here our love is lukewarm, and sometimes frozen: a child of God weeps that he can love God no more; but there is a time shortly coming when our love to God shall be fervent, it shall burn as hot as it can: the damned shall be in a flame of fire, the elect in a flame of love. 2. A fixed love. Alas, how soon is our love taken off from God! other objects presenting themselves, steal away our love. 'Your goodness is like a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away:' in the morning you shall see the grass covered with drops of dew, as so many pearls, but before noon all is vanished; so it is with our love to God: perhaps at a sermon, when our affections are stirred, the heart melts in love; and at a sacrament, when we see Christ's blood, as it were, trickling down upon the cross, some love-drops fall from the heart; but within a few days all is vanished, and we have lost our first love: this is matter of humiliation while we live. But O ye saints, comfort yourselves, in heaven your love shall be fixed, as well as fervent; it shall never be taken off from God any more: such beauty and excellency shall shine in God, that as a divine loadstone it will be always drawing your eyes and heart after him.

2. Our love to the saints shall be perfect: love is a sweet harmony, a tuning and chiming together

of affections. It is our duty to love the saints, 1. Though they are of bad dispositions; sometimes their nature is so rugged and unhewn, that grace doth not cast forth such a lustre; it is like a gold ring on a leprous hand, or a diamond set in iron: yet if there be any thing of Christ, it is our duty to love it. 2. Though they in some things differ from us, yet if we see Christ's image or portraiture drawn upon their hearts, we are to separate the precious from the vile. But alas, how defective is this grace? how little love is there among God's people? Herod and Pilate can agree: wicked men unite when saints divide. For the divisions of England there are great thoughts of heart; contentions were never more hot, love never more cold: many there are whose music consists all in discord, whose harp is the cross; that pretend to love truth, but hate peace. Divisions are Satan's powder-plot to blow up religion. Histories relate that in the time of the emperor Commodus, the temple of Peace at Rome was burned down to the ground; it was a stately edifice, richly adorned with donaries of gold and silver: the burning of this temple was very ominous, and did presage war among the Romans. I may too truly allude, sin kindled the fire of separation, and this fire hath burned down the temple of peace in England, and now we are crumbled into factions: for these things there are great thoughts of heart. It were not strange to hear the harlot say, Let the child be divided; but to hear the mother say so, this is sad. If pope, cardinal, jesuit, all conspire against the church of God, it were not strange; but for one saint to persecute another, this is strange. For a wolf to worry a lamb is usual, but for a lamb to worry a lamb is unnatural. For Christ's lily to be among the thorns, is ordinary; but for this lily to become a thorn, to tear and fetch blood of itself, this is strange? How will Christ

take this at our hands? would he not have his coat rent, and will he have his body rent? O that I could speak here weeping! Well, this will be a foil to set off heaven the more; there is a time shortly coming when our love shall be perfect, there shall be no difference of judgment in heaven; there the saints shall be all of a piece: though we fall out by the way, and about the way, we shall all agree in the journey's end. The cherubims, representing the angels, are set out 'with their faces looking one upon another;' in this life christians turn their backs one upon another, but in heaven they shall be like the cherubims with their faces looking one upon another. It is observed, that the olive tree and the myrtle have a wonderful sympathy, and if they grow near together, will mutually embrace, and twist about each others roots and branches: christians in this life are like tearing brambles, but in heaven they shall be like the olive and myrtle, sweetly embrace one another. When once the blessed harp of Christ's voice hath sounded in the ears of the saints, the evil spirit shall be quite driven away. When our strings shall be wound up to the highest pitch of glory, you shall never hear any more discord in the saints' music: in heaven there shall be a perfect harmony.

CHAP. XII.

The Seventh Prerogative Royal.

THE next glorious privilege to come, is the resurrection of our bodies. Trajan's ashes after death were brought to Rome and honoured, being set upon the top of a famous pillar: so the ashes of the saint's at the resurrection shall be honoured, and shine as silver dust: this is an article of our faith. Now for the illustration of this, there are three

things considerable: 1. That there is such a thing as the resurrection. 2. That this is not yet past. 3. That the same body that dies shall rise again.

1. I shall prove the proposition that there is a resurrection of the body. There are some of the Sadducees of opinion that there is no resurrection, then 'let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' 1 Cor. xv. 32. To what purpose are all our prayers and tears? and indeed it were well for them who are in their life-time as brute beasts, if it might be with them as beasts after death; but there is a resurrection of the body, as well as an ascension of the soul; which I shall prove by two arguments.

1. Because Christ is risen, therefore we must rise: the head being raised, the rest of the body shall not always lie in the grave, for then it would be an head without a body: his rising is a pledge of our resurrection, 1 Thess. iv. 14.

2. In regard of justice and equity. The bodies of the wicked have been weapons of unrighteousness, and have joined with the soul in sin; their eyes have been a casement to let in vanity, their hands have been full of bribes, their feet have been swift to shed blood; therefore justice and equity require that they should rise again, and their bodies be punished with their souls. Again, the bodies of the saints have been members of holiness; their eyes have dropped down tears for sin, their hands have relieved the poor, their tongues have been trumpets of God's praise, therefore justice and equity require that they should rise again, that their bodies as well as their souls may be crowned. There must be a resurrection, else how should there be a remuneration? We are more sure to rise out of our graves than out of our beds. The bodies of the wicked are locked up in the grave as in a prison; that they may not infest the church of God; and at the day of judgment they shall be brought out of

the prison to trial; and the bodies of the saints are laid in the grave, as in a bed of perfume, where they mellow and ripen against the resurrection. Noah's olive tree springing after the flood, the blossoming of Aaron's dry rod, the flesh and sinews coming to Ezekiel's dry bones, what were these but lively emblems of the resurrection?

2. That this resurrection is not yet past. Some hold that it is past, and make the resurrection to be nothing else but regeneration, which is called a rising from sin, and a 'being risen with Christ;' and do affirm, that there is no other resurrection but this, and that only the soul is with God in happiness, not the body. Of this opinion were Hymeneus and Philetus, 2 Tim. ii. 18. But the rising from sin is called the first resurrection, Rev. i. 6. which implies that there is a second resurrection; and that second I shall prove out of Dan. xii. 2. 'And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake;' he doth not say they are already awake, but they shall awake. And John v. 28. 'The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.' Observe, Christ doth not say, they are come forth of the grave already, but they shall come forth.

Here a question may be moved, Whether the bodies of some of the saints are not in heaven already? then it will seem that their resurrection is not yet to come; as we read that Elias was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot; and Enoch, Heb. xi. 5. 'was translated, that he might not see death.'

Ans. I know the question is controverted among divines; and should it be granted that they are bodily in heaven, by an extraordinary writ, or dispensation from God, this doth not at all disprove a ge-

neral resurrection to come. But there are some reasons do incline me to think that Enoch and Elias are not yet bodily in heaven, nor shall be till the resurrection of all flesh, when the rest of the elect, like a precious crop, being fully ripe, shall be translated into glory. The first is Heb. xi. 13. where it is said, 'these all died in faith,' where Enoch was included: now why we should restrain this word, these, only to Abel, Noah, Abraham, and not also to Enoch, I see no rational ground.

Quest. But is it not said, he was translated, 'that he might not see death;' how can these two stand together, that Enoch died, yet he did not see death?

Ans. These words, that he might not see death, I conceive (with some other divines) the meaning is, that he might not see it in that painful and horrid manner as others: his soul had an easy and joyful passage out of his body; he died not after the common manner of men: seeing and feeling are in scripture oft exegetical, the one is put for the other.

2. My second argument is, John iii. 2. 'We know when he shall appear, we shall be like him.' We read in scripture but of two appearings of Christ, his appearing in the flesh, and his appearing at the day of judgment. Now his appearing in this text, must needs be meant of his last appearing: and what then? then saith the apostle, 'we shall be like him,' that is, in our bodies, Phil. iii. 21. The spirits of just men being already made perfect, Heb. xii. 23. whence I infer, Enoch is not yet ascended bodily into heaven, because none of the bodies of the saints shall be fully made like Christ till his second appearing. 3. Besides this, may be added the judgment of many of the Fathers, who were pious and learned. It is not probable that Enoch and Elias should be taken up in their bodies into heaven, saith Peter Martyr; and he urgeth that saying of our Lord, 'No man hath ascended into heaven,'

(that is, saith he, corporeally) 'but the Son of man that descended from heaven.' Of this opinion also is Œcolampadius, Martinus, Borrhæus, and learned Doctor Fulk, who in his marginal notes upon the xith to the Hebrews, hath this descant: "It appeareth not, saith he, that Enoch now liveth in the body, no more than Moses; but that he was translated by God out of the world, and died not after the common manner of men." And concerning Elijah, the same reverend author hath this passage: "It is evident that he was taken up alive; but not that he continueth alive." And again, "Because we read expressly, that he was taken up into heaven, 2 Kings ii. 11. it is certain (saith he) that his body was not carried into heaven." Christ being the first that in perfect humanity ascended thither, 1 Cor. xv. 20. 'Christ is become the first fruits of them that sleep.' He is called the first fruits, not only because he was the most excellent, and sanctified the rest, but because he was the first cluster which was gathered; the first that went up in a corporeal manner into the seat of the blessed: hence we see that the resurrection is yet to come.

3. The third thing is, That at the resurrection every soul shall have its own body: the same body that dies shall arise. Some hold that the soul shall be clothed with a new body, but then it were improper to call it a resurrection of the body, it should be rather a creation. It was a custom in the African churches to say, I believe the resurrection of this body. I confess, the doctrine of the resurrection is such, that it is too deep for reason to wade: you must let faith swim. For instance, suppose a man dying is cast into the sea, several fishes come and devour him, the substance of his body goes into these fishes, afterwards the fishes are taken and eaten, and the substance of these fishes go into several men; now how this body, thus devoured, and as it were

crumbled into a thousand fractions, should be raised the same individual body, is infinitely above reason to imagine, we have scarce faith enough to believe it.

Ques. How can this be?

Ans. To such I say as our blessed Saviour, Matt. xxii. 19. 'Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. 1. Not knowing the scriptures: The scripture tells us expressly, that the same body that dies shall rise again, Job xix. 26. 'In my flesh shall I see God,' not in another flesh, And ver. 27. 'My eyes shall behold him,' not other eyes.' So 1 Cor. xv. 53. 'This mortal shall put on immortality:' not another mortal, but this mortal, and, 2 Cor. v. 10. 'That every one may receive the things done in his body,' &c. not in another body. Death in scripture is called a sleep; it is far easier with God to raise the body, than it is for us to awake a man when he is asleep. 2. Ye err, not knowing the power of God: that God, who of nothing created all things, cannot he reduce many things to one thing? When the body is gone into a thousand substances, cannot he make an abstraction, and bring that body together again? Do we not see the chymist can, out of several metals mingled together, as gold, silver, alchymy, extract the one from the other, the silver from the gold, the alchymy from the silver, and can reduce every metal to its own species or kind? and shall we not much more believe that when our bodies are mingled and confounded with other substances, the wise God is able to make a divine extraction, and re-invest every soul with its own body.

Use 1. This is comfort to a child of God: as Christ said to Martha, John xi. 23. 'Thy brother shall rise again:' so I say to thee, thy body shall rise again. The body is sensible of joy as well as the soul; and indeed, we shall not be perfect in glory

till our bodies be re-united to our souls. Therefore in scripture, the doctrine of the resurrection is made matter of joy and triumph, Isa. xxvi. 19. 'Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust. Death is as it were the fall of the leaf, but our bones shall flourish as an herb, in the spring of the resurrection. That body which is mouldered to dust shall revive. Sometimes the saints do sow the land with their bodies, Psal. cxlii. 7. and water it with their blood, Ps. lxxix. 3. But these bodies, whether imprisoned, beheaded, sawn asunder, shall arise and sit down with Christ upon the throne. O consider what joy there will be at the re-uniting of the body and soul at the resurrection! As there will be a sad meeting of the body and soul of the wicked, they shall be joined together as briars, to scratch and tear one another; so, what unspeakable joy will there be at the meeting together of the soul and body of the saints: how will they greet one another? (they two being the nearest acquaintance that ever were) what a welcome will the soul give to the body? O blessed body, thou didst suffer thyself to be martyred, and crucified, thou wert kept under by watchings, fastings, &c. when I prayed thou didst attend my prayers with hands lifted up, and knees bowed down; thou wert willing to suffer with me, and now thou shalt reign with me; cheer up thyself my dear friend; thou wert sown as seed in the dust of the earth with ignominy, but now art raised a spiritual body. O my dear body, I will enter into thee again as an heavenly sparkle, and thou shalt clothe me again as a glorious vestment.

Use. 2. It shews the great love and respect God bears to the weakest believer; God will not glorify the bodies of his dearest and most eminent saints, not the patriarchs or prophets, not the body of Moses or Elias, till thou risest out of thy grave. God

is like a master of a feast that stays till all his guests are come. Abraham, the father of the faithful, must not sit down in heaven till all his children are born, and the body of every saint perfectly mellow and ripe for the resurrection.

3. If the bodies of the saints must arise, then consecrate your bodies to the service of God : these bodies must be made one with Christ's body. The Apostle makes this use of the doctrine of the resurrection, 1 Cor. vi. 14. ' And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power : ' there is the doctrine. ' Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? ' ver. 15. there is the use. It is enough for wicked men, to adulterate and defile their bodies. The drunkard makes his body a tunnel for the wine and strong drink to run through. The epicure makes his body a living tomb to bury the good creatures of God. The adulterer makes his body a stew. The body is called a vessel in scripture; these vessels will be found musty at the resurrection, fit only to hold that wine which you read of, Psal. lxxv. 8. ' In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; ' this is the wine of God's wrath. It is enough for those bodies to be defiled which shall be joined to the devil : but you that are believers, that expect your bodies shall be joined with Christ's body, oh cleanse these vessels ; take heed of putting your bodies to any impure services. Present your bodies a living sacrifice, Rom. xii. 1. Have a care to keep all the passages and cinque-ports ; sometimes the devil comes in at the eye ; therefore Job made a covenant with his eyes, and goes out at the tongue ; therefore David set a watch before his lips. Surely those that have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, that

is, the guilt of known sin, will have a care to have their bodies washed with clean water.

CHAP. XIII.

The eight Prerogative Royal.

I Proceed now to the next privilege which is to come, viz. The bodies of the saints shall be enamelled with glory. In this life the body is infirm, physicians have much ado to piece it up; it is like a picture out of frame, or an house out of repair, every storm of sickness it rains through. How doth the excellent soul oft lodge in a deformed body? The body is like a piece of rotten wood, diseases like worms breed there, fevers, pleurisies, aches, &c. But this body shall be made glorious at the resurrection, it shall neither have diseases nor defects; Leah shall no more complain of her blear eyes, nor Barzillai of his lameness. There are five properties of the glorified bodies.

1. They shall be agile and nimble. The bodies of the saints on earth are heavy and weary in their motion, but in heaven their shall be no elementary gravity hindering; but our bodies being refined, shall be swift and facile in their motion, and made fit to ascend, as the body of Elias. This is the apostle's meaning when he calls it a spiritual body; that is not only a body tunable and made fit to serve God without weariness, but a body that can move swiftly from one place to another. In this life the body is a great hindrance to the soul in its operation: 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' The soul may bring its action against the body; when the soul would fly up to Christ, the body as a leaden lump keeps it down; but there is a time coming when it shall be otherwise; here the body is a clog, in heaven it shall be a wing, The bodies

of the saints shall be agile and lively, they shall be made fully subject to the soul, and so no way impede or hinder the soul in its progress.

2. The bodies of the saints shall be transparent, full of clarity and brightness ; as Christ's body when it was transfigured, Matt. xvii. 2. Our bodies shall have a divine lustre put upon them : here they are as iron when it is rusty ; there they shall be as iron when it is filed and made bright, as the sun in its splendour ; nay, seven times brighter, saith Chrysostom : here our bodies are as the gold in the ore, drossy and impure ; in heaven they shall be as gold when it spangles and glisters : so clear shall they be, that the soul may sally out at every part, and sparkle through the body as the wine through the glass.

3. They shall be amiable. Beauty consists in two things. 1. Symmetry and proportion, when all the parts are drawn out in their exact lineaments. 2. Complexion, when there is a mixture and variety in the colours, white and sanguine : thus the bodies of the saints shall have a transcendency of beauty upon them. Here the body is called a vile body : vile in its birth and production ; of the dust of the earth ; the earth is the most ignoble element : and vile in the use that it is put to ; the soul oft useth the body as a weapon to fight against God ; but this vile body shall be ennobled and beautified with glory ; it shall be made like Christ's body.

How beautiful was Christ's body upon earth ! In it there was the purple and the lily, it was a mirror of beauty : For all deformities of body issue immediately from sin, but Christ being conceived by the Holy Ghost, and so without sin, he must needs have a beautiful body, and in this sense he was fairer than the children of men, Psal. xlv. 2. There was graceful majesty in his looks. Christ's body, as some writers aver, was so fair by reason of the beauty and grace which did shine in it, that no limner

could ever draw it exactly; and if it was so glorious a body on earth, how great is the lustre of it now in heaven? That light which shone upon Saint Paul, 'surpassing the glory of the sun,' was no other than the beauty of Christ's body in heaven. O then what beauty and resplendency will be put upon the bodies of the saints! they shall be made 'like Christ's glorious body.'

4. The bodies of the saints shall be impassible. Not but that the body when it is glorified shall have such a passion as is delightful, (for the body is capable of joy) but no passion that is hurtful; it shall not be capable of any noxious impression; in particular,

1. The bodies of the saints shall be free from the necessities of nature, as hunger and thirst. Here we are pinched with hunger: 'David waxed faint,' 2 Sam. xxi. 15. Here we need the supplies of nature. Christ 'took compassion on the multitude,' and wrought a miracle, lest they should 'faint by the way,' Matt. xv. 32. Nature must have its recruits; these are as necessary to maintain life, as the oil is to maintain the lamp, but in heaven we shall hunger no more, Rev. vii. 16. Hunger implies a vacuity and want, which cannot be in heaven; there we need not pray, 'Give us our daily bread.'

Quest. But doth not Christ say, 'I will not drink this day of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom;' which implies there will be eating and drinking in heaven, and by consequence hunger?

Ans. We must not understand the words literally; our Saviour only alludes to the metaphor of the vine: it is as if Christ had said, as drinking the fruit of the vine now with you, is an action of familiarity and pleasantness; so when you shall be with me in the kingdom of heaven, you shall be filled with such joy and delight, as if all the time were

a time of feasting and banqueting. 2. Glorified bodies shall be free from the infirmities of nature, as cold and heat; heaven is a temperate zone: there is no nipping frost or scorching heat, nothing will be there in extremity, but joy.

3. The bodies of the saints shall be free from the burdens of nature, as labour and sweating; no more ploughing or sowing: what needs that when the saints shall receive the full crop of joy? Look that, as it is with an husband-man while he works in the field, he needs his hedging-bill, his spade and mattock, &c. But let this man be advanced to the throne, and now there is no more use of the spade, he is freed from all those labours: so though now we must 'eat our bread with the sweat of our brows,' yet when we are in heaven, and shall be advanced to the throne, there will be no more need of our working tools; labour shall cease; our sweat as well as our tears shall be dried up.

4. The bodies of the saints shall be free from the injuries of nature, as sufferings; we run the race of our life in a ring of misery, from one suffering to another; we do not finish our troubles but change them: 'man is born to trouble,' he is the natural heir to it. Where the body is, there will afflictions like eagles be gathered together. Job was smitten with boils, and Paul did bear in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Afflictions, like hard frosts, nip the tender buds of our comfort; but ere long the saints shall be impassible, they shall have a protection from injuries granted them.

5. The bodies of the saints shall be immortal: here our bodies are still dying.' It is improper to ask when we shall die, but rather when we shall make an end of dying: first, the infancy dies, then the childhood, then youth, then old age, and then we make an end of dying: it is not only the running out of the last sand in the glass that spends it,

but all the sands that run out before. Death is a worm that is ever feeding at the root of our gourds; but in heaven 'our mortal shall put on immortality.' As it was with Adam in innocency, if he had not sinned, such was the excellent temperature and harmony in all the qualities of his body, that it is probable he had not died, but had been translated from paradise to heaven. Indeed, Belarmine saith, that Adam had died though he had not sinned; but I know no ground for that assertion, for sin is made the formal cause of death: however there is no such thing disputable in heaven, the bodies there are immortal; Luke xx. 36. 'Neither can they die any more:' heaven is an healthful air, there is no sickness or dying; we shall never hear a passing-bell go any more: as our souls shall be eternal, so our bodies immortal. If God made manna (which is in itself corruptible) to last many years in the golden pot, much more is he able by a divine power, so to consolidate the bodies of the saints, that they shall be preserved to eternity. Rev. xxi. 4. 'And there shall be no more death:' our bodies shall run parallel with eternity.

CHAP. XIV.

The Ninth Prerogative Royal.

THE next privilege is, we shall be as the angels in heaven, Matt. xxii. 30. Christ doth not say, we shall be angels, but as the angels.

Quest. How is that? *Ans.* Two ways.

1. In regard of our manner of worship. The angels fulfil the will of God,

1. Readily. 2. Perfectly.

1. Readily. When God sends the angels upon a commission, they do not hesitate or dispute the case with God, but presently obey. The angels are

set out by the cherubims, with wings displayed: this was not to represent their persons (spirits having no wings) but their office; to shew how ready they are in their obedience, it is as if they had wings, Dan. ix. 21. The man Gabriel (this was an angel) 'was caused to fly swiftly:' as soon as God speaks the word, the angels are ambitious to obey: now in heaven we shall be as the angels.

This is a singular comfort to a weak christian: alas, we are not as the angels in this life; when God commands us upon service, to mourn for sin, to take up the cross, O what a dispute is there? how long is it sometimes ere we can get leave of our hearts to go to prayer? Jesus Christ went more willingly to suffer, than we do often to pray: how hardly do we come off in duty? God had as good almost be without it. O but (if this be our grief) be of good comfort, in heaven we shall serve God swiftly, we shall be winged in our obedience, even as the angels.

2. The angels serve God perfectly; they fulfil God's whole will; they leave nothing undone: when God commands them upon duty, they can shoot to an hair's breadth. Alas, our services, how lame and bed-rid are they? we do things by halves? instead of using the world as if we used it not, we pray as if we prayed not, we weep for sin as if we wept not; how many blemishes are there in our holy things? as the moon when it shines brightest, hath a dark spot in it. How many grains should we want, if Christ did not put his merits into the scales? our duties, like good wine, do relish of a bad cask; the angel pouring sweet odours into the prayers of the saints, Rev. viii. 3. sheweth, that in themselves they yield no sweet savour, unless perfumed with Christ's incense; but in heaven we shall be even as the angels, we shall serve God perfectly: how should we long for that time.

2. We shall be as the angels in regard of dignity. There is no question, but in regard of our marriage-union with Christ, we shall be above the angels, but behold our human nature, simply and entirely considered, shall be parallel with the angelical, Luke xx. 36. 'they shall be equal to the angels.' I shall shew the dignity of the angelical nature, and the analogies between the saints glorified, and the angels. The dignity of the angels appears,

1. In their Sagacity. The angels (who are God's courtiers) are wise intelligent creatures. Tyrus in regard of wisdom is stiled a cherubim, or angel, Ezek. xxviii. 3, 4, 16. The angels have a most critical exquisite judgment, they are discerning spirits; and thus the saints shall be as the angels, for wisdom and sagacity: Christ the wisdom of God is their oracle.

2. The dignity of angels appears in their majesty: an angel is a beautiful glorious creature. They saw Stephen's face 'as it had been the face of an angel,' Acts vi. 15. 'The angels are compared to lightning, in regard of their sparkling lustre, Matt. xxviii. 3. such beams of majesty fall from the angels, that we are not able to bear a sight of them. John the divine was so amazed at the sight of an angel, that he fell at his feet to worship him, Rev. xix. 10. and thus shall we be as the angels, for splendour and majesty. 'Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,' Matt. xiii. 43. not that the saints shall not surpass the sun in brightness, saith Chrysostome; but the sun being the most noble and excellent creature, therefore our Saviour takes a resemblance thence, to express the saints' glory: they shall not only be of a sun-like, but angel-like brightness: the beams of Christ's glory will be transparent in them.

3. The dignity of angels is seen in their power. Ye angels 'that excel in strength,' Psal. ciii. 20.

We read of one angel that destroyed an army of an hundred fourscore and five thousand at one blow. An angel were able to look us dead: thus shall we be as the angels. Here we have our fainting fits, we wrestle continually with infirmities; but in heaven the weak reed shall be turned into a cedar, we shall put on strength, and be as the angels of God.

4. The dignity and nobility of angels consists in their purity. Take away holiness from an angel, and he is no more an angel, but a devil. Those blessed spirits are sinless, spotless creatures; no unholy thought enters into their mind; they are virgin spirits; therefore the angels are said to be 'clothed in pure white linen,' Rev. xv. 6. And they are represented by the cherubims overshadowing the mercy-seat, which were made 'all of fine gold,' to denote the purity of their essence; and in this sense we shall be as the angels of a refined sublimated nature; therefore the saints are said to have 'washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14. Christ's blood washeth white; and we read of 'the spirits of just men made perfect.'

5. The dignity of angels appears in their immunity. The angels are privileged persons, and thus shall we be as the angels. There is a two-fold immunity. 1. We shall be privileged from the difficulties of religion. Duties are irksome to the flesh, but in heaven, we shall be as the angels; no more praying or fasting, no more repenting or mortification. When we are above sin, then we shall be above ordinances: I do not say we shall be free from serving God, but we shall be freed from all that is tedious and unpleasant: the angels serve God, but it is with cheerfulness. It is their heaven to serve God: when they are singing hallelujahs they are ravished with holy delight: though being spirits they need no food, yet it is their meat and

drink to be doing the will of God: 'the joy of the Lord is their strength.' Thus the saints shall be as the angels, 'they shall rest from their labours,' Rev. xiv. 13. They shall not rest from serving God, but from their labour in serving him. Their service shall be sweetened with so much pleasure and delight, that it shall not be a task, but a recreation. What joy will it be to sing in the heavenly choir? the angels begin the music, and the saints join in the concert.

2. We shall be privileged from the immodesty of temptation. The angels, those blessed spirits, have no temptations to sin: thus shall we be as the angels. It is sad to have atheistical, blasphemous thoughts forced upon us; it is sad always to lie under the Devil's spout, to have temptations dropping upon us; and though we do not yield to the enemy, yet to have the garrison continually assaulted, is a great grief to a child of God; but this is a believer's privilege, he shall be shortly as the angels, not subject to temptation. The Devil is cast out of paradise, the old serpent shall never come into the New Jerusalem. Heaven is set out by an exceeding high mountain, Rev. xxi. 10. This heavenly mount is so high, that Satan's fiery darts cannot shoot up to it, it is above the reach of his arrow.

6. The dignity of angels consist in their impeccability. The blessed angels are not only without sin, (as the lapsed angels were once) but they are in an impossibility of sinning. The angels have a clear sight of God, they are by the sweet influence of that vision so enamoured with the beauty and love of God, that they have not the least motion or will to sin. They are confirmed by the power of God, saith Austin, that they cannot sin. The angels are immoveable in holiness; indeed Origen affirms that there is a possibility of sinning even in the angels; but this opinion is, 1. Contrary to the current of

the fathers, the angels are of that invincible sanctity, that they cannot be drawn by any violence to sin, as Damasçen speaks. 2. That it should be possible for the angels to be stained with the least tincture of sin, is repugnant to scripture; for if the angels may sin, then they may fall, but they cannot fall. The minor proposition is clear: elected angels cannot fall, but the angels are elected; the apostle proves the election of angels. 1 Tim. v. 21. 'I charge thee before God and the elect angels.' The angels are called stars, Job. xxxviii. 7. these angelical stars are so fixed in their orb of sanctity, that they cannot have the least erring, or retrograde motion to sin; and doth not all this set forth the privilege and comfort of believers? they shall be in this sense as the angels, in an impossibility of sinning; here it is impossible that we should not sin, in heaven it is impossible that we should. There we shall not only be exempted from the act, but from the capacity of sinning, for we shall be as the angels of God; what a blessed privilege is this! we that now are accounted as the off-scouring of men, shall be as the angels.

Oh how may this excite the most profane persons to the study of piety! fly from sin; that will not make you angels but devils; 'follow after holiness;' it alludes to huntsmen that follow the game with earnestness; pursue holiness as in a chase; here is reason enough, you shall not only be with the angels, but you shall be as the angels; if while you live, you live as saints, when you die you shall be as angels.

CHAP. XV.

The Tenth Prerogative Royal.

THE next privilege to come is, the vindication of names. Fulgentius calls a good name the godly man's heir, because it lives when he is dead,

It is the best temporal blessing, yet all wear not this garland; those which have a good conscience, have not always a good name. The old serpent spits his venom at the godly through the mouths of wicked men: if Satan cannot strike his fiery dart into our conscience, he will put a dead fly into our name. The people of God are represented to the world in a very sad manner; how strangely doth a saint look when he is put in the Devil's dress! as those primitive christians that were clothed with bear's skins and painted with red devils. Job was represented to the world as an hypocrite, and by his friends too, which went near to him. Paul was called a seditious man; and he suffered (in the opinion of some) as an evil-doer, 2 Tim. ii. 9. 'Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds:' he did not only bear Christ's mark in his body, but in his name. Our blessed Saviour was called 'a deceiver of the people.' It hath ever been the manner of the wicked world, to paint God's children in very strange colours. It is a great sin to defame a saint, it is murder; better take away his life than his name; it is a sin which we can never make him reparation for; a flaw in a man's credit being like a blot in white paper, which will never come out. The defaming of a saint is no less than the defaming of God himself; the saints have God's picture drawn in their hearts: a man cannot abuse the picture of Cæsar, without some reflection upon Cæsar's person. Well, either God will clear his peoples' innocency here, which he hath promised, Ps. xxxvii. 6. 'And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light:' thy good name may be in a cloud, but it shall not set in a cloud; or else at the day of judgment, then there shall be a vindication of names.

In this life the godly are called the troublers of Israel, seditious, rebellious and what not? but

a day is shortly coming, when God himself will proclaim their innocency. Believe it, as God will make inquisition for blood, so for names; the name of a saint is precious in God's esteem, it is like a statue of gold which the polluted breath of men cannot stain; and though the wicked may throw dust upon it, yet as God will wipe away tears from the eyes of his people, so he will wipe off the dust from their name. The time is shortly coming when God will say to us, as once to Joshua, 'I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you:' even as it was with Christ, the Jews rolled a great stone upon him, and as they thought, it was impossible he should rise again; but an angel came and rolled away the stone, and he arose in a glorious triumphant manner: so it shall be with the godly, their good names or titles are buried, a stone of obloquy and reproach is rolled upon them; but at the day of judgment, not an angel, but God himself will roll away the stone, and they shall come forth from among the pots, where they have been blacked and sullied, 'as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.' O what a blessed day will that be, when God himself shall be the saints' compurgator.

CHAP. XVI.

The Eleventh Prerogative Royal.

THE next blessed privilege, is, the sentence of absolution. Here take notice of two things,

1. The process in law, Rev. xx. 12. 'The books were opened.' It is a metaphor taken from the manner of our courts of judicature, where there is the whole process, every circumstance traversed, and the witnesses examined: So here, the books are opened, the book of God's account, the book of

conscience: now observe, 'another book was opened, which is the book of life; that is, the book of God's decree, the book of free grace, the book that hath the saints' names written in it, and their pardon; and the elect shall be judged out of this book: surely the sentence cannot be dismal, when our husband is judge, and will judge us by the book of life.

2. The sentence itself, Matt. xxv. 34. "Come ye blessed of my Father:" which implies two things, 1. The saints' acquittance: the curse is taken off, they have their discharge in the court of justice, and shall have the broad seal of heaven, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all setting their hands to the pardon, and this Christ shall proclaim. 2. It implies the saints' instalment. Come ye blessed. As if Christ should say, ye are the heirs apparent to the crown of heaven, heaven is your freehold; come in ye blessed of the Lord, enter upon possession. And this sentence can never be reversed to eternity: but as Isaac said, I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed. At the hearing of this comfortable sentence, O with what ineffable joy will the saints be filled! it will be like music in the ear, and a jubilee in the heart. Even as Elizabeth once said to the virgin Mary, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy; so the heart of a believer will leap in him at the hearing of this blessed sentence, and be ready to leap out of him for joy. O what trembling now among the devils, what triumph among the angels!

CHAP. XVII.

The Last Prerogative Royal.

THE last privilege to come, is, God will make a public and honourable mention of all the good which the saints have done. This I ground

upon three scriptures, Matt. xxv. 21. 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant.' The world maligns and censures; when we discharge our conscience they say ill done; but God will say, well done, thou good and faithful servant; he will set a trophy of honour upon his people, Matt. xxv. 35. 'I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me.' &c. King Ahasuerus had his book of records; and when he did read in his book, he took notice of Mordecai's good service, and caused him to have public honour. Be assured, God hath this book of record, and will openly take notice of all the good service you have done, and he himself will be the herald to proclaim your praises, 2 Cor. iv. 5. 'Then shall every man have praise of God.'

I speak this the rather, to encourage you in God's service. Perhaps thou hast laid out thyself for the cause of God, and thou seest Providence blows upon it, and thou beginnest to think it was a desperate venture, all is lost. No, thy faith and zeal is recorded, thy name is taken in heaven, and God will give thee a public testimony of honour, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant.' What a whetstone is this to duty? How should it add oil to the flame of our devotion? thou perhaps hast prayed a great while, and watered this seed with thy tears; be of good comfort, thy tears are not lost; God bottles them as precious wine, and it is not long before he will open his bottle, and this wine which came from the wine-press of thy eyes, shall sparkle forth in the sight of men and angels. Nay, God will not only take notice of what we have done for him, but what we would have done. David had an intention to build God an house, and the Lord did interpret it as if he had done it, 1 Kings viii. 18. 'Whereas it was in thine heart to build

an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. Intentional goodness is recorded, and shall add to our crown.

What a good God do we serve! who would ever change such a master! it were, one would think, enough, that God should give us wages for our work (especially seeing he gave us ability to work); but that God should applaud us, Well done! Think how sweet it will be to hear such a word from God, how amazing and ravishing, when he shall say openly, these are the servants of the most high God, these are they that feared an oath, that have wept in secret for that which it was not in their power to perform; these are they that have kept their garments pure, that have valued my favour above life, that did rather choose to honour me than humour men: these are they that are willing to wash off the stains from the face of religion with their blood, and to make my crown flourish, though it were in their ashes. Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord: thus shall it be done to them whom God delights to honour.

These are those glorious things which are to come: I have led you to the top of the mount, and given you a prospect of heaven; I have shewn it you at the little end of the perspective: I shall say of this glory of heaven, as once the queen of Sheba of Solomon's pomp and magnificence, 'The half of it hath not been told.'

CHAP. XVIII.

The First Inference drawn from the Proposition.

Use 1. **I**T shews us what an high valuation and esteem we should set upon the godly. They are, we see, men greatly in favour with God, as the angel once proclaimed to Daniel, and they

are invested with glorious privileges; they are of an heavenly descent, born of the Spirit; and they are very rich, for they are heirs of the kingdom. God hath not only laid out some parcels of land, or divided heaven to them, as Canaan was divided to Israel by lot: the tribe of Judah to inhabit in one country, the tribe of Reuben in another, &c. God, I say, doth not parcel out heaven thus to the saints: no, heaven is theirs with all its perquisites, with all its royalties: there are no enclosures or land-marks in heaven: there can be no confinement where every thing is infinite. Oh what an high value and estimate then should be put upon the saints! they are heirs: how doth the world respect great heirs? what honour then should we give to the godly! They are adopted into all the stately privileges of heaven. It is true, an heir under age may be kept short, but how rich is he when possessed of the inheritance? how rich shall the saints be, when God shall pour out of his love, and shall empty all the treasures of glory into them! The saints are jewels, but their worth and riches is not known; therefore they are trampled upon by the world. 'It doth not yet appear what they shall be:' all things are theirs.

CHAP. XIX.

The Second Inference drawn from the Proposition,

IT shews us a main difference between the godly and the wicked; the godly man hath all his best things to come; the wicked man hath all his worst things to come: as their way is different, so their end; 'Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things.' The wicked have all their good things here; they have not only what heart can wish, but they have more than heart can wish; their worst things are to come; why, what is to come? the

apostle answers, 1 Thes. i. 10. wrath to come. And here I shall briefly shew you the wicked man's charter: which consists in five things.

SECT. 1.

1. The awakening of conscience: this is to come. Conscience is God's deputy in the soul, his viceroy; a wicked man doth what he can to unthrone conscience, and put it out of office. Conscience is God's echo, and sometimes it is so shrill and clamorous, that the sinner cannot endure the noise, but silenceth conscience, and at last by often sinning, conscience begins to be sleepy and seared; 'having their conscience seared with a hot iron,' 1 Tim. iv. 2. this conscience is quiet, but not good; for the dumbness of conscience proceeds from the numbness of it: it is with him as with a sick patient, who having a confluence of diseases upon him, yet being asleep, is insensible of the pain. The conscience of many a man is like the body of Dionysius, so gross and corpulent, that though they did thrust needles into his flesh, he felt no pain. Time was when conscience was tender, but by often sinning, he is like the ostrich that can digest iron; or as it is said of Mithridates, that by often accustoming his body to poison, it never hurt him, but he could live upon it as his food: that sin which was before as the wounding of the eye, now is no more than the cutting of the nail. Well, there is a time coming when this sleepy conscience shall be awakened. Belshazzar was drinking wine in bowls, 'but there came out fingers on the wall, and his countenance changed;' there conscience began to be awakened. Conscience is like a looking-glass; if it be foul and dusty, you can see nothing in it; but wipe away the dust, and you may see your face in it clearly: there is a time coming when God will wipe off the dust from the glass of a man's conscience, and he shall see his sins clearly represented. Conscience

is like a lion asleep, when he awakes he roars and tears his prey: when conscience awakes, then it roars upon a sinner, and tears him, as the devil did the man into which he entered; Mark ix. 22. he 'rent him, and threw him into the fire.' When Moses' rod was turned into a serpent, he was afraid and fled from it; oh what is it when conscience is turned into a serpent! Conscience is like the bee, if a man doth well, then conscience gives honey, it speaks comfort; if he does ill, it puts forth a sting: it is called a worm, Mark ix. 44. 'where the worm never dies.' It is like Prometheus' vulture, it lies ever gnawing: it is God's blood-hound that pursues a man. When the jailor saw the prison doors open, and, as he thought, the prisoners were missing, he drew his sword and would have killed himself: when the eye of conscience is opened, and the sinner begins to look about him for his evidences, faith, repentance, &c. and sees they are missing, he will be ready to kill himself: a troubled conscience is the first-fruits of hell; and indeed it is a lesser hell. That it is so, appears two ways:

1. By the suffrage of scripture, Prov. xviii. 14. 'A wounded spirit who can bear? a wound in the name, in the estate, in the body, is sad; but a wound in the conscience who can bear? especially when the wound can never be healed; for I speak of such as awake in the night of death.'

2. By the experience both of good and bad. 1. By the experience of good men; when the storm hath risen in their conscience (though afterwards it hath been allayed) yet for the present, they have been in the suburbs of hell. David complains of his broken bones, he was like a man that had all his bones out of joint. What is the matter? you may see where his pain lay, Ps. li. 3. 'My sin is ever before me;' he was in a spiritual agony: it was not the sword threatened, it was not the death of the

child, but it was the roarings of his conscience ; some of God's arrows fast stuck there : though God will not damn his children, yet he may send them to hell in this life.

2. By the experience of bad men, who have been in the perpetual convulsions of conscience : I have sinned, saith Judas : before, he was nibbling at the silver bait, the thirty pieces ; but now the hook troubles him, conscience wounds him : such was Judas's horror, being now like a man upon the rack, that he hangs himself to quiet his conscience. This shews what the hell of conscience is ; that men account death easy to get rid of conscience ; but in vain : it is with them as with a sick man, he removes out of one room into another, and changeth the air, but still he carries his disease with him. Thou mayest think, O sinner, to laugh thy sins out of countenance ; but what wilt thou do when conscience will begin to fly upon thee, and shall examine thee with scourgings ? It is a mercy when conscience is awakened in time ; but the misery is when the wound is too late, there being then no balm in Gilead.

SECT. 2.

The second thing to come is, his appearing before the judge ; ' For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.' Hierome thought he ever heard that sounding in his ears, Arise ye dead, and come to judgment. What solemnity is there at an assizes, when the judge comes to the bench, and the trumpets are sounded ? thus Christ the Judge shall be accompanied with angels and arch-angels, and the trumpets shall be blown ; 1 Thess. iv. 16. ' For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God : ' this is the great and general assizes. Then shall Christ sit down upon the throne of judicature, holding his sword in

his hand, and a flame coming out of his mouth. Now the sinner being summoned before him as a prisoner at bar, he hath his guilt written in his forehead, he is condemned before he comes, I mean in his conscience, which is the consistory or petty sessions: and appearing before Christ, he begins to tremble and be amazed with horror: and not being covered with Christ's righteousness, for want of a better covering, he cries to the mountains to cover him: 'And the kings and the great men said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:' nothing so dreadful as the sight of mercy abused. Now the Lamb will be turned into a lion, and he who was once a Saviour will be a judge.

SECT. 3.

The third thing to come is, his charge read: I will reprove thee, and 'set thy sins in order before thee,' Ps. l. 21. As God hath a bottle for tears, so he hath a book to register mens' sins, Rev. xx. 12. 'the books were opened.' Oh what a black charge will be read against a sinner! not only the sins which have damnation written in their forehead, as drunkenness, swearing, blasphemy, shall be brought into the charge, but those sins which he slighted, as,

1. Secret sins, such as the world never took notice of: many a man doth not forsake his sins, but grows more cunning: with the vintner, he pulls down the bush, but his heart gives as much vent to sin as ever; his care is rather that sin should be covered than cured: not unlike to him that shuts up his shop windows, but follows his trade within doors: he sits brooding upon sin; he doth with his sins as Rachel did with her father's idols, she put them under her that he might not find them; so doth he put his sins in a secret place: all these

sins shall be set in order before him : Luke xii. 2.
 ‘ For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed :’ God hath a key for the heart.

2. Little sins, as the world calls them ; though I know no such thing as little treason, the majesty against which it is committed, doth accent and enhance the sin. Besides, little sins (suppose them so) yet multiplied, become great. What is less than a grain of sand? yet when multiplied, what is heavier than the sands of the sea? a little sum multiplied is great; a little sin, unrepented of, will damn; as one leak in the ship, if it be not looked to, will sink it. You would think it is no great matter to forget God, yet it hath a heavy doom, Ps. l. 22. The non-improvement of talents, the world looks upon as a small thing; yet we read of him that ‘ hid his talent in the earth,’ Matt. xxv. 25. he had not spent it; only not trading it, is sentenced.

3. Sins that in the eye of the world were looked upon as graces; sins that were coloured and masked over with zeal of God, and good intentions, &c. men put fine glosses upon their sins, that they may obtain credit, and be the more vendible. It is said of Alcibiades, that he embroidered a curtain with lions and eagles, that he might hide the picture under, full of owls and satyrs. So doth Satan embroider the curtain with the image of virtue, that he may hide the foul picture of sin under. The devil is like the spider, first she weaves her web, and then hangs the flie in it: so he helps men to weave the web of sin with religious pretences, and then he hangs them in the snare; all these sins shall be read in the sinner’s charge, and set in order before him.

SECT. 4.

4. The next thing is, the passing of the sentence, Matt. xxv. 41. ‘ Depart from me ye cursed.’ At the hearing of this sentence, the heart of a sinner will be rent thro’ with horror; that heart which be-

fore would not break with sorrow for sin, shall now break with despair. At the pronouncing of this dreadful sentence, 'depart from me,' the sinner would be glad if he could depart from himself, and be annihilated. O it will be a sad departing! We use to say, when a man is dead, he is departed; but this will be a departing without a deceasing. As soon as Christ hath pronounced the curse, the sinner will begin to curse himself. Oh what have I been doing! 'I have lain in wait for my own blood;' I have twisted the cord of my own damnation. While he lived, he blessed himself; oh how happy am I, how doth providence smile upon me! Psal. xlix. 18. 'Though whilst he lived he blessed his soul,' yet when this sentence is passed, he is the first that will curse himself.

SECT. 5.

5. The pouring out of the vial, Psal. lxxv. 8. 'For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red, it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same.' This is the sad execution: hell is set out by Tophet, Isa. xxx. 33. which was a place situated near Jerusalem, where they offered their children in the fire to Moloch. A metaphor to figure out the infinite torments of hell: the sinner shall lie in the furnace of God's wrath, and the breath of the Lord, as a pair of bellows, shall blow the fire. Hell is said to be prepared, as if God had been sitting down to study and devise some exquisite torment. Hell is set out in one place by fire, and in another place by darkness: to shew that hell is a fire without light. The hypocrite, while he lived, was all light, no fire; and in hell he shall be all fire, no light; nothing there to give comfort, no music but the shrieks of the damned; no wine but what is burnt with the flame of God's wrath: 'There shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.' The weeping hypocrite shall go to the place

of weeping : while he lived, he lifted up his eyes in a false devotion, and now being in hell he shall lift up his eyes. He that gnashed his teeth at the godly, shall now have gnashing enough ; before he gnashed in envy, now in despair ; and this for ever. ‘ He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire ;’ the word unquenchable scorcheth hotter than the fire. The fire of hell is like that stone in Arcadia, I have read of, which being once kindled, could not be extinguished. Eternity is the hell of hell ; the loss of the soul is irreparable : if all the angels in heaven should go to make a purse, they could not make up this loss. When a sinner is in hell, shall another Christ be found to die for him ? or will the same Christ be crucified again ? oh no ; they are everlasting burnings. Thus the sinner hath all worst things to come ; but a believer hath all his best things to come, the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, viz. the beatifical vision, the chrystal streams of joy that run at God’s right hand : his heaven is to come. -

CHAP. XX.

A Serious Scrutiny about the Believer’s Charter.

Use 2.

I Hear, methinks, a christian say, Great are the privileges of a believer ; but I fear I have no title to this glorious charter : all depends upon an interest. Were there a dispute about our estate, whether such an inheritance did belong to us, we would desire that there should be a trial in law to decide it. Here is a large inheritance, things present and things to come ; but the question is, whether we are the true heirs to whom it belongs ? now for the deciding this, we must seriously examine what right we have to Christ ; for all this estate is made over to us through Christ : so in the text, ‘ All things

are yours, and ye are Christ's : there comes in the title. Jesus Christ is the great magazine and store-house of a christian, he hath purchased heaven in his blood; now if we can say we are Christ's, then we may say, all things are ours.

Quest. But how shall we know that we are Christ's.

Ans. Those that are Christ's, Christ is in them, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. ' Know ye not that Christ is in you?'

Quest. But how shall we know that?

Ans. If we are in the faith. It is observable, before the apostle had said, ' Know ye not that Christ is in you ;' first he puts this query, ' Examine whether you are in the faith.' Christ is in you, if you are in the faith : here lies the question, Have you faith? Now for the deciding this, I shall shew,

The antecedents, the concomitants, the genuine act, and the fruits of faith.

SECT. 1. *Shewing the Antecedents of Faith.*

1. Antecedent is knowledge. Faith is an intelligent grace; though there can be knowledge without faith, yet there can be no faith without knowledge. ' They that know thy name will put their trust in thee,' Ps. ix. 10. one calls it, quick-sighted faith. Knowledge must carry the torch before faith, 2 Tim. i. 12. ' For I know whom I have believed.' As in Paul's conversion, a light from heaven ' shined round about him,' Acts ix. 3. so before faith be wrought, God shines in with a light upon the understanding. A blind faith is as bad as a dead faith : that eye may as well be said to be a good eye, which is without sight; as that faith is good which is without knowledge. Devout ignorance damns; which condemns the church of Rome, that think it a piece of their Religion to be kept in ignorance; these set up an altar to an unknown God. They

say ignorance is the mother of devotion; but sure where the sun is set in the understanding, it must needs be night in the affections. So necessary is knowledge to the being of faith, that the scriptures do sometimes baptize faith with the name of knowledge, Isa. liii. 11. 'By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; knowledge is put there for faith, and this knowledge which is antecedent to faith and doth usher it in, consists in the apprehension of four things: the soul through this optic glass of knowledge sees,

1. A preciousness in Christ, 'he is the chief of ten thousand.' Christ was never poor but when he had on our rags; there is nothing in Christ but what is precious: he is precious in his name, in his nature, in his influences, in his privileges; he is called a precious stone, Isa. xxviii. 16. he must needs be a precious stone who hath made us living stones, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

2. A fulness in Christ, the fulness of the Godhead. Col. ii. 9. 'all fulness,' Col. i. 19. a fulness of merit, his blood able to satisfy God's justice; a fulness of spirit, his grace able to supply our wants.

3. A suitableness in Christ; nothing can be satisfactory but what is suitable; if a man be hungry, bring him fine flowers, this is not suitable, he desires food; if he be sick, bring him music, this is not suitable, he desires physic. In this sense there is a suitableness in Christ to the soul: there is a fitness as well as a fulness; he is (as Origen speaks) whatever is desirable; if we hunger, he is the food of the soul, therefore he is called the bread of life; if we are sick unto death, his blood is the balm of Gilead: he may be compared to the trees of the sanctuary, which were both for meat and medicine, Ezek. xlvii. 12.

4. A propenseness and readiness in Christ to give out his fulness: there is bounty in Christ as well as

beauty, Isa. lv. 1. 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, buy and eat,' &c. Behold, at what a low price doth God set his heavenly blessings! it is but thirsting: bring but desires. Behold the propenseness in Christ to dispense and give out his fulness: buy without money. A strange kind of buying! as he is all fulness, so he is all sweetness, of a noble and generous disposition. This is the lenocinium and enticer of the affections; this draws the eyes and heart of a sinner after him. What are the promises but Christ's golden sceptre held forth? what are the motions of the Spirit, but Jesus Christ coming a wooing; and such a knowledge of Christ doth necessarily precede and go before faith; now the soul begins to move towards him.

2. The second antecedent to faith is credence; a setting our seal to the truth of the word; a giving credit to that which the word asserts concerning Christ: viz. that he is the true Messiah, that there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved; that whosoever believes in him shall not perish; that he delights in mercy. It is delightful to the mother (saith Chrysostom) to have her breasts drawn: so it is pleasing to Christ, that sinners should draw the breasts of the promises. An assent, and giving credence to all that the scripture holds forth concerning Christ, is necessary to precede faith. Dogmatical faith goes before justifying.

3. The third preparatory or antecedent to faith is, deep conviction and humiliation; the seed that wanted depth of earth withered: so will faith that is not laid in deep humiliation. Christ is never sweet till sin is bitter; he never gives ease but to them that feel their burthen, Matt. xi. 28. and indeed, till a man feel his burden, he cannot cast it upon Christ: a man must see himself lost. Many are lost for want of losing, Acts ii. 37. 'they were

pricked at their hearts,' &c. as if a bladder were pricked and the wind let out: so the flatus, or swelling of pride, was let out by humiliation, Rom. vii. 9. 'when the commandment came sin revived and I died:' as if Paul had said, when the law of God came, and shewed me the spots of my soul, sin revived; sin began to appear in its bloody colours, striking horror and amazement into my soul, and I died: the good opinion which before I had of myself did die, I was as one that gives up the ghost. As it was with the people of Israel, they saw the Red Sea before them, and Pharaoh pursuing behind. So the sinner after some legal bruising, being affrighted, sees the sea of his sins before ready to swallow him up, and the justice of God pursuing and ready to overtake him, and no way to extricate or help himself, only there is a brazen serpent lifted up, and if he can look upon that he may be saved.

4. The fourth antecedent to faith is abrenunciation, or a disclaiming and renouncing any thing in a man's self that can save: this is certain, before a man can come to Christ, he must come out of himself, before he can trust in Christ he must despair in himself, Phil. iii. 7. 'Not having mine own righteousness.' Men would have something of their own to trust to; they would bow down to their own righteousness, their duties and moralities, Rom. x. 3. Oh but if ye will lean on Christ, throw away these rotten crutches; you must use duty, as the dove did her wings to fly, but trust to Christ the ark for safety. A man must be first transplanted; taken out of the old soil, have nothing of his own to grow upon, before he can be ingrafted into Christ the true olive; as the angel said to Mary when she looked for Christ in the sepulchre, 'he is not here,' Matt. xxviii. 6. So I may say to that man who seeks to make a Christ of his duties, and moral ex-

cellencies, Christ is not here, you must look higher; salvation is not to be found within thee, but in something without thee, in something above thee.

5. The fifth antecedent, or that which goes before faith, is a secret persuasion in the soul of man, that Christ is willing to shew mercy to him in particular, Mark x. 49. 'arise, he calleth thee: so the Spirit secretly whispers to the soul, arise out of thy sins, Jesus Christ calleth thee; he bids thee believe in him. Then the soul begins to think thus, did Jesus Christ come to save sinners, such as are humble and penitent? doth he not only invite them, but command them to believe in him, 1 John. iii. 23. then why do I not believe? what is it keeps me off from Christ? is it my unworthiness? behold there is merit enough in Christ to make me worthy: is it my impurity? 'the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin,' 1 John i. 7. his blood is a balsam to heal me, a laver to wash me: and though I have nothing whereby to ingratiate myself into his favour, yet my comfort is, Jesus Christ doth not require that I should carry any thing to him, but, fetch something from him. I need carry no water to this well of salvation, only an empty vessel, an humble broken heart. Why then should I hold off from Christ any longer, if God 'justifies the ungodly, Rom. iv. 5. Why then should not I think that there is mercy for me? sure there is; methinks I see Christ beckoning to me to come to him, methinks I hear the soundings of his bowels: these are the preparations to faith.

SECT. 2. *Shewing the Concomitants of Faith.*

2. The concomitants of faith which are, 1. Consent. The soul now consents to have Christ, and to have him upon his own terms. 1. As an Head. The head hath a double office: it is the fountain of

spirits, and the seat of government; the head is as it were the pilot of the body, it rules and steers it in its motion; the believer consents to have Christ, not only as an head to send forth spirits, that is comfort, but as an head to rule. A sinner would take Christ's promises, but not his laws: he would be under Christ's benediction, but not his jurisdiction. A believer consents to have whole Christ; he doth not pick and choose; but as he expects to sit down with Christ upon the throne, so he makes his heart Christ's throne.

2. The believer consents to have Christ for better for worse, a naked Christ, a persecuted Christ: for he sees a beauty and glory in the reproaches of Christ, 1 Pet. iv. 14. and will have Christ not only in purple, but when with John Baptist he is clothed in camel's hair; he can embrace the fire if Christ be in it: he looks upon the cross as Jacob's ladder by which he ascends up to heaven; he saith, Blessed be that affliction, welcome that cross which carries Christ upon it.

3. He consents to have Christ purely for love: if the wife should give her consent only for her husband's riches, she would marry his estate rather than his person, it were not properly to make a marriage with him, but rather to make a merchandise of him. The believer consents for love: he loves Christ for Christ. Heaven without Christ is not a sufficient dowry for a believer; there is nothing adulterate in his consent, it is not sinister; there is nothing forced, it is not for fear; that were rather constraint than consent; a consent forced will not hold in law; it is voluntary; the beauty of Christ's person and the sweetness of his disposition draws the will, which as the *primum mobile*, or master-wheel, carries the whole soul with it.

4. The believer consents to have Christ, never to part more; he would have an uninterrupted com-

munion with him; he will part with life but not with Christ; indeed death, when it slips the knot between the soul and the body, it ties it faster between the soul and Christ.

5. The believer doth so consent to have Christ, as he makes a deed of gift, resigning up all the interest in himself to Christ: he is willing to lose his own name, and surname himself by the name of Christ: to lose his own will and be wholly at Christ's disposal, 1 Cor. vi. 19. he resigns up his love to Christ: in this sense the spouse is said to be a spring shut up, Cant. iv. 12. she hath love for relations, but the best of her love is kept for Christ: the world hath the milk of her love, but Christ hath the cream of it. The choicest and purest of her love is a spring shut up, it is broached only for Christ to drink.

2. The second concomitant of faith is desire; Psal. xlii. 1. 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God!' Oh (saith the soul) that I had Christ, that I might but touch the hem of his garment! 'Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem! 2 Sam. xxiii. 15. So saith the thirsty sinner, who will give me to drink of those streams of living water, that run in Christ's blood? O that I had this morning star, to enlighten me; this pearl of price, to enrich me; this tree of life, to quicken me. Oh that I had a sight of Christ's beauty, a taste of his sweetness! there is such a thirst raised in the soul, that nothing can quench it but the blood of Christ: nothing but the breast will quiet the child; nothing will quiet the longing soul, but God's opening the breasts of free-grace, and giving his Son out of his bosom.

3. The third concomitant of faith is a spirit of contrition: the soul is even melted into tears, Zech. xii. 10. 'They shall look upon me whom they have

pierced, and shall mourn.' The Spirit of grace drops as dew upon the heart, and makes it soft and tender. The poor sinner weeps for his sins of unkindness against Christ: Oh, saith he, that I should sin against so sweet a Saviour! he looks upon a broken Christ with a broken heart; he washeth Christ's wounds with his tears; before, he wept for fear; now, he weeps for love; Mary stood at Jesus' feet weeping, Luke vii.

SECT. 3. *Shewing the genuine Act of Faith.*

3. Then follows the genuine and proper act of faith, namely recumbency. The soul doth rest upon Christ, and Christ alone for salvation: this is the very door by which we enter into heaven. Faith casts itself upon Christ, as a man that casts himself upon the stream to swim: the believer stays himself upon Christ, therefore faith is called a 'leaning upon Christ,' Cant. v. 8. Believers are called lively stones, 1 Pet. ii. 5. and they rest upon Christ the corner-stone, Isa. xxviii. 16. the believer catcheth hold of Christ, as Adonijah caught hold of the horns of the altar, 1 Kings i. 51. or as a man that is sinking catcheth hold of a bough; faith makes an holy adventure upon Christ, as Queen Esther did upon king Ahasuerus, 'If I perish, I perish,' Esther iv. 16. and this adventuring upon Christ, is by virtue of a promise: else it is not faith, but presumption. Faith hath its warrant in its hand, John vi. 37. he 'that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out.'

This is the proper act of faith, the soul's resting with an humble affiance upon Jesus Christ. Saint Bernard, being a little before his death (as he thought) brought before God's tribunal, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him for his sins, he runs to Christ, and saith he, Satan I am

sinful and unworthy as thou sayest, but though thou dost magnify my disease, I will magnify my physician. I know the Lord Jesus hath a double right to the kingdom of glory, not only by heritage, but conquest; and he hath conquered for me. So that I am not confounded while I look on Christ as my Saviour, and heaven as my inheritance: and it was a saying of Austin, I can rest securely while I lay my head on Christ's bleeding sides.

Now concerning this faith I shall lay down two rules. 1. That faith justifies not as a formal cause, but purely as an instrument, viz. as it lays hold on Christ the blessed object, and fetcheth in his fulness: and in this sense it is called a precious faith: the worth lies not in the faith, but in Christ, on which it doth centre and terminate; faith in itself considered, is not more excellent than other graces. Take a piece of wax, and a piece of gold of the same magnitude, the wax is not valuable with the gold; but as the wax hangs at the label of some will, by virtue of which a great estate is confirmed and conveyed, so it may be worth many hundred pounds. So faith considered purely in itself, doth challenge nothing more than other graces, nay in some sense, it is inferior, it being an empty hand: but as this hand receives the precious alms of Christ's merits, and is an instrument or channel through which the blessed streams of life flow to us from him; so it doth challenge a superiority above other graces.

Indeed some affirm, that the very act of believing without reference to the merits of Christ, justifies: to which I shall say but this, 1. Faith cannot justify, as it is an act, for it must have an object: we cannot (if we make good sense) separate between the act and the object. What is faith, if it do not fix upon Christ, but fancy? It was not the people of Israel's looking up that cured them, but the fixing their eye upon the brazen serpent. 2. Faith

doth not justify as it is a grace: this were to substitute faith in Christ's room, it were to make a Christ of faith. Faith is a good grace but a bad Christ. 3. Not as a work; which must needs be, if the stress and virtue of faith lies only in the act, and then we should be justified by works, contrary to that, Eph. ii. 9. where the apostle saith expressly, 'not of works.' So that it is clear, faith's excellency lies in the apprehending and applying the object Christ: therefore in scripture we are said to be justified through faith as an instrument deputed; not for faith as a formal cause.

The second rule is, that faith doth not justify, as it doth exercise grace. It cannot be denied but faith hath an influence upon the graces; it is like a silver thread that runs through a chain of pearl; it puts strength and vivacity into all the virtues; but it doth not justify under this notion. Faith begets obedience: by faith Abraham obeyed, but Abraham was not justified as he obeyed, but as he believed. Faith works by love, but it doth not justify as it works by love. For as the sun shines by his brightness, not by his heat (though both are inseparably joined); so faith and love are tied together by an indissoluble knot, yet faith doth not justify as it works by love, but as it lays hold on Christ. Though faith be accompanied with all the graces, yet in point of justification, it is alone, and hath nothing to do with any of the graces. Hence that speech of Luther, In the justification of a sinner, Christ and faith are alone; as the bridegroom and bride in the bed-chamber. Faith is never separated from the graces, yet sometimes it is alone. And thus I have shewn you the essentials of faith.

SECT. 4. *Shewing what are the Fruits and Products of Faith.*

I proceed to the consequentials of faith. There are many rare and supernatural fruits of faith.

1. Faith is an heart-quickening grace, it is the vital artery of the soul : ' The just shall live by his faith,' Hab. ii. 4. When we begin to believe, we begin to live. Faith grafts the soul into Christ, as the scion into the stock, and fetcheth all its sap and juice from the blessed vine. Faith is the great quickener; it quickens our graces and our duties.

1. Faith quickens our graces; the Spirit of God infuseth all the seeds and habits, but faith is the fountain of all the acts of grace; it is as the spring in the watch that moves the wheels: not a grace stirs till faith set it a work. How doth love work? By faith! When I apprehend Christ's love, this doth pullize and draw up my love to him again. How doth humility work? By faith! Faith humbles the soul; it hath a double aspect; it looks upon sin, and a sight of sin humbles: it looks upon free-grace, and a sight of mercy humbles. How doth patience work? By faith! If I believe God is a wise God, who knows what is best for me, and can deliver not only from affliction, but by affliction: this spins out patience. Thus faith is not only *viva*, but *vivifica*: it puts forth a divine energy and operation into all the graces.

2. Faith animates and quickens our duties. What was the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin? It was their faith in the Messiah, that made their dead sacrifices become living sacrifices. What are ordinances but a dumb shew, without the breathings of faith in them? therefore in scripture it is called the prayer of faith, the hearing of faith, and the obedience of faith: dead things have no beauty in them, it is faith that quickens and beautifies.

3. Faith is an heart-purifying grace: ' Having purified their hearts by faith,' Acts xv. 9. Faith is a virgin grace, of a pure and heavenly nature. Faith is in the soul as lightning in the air, which purgeth; as fire in the metals, which refines; as physic in the

body, which works out the disease. Faith works out pride, self-love, hypocrisy : it consecrates the heart : that which was before the devil's thoroughfare, is now made God's enclosure, 1 Tim. iii. 9. ' Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.' Faith is an heavenly plant, which will not grow in an impure soil. Faith doth not only justify, but sanctify : as it hath one work in heaven, so it hath another work in the heart. He that before was under the power of some hereditary corruption, as soon as faith is wrought, there is a sacred virtue coming from Christ, for the enervating and weakening that sin : ' the waters are abated.' The woman that did but touch the hem of Christ's garment, felt virtue coming out of him. The touch of faith hath an healing power : faith casts the devil out of the castle of the heart, though still he keeps the out-works. Satan hath a party in a believer, but there is a duel fought every day : and faith will never give over, till, as a prince, it prevails. ' This is the faith of God's elect.' Thou that sayest thou believest, hath thy faith removed the mountain of sin, and cast it into the sea ? What, a believer, and a drunkard ! a believer, and a swearer ! a believer, and an apostate ! for shame ! either leave thy sins, or leave thy profession : Faith and the love of sin can no more stand together, than light and darkness.

4. Faith is an heart-pacifying grace ; peace is the daughter of faith, Rom. v. 1. ' Being justified by faith we have peace with God ;' faith is the dove that brings an olive-branch of peace in its mouth : faith presents God reconciled, and that gives peace. What is it makes heaven, but the smile of God ? Faith puts the soul into Christ, and there is peace, John xvi. ult. ' That in me ye may have peace.' When the conscience is in a fever, and burns as hell, faith opens the orifice in Christ's side, and

sucks in his blood, which hath a cooling and pacifying virtue in it. Faith gives us peace in trouble, nay, out of trouble. 1. It gives peace in trouble: Faith is an heart-pacifying, because an heart-securing grace. When Noah was in the ark, he did not fear the deluge; he could sing in the ark. Faith shuts a believer into the ark, Christ: 'Lead me to the rock which is higher than I,' was David's prayer. Faith plants the soul upon this rock. The West Indians built their palaces upon the tops of hills: in the flood the waters covered the hills: but a believer is built higher: Isa. xxxiii. 16. His place of defence shall be the munition of rocks: but a man may starve upon a rock; therefore it follows, bread shall be given him, &c. Faith builds a christian upon the power, wisdom, faithfulness of God: This is the munition of rocks: and it feeds him with the hidden manna of God's love: here is bread given him. The way to be safe in evil times, is to get faith; this ushers in peace, and it is such a peace as doth garrison the heart, Phil. iv. 7. 'The peace of God shall keep your heart; it shall keep it as in a tower or garrison. 2. Faith gathers peace out of trouble; joy out of sorrow; glory out of reproach. This is the key to Sampson's riddle, 'out of the eater came meat;' this explains that paradox, 'Can a man gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?' Yes, of trials and persecutions, faith gathers joy and peace: here are figs of thistles. How were the martyrs ravished in the flames! the Apostles were whipt in prison, but it was with sweet-briar. O how sweet is that peace which faith breeds? it is a plant of the heavenly paradise; it is a christian's festival? it is his music: it is as Chrysostome speaks, the anticipation of heaven.

5. Faith is an heart-strengthening grace; a believer is heart of oak, he is strong to resist temptation, to bear afflictions, to foil corruptions; he

gives check to them, though not full mate. An unbeliever is like Rueben, unstable as water, he shall not excel. A state of infidelity, is a state of impotency. A believer is as Joseph, who though the archers shot at him, his bow abode in strength. If a christian be to do any thing, he consults with faith; this is the sinew, which if it be cut, all his strength goes from him. When he is called out to suffering, he harnesseth himself with faith, he puts on this coat of mail; faith lays in suffering strength, furnisheth the soul with suffering promises, musters together suffering graces, propounds suffering rewards.

But how comes faith to be so strong? Ans. 1. Because it is a piece of God's armour; it is a shield he puts into our hand: Eph. vi. 16. 'Above all, taking the shield of faith:' a shield will serve for a breast-plate, a sword, if need be, an helmet; it defends the head, it guards the vitals; such a shield is faith. 2. Faith brings the Strength of Christ into the soul; Phil. iv. 13. 'I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. The strength of faith lies out of itself, it grafts upon another stock. When it would have wisdom, it consults with Christ, whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor; when it would have strength, it goes to Christ, who is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Christ is a christian's armoury, faith is the key that unlocks it. Faith hangs upon the lock of Christ, all its strength lies here; cut it off from this lock, and it is weaker than any other grace. Christ may be compared to that tower of David, on which there hung a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men: the faith of all the elect, these shields hang upon Christ. Faith is an heroical grace; the crown of martyrdom is set upon the head of faith. 'By faith they quenched the violence of the fire;' the fire over-

came their bodies, but their faith overcame the flame.

5. Faith is a life-fructifying grace, it is fruitful. Julian, upbraiding the christians, said, that their motto was, 'only believe;' and the papists call us solifidians. Indeed, when faith is alone, and views all the rare beauties in Christ, then faith sets a low value and esteem upon works; but when faith goes abroad in the world, good works are the handmaids that wait on this queen. Though we place faith in the highest orb, in matter of justification, yet good works are in conjunction with it in matter of sanctification. It is no wrong to good works to give faith the upper hand, which goes hand in hand with Christ. Good works are not separated from faith, only faith challengeth its seniority. Faith believes as if it did not work, and it works as if it did not believe, Faith hath Rachel's eye, and Leah's womb: Rom. vii. 4. 'That ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God.' Faith is that spouse-like grace which marries Christ, and good works are the children which faith bears.

Thus having briefly shewn you the nature of faith, I now come to the reflexive act: Have you faith or not? And here let me turn myself, first to unbelievers, such as cannot find that they have this uniting, this espousing grace; What shall I say to you; Go home and mourn; think with yourselves, what if you should die this night? what if God should send you a letter of summons to surrender? what would become of you? you want that grace which should entitle you to Christ and heaven: oh, I say, mourn: yet mourn not as them without hope, for in the use of means you may recover a title. I know it is otherwise in our law-courts; if a title to an estate be once lost, it can never be recovered: but it is otherwise here; though thou hast no title

to Christ to day, yet thou mayest recover a title: thou hast not sinned away the hope of a title, unless thou hast sinned away the sense of sinning. To such as are resolved to go on in sin, I have not a word to say, they are upon the spur to go to hell: but to you that have been prodigal sons, but are now taking up serious resolutions to give a bill of divorce to your sins, let me encourage you to come to Christ, and to throw yourselves upon his blood; for yet a title to heaven is recoverable.

Obj. 1. But saith the sinner, is there hope of mercy for me? sure this is too good news to be true: I would believe, and repent, but I am a great sinner. *Ans.* And whom else doth Christ come to save! whom doth God justify but the ungodly? did Christ take our flesh on him, and not our sins?

2. But my sins are of no ordinary dye?

Ans. And is not Christ's blood of a deeper purple than thy sins? is there not more virtue in the one, than there can be venom in the other? what if the devil doth magnify thy sins? canst not thou magnify thy physician? cannot God drown one sea in another, thy sins in the ocean of his mercy?

3. But my sins are of a long standing.

Ans. As if Christ's blood were only for new and fresh wounds: we read that Christ raised not only the daughter of Jairus, who was newly dead, and the widow's son who was carried forth to burying; but Lazarus, who had lain four days in the grave, and began to putrify: and hath Christ less virtue now in heaven than he had upon earth? if thine be an old wound, yet the medicine of Christ's blood, applied by faith, is able to heal it: therefore sink not in these quick-sands of despair. Judas his despair was worse in some sense than his treason. I would not encourage any to go on in sin, God forbid: it is sad to have old age and old sins. It is hard to pull up an old tree that is rooted, it is easier to cut

it down for the fire; but let not such despair: God can give an old sinner a new heart, he can 'make springs in the desert.' Have not others been set forth as patterns of mercy, who have come in at the twelfth hour? therefore break off thy league with sin, throw thyself into Christ's arms; say, Lord Jesus thou hast said, Those which come to thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out.

2. Let me turn myself to the people of God, such as upon a serious scrutiny with their own hearts, have ground to believe that they have faith, and being in the faith, are ingrafted into Christ. Read over your charter, 'All things are yours:' things present and to come; you are the heir on which God hath settled all these glorious privileges. 'Give wine,' saith Solomon, 'to them that are of heavy hearts.' But while I am going to pour in this wine of consolation, methinks I hear the christian sadly disputing against himself that he hath no right to this charter.

CHAP. XXI.

The Believer's Objections answered.

THERE are three great objections which he makes,

Object. 1. Alas, saith he, I cannot tell whether I have faith or no.

Ans. Hast thou no faith? how didst thou come to see it? a blind man cannot see: thou canst not see the lack of grace, but by the light of grace.

Quest. But sure, if I had faith I should discern it?

Ans. 1. Thou mayest have faith, and not know it: a man may seek for that sometimes which he hath in his hand. Mary was with Christ, she saw him, she spake with him, yet her eyes were held that she did not know it was Christ: the child lives

in the womb, yet doth not know that it lives. 2. Faith oft lies hid in the heart, and we see it not for want of search; the fire lies hid in the embers, but blow aside the ashes and it is discernable: faith may be hid under fears, temptations; but blow away the ashes. Thou prizest faith; hadst thou a thousand jewels lying by, thou wouldst part with all for this jewel: no man can prize grace but he that hath it. Thou desirest faith; the true desire of faith, is faith. Thou mournest for want of faith; dispute not, but believe: what are these tears but the seeds of faith.

Object. 2. But my faith is weak, the hand of it so trembles, that I fear it will hardly lay hold upon Christ.

Ans. There are seven things which I shall say in reply to this. 1. A little faith is faith; as a spark of fire is fire. Though the pearl of faith be little, yet if it be a true pearl, it shines in God's eyes. This little grace is the seed of God, and it shall never die, but live as a spark in the main sea. 2. A weak faith will entitle us to Christ as well as a stronger: 'To them that have obtained like precious faith,' 2 Pet. i. 1. not but that there are degrees of faith; as faith purifies, so all faith is not alike, one is more than another; but as faith justifies, so faith is alike precious; the weakest faith justifies as well as the faith of the most eminent saint; a weak hand will receive the alms: for a man to doubt of his grace because it is weak, is rather to rely upon grace than upon Christ. 3. The promise is not made to strong faith, but to true. The promise doth not say, Whoever hath a faith that can remove mountains, that can stop the mouths of lions, shall be saved; but whoever believes, be his faith never so small: the promise is made to true faith, and for the most part to weak. What is a grain of mustard seed, what is a bruised reed, but the emblem of a

weak faith? yet the promise is made to these: 'A bruised reed he will not break.' The words are a meiosis, where the lesser is put for the greater. He will not break, that is, he will bind up: though Christ chides a weak faith, yet that it may not be discouraged, he makes a promise to it. Hierome observes upon the beatitudes, there are many of the promises made to weak grace, Matt. v. 3. "Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that mourn, ver. 4. blessed are they that hunger," ver. 5.

4. A weak faith may be fruitful; weakest things do multiply most. The vine is a weak tree, it is borne up and under-propt, but it is fruitful; it is made in scripture the emblem of fruitfulness. The thief on the cross, when he was newly converted, had but a weak faith; but how many precious clusters grew upon that vine! Luke xxiii. 40. he chides his fellow-thief; 'Dost thou not fear God?' he falls to self-judging, 'we indeed suffer justly:' he believes in Christ when he says, 'Lord' (he makes an heavenly prayer) 'remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom:' here was a young plant, but very fruitful. Weak christians oft are most fruitful in affections; how strong is the first love, which is after the first planting of faith!

5. A Christian may mistake, and think he is weak in faith because he is weak in assurance, whereas faith may be strongest when assurance is weakest; assurance is rather the fruit of faith: the woman of Canaan was weak in assurance, but was strong in faith. Christ gives her three repulses, but her faith stands the shock; she pursues Christ with an holy obstinacy of faith, insomuch that Christ sets a trophy of honour upon her faith, 'O woman, great is thy faith:' it may be a strong faith, though it doth not see the print of the nails: it is an heroical faith that can swim against wind and tide, believe against hope. Christ sets the crown upon the head of faith,

not of assurance, John xx. 29. 'Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.'

9. God hath most care of weak believers; the mother tends the weak child most: 'God will gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom.' The Lord hath a great care of his weak tribes: when Israel marched towards Canaan, the tribes were divided into several companies or brigades: now it is observable, all the weak tribes were not put together, lest haply they should discourage one another, and so have fainted in their march: but God puts a strong tribe to two weak tribes; as Issachar, Zebulun, two weak tribes, and Judah a victorious tribe; therefore he gives the lion in his standard: surely this was not without a mystery, to shew what care God hath of his weak children: Christ the lion of the tribe of Judah shall be joined to them.

7. Weak faith is a growing faith. It is resembled by the grain of mustard-seed, of all seeds the least; but when it is grown, it is the 'greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air came and lodged in the branches thereof.' Faith must have a growing time; the seed springs up by degrees, first the blade, and then the ear; and then the full corn in the ear: the strongest faith hath sometimes been weak. The faith that hath been renowned in the world, was once in its infancy and minority: grace is like the waters of the sanctuary, which did rise higher and higher. Wait on the ordinances, these are the breasts to nourish faith: be not discouraged at thy weak faith; though it be now in the blossom and bud, it will come to the full flower.

Object. 3. But saith a child of God, I fear I am not elected.

Ans. What! a believer, and not elected? who told thee thou wert not elected? hast thou any skill

in the black book of reprobation? the angels cannot unclasp this book, and wilt thou meddle with it? which is our duty to study, God's secret will, or his revealed? It is a sin for any man to say he is a reprobate; that which keeps him in sin must needs be a sin; but this opinion keeps him in sin, it cuts the sinews of endeavour. Who will take pains for heaven that gives himself up for lost? O believer, be of good comfort, thou needest not look into the book of God's decree, but look into the book of thy heart, see what is written there: he that finds the Bible copied out into his heart, his nature transformed, the bias of his will changed, the signature and engravings of the Holy Ghost upon him, he doth not look like a reprobate.

When you see the fruits of the earth spring up, you conclude the sun hath been there; it is hard to climb up into election: but if we find the fruits of holiness springing up in our hearts, we may conclude the Sun of Righteousness hath risen there, 2 Thes. ii. 13. 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit.' By our sanctification we must calculate our election. Indeed, God in saving us, begins at the highest link of the chain, election; but we must begin at the lowest link of the chain, sanctification, and so ascend higher.

Therefore laying aside all disputes, let me pour in of the wine of consolation. Thou who art a believer, (and though thou wilt not affirm it, yet thou canst not deny it without sin) let me do two things, shew you your happiness, then your duty.

1. Behold your happiness: all the things which you have heard of, present and to come, are your portion and prerogative. What shall I say to you? All my apprehensions fall short: when I speak of things to come, I know not how to express myself but by a deep silence and astonishment. O the mag-

nitude and magnificence of the saints' glory! The ascent to it is so high, that it is too high for any man's thoughts to climb: the most sublime spirit would here be too low and jejune. How happy art thou, O believer, if God himself can make thee blessed, thou shalt be so: if being invested with Christ's robes, enamelled with his beauty, replenished with his love: if all the dimensions of glory will make thee blessed, thou shalt be so. O the infinite superlative happiness of a believer! all things to come are his. What? to have the same jointure with the angels, those blessed spirits! nay, to speak with reverence, to have a partnership with God himself! to be enriched with the same glory which did sparkle forth in the human nature of Christ! How amazing is this! the thoughts of it are enough to swallow us up. O what an inheritance is he born to, who is new-born? Suppose he is poor in the world, and despised, (the king of the Moors was offended at religion, because the professors of it were poor) I say to him as our Saviour, 'Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.' All things to come are yours. Who would not be a believer! O that I might tempt such to Christ as yet stand out!

2. Learn your duty. Mercy calls for duty.

CHAP. XXII.

Shewing the Duties of a believer by way of Retaliation.

THERE are several duties which I would press upon believers; and they branch themselves into ten particulars.

1. Admire, and thankfully adore the love of God in settling this rich charter upon you. You that are mirrors of mercy, should be monuments of

praise. How was David affected with God's goodness? 2 Sam. vii. 19. 'Thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come.' So should we say, Lord, thou hast not only given us things present, but thou hast spoken of thy servants for a great while to come, nay, for ever. It will be a great part of our work in heaven, to admire God; let us begin to do that work now, which we shall be for ever doing. Adore free grace; free grace is the hinge on which all this turns; every link in this golden chain is richly enamelled with free grace; free grace hath provided us a plank after shipwreck. When things past were forfeited, God hath given us things to come: when we had lost paradise, he hath provided heaven. Thus are we raised a step higher by our fall. Set the crown upon the head of free grace. O to what a seraphical frame of spirit should our hearts be raised! How should we join with angels and arch-angels in blessing God for this! It is well there is an eternity coming; and truly that will be little enough to praise God. Say as that sweet singer of Israel, Psal. ciii. 1. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul;' or as the original will bear, Bow the knee, O my soul, before the Lord. Thus should a christian say, All things in heaven and earth are mine, God hath settled this great portion upon me, bow the knee, O my soul; praise God with the best instrument, the heart, and let the instrument be screwed up to the highest, do it with the whole heart. When God is tuning upon the string of mercy; a christian should be tuning upon the string of praise: I have given you a taste of this new wine, yet so full of spirits is it, that a little of it would enflame the heart in thankfulness. Let me call upon you, who are the heirs apparent to this rich inheritance, Things present and to come; that you would get your hearts elevated, and wound up into a thankful frame. It is not an handsome pos-

ture, to see a christian ever complaining when things go cross : O do not so look upon your troubles as to forget your mercies. Bless God for what is to come : and to heighten your praises, consider God gives you not only these things, but he gives you himself. It was Austin's prayer : Lord, saith he, Whatever thou hast given me, take all away, only give me thyself: you have not only the gift but the Giver. O take the harp and viol; if you do not bless God, who shall? where will God have his praise? he hath but a little in the world. Praise is in itself an high angelical work, and requires the highest spirited christians to perform it. Wicked men cannot praise God : they can say, God be thanked ; but as it is with the hand-dial, the finger of the dial is at twelve, when the dial hath not moved one minute : so though the tongues of wicked men are forward in praise, yet their hearts stand still. Indeed, who can praise God for these glorious privileges to come, but he that hath the seal of the Spirit to assure him that all is his? O that I might persuade the people of God to be thankful, 'make God's praise glorious.' Let me tell you, God is much taken with this frame ; repentance is the joy of heaven, and thankfulness is the music of heaven : let not God want his music : let it not be said, God hath more murmurers than musicians. 'Whoso offereth praise, glorifies me.'

2. If all things to come are yours, live suitable to these glorious hopes : you that look for things to come, let me tell you, God looks for something present from you ; namely, that your lives be answerable to your hopes, 'What manner of persons ought you to be?' 2 Pet. iii. 21. You have heard what manner of privileges you shall have ; aye, but what manner of persons ought you to be? Those that look to differ from others in their condition, must differ from them also in their conversation.

Wherefore beloved, 'seeing you look for such things, be diligent that you may be found of him in peace, without spot.' We would all be glad to be found of God in peace, then labour to be found without spot. Spot not your faces, spot not your consciences; live as those who are the citizens and burgesses of this New Jerusalem above. Walk as Christ did upon earth. There are three steps in which we should follow Christ.

1. In sanctity. His was an holy life; 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' though he was made sin, yet he knew no sin. The very devils acknowledged his holiness: 'we know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.' O be like Christ; tread in his steps. In the sacrament, 'we shew forth the Lord's death:' and in a holy conversation, we shew forth his life. The holy oil, wherewith the vessels of the sanctuary were to be consecrated, was compounded of the purest ingredients, which was a type and emblem of that sanctity which should rest upon the godly: their hearts and lives should be consecrated with the holy oil of the Spirit. Holiness of life is the ornament of the gospel, it credits religion. Sozomen observes, that the devout life of a poor captive christian woman, moved a king and his whole family to embrace the christian faith. Whereas how doth it eclipse, and as it were entomb the honour of religion, when men profess they look for heaven, yet there is nothing of heaven in them? if there be light in the lanthorn, it will shine out: and if grace be in the heart, it will shine forth in the conversation. It is a great sin in these times to be bewailed, the looseness of professors: even those that we hope (by the rule of charity) have the sap of grace in their heart, yet do not give forth such a sweet savour in their lives: how many under the notion of christian liberty, degenerate into libertinism! the carriage of some that

go for saints is such, that it would make men afraid to embrace religion. What Chrysostome saith of the contentions of the church in his time, (If, saith he, a gentile should come and say, I would be made a christian, yet when he sees such a spirit of dissension among them, one of Paul, and another of Apollos, such are the diversities of opinions, that he knows not which to choose, but must return to his gentilism again :) the same may I say of the looseness, if not scandals, of some professors. If a stranger should come from beyond sea, and see the miscarriages of many, their covetousness, their licentiousness; had he no other Bible to read in, but the lives of some professors, he would turn back again and resolve never to be made a christian. What a shame is this! Did Christ walk thus when he was upon earth? His life was a pattern of sanctity! You that are professors, your sins are sins of unkindness, they go nearest to Christ's heart. Do you live as those who have hope of things to come? is Christ preparing heaven for you, and are you preparing war against him? is this your kindness to your friend? O consider how you wound religion; your sins are worse than others. A stain in a black cloth is not easily seen or taken notice of; but a spot in a piece of scarlet, every one's eye is upon it. The sins of wicked men are not much wondered at, they can do no other, theirs is a spot in black; but a sin in a professor, this is like a spot in a bright scarlet, every one's eye is upon it; how doth this dishonour the gospel? and is it not sad that others should make a rod of your sin to lash religion? The deviation of the godly is as odious as the devotion of the profane. O that there were such a lustre and majesty of holiness in the lives of professors, that others might say, These look as if they had been with Jesus; they live as if they were in heaven already. Aaron must not only have bells, but pomegranates,

which were for savour, as the other were for sound. It is not enough to discourse of godliness, or to make a noise by a profession: What are these bells without the pomegranates, viz. a life that casts a savour in the church of God?

2. Walk as Christ did, in humility. His life was a pattern of humility. He was the heir of heaven, the Godhead was in him, 'yet he took on him the form of a servant,' Phil. ii. 7. O infinite humility for a Saviour to become a servant, for the Lord of glory to lay aside his robe, and put on a livery; as if a king should leave his throne, and wait at table: nay, that is not all, but Christ washeth his disciples' feet. 'He poured water into a bason, and began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel,' 1 John xiii. 6. No wonder it is said that he came in the form of a servant; he stands here with his bason of water and a towel! Yea, to express the depth of his humility, he was made in the likeness of men. O how did Christ abase himself in taking flesh! it was more humility in Christ to humble himself to the womb than to the cross. It was not so much for flesh to suffer, but for God to be made flesh; this was the wonder of humility. We read Christ's flesh is called a vail, Heb. x. 20. 'Through the vail, his flesh;' indeed the taking of flesh was the wearing of a vail. By putting this dark vail upon him, he eclipsed the glory of the Deity. This was Christ's 'emptying of himself,' Phil. ii. which Tertullian renders, he exhausted himself. The metaphor may allude to a vessel full of wine that is drawn out; Christ, in whom all fulness dwells, by humility seemed to be so drawn out, as if there had been nothing left in him. Behold here a rare pattern of humility.

You that look for things to come, tread in this step of Christ, be humble; grace shines brightest through the mask of humility: humility is such a

precious herb as grows not in the garden of philosophy, that is rather humanity than humility. Humility beautifies our persons. The humble saint looks like a citizen of heaven. Humility is the vail of a christian : Christ's bride never looks more beautiful in his eyes, than when she hath on this vail : be ye clothed with humility. Or as the Greek word is, be knotted. Humility is the spangled knot in the garment of our graces. Humility sweetens our duties; incense smells sweetest when it is beaten small : when the incense of our duties is beaten small with humility, then it sends forth its most fragrant perfume. The violet is a sweet flower; it hangs down the head so low, that it can hardly be seen, only discovers itself by its scent. This is the emblem of humility.

The humble christian studies his own unworthiness : he looks with one eye upon grace to keep his heart cheerful, and with the other eye upon sin to keep it humble. Better is that sin which humbles me, than that duty which makes me proud. As humility hides another's error, so it hides its own graces. Humility looks upon another's virtues and its own infirmities. The humble man admires that in another which he slights in himself ; he is one that denies not only his evil things, but his good things; not only his sins but his duties : he desires to have atonement made even for the altar. The humble saint is no murmurer, yet he is ever complaining ; the more knowledge he hath, the more he complains of ignorance ; the more faith, the more he complains of unbelief : in short, the humble christian translates all the glory from himself to Christ. Constantine did use to write the name of Christ upon his doors ; so doth the humble soul write Christ and free-grace upon his duties. ' I laboured more abundantly than they all ; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.' When he prays, saith

he, it is the 'Spirit helps my infirmities.' Rom. viii. When he mourns for sin, saith he, 'the Almighty makes my heart soft.' When his heart is in a good frame, saith he, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' When he conquers a corruption, saith he, 'It is through Christ that strengthens me.' As Joab when he had gotten a victory, sends for king David that he might carry away the crown of it: so doth the humble christian when he hath gotten the victory over a corruption, he sets the crown upon the head of Christ; O blessed humility! You that look for things above, let me tell you, the way to ascend is to descend; the lower the tree roots, the higher it shoots up: would you shoot up in glory, would you be tall cedars in the kingdom of God, be deeply rooted in humility. Humility is compared by some of the Fathers to a valley: we must walk to heaven through this valley of humility. Humility distinguisheth Christ's spouse from harlots. Hypocrites grow in knowledge, but not in humility. 'Knowledge puffeth up,' 1 Cor. viii. 1. It is a metaphor taken from a pair of bellows that are blown up and filled with wind. He that is proud of his knowledge, the devil cares not how much he knows. It is observable in the old law, that God hated the very resemblance of the sin of pride; he would have no honey mingled in their offering; 'Ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey in any offering of the Lord made by fire,' Lev. ii. 11. Indeed, leaven is sour, but what is there in honey that should offend? why no honey? because honey, when it is mingled with meal or flower, maketh it to rise and swell: therefore the people of Israel must mingle no honey in their offering. This was to let us see how God hated the resemblance of this sin of pride. Be humble.

3. Be like Christ in charity: Christ's life was a life of charity: he breathed nothing but love; he

was full of this sweet perfume : as his person was lovely, so was his disposition, he was composed all of love : his lips dropped honey, his side dropped blood, his heart dropped love. You that expect these glorious things to come, live as Christ did, live in love. O that this spice might send out its fragrant smell among christians! ' we know we are passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.' Dost thou love the person of Christ, and hate the picture? ' He that loves him who doth beget, loves him also that is begotten.' There are two devils which are not fully cast out of God's own people ; the devil of vain-glory, and the devil of uncharitableness. Are we not fellow-citizens? Do we not all expect the same heaven? Nay, are we not brethren? which should be a sufficient bond to knit us together in amity. We have all the same Father, God; we are born of the same mother, the Church? we are begotten of the same seed, the Word; we suck the same breasts, the promises; we feed at the same board, the Table of the Lord; we wear the same clothing, the Robe of Christ's Righteousness; we are partners in the same glory, the Inheritance of the Saints in Light; and shall we not love? There is indeed a blessed strife, when the saints strive for the faith : but this is a strife that consists of unity. ' Striving together for the faith of the gospel,' Phil. i. 27. You that look for things to come, live suitably to your hopes : Walk as Christ did, that some of his beams may shine in you, and his life may be copied out in yours.

3. The third Duty is, If things to come are a believer's, be content though you have the less of things present : a believer is to be valued according to that which is in reversion. Things to come are his. If you were to take an estimate of a man's estate, would you value it by that which he hath in his house, or by his land? Perhaps he hath little in

his house, little money or plate; but he is a landed man, there lies his estate. While we are in this house of clay, we have but little. Many a christian can hardly keep life and soul together; but, he is a landed man, things to come are his: then be content with the less of things present: if we have but a small fore-crop, we shall have a great after-crop; it is sufficient if we have but enough to bear our charges till we come to heaven. An heir that hath a great estate beyond sea, though he hath but little money for his voyage thither, he will be content. Should not Hagar have been content, though the water were spent in her bottle, when there was a well so near? God hath made a deed of gift, he hath given Christ to a believer, and in him all things, 'things present and to come,' grace and glory; is not here enough to make him content? But, saith the christian, I want present comforts. Consider, the angels in heaven are rich, yet they have no money; thou hast things to come, angels' riches, such as cannot stand with reprobation; be content then with the less of things present. If thou complainest of any thing, let it be of thy complaining.

4. Labour for such an high degree of faith, as to make these things to come, present. Faith and hope are two sisters, and are very like: they differ thus; hope looks at the excellency of the promise, faith at the certainty of it: now faith looking at the infallible truth of him that promiseth, thus it makes things to come, present. Faith doth antedate glory, it doth substantiate things not seen. Faith alters the tenses, it puts the future into the present tense, Ps. lx. 6. 'Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine, Ephraim is the strength of my head,' &c. Those places were not yet subdued, but God had spoken in his holiness, he had made David a promise, and he believed it, therefore he looked upon it as already

subdued: Gilead is mine, &c. So saith faith, God hath spoken in his holiness, he hath made me a promise of things to come, therefore heaven is mine already. When one hath the reversion of an house, saith he, this house is mine: O that we had this art of faith, thus to anticipate heaven, and make things to come present. Thou who art a believer, heaven is thine now; thy head is already glorified; nay, heaven is begun in thee, thou hast some of those joys which are the first fruits of it. A christian, by the eye of faith, through the perspective glass of the promise, may see into heaven. Faith sees the promise fulfilled before it be fulfilled. Faith sets to its hand: *Item*, Received so much, before it be paid. Had we a vigorous faith, we might be in heaven before our time: that which a weak believer hopes for, a strong believer doth in some kind possess. Oh that we could often take a prospect of the heavenly paradise: 'Walk about Sion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces,' Ps. xlviii. 12, 13. So, walk into the heavenly mount, see what a glorious situation it is, go tell her towers, see what an inheritance you have; see your nobility, behold your 'scutcheon: O that we could thus breathe our faith up this mount of heaven every day. Do not say, all this shall be mine; but say, it is mine already: my head is there, my faith is there, my heart is there: Could we thus, living up to the height of our faith, realize and antedate things to come, how would all present things vanish! if a man could live in the sun, the earth would not appear; when saint Paul had been wrapped up into the third heaven, the earth did hardly appear ever after: see how he scorns it, 'I am crucified to the world:' it was a dead thing to him, he had begun heaven already; thus it is with a man that is heavenized. You saints that are earthly, the eye of

your faith is blood-shot : it is the character of a sinner, ' he cannot see afar off ;' like a man who hath bad eyes, that can see but just before him. Faith carries the heart up to heaven, and brings heaven down into the heart.

5. If all things to come are yours, then walk cheerfully with God, put on your white robes: hath a believer a title to heaven? what, and sad! ' We rejoice in hope of the glory of God,' Rom. v. 2. It is but a while, it is but putting off the earthly clothes of our body, and we shall be clothed with the bright robes of glory, and can a believer be sad? See how Christ doth secretly check his disciples for this, Luke xxiv. 17. ' What manner of communications are these, while you walk and are sad?' What, sad, and Christ risen? So I say to believers; things to come are yours; why walk ye and are sad? let them be out of heart who are out of hope. O rejoice in God: when the lead of the flesh begins to sink, let the cork of faith swim above! How doth the heir rejoice in hope of the inheritance! How doth the apprentice rejoice to think of coming out of his time! Here we are kept under by sin, and a child of God is forced sometimes to do the devil's work, but shortly death will make us free: there is an eternal jubilee coming, therefore ' rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' Can wicked men rejoice that have their portion in this life? and cannot he rejoice that hath a reversion of heaven? Are the waters of Abanah and Pharphar like to the waters of Jordan? O ye saints, think into what a blessed condition you are now brought! is it not a sweet thing to have God appeased? is it not a matter of joy to be an heir of the promise? Adam in paradise had choice of all the trees, one only excepted. The promises are the trees of life: thou mayest walk in the garden of the Bible, and pluck from all these trees. Who should rejoice, if not a christian?

he hath never so much cause to be sad, as he hath to be cheerful.

Obj. 1. But my sins trouble me.

Ans. It is true: that sin will not forsake thee, is matter of sadness; but that thou hast forsaken sin, is matter of joy: sin is a talent of lead. That thou canst not run so fast as thou wouldst in the ways of God, is matter of sadness; but that thou goest without halting (in regard of righteousness) this is matter of joy; and for your comfort remember, shortly you shall sin no more, all things shall be yours, but sin.

Obj. 2. But we are bid to mourn.

Ans. I would not speak against holy mourning; while we carry fire about us, we must carry water; as long as the fire of sin burns in our breasts, we must carry tears to quench it. But consider, 1. Spiritual joy and mourning are not inconsistent; sometimes it rains and shines at once: when there is a shower in the eyes, there may be a sunshine in religion, mourning and music may stand together; one saith, the great mourner in Israel was the sweet singer of Israel. 2. The end why God makes us sad, is to make us rejoice; he doth not require sorrow for sorrow, but it is ordained to be as sauce to make our joy relish the better: we sow in tears, that we may reap in joy. 3. The sweetest joy is from the sourest tears: Christ made the best wine of water: the purest and most excellent joy is made of the waters of true repentance: the bee gathers the best honey off the bitterest herbs: tears are the breeders of spiritual joy. When Hannah had wept, she went away, and was no more sad. Those clouds are very uncomfortable that never have any sunshine: that mourning which dyes the soul all in sable, that hath no place for rejoicing, I shall rather think it despair, than true remorse: The same God who hath bid us mourn, hath also bid us rejoice, Phil.

iv. 4. It is an excellent temper to be serious, yet cheerful. Jesus Christ loves the sanguine complexion: joy puts liveliness and activity into a christian, it oils the wheels of the affections; an heavy mind makes a dull action: the joy of the Lord is your strength. The pensive melancholy christian doth disparage the glory of heaven: what will others say? Here is one that speaks of things to come, and of a crown laid up, but sure he doth not believe it: see how sad he is! what ado is here to make a child of God cheerful! shall we need bid an heir rejoice in the estate befallen him? let me tell you, you who refuse consolation, are not fit persons to praise God: it is a kind of solecism to praise God with a sad heart: 'I will sing praises,' Psal. cviii.

1. It is more proper to sing praises, than to weep them. Rejoice, O christian, lift up thy crest, triumph in the hope of these things to come: it is not enough that there be joy within the firmament of a christian's heart, but it must shine out in his countenance.

Sixth *Duty*. If all things to come are a believers, let him not envy them who have only things present. God often wrings out the waters of a full cup to wicked men; but there are dregs at the bottom. Indeed, the prosperity of sinners is a great temptation: David stumbled at it, and had almost fallen; Psal. lxxiii. 'My feet had well nigh slipt:' It is not matter of envy but pity, to see men thrive in a way of sin; a fool is in gay clothes, but do you envy him? a man under a sentence going up the ladder, do you envy his preferment? 'They that will be rich, fall into temptations and a snare,' 1 Tim. vi. 9. Do you envy a man who is fallen into a snare? wicked men have that guilt which embitters their comforts, so that they may be said to want what they have; as a man who hath great possessions, yet having a fit of the stone or gout, while he is in

that torment, he may be said not to have them, because the comfort of them is taken away. A believer hath better things than these; things to come: wicked men have a crown of unrighteousness, he hath a crown of righteousness; they have robes (and perhaps stained with 'the blood of innocents') he hath the bright robe of glory. 'Envy not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways:' better is sanctified adversity than successful impiety.

Seventh Duty. Be supported in want of spiritual comfort: spiritual joy is a sweet thing; this is the spiced wine that 'causeth the lips of them who are asleep to speak:' this is the hidden manna, the bunch of grapes that grows upon the true vine; this is the saints' banqueting stuff; how sweet is it to have Word and Spirit, and Conscience speaking peace! in the mouth of these three witnesses, faith is confirmed. But, saith the poor soul that goes mourning, It is not so with me, I have not the privy seal of heaven, I want assurance. Well, do not give over waiting. We read, John vi. 19. the disciples were in the ship, and there arose a great storm, 'And when they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus.' This, O christian, may be thy case: there is a tempest of sorrow risen in thy heart; and thou hast rowed from one ordinance to another, and hast no comfort; Well, be not discouraged, do not give over rowing; thou hast but rowed three or four furlongs; perhaps when thou has rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs, thou mayest see Jesus, and have a comfortable evidence of his love; but suppose thou shouldest row all thy life long, and not have assurance, yet this may be a pillar of support;

Things to come are yours: it is but staying a while, and you shall be brimful of comfort: now, a believer is an heir of this joy; let him stay but while he is of age, and he shall be fully possessed of

the joys of heaven. For the present, God leaves a seed of comfort in the heart, the seed of God; there is a time shortly coming, when we shall have the full flower; 'We shall drink of the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of heaven. As Paul said of Onesimus, Philem. ver. 15. 'For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou mightest receive him for ever:' so I say of the comforts of God's Spirit, that they may be withdrawn for a season, that we may have them for ever: there is a time coming when we shall bathe ourselves in the rivers of divine pleasure.

8. If there be such a glorious inheritance to come, let us zealously contend for it against all oppositions: we have a city above, but there are enemies in the way which we must give battle to. God would give Israel Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey; but first they must encounter with the sons of Anak. So he will bestow upon us a crown, but we must fight for it. Heaven is not taken without storm. Hence it is the scripture bids us stand to our arms, and 'fight the good fight of faith,' 1 Tim. vi. 12. that we may not through a supine negligence lose the recompense of a reward. Christians must be military persons; it becomes the children of light to put on the armour of light. The apostle reckons up our several pieces of armour; the shield of faith, the helmet of hope, the breast-plate of love; and our artillery, the sword of the Spirit, the cannon-bullet of prayer. Indeed in heaven our armour shall be hung up in token of victory and triumph; but now it is a day of battle, and no cessation of arms, till death. And there is a threefold regiment we must fight against, which would hinder us of our crown.

1. The enemy within, viz. a treacherous heart; this is a sly enemy; 'A man's enemies are they of his own house,' Mic. vii. 6. nay, of his own heart,

Man by his fall lost his head-piece, viz. spiritual wisdom, and ever since he is an enemy to himself; he lays a snare for his own blood, Prov. i. 18. therefore Austin prays, Lord deliver me from myself: 'The heart is a conclave of wickedness; it is an armoury and magazine, where all the weapons of unrighteousness lie: the heart doth hold intelligence with Satan, it sides with him, and at every turn is ready to deliver up the keys to him; therefore good reason that we should gird on our armour, and give battle to this bosom traitor, which stands in our way to the crown. It is reported of Basil, that to shun the allurements and flatteries of the world, he retired and fled into the wilderness; but when he was there, he cries out of his heart, I have, saith he, forsaken all, but my evil heart is still tempting me. Luther used to say, he feared his heart more than pope or cardinal. Thy heart, O christian, would supplant thee of the blessing which is in reversion; O therefore make a brave onset, run the sword of the Spirit up to the hilt in the blood of thy sins; stab thy heart-lusts to the heart with the knife of mortification; let a duel be fought every day, and call in Christ for thy second. If the flesh doth war against us, good reason we should war against the flesh.

2. The second regiment that stands in the way to salvation, and which we must arm against, is the devil. He may be called a regiment, his name being Legion. This is the red regiment! how furiously doth he make his onset upon us, sometimes with temptations, sometimes with persecutions, that if possible we might let fall our armour, and so let go our crown? the devil, that roaring lion, while we are marching to heaven, raiseth all the trainbands of hell against us; 'whom resist, steadfast in the faith,' 1 Pet. v. 9. Our enemy is beaten in part already, he knows no march but running away.

3. The third regiment which stands in our way to heaven is the world; this enemy courts us; it smiles that it may deceive; it kills with embracing; it hath a golden apple in one hand, and a dagger in the other. Marcia gave to the emperor Commodus poison in perfumed wine: such an aromatic cup doth the world present us with, that we may drink and die. The ivy, while it clasps about the oak, sucks away the heart of it for its own leaves and berries; such are the world's embraces. Him whom I shall kiss, saith Judas, take him. So, whom the world kisseth, it often betrays. The world is a silken halter, a golden fetter; some have been drowned in the sweet waters of pleasure, others have been choaked in silver mines; Oh arm, arm against this flattering enemy! If the world's music enchant us, and we fall asleep upon our guard, then the devil falls on, and wounds us. Fight it out against all these regiments.

Consider the excellency of the prize, Things to come; what striving is there for earthly crowns and sceptres! with what zeal and alacrity did Hannibal continue his march over the Alps, and Cæsar's soldiers fight with hunger and cold? men will break through laws and oaths, run a thousand hazards for those things which, when they have them, will prove damnable gains. But 'things to come are yours.' You expect salvation, which is the crown of your desires, the flower of your ambition; oh therefore muster and rally together all your forces against this three-headed adversary which stands in your way to hinder you from taking possession. Fight it out to the death, you have a good captain; Christ is 'the Captain of your salvation,' Heb. ii. 10. If a flock of sheep have a lion for their captain, what need they fear? so, fear not little flock, you fight under the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

9. The next Duty is; If all Christ's things are

ours, then all our things must be Christ's; this is *lex talionis*, justice and equity require it. There is a joint interest between Christ and a believer: Christ saith, All mine are thine, things present, and things to come; then the heart of a believer must echo back to Christ, Lord, whatsoever I have is for thee; my parts, my estate: It was the saying of an holy man, 'Lord, thou art my all, and my all is thine.' Oh be willing to spend, and be spent; do, and suffer for Christ.

1. Let us to our power advance the honour and interest of Jesus Christ: Alas, what is all that we can do? If a king should bestow upon another a million per annum, with this proviso, that in lieu of his acknowledgment he shall pay a pepper-corn every year to the king, what proportion were there between this man's rent and his revenue? Alas, we are but unprofitable servants; all that we can do for Christ is not so much as this pepper-corn; yet up, and be doing. Christ hates compliments: we must not only bow the knee to him, but, with the wise men, present him with gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Be not like the sons of Belial, who brought their king no presents: But, saith the christian, I am poor, and can do little for Christ. Canst thou not make a deed of gift, and bestow thy love upon Christ? In the law, he that could not bring a lamb for an offering, if he brought but two turtle doves, it was sufficient. The woman in the gospel that threw in but her two mites, yet was accepted. God is not angry with any man because he hath but one talent, but because he doth not trade it.

2. Suffer for Christ, be willing to sell all, nay, to lose all for Christ: we may be losers for him, we shall never be losers by him; if he calls for our blood, let us not deny it him; we have no such blood to shed for Christ as he hath shed for us. It was Luther's saying, That in the cause of God he

was content to endure the odium and fury of the whole world. Basil affirms of the primitive saints, they had so much courage in their sufferings, that many of the heathens, seeing their heroic zeal, turned christians; they snatched up torments as so many crowns. O think nothing too dear for Christ! We that look for things to come, should be willing to part with things present for Christ.

10. Lastly, If all things to come are ours, be content to wait for these great privileges: it is not incongruous to long for Christ's appearing, and yet to wait for it: you see the glory a believer shall be invested with; but though the Lord gives a great portion, he may set a long day for the payment; David had the promise of a crown, but was long before he came to wear it. God will not deny, yet he may delay his promise, to teach us to wait: it is but a short-sighted faith that cannot wait. The husbandman waits for the seed: there is a seed of glory sown in a believer's heart; wait till it spring up into an harvest. Truly, it is an hard thing to wait for these things to come; so many discouragements from without, so many distempers from within, that the christian is willing to be at home: therefore we need patience, Heb. x. 36. 'For ye have need of patience.' But how shall we get it? nourish faith, ver. 35. 'Cast not away your confidence.' Patience is nothing else but faith spun out; if you would lengthen patience, be sure to strengthen faith.

There is a great deal of reason why a believer should be content to wait for heaven. 1. God is faithful who promiseth: God's word is security enough to venture upon; his bond is as good as ready money: all the world hangs upon the word of his power; and cannot our faith hang upon the word of his promise? We have his hand and seal, nay, his oath. 2. While we are waiting, God is tuning and fitting us for glory; 'Giving thanks to

the Father, who hath made us meet for the inheritance,' Col. i. 12. we must be made meet. Perhaps our hearts are not humble enough, not patient enough; our faith is but in its swaddling band: we should be content to wait a while, till we have gotten such a vigorous faith as will carry us full sail to heaven. As there is a fitting of vessels for hell, Rom. ix. 22. so there is a ripening and a preparing of the vessels of mercy, ver. 23. A christian should be willing to wait for glory, till he be fit to take his degree. 3. While we are waiting, our glory is increasing; while we are laying out for God, he is laying up for us, 2 Tim. iv. 8. If we suffer for God, the heavier our cross, the heavier shall be our crown. Would a christian be in the meridian of glory? would he have his robes shine bright? let him stay here and do service; God will reward us, though not for our works, yet according to our works, Mark xvi. 27. The longer we stay for the principal, the greater will the interest be. 4. Wait for these things to come out of an ingenuity: the longer a christian lives, the more glory he may bring to God. Faith is an ingenuous grace; as it hath one eye at the reward, so it hath another eye at duty. The time of life is the only time we have to work for God. Heaven is a place of receiving; this of doing. Hence the apostle being inflamed with divine love, though he could with all his heart be with Christ, yet he was content to live a while longer, that he might build up souls, and make the crown flourish upon the head of Christ: It is self-love saith, 'Who will shew us any good?' Divine love saith, How may I do good? The prodigal son could say, Father give me my portion; he thought more of his portion than his duty. A gracious spirit is content to stay out of heaven a while, that he may be a means to bring others thither. He whose heart hath been divinely touched with the love of

God, his care is not so much for receiving the talents of gold, as for improving the talents of grace. O wait a while! learn of the saints of old, they waited: if we cannot wait now, what would we have done in the times of the long-lived patriarchs? Look upon worldly men, they wait for preferment; shall they wait for earth? and cannot we wait for heaven? If a man hath the reversion of a lordship or manor when such a lease is out, will he not wait for it? we have the reversion of heaven when the lease of life is run out; and shall we not wait? look upon wicked men, they wait for an opportunity to sin; the adulterer waits for the twilight; sinners 'lie in wait for their own blood,' Prov. i. 18. Shall men wait for their damnation, and shall not we be content to wait for our salvation? Wait without murmuring, wait without fainting; the things we expect are infinitely more than we can hope for. And let me add one caution; 'wait on the Lord and keep his ways,' Psal. xxxvii. 34. while we are waiting, let us take heed of wavering. Go not a step out of God's way, though a lion be in the way: avoid not duty to meet with safety: keep God's highway, 'the good old way,' Jer. vi. 16. the way which is paved with holiness, Isa. xxv. 8. 'And an highway shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness:' avoid crooked paths, take heed of turning to the left hand, lest you be set on the left hand. Sin doth cross our hopes, it barricades up our way; a man may as well expect to find heaven in hell, as in a sinful way.

My last use is to such as have only things present, that they would labour for things to come. You have seen the blessed condition of a man in Christ: never rest till this be yours. Alas, how poor and contemptible are these present enjoyments laid in balance with things to come!

1. What is honour which is the highest eleva-

tion of mens ambition? one calls it the gallant madness. It was foretold to Agrippina, Nero's mother, that her son should be emperor, and that he should afterward kill his own mother; to which Agrippina replied, 'let my son be emperor, and then let him kill me and spare not;' so thirsty was she of honour. Alas, what are swelling titles but rattles to still mens' ambition? Honour is like the meteor which lives in the air; so doth this in the breath of other men: it is like a gale of wind which carries the ship; sometimes this wind is down, a man hath lost his honour, and lives to see himself intombed: sometimes this wind is too high: how many have been blown to hell, while they have been sailing with the wind of popular applause: Honour is but a glorious fancy; Acts xxv. 23. It doth not make a man really the better, but often the worse. A man swelled with honour, wanting grace, his bigness is his disease.

3. What are riches that men so thirst after? Amos ii. 7. 'Who pant after the dust of the earth;' golden dust will sooner choak than satisfy. How many have pulled down their souls to build up their houses. What a transiency and deficiency is there in all things under the sun? Christ, who had all riches, scorned these earthly riches; he was born poor, the manger was his cradle, the cobwebs his curtains: he lived poor, he had not where to lay his head: he died poor; I do not read that when Christ died, he made any will; he had no crownlands, only his coat was left, and that the soldiers parted among them: and his funeral was suitable; for as he was born in another man's house, so he was buried in another man's tomb; to shew how he did contemn earthly dignities and possessions. His kingdom was not of this world. Suppose an hour of adversity come, can these present things quiet the mind in trouble? Riches are called thick

clay, which will sooner break the back, than light on the heart. When pangs of conscience and pangs of death come, and no hope of things to come, what peace can the world give at such a time? surely it can yield no more comfort than a silken stocking to a man whose leg is out of joint. A fresh colour delights the eye; but if the eye be sore, this colour will not heal it. 'Riches avail not in the day of wrath.' Thou canst not hold thy wedge of gold as a screen to keep off the fire of God's justice. Let this sound a retreat to call us off from the immoderate pursuit of present things, to labour for things to come. What are these nether springs to the upper springs? As Abraham said, 'Lord, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless? So say, Lord, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go Christless? Luther did solemnly protest, God should not put him off with these things: Oh labour for those blessings in heavenly places. Things present are pleasing, but not permanent? be not content with a few gifts: Abraham gave unto the sons of the concubines gifts, and sent them away; 'but unto Isaac, Abraham gave all that he had.' Reprobates may have a few jewels and ear-rings which God scatters with an indifferent hand: these with the sons of the concubines are put off with gifts; but labour you for the portion, that portion which the saints and angels are spending upon, and can never spend: get into Christ, and then all is yours; so saith the Apostle, 'All things are yours, and ye are Christ's.'

GOD'S ANATOMY

UPON

MAN'S HEART.

BY THOMAS WATSON,
Minister of St. Stephen's Walbrook, LONDON.

HEB. iv. 13. *But all Things are naked and open unto the Eyes of Him with whom we have to do.*

WE are met this day to humble our souls, and to bring our censer, as once Aaron did, and step in, that the wrath of the great God may be appeased. And was there ever more need to lie in sackcloth, than when the kingdom almost lies in ashes? or to shed tears, than when this nation hath shed so much blood? These days are called in scripture, Soul-afflicting days, Lev. xxiii. 9. 'For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.' And certainly that may be one reason why there is so much state-affliction, because there is so little soul-affliction. Our condition is low, but our hearts are high. God sees with what hearts we now come, what is our spring, what our centre; his eye is upon us. So saith my text, 'All things are naked and open.'

I shall wave the coherence, lest I be prevented, and handle the words as an entire proposition. We have here a map of God's knowledge. But before

I extract any thing, I will first open the terms. In the law, first the lamps were lighted before the incense was burned: I may allude, first the judgment is to be enlightened by doctrine, before the affections are set on fire. Ministers must be first shining and then burning lamps.

All things are [naked.] It is a metaphor from the taking off the skin of any beast, which doth then appear naked. Thus our hearts are said to be naked; they lie open to the eye of God, they have no covering; there is no vail over the heart of a sinner, but the vail of unbelief; and this covering makes him naked.

This is not all, the apostle goes higher: they are naked and [open.] It alludes to the cutting up of the sacrifices under the law, where the priest did divide the beast in pieces, and so the *intestina*, the inward parts, were made visible. Or it may allude to an anatomy, where there is a dissection and cutting up of every part, the mesentery, the liver, the arteries. Such a kind of anatomy doth God make; an heart-anatomy: he doth cut up the inwards, and make a difference; this is flesh, that is spirit; this is faith, that is fancy. He makes a dissection, as the knife that divides between the flesh and the bones, the bones and the marrow, the sinews and the veins. 'All things are open;' they are cut up before him.

The next word is [all things]. There is nothing escapes his eye: and herein God's knowledge doth infinitely differ from ours. We cannot see in the dark, nor can we see many things at once; but it is not so with him; there is nothing so deep, but God will bring it above-board, 'who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness;', and he sees many things at once, nay, all are as if they were but one. All things being represented to him in the pure crystal of his own essence, are but as one individual thing.

Again [unto his eye.] Eyes are ascribed to God, not properly, but metaphorically: idols have eyes, 'yet they see not;' God hath no eyes, yet he sees; the eye of God is put in scripture for his knowledge; all things are naked to his eye, that is, they are obvious to his knowledge. We cannot sin, but it must be in the face of our Judge.

The last word is, [With whom we have to do.] To whom we must give an account. To whom we must be responsible. The words thus opened fall into these parts

1. Here is the Judge, that is God. Unto the eyes of [Him.]
2. The matter of fact [All things.]
3. The evidence given in, All things are [naked.]
4. The clearness of the evidence, Naked and [open.]
5. The witnesses [his eyes.]
6. The persons to be adjudged either for life or death, [we] that is every individual person: there are none excepted from this general assize. With whom we have to do.

The proposition I shall dilate on is this:

Doctrine. That the most secret cabinet-designs of man's heart are all unlocked and clearly anatomized before the Lord.

I might produce a whole cloud of witnesses, giving in their full vote and suffrage to this truth. I shall rest in two or three, that in the mouth of three witnesses this great truth may be established.

'He knows the secrets of the heart,' Ps. xlii. 21. in the original it is, the hidden things of the heart; those which are most veiled and masked from human perception.

And Ps. cxxxix. 2. 'Thou knowest my thoughts afar off.' Here are two words that set out the infiniteness of God's knowledge.

First, Thou knowest my thoughts, there is nothing can be paralleled with a thought.

First, For its subtilty, it is called 'the imagination of the thought,' Gen. vi. 5. or, as the word may bear, the first embryo and forming of the thought, that is, a thing very subtile, and scarce discernable.

Secondly, For its celerity, our thoughts are winged, like the cherubims, they will in an instant travel over the world: they are 'swifter than eagles,' 2 Sam. i. 23. but he that rides upon the swift cloud can overtake them, he can out-march them.

Thirdly, For its incongruity: our thoughts are snarled and tangled one with another, they have no dependance; yet even these thoughts are known to God, and set in their proper sphere: what David saith of his members, may be said of our thoughts, 'Are they not all written in thy book?'

2. Afar off, that is, 1. God knows our thoughts before we ourselves know them. He knows what designs are in the heart, and men would certainly pursue, did not he turn the wheel another way. God knew what was in Herod's mind before Herod himself knew it, viz. that he would have destroyed the child Jesus. God knew his thoughts afar off; he sees what blood and venom is in the heart of a sinner, though it never comes to have vent: he looks at the intention, though it be not put in execution.

Secondly, Afar off; that is, God knows our thoughts when we have forgotten them: they are afar off to us, but they are present with him. 'These things hast thou done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest I was such an one as thyself,' &c. That is, that I had a weak memory, 'but I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee,' Psal. l. 21. Millions of years are but as a short parenthesis between: and that we may not think God forgets,

he keeps a book of records, Rev. xx. 12. 'I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the Lord, and the books were opened:' God writes down, *Item*, such a sin; and if the book be not discharged, there will be an heavy reckoning: to every believer, the debt-book is crossed; the black lines of sin are crossed out in the red lines of Christ's blood.

To instance in one scripture more, 'The night shineth as the day,' Psal. cxxxix. 12. The clouds are no canopy; the night is no curtain to draw between, or intercept his knowledge: we cannot write our sins in so small or strange a character, but God can read, he hath a key for them. Indeed, we know not sometimes what to make of his providences, 'His way is in the sanctuary,' Ps. lxxvii. 13. we cannot read his hand-writing; but he understands our hearts without a commentary: he is privy to all our treachery: we cannot climb so high but he sees us, we cannot dig so low but he takes notice. The men of Babel were climbing very high, they would make a city and tower, the top whereof should reach to heaven, and so indeed it did, for God saw them all the while: and what became of it? 'He divided their language,' Gen. xi. 7, 8. Achan digs deep to hide his counsels, saying, 'No eye shall see;' he takes the Babylonish garment, and hides it in the earth, with the wedge of gold, but God unmasks his thievery, Josh. vii. 12.

If there be any here, that when they should have been doing God's work, have been by stealth hiding the Babylonish garment, making themselves rich, feathering their own nests; instead of driving in nails into God's temple to fasten it, have been driving a wedge of gold into their chests, God sees it; let me tell you, all the gain you get, you may put in your eyes; nay, if you belong to God you must, and weep it out again. God hath a window that looks into your hearts. Momus complained of

Vulcan, that he had not set a grate at every man's breast. God hath such a grate, he is the great superintendant; we come into the world as upon a theatre, every man acts his several part or scene; God is both the Spectator and the Judge.

You have seen the Doctrine proved.

For the amplification, let us consider what the knowledge of God is; it is a most pure act by which he doth at one instant know himself in himself, and all things without himself, not only necessary, and contingent, but which shall ever be, after a most perfect, exquisite, and infallible manner. Out of this description we may gather two things.

1. That there is no succession in God's knowledge: our knowledge is from the effect to the cause; it is not so in God. 2. Things that are not, have an objective being in his knowledge; Rom. iv. 17, 'He calls things that are not, as if they were;' even these *non entia* have an idea in his knowledge.

Quest. Here a question may be started, If there be such perfection in the knowledge of God, then he knows sin?

Ans. The schools distinguish of a double knowledge in God. There is, 1. A knowledge of pure intelligence; and thus he knows evil by a contrary good, as the light discovers the darkness. So we say, the straight rule shews the crooked. 2. There is a knowledge of approbation. Thus God doth not know sin, for he hates it, he punisheth it. Christ was made sin, yet he knew no sin? he did know it so as to hate it, not so as to act or approve it.

I pass to the Reasons.

Reason 1. From his creation; God is the Father of lights, therefore must needs see. It is his own argument, 'He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see, Psal. xciv. 9. He that makes a watch, knows all the pins and wheels in it; and though these wheels move

cross one to another, he knows the true and perfect motion of the watch, and the spring that sets these wheels a going; 'He that formed the eye, shall he not see?' Man may be compared to a spiritual watch. The affections are the wheels; the heart is the spring; the motion of this watch is false; the heart is deceitful; but God that made this watch knows the true motion of it (be it never so false) and the springs that sets the wheels a going. God knows us better than we know ourselves: he is as Ezekiel's wheels, full of eyes; and, as Augustine saith, he is all eye.

Reason 2. From his Ubiquity. He is omniscient, because omnipresent, Jer. xxiii. 24. 'Do not I fill heaven and earth?' He is no-where included, and yet no-where excluded; his circumference is every where: God hath an eye in councils, in armies, he makes an heart-anatomy; he sees what mens' designs are, and whither they are driving. If hatred wears the livery of friendship, if ambition comes masqued with humility, if religion be made a stirrup to get into the saddle of preferment, God sees it; 'And tho' they dig into hell, thence shall my hand take them,' Amos ix. 2. God can unlock hell; Plato saith of the king of Lydia, he had a ring, when he turned the head of it to the palm of his hand, he could see every one, but himself walk invisible. Thus God observes all our actings, but himself is not seen, as the apostle argues, 1 Tim. vi. 16. Therefore the schoolmen say well, *Deus est in loco repletive*, man may be circumscribed, the angels may be defined, but God is in every place by way of repletion. His centre is every where, and his eye is ever in his centre.

Obj. 1. But is it not said, Gen. xviii. 21. 'I will go down and see whether it be done altogether according to the cry?'

Ans. It could not be that God was ignorant; be-

cause there is mention made of a cry, but it is spoken after the manner of a judge, who will first examine the cause before he will pass the sentence. Therefore, to answer that scripture, 'I will go down and see:' It implies two things.

First, The moderation God useth when he is upon a work of justice; God doth not make the sword the judge; he doth first weigh things in the balance; he doth ever lay judgment to the line, before he draws the line of confusion. God, when he is upon a work of justice, is not in a riot, as if he did not care where he hits, but goes in the way of a circuit against offenders, 'I will go down and see;' he doth not punish rashly: and this may be a good hint to them that have power in their hand, they must work by line and plummet, judging the cause rather than the person; they must proceed in righteousness; else seeming zeal is no better than wild-fire; it is not justice, but violence.

Secondly, 'I will go down and see.' It denotes God's patience in waiting for sinners; he staid till the cry came up: God puts up with a great deal of injury at our hands, before justice draws the sword. He spins out mercy into patience, and ekes out patience into long-suffering. Oh! had not God's patience been infinite, we have spent so long time upon it, that we had quite spent the stock. But let no sinner presume: though God be long-suffering, he doth not tell us how long: when the cry comes up, God comes down. If pride, lust, oppression abound, God will hear the cry, and will quench the fire of sin with a shower of blood.

Obj. 2. 2 Zeph. ii. i. 'I will search Jerusalem with candles.' Implying, that something is hid out of his reach.

Ans. Not that God needs any candles to see by; for though it be said, 'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord,' Prov. x. 27. This candle is not

for him to see by, but for us. Therefore this searching implies two things:

First, The exactness of God's knowledge : he hath such a deep insight as usually men have upon search. 2. God threatens to search, because he would have us search. As Lam. iii. 40. ' Let us search and try our ways.' God's searchers are now abroad, his judgments; let us find out our sins, or else our sins will find us out.

Use 1. Information. And this hath two branches.

Branch 1. ' What manner of persons ought we to be', 2 Peter iii. 11. Hath God a window that opens into our hearts? doth he make a critical descent upon our actions? Oh what holiness, what sincerity, what exemplary piety becomes us, being in such a presence! Were we to come before some great monarch, what solemn preparations would we make? Shall the eye of a king do so much, and not the eye of God? The king can only see the outside; there may be a treason within for ought he knows: but God hath a key for the heart, Jer. xvii. 10. ' I the Lord search the heart;' and will not this command reverence? in these days of solemn humiliation, God's eye is principally upon the heart. God looks there most, where we look least; some have no heart at all; sin hath stolen away their heart; others have an heart too much, ' An heart and an heart,' Psal. xii. 2. others have hearts good for nothing, earthly hearts, like ' Saul that was hid among the stuff,' 1 Sam. x. 22. some have angels tongues, but, as Nebuchadnezzar he had the heart of a beast given to him. Brethren; did our hearts stand where our faces do, this would be a day of blushing, we should be ashamed to look one upon another; remember, God hath a key for the heart.

When we come to these solemn duties, God asks that question, as Jehu did Jehonadab, 2 Kings x.

15. he saluted him, and said to him, 'Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?' and he said, 'It is. If it be, give me thy hand: and he took him up into the chariot.'

This is God's question. You come this day to humble yourselves and make atonement, 'Is your heart right with me?' If we can answer as he did, Lord, thou knowest it is; though I have much weakness, yet my heart is right, I have no false bias upon it; though I am not perfect, I hope I am sincere; then will God say, Give me your prayers, give me your tears, now 'come up with me into the chariot.' A tear from a bleeding heart is a precious perfume in heaven. Oh did we consider this all-seeing eye, we durst not bring so much strange fire into the Divine presence. We read of Ezekiel's wheels, they had a wheel within a wheel. Thus God hath a thought within a thought: he comes between us and our thoughts.

The goddess Minerva, as the Poets feign, was drawn in such lively colours, that which way soever one turned, still Minerva's eye was upon him. Thus, turn which way you will, fall in love with any sin, still God looks upon you: he hath an eye in your heart. What manner of persons ought we to be?

Branch 2. Of how dangerous consequence is it to act any thing against God? He sees it, and his knowledge is armed with power: he that hath an eye to see, will find an hand to punish. If there be any designs against God, though carried on ever so subtilely, remember there is a council of war sits in heaven.

Against God? will some say. By no means.

There are four things; and if we act either directly or indirectly against any of these, we act against God, and he sees it; he writes it down.

1. If we act against his Truth, we act against God: Truth is a beam of God, it is his essence; it

is the most orient pearl of his crown: Take away his truth, and we ungod him. Truth is the precious seed by which we are begotten to life; it is the pillar of our salvation; it is not only the rule of faith, but it is the root out of which faith grows: take away truth, and what is faith but fancy? we believe ourselves into hell. Truth is the great purchase of Christ's blood, and it hath been transmitted to us in the blood of many saints and martyrs; if we strike at truth, we strike at God; and doth not God see this?

Give me leave to plead in God's cause: is not this pure wine of truth mixed with water, nay, with poison? How are the truths of God almost lost in the crowd of errors? what truth in divinity but is now called in question? some denying the scriptures, others denying the Lord that bought them; not only the foundations of the earth are out of course, but even the foundations of scripture are shaken. We read that, when the bottomless pit was opened, there arose a smoke as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened.' The late errors sprung out of the furnace of hell, have made such a smoke and mist in the church of God, that the bright sun of truth is much eclipsed in our horizon. How many religions are there now among us, and every day in a new dress? old heresies newly vamped. Our Saviour saith, 'If the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' yes sure, he may now find many faiths; so many men, almost so many faiths: these things are done, but are they punished? are they not countenanced? God sees: silence, when truth is wounded, is a loud sin.

Secondly, We act against God, when we act against his Covenant; a covenant is a serious thing. Suppose the matter of it civil, (though ours is more) the making of it is divine. We read of a covenant

made with an heathen king, 'which being broken, saith God, 'shall he prosper? shall he escape that doth such things?' Ezek. xvii. 16, 17. what, when ol he had given his hand, ver. 18. 'He shall not escape;' let us look upon our solemn league and covenant; I tremble when I read it: we covenanted not only against prelacy but popery; not only against hierarchy, but heresy; not only sin, but schism; and have we not gone against the letter of it? how is the covenant slighted by some as an almanack out of date? Those that did once lift up their hand to it, do now lift up their heel against it. Indeed at first the covenant was looked upon as sacred; the drunkard would be sober that day, the unclean person chaste; but within a while it is laid aside; we begin to play fast and loose with God, and for a trifle will venture the curse of the covenant; 'But they like men have transgressed the covenant,' Hos. vi. 7. or as in the Hebrew, They like Adam; how is that? for a poor apple; so for a trifle, a penny in the shop, or the bushel, men will set their covenant and conscience to sale. God sees this, and hear what he saith, 'I will bring a sword, which shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant:' Lev. xxvi. 25. Covenant-violation is a high affronting sin, and an affront will make God draw his sword; to set our hand and seal to the covenant, and then to tear off the seal: if the covenant will not hold us, God hath chains that will.

That which doth enhance the sin is, it must needs be against light; it is to be presupposed no man would take a covenant blindfold: either he was informed, or else might have been. This is that which dyes the sin in grain: take any sin, put it in the scales, and put in this weight with it, that before, and when it was done, it was against knowledge; this circumstance is as much as the sin itself; tho' it be but one sin, it weighs as much as two.

The covenant is a marriage knot ; for a woman to go away from her husband after solemn contract, is sin of an high nature. The covenant is a girdle or golden clasp that binds us to God, and God to us. The girdle in ancient times was an emblem of chastity. When the covenant is broken, the church loseth her virginity ; Israel was a people espoused to God in covenant ; but having stained this foederal relation by idolatry, (a sin that directly cuts asunder the marriage-knot) God gives her a bill of divorce: 'Plead with her, saith he, she is not my wife,' Hosea ii. 2.

The Carthaginians were execrable for covenant-breaking, insomuch that it grew at last to a proverb, The faith of a Carthaginian ; and I would to God it might not be said, that many of the christians in England are turned Carthaginians ; they make no reckoning of their oaths.

The Scythians had a law, that if any man did bind two sins together, a lie and an oath, he was to lose his head, because this was the way to take away all faith and truth among men : if all liars and perjurers in this age should come to trial, I think we should scarce find men enough to bring them to the bar.

3. We act against God when we act against his ambassadors. I mean not such as have stolen into the priests' office, such as are gone out, 1 John iv. 1. not sent out, they are gone without a commission ; but such as are in a scripture method instituted into this holy function ; he that acts against these, acts against God : and remember God sees, he writes it down : What injury is done to the ambassador, the King takes as done to his own person ; so saith Christ, 'He that despiseth you despiseth me.' What a black vail is drawn over the face of the ministry ? Let me plead with you : God might have come in his own person, and have preached to you in flames,

as when he did once deliver the law upon mount Sinai ; but then you would have said, Oh let not God speak, lest we die ; let Moses speak : God might have preached to you in the ministry of angels, but you would not have been able to bear it : ' God is not in the fire, nor in the earthquake, but in the still small voice : ' 1 Kings xix. 11, 12. He is pleased, in a sweet kind of humility, to send his ambassadors, and he puts an olive-branch in their mouth ; they woo and beseech, and all in the bowels of Christ ; will not love conquer ?

This nation is sick of a spiritual pleurisy, we begin to surfeit upon the bread of life ; when God sees his mercies lying under table, it is just with him to call to the enemy to take away. I heartily pray that plenty of ordinances doth not as much hurt in this city, as famine hath done in other places of the land ; and if we once say, what is this manna ? no wonder if we begin to say, who is this Moses ? Oh what a sad change is there in our days ! Those that once would have counted our feet beautiful, that would have been ready to have pulled out their eyes for their minister, are now ready to pull out their minister's eyes ; and what is the quarrel ? even this, ' Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth ? ' If ministers would preach smooth things, make the way to heaven nearer than ever Christ made it, then they should be admired. (You have more people gaze at a Comet or blazing star, than at the sun.) But if they come to lay the ax of the law to the root of conscience ; if they fall a hewing and cutting down mens' sins, ' The land is not able to bear their words. ' If the prophet goes to tell king Asa of his great sin in joining with a wicked army ; ' Herein thou hast done foolishly. ' If he goes about to imprison his sin, he himself shall be imprisoned. ' Then Asa was wroth with the Seer, and put him in a prison-house. ' This was Jerusalem's sin, and it

drew tears from Christ; 'O Jerusalem, thou that stonest the prophets!' &c. Mat. xxiii. And she stoned them so long, till she had not one stone left upon another.

Those that would annihilate the ministry, go to pull the stars out of Christ's hand; and they will find it a work not feasible; it will fare with them as with the eagle, that going to fetch a piece of flesh from the altar, a coal sticking to the flesh, she burnt herself and the young ones in the nest. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. 'They mocked the messengers of God, and misused his prophets, till there was no remedy.'

4. We act against God, when we act against that order and government which he hath set up in his church; God is the God of order, he hath set every thing in its proper sphere. The order and harmony of the world doth consist in degrees, one thing still above another. For as Aristotle saith, no harmony consists of union; there can be no music, if all the sounds be alike; the countertenor is above the Bass. In nature, the sun is commander in chief among the planets. Thus in the body politic, God hath set kings, nobles, judges, still in a descent; and this makes the harmony. And these powers are of God, Rom. xiii. 1. 'The powers that be, are of God.' Magistracy is the hedge of a nation, 'And he that breaks an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.'

Use 2. Reproof. Here is a just impeachment against two sorts of persons.

Branch 1. The libertine. And there are two kinds of them.

First, The profane libertine, that fancies to himself a God made up of mercy; and therefore he ingulphs himself in sin, he is upon the spur to go to hell, as if he were afraid hell would be full before he could get thither. Doth not he say, 'God shall not see?'

Secondly, The religious libertine, That sins be-

cause grace abounds ; that saith, God sees no sin in his people, and therefore what need we see it ? After we are in Christ, we cannot sin ; therefore repentance is out of date. Whom I shall refute in two words.

1. There needs repentance after we are in Christ: for though sin in a believer be covered, yet it is not perfectly cured. There are still some remainders of corruption ; and certainly, as long as there is an issue of sin open, there must be an issue of sorrow kept open.

2. Every sin, after we are in Christ, is a sin of unkindness, the sin of a spouse ; and if any thing will melt and break the heart, this will. The sins of the regenerate do wound Christ's heart deeper than others. Hath not Christ suffered enough already ? Wilt thou wound him whom God hath wounded ? Will you give him more vinegar to drink ? O rather ' Give wine to him that is of an heavy heart ; ' cheer him with thy tears: look on a bleeding Christ with a bleeding heart.

Branch 2. It doth impeach the hypocrite, who is a practical atheist, he saith, God shall not see. The word in the Hebrew signifies to dissemble. The Syriac word, a face-taker. The hypocrite wears a vizard of sanctity. Aquinas in his Sums calls hypocrisy the counterfeiting of virtue. The hypocrite is a very mountebank, he pretends that which he is not. He is like those angels that assumed the dead bodies, but there was no soul to animate them, Gen. xix. 1. he is a shape, an apparition, he doth not assume religion. The hypocrite is a walking landscape, a rotten post gilded over ; he is like the painted grapes that deceived the living birds ; or the beautiful apples of Sodom with this motto, ' No further than colour ; ' touch them, and they moulder to dust.

In short, hypocrites are like turning pictures, which have on one side the image of a lamb, on the

other side a lion : so they are on their outside saints, but their inside devils. Hypocrites may be compared to trumpets that make a great sound, but within they are hollow. Do these believe the all-seeing eye? The hypocrite turns all religion into mere compliment ; he walks with a dark lanthorn, saying, No eye shall see. He goes about to juggle with God, as Jeroboam's wife did think to do with the prophet, 1 Kings xiv. 6. but he pulled off her vizor, ' Come in thou wife of Jeroboam.' The hypocrite knows God is of purer eyes than to behold sin ; yet for all this will play a devotion ; he will venture to abuse God, that he may delude men. The hypocrite takes more care to make a covenant, than to keep it ; and is more studious to enter into religion, than that religion should enter into him. This text arraigns the hypocrite : All things are naked, God sees our jugglings.

I shall give you two distinguishing characters whereby you may know an hypocrite.

Character 1. He is one that is partial in his goodness ; zealous in lesser things, and remiss in greater : as Luther complained of some in his time, and our Saviour in his time, which ' strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.' He is one that sweats only in some part, but is cool in all the rest, which is a sign his zeal is distempered. He is zealous against a ceremony, a relick or painted glass (not that I plead for these), but in the mean time lives in known sin, lying, cozening, extortion, &c. Just as the High Priests, ' It is not lawful, say they, to put the money into the treasury, because it is the price of blood,' Matt. xxvii. 6. They speak like conscientious men. Oh do not defile the treasury ! But let me ask the question, Why did they shed that blood? it was innocent blood. They will not take the price of blood into the treasury, but they never scruple to take the guilt of blood into their souls. They were zealous for the temple, but in the mean time mur-

derers of the Son of God. And we have a parallel scripture to this, Rom. ii. 22. 'Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?' Who at the first blush would not have taken these for very holy, devout men, that were zealous against idolatry? But see a root of hypocrisy! They were partially good, they hated one sin, but not another; idolatry, but not sacrilege. Though it was an abominable sin, and there was an express law of God against it; yet these seeming zealots make no conscience of robbing God of his tythes.

And here as in a scripture looking-glass, we may see our own faces; have we not many now-a-days seemingly zealous against popery? If they see a cross, (though it be in a coat of arms), they are much offended, and are in a kind of convulsion; but in the meantime make no conscience of sacrilege, starving out the ministry, they put out the fire on God's altar, shut the doors of his temple; is not this visible hypocrisy? There are some, it may be, will not be heard to swear, it will not stand with their saintship; (this were to call the devil father aloud,) but they will defraud and defame, which is a sin they can never satisfy for; take away a man's name, what mends can you make him? it is no better than murder; and if these be saints, there are as good saints in hell.

Character 2. The second character of an hypocrite is, he makes religion a mask to cover his sin.

Herod pretended to worship Christ, but his zeal was no other than malice, for it was to have destroyed him. Thus oft bad purposes lie hid under good pretences. Jezabel, that she may dissemble her murderous intentions, proclaims a fast. Absalom, to colour over his treason, pretends a religious vow. How cunning is the heart to go to hell; sometimes covetousness pretends conscience; Judas fisheth for money under a pretence of religion, 'This oint-

ment might have been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor,' John xii. 5. how charitable Judas was ! but his charity began at home, for he carried the bag. Many make religion a cloak for their ambition, ' Come, see my zeal, saith Jehu, for the Lord.' 1 Kings x. 16. No, Jehu, thy zeal was for the kingdom. It was not zeal, but state-policy. Jehu made religion hold the stirrup till he got possession of the crown ; here was double-dyed hypocrisy.

The hypocrite doth set himself against God.

First, He opposeth him in his essence ; God is a substance, the hypocrite is only a shape.

Secondly, In his unity ; God is one, and made him one at first ; but he hath made himself two, an heart, and an heart ; he gives God the tenth, and leaves the rest for that which he loves better.

Thirdly, In his goodness, God is good, and in him is no mixture. The hypocrite is therefore good in show, that he may be bad in deed, he is a devil in Samuel's mantle. Pilate would make the world believe he had a tender conscience : he washeth his hands ; but he could not say as David, ' I will wash my hands in innocency ;' for then he would never have given his vote for the shedding of innocent blood. God sees our prevarications. How odious is the hypocrite ? We ourselves cannot endure treacherous dealing ; therefore in the common-wealth, he that poisons, hath a greater punishment, than he that kills with the sword, because he offers it hypocritically under a shew of meat and drink. ' Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss ?' we may as well betray Christ with a tear, as Judas did with a kiss. You may see God's great dislike of this sin, in that he forbids his people in the old law, the very resemblances of it, linsy woolsy ; and by his exposition, Psal. l. 16. ' What hast thou to do to take my covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed ?' Thou hypocrite, what hast

thou to do to meddle with religion, to pretend saintship, that makest religion odious, and the offering of God to be abhorred? Hear that dreadful commination, Isa. xxix. 14. 'They draw near to me with their lips.' They have God in their mouths, 'but their heart is far from me;' therefore, ver. 14. 'I will take away the wisdom of the wise men;' I will blast their proceedings, I will infatuate their counsels. They are hypocrites! Christ pronounceth seven woes to this sin, in one chapter, that he never doth the like to any other, Matt. xxiii. 'Wo to you hypocrites,' wo, wo, wo, &c. To be an hypocritical nation, and to be the generation of God's wrath are made in scripture synonymous, and are all one, Isa x. 6. And when the Holy Ghost would inhanche and aggravate the torments of hell, he sets them out under this notion, 'The place of hypocrites, as if hell were taken up on purpose for the hypocrite to quarter in.

Use 3. A word of Exhortation. If the secrets of our hearts are unveiled and unmasked, walk as in the eye of God. Methinks that of Hagar should be a christian's motto, Thou God seest me. And David's prospect should be ever in our eye, Ps. xvi. 8. 'I have set the Lord always before me:' some set their bags of money always before them, others set the fear of men always before them; but a wise christian will set God, and judgment, and eternity always before him. If indeed God's eye were at any time off from us, we might take the more liberty; but if all things be naked, and open to his eye, we cannot sin but in the face of our Judge. Oh then reverence this eye of God.

First, it should be a bridle to keep us from sin: 'How shall I do this and sin against God?' Seneca gives his friend Lucilius this counsel, 'Whatever he was doing, he should imagine that some of the Roman worthies did behold him, and then he would

do nothing dishonourable.' The eye of God should be ever in our eye ; this would be as a counter poison against sin : nor is it enough to prune sin, viz. to cut off the external acts, but kill the root. Crucify complexion sins ; let not thy heart sit brooding upon sin. Again, let God's omniscience deter thee from hiding sin. Who would hide a traitor ? Now it sucks your breast, shortly it will suck your blood. Men think to walk in the dark, and to carry their sins under a canopy, that no eye shall see them : as those that have bad eyes think that the sky is ever cloudy, whereas the fault is not in the sky, but in their eyes ; so when the prince of the world hath blinded men's eyes, because there is darkness within, they think it is dark abroad too, and now the sky is cloudy, God cannot see : but remember, all things are naked : do not go about to hide sin : confess, confess, it is a work proper for the day. Confession doth that to the soul which the surgeon doth to the body ; it opens a spiritual vein, and lets out the bad blood. The only way to make God not see sin, is to see it ourselves, but not with dry eyes ; point every sin with a tear.

2. It is a spur to virtue : art thou zealous for God ? dost thou exhaust thyself in the cause of religion ? God sees it, thou shalt loose nothing : for the present thou hast a promise, which is God's bill of exchange, and when God comes to make up thy accounts, thou shalt be paid with overplus : The more any man hath disbursed for God, the greater sums of glory are still behind.

3. It is a whetstone to duty. O thou christian that art much in private, that settest hours apart for God, (a sign he hath set thee apart) thou sheddest many tears in thy closet : the world takes no notice ; but remember, God's eye is upon thee, thy prayers are registered, thy tears are bottled up, ' and he that sees in secret will reward thee openly.' How should

this add wings to prayer, and oil to the flame of our devotion? let us take heed of slacking our pace in religion, let not our tears begin to freeze; for this, if it doth not lose, yet it may lessen our crown.

Use 4. Here is a breast of consolation to the saints of God (in these sad times), in the midst of all that hard measure they may meet with; let the world frown, let men persecute and calumniate, (and it may be, think they do God service), here is sap in the vine, a strong cordial to take, all things are naked. They do nothing but what our Father sees, They make wounds, and then pour in vinegar; God writes down their cruelty, he sees what rods they use, and how hard they strike; and he that hath an eye to see, hath also an hand to punish; 'I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people,' not only with an eye of providence, but with an eye of pity. This was a great comfort to David in his affliction, and was like a golden shield in the hand of his faith, 'My groaning is not hid from thee,' Psal. xxxviii. 6. When I weep, Christ weeps in my tears, he bleeds in my wounds. There are two bloods will cry: the blood of souls, when they have been starved or poisoned, and the blood of saints. I do not mean saints without sanctity, titular saints, but such as have Christ engraven in their hearts, and the word copied out into their lives: it is dangerous meddling with their blood; if we spill their blood, it is no better than spilling Christ's blood, for they are members of his body, 'In all their afflictions he was afflicted. The people of God are precious to him. There is blood royal running in their souls, 'they are his jewels,' Mal. iii. 17. and his heart is exceedingly taken with them; it is wounded with love, 'I was jealous for Sion with great jealousy;' Zech. viii. 2. Jealousy, we know, proceeds from love; nay, I was zealous for Sion; zeal is the flame of love. Oh then ye saints of God, be of good com-

fort; whatever your measure is, God sees it, *Exod. xiv. 24.* 'In the morning-watch the Lord looked through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians : ' Remember, God hath an eye in the cloud.

Use 5. Caution. God being so infinite in wisdom ; if things go cross in church or state, take heed of charging God with folly; do not censure but admire. *All things are naked.* There is not any thing that stirs in the world, but God hath a design in it, for the good of his church : he carries on his designs by mens' designs : all things are unveiled to the eye of providence. God is never at a stand : he knows when to deliver, and how to deliver.

1. When to deliver.

David saith, ' My times are in thy hand,' *Psal. xxxi. 15.* If our times were in our own hand, we would have deliverance too soon ; if they were in our enemy's hand, we should have deliverance too late : But my times are in thy hand ; and God's time is ever best. Every thing is beautiful in its season : when the mercy is ripe, we shall have it. It is true, we are now between the hammer and the anvil : we may fear we shall see the death of religion, before the birth of reformation. But do not cast away your anchor ; God sees when the mercy will be in season. When his people are low enough, and the enemy high enough, then usually appears the church's morning-star : let God alone to his time.

2. How to deliver.

' All things are naked.' God delivers sometimes in that way in which we think he will destroy. It might seem strange, when he would deliver Israel, he stirred up the hearts of the Egyptians to hate them. Could this be a likely way ? yet by this means was deliverance ushered in. So now the hearts of many are stirred up to hate the people of God, to hate the covenant ; but God can

make use of their power and rage, as once he did of the High Priest's malice, and Judas's treason, for our greater advantage. There was no way for Jonah to be saved, but to be swallowed up; he sails safe to land in the whale's belly: God brings his people many times to shore upon the broken pieces of the ship: God can make the enemies do his work; he doth sometimes play his own game by their hand. Well then may we cry out with the apostle; 'O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!' God will not make us of his privy counsel, his path is in the deep: if we cannot see a reason of his proceedings; let us censure our own shallowness, not his depth.

It is a word of counsel, it shews us whither to have recourse in all our straits and doubts; go to God; all things are naked in his eye, he is the oracle of wisdom: 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God,' James i. 5. We are here in the dark; pray with David, 'Lord, light my candle,' shed some beams of divine knowledge into my soul. Beg of God, that as things are naked in his eyes, so they may be naked in our eyes, that we may see the sinfulness of sin, and the beauty of holiness. The times are evil: let us pray to God that he would be our pilot to steer us; that he would teach us to walk jealously towards ourselves, piously towards him, prudently towards others, that he would give us the graces of our relation which do bespangle and grace our profession; that so guiding us by his counsels, we may at last be received to glory.

THE
SAINT'S
SPIRITUAL DELIGHT.

PSAL. i. 2. *But his Delight is in the Law of the Lord.*

CHAP. I.

*Shewing that Negative Goodness is but a broken Title
to Heaven.*

AS the book of the Canticles is called the Song of Songs by an Hebraism, it being the most excellent ; so this psalm may not unfitly be entitled, the Psalm of Psalms, for it contains in it the very pith and quintessence of christianity. What Hierom saith of Saint Paul's epistles, the same may I of this psalm ; it is short for the composure, but full of length and strength for the matter. This psalm carries blessedness in the frontispiece ; it begins where we all hope to end : it may well be called A Christian's Guide, for it discovers the quicksands where the wicked sink down in perdition, verse 1. and the firm ground on which the saints tread to glory, ver. 2. The text is an epitome and breviary of religion,
' But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in

his law doth he meditate day and night.' Every word hath its emphasis ; I begin with the first word But.

This But is full of spiritual wine, we will broach it and taste a little, then proceed.

But] This is a term of opposition. The godly man is described.

I. By way of negation, in three particulars. 1. ' He walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly ;' he is none of their council ; he neither gives bad counsel, nor takes it. 2. ' He standeth not in the way of sinners.' He will not stand among those who shall not be able to stand in the judgment,' ver. 5. 3. ' He sitteth not in the seat of the scornful.' Let it be a chair of state, he will not sit in it, he knows it will prove very uneasy at last. The word sitting implies,

1. An habit in sin, Psal. 1. 20. ' Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother.'

2. Sitting implies familiarity with sinners, Psal. xxvi. 4. ' I have not sat with vain persons ;' that is, I do not haunt their company. The godly man shakes off all intimacy with the wicked. He may traffic with them, not associate ; he may be civil to them, as neighbours, but not twist into a cord of friendship : diamonds and stones may lie together, but they will not solder and cement.

II. The godly man is described by way of position or rather opposition, ' But his delight is in the law of the Lord.' From this word [But] observe,

That negative goodness is not sufficient to entitle us to heaven. To be no scorner, is good, but it is not enough. There are some in the world whose religion runs all upon negatives ; they are not drunkards, they are not swearers, and for this they do bless themselves. See how that pharisee vapours, Luke xviii. 11. ' God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers,'

&c. Alas, the not being scandalous will no more make a good christian than a cypher will make a sum. The godly man goes further, 'he sits not in the seat of the scorner, but his delight is in the law of the Lord. We are bid, not only to 'cease from evil, but to do good,' Psal. xxxiv. 14. It will be a poor plea at last, Lord, I kept myself from being spotted with gross sin. I did no hurt; but what good is there in thee? It is not enough for the servant of the vineyard that he doth no hurt there, he doth not break the trees, or destroy the hedges; if he doth not work in the vineyard, he loseth his pay; it is not enough for us to say at the last day, we have done no hurt, we have lived in no gross sin; but what good have we done in the vineyard? where is the grace we have gotten? if we cannot shew this, we shall lose our pay, and miss of salvation.

Use. Do not content yourselves with the negative part of religion; many build their hopes for heaven upon this cracked foundation, they are given to no vice, none can charge them with any foul miscarriages, and these are their letters of credence to shew; to such persons I say three things.

1. You may not be outwardly bad, and yet not inwardly good. You may be as far from grace as from vice; though none can say, black is your eye, yet your soul may be dyed black. Though your hands be not working iniquity, your heads may be plotting it. Though you do not hang out your bush, yet you may secretly vend your commodity: a tree may be full of vermin, yet the fair leaves may cover them that they are not seen; so the fair leaves of civility may hide you from the eye of man, but God sees the vermin of pride, unbelief, covetousness in your heart: 'ye are they, saith Christ, that justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts,' Luke xvi. 15. A man may not be

morally evil, yet not spiritually good. He may be free from gross enormity, yet full of secret enmity against God; like the snake, which though it be of a fine colour, yet hath its sting.

2. If you are only negatively good, God makes no reckoning of you; you are as so many cyphers in God's Arithmetic, and he writes down no cyphers in the book of life: Take a piece of brass, though it be not so bad metal as lead or iron, yet not being so good as silver, there is little reckoning made of it, it will not pass for current coin; though thou art not profane, yet not being of the right metal, wanting the stamp of holiness upon thee, thou wilt never pass current, God slights thee, thou art but a brass Christian.

3. A man may as well go to hell for not doing good, as for doing evil; he that bears not good fruit is as well fuel for hell, as he that bears bad; Matt. iii. 10, 'Every tree which beareth not good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. One may as well die with not eating food, as with poison, a ground may as well be spoiled for want of good seed as with having tares sown in it; they that were not active in works of charity, were sadly sentenced: 'Depart from me ye cursed, &c. for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat,' Matt. xxv. 41, 42. It is not said ye took away my meat from me, but 'ye gave me no meat.' Why were the foolish virgins shut out? They had done no hurt, they had not broken their lamps, aye, but they 'took no oil in their lamps,' Matth. xxv. 3. Their wanting oil was the indictment: Therefore let not any man build his hope for heaven upon negatives. This is building upon the sand; the sand is bad to build on; it will not cement; but suppose a man should finish an house upon it, what is the issue? the flood comes, viz. persecution, and the force of this flood will drive away the sand and make

the house fall ; and the wind blows, the breath of the Lord as a mighty wind will blow such a sandy building into hell ; be afraid then to rest in the private part of religion, launch forth further, be eminently holy. So I come to the next words, but ‘ his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.’

CHAP. II.

What is meant by the Law of God, what by Delight in the Law, and the Proposition resulting.

THE words give a twofold description of a godly man.

First, He delights in God’s law.

Secondly, He meditates in God’s law.

I begin with the first, ‘ His delight is in the law of the Lord :’ The great God hath grafted the affection of delight in every creature ; it hath by the instinct of nature something to delight itself in. Now the true saint, not by intuition, but divine inspiration makes the law of God his delight. This is the badge of a christian, ‘ His delight is in the law of the Lord.’ A man may work in his trade, and not delight in it, either in regard of the difficulty of the work, or the smallness of the income ; but a godly man serves God with delight ; it is his meat and drink to do his will.

For the explication of the words, it will be inquired,

1. What is meant by ‘ the law of the Lord.’ This word, Law, may be taken either more strictly or more largely. 1. More strictly, for the decalogue or ten commandments. 2. More largely. 1. For the whole written word of God. 2. For those truths which are deducted from the word, and do

concenter in it. 3. For the whole business of religion which is the counterpart of God's law, and agrees with it as the transcript with the original. The word is a setting forth, and religion is a shewing forth of God's law. I shall take this word in its full latitude and extent.

2. What is meant by delight in God's law. The Hebrew and Septuagint both render it, His will is in the law of the Lord ; and that which is voluntary is delightful ; a gracious heart serves God from a principle of ingenuity ; he makes God's law not only his task, but his recreation ; upon this scripture-stock I shall graft this proposition.

Doct. That a child of God, though he cannot serve the Lord perfectly, yet he serves him willingly ; his will is in the law of the Lord ; he is not a pressed soldier, but a volunteer ; by the beating of this pulse we may judge whether there be spiritual life in us, or no. David professeth God's law was his delight, Psal. cxix. 77. he had his crown to delight in, he had his music to cheer him, but the love he had to God's law did drown all other delights ; as the joy of harvest and vintage exceeds the joy of gleanings. ' I delight in the law of God,' saith saint Paul, ' in the inner man.' Rom. vii. 22. the Greek word is, I take pleasure ; the law of God is my recreation, and it was an heart delight, it was in the inner man ; a wicked man may have joy in the face, 2 Cor, v. 12. like honey-dew, that wets the leaf ; but the wine of God's Spirit cheers the heart ; Paul delighted in the law, in the inner man.

CHAP. III.

Whence the Saint's Spiritual Delight springeth.

THE saint's delight in the law of God proceeds,

1. From soundness of judgment. The mind apprehends a beauty in God's law; now the judgment draws the affections, like so many orbs after it; 'The law of God is perfect,' Psal. xix. 7. it needs not be eked out with tradition. The Hebrew word for perfect, seems to allude to a perfect, entire body, that wants none of the members or lineaments; God's law must needs be perfect, for it is able to make us wise to salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15. The Septuagint renders it, the law of the Lord is pure, like beauty that hath no stain, or wine that is clarified and refined. The soul that looks into this law, seeing so much lustre and perfection, cannot but delight in it; the middle lamp of the sanctuary being lighted from the fire of the altar, gave light to all the other lamps: So the judgment being lighted from the word, it sets on fire the lamps of the affections.

2. This holy delight ariseth from the predominancy of grace. When grace comes with authority and majesty upon the heart, it fills it with delight; naturally we have no delight in God; 'Therefore they say unto God depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways;' nay, there is not only a dislike, but antipathy; sinners are called haters of God, Rom. i. 30. but when grace comes into the heart, O what a change is there! Grace preponderates, it files off the rebellion of the will, it makes a man of another spirit. It turns the lion-like fierceness into a dove-like sweetness, it changeth hatred into delight; grace puts a new bias into the will, it works a spontaneity and cheerfulness

in God's service. 'Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power,' Psal. cx. 8.

3. This holy delight in religion is from the sweetness of the end. Well may we with cheerfulness let down the net of our endeavour when we have so excellent a draught. Heaven at the end of duty causeth delight in the way of duty.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing a characteristical Difference between a child of God and an Hypocrite

Use 1. **I**T shews us a discriminating difference between a child of God and an hypocrite, the one serves God from a principle of delight, the other doth not. 'The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver,' Psal. cxix. 72. With what delight doth a covetous man tell over his thousands? ay, but God's law was better to David than thousands; a child of God looks upon the service of God, not only as his duty, but his privilege. A gracious heart loves every thing that hath the stamp of God upon it. The word is his delight. 'Thy words were found and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart,' Jer. xv. 16. The Sabbath is his delight, Isa. lviii. 13. 'If thou turn away thy foot from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight.' Prayer is his delight, Isa. lvi. 7. 'I will make them joyful in my house of prayer.' Hearing is his delight, Isa. lx. 8. 'Who are these that fly like doves to their windows? The gracious soul flies as a dove to an ordinance, upon the wings of delight; The sacrament is his delight: On this day the Lord makes 'a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined,' Isa. xxv. 6. A sa-

cramment day is a soul-festival day; here Christ takes the soul into his banqueting-house, and 'displays the banner of love over it,' Cant. ii. 4. Here are heavenly delicacies set before us. Christ gives us his body and blood. This is angels' food, this is the heavenly nectar, here is a cup perfumed with the divine nature; here is wine spiced with the love of God. The Jews at their feasts poured ointment upon their guests, and kissed them; here Christ pours the oil of gladness into the heart, and kisses us with the kisses of his lips. This is the king's bath where we wash and are cleansed of our leprosy: the withered soul, after the receiving this blessed eucharist, hath been like a watered garden, or like those Egyptian fields, after the overflowing of the Nile, fruitful and flourishing; and do you wonder that a child of God delights in holy things? he must needs be a volunteer in religion.

But it is not thus with an hypocrite; he may be forced to do that which is good, but not to will that which is good; he doth not serve God with delight. Job xxvii. 10. 'Will he delight himself in the Almighty?' That he hath none of this complacency and delight, appears thus, because he serves God grudgingly; he brings his sacrifice with a wicked mind, Prov. xxi. 27. Such an one was Cain: It was long before he brought his offering, it was not the first-fruits; and when he did bring it, it was grudgingly; it was not a free-will offering, Deut. xvi. 10. It is probable it was the custom of his father's family to sacrifice; and perhaps conscience might check him for forbearing so long; at last the offering is brought, but how? as a task rather than a duty; as a mulct or fine rather than a sacrifice. Cain brought his offering, but not himself, What Seneca saith of a gift, I may say of a sacrifice; it is not gold and silver makes a gift, but a willing mind, if this be wanting, the gold is only parted with, not given:

so, it is not prayer and hearing makes a sacrifice, but it is a willing mind. Cain's was not an offering, but a tax, not worship, but penance.

CHAP. V.

Two Cases of Conscience resolved

BUT here are two cases to be put.

Case 1. Whether a regenerate person may not serve God with weariness;

Ans. Yes; but 1. This delight in God is not wholly extinct. This lassitude and weariness in a child of God may arise,

From the in-being of corruption, Rom. vii. 24. It is not from the grace that is in him, but the sin; as Peter's sinking on the water was not from his faith but his fear; yet I say still a regenerate person's will is for God, Rom. vii. 15. Paul found sometimes an indisposition to good, Rom. vii. 23. yet at the same time he professeth a complacency in God, ver. 22. 'I delight in the law of God, in the inner man;' one may delight in music, or any recreation, yet through weariness of body he for the present dulled, and indisposed; a christian may love God's law, though sometimes the clog of the flesh weighing him down, he finds his former vigour and agility remitted.

Ans. 2. I answer, That this faintness and weariness in a regenerate person is not habitual; it is not his constant temper; when the water ebbs a while it is low water, but there is soon a spring-tide again; it is sometimes low water in a christian's soul, he finds an indisposition and irksomeness to that which is good, but within a while there is a spring-tide of affection, and the soul is carried full sail in holy duties; it is with a christian as with a man that is distempered; when he is sick he doth not take that

delight in his food as formerly ; nay, sometimes the very sight of it offends, but when he is well he falls to his meat again with delight and appetite ; so, when the soul is distempered through sadness and melancholy, it finds not that delight in word and prayer as formerly ; but when it returns to its healthful temper again, now it hath the same delectability and cheerfulness in God's service as before.

Ans. 3. I answer, That this weariness in a regenerate person is involuntary ; he is troubled at it ; he doth not hug his disease, but mourns under it. He is weary of his weariness. When he finds a heaviness in duty, he goes heavily under that heaviness ; he prays, weeps, wrestles, useth all means to regain that alacrity in God's service as he was wont to have. David, when his chariot wheels were pulled off, and he did drive on heavily in religion, how oft doth he pray for quickening grace ? Psal. cxix. When the saints have found their hearts fainting, their affections flagging, and a strange kind of lethargy seizing on them, they are never at rest till they have recovered themselves, and are arrived at that freedom and delight in God as they were once sensible of.

Case 2. The second case is, Whether an hypocrite may not serve God with delight ? I answer, he may ; Herod heard John Baptist gladly, Mat. vi. 20. and those that fasted for strife and debate, ' did delight to know God's way,' Isa. lviii. 2. An hypocrite may, out of some flashy hopes of heaven, shew a delight in goodness ; but yet it is not such a delight as is found in the regenerate, for his delight is carnal. A man may be carnal while he is doing spiritual things : It is not the holiness and strictness in religion that the hypocrite delights in, but something else ; he delights in prayer, but it is rather the shewing of gifts he looks at, than the exercise of grace. He delights in hearing, but it is not the spi-

rituality of the word he delights in ; not the savour of knowledge, but the lustre. When he goes to the word preached, it is that he may rather feast his fancy than better his heart ; as if a man should go to an apothecary's shop for a pill, only to see the gilding of it, not for the operative virtue. The hypocrite goes to the word to see what gilding is in a sermon, and what may delight the intellect. Hypocrites come to the word as one comes into a garden to pluck some fine flower to smell to, not as a child comes to the breast for nutriment. This is rather curiosity than piety. Such were those, Ezek. xxxiii. 32. Thou ' art to them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument.' The prophet being eloquent, and having a pleasing delivery, they were much taken with it, and it was as sweet to them as a fit of music, but it was not the spirituality of the matter they so well liked, as the tuneableness of the voice. It was a sharp, yet seasonable reproof of Chrysostom to his auditory, ' This is that, saith he, which is like to undo your souls, you hear your ministers as so many minstrels, to please the ear, not to pierce the conscience.' You see an hypocrite's delight in religion is carnal ; it is not ' the being nourished up in the words of faith, which he minds, but the eloquence of speech, the rareness of notion, the quickness of fancy, the smoothness of style : he strives only to pluck from the tree of knowledge. Alas, poor man ; thou mayest have the star-light of knowledge, and yet it may be night in thy soul.

CHAP. VI.

Trial of a Christian's Delight in God.

Use 2. **L**ET this put us upon a holy scrutiny and *Trial.* trial, whether we have this delight in religion ? It is life or death as we answer this.

Quest. How may this spiritual delight be known ?

Ans. 1. He that delights in God's law, is often thinking of it; what a man delights in, his thoughts are still running upon; he that delights in money, his mind is taken up with it; therefore the covetous man is said to mind earthly things, Phil. iii. 19. thus if there be a delight in the things of God, the mind will be still musing upon them. O what a rare treasure is the word of God! it is the field where the pearl of price is hid; how precious are the promises? they are the conduit that holds the water of life; they are like those two olive branches, 'which thro' the two golden pipes did empty the golden oil out of themselves,' Zach. iv. 12. These seal up pardon, adoption, glory: 'O Lord, by these things men live,' Isa. xxxviii. 16. Where there is a delight in the law of God, the mind is wholly busied about it.

2. If we delight in religion, there is nothing can keep us from it, but we will be conversant in word, prayer, sacraments. He that loves gold will trade for it. The merchant will compass sea and land to make money his proselyte. Men will not be kept from their fairs. If there be a delight in holy things, we will not be detained from an ordinance, for there we are trafficking for salvation. If a man were hungry, he would not stay from the market for the aching of his finger. The ordinances are a gospel market, and those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, will not for every slight occasion stay away. 'I was glad when they said, come let us go up to the house of the Lord,' Psal. cxxii. 1. 'Thou that art glad when the devil helps thee with an excuse to absent thyself from the house of the Lord, art far from this holy delight.'

3. Those that delight in religion are often speaking of it; 'Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another,' Mal. iii. 16. Where there is grace infused, it will be effusive. 'The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious,' Eccl. xii. 10. Da-

vid delighting in God's testimonies, 'would speak of them before kings,' Psal. cxix. 46. The spouse delighting in her beloved, could not conceal her love, but breaks forth into most pathological, and no less elegant expressions: 'My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand, his head is as the most fine gold,' &c. The disciples whose hearts were upon Christ, make him the whole subject of their discourse as they were going to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 19. The primitive Christians who were fired with love to God, did speak so much of heaven, and the kingdom prepared, that the emperor suspected they meant to take his kingdom from him: words are the looking-glass of the mind, they shew what is in the heart. Where there is spiritual delight, like new wine, it will have vent; grace is poured into thy lips, Psal. xlv. 2. a man that is of the earth speaketh of the earth, John iii. 31. He can hardly speak three words, but two of them are about earth. His mouth, like the fish in the gospel, is full of gold, Matt. xvii. 27. So where there is a delight in God, 'our tongues will be as the pen of a ready writer.' Psal. xlv. This is a scripture touch-stone to try men's hearts by. Alas, it shews how little they delight in God, because they are possessed with a dumb devil; they speak not the language of Canaan.

4. He that delights in God, will give him the best in every service. Him whom we love best, shall have of the best. The spouse delighting in Christ, will give him of her pleasant fruits, Cant. vii. 13. and if she hath a cup of spiced wine, and full of the juice of the pomegranate, he must drink of it, Cant. viii. 2. He that delights in God gives him the strength of his affections, the cream of his duties; if he hath any thing better than other, God shall have it: hypocrites care not what they put God off with; they offer that to the Lord which costs them

nothing; a prayer that costs them no wrestling, no pouring out of the soul. 1 Sam. i. they put no cost in their services. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, Gen. iv. 3. It is observable, the Holy Ghost doth not mention any thing that might commend, or set off Cain's sacrifice. When he comes to speak of Abel's, he sets an emphasis upon it, 'Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof,' ver. 4. but when he speaks of Cain, he only saith, 'he brought of the fruit of the ground.' Some sorry thing, perhaps pulled out of a ditch; God who is best, will be served with the best. Domitian would not have his statute carved in wood or iron but in gold. God will have the best of our best things, golden services. He who delights in God, gives him the fat of the offering; the purest of his love, the hottest of his zeal; and when he hath done all, he grieves he can do no more, he blusheth to see such an infinite disproportion between Deity and duty.

5. He that delights in God, doth not much delight in any thing else. The world appears in an eclipse; Paul delighted in the law of God, in the inner man, and how was he crucified to the world? Gal. vi. 14. It is not absolutely unlawful to delight in the things of the world, Deut. xxvi. 11. 'Thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given thee.' None may better take the comfort of these things than believers; for they have the best right to them, they hold all in *capite*; and they have the dew of a blessing distilled, 'Take two talents, said Naaman to Gehazi,' 2 Kings v. 23. so saith God to a believer, take two talents, take thy outward comforts, and take my love with them; but the children of God, though they are thankful for outward mercies, which is the yearly rent they sit at, yet they are not much taken with these things; they use them only as a conveniency for

their passage; they know they need them as a staff to walk with, but when they shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven, and rest themselves, they shall have no use of this Jacob's staff. Believers do not much pray for these things which are still passing. Their delight is chiefly in God and his law; and is it thus? have we this low opinion of all undermoon comforts? is the price fallen? The astronomer saith, if it were possible for a man to be lifted up as high as the moon, the earth would seem to him but as a little point. If we could be lifted up to heaven in our affections, all earthly delights would seem as nothing; when the woman of Samaria had met with Christ, down goes the pitcher, she leaves that behind; he who delights in God, as having tasted the sweetness in him, doth not much mind the pitcher, he leaves the world behind.

6. True delight is constant. Hypocrites have their pangs of desire, and flashes of joy, which are soon over. The Jews did rejoice in John's light for a season, John v. 35. Unsound hearts may delight in the law of the Lord for a season; but, they will quickly change their note, "What a weariness is it to serve the Lord!" The Chrysolyte, which is of a golden colour, in the morning is very bright to look on, but towards noon it grows dull, and hath lost its splendour; such are the glistening shews of hypocrites. True delight, like the fire of the altar, never goes out; affliction cannot extirpate it, Psalm cxix. 143. 'Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me, yet thy commandments are my delight.'

CHAP. VII.

A Suasive to this holy Delight in Religion.

Use 1. **L**ET me persuade christians to labour for ~~Exhort.~~ this holy delight; comment upon the text, 'Let your delight be in the law of the Lord.'

And that I may the better enforce the exhortation, I shall lay before you several weighty considerations.

1. There is that in the law of God which may cause delight ; as will appear in two things.

There is in it, 1. Truth. 2. Goodness.

1. Truth ; the law of God is a series of truth, Ps. cxix. 160. ‘ Thy word is true from the beginning.’ The two Testaments are the two lips by which the God of truth hath spoken to us. Here is a firm basis for faith.

2. Goodness, Nehem. ix. 13. Thou gavest them true laws, good statutes. Here is Truth and Goodness ; the one adequate to the understanding, the other to the will. Now this goodness and excellency of the law of God shines forth in nine particulars.

1. This blessed law of God is a letter sent to us from heaven, indited by the Holy Ghost, and sealed with the blood of Christ ; see some passages in the letter, Isa. lxii. 5. ‘ As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee ;’ and Hosea ii. 19. ‘ I will betroth thee unto me for ever in righteousness and in loving kindness, and in mercies.’ Is it not delightful reading over this love-letter ?

2. The law of God is a light ‘ that shines in a dark place,’ 2 Pet. i. 19. It is our pole-star to guide us to heaven ; it was David’s candle and lanthorn to walk with, Ps. cxix. 105. Now light is sweet, Ec. xi. 7. it is sad to want this light ; those heathens who have not the knowledge of God’s law, must needs stumble to hell in the dark. Hierom brings in Tully with his oratory, and Aristotle with his syllogisms, crying out in hell : they that leave the light of the word, following the light within them, as some speak, prefer the shining of the glow-worm before the sun.

3. The law of God is a spiritual glass to dress our souls by. David oft looked himself in this glass,

and got much wisdom, Psal. cxix. 104. 'Through thy precepts I get understanding.' This glass both shews us our spots, and takes them away; it may be compared to the laver which was made of the women's looking-glasses, Exod. xxxviii. 8. it was both a glass and a laver; a glass to look in, and a laver to wash in; so the law of God is a glass to shew us our faces, and a laver to wash away our spots.

4. This law of God contains in it our evidences for heaven; would we know whether we are heirs of the promise, whether our names are written in heaven? we must find it in this law book, 2 Thess. ii. 13. 'He hath chosen us to salvation thro' sanctification.' 1 John ii. 14. 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;' and is it not comfortable reading over our evidences?

5. The law of God is a place of ammunition, out of which we must fetch our spiritual artillery to fight against Satan. It may be compared to the 'Tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers; all shields of mighty men,' Cant. iv. 4. It is called the 'sword of the Spirit,' Eph. vi. 16. It is observable, when the devil tempted our Saviour, he runs to scripture for armour, 'it is written;' three times Christ wounds the serpent with this sword, Mat. iv 4, &c. Is it not good having our armour about us when the enemy is in the field.

6. The law of God is our spiritual physic-book, or book of receipts. Basil compares the word of God to an apothecary's shop which hath its *panpharmakon*; when there is any disease growing in the soul, here is a recipe to take; if we find ourselves dead in duty, here is a recipe, Psal. cxix. 50. 'Thy word hath quickened me:' if our hearts be hard, here is a recipe, 'Is not my word as fire?' Jer. xxiii. 29. This is able to melt the rock into

tenderness. If we grow proud, here is a recipe, 1. Pet. v. 5. 'God resisteth the proud;' if there be any fresh guilt contracted, here we have a sovereign medicine to take, John xvii. 17. 'Sanctify them through thy truth.' The law of God is like a physic-garden, where we may walk and gather any herb to expel the poison of sin.

7. The law of God is a divine treasury to enrich us; here are the riches of knowledge, and the riches of assurance to be found, Col. ii. 2. In this law of God are scattered many truths as precious diamonds to adorn the hidden man of the heart. David took the law of God as his heritage, Ps. cxix. 111. In this blessed mine is hid the true pearl; here we dig till we find heaven.

8. The law of God is our cordial in fainting times; and it is a strong cordial, Heb. vi. 18. 'That we might have strong consolation.' They are strong consolations indeed that can sweeten affliction, that can turn water into wine, that can stand against the fiery trial. 'This is my comfort in affliction; for thy word hath quickened me,' Psal. cxix. 50. The comforts of the world are weak consolations; a man hath comfort in health, but let sickness come, where is his comfort then? he hath comfort in an estate, but let poverty come, where is his comfort then? these are weak consolations, they cannot bear up against trouble; but the comforts of the world are strong consolations, they can sweeten the waters of Marah. Let sickness come, the comforts of the word can allay and stupify it, 'the inhabitant of the land shall not say I am sick,' Isa. xxxiii. 24. Let death come, a christian can outbrave it: 'O death, where is thy sting?' 1 Cor. xv. 55. and is it not comfortable to have such a julap lying by, as can expel the venom of death?

6. The law of God is manna; an heavenly manna that suits itself to every christian's palate. What

doth the soul desire? it is quickening? strengthening? he may find all in this *manna*.

2. Delight in religion crowns all our services. Therefore David counsels his son Solomon, not only to serve God, but to serve him 'with a willing mind,' 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Delight in duty is better than duty itself; as it is worse for a man to delight in sin than to commit it, because there is more of the will in sin; so delight in duty is to be preferred before duty: 'O how love I thy law,' Psal. cxix. 97. It is not how much we *do*, but how much we *love*; hypocrites may obey God's law, but the saints love his law; this carries away the garland.

3. Delight in spiritual things evidenceth grace; it is a sign we have received the spirit of adoption. An ingenuous child delights to obey his father; he that is born of God is enobled by grace, and acts from a principle of ingenuity; grace alters the bias of the heart, and makes it of unwilling, willing. The Spirit of grace is called a free spirit, Psal. li. not only because it works freely, but because it makes the heart free and cheerful in obedience; a gracious heart doth not act by pure constraint, but by free consent.

4. Delight in religion will make the business of religion more facile to us. Delight makes every thing easy; there is nothing hard to a willing mind; delight turns religion into recreation; it is like fire to the sacrifice, like oil to the wheels, like wind to the sails, it carries us full sail in duty; he that delights in God's way, will never complain of the ruggedness of the way; a child that is going to his father's house, doth not complain of bad way. A christian is going to heaven in the way of duty; every prayer, every sacrament, he is a step nearer his Father's house; sure he is so full of joy he is going home, that he will not complain of bad way. Get then this holy delight. Beloved, we have not

many miles to go, death will shorten our way, let delight sweeten it.

5. All the duties in religion are for our good. We shall have the benefit; 'If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself,' Prov. ix. 12. God hath twisted his glory and our good together. 'I gave them my statutes, which if a man do, he shall even live in them,' Ezek. xx. 11. There is nothing the Lord requires, but it tends to self-preservation. God bids us read his word, and why? this word is his will and testament wherein he makes over a fair estate to be settled upon us, Col. i. 12. 1 John ii. 25. 'And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life;' he bids us pray, and this duty carries meat in the mouth of it, 1 John v. 14. 'This is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.' Ask what you will, he will sign your petitions. If you had a friend that should say, Come to me when you will, I will furnish you with money, would you not delight to visit that friend? God will give to more than half the kingdom, and shall we not delight in prayer? God bids us believe, and there is a honey-comb to be found in this precept, 'Believe and you shall be saved.' Salvation is the crown that is set upon the head of faith. Well may the apostle say, 'his commandments are not grievous.' O then, if religion be so beneficial, if there be such gold to be dug out of this mine, it may make us delight in the ways of God. What will tempt, if not self-interest?

6. How did Christ delight in the work of our redemption? 'Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O my God,' Psal. xl. 7, 8. It is by expositors agreed that it is spoken mystically of Christ; when he came into the world to sacrifice his life for us, it was a free-will-offering. 'I have a baptism to be baptised with,' Luke xii. 50. Christ was to be,

as it were, baptised in his own blood, and how did he thirst for that time? 'How am I straitened till it be accomplished?' Did Christ so delight in the work of our redemption, and shall not we delight in his service? Did he suffer willingly, and do we pray unwillingly? Did he so cheerfully lay down his life for us, and shall not we give up our lives to him? Certainly if any thing could make Christ repent of shedding his blood, it would be this, to see christians come off so hardly in duty, bringing it rather as a penance than a sacrifice.

7. Delight in God's service makes us resemble the angels in heaven. They serve God with cheerfulness; as soon as God speaks the word, they are ambitious to obey. How are they ravished with delight while they are praising God! In heaven we shall be as the angels; spiritual delight would make us like them here; to serve God by constraint, is to be like the devil; all the devils in hell obey God, but it is against their will, they yield a passive obedience; but service which comes off with delight is angelical: This is that we pray for, that 'God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven;' is it not done with delight there?

8. His delight in God's law will not breed surfeit. Carnal objects do oft cause a loathing and nauseating; we soon grow weary of our delights; hence it is we change from one sense to another; from colours to music, from music to smell, &c. Too much pleasure is a pain; but spiritual objects do not cloy or tire the soul; the more we study in the law of God, the more delight we find. And in this regard David might say, the words of God's mouth were 'sweeter to his taste than honey,' Psal. cxix. 108. because one may soon surfeit upon honey, but he can never surfeit with the word of God. He that hath once, with Jeremiah, 'found the word and ate it,' Jer. xv. 16. will not be cloyed with it; there

is that savouriness in the word, that a christian cries out, 'Lord, evermore give me this bread.' There is that sweetness in communion with God, that the soul saith, "O that I might be always thus; O that what I now feel I might ever feel!" He that delights in God, doth not complain he hath too much of God, but rather too little: he opens and spreads the sails of his soul to take in more of those heavenly gales, he longs for that time when he shall be ever delighting himself in the sweet and blessed vision of God.

9. Without this holy delight we weary ourselves, and we weary God too, Isa. vii. 13. 'Will ye weary my God also?' Our delighting in God would make him delight in us; but when we begin to say what a weariness 'is it to serve the Lord,' Mal. i. 13. God is as weary as we are; he is even sick of such services. When duties are a burden to us, they are a burden to God, and what should we do with them? when a man is weary of a burden, he will cast it off. Let all this quicken delight in God's service.

CHAP. VIII.

Shewing how a Christian may arrive at this Delight in God's Law.

Use 4. **FOR** the attaining this blessed delight in the law of God, three things are requisite.

Direction 1. Set an high estimate upon the word; what the judgment prizeth, the affections embrace; he that values gold, will delight in it; we are apt, through a principle of Atheism, to entertain slight thoughts of religion, therefore our affections are so slight. David prized God's statutes at a high rate; 'More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than

much fine gold,' Psal xix. 10. and hence grew that enflamed love to them; 'I will delight myself in thy statutes,' Psal. cxix. 16.

2. Pray for a spiritual heart; an earthly heart will not delight in spiritual mysteries; the earth puts out the fire. Earthliness destroys holy delight; get a spiritual palate, that you may relish the sweetness of the word. He that tastes the sweetness of honey, will delight in it. 'If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious,' 1 Pet. ii. 3. It is not enough to hear a sermon, but you must taste a sermon; it is not enough to read a promise, but you must taste a promise; when you have gotten this spiritual palate, then God's word will be to you 'the joy and rejoicing of your heart,' Jer. xv. 16.

3. If you would delight in the law of God, purge out the delight of sin; sin will poison this spiritual delight: If you would have God's law sweet, let not 'wickedness be sweet in your mouth,' Job xx. 12. When sin is your burden, Christ will be your delight.

CHAP. IX.

Holy delight should cause Thankfulness.

Use 5. Thankfulness.

WHAT cause have they to be thankful who can find this spiritual delight in God? How did David bless God that he gave the people hearts to offer so cheerfully to the building of the temple; 'Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?' 2 Chron. xxix. 14. Their willingness was more than their offering; so should a christian say, Lord, when there are so many prest soldiers, who am I, that I should offer so willingly? Who am I that I should have thy free Spirit, and should serve thee rather out of

choice than constraint ! It is a great blessing to have this promptitude and alacrity in God's service ; delight doth animate and spirit duty ; now we act to purpose in religion. Christians are never drawn so powerfully and sweetly, as when the chain of delight is fastened to their heart. Without this all is lost ; our praying and hearing is like water spilt upon the ground. It loseth both its beauty and reward ; then bless God, christian, who hath oiled the wheels of thy soul with delight, and now thou canst ' run and not be weary.' For thy comfort, be assured thou shalt not want any thing thy heart can desire, Psal. xxxvii. 4. ' Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.'

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A
CHRISTIAN ON THE MOUNT;
OR, A
TREATISE
CONCERNING
MEDITATION.

Psal. i. 2.

And in his Law doth he meditate Day and night.

HAVING led you through the Chamber of Delight, I will now bring you into the Withdrawing Room of Meditation. ' In his law doth he meditate day and night.

CHAP. I.

The opening of the Words, and the Proposition asserted.

GRACE breeds delight in God, and delight breeds meditation. A duty wherein consists the essentials of religion, and which nourisheth the very life-blood of it; and that the Psalmist may shew how much the godly man is habituated and

inured to this blessed work of meditation, he subjoins, ‘ In his law doth he meditate day and night ; not but that there may be sometimes intermission : God allows time for our calling, he grants some relaxation ; but when it is said, the godly man meditates day and night, the meaning is, frequently : he is much conversant in the duty. It is a command of God to pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. v. 17. The meaning is, not that we should be always praying, as the Eutiches held, but that we should every day set some time apart for prayer : so Drusius and others interpret it. We read in the Old law it was called the continual sacrifice, Numb. xxviii. 24. not that the people of Israel did nothing else but sacrifice, but because they had their stated hours, every morning and evening they offered, therefore it was called the continual sacrifice : thus the godly man is said to meditate day and night, that is, he is often at this work, he is no stranger to meditation.

Doct. The proposition that results out of the text is this, That a good christian is a meditating christian, Ps. cxix. 15. ‘ I will meditate in thy precepts.’ 1 Tim. iv. 15. ‘ Meditate upon these things.’ Meditation is the chewing upon the truths we have heard : The beasts in the old law that did not chew the cud, were unclean : the christian that doth not by meditation chew the cud, is to be accounted unclean. Meditation is like the watering of the seed, it makes the fruits of grace to flourish.

For the illustration of the point, there are several things to be discussed.

1. I shall shew you what meditation is.
2. That meditation is a duty.
3. The difference between meditation and memory.
4. The difference between meditation and study.
5. The subject of meditation.
6. The necessity of meditation.

CHAP. II.

Shewing the Nature of Meditation.

IF it be inquired what meditation is, I answer, Meditation is the soul's retiring of itself, that by a serious and solemn thinking upon God, the heart may be raised up to heavenly affections. This description hath three branches.

1. Meditation is the soul's retiring of itself; a christian, when he goes to meditate, must lock up himself from the world. The world spoils meditation; 'Christ went apart into the mount to pray, Matt. xiv. 23. so, go apart when you are to meditate; 'Isaac went out to meditate in the field,' Gen. xxiv. 63. he sequestered and retired himself that he might take a walk with God by meditation. Zaccheus had a mind to see Christ, and he got out of the crowd, 'He ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him,' Luke xix. 3, 4. so, when we would see God, we must get out of the crowd of worldly business; we must climb up into the tree by retiredness of meditation, and there we shall have the best prospect of heaven. The world's music will either play us asleep, or distract us in our meditations. When a mote is gotten into the eye, it hinders the sight; when worldly thoughts, as motes, are gotten into the mind, which is the eye of the soul, it cannot look up so steadfastly to heaven by contemplation. Therefore, as when Abraham went to sacrifice, 'he left his servant and the ass at the bottom of the hill,' Gen. xxii. 5. so, when a christian is going up the hill of meditation, he should leave all secular cares at the bottom of the hill, that he may be alone, and take a turn in heaven. If the wings of the bird are full of slime, she cannot fly: Meditation is the wing of the soul;

when a christian is beslimed with earth, he cannot fly to God upon this wing. Saint Bernard when he came to the church-door, used to say, Stay here all my worldly thoughts, that I may converse with God in the temple: so say to thyself, I am going now to meditate, O all ye vain thoughts stay behind, come not near. When thou art going up the mount of meditation, take heed the world doth not follow thee, and throw thee down from the top of this pinnacle. This is the first thing, the soul's retiring of itself; lock and bolt the door against the world.

2. The second thing in meditation, is, a serious and solemn thinking upon God. The Hebrew word to meditate, signifies with intenseness to recollect and gather together the thoughts: Meditation is not a cursory work, to have a few transient thoughts of religion; like the dogs of Nilus that lap and away; but there must be in meditation a fixing the heart upon the object, a steeping the thoughts; carnal christians are like quick-silver which cannot be made to fix; their thoughts are roving up and down, and will not fix; like the bird that hops from one bough to another, and stays no where. David was a man fit to meditate, 'O God, my heart is fixed,' Psal. cviii. 1. In meditation there must be a staying of the thoughts upon the object; a man that rides post through a town or village, he minds nothing; but an artist or limner that is looking on a curious piece, views the whole draught and portraiture of it, he observes the symmetry and proportion, he minds every shadow and colour. A carnal, flitting christian is like the traveller, his thoughts ride post, he minds nothing of God; a wise Christian is like the artist, he views with seriousness, and ponders the things of religion, Luke ii. 19. 'But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.'

3. The third thing in meditation, is, the raising

of the heart to holy affections. A christian enters into meditation, as a man enters into the bath, that he may be healed. Meditation heals the soul of its deadness and earthliness ; but more of this after.

CHAP. III.

Proving Meditation to be a Duty.

MEDITATION is a duty lying upon every christian, and there is no disputing our duty. Meditation is a duty, 1. Imposed. 2. Opposed.

1. Meditation is a duty imposed ; it is not arbitrary : The same God who hath bid us believe, hath bid us meditate, Josh. i. 8. ‘ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.’ These words, though spoken to the person of Joshua, yet they concern every one ; as the promise made to Joshua concerned all believers, Josh. i. 5. compared with Heb. xiii. 5. So this precept made to the person of Joshua, thou shalt meditate in this book of the law, takes in all christians ; it is the part of an hypocrite to enlarge the promise, and to strengthen the precept ; thou shalt meditate in this book of the law ; the word *thou* is indefinite, and reacheth every christian ; as God’s word doth direct, so his will must enforce obedience.

2. Meditation is a duty opposed. We may conclude it is a good duty, because it is against the stream of corrupt nature ; as he said, you may know that religion is right which Nero persecutes ; so you may know that is a good duty which the heart opposeth. We shall find naturally a strange averseness from meditation. We are swift to hear, but slow to meditate. To think of the world, if it were all day long, is delightful ; but as for holy meditation, how doth the heart wrangle and quarrel with this duty ;

it is doing of penance ; now truly, there needs no other reason to prove a duty to be good, than the reluctancy of a carnal heart. To instance in the duty of self-denial. ' Let a man deny himself,' Mat. xvi. 24. self-denial is as necessary as heaven, but what disputes are raised in the heart against it? What! to deny my reason, and become a fool that I may be wise ; nay, not only to deny my reason, but my righteousness? What, to cast it overboard, and swim to heaven upon the plank of Christ's merits? This is such a duty that the heart doth naturally oppose, and enter its dissent against. This is an argument to prove the duty of self-denial good ; just so it is with this duty of meditation ; the secret antipathy the heart hath against it, shews it to be good ; and this is reason enough to enforce meditation.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing how Meditation differs from Memory.

THE memory (a glorious faculty) which Aristotle calls the soul's scribe, sits and pens all things that are done. Whatsoever we read or hear, the memory doth register ; therefore, God doth all his works of wonder that they may be had in remembrance. There seems to be some analogy and resemblance between meditation and memory. But I conceive there is a double difference.

1. The meditation of a thing hath more sweetness in it than the bare remembrance. The memory is the chest or cupboard to lock up a truth, meditation is the palate to feed on it ; the memory is like the ark in which the manna was laid up, meditation is like Israel's eating of manna. When David began to meditate on God, it was ' sweet to him as marrow,' Psal. lxxiii. 5, 6. There is as much difference between a truth remembered, and a truth

meditated on, as between a cordial in a glass, and a cordial drunk down.

2. The remembrance of a truth without the serious meditation of it will but create matter of sorrow another day. What comfort can it be to a man when he comes to die, to think he remembered many excellent notions about Christ, but never had the grace so to meditate on them, as to be transformed into them ! a sermon remembered, but not ruminated, will only serve to increase our condemnation.

CHAP. V.

Shewing how Meditation differs from Study.

THE Student's life looks like meditation, but doth vary from it. Meditation and study differ three ways.

1. They differ in their nature. Study is a work of the brain, meditation of the heart ; study sets the invention on work, meditation sets the affection on work.

2. They differ in their design. The design of study is notion, the design of meditation is piety : the design of study is the finding out of a truth ; the design of meditation is the spiritual improvement of a truth ; the one searcheth for the vein of gold, the other digs out the gold.

3. They differ in the issue and result. Study leaves a man never a whit the better ; it is like a winter sun that hath little warmth and influence : meditation leaves one in a holy frame : it melts the heart when it is frozen, and makes it drop into tears of love.

CHAP. VI.

Shewing the Subject of Meditation.

THE fourth particular to be discussed is the subject-matter of meditation ; what a christian should meditate upon. I am now gotten into a large field, but I shall only glance at things ; I shall but do as the disciples, pluck some ears of corn as I pass along.

Some may say, alas, I am so barren I know not what to meditate upon. To help Christians therefore in this blessed work, I shall shew you some choice select matter for meditation. There are fifteen things in the law of God which we should principally meditate upon.

SECT. 1. *Meditate on God's Attributes.*

1. The Attributes of God are the several beams by which the divine nature shines forth to us ; and there are six special attributes which we should fix our meditations upon.

2. Meditate upon God's Omniscieny. His eye is continually upon us ; he hath a window open into the conscience ; our thoughts are unveiled before him. He can tell the words we speak ' in our bed-chamber,' 2 Kings ii. 12. He is described with seven eyes, to shew his omniscieny. ' Thou numberest my steps,' Job xiv. 16. The Hebrew word signifies to take an exact account. God is said to number our steps, when he makes a curious and critical observation of our actions ; God sets down every passage of our lives, and keeps as it were a day book of all we do, and enters it down into the book. Meditate much on this omniscieny.

The meditation of God's omniscience would have these effects.

1. It would be as a curben-bit to check and restrain us from sin. Will the thief steal when the judge looks on?

2. The meditation of God's omniscience would be a good means to make the heart sincere. God hath set a grate at every man's breast, 'doth not he see all my ways?' Job xxxi. 4. If I harbour proud, malicious thoughts, if I look at my own interest more than Christ's, if I juggle in my repentance, the God of heaven takes notice. The meditation of this omniscience would make a christian sincere, both in his actions and aims. One cannot be a hypocrite, but he must be a fool.

Meditate on the Holiness of God. Holiness is the embroidered robe God wears : it is the glory of the Godhead, Exod. xv. 11. 'Glorious in holiness : ' it is the most orient pearl of the crown of heaven. God is the exemplar and pattern of holiness. It is primarily and originally in God as light in the sun ; you may as well separate weight from lead, or heat from fire, as holiness from the divine nature ; God's holiness is that whereby his heart riseth against any sin, as being most diametrically opposite to his essence, Hab. i. 13. 'Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.' Meditate much on this attribute.

The meditation of God's holiness would have this effect ; it would be a means to transform us into the similitude and likeness of God ; God never loves us till we are like him. There is a story in Peter Martyr of a deformed man, who set curious fair pictures before his wife, that seeing them she might have fair children, and so she had. Jacob's cattle looking on the rods which were peeled, and had white strais in them, conceived like the rods,' Gen. xxx. 38, 39. So, while by meditation we are looking upon the beams of holiness, which are glorious.

ly transparent in God, we shall grow like him, and be holy as he is holy. Holiness is a beautiful thing, Psal. cx. It puts a kind of angelical brightness upon us ; it is the only coin will pass current in heaven ; by the frequent meditation of this attribute, we are changed into God's image.

3. Meditate on the Wisdom of God. He is called ' the only wise God,' 1 Tim. i. 17. His wisdom shines forth in the works of providence ; he sits at the helm guiding all things regularly and harmoniously ; he brings light out of darkness ; he can strike a straight stroke by a crooked stick ; he can make use of the injustice of men to do that which is just ; he is infinitely wise, he breaks us by afflictions, and upon these broken pieces of the ship, brings us safe to shore ; meditate on the wisdom of God.

The meditation of God's wisdom would sweetly calm our hearts. 1. When we see things go cross in the public, the wise God holds the reins of government in his hand ; and let who will rule, God over-rules ; he knows how to turn all to good ; his work will be beautiful in its season. 2. When things go ill with us in particular, the meditation of God's wisdom would rock our hearts quiet. The wise God hath set me in this condition, and whether health or sickness, wisdom will order it for the best. God will make a treacle of poison, all things shall be physical and medicinal to me ; either the Lord will expel some sin, or exercise some grace. The meditation of this would silence murmuring.

Meditate on the Power of God. This power is visible in the creation. ' He hangs the earth upon nothing,' Job xxvi. 7. What cannot that God do that can create ; nothing can stand before a creating power ; he needs no pre-existent matter to work upon ; he needs no instruments to work with, he can work without tools ; he it is before whom the

angels veil their faces, and the kings of the earth cast their crowns. He it is that 'removes the earth out of her place,' Job ix. 6. An earthquake makes the earth tremble upon her pillars, but God can shake it out of its place. God can with a word unpin the wheels, and break the axletree of the creation. He can suspend natural agents, stop the lion's mouth, cause the sun to stand still, make the fire not burn: Xerxes, the Persian monarch, threw fetters into the sea, as if he would have chained up the unruly waters; but when God commands, 'the winds and sea obey him,' Matt. viii. 27. If he speaks the word, an army of stars appear, Judg. v. 20. If he stamp with his foot, an host of angels are presently in battalia; if he lift up an ensign, and doth but hiss, his very enemies shall be up in arms to revenge his quarrel, Isa. v. 56. Who would provoke this God! 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' Heb. x. 31. as a lion 'he tears in pieces his adversaries,' Psal. i. 22. Oh meditate on this power of God.

The meditation of God's power would be a great stay to faith. A christian's faith may anchor safely upon the rock of God's power. It was Samson's riddle, 'Out of the strong came forth sweetness;' Judges xiv. 14. While we are meditating on the power of God, out of this strong comes forth sweetness. Is the church of God low? he can 'create Jerusalem a praise,' Isa. lxxv. 28. Is thy corruption strong? God can break the head of this leviathan: is the heart hard, is there a stone gotten there? God can dissolve it. 'The Almighty makes my heart soft;' faith triumphs in the power of God: out of this strong comes forth sweetness; Abraham meditating on God's power, did not stagger through unbelief, Rom. iv. 20. He knew God could make a dead womb fruitful, and dry breasts give suck.

5. Meditate upon the mercy of God; mercy is

an innate disposition in God to do good ; as the sun hath an innate property to shine, Psal. lxxxvi. 5. ‘ Thou Lord art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon thee. God’s mercy is so sweet, that it makes all his other attributes sweet. Holiness without mercy, and justice without mercy were dreadful. Geographers write that the city of Syracuse in Sicily is curiously situated, that the sun is never out of sight ; though the children of God are under some clouds of affliction, yet the sun of mercy is never quite out of sight. God’s justice reacheth to the clouds, his mercy reacheth above the clouds. How slow is God to anger. He was longer in destroying Jericho, than in making the world ; he made the world in six days, but he was seven days in demolishing the walls of Jericho. How many warning pieces did God shoot against Jerusalem, before he shot off his murdering piece ? Justice goes a foot-pace, Gen. xviii. 21. mercy hath wings ; the sword of justice oft lies a long time in the scabbard, and rusts, till sin doth draw it out and whet it against a nation ; God’s justice is like the widow’s oil, which ran a while, and ceased, 1 Kings iv. 6. God’s mercy is like Aaron’s oil, which rested not on his head, but ran down to the skirts of his garment, Psal, cxxxiii. 2. So the golden oil of God’s mercy doth not rest upon the head of a good parent, but is poured on his children, and so runs down, “ To the third and fourth generation,” even the borders of a religious seed. Often meditate upon the mercy of God.

The meditation of mercy would be a powerful loadstone to draw sinners to God by repentance. It would be as a cork to the net to keep the heart from sinking in despair ; behold a city of refuge to fly to ; ‘ God is the Father of mercies,’ 2 Cor. i. 3. mercy doth as naturally issue from him, as the child from the parent. God ‘ delights in mercy,’ Micah

vii. 18. Chrysostom saith, it is delightful to the mother to have her breasts drawn; and how delightful is it to God to have the breasts of mercy drawn; mercy finds out the worst sinner; mercy comes not only with salvation in its hand, but with healing under its wings.

The meditation of God's mercy would melt a sinner into tears: One reading a pardon sent him from the king, fell a weeping, and burst out into these words, "A pardon hath done that which death could not do, it hath made my heart relent."

6. Meditate upon the Truth of God: Mercy makes the promise, and Truth performs it, Psal. lxxxix. 33. 'I will not suffer my faithfulness to fail.' God can as well deny himself as his word. He is 'abundant in truth,' Exod. xxxiv. 6. What is that? If God hath made a promise of mercy to his people, he will be so far from coming short of his word, that he will be better than his word. God often doth more than he hath said, never less; he often shoots beyond the mark of the promise he hath set, never short of it. He is abundant in truth. God may sometimes delay a promise, he will not deny it. The promise may lie a long time as seed hid under ground, but it is all the while a ripening, The promise of Israel's deliverance lay four hundred and thirty years hid under ground; but when the time was come, the promise did not go a day beyond its reckoning, Exod. xii. 41. 'The strength of Israel will not lie,' 1 Sam. xv. 29. Meditate on the truth of God.

The meditation of God's truth would, 1. Be a pillar of support for faith. The world hangs upon God's power, and faith hangs upon his truth. 2. The meditation of God's truth would make us ambitious to imitate him. We should be true in our words, true in our dealings. Pythagoras being ask-

ed, "What did make men like God?" answered, "When they speak truth."

SECT. 2. Meditate upon the Promises of God.

The promises are flowers growing in the paradise of scripture; meditation, like the bee, sucks out the sweetness of them. The promises are of no use or comfort to us, till they are meditated upon. For as the roses hanging in the garden may give a fragrant redolency, yet their sweet water is distilled only by the fire; so the promises are sweet in reading over, but the water of these roses, the spirits and quintessence of the promises are distilled into the soul only by meditation. The incense, when it is pounded and beaten, smells sweetest. Meditating on a promise, like the beating of the incense, makes it more odoriferous and pleasant. The promises may be compared to a golden mine, which then only enricheth when the gold is dug out: by holy meditation we dig out that spiritual gold which lies hid in the midst of the promise, and so we come to be enriched. Cardan saith, there is no precious stone but hath some hidden virtue in it. They are called precious promises, 2 Pet. i. 4. When they are applied by meditation, then their virtue appears, and they become precious indeed. There are three sorts of promises which we should meditate upon.

1. Promises of remission; 'I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins,' Isaiah xliii. 25. Whereas the poor sinner may say, Alas, I am deep in arrears with God, I fear I have not filled his bottle with my tears, but I have filled his book with my debts; well, but meditate on his promise, 'I am he that blotteth out,' &c. The word there in the original to blot out, is a metaphor alludes to a merchant, who when his debtor hath paid him, he

blots out the debt, and gives him an acquittance. So saith God, I will blot out your sin, I will cross the debt-book. Ah, but may the poor soul say, It may be a great while first ; I may be a long time under the convulsions of conscience ; ‘ I may even pine away, and ‘ my life draw nigh to the grave,’ Psal. lxxxviii. 9. No, in the Hebrew it is, ‘ I am blotting out thy transgressions.’ I have taken my pen, and am crossing out thy score. Oh, but may the sinner say, There is no reason God should do thus for me. Well, but acts of grace do not go by reason, I will blot out thy sins ‘ for my name’s sake.’ Oh, but saith the sinner, Will not the Lord call my sins again to remembrance ? No, he promiseth an act of oblivion ; I will not upbraid thee with thy sins, or sue thee with a bond that is cancelled, ‘ I will remember thy sins no more.’ Here is a sweet promise to meditate upon ; it is an hive full of the honey of the gospel.

2. Meditate upon promises of sanctification. The earth is not so apt to be overgrown with weeds and thorns, as the heart is to be overgrown with lusts ; now, God hath made many promises of healing, Hos. xiv. 4. and purging, Jer. xxxiii. 8. promises of sending his Spirit, Isa. xlv. 3. which, for its sanctifying nature, is compared sometimes to water which cleanseth the vessel ; sometimes to wind, which is the fan to winnow and purify the air ; sometimes to fire, which doth refine the metals. Meditate often on that promise, Isa. i. 18. ‘ Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow.’ Scarlet is so deep a dye, that all the art of man cannot take it out ; but behold here a promise, God will lay the soul a whitening ; he will make of a scarlet sinner a milk white saint. By virtue of this refining and consecrating work, a christian is made partaker of the divine nature ; he hath an idoneity and fitness to

have communion with God for ever; meditate much on this promise.

3. Meditate upon promises of remuneration: 'The haven of rest,' Heb. iv. 9. 'The beatifical sight of God,' Matt. v. 8. The glorious mansions, John xiv. 2. The meditation of these promises will be as bezar-stone to keep us from fainting under our sins and sorrows.

SECT. 3. *Meditate upon the Love of Christ.*

Christ is full of love, as he is of merit. What was it but love, that he should save us, and not the angels? Among the rarities of the loadstone, this is not the least, that leaving the gold and pearl, it should draw iron to it, which is a baser kind of metal; so, that Christ should leave the angels, those more noble spirits, the gold and pearl, and draw mankind to him, how doth this proclaim his love? Love was the wing on which he did fly into the virgin's womb. 1. How transcendent is Christ's love to the saints! The apostle calls it a love 'that passeth knowledge,' Eph. iii. 19. It is such a love as God the Father bears to Christ; the same for quality, though not equality, John xv. 9. 'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.' A believer's heart is the garden where Christ hath planted this sweet flower of his love. It is the channel thro' which the golden stream of his affection runs. 2. How distinguishing is Christ's love, 1 Cor. i. 26. 'Not many wise, not many noble are called.' In the old law God passed by the lion and the eagle, and took the dove for sacrifice; that God should pass by so many of birth and parts, and that the lot of free grace should fall upon thee; O the depth of divine grace! How invincible is the love of Christ! 'It is strong as death,' Cant. viii. 6. Death might take away his life, not this love; and as

death, so neither sin could wholly quench that divine flame of love; the church had her infirmities, her sleepy fits, Cant. v. 2. but though blacked and sullied, yet still a dove; Christ could see the faith, and wink at the failing. He who drew Alexander while there was a scar upon his face, drew him with his finger upon the scar: Christ puts the finger of mercy upon the scars of the saints; he will not throw away his pearls for every speck of dirt. And, which makes this love of Christ the more stupendous, there was nothing in us to excite or draw forth his love: He did not love us because we were worthy, but by loving us he made us worthy. 4. How immutable is Christ's love? 'Having loved his own, he loved them to the end,' John xiii. 1. The saints are like letters of gold engraven upon Christ's heart, which cannot be razed out. Meditate much upon the love of Christ.

1. The serious meditation of the love of Christ, would make us love him again. 'Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?' Prov. vi. 28. who can tread by meditation upon these hot coals of Christ's love, and his heart not burn in love to him?

2. The meditation of Christ's love would set our eyes abroad with tears for our gospel unkindnesses. O that we should sin against so sweet a Saviour! had we none to abuse but our friend? had we nothing to kick against but bowels of love? did not Christ suffer enough upon the cross, but must we needs make him suffer more? do we give him more gall and vinegar to drink? O, if any thing can dissolve the heart in mourning, it is disingenuity, and unkindness offered to Christ. When Peter thought of Christ's love to him, Christ could deny Peter nothing, yet he could deny Christ, this made his eyes to water; 'Peter went out and wept bitterly.'

3. The meditation of Christ's love would make

us love our enemies. Jesus Christ shewed love to his enemies. We read of 'the fire licking up the water, 1 Kings xviii. 38. It is usual for water to quench the fire, but for fire to dry up and consume the water, which was not capable of burning, this was miraculous! such a miracle did Christ shew; his love did burn where there was no fit matter to work upon; nothing but sin and enmity; he loved his enemies; the fire of his love did consume and lick up the water of their sins. He prayed for his enemies, 'Father forgive them;' he shed tears for them that shed his blood. Those that gave him gall and vinegar to drink, them he gave his blood to drink. The meditation of this love would melt our hearts in love to our enemies. Austin saith, Christ made a pulpit of the cross, and the great lesson he taught christians was, to love their enemies.

4. The meditation of Christ's love would be a means to support us in case of his absence. Sometimes he is pleased to withdraw himself, Cant. v. 6. yet when we consider how entire and immutable his love is, it will make us wait with patience till he sweetly manifests himself to us. He is love, and he cannot forsake his people over long, Micah vii. 19. The sun may be gone a while from our climate, but it returns in the spring: The meditation of Christ's love may make us wait for the return of this Sun of Righteousness, Heb. x. 37. 'For yet a little while and he that shall come will come.' He is truth, therefore he shall come; he is love, therefore he will come.

SECT. 5. *Meditate upon Sin.*

1. Meditate on the guilt of sin. We are in Adam as in a common head, or root, and he sinning, we become guilty, Rom. v. 12. 'in whom all have sinned;' by his treason our blood is tainted, and

this guilt bringeth shame with it as its twin, Rom. vi. 21.

2. Meditate upon the filth of sin; not only is the guilt of Adam's sin imputed, but the poison of his nature is disseminated to us. Our virgin nature is defiled, the heart is spotted; how then can the actions be pure? If the water be foul in the well, it cannot be clean in the bucket. Isa. lxiv. 6. 'We are all as an unclean thing.' We are like a patient under the physician's hand, that hath no sound part in him, his head bruised, his liver swelled, his lungs perished, his blood inflamed, his feet gangrened. Thus is it with us before grace comes; in the mind darkness; in the memory slipperiness: in the heart hardness; in the will stubbornness; 'from the sole of the foot, to the crown of the head there is no soundness, but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores,' Isa. i. 6. A sinner befiltied with sin, is no better than a devil in man's shape; and which is sadly to be laid to heart, the adherency of this sin. Sin is naturalized to us, the apostle calls it an encompassing sin, Heb. xii. 1. a sin that will not easily be cast off. A man may as well shake off the skin of his body, as the sin of his soul; it sticks fast as the ivy to the wall. There is no shaking off this viper till death. Oh, often meditate on this contagion of sin. How strong is that poison, a drop whereof is able to poison a whole sea? how venomous and malignant was that apple, a taste whereof poisoned all mankind? Meditate sadly on this. The meditation of sin would make the plumes of pride fall; if our knowledge makes us proud, we have sin enough to make us humble. The best saint alive who is taken out of the grave of sin, yet hath the smell of the grave-clothes still upon him.

3. Meditate upon the curse of sin, Gal. iii. 10. 'Cursed be every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law.' This curse

is like a blast upon fruit, which keeps it from thriving; sin is not only a defiling thing, but a damning. It is not only a spot in the face, but a stab at the heart. Sin betrays us into the devil's hands, who, like Draco, writes all his laws in blood. Sin binds us over to the wrath of God, and then what are all our earthly enjoyments but like Damaris's banquets, with a sword hanging over the head? sin brings forth the 'roll written with curses' against a sinner, Zech. v. and it is a 'flying roll,' ver. 5. it comes swiftly, if mercy doth not stop it. 'Ye are cursed with a curse,' Mal. iii. 9. Thus it is till the entail of this curse be cut off by Christ. Oh meditate upon this curse due to sin.

The meditation of this curse would make us afraid, 1. Of retaining sin. When Micah had stolen his mother's money, and heard her curse him, he durst not keep it any longer, but restores it.' Judg. xvii. 2. he was afraid of his mother's curse; what then is God's curse? 2. The meditation of this curse would make us afraid of entertaining sin. We would not willingly entertain one in our house who had the plague. Sin brings a curse along with it which is the plague of God that cleaves to a sinner; sin is like the water of jealousy which made 'the belly to swell, and the thigh to rot,' Numb. v. 22. The meditation of this would make us fly from sin; while we sit under the shadow of this bramble, fire will come out of the bramble eternally to devour us, Judg. v. 19.

SECT. 5. *Meditate upon the Vanity of the Creature.*

When you have sifted out the finest flour that the creature doth afford, you will find something either to dissatisfy or nauseate. The best wine hath its froth, the sweetest rose its prickles, and the purest comforts their dregs; the creature cannot be said to be full, unless of vanity; as a bladder may

be filled with wind, Job xx. 22. ‘ In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits:’ they who think to find happiness here, are like Apollo who embraced the laurel-tree instead of Daphne. Meditate on this vanity. The world is like a looking glass which represents that face which is not in it.

The meditation of this vanity, 1. Would be like the digging about the roots of a tree, to loosen it from the earth, it would much loosen our hearts from the world, and be an excellent preservative against a surfeit. Let a christian think thus with himself, Why am I so serious about vanity? if the whole earth were changed into a globe of gold, it could not fill my heart.

2. The meditation of the creature’s vanity would make us look after more solid comforts; the favour of God, the blood of Christ, the influences of the Spirit. When I see the life which I fetch from the cistern is vain, I will go the more to the spring head; in Christ there is an inexhaustible treasury: When a man finds the bough begin to break, he lets go the bough, and catcheth hold on the main tree; so when we find the creature to be but a rotten bough, then by faith we shall catch hold on Christ the tree of life, Rev. ii. 7. The creature is but a reed, God is the rock of ages.

SECT. 6. *Meditate on the Excellency of Grace.*

Grace is, 1. Precious in itself, 2. Pet. i. 1. precious faith. Grace is precious, 1. in its original, it comes from above, James iii. 17. 2. In its nature; it is the seed of God, 1. John iii. 9. Grace is the spiritual enamel and embroidery of the soul; it is the very signature and engraving of the Holy Ghost. Grace doth not lose its colour: it is such a commodity, that the longer we keep it, the better it is, it changeth into glory. 2. As grace is precious in itself, so it makes us precious to God; as a rich

diamond adorns them that wear it, Isa. xliii. 4. 'Since thou wert precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable.' The saints who are invested with grace, are God's jewels, Mal. iii. 17. though sullied with reproach, though besmeared with blood, yet, jewels; all the world besides is but lumber. These are the jewels, and heaven is the golden cabinet where they shall be locked up safe; a gracious man is the glory of the age he lives in; like Melancthon, who was called the phoenix of Germany. So illustrious in God's eye is a soul bespangled with grace, that he doth not think the world worthy of him, Heb. xi. 38. 'Of whom the world was not worthy.' Therefore God calls for his people home so fast, because they are too good to live in the world, Prov. ii. 26. 'The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour. Grace is the best blessing; it hath a meliority and transcendancy above all things else; there are two things sparkle much in our eyes, but grace infinitely outshines both.

1. Gold. The sun doth not shine so much in our eyes as gold; it is the mirror of beauty, money answers all things,' Eccl. x. 19. but grace weighs heavier than gold; gold draws the heart from God, grace draws the heart to God. Gold doth but enrich the mortal part, grace the angelical. Gold perisheth, 1. Pet. i. 7. grace perseveres. The rose, the fuller it is blown, the sooner it sheds, an emblem of all things besides grace.

2. Gifts. These are nature's pride. Gifts and parts, like Rachael, are fair to look upon, but grace excels. I had rather be holy than eloquent. An heart full of grace is better than an head full of notions. Gifts commend no man to God. It is not the paring of the apple we esteem, though of a vermilion colour, but the fruit. We judge not the better of a horse for his trappings and ornaments unless he have good mettle. What are the most glo-

rious parts, if there be not the metal of grace in the heart? Gifts may be bestowed upon one for the good of others, as the nurse's breasts are given her for the child, but grace is bestowed for a man's own eternal advantage. God may send away reprobates with gifts, as Abraham did the sons of the concubines, Gen. xxv. 6. but he entails the inheritance only upon grace. O, often meditate upon the excellency of grace.

The musing on the beauty of grace would, 1. Make us fall in love with it. He that meditates on the worth of a diamond, grows in love with it. Damascen calls the graces of the Spirit the very characters and impressions of the divine nature. Grace is that flower of delight, which, like the vine in the parable, Judg. ix. 13. 'cheers the heart of God and man.'

2. The meditation of the excellency of grace would make us earnest in the pursuit after it. We dig for gold in the mine, we sweat for it in the furnace; did we meditate on the worth of grace, we would dig in the mine of ordinances for it; what sweating and wrestling in prayer? we would put on a modest boldness, and not take a denial. 'What wilt thou give me (saith Abraham) seeing I go childless?' Gen. xv. 2. So would the soul say, Lord, what wilt thou give me seeing I go graceless? who will give me to drink of the 'water of the well of life?'

3. The meditation of the excellency of grace would make us endeavour to be instrumental to convey grace to others. Is grace so transcendently precious, and have I a child wants grace? Oh that I might be a means to convey this treasure into his soul! I have read of a rich Florentine, who being to die, called all his sons together, and used these words to them, "It much rejoiceth me now upon my death-bed, that I shall leave you all wealthy;"

but a parent's ambition should be rather to convey sanctity, that he may say, O my children, it rejoiceth me that I shall leave you gracious ; it comforts me that before I die, I shall see Jesus Christ live in you.

SECT. 7. *Meditate upon thy Spiritual Estate.*

Enter into a serious meditation on the state of your souls ; while you are meditating of other things, do not forget yourselves : the great work lies at home. It was Solomon's advice, ' know the state of thy flock,' Prov. xxvii. 33. much more know the state of thy soul ; for want of this meditation, men are like travellers, skilled in other countries, but ignorant of their own : so they know other things, but know not how it goes with their souls, whether they are in a good state or bad ; there are few who by holy meditation enters within themselves. There are two reasons why so few meditate upon the state of their souls.

1. Self-guiltiness. Men are loath to look into their hearts by meditation, lest they should find that which would trouble them. The cup in their sack. Most are herein like tradesmen, who being ready to sink in their estates, are loath to look into their books of account, lest they should find their estate low ; but hadst thou not better enter into thy heart by meditation, than God should in a sad manner enter into judgment with thee ?

2. Presumption ; men hope all is well ; men will not take their land upon trust, but will have it surveyed ; yet they will take their spiritual estate upon trust, without any surveying. They are confident their case is good ; Prov. xiv. 16. It is a thing not to be disputed on, and this confidence is but conceit. The foolish virgins, though they had no oil in their lamps, yet how confident were they ? ' They

came knocking; it was a peremptory knock, they doubted not of admittance; so many are not sure of their salvation, but secure; they presume all is well, never seriously meditating whether they have oil or not. O christian, meditate about thy soul! See how the case stands between God and thee; do as merchants, cast up thy estate, that thou mayest see what thou art worth; see if thou art rich towards God, Luke xii. 21. Meditate about three things. 1. About thy debts, see if thy debts be paid or no, that is, thy sins pardoned; see if there be no arrears, no sin in thy soul unrepented of. 2. Meditate about thy will; see if thy will be made yet. Hast thou resigned up all the interest in thyself? Hast thou given up thy love to God? Hast thou given up thy will? This is to make thy will. Meditate about thy will; make thy spiritual will in the time of health; if thou puttest off the making of thy will till death, it may be invalid; perhaps God will not accept of thy soul then. 3. Meditate about thy Evidences. These evidences are the graces of the Spirit; see whether thou hast any evidences. What desires hast thou after Christ? what faith? see whether there be no flaw in thy evidences; are thy desires true? dost thou as well desire heavenly principles, as heavenly privileges? O meditate seriously upon your evidences.

To sift our hearts thus by meditation, is very necessary; if we find our estate is not sound, the mistake is discovered, and the danger prevented; if it be sound, we shall have the comfort of it. What gladness was it to Hezekiah, when he could say, 'Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight,' Isaiah xxxviii. 3. So, what unspeakable comfort will it be, when a christian, upon a serious meditation and review of his spiritual condition, can say, I have

something to shew for heaven; 'I know I am passed from death to life,' 1 John iii. 14. and as an holy man once said, "I am Christ's, and the devil hath nothing to do with me."

SECT. 8. *Meditate upon the Paucity of them that shall be saved.*

The eight subject of meditation is, the small number that shall be saved; 'but few are chosen,' Mat. xx. 16. among the millions in Rome, but few senators; and among the swarms of people in the world, but few believers. One said, all the names of the good emperors might be engraven in a little ring; there are not many names in the book of life. We read of four sorts of ground in the parable, and but one good ground, Matt. xiii. How few in the world know Christ? how few that believe in him? Who hath believed our report? Isa. liii. 1. how few that strike sail to Christ's sceptre? The heathen idolaters and Mahometans possess almost all Asia, Africa, America; in many parts of the world the devil is worshipped, as among the Parthians and Pilapians; Satan takes up most climates and hearts. How many formalists are in the world? 2 Tim. iii. 5. 'having a form of godliness; like wool that receives a slight tincture, not a deep dye, whose religion is a paint, (which a storm of persecution will wash off) not an engraving. These look like Christ's doves, but are the serpent's brood. They hate God's image, like the panther, that hates the picture of a man.

•O often meditate on the paucity of them that shall be saved. The meditation of this, would, 1. Keep us from marching along with the multitude. 'Thou shalt not follow a multitude,' Exod. xxiii. 2. The multitude usually goes wrong: most men walk 'after the course of this world,' Eph. ii. 2.

That is, the lusts of their hearts, and the fashions of the times. They march after the prince of the air. The meditation of this would make us turn out of the common road.

2. The meditation of the fewness of them that shall be saved, would make us walk tremblingly; few that find the way; and when they have found it, few that walk in the way. The thoughts of this would work holy fear, Heb. iv. 1. not a despairing fear, but a jealous and cautious fear. This fear the eminent saints of God have had. Austin saith of himself, he knocked at heaven's gate with a trembling hand. This fear is joined with hope, Psalm cxlvii. 11. 'The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy:' A child of God fears, because the gate is strait; but hopes, because the gate is open.

3. The meditation of the paucity of them that shall be saved, would be a whetstone to industry. It would put us upon working out our salvation; if there be so few that shall be crowned, it would make us the swifter in the race. This meditation would be an alarm to sleepy christians.

SECT. 9. *Meditate upon Final Apostasy*

Think what a sad thing it is to begin in religion to build, and not be able to finish; Joash was good while his uncle Jehoiada lived, but after he died, Joash grew wicked, and all his religion was buried in his uncle's grave. We live in the fall of the leaf; how many are fallen to damnable heresies? 2 Pet. ii. 1. Meditate seriously on that scripture, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. 'It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to

renew them again unto repentance.' A man may be enlightened, and that from a double lamp, the word and Spirit; but these beams, though they are irradiating, yet not penetrating. It is possible he may have a taste of the heavenly gift; he may taste but not concoct; as one saith, a cook may taste the meat he dresseth, but not be nourished by it. This taste may not only illuminate, but refresh; it may carry some sweetness in it, there may be a kind of delight in spiritual things: Thus far a man may go and yet fall away finally. Now this will be very sad (it being such a God-affronting, and Christ reproaching sin); 'Know therefore it is an evil and bitter thing that thou hast forsaken the Lord,' Jer. ii. 19. Meditate upon final relapses.

The meditation of this would make us earnest in prayer to God. 1. For soundness of heart, 'Make my heart sound in thy statutes,' Ps. cxix. 80. Lord, let me not be an alchemy christian, work a thorough work of grace upon me: though I am not washed perfectly, let me be washed thoroughly, Psal. li. 2. That which begins in hypocrisy, ends in apostasy. 2. The meditation of hypocrites final falling away would make us earnest in prayer for perseverance. 'Hold up my goings in thy paths that my footsteps slip not,' Psalm xvii. 5. Lord, hold me up that I may hold out. Thou hast set the crown at the end of the race, let me run the race, that I may wear the crown; it was Beza's prayer, and let it be ours, Lord perfect what thou hast begun in me, that I may not suffer shipwreck when I am almost at the haven.

SECT. 10. *Meditate upon Death.*

We say we must all die, but who is he that meditates seriously upon it? Meditate, 1, Of the certainty of death; it is appointed for all once to die,

Heb. ix. 27. There is a statute out. 2. Meditate upon the proximity of death, it is near to us.—We are almost setting our feet upon the dark entry of death. The poets painted time with wings; it not only rides post, but flies, and carries us upon its wings. The race is short between the cradle and the grave: the sentence of death is already passed, Gen. iii. 19. ‘To dust thou shalt return;’ so that our life is but a short reprieve from death which is granted to a condemned man; ‘Mine age is as nothing,’ Psal. xxxix. 5. nay, if it were possible to take something out of nothing, our life is less than nothing, reckoned with eternity. 3. Meditate upon the uncertainty of time. We have no lease, but may be turned out the next hour; there are so many casualties, that it is a wonder if life be not cut off by untimely death. How soon may God seal us a lease of ejectment? Our grave may be dug before night. To day we may lie upon a pillow of down, to morrow we may be laid upon a pillow of dust. To day the sermon-bell goes, to morrow our passing bell may go. 4. Think seriously, that to die is to be but once done, and after death there is nothing to be done. If thou diest in thine impenitency there is no repenting in the grave. If thou leaves thy work at death half done, there is no finishing it in the grave, Eccl. ix. 10. ‘There is no work, nor device, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.’ If a garrison surrender at the first summons, there is mercy; but if it stay till the red flag be hung out, and the garrison is stormed, there is no mercy then. Now it is a day of grace, and God holds forth the white flag of mercy to the penitent; if we stay till God hold forth the red flag, and storm us by death, now there is no mercy. There is nothing to be done for our souls after death. O meditate of death. It is reported of Zeleucus, that the first piece of house-hold stuff he brought to

Babylon, was a tomb-stone : think often of your tomb-stone. The meditation of death would work these admirable effects.

1. The meditation of death would pull down the plumes of pride; thou art but dust animated; shall dust and ashes be proud? Thou hast a grassy body, and shalt shortly be mowed down; 'I have said ye are gods,' Psal. lxxxii. but lest they should grow proud, he adds a corrective, 'ye shall die like men,' ver. 7. ye are dying gods.

2. The meditation of death would be a means to give a death's wound to sin. No stronger antidote against sin, saith Austin, than the frequent meditation of death; am I now sinning, and to-morrow may be dying? what if death should take me doing the devil's work, would it not send me to him to receive double pay; carry the thoughts of death as a table-book always about thee, and when sin tempts, pull out this table-book, and read in it, and you shall see sin will vanish. We should look upon sin in two glasses, the glass of Christ's blood, and the glass of death.

3. The meditation of death would be a bridle for intemperance; shall I pamper that body which must lie down in the house of rottenness? Our Saviour at a feast breaks forth into mention of his burial, Mat. xxvi. Feeding upon the thoughts of death would be an excellent preservative against a surfeit.

4. The meditation of death would make us husband time better, and crowd up much work in a little room. Many meet in taverns to drive away time; the apostle bids us redeem it; Redeeming the time. Our lives should be like jewels, tho' little in bulk, yet great in worth. Some die young, yet with gray hairs upon them; we must be like grass of the field, useful; not like grass of the house-top, which withers before it be grown up. To live and not be serviceable, is not life, but time.

5. The meditation of death would make us lay in provision against such a time. It would spur us on in the pursuit after holiness. Death is the great plunderer, it will shortly plunder us of all our outward comforts; our feathers of beauty and honour must be laid in the dust, but death cannot plunder us of our graces. The commonwealth of Venice, in their armoury, have this inscription, "happy is he that in time of peace thinks of war;" he that often meditates of death, will make preparation against its coming.

SECT. 11. *Meditate on the Day of Judgment.*

Feathers swim upon the water, but gold sinks in it; light feathery christians float in vanity, they mind not the day of judgment, but serious spirits sink deep into the meditation of it. Most men put far away from them the evil day, Amos iii. 6. They report of the Italians, that in a great thunder they use to ring the bells, and shoot off their cannons, that the sound of their bells and the roaring of their cannons may drown the noise of the thunder; so the devil delights men with the music of the world, that the noise of this should drown the noise of the day of judgment, and make them forget the sound of the last trump. Most men are guilty, therefore they do not love to hear of the assizes. When Paul preached of judgment, Felix trembled, he had a bad conscience: Josephus tells us of Felix, that he was a wicked man: the woman that lived with him (Drusilla by name) he enticed away from her husband, and when he heard of judgment, he fell a trembling. Oh I beseech you meditate upon this last and solemn day; while others are thinking how they may get riches, let us bethink ourselves how we may abide the day of Christ's coming.

The meditation of the day of judgment, 1. Would

make us to scan all our actions ; Christ will come with his fan and his sieve : will this action of mine bide the test at that great day.

2. The meditation of the last day would make us labour to approve our hearts to God, the great judge and umpire of the world. It is no matter what men think of us, but what is our Judge's opinion of us ? to him we must stand or fall. The meditation of the day of judgment would make us endeavour to be like Moses, who was fair to God, as the original hath it. The galaxy, or milky way, as the astronomers call it, is a bright circle in the heavens containing many stars, but they are so small that they have no name, nor are they taken cognizance of by the astrologers. Give me leave to apply it ; possibly others may take no notice of us ; we are so small as to have no name in the world, yet if we are true stars, and can approve our hearts to God, we shall hold up our heads with boldness, when we come to stand before our Judge.

SECT. 12. *Meditate upon Hell.*

1. Meditate upon the pain of loss, Matt. xxv. 10. ' and the door was shut.' To have Christ's face veiled over, and a perpetual eclipse and midnight in the soul ; to be cast out of God's presence, in whose presence is fulness of joy, this doth accent and embitter the condition of the damned ; it is like mingling gall with wormwood.

2. Meditate upon the pain of sense ; the Photinians hold there is no hell, but they speak in a dream, Psal. ix. 17. ' The wicked shall be turned into hell.' And here meditate of two things,

1. The place of hell. 2. The company.

1. Meditate on the place of hell. It is called ' a place of torment,' Luke xvi. 28. There are two things especially in hell to torment.

1. Fire. Rev. xx. 15. It is called a lake of burning fire. Austin, Peter Lombard, Gregory the Great, say, this fire of hell is a material fire, though they say it is infinitely hotter than any culinary fire; that is but painted fire to this. I wish none of us may know what kind of fire it is, but I rather think the fire of hell is partly material, and partly spiritual; the material fire is to work upon the body, the spiritual to torture the soul. This is the wrath of God, which is both fire and bellows, 'who knoweth the power of thine anger?' Psal. xc. 11.

But it may be objected, if there be any material fire in hell, it will consume the bodies there. I answer, It shall burn without consuming, as Moses' bush did, Exod. iii. 2. The power of God silenceth all disputes. If God by his infinite power could make the fire of the three children not to consume, cannot he make the fire of hell burn and not consume? Austin tells of a strange salt in Sicily, which if it be put in the fire swims: that God who can make salt, contrary to its nature, swim in the fire, can make the bodies of the damned not consume in the fire.

2. The worm, Mark xix. 44. 'Where the worm never dies.' Homer in his Odyssey feigns, that Titus' liver was gnawn by two vultures in hell. This never-dying worm Christ speaks of, is the gnawing of a guilty conscience. Melancthon calls it an helish fury,—they that will not hear conscience preaching, shall feel conscience gnawing; and so great is the extremity of these two, the fire which burns, and the worm which bites, that there will follow 'gnashing of teeth,' Matt. viii. 12. the damned will gnash their teeth for horror and anguish. That must needs be sad cheer (as Latimer saith) where weeping is served in for the first course, and gnashing of teeth for the second; to endure this will be intolerable, to avoid it will be impossible.

2. Meditate of the company in hell, the devil and his angels, Matt. xxv. 41. Job complains he was a companion to owls, chap. xxx. 29. What will it be to be a companion to devils? Consider, 1. Their ghastly deformity, they make hell look blacker. 2. Their deadly antipathy; they are fired with rage against mankind; first they become tempters, then tormentors.

Meditate much on hell. Let us go into hell by contemplation, that we may not go into hell by condemnation. How restless is the condition of the damned! The ancients feign of Endymion, that he got leave of Jupiter always to sleep. What would the damned in hell give for such a license? in their pains is neither intermission, nor mitigation.

The serious meditation of hell, would make us, 1. Fear sin as hell. Sin is hell's fuel; sin like Samson's foxes, carries devouring fire in the tail of it.

2. The meditation of hell would cause rejoicing in a child of God. The saint's fear of hell is like the two Marys' fear, Matt. xxviii. 8. 'They departed from the sepulchre with fear and great joy. A believer may fear to think of the place of torment, but rejoice to think he shall not come into this place. When a man stands upon a high rock, he trembles to look down into the sea, yet he rejoiceth that he is not there struggling with the waves. A child of God, when he thinks of hell, he rejoiceth with trembling. A prison is not made for the king's son to be put in. A great naturalist observes that nothing will so soon quench fire as salt and blood; sure I am, the salt brinish tears of repentance, and the blood of Christ will quench the fire of hell to a believer. Christ himself hath felt the pains of hell for you. The Lamb of God being roasted in the fire of God's wrath, by this burnt-offering the Lord is now appeased towards his people. Oh how may the godly rejoice! 'There is no condemnation to them

that are in Christ,' Rom. viii. 1. When the Son of God was in the furnace, Dan. iii. 25. the fire did the three children no hurt; so Christ being for a time in the fiery furnace of God's wrath, that fire can do a believer no hurt. The saints have the garment of Christ's righteousness upon them, and the fire of hell can never singe this garment.

SECT. 13. *Meditate upon Heaven.*

From the mount of meditation, as from mount Nebo, we may take a view and prospect of the land of promise. Christ hath taken possession of heaven in the name of all believers, Heb. vi. 20. 'Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.' Heaven must needs be a glorious city, which hath God both for its builder and inhabitant. Heaven is the extract and quintessence of all blessedness. There the saints shall have their wish. Austin wished that he might have seen three things before he died, Rome in its glory, Paul in the pulpit, and Christ in the flesh. But the saints shall see a better sight; they shall see, not Rome, but heaven in its glory; they shall see Paul, not in the pulpit, but on the throne, and shall sit with him; they shall see Christ's flesh, not veiled over with infirmities and disgraces, but in its spiritual embroidery; not a crucified, but a glorified body. They shall 'behold the king in his beauty,' Isa. xxxiii. 17. What a glorious place will this be! In heaven 'God will be all in all,' 1 Cor. xv. 28. beauty to the eye, music to the ears, joy to the heart; and this he will be to the poorest saint, as well as the richest. O christian, who art now at thy hard labour, perhaps following the plough, thou shalt sit on the throne of glory, Rev. iii. 21. Quintus Curtius writes of one who was digging in his garden, and on a sudden made king, and a purple garment richly embroidered with gold

put upon him; so shall it be done to the poorest believer, he shall be taken from his labouring work, and set at the right hand of God, having the crown of righteousness upon his head.

Meditate often on the Jerusalem above.

The meditation of heaven would, 1. Excite and quicken obedience. It would put spurs to our sluggish hearts, and make us 'abound in the work of God, knowing that our labour is not in vain in the Lord,' 1 Cor. xv. 58. The weight of glory would not hinder us in our race, but cause us to run the faster: this weight would add wings to duty.

2. The meditation of heaven would make us strive after heart purity, because only the 'pure in heart shall see God,' Matt. v. 8. It is only a clear eye can look on a bright transparent object.

3. The meditation of heaven would be a pillar of support under our sufferings; heaven will make amends for all. One hours being in heaven will make us forget all our sorrows; the sun dries up the water; one beam of God's glorious face will dry up all our tears.

SECT. 14. *Meditate on Eternity.*

Some of the ancients have compared eternity to an intellectual sphere, whose centre is every where, and circumference no where. Millions of years stand only for cyphers in eternity, and signify nothing. What an amazing word is eternity? Eternity to the godly is a day which hath no sun-setting; and to the wicked, a night which hath no sun-rising. Eternity is a gulf which may swallow up all our thoughts: Meditate on that scripture, Matt. xxv. 46. 'And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.'

1. Meditate upon eternal punishment; the bitter cup the damned drink of shall never pass away from

them. The sinner and the furnace shall never be parted. God's vial of wrath will be always dropping upon a wicked man. When you have reckoned up so many myriads and millions of years, nay, ages, as have passed the bounds of all arithmetic, eternity is not yet begun. This word *Ever* breaks the heart: If the tree fall hell-ward, so it lies to all eternity. Now is the time of God's long-suffering, after death will be the time of the sinner's long-suffering, when he shall 'suffer the vengeance of eternal fire,' Jude vii.

2. Meditate upon life eternal. The soul that is once landed at the heavenly shore, is past all storms. The glorified soul shall be for ever bathing itself in the rivers of pleasure, Psal. xvi. ult. This is that which makes heaven to be heaven, 'We shall be ever with the Lord,' 1 Thess. iv. 17. Austin saith, 'Lord, I am content to suffer any pains and torments in this world, if I might see thy face one day; but alas, were it only a day, then to be ejected heaven, it would rather be an aggravation of misery; but this word, ever with the Lord, is very accumulative, and makes up the garland of glory; a state of eternity is a state of security.'

The meditation of eternity would, 1. Make us very serious in what we do. Zeuxes being asked, why he was so long about a picture, answered, I paint for eternity. The thoughts of an irreversible condition after this life, would make us pray and hear as for eternity.

2. The meditation of eternity, would make us overlook present things, as flitting and fading. What is the world to him that hath eternity in his eye? it is but the smallest part of a point, which, as the mathematicians say, is just nothing. He that thinks of eternity will despise 'the pleasures of sin for a season.'

3. The meditation of eternity would be a means

to keep us from envying the wicked's prosperity : here they ruffle it in their silks, but what is this to eternity ? as long as there is such a thing as eternity, God hath time enough to reckon with all his enemies.

SECT. 15. *Meditate upon your Experiences.*

The last subject of meditation is your experiences. Look over your receipts : 1. Hath not God provided liberally for you, and vouchsafed you those mercies which he hath denied to others who are better than you ? Here is an experience, Gen. xlviii. 15. ' The God who hath fed me all my days.' Thou never feedest, but mercy carves for thee ; thou never goest to bed, but mercy draws the curtain, and sets a guard of angels about thee. Whatever thou hast is out of the exchequer of free grace. Here is an experience to meditate upon.

2. Hath not God prevented many dangers, hath he not kept watch and ward about you ? 1. What temporal dangers hath God screened off ? thy neighbour's house on fire, and it hath not kindled in thy dwellings. Another infected, thou art free ; behold the golden feathers of protection covering thee. 2. What spiritual dangers hath God prevented ? when others have been poisoned with error, thou hast been preserved. God hath sounded a retreat to thee ; thou hast heard ' a voice behind thee saying, This is the way, walk in it : ' When thou hast listed thyself, and taken pay on the devil's side, that God should ' pluck thee as a brand out of the fire,' that he should turn thy heart, and now thou espousest Christ's quarrel against sin. Behold preventing grace ! Here is an experience to meditate upon.

3. Hath not God spared you a long time ? whence is it that others are struck dead in the act of sin as Ananias and Sapphira, and you are preserved as a

monument of patience? Here is an experience: God hath done more for you than for the angels; he never waited for their repentance, but he hath waited for you year after year, Isa. xxx. 18. Therefore 'will the Lord wait that he may be gracious.' He hath not only knocked at your heart in the ministry of the word, but he hath waited at the door; How long hath his Spirit striven with you; like an importunate suitor, that after many denials, yet will not give over the suit. Methinks I see justice with a sword in its hand ready to strike, and mercy steps in for the sinner, 'Lord, have patience with him a while longer:' Methinks I hear the angels say to God, as the king of Israel once said to the prophet Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 22. 'Shall I smite them? shall I smite them?' so methinks I hear the angels say, shall we take off the head of such a drunkard, swearer, blasphemer? and mercy seems to answer as the vine-dresser, Luke xiii. 8. 'Let him alone this year,' see if he will repent. Is not here an experience worth meditating upon? mercy turns justice into a rainbow; the rainbow is a bow indeed, but hath no arrow in it; that justice hath been like the rainbow without an arrow, that it hath not shot thee to death, here is a receipt of patience to read over and meditate upon.

4. Hath not God often come in with assisting grace? when he hath bid thee mortify such a lust, and thou hast said as Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 12. 'I have no might against this great army.' Then God hath come in with auxiliary force, 'his grace hath been sufficient. When God hath bid thee pray for such a mercy, and thou hast found thyself very unfit; thy heart was at first dead and flat, all on a sudden thou art carried above thy own strength; thy tears drop, thy love flames; God hath come in with assisting grace. If the heart burn in prayer, God hath struck fire. The Spirit hath been tuning

thy soul, and now thou makest sweet melody in prayer. Here is an experience to meditate upon.

5. Hath not God vanquished Satan for you? When the devil hath tempted to infidelity, to self-murder, when he would make you believe either that your graces were but a fiction, or God's promise but a counterfeit bond, now that you have not been foiled by the tempter, it is God who hath kept the garrison of your heart, else his fiery darts would have entered. Here is an experience to meditate on.

6. Have you not had many signal deliverances? when you have been even at the gates of death, God hath miraculously recovered you, and renewed your strength as the eagle; may not you write that writing which Hezekiah did? Isa. xxxviii. 6. 'The writing of Hezekiah King of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness;' you thought the sun of your life was quite setting, but God made this sun return back many degrees. Here is an experience for meditation to feed upon. When you have been imprisoned, your foot taken in the snare, and the Lord hath broken the snare, nay, hath made those to break it who were the instruments of laying it: behold an experience; oh let us often revolve in mind our experiences. If a man had physic receipts by him, he would be often looking over his receipts. You that have rare receipts of mercy by you, be often by meditation looking over your receipts.

The meditation of our experiences would, 1. Raise us to thankfulness. Considering that God hath set an hedge of providence about us, he hath strewed our way with roses, this would make us take the harp and viol, and praise the Lord, and not only praise, but record, 1 Chron. xvi. 4. The meditating christian keeps a register or chronicle of God's mercies, that the memory of them doth not decay. God would have the manna kept in the ark

many hundred years, that the remembrance of that miracle might be preserved; a meditating soul takes care that the spiritual manna of an experience be kept safe.

2. The meditation of our experiences would engage our hearts to God in obedience. Mercy would be a needle to sew us to him. We would cry out as Bernard, "I have, Lord, two mites, a soul and a body, and I give them both to thee."

3. The meditation of our experiences would serve to convince us that God is no hard master; we might bring in our experiences as a sufficient confutation of that slander. When we have been falling, hath not God taken us by the hand? 'when I said my foot slippeth, thy goodness, O Lord, held me up,' Psal. xciv. 18. How often hath God held our head and heart when we have been fainting? and is he a hard Master? is there any Master besides God who will wait upon his servants? Christians, summon in your experiences. What vails have you had? what inward serenity and peace, which neither the world can give, nor death take away? a christian's own experiences may plead for God against such as desire rather to censure his ways than to try them, and to cavil at them than to walk in them.

4. The meditation of our experiences would make us communicative to others. We would be willing to tell our children and acquaintance 'what God hath done for our souls; at such a time we were brought low, and God raised us; at such a time in desertion, and God brought a promise to remembrance which dropt in comfort. The meditation of God's gracious dealing with us would make us transmit and propagate our experience to others, that the mercies of God shewn to us may bear a plentiful crop of praise when we are dead and gone. And so much for the subject matter of

meditation; I proceed next to the necessity of meditation.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing the Necessity of Meditation.

IT is not enough to carry the book of God's law about us, but we must meditate in it. The necessity of meditation will appear in three particulars. 1. The end why God hath given us his word written and preached, is not only to know it, but that we should meditate in it. The word is a letter of the great God written to us; now we must not run it over in haste, but meditate upon God's wisdom in inditing, and his love in sending it to us. Why doth the physician give his patient a receipt; is it that he should only read it over and know the receipt, or that he should apply it? the end why God communicates his gospel receipts to us, is, that we should apply them by fruitful meditation: would God, think we, ever have been at the pains of writing his law with his own finger, only that we should have the theory and notion of it? is it not that we should meditate in it? would he ever have been at the cost to send abroad his ministers into the world, to furnish them with gifts, Eph. iv. and must they for the work of Christ be nigh unto death that the Christians should only have an empty knowledge of the truths published? is it only speculation or meditation that God aims at?

2. The necessity of meditation appears in this, because without it we can never be good christians; a Christian without meditation is like a soldier without arms, or a workman without tools. 1. Without meditation the truths of God will not stay with us; the heart is hard, and the memory slippery, and without meditation all is lost; meditation imprints

and fastens a truth in the mind, it is like the selvage which keeps the cloth from raveling. Serious meditation is like the engraving of letters in gold or marble which endure: without this all our preaching to you is but like writing in sand, like pouring water into a seive, like throwing a bur upon a crystal, which glides off and doth not stay. Reading and hearing without meditation is like weak physic which will not work; want of meditation hath made so many sermons in this age to have a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

2. Without meditation the truths which we know will never affect our hearts, Deut. vi. 6. 'These words which I command this day shall be in thine heart.' How can the word be in the heart, unless it be wrought in by meditation? as an hammer drives a nail to the head, so meditation drives a truth to the heart. It is not the taking in of food, but the stomach's concocting it, which makes it turn to blood and spirits; so it is not the taking in of a truth at the ear, but the meditating of it, which is the concoction of it in the mind, makes it nourish. Without meditation the word preached may increase notion, not affection. There is as much difference between the knowledge of a truth, and the meditation of a truth, as there is between the light of a torch, and the light of the sun: set up a lamp or torch in the garden, and it hath no influence. The sun hath a sweet influence, it makes the plants to grow, and the herbs to flourish: so knowledge is but like a torch lighted in the understanding, which hath little or no influence, it makes not a man the better; but meditation is like the shining of the sun, it operates upon the affections, it warms the heart and makes it more holy. Meditation fetcheth life in a truth. There are many truths lie, as it were, in the heart dead, which when we meditate upon, they begin to have life and heat in

them. Meditation of a truth is like rubbing a man in a swoon, it fetcheth life. It is meditation makes a christian.

3. Without meditation we make ourselves guilty of slighting God and his word. If a man lets a thing lie by, and never minds it, it is a sign he slights it: God's word is the book of life; not to meditate in it, is to undervalue it. If a king put forth an edict or proclamation, and the subjects never mind it, it is a slighting of the king's authority. God puts forth his law as a royal edict; if we do not meditate in it, it is a slighting his authority, and what doth this amount to less than a contempt done to the divine majesty.

CHAP. VIII.

Shewing the Reason why there are so few Good Christians.

Use. 1. Information.

IT gives us a true account why there are so few good christians in the world; namely, because there are so few meditating christians: we have many that have Bible ears, they are swift to hear, but slow to meditate. This duty is grown almost out of fashion, people are so much in the shop, that they are seldom on the Mount with God. Where is the meditating christian? Diogenes, in a full market, was seeking up and down, and being asked what he sought for, saith, I seek for a man, that was to say, a wise man, a philosopher: among the croud of professors, I might search for a christian, viz. a meditating christian. Where is he that meditates on sin, hell, eternity, the recompence of reward, that takes a prospect of heaven every day? where is the meditating christian? It is to be bewailed in our times, that so many who go under the name of pro-

fessors, have banished good discourse from their tables, and meditation from their closets. Surely the hand of Joab is in this.

The devil is an enemy to meditation; he cares not how much people read and hear, nor how little they meditate; he knows that meditation is a means to compose the heart, and bring it into a gracious frame: now the devil is against that; Satan is content that you should be hearing and praying christians, so that ye be not meditating christians; he can stand your small shot, provided you do not put in this bullet.

CHAP. IX.

A Reproof to such as do not Meditate in God's Law.

Use 2. Of reproof.

IT serves to reprove those who meditate indeed, but not in the law of God: they turn all their meditations the wrong way; like a man that lets forth the water of his mill which should grind his corn, into the highway, where it doth no good: so there are many who let out their meditations upon other fruitless things which are no ways beneficial to their souls.

1. The farmer meditates on his acres of land, not upon his soul: his meditation is how he may improve a barren piece of ground, not how he may improve a barren mind: he will not let his ground lie fallow, but he lets his heart lie fallow: there is no spiritual culture, not one seed of grace sown there.

2. The physician meditates upon his receipts, but seldom on those receipts which the gospel prescribes for his salvation, faith and repentance. Commonly the devil is physician to the physician, having given him such stupifying physic, that for the most part he dies of a lethargy.

3. The lawyer meditates upon the common law; but as for God's law he seldom meditates in it either day or night: the lawyer while he is meditating on his client's evidences, often forgets his own; most of this robe have their spiritual evidences to seek, when they should have them to shew.

4. The tradesman is for the most part meditating upon his wares and drugs: his study is how he may increase his estate, and make the ten talents an hundred. He is 'cumbered about many things;' he doth not meditate in the book of God's law, but in his account-book day and night. At the long run you will see these were fruitless meditations, you will find that you are but golden beggars, and have gotten but the fool's purchase when you die, Luke xii. 20.

5. There is another sort that meditate only upon mischief, 'who devise iniquity,' Mic. ii. 1. they meditate how to defame and to defraud; James viii. 5. 'They make the ephah small, and the shekel great.' The ephah was a measure used in buying, the shekel a weight used in selling; they know how to collude and sophisticate; Christians who should support, too often supplant one another; and how many meditate revenge? it is sweet to them as dropping honey, as Homer speaks. 'Their hearts shall meditate terror,' Isa. xxxviii. 18. The sinner is a felon to himself, and God will make him a terror to himself.

CHAP. X.

An holy Persuasive to Meditation.

Use 3. Of Exhortation.

I AM in the next place to exhort christians to this so necessary duty of meditation. If ever there were a duty I would press upon you with more ear-

nestness and zeal, it should be this, because so much of the vitals and spirit of religion lies in it. The plant may as well bear fruit without watering, the meat may as well nourish without digesting, as we can fructify in holiness without meditation. God provides the meat, ministers can but cook and dress it for you. Meditation must make the concoction: for want of this you may cry out with the prophet, Isa. xxiv. 16. ‘My leanness, my leanness, wo unto me.’ O let me persuade such as fear God, seriously to set upon this duty. If you have formerly neglected it, bewail your neglect, and now begin to make conscience of it: lock up yourselves with God (at least once a day) by holy meditation. Ascend this hill, and when you are gotten to the top of it, you shall see a fair prospect, Christ and heaven before you. Let me put you in mind of that saying of Bernard, “O saint, knowest thou not that thy husband Christ is bashful, and will not be familiar in company, retire thyself by meditation into the closet, or the field, and there thou shalt have Christ’s embraces.” Cant. vii. 11, 12. ‘Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field, there will I give thee my loves;’ O that I might invite christians to this rare duty. Why is it that you do not meditate in God’s law? let me expostulate the case with you; what is the reason? Methinks I hear some say, We are indeed convinced of the necessity of the duty, but alas there are many things that hinder. There are two great objections that lie in the way, I shall remove them, and then hope the better to persuade to this duty.

CHAP. XI.

The answering of Objections.

Obj. 1. **I** HAVE so much business in the world, that I have no time to meditate.

Ans. The world indeed is a great enemy to meditation. It is easy to lose one's purse in a crowd; and in a crowd of worldly employments, it is easy to lose all the thoughts of God. So long as the heart is an Exchange, I do not expect that it should be a Temple: but, to answer the objection; hast thou so much business that thou hast no time for meditation? as if religion were but by the bye, a thing fit only for idle hours: What, no time to meditate! What is the business of thy life but meditation? God never sent us into the world to get riches, (I speak not against labour in a calling) but I say this is not the end of our coming hither. The errand God sent us into the world about, is salvation; and that we may attain the end, we must use the means, viz. holy meditation. Now, hast thou no time to meditate? just as if a husbandman should say, truly he hath so much business that he hath no time to plough or sow; why, what is his occupation but plowing and sowing? what a madness is it to hear christians say they have no time to meditate? what is the business of their lives but meditation? O take heed lest by growing rich, you grow worth nothing at last. Take heed that God doth not sue out the statute of bankrupt against you, and you be disgraced before men and angels: No time for meditation! you shall observe that others in former ages have had as much business as you, and public affairs to look after, yet they were called upon to meditate, Josh. i. 8. 'Thou shalt meditate in this book of the law.' Joshua might have pleaded an excuse,

he was a soldier, a commander, and the care of marshalling his army lay chiefly upon him, yet this must not take him off from religion; Joshua must meditate in the book of God's law. God never intended that the great business of religion should give way to a shop or farm; or that a particular calling should jostle out the general.

2. *Obj.* But this duty of meditation is hard. To set time apart every day to get the heart into a meditating frame is very difficult; Gerson reports of himself, that he was sometimes three or four hours before he could work his heart into a spiritual frame.

Ans. Doth this hinder? To this I shall give a threefold reply.

1. The price that God hath set heaven at is labour; our salvation cost Christ blood, it may well cost us sweat. 'The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, Matt. xi. 12. It is as a garrison that holds out, and the duties of religion are the taking it by storm: a good Christian must offer violence to himself, (though not self-natural, yet self-sinful.) Self is nothing but the flesh, as Basil, Hierom, Theophylact, and Chrysostom, do all expound it. The flesh cries out for ease, it is a libertine; it is loath to take pains, loath to pray, to repent, loath to put its neck under Christ's yoke; now a christian must hate himself; no man ever yet hated his own flesh, Eph. v. 29. yes, in this sense he must hate his own flesh, 'The lusts of the flesh,' Rom. viii. 13. He must offer violence to himself by mortification and meditation; say not it is hard to meditate, is it not harder to lie in hell?

2. We do not argue so in other things: riches are hard to come by, therefore I will sit still and be without them; no, difficulty is the whet-stone of industry. How will men venture for gold? and shall we not spend and be spent for that which is more

precious than the gold of Ophir? by meditation we suck out the quintessence of a promise.

3. Though while we are first entering upon meditation it may seem hard, yet when once we are entered it is sweet and pleasant. Christ's yoke at the first putting on may seem heavy, but when once it is on it becomes easy, it is not a yoke but a crown. Lord, saith Austin, the more I meditate on thee, the sweeter thou art to me. According to that of holy David, 'My meditation of thee shall be sweet,' Psal. civ. 34. The poets say the top of Olympus was always quiet and serene: it is hard climbing up the rocky hill of meditation, but when we are got up to the top, there is a pleasant prospect, and we shall sometimes think ourselves even in heaven. By holy meditation the soul doth as it were breakfast with God every morning; and to be sure his breakfast is better than his dinner. When a christian is upon the mount of meditation, he is like Pétér on the mount when Christ was transfigured, Matt. xvii. he cries out, 'Lord, it is good to be here:' he is loath to go down the mount again. If you come to him, and tell him of a purchase, he thinks you bid him to his loss: what hidden manna doth the soul taste now? how sweet are the visits of God's Spirit? when Christ was alone in the wilderness, then the angel came to comfort him; when the soul is alone in holy meditations and ejaculations, then not an angel, but God's own Spirit doth come to comfort him: a christian that meets with God in the mount, would not exchange his hours of meditation for the most orient pearls or sparkling beauties that the world can afford. No wonder David spent the whole day in meditation, Psal. cxix. 97. Nay, as if the day had been too little, he borrows a part of the night too, Psal. lxxiii. 6. 'when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.' When others were sleeping, David was

meditating. He who is given much to meditation, shall with Sampson find an honey comb in this duty: therefore let not the difficulty discourage. The pleasantness will infinitely countervail the pains.

Having removed these two objections out of the way, let me again revive the exhortation to ‘ meditate in God’s law day and night.’ And there are two sorts of meditation which I would persuade to.

CHAP. XII.

Concerning occasional Meditations.

1. OCCASIONAL, and 2. Deliberate.

1. Occasional meditations, such as are taken up on any sudden occasion. There is nothing almost doth occur, but we may presently raise some meditation upon : as a good herbalist doth extract the spirits and quintessence out of every herb, so a christian may from every emergence and occurrence extract matter of meditation. A gracious heart, like fire, turns all objects into fuel for meditation. I shall give you some instances : when you look up to the heavens, and see them richly embroidered with light, you may raise this meditation. If the footstool be so glorious, what is the throne where God himself sits ? When you see the firmament bespangled with stars, think, what is Christ The Bright Morning Star ? Monica, Austin’s mother, standing one day, and seeing the sun shine, raised this meditation, Oh ! if the sun be so bright, what is the light of God’s presence ? when you hear music that delights the senses, presently raise this meditation, what music like a good conscience ; this is the bird of paradise within, whose chirping melody doth enchant and ravish the soul with joy ; he that hath this music all day, may take David’s pillow at night, and say with that sweet singer, ‘ I

will lay me down in peace and sleep,' Psal. iv. 8. How blessed is he that can find heaven in his own bosom! when you are dressing yourselves in the morning, awaken your meditation, think thus, but have I been dressing the hidden man of the heart? have I looked my face in the glass of God's word? I have put on my clothes, but have I put on Christ? it is reported of Pambo, that seeing a gentlewoman dressing herself all the morning by her glass, he fell a weeping: O saith he, this woman hath spent the morning in dressing her body, and I sometimes spend scarce an hour in dressing my soul! When you sit down to dinner, let your meditation feed upon this first course, how blessed are they that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God? what a royal feast will that be which hath God for the founder? what a love-feast where none shall be admitted but friends.

When you go to bed at night, imagine thus, shortly I shall put off the earthly clothes of my body and make my bed in the grave: when you see the judge going to the assizes, and hear the trumpet blow, think with yourselves, as Hierom did, that you are still hearing that shrill trumpet sounding in your ears, *surgite mortui*; "Arise ye dead and come to judgment." When you see a poor man going on the streets, raise this meditation, here is a walking picture of Christ, 'He had no place where to lay his head, Matt. viii. 10. My Saviour became poor, that I through his poverty might be made rich: when you go to church, think thus, I am now going to hear God speak, let me not stop my ear; if I refuse to hear him speaking in his word, I shall next hear him speaking in his wrath, Psal. ii. 5. When you walk abroad in your orchard, and see the plants bearing, and the herbs flourishing, think how pleasing a sight it is to God to see a thriving Christian; how beautiful

are the trees of righteousness when they are hung full of fruit, when they abound in faith, humility, knowledge! when you pluck a rose-bud in your garden, raise this contemplation, How lovely are the early puttings forth of grace! God prizeth a Christian in the bud, he likes the blooming of youth rather than the shedding of old age. When you eat a grape from the tree, think of Christ the true vine; how precious is the blood of that grape! such rare clusters grow there, that the angels themselves delight to taste of. It is said of Austin, he was much in these extempore meditations; a gracious heart, like the philosopher's stone, turns all into gold; it is all the year stilling-time with a christian, he stilleth out heavenly meditations from earthly occurrences, as the curious alchymist, when several metals are mingled together, can by his skill extract the gold and silver from the baser metals: so a Christian, by a divine alchymy, can extract golden meditations from the various objects he beholds: indeed it argues a spiritual heart, to turn every thing to a spiritual use; and we have Christ's own example for these occasional meditations, John iv. 7, 10, 13, 14. While he sat on Jacob's well, he presently meditates on that, and breaks forth into a most excellent discourse concerning the water of life. So much for occasional meditations.

2. Be exhorted to deliberate meditations, which are the chief: set some time apart every day, that you may in a serious and solemn manner converse with God in the mount: A godly man, is a man set apart, Psal. iv. 3, as God sets him apart by election, so he sets him apart by meditation.

CHAP. XIII.

For the Right Timing of Meditation.

Q. 1. **WHAT** is the fittest time for meditation ?

Ans. For the timing of it, it is rather hard to prescribe, because of mens' various callings and employments. But if I may freely speak my thoughts, the morning is the fittest time for meditation. The best time to converse with God is, when we may be most private, that is, before worldly occasions stand knocking as so many suitors at the door to be let in : the morning is, as it were, the cream of the day, let the cream be taken off, and let God have it. In the distilling of strong-water, the first water that is drawn from the still is more full of spirits, the second drawing is weaker ; so the first meditations that are stilled from the mind in a morning, are the best, and we shall find them to be most full of life and spirits. The morning is the golden hour. God loved the first-fruits, *Exod. xxiii. 19.* ' The first of the first-fruits thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord. Let God have the first-fruits of the day ; the first of our thoughts must be set abroad for heaven. The student takes the morning for his study. The usurer gets up in the morning and looks over his books of account : a Christian must begin with God in the morning. David was with God before break of day, *Psal. cxix. 147.* ' I prevented the dawning of the morning.'

Q^a. 2. But why the morning for meditation ?

Ans. 1. Because in the morning the mind is fittest for holy duties ; a Christian is most himself then : What weary devotion will there be at night when a man is even tired out with the business of the day ! he will be fitter to sleep than to meditate. The morning is the queen of the day ; then the fancy is quick-

est, the memory strongest, the spirits freshest, the organ of the body most disposed, having had its recruits by sleep. It is a sure rule, then is the best time to serve God, when we find ourselves most in tune. In the morning the heart is like a viol strung and put in tune, and then it makes the sweetest melody.

2. The morning thoughts stay longest with us the day after; the wool takes the first dye best, and is not easily worn out. When the mind receives the impression of good thoughts in the morning, it holds this sacred dye the better; and like a colour in grain, it will not easily be lost. The heart keeps the relish of morning meditations, as a vessel that receives a tincture and savour of the wine that is first put into it; or as a chest of sweet linen, that keeps the scent a great while after. Perfume thy mind with heavenly thoughts in the morning, and it will not lose its spiritual fragrancy; wind up thy heart towards heaven in the beginning of the day, and it will go the better all the day after: it is with receiving thoughts into the mind, as it is with receiving guests into an inn; the first guests that come fill the best rooms in the house; if others come after, worse rooms will serve them: so, when the mind entertains holy meditations for its morning-guests, if afterwards earthly thoughts come, they are put into some of the worst rooms, they lodge lowest in the affections. The best rooms are taken up in the morning for Christ. He that loseth his heart in the morning in the world, will hardly find it again all the day after.

3. It is a part of that solemn respect and honour we give to God, to let him have the first thoughts of the day: we give persons of quality the precedence, we let them take the first place. If we honour God (whose name is reverend and holy) we will let the thoughts of God take place of all other.

When the world hath the first of our thoughts, it is a sign the world lies uppermost, we love it most. The first thing a covetous man meditates on in the morning, is his money; a sign his gold lies nearest to his heart. O! Christians, let God have your morning meditations. He takes it in disdain to have the world served before him. Suppose a king and a yeoman were to dine in the same room, and to sit at two tables; if the yeoman should have his meat brought up, and be served first, the king might take it in high disdain, and look upon it as a contempt done to his person. When the world shall be served first, all our morning thoughts attending it, and the Lord shall be put off with the dregs of the day, when our thoughts begin to run low, is not this a contempt done to the God of glory.

4. Equity requires it; God deserves the first of our thoughts; some of his first thoughts were upon us; we had a being in his thoughts before we had a being, he thought upon us, Eph. i. 4. 'Before the foundations of the world.' Before we fell, he was thinking how to raise us. We had the morning of his thoughts; O! what thoughts of free grace, what thoughts of peace hath he had towards us! we have taken up his thoughts from eternity: if we have had some of God's first thoughts, well may he have our first thoughts.

5. This is to imitate the pattern of the saints. Job rose early in the morning, and offered, Job i. 5. David when he awaked was with God, Psal. lxxxix. 17. and indeed this is the way to have a morning blessing. 'In the morning the dew fell,' Exod. xvi. 13. The dew of a blessing falls early; now we are likeliest to have God's company. If you would meet with a friend, you go betimes in the morning before he be gone out. We read that the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles, Acts

ti. 3, 4. and it was in the morning, as may be gathered from Peter's sermon, ver. 15. it was but 'the third hour of the day:' the morning is the time for fruitfulness, 'In the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish, Isa. xvii. 11. by morning meditation, we make the seed of grace to flourish.

I would not by this, wholly exclude evening meditation. Isaac went out to meditate in the evening, Gen. xxiv. 63. When business is over, and every thing calm, it is good to take a turn with God in the evening. God had his evening sacrifices, as well as his morning, Ex. xxix. 39. as the cream at the top is sweet, so the sugar at the bottom; in two cases, the evening meditation doth well.

1. In case such hath been the urgency of business, that thou hast time only for reading and prayer; then recompense the want of the morning with evening meditation.

2. In case thou findest thyself more inclinable to good thoughts in the evening, for sometimes there is a greater *impetus* upon the heart, a greater aptitude and tuneableness of mind, dare not neglect meditation at such a time: who knows but it may be a quenching the Spirit; do not drive this blessed dove from the ark of thy soul; in these cases evening meditation is seasonable: but I say, if I may cast in my verdict, the morning is to be preferred; as the flower of the sun opens in the morning to take in the sweet beams of the sun, so open thy soul in the morning to take in the sweet thoughts of God. And so much for the timing of meditation.

CHAP. XIV.

How long Christians should be conversant with this Duty.

Qu. 2. **BUT** how long should I meditate?

Ans. For the *quamdiu*, the how long, if we consider how long the world hath, it is hard if we cannot give God at least one half hour every day; I shall only say this for a general rule, meditate so long till thou findest thy heart grow warm in this duty.

If when a man is cold, you ask how long he should stand by the fire? Sure, till he be thoroughly warm, and made fit for his work. So, Christian, thy heart is cold; never a day, no not the hottest day in summer, but it freezeth there; now stand at the fire of meditation till thou findest thy affections warmed; and thou art made fit for spiritual service. David mused till his heart waxed hot within him, Psal. xxxix. 3. I will conclude this with that excellent saying of Bernard, "Lord, I will never come away from thee without thee." Let this be a Christian's resolution not to leave off his meditations of God till he find something of God in him: some 'moving of bowels after God,' Cant. v. 4. Some 'flamings of love,' Cant. vi. 8.

CHAP. XV.

Concerning the Usefulness of Meditation.

HAVING answered these questions, I shall next shew the benefit and usefulness of meditation.

I know not any duty that brings in greater income and revenue than this. It is reported of Thales, that he left the affairs of state to become a con-

templating philosopher. O! did we know the advantage which comes by this duty, we would often retire from the noise and hurry of the world, that we might give ourselves to meditation.

The benefit of meditation appears in seven particulars.

1. Meditation is an excellent means to profit by the word: reading may bring a truth into the head, meditation brings it into the heart; better meditate on one sermon than hear five; I observe many put up their bills in our congregations, and complain that they cannot profit; may not this be the chief reason, because they chew not the cud, they do not meditate on what they have heard. If an angel should come from heaven, and preach to men, nay, if Jesus Christ himself were their preacher, they would never profit without meditation. It is the settling of the milk that makes it turn to cream; and it is the settling of a truth in the mind, that makes it turn to spiritual aliment: the bee sucks the flower, and then works it in the hive, and makes honey of it. The hearing of a truth preached is the sucking of a flower, there must be a working it in the hive of the heart by meditation, then it turns to honey. There is a disease in children called the rickets, when they have great heads, but their lower parts are small and thrive not. I wish many professors have not the spiritual rickets, they have great heads, much knowledge, but yet they thrive not in godliness, their heart is faint, their feet feeble, they walk not vigorously in the ways of God; and the cause of this disease is, the want of meditation. Illumination without meditation makes us no better than devils. Satan is an angel of light, yet black enough.

2. Meditation doth make the heart serious, and then it is ever best: meditation doth ballast the heart; when the ship is ballasted, it is not so soon

overturned by the wind; and when the heart is ballasted with meditation, it is not so soon overturned with vanity. Some Christians have light hearts, Zeph. iii. 4. 'his prophets are light.' A light Christian will be blown into any opinion or vice; you may blow a feather any way: there are many feathery Christians; the devil no sooner comes with a temptation but they are ready to take fire; now meditation makes the heart serious, and God saith of a serious Christian, as David of Goliath's sword, 'there is none like that, give it me.' Meditation consolidates a Christian; solid gold is best; the solid Christian is the only metal that will pass current with God. The more serious the heart grows, the more spiritual, and the more spiritual, the more it resembles the Father of spirits. When a man is serious he is fittest for employment. The serious Christian is fittest for service, and it is meditation brings the heart into this blessed frame.

3. Meditation is the bellows of the affections; meditation hatcheth good affections, as the hen her young ones by sitting on them; we light affection at this fire of meditation, 'while I was rousing the fire burned,' Psal. xxxix. 3. David was meditating of mortality, and see how his heart was affected with it, ver. 4. 'Lord, make me to know mine end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am.' The reason our affections are so chill and cold in spiritual things, is, because we do not warm ourselves more at the fire of meditation. Illumination makes us shining lamps, meditation makes us burning lamps. What is it to know Christ by speculation and not by affection? It is the proper work of meditation to excite and blow up holy affections. What sparkling of love in such a soul! When David had meditated on God's law, he could not chuse but love it, Psal. cxix. 97. 'O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.'

When the spouse had by meditation viewed those singular beauties in her beloved, white and ruddy, Cant. v. she grew sick of love, ver. 8. Galeatius Carraccialus, that famous marquis of Vico, who had been much in the contemplation of Christ, breaks out into a holy pathos, Let their money perish with them who esteem all the gold in the world worth one hour's communion with Jesus Christ!

4. Meditation fits for holy duties. The musician first puts his instrument in tune, and then he plays a lesson; meditation tunes the heart, and then it is fit for any holy service: as the sails to the ship, so is meditation to duty, it carries on the soul more swiftly.

1. Meditation fits for hearing; when the ground is softened by meditation, now is a fit time for the seed of the word to be sown.

2. Meditation fits for prayer. Prayer is the spiritual pulse of the soul, by which it beats strongly after God. There is no living without prayer; a man cannot live unless he takes breath, no more can the soul unless it breathes out its desires to God. Prayer ushers in mercy, and prayer sanctifies mercy, it makes mercy to be mercy, 1 Tim. iv. 5. Prayer hath power over God, Hos. xii. 4. Prayer comes with letters of *mandamus* to heaven, Isa. xlv. 11. Prayer is the spiritual leech, that sucks the poison of sin out of the soul. What a blessed (shall I say duty or) privilege is prayer! now meditation is an help to prayer; Gerson calls it the nurse of prayer. Meditation is like oil to the lamp; the lamp of prayer will soon go out unless meditation cherish and support it: Meditation and prayer are like two turtles, if you separate one, the other dies; a cunning angler observes the time and season when the fish bite best, and then he throws in his angle: when the heart is warmed by meditation, now is the best season to throw in the angle of prayer, and fish for

mercy. After Isaac had been in the field meditating, he was fit for prayer when he came home. When the gun is full of powder, it is fittest to discharge. So when the mind is full of good thoughts, a Christian is fittest by prayer to discharge, now he sends up whole volleys of sighs and groans to heaven. Meditation hath a double benefit in it, it pours in, and pours out; first it pours good thoughts into the mind, and then it pours out those thoughts again into prayer; meditation first furnisheth with matter to pray, and then it furnisheth with a heart to pray, Psal. xxxix. 3. I was musing, saith David, and the very next words are a prayer, 'Lord make me to know my end;' and Psal. cxliii. 5, 6. 'I muse on the works of thy hands, I stretch forth my hands to thee;' the musing of his head made way for the stretching forth of his hands in prayer. When Christ was upon the mount, then he prayed: So when the soul is upon the mount of meditation, now it is in tune for prayer. Prayer is the child of meditation: meditation leads the van, and prayer brings up the rear.

3. Meditation fits for humiliation. When David had been contemplating the works of creation, their splendour, harmony, motion, influence, he lets the plumes of pride fall, and begins to have self-abasing thoughts, Psal. viii. 3, 4. 'When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained, What is man that thou art mindful of him!'

4. Meditation is a strong antidote against sin; most sin is committed for want of meditation: men sin through incogitancy, and passion; would they be so brutishly sensual as they are, if they did seriously meditate what sin is? Would they take this viper in their hand, if they did but consider before of the sting? sin puts a worm into conscience, a sting into death, a fire into hell; did men meditate

of this, that after all their dainty dishes, death will bring in the reckoning, and they must pay the reckoning in hell, they would say as David in another sense, 'let me not eat of their dainties,' Psal. cxli.

4. The devil's apple hath a bitter core in it. Did men think of this, sure it would put them into a cold sweat, and be as the angel's drawn sword to affright them. Meditation is a golden shield to beat back sin. When Joseph's mistress tempted him to wickedness, meditation did preserve him, 'How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?' Meditation makes the heart like wet tinder, it will not take the devil's fire.

6. Meditation is a cure of covetousness. The covetous man is like an idolater, Col. iii. 5. Though he will not bow down to an idol, yet he worships graven images in his coin. Now meditation is an excellent means to lessen our esteem of the world. Great things seem little to him that stands high, if he could live among the stars, the earth would seem as nothing. A christian that stands high upon the pinnacle of meditation, how do all worldly things disappear, and seem as nothing to him! he sees not that in them which men of the world do. He is gotten into his tower, and heaven is his prospect. What is said of God, 'He dwelleth on high, he humbleth himself to behold the things done on the earth,' Psal. cxliii. 6. I may allude to with reverence, the christian that dwelleth on high by meditation, accounts it an humbling and abasing of himself to look down upon the earth, and behold the things done in this lower region. Saint Paul, whose meditations were sublime and seraphical, looked at things which were not seen, 2 Cor. iv. ult. How did he trample upon the world, how did he scorn it? 'I am crucified to the world,' Gal. vi. 14. as if he had said, it is too much below me to mind it. He who is catching at a crown, will not

fish for gudgeons, as Cleopatra once said to Mark Anthony. A Christian that is elevated by holy meditation, will not set his heart there where his feet should be, upon the earth.

7. Holy meditation banisheth vain and sinful thoughts, it purgeth the fancy, 'How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee,' Jer. iv. 14. The mind is the shop or workhouse where sin is first framed. Sin begins at the thoughts. The thoughts are the first plotters and contrivers of evil. The mind and fancy is a stage where sin is first acted; the malicious man acts over sin in his thoughts, he contemplates revenge. The impure person acts over concupiscence in his thoughts, he contemplates lust. The Lord humbles us for our contemplative wickedness, Prov. xxx. 32. 'If thou hast thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy mouth.' How much sin do men commit in the chamber of their imagination? now meditating in God's law would be a good means to banish these sinful thoughts. If David had carried the book of the law about him, and meditated in it, he had not looked on Bathsheba with a lascivious eye, 2 Sam. ii. 11. Holy meditation would have quenched that wild-fire of lust. The word of God is pure, Psal. cxix. 140. not only subjective, but effective. It is not only pure in itself, but it makes them pure that meditate in it. Christ whipped the buyers and sellers out of the temple, John ii. 15. Holy meditation would whip out idle and vagrant thoughts, and not suffer them to lodge in the mind: What is the reason the angels in heaven have not a vain thought? They have a sight of God, their eye is never off him. If the eye of the soul were fixed on God by meditation, how would vain impure thoughts vanish? as when that woman, Judg. ix. 52. was in the tower, and Abimelech came near to the tower to have entered, she threw a mill-stone out of the tower upon him, and killed

him: so when we are gotten into the high tower of meditation, and sinful thoughts would come near to enter, we may from this tower throw a millstone upon them, and destroy them. And thus you have seen the benefit of meditation.

CHAP. XVI.

Setting forth the Excellency of Meditation.

ARISTOTLE placeth felicity in the contemplation of the mind. Meditation is highly commended by Austin, Chrysostom, Cyprian, as the nursery of piety. Hierom calls it his Paradise; with what words shall I set it forth? Other duties have done excellently, but 'thou excellest them all.' Meditation is a friend to the graces, it helps to water the plantation. I may call it in Basil's expression, the treasury where all the graces are locked up; and with Theophylact, the very gate and portal by which we enter into glory. By meditation the spirits are raised and heightened to a kind of angelical frame; meditation doth sweetly anticipate happiness, it puts us in heaven before our time. Meditation brings God and the soul together, 1 John iii. 2.

Meditation is the saints' perspective glass, by which they see things invisible. It is the golden ladder by which they ascend to paradise; it is the spy they send abroad to search the land of promise, and it brings a bunch of grapes with it; it is the dove they send out, and it brings an olive branch of peace in its mouth; but who can tell how sweet honey is, save they that taste it? The excellency of meditation I leave to experienced christians, who will say the comfort of it may be better felt than expressed.

To excite all to this pancreston, to this so useful, excellent (I had almost said angelical) duty, let me lay down some divine motives to meditation; and

how glad should I be if I might revive this duty among christians.

CHAP. XVII.

Containing Divine Motives to Meditation.

1 *Motive.* **M**EDITATION doth discriminate and characterize a man; by this he may take a measure of his heart, whether it be good or bad; let me allude to that, Prov. xxiii. 7. 'For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he;' as the meditation is, such is the man. Meditation is the touchstone of a christian, it shews what metal he is made of. It is a spiritual index; the index shews what is in the book: so meditation shows what is in the heart. If all a man's meditations are how he may get power against sin, how he may grow in grace, how he may have more communion with God; this shows what is in his heart, the frame of his heart is spiritual; by the beating of this pulse, judge of the health of thy soul. It is made the character of a godly man, he fears God, 'and thinks of his name,' Mal. iii. 17. Whereas if the thoughts are taken up with pride and lust, as are the thoughts, such is the heart; 'Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity,' Isa. lix. 7. When vain sinful thoughts come, men make much of them, they make room for them, they shall diet and lodge with them; if a good thought chance to come into their mind, it is soon turned out of doors, as an unwelcome guest; 'what need we further witness?' this argues much unsoundness of heart; let this provoke to holy meditation.

2. *Motive.* The thoughts of God, as they bring delight with them, so they leave peace behind: those are the best hours which are spent with God. Conscience, as the bee, gives honey; it will not grieve

us when we come to die, that we have spent our time in holy soliloquies and ejaculations. But what honour will the sinner have, when he shall ask conscience the question as Joram did Jehu, 2 Kings ix. 29. Is it peace conscience, is it peace? and conscience shall say as Jehu, 'What peace, as long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts are so many? Oh how sad will it be with a man at such a time? christians, as you tender your peace, 'meditate in God's law day and night.'

This duty of meditation being neglected, the heart will run wild, it will not be a vineyard, but a wilderness.

3. *Motive.* Meditation keeps the heart in a good decorum. It plucks up the weeds of sin, it prunes the luxuriant branches, it waters the flowers of grace, it sweeps all the walks in the heart, that Christ may walk there with delight. For want of holy meditation the heart lies like the sluggard's field, Prov. xxiv. 31. all overgrown with thorns and briars, unclean earthly thoughts. It is rather the devil's hogstye, than Christ's garden. It is like a house fallen to ruin, fit only for unclean spirits to inhabit.

4. *Motive.* The fruitlessness of all other meditations; one man lays out his thoughts about laying up; his meditations are how to raise himself in the world, and when he hath arrived at an estate, often God blows upon it, Hag. i. 9. His care is for his child, and perhaps God takes it away, or if it lives, it proves a cross. Another meditates how to satisfy his ambition, 'Honour me before the people,' 1 Sam. xv. 30. Alas, what is honour but a meteor in the air; a torch lighted by the breath of people, with the least puff blown out! how many live to see their names buried before them? When this sun is in the meridian, it doth soon set in a cloud.

Thus fruitless are those meditations which do not

centre upon God. It is but to carry dust against the wind. But especially at death; then a man sees all those thoughts which were not spent upon God to be fruitless, Psal cxlvi. 4. 'In that very day his thoughts perish.' I may allude to it in this sense; all worldly, vain thoughts, in that day of death perish, and come to nothing: What good will the whole globe of the world do at such a time? Those who have revelled out their thoughts in impertinencies will but be the more disquieted; it will cut them to the heart to think how they have spun a fool's thread. A Scythian captain having, for a draught of water, yielded up the city, cried out, What have I lost? what have I betrayed? So will it be with that man when he comes to die, who hath spent all his meditations upon the world; he will say, What have I lost? what have I betrayed? I have lost heaven, I have betrayed my soul. And should not the consideration of this fix our minds upon the thoughts of God and glory? All other meditations are fruitless; like a piece of ground which hath much cost laid out upon it, but it yields no crop.

5. *Motive.* Holy meditation is not lost. God hath a pen to write down all our good thoughts, Mal. iii. 5. 'A book of remembrance was written for them that thought upon his name.' As God hath all our members, so all our meditations written in his book. God pens our closet devotion.

The sixth motive is in the text, viz. The blessedness affixed to the meditating christian, 'Blessed is the man.' &c. ver. 1. Say not it is hard to meditate. What think you of blessedness? Lyncurgus could draw the Lacedemonians to any thing by rewards; if men can meditate with delight on that which will make them cursed, shall not we meditate on that which will make us blessed? nay, in the Hebrew it is in the plural, blessednesses, we shall have one blessedness upon another.

Lastly, Delightful meditation in God's law is the best way for a man to prosper in his estate, Josh. i. 8. 'This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein; for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous.' I leave this to their consideration who are desirous to thrive in the world; and let this serve for motive to meditation.

The next thing remaining, is, to lay down some rules about meditation.

CHAP. XVIII.

Prescribing Rules about Meditation.

SECT. 1. *Rule 1.*

WHEN thou goest to meditate be very serious in the work. Let there be a deep impression upon thy soul: and that thou mayest be serious in meditation, do these two things: 1. Get thyself into a posture of holy reverence. Over-awe thy heart with the thoughts of God, and the incomprehensibleness of his Majesty. When thou art at the work of meditation, remember thou art now to deal with God. If an angel from heaven did appoint to meet thee at such an hour, wouldst thou not address thyself with all seriousness and solemnity to meet him? behold a greater than an angel is here; the God of glory is present; He hath an eye upon thee, he sees the carriage of thy heart when thou art alone. Think with thyself, O christian, when thou art going to meditate, thou art now to deal with him in private before whom the angels adore, and the devils tremble. Think with thyself thou art now in his presence before whom thou must shortly stand and all the world with thee to receive their doom. Thou must be removed, and how soon thou knowest not; from the closet to the tribunal.

2. That thy heart may be serious in meditation, labour to possess thy thoughts with the solemnity and greatness of the work thou art now going about. As David said concerning his building a house for God, the work is great, 1 Chron. xxix. 1. so it may be said of meditation, the work is great, and we had need gather and rally together all the powers of the soul to the work. If thou wert to set about a business wherein thy life were concerned, how serious wouldst thou be in the thoughts of it? in the business of meditation thy soul is concerned; eternity depends upon it; if thou neglectest, or art slight in it, thou runnest an hazard of thy salvation. If Archimedes was so serious in drawing his mathematical line, that he minded not the sacking of the city; O how serious should a christian be when he is drawing a line for eternity! When thou art going to meditate, thou art going about the greatest work in the world.

SECT. 2. *Rule. 2.*

Read before you meditate, Josh. 1. 8. 'This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate in it.' The law must be in Joshua's mouth; he was first to read and then meditate. 'Give attendance to reading,' 1 Tim. iv. 13. Then it follows, 'meditate on these things,' ver. 15. reading doth furnish with matter; it is the oil that feeds the lamp of meditation. Reading helps to rectify meditation. Austin saith well, that meditation without reading will be erroneous; naturally the mind is defiled as well as the conscience, Tit. i. 15. the mind will be minting thoughts, and how many untruths doth it mint? therefore first read in the book of the law, and then meditate: be sure your meditations be grounded upon scripture. There is a strange Utopia in the fancies of some men; they

take those for true principles which are false; and if they mistake their principles they must needs be wrong in their meditations. He that is of the saduces' opinion, that there is no resurrection, he mistakes a principle; now while he is meditating on this, he is at last carried to direct atheism. He that is of the antinomians' opinion, that there is no law to a justified person, mistakes a principle, and while he is meditating on this, he at last falls into scandal. Thus the mind having laid in wrong principles, and taking that for a principle which is not, the meditation must needs be erroneous, and a man at last goes to hell upon a mistake; therefore be sure you read before you meditate, that you may say, it is written. Meditate on nothing but what you believe to be a truth; believe nothing to be a truth, but what can shew its letters of credence from the word; observe this rule, let reading usher in meditation: reading without meditation is unfruitful; meditation without reading is dangerous.

SECT. 3. *Rule 3.*

Do not multiply the subject of meditation; that is, meditate not on too many things at once; like the bird that hops from one bough to another, and stays no where; single out rather some one head at a time, which you will meditate upon. Too much variety distracts. One truth driven home by meditation will most kindly affect the heart; a man that is to shoot, sets up one mark that he aims at to hit. When you are to shoot your mind above the world by meditation, set one thing before you to hit; if thou art to meditate on the passion of Christ, let that take up all thoughts; if upon death, confine thy thoughts to that: one subject at a time is enough. Martha while she was cumbered about many things, neglected the one thing; so while our

meditations are taken up about many things, we lose that one thing which should affect our hearts, and do us more good. Drive but one wedge of meditation at a time, but be sure you drive it home to the heart. Those who aim at a whole flock of birds hit none ; several medicines applied together, the one hinders the virtue of the other, whereas a single medicine might do good.

SECT. 4. *Rule 4.*

To meditation join examination. When you have been meditating on any spiritual subject, put a query to thy soul, and though it be short, let it be serious. O my soul, is it thus with thee or no? when thou hast been meditating about the fear of God, that it is the ‘beginning of wisdom ;’ Prov. i. 17. put a query, O my soul, is this fear planted in thy heart? thou art almost come to the end of thy days, art thou yet come to the beginning of wisdom? when thou hast been meditating on Christ, his virtues, his privileges, put a query, O my soul, dost thou love him who is so lovely, and art thou ingrafted into him? art thou a living branch of this living vine? when thou hast been meditating upon the graces of the Spirit, put a query, O my soul, art thou adorned as the bride of Christ with this chain of pearl? hast thou thy certificate for heaven ready? will not thy graces be to seek when thou shouldst have them to shew? thus should a christian in his retirements, partly often with his heart.

For want of this examination meditation doth evaporate and come to nothing. For want of examination joined with meditation, many are strangers to their own hearts ; though they live known to others, they die unknown to themselves. Meditation is like a perspective glass by which we contemplate heavenly objects ; but self-examination is like

a looking glass by which we see into our own souls, and can judge how it is with us. Meditation joined with examination, is like the sun on the dial, which shews how the day goes, it shews us how our hearts stand affected to spiritual things.

SECT. 5. *Rule 5.*

Shut up meditation with prayer ; pray over your meditations. Prayer sanctifies every thing ; without prayer they are but unhallowed meditations ; prayer fastens meditation upon the soul ; prayer is a tying a knot at the end of meditation that it doth not slip ; pray that God will keep those holy meditations in your mind for ever, that the savour of them may abide upon your hearts, 1 Chron. xxix. 18. ‘ O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel our fathers, keep this for ever in the imaginations of the thoughts of thy people.’ So let us pray, that when we have been musing of heavenly things, and our hearts have waxed hot within us, we may not cool into a sinful tepidness and lukewarmness, but that our affections may be as the lamp of the sanctuary, always burning.

SECT. 6. *Rule 6.*

The last rule is, let meditation be reduced to practice ; live over your meditation, Joshua i. 8. ‘ Thou shalt meditate in this book, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.’ Meditation and practice, like two sisters, must go hand in hand. Cassian saith, that the contemplative life cannot be perfected without the practice. We read that the angels had wings, and hands under their wings, Ezek. i. 8. it may be an hieroglyphical emblem of this truth ; Christians must not only fly upon the wing of meditation, but they must

be active in obedience, they must have hands under their wings. The end of meditation is action. We must not only meditate in God's law, but walk in his law, Deut. xxviii. 9. Without this we are like those Gnosticks, of whom Epiphanius complains, they had much knowledge, but were in their lives licentious. Christians must be like the sun, which doth not only send forth heat, but goes its circuit round the world; it is not enough that the affections be heated by meditation, but we must go our circuit too, that is, move regularly in the sphere of obedience. After warming at the fire of meditation we must be fitter for work. Meditation is the life of religion, and practice is the life of meditation. It is said in the honour of Nazianzen, he lived over his own sermons. So a good christian must live over his own meditations.

For instance: 1. When you have been meditating of sin, which, for its bitterness, is compared to grapes of gall; for its damnableness to poison of asps, and you begin to burn in an holy indignation against sin, now put your meditations in practice, give sin a bill of divorce, Job xi. 14. 'If iniquity be in thy hand put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.'

2. When you have been meditating of the graces of the Spirit, let the verdure and lustre of these graces be seen in you: live these graces; meditate, 'that you may observe and do.' It was St. Paul's counsel to Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. 7. 'Exercise thyself to godliness.' Meditation and practice are like a pair of compasses, the one part of the compass fixeth upon the centre, and the other part goes round the circumference: a christian by meditation fixeth upon God as the centre, and by practice goes round the circumference of the commandments: a man who hath let his thoughts run out upon riches, will not only have them in the notion, but will endeavor

our to get riches ; let your meditation be practical ; when you have been meditating upon a promise, live upon a promise ; when you have been meditating of a good conscience, never leave till you can say as Paul, ‘ Herein I exercise myself, to have a good conscience,’ Acts xxiv. 16. Beloved, here lies the very essence of religion.

That this rule may be well observed, consider,

1. It is only the practical part of religion will make a man blessed. Meditation is a beautiful flower, but as Rachel said to her husband ‘ Give me children or I die,’ Gen. xxx. 1. So, If meditation be barren, and doth not bring forth the child of obedience, it will die and come to nothing.

2. If when you have meditated in God’s law, you do not obey his law, you will come short of them who have come short of heaven. It is said of Herod, Mark vi. 20. ‘ He did many things ;’ he was in many things a practiser of John’s ministry : they who meditate in God’s law, and observe not *to do*, are not so good as Herod, nay, they are no better than the devil ; he knows much, but still he is a devil.

3. Meditation without practice will increase a man’s condemnation. If a father writes a letter to his son, and the son shall read over this letter, and study on it, yet not observe to do as his father writes, this would be an aggravation of his fault, and would but provoke his father the more against him. Thus when we have meditated upon the evil of sin, and the beauty of holiness, yet we do not eschew the one, nor espouse the other, it will but incense the divine Majesty so much the more against us, and we shall ‘ be beaten with many stripes.’

APPENDIX

TO THE
FORMER DISCOURSE.

A

CHRISTIAN ON EARTH STILL IN HEAVEN.

PSAL. cxxxix. 18. *When I awake I am still with thee.*

THE scripture is a spiritual paradise, the book of Psalms is placed as the tree of life in the midst of this paradise; the Psalms are not only for delight, but usefulness; they are like the pomegranate tree which is not only for savour, but fruit; or like those trees of the sanctuary, Ezek. xlvii. 12. both for food and medicine. The Psalms are enriched with variety, and suited to every christian's estate and condition. They are a spiritual pantry and store-house; if he find his heart dead, here he may fetch fire; if he be weak in grace, here he may fetch armour; if he be ready to faint, here are cordials lying by. There is no condition you can name but there is a Psalm suited to that condition.

1. In case of sickness, Psal. xli. 4. 'Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness,' and sure that bed must needs be soft which God will make; and there is a parallel Psalm to this, Psal. lxxiii. 26. 'My flesh fails,' my health is declining, 'but the Lord is

the strength of my heart;' or as the Septuagint renders it. He is the God of my heart.

2. In case of reproach, 'I was a reproach among my enemies,' Psal. xxxi. 11. 'But I trusted in thee O Lord, I said, thou art my God,' ver. 14. 'Blessed be the Lord, for he hath shewn me his marvellous loving-kindness in a strong city:' ver. 18. Here was some sunshine breaking forth of those black clouds.

3. In case of unkind dealings from friends, Psal. lv. 'For it was not an enemy, then I could have borne it, but it was thou, mine equal, my guide, and my acquaintance; we took sweet counsel together,' ver. 12, 13. here was the malady; 'cast thy burden upon the Lord,' ver. 22. The Chaldee reads it, 'Cast thy hope; the Septuagint, Cast thy care. God is power, therefore he is able to help; he is mercy, therefore he is willing. 'He shall sustain thee,' here is God's promise, which is his bond to secure us.

4. In case we are close begirt with enemies. There is a Psalm suited to this condition; 'Lord, how are they increased that trouble me? many are they that rise up against me,' Psal. iii. 1. 'I laid me down and slept,' ver. 5. David, when beleaguered with enemies, could lie down and sleep upon the soft pillow of a good conscience; and Psal. xxvii. 3. 'Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. He shall hide me in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me,' ver. 5. He shall hide me so safe as if I were in the holy place of the sanctuary, where none but the priest was to enter.

5. In case of poverty. If a christian's state be brought so low, that like the widow, 1 Kings xvii. 12. he hath nothing but a little meal, and a little oil in the cruse left, there is a Psalm of consolation, 'I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me,' Psal. xl. 17. 'I will bless her provision, I

will satisfy her poor with bread,' Psal. cxxxii. 15. here is the dew of a blessing distilled, Psal. cxix. 57. 'Thou art my portion, O Lord.' Behold riches in poverty; what though the water in the bottle be spent; if this well be at hand?

6. If sin through the immodesty of tentation prevail against a child of God, there is a psalm consolatory, Psal. lxxv. 3. 'Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.' In the Hebrew it is thou shalt hide them. It alludes to the mercy-seat which was covered with the wings of the cherubims; so are the sins of the godly, when repented of, covered with the wings of mercy and favour.

7. In case of prayer, and no speedy return, Psal. lxxix. 3. 'I am weary of my crying, my eyes fail while I wait for my God.' But in the same psalm he draws the breast of comfort, ver. 33. 'the Lord heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.' Would we have fruit before it is ripe? when the mercy is ripe, we shall have it; and besides, there is nothing lost by waiting; we send out the golden fleet of prayer to heaven, the longer this fleet stays out, the greater return it will bring with it. David found it so; therefore he pulls off his sackcloth, and puts on the garments of praise; 'I will praise the name of God with a song,' ver. 30.

8. In case of desertion. This is the poisoned arrow that wounds to the heart, but still there is a psalm to turn to, 'The Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance,' Ps. xciv. 14. This is like a star in a dark night, or like the plank and broken pieces of the ship on which Paul and the rest came safe on shore, Acts xxvii. 44. God may conceal his love from his children, not take it away, 2 Sam. vii. 15. he may change his providence towards them, not alter his purpose.

9. In case of death, there is a psalm revives;

‘ though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,’ Psal. xxiii. 4. The sting and poison of this serpent is taken away. Thou art with me; with thy power to support, with thy grace to sanctify, with thy love to sweeten. ‘ Thy rod and thy staff to comfort me.’ I have the staff of thy promise in the hand of my faith, and with this I can walk through the dark entry of death.

Thus in every condition David’s psalms like David’s harp, may serve to drive away the evil spirit of sadness and uncheerfulness from a christian; so much concerning the psalms in general.

I come now to the words of the text, ‘ When I awake I am still with thee.’

Where you have the very effigies and portraiture of a godly man drawn out, he is one that is still with God. It was David’s happiness that he lived above the common rate of men, not only as he was higher in power and dignity, being a king, but higher in sublimeness of affection, having his heart and hope raised above the world, ‘ I am still with thee.’ Divines give many reasons why David was called a man after God’s heart, but sure this is not the least, because the frame of his heart was so heavenly, this being most agreeable to God’s nature and will. David was a man that, as Ambrose speaks, lived in the world above the world. As soon as he awakened, he stepped into heaven. David was a seraphical saint, a mortal angel; like a true bird of paradise, he did seldom touch with his feet upon the earth. He was least alone when he was most alone. When he awaked he was with God :

Nor was this only when the fit was upon him, a thought of God and away, but it was a fixed temper of heart. I am still with thee. The pulse of his soul was still beating after God. The hypocrite may have a blush of godliness which is quickly over, Job

xxvii. 10. but the constitution of David's soul was heavenly, 'I am still with thee.'

Caution. Not but that David had some diversions of mind : (to have the eye always fixed upon God, will be the state of the blessed in heaven) but, David was still with God. 1. Because the bias and bent of his spirit was towards God. His heart like the needle in the compass pointed heavenward. 2. Because he was more with God, than he was any where else ; as we use to say a man lives at his house, not but that urgency of occasions draws him abroad sometimes, but he is said to live there, because he is most resident there.

The words hold forth this proposition.

Doct. That it is the sweet temper of a gracious heart to be still with God, 'I am still with thee.' David awakened in heaven. He was ever above. We read in the old law, that those creatures which did creep upon all four, were to be had in abomination ; but they which had wings to fly, and legs to leap withall, were accounted clean, Lev. xi. 20. Those are among the unclean, and are abominable to God, whose souls creep upon the earth ; but they who have the legs and wings of grace to mount up with, who are still with God, these are pure and precious in God's eyes. For the illustrating this point there are three things to be explained and amplified.

1. What it is to be still with God.
2. In what sense the soul is still with God.
3. Why a gracious heart is still with God.

1. What it is to be still with God. In general, it is to have a sweet intercourse and communion with God, 1 John i. 3. 'Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus.' In prayer we speak to God ; in the sacrament he kisseth us with the kisses of his lips, he giveth us a privy seal of his love.

2. In what sense the soul is said to be still with

God. I answer, the soul is still with God five manner of ways.

1. By Contemplation. So Ainsworth understands the Text. I am still with thee, that is, by divine Contemplation. David's thoughts were ever and anon running upon God. So ver. 17. 'How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God!' David's mind was a spiritual mint, he minted most gold, most of his thoughts were heavenly. Thoughts are as travellers and passengers in the soul; David's thoughts were still travelling towards the Jerusalem above. In David's dangers God was still with him; in David's contemplations he was still with God. Anaxagoras said he was born to contemplate heaven. Thus a christian is still with God, he is viewing glory, his thoughts are all packed up and gone.

2. The soul is still with God by desire. His anchor is cast in heaven. Heb. vi. 19. and he is carried thither with the sails of desire. David did shoot his heart into heaven by desire; he had strong anhelations and pantings after God, Psal. lxxiii. 25. 'Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire besides thee?' he saith not he had nothing upon earth, he had his crown and sceptre, but nothing he desired like God, Psal. xlii.

1. 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' The hart (as Historians observe) is a dry thirsty creature, especially when chased by the hunter; now nature is on fire, and must have water to quench it; thus the pious soul pants after the refreshing streams of Christ's blood; and these desires of a christian are rightly terminated; he desires as well conformity to Christ in grace, as communion with him in glory: he desires the Sun of Righteousness, not only for its refreshing beams, but for its healing wings; he desires not only Christ's presence, but his image: Lord give me thyself that I may be more holy; what

should I do in heaven with this unholy heart : what converse could I have with God or Angels ? Thus the soul is still with God by desire, and he desires not only mercy, but grace.

3. The soul is with God by love. Where a man's love is, there he is ; what an egress and expansion of heart is there to that which we love. Bonaventure calls love the wing of the soul ; on this wing did David fly to heaven. ' I am still with thee.' Love hath this property, it unites at a distance ; it fixeth the heart upon the object. Thus the love-sick spouse when she could not see Christ, yet she embraced him in her affections ; when her eye was not upon him, yet her love was. ' Saw ye him whom my soul loveth ?' Cant. iii. 3. Christ my love is crucified, said Ignatius. As Christ was fastened to the cross, so he is to a christian's heart. A true saint is like the tribe of Manassah, half of the tribe was on this side Jordan, and half on the other side in the holy land ; so it is with a saint ; half of him is on this side, and half in the holy land ; his flesh is on earth, his heart in heaven ; as it was said of Paul 2 Cor. xii. 2. ' Whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell : ' so it may be said of a good christian, it is hard to tell whether he be in the body or out of the body ; his love is in heaven, he is lodged in the tree of life. The fire of love boils the heart as high as heaven.

4. The soul is still with God by faith ; unbelief is called ' a drawing back from God,' Heb. x. 39. and faith ' drawing near to God,' Heb. x. 22. By an eye of faith, through the perspective glass of a promise, we look into heaven. The people of Israel stood in the outer court of the temple, but the high-priest ' entered within the veil,' into the holy of holies ; thus the senses stand in the outward court of the body, but faith enters within the veil ; it sees Christ clothed with the robe of our human nature,

and sitting down in glory above the angels; faith embraceth Christ. Austin moves the question, how shall I put out a long arm to reach Christ in heaven? believe, saith he, and thou hast laid hold on him. Faith is the golden clasp that knits us to Christ; by faith we put on Christ as a garment, Rom. xiii. 14. By faith we receive and concoct him as food, Col. ii. 6. By faith we are ingrafted into him as the scions into the stock, John xv. 5. Indeed a believer's life is out of himself; he lives more in Christ than he lives in himself, as the beam lives in the sun, as the branch in the root, Col. iii. 3. even as Judah said concerning Jacob, 'his life is bound up in the lad's life,' Gen. xlv. 30. so is a believer's life bound up in Christ. And thus is the gracious soul ever with God, by faith.

5. A christian is still with God in the whole course and tenor of his life. Not only his heart is in heaven, but his conversation too, Phil. iii. 28. Our deportment and carriage is in heaven; we walk as burgesses of that city. It is said of Christ, 'his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem,' Luke ix. 53. A good christian should be known by his face; his outward carriage and demeanour should show that he is going to the Jerusalem above. Socrates being asked of what country he was, answered, he was a citizen of the world; a true saint is a citizen of heaven; he is known what place he belongs to by his speech, habit, gesture. There is a kind of angelical brightness on him; he shines in holiness as Moses' face did shine when he had been with God in the mount. He is still doing angels' work: his life is a very heaven upon earth. 'Noah walked with God,' Gen. vi. 9. And in this sense the pious soul is still with God, he walks unweariably with God; though he meets with some rubs and difficulties in the way, yet still he keeps his walk: and thus we have seen in what sense a graci-

ous soul is still with God ; the eagle may sometimes sit upon a low bough, but her nest is built high. A christian walks upon the surface of the earth, but his nest is built upon the Rock Christ. The moon is seen in the water, yet it is seated in the firmament. So a christian is seen here below, but he is above, ' he is still with God.'

3. The third thing is, why a gracious heart is still with God. There are five reasons why it is so.

1. From the nature of grace. Grace carries the soul up towards God. Grace is like fire. It is the nature of fire to ascend. You that lie grovelling on the earth, feeding like the serpent on dust, or like eels wrapping yourselves in the mud and slime of the world, had you that new and holy principle of grace infused, your souls would sparkle upwards, would ' mount up to heaven as eagles,' Isa. xl. 31. had you the sharp eye of faith to see Christ, you would soon have the swift wing of desire to fly to him.

2. From that magnetical power of God's Spirit. The Spirit hath not only a soul purifying, but a soul elevating power ; as the sun exhales and draws up the vapours from the earth, so the Spirit draws up the heart to God ; ' The Spirit lifted me up ;' Ezek. iii. 14. Though there be grace in the heart which would be still mounting upward, yet there is much corruption to pull us down : a christian in this life is both checked and spurred ; grace spurs him forward in his way to heaven, and then corruption checks him ; now here the Spirit comes in and draws up the heart to God ; which is a mighty power, as if you should see a mill-stone drawn up into the sun.

3. A gracious heart is still with God, because he is the centre of the soul ; and where should it ever be but in its centre ? while the heart is on the earth it shakes and trembles like the needle in the compass

till it turns to God, God is the proper orb where the soul doth fix. A christian rests in God, as the bee in the hive, as the bird in the nest; 'Return to thy rest, O my soul,' Psalm cxvi. 7. Noah's dove was never well till it was in the ark. The ark was a type of Christ.

4. The soul is still with God, because of those dear relations it hath to God. There are all the terms of consanguinity. God is our Father, John xx. 17. and where should the child be but with its Father? he is our husband, Isa. liv. 5. and where should the wife be but with her husband? he is our friend, John xv. 15. now friends desire to be still together. God is our rock, 2 Sam. xxii. 2. where should Christ's doves be but in the cliffs of this blessed rock? God is the saints, treasure, and 'where the treasure is, there will their hearts be also.'

5. The gracious soul is still with God, because of those rare excellencies which are in God.

1. Fulness. Every one desires to be at a full fountain, Col. i. 19. 'For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' Observe, Christ is not only said to be full in the concrete, but fulness in the abstract, nay, in him is all fulness: A vessel may be full of water, but that is not all fulness, it is not full of wine; a chest may be full of silver, but that is not all fulness, it is not full of pearl: but in Christ is all fulness. He is bread to strengthen, John vi. 48. Wine to comfort, John xv. 1. Gold to enrich, Rev. iii. 18. He is all, and in all, Col. iii. 11.

Thus there is a variety of fulness in the Lord Jesus. O Christian, what is it thou needest? Dost thou want quickening grace? Christ is the Prince of life, Acts iii. 15. Dost thou want healing grace? Christ hath made a medicine of his own body to cure thee, Isa. liii. 5. Dost thou want cleansing grace? there is the bath of his blood to wash thee,

1 John 1. 7. 'The blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all our sin.' Let not the Poets tell us of their Aonia and Kastalia, fountains in which they supposed their nymphs to have washed: These waters distilled out of Christ's side are infinitely more pure. Pliny saith that the water-courses of Rome are the world's wonder; Oh had he known these sacred water-courses in Christ's blood, how would he have been stricken with admiration? And do you wonder the soul is still with Christ, when there is all fulness in him?

Nay, but that all is not all; the Apostle goes further; it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. To note the duration of this fulness; it is not transient but immanent. This fulness is not in Christ, as the water in the pipe or spout; the spout may be full of water, but it continues not there; water doth not dwell in the spout; but this fulness is in Christ, as light in the sun; it dwells there. Christ's fulness is a never-failing fulness; what can be said more? Nay, but the Apostle carries it yet higher? in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead; if Christ had all the fulness of the creation, the treasures of the earth, the holiness of the angels; yet this could not satisfy the soul. In him there is the fulness of the Godhead, the riches of the Deity are in him; and the communication of this blessed fulness, so far as there is a capacity to receive, is that which satisfies the soul, and fills it brim full; and if there be such a plenitude and fulness in God, no wonder a gracious heart desires to be still with God.

2. Sweetness; God is love, 1 John iv. 19. Every one desires to be with them from whom they receive most love: The Lord doth often make himself known to the soul in an ordinance, as he did to the disciples in breaking of bread, Luke xxiv. 35. He manifests himself in the comforts of his Spirit, which are so sweet and ravishing, that they pass all

understanding ; and do you wonder the soul is so strongly carried out after God ? Truly if it be still with God, to speak with reverence, it is long with God. He gives those jewels and bracelets, those love-tokens, that the soul cannot but desire to be still with God.

Use 1. It shews us an art how to be in heaven before our time, namely, by being still with God. A good christian begins his heaven here, grace translates him into the paradise of God ; Elijah left his mantle behind, but he was taken up in a fiery chariot ; So it is with a saint, the mantle of the flesh is left behind, but his soul is carried up in a fiery chariot of love.

Use 2. Is of Reproof ; and it consists of two branches.

Branch 1. It reproves them that are never with God ; they live without God in the world, Ephes. ii. 12. It is made the characteristical note of a wicked man, God is not in all his thoughts, Psal. x. 4. He never thinks of God, unless with horror and amazement, as the prisoner thinks of the judge and the assizes ; and here two sorts of sinners are indicted.

1. Such as are still with their sins. A child of God, though sin be with him, yet he is not with sin, his will is against sin ; Rom. vii. 15. ' That which I do I allow not ; he would fain shake this viper into the fire ; he forsakes sin, but sin will not forsake him ; so that though sin be with him ; yet he is not with sin ; but a wicked man and sin are together, as two lovers mutually solacing and embracing ; ' a wicked man is a worker of iniquity,' Luke xxiii. 27. like a workman that follows his trade in his shop.

2. Such as are still with the world : It is counted a piece of a miracle to find a diamond in a vein of gold ; and it is as great a miracle to find Christ,

that precious stone, in an earthly heart. The world is mens' Diana; 'they mind earthly things,' Phil. iii. 19. like the ostrich, though she hath wings, yet by reason of the weightiness of her body cannot fly high; most men are so weighed down with thick clay, that they cannot soar aloft: they are like Saul, hid among the stuff; like Sisera, who had his head nailed to the earth, so their hearts are nailed to the earth. Absalom's beauty stole away the hearts of Israel from their king, 2 Sam. xv. 6. the world's bewitching beauty steals away mens' hearts from God. It is sad when the husband sends his wife a jewel, and she so falls in love with the jewel that she forgets her husband: an estate should be a load-stone to draw men nearer to God, but it is often a mill-stone to sink them to hell.

There is a moderate use of these things, but there is a danger in the exercise. The bee may suck a little honey from the leaf, but put it in a barrel of honey and it dies.

Christians must stave off the world, that it gets not into their heart, Psal. lxii. 10. for as the water is useful to the ship, and helps it to sail better to the haven, but let the water get into the ship, if it be not pumped out at the leak, it drowns the ship; so riches are useful and convenient for our passage. We sail more comfortably with them through the troubles of this world: but if the water get into the ship, if the love of riches get into the heart, then we are drowned with them, 1 Tim. vi. 9.

Branch 2. It reproves them that are seldom with God. They are sometimes with God, but not still with God. The shell-fish, as naturalists observe, hath so little life in it, and moves so slow, that it is hard to determine whether it lives a vegetative or a sensitive life: so it may be said of many christians, their motion heaven-ward is so slow and inconstant, that we can hardly know whether the life of grace be in

them or no; they are seldom with God. Rev. ii. 4. 'Thou hast left thy first love,' Many professors have almost lost their acquaintance with God. Time was when they could weep at a sermon, but now these wells are stopped. Time was when they were tender of sin; the least hair makes the eye weep; the least sin would make conscience smite; now they can digest this poison: time was when they trembled at the threatenings of the word: now, with the leviathan, they can 'laugh at the shaking of a spear,' Job xli. 29. 'Time was when they 'called the sabbath a delight,' Isa. lviii. 13. the queen of days; how did they wait with joy for the rising of the Sun of Righteousness on that day! what anhelations and pantings of soul after God! what mounting up of affections! but now the case is altered; 'What a weariness is it to serve the Lord?' Mal. i. 13. Time was when they delighted in the word (indeed it is a glass that mends their eyes that look on it), now they have laid it aside, seldom do they look in this glass. Time was when they could send forth strong cries in prayer, Heb. v. 7. but now the wings of prayer are clipt; they come like cold suitors to God, their petitions do even cool between their lips; as if they would teach God to deny. Oh why have you left off your communion with God! 'What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me?' Jer. ii. 5. Let christians lay this sadly to heart: 'Remember from whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your first works,' Rev. ii. 5. You are in a spiritual lethargy: Oh never leave till your hearts are screwed up to such an heavenly frame as here David's was, 'When I awake I am still with thee.' And that brings me to the next.

Use 3. The third use is of Exhortation: To persuade all those who profess themselves christians, to imitate this blessed pattern in the text, 'be still with

God.' You shall never go to heaven when you die unless you begin heaven here. The church in the Revelation hath a crown of stars on her head, and the moon under her feet; Rev: xii. 1. Christ is not to be found in the furrows, but upon the pinnacle; now that you may get your hearts loosened from these things below, and be still with God, I shall only propound two arguments.

1. Consider how unworthy it is for a christian to have his heart set upon the world. 1. It is unworthy of his soul. The soul is dignified with honour, it is a noble coin that hath a divine impress stamped upon it; it is capable of communion with God and angels; now it is too far below a man to spend the affections and operations of this heaven-born soul upon drossy things. It is as if one should embroider sackcloth with gold, or set a diamond in clay.

2. It is unworthy of his profession. 'Seekest thou great things for thyself?' Jer. xlv. 5. what! thou Baruk? thou who art a godly man? a Levite? Oh how sordid is it for him that hath his hope in heaven, to have his heart upon the earth! it is just as if a king should leave his throne, and follow the plough; or as if a man should leave a golden mine to dig in a gravel pit. The lapwing hath a crown on her head, and yet feeds on dung. A fit emblem of those who have a crown of profession on their head, yet feed with eagerness on these things below. Christians should deny themselves, but not undervalue themselves; they should be humble, but not base. If Alexander would not exercise at the Olympics, it being too far below him; (kings do not use to run races) shall they then who are the holy seed, the heirs of glory, disparage themselves by too eager pursuit after these contemptible things.

The second argument to persuade us to be still with God, is, consider what a rare and excellent

thing this is; which will appear in four particulars.

1. To be still with God is the most noble life. It is as much above the life of reason as reason is above the life of a plant; the true christian is like a star in the highest orb, he looks no lower than a crown; grace puts high thoughts, princely affections, a kind of heavenly ambition into the soul. Grace raiseth a christian above himself, it makes him as Caleb, a man of another spirit; he lives in the altitudes, his thoughts are lodged among angels, and the 'spirits of just men made perfect:' and is not this the most noble life to be still with God? The academics compare the soul of man to a fowl mounting up with her wings in the air: thus with the wings of grace, the soul flies aloft, and takes a prospect of heaven.

2. To be still with God is the most satisfying life, nothing else will do it. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full,' Eccl. i. 7. Let all the golden streams of worldly delights run into the heart of a man, yet the heart is not full: strain out the quintessence of the creature, it turns to froth, Eccl. i. 2. 'Vanity of vanities:' but in God is sweet satisfaction and contentment. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, Psal. lxxiii. 5. Here is an hive of sweetness, a mirror of beauty, a magazine of riches; here is the river of pleasure, where the soul bathes with infinite delight, Psal. xxxvi. 8. and this river hath a fountain at the bottom, ver. 9. 'For with thee is the fountain of life:' and is not this most satisfactory? It is a witty observation of Picus Mirandula, that in the creation of the world, God gave the water to the fish; the earth to the beasts; the air to the fowls; and afterward, made man in his own image, that man might say, 'Lord there is nothing on earth to be desired besides Thee;' what can satisfy my soul, but to be still with thee.

3. To be still with God is the most comfortable life: what sweet harmony and music is in that soul? The bird, the higher it takes its flight, the sweeter it sings: so the higher the soul is raised above the world, the sweeter joy it hath. How is the heart inflamed in prayer? How is it ravished in holy meditation? What joy and peace in believing? Rom. xv. 13. and these joys are those *mellea flumina*, those honey-streams which flow out of the rock Christ: tell me, is it not comfortable being in heaven? He that is still with God, carries heaven about him: he hath those prelibations and tastes of God's love, which are the beginnings of heaven. So sweet is this kind of life, that it can drop sweetness into the troubles and disquiets of the world, that we shall be scarce sensible of them. It can turn the prison into a paradise; the furnace into a festival; it can sweeten death. A soul elevated by grace, can rejoice to think of dying: death will but cut the string, and the soul, that bird of paradise, shall fly away and be at rest.

4. To be still with God is the most durable life: the life of sense will fail; we must shortly bid farewell to all our outward comforts; these blossoms will drop off: We read of a 'sea of glass mingled with fire,' Rev. xii. 2. Bullinger, and other learned expositors understand by that sea of glass, the world. Indeed it is a fit emblem of it; the world is a sea, and it is seldom calm; and it is a sea of glass, slippery; and this glass is mingled with fire, to shew it is of a perishable and consuming nature. Riches take wings, and relations take wings: but you, that by the wings of grace are still soaring aloft, this life shall never have an end; it is the beginning of an eternal life; happiness is but the cream of holiness: you that are still with God, shall be ever with the Lord, 1 Thess. iv. 17. You shall see God in all his embroidered robes of majesty,

1 John iii. 'We shall see him as he is;' and this sight will be ravishing, and full of glory. O then is not this the best kind of life? He who when he awakes is still with God, when he goes to sleep at death, shall be ever with the Lord.

Quest. But how shall I arrive at this blessed frame of heart, to be still with God?

Ans. 1. Get a right judgment: It is a great matter to have the judgment set right: get a right judgment of sin, and you will never be with it: get a right judgment of God, and you will be still with him. In God are all combined excellencies: how sweet is his love, how satisfying is his presence? but as the painter drew a veil over Agamemnon's face, because the greatness of his grief for his daughter Iphigenia could not be expressed: so when I speak of the glorious perfections in God, I must draw a veil; neither pen nor pencil can set them forth in their orient lustre; the angels here must be silent.

2. If you would be still with God, watch over your hearts every day; lock up your hearts with God every morning, and give him the key. The heart will be stealing out to vanity. Lord, saith Bernard, there is nothing more flitting than my heart. Keep watch and ward there; especially, christians, look to your hearts after an ordinance; when you have been with God in duty, now expect a temptation. Physicians say, the body must be more carefully looked to when it comes out of a hot bath, for the pores being open, it is in more danger of catching cold: after your spiritual bathing in an ordinance, when you have been at a sermon or sacrament, now take heed that you do not catch cold.

3. Beware of remissness in duty: when you begin to slacken the reins, and abate your former heat and vigour in religion, there steals insensibly a deadness upon the heart, and by degrees there ariseth a sad estrangement between God and the soul. And,

brethren, how hard a work will you find it to get your hearts up again, when they are once down ! a weighty stone that hath been rolled up to the top of a steep hill, and then falls down to the bottom, how hard is it to get it up again !

Oh take heed of a dull, lazy temper in God's service : we are bid to be ' fervent in spirit,' Rom. xii. 11. The Athenians inquiring at the oracle of Apollo, why their plagues did continue so long ; the oracle answered them, they must double their sacrifices ; those who would hold constant communion with God, must double their devotion, they must be much in prayer, and mighty in prayer ; we read that the coals were to be put to the incense, Lev. xvi. 13. Incense was a type of prayer, and the coals put to the incense was to shew, that the heart of a christian ought to be inflamed in holy services ; nothing more dangerous than a plodding formality.

4. If you would be still with God, be much in the communion of saints ; (many christians live as if this article were blotted out of their creed) how doth one saint whet and sharpen another ! As vain company cools good affections, so by being in the communion of saints we are warmed and quickened. Be often among the spices, and you will smell of them : These directions observed, we shall be able to keep our acquaintance with God, and may arrive at this blessed frame, as here David had, ' When I awake I am still with thee.'

CHRIST'S LOVELINESS.

CANT. v. 16. *Yea, he is altogether Lovely.*

IN this book, which is a divine epithalamium, or marriage-song, are all the strains of holy love set forth in the purest allegories and metaphors, such as do represent that dear affection and union between Christ and his church. The text is nothing else but the breathing forth of the spouse's love to Christ, 'He is altogether lovely;' in the verses precedent, she had made her sacred panegyricks, and had been setting Christ forth in his spiritual embroidery.

'He is white and ruddy,' ver. 10. This denotes excellency of complexion; in him is a mixture of the purest colours; he is of unspotted beauty.

'The chiefest among ten thousand.' The Hebrew word signifies the Standard-bearer among ten thousand: the standard is a warlike ensign, and he who did bear the standard in antient times, was the most eminent person in the army; so Christ is the most glorious person of renown, the standard-bearer; according to that, Isa. xi. 10. 'He shall stand for an ensign of the people.'

'His head is as the most fine gold,' ver. 11. Kings have crowns of gold; Christ is described with an head of gold. The Hebrew signifies shining gold, or sparkling, to set forth the infinite resplendency of

Christ's beauty ; it is of that sparkling lustre, that the angels are fain to wear a veil.

‘ His eyes are as the eyes of doves,’ ver. 12. Christ is described with eyes like a flame of fire, Rev. i. 14. So indeed he hath to the wicked ; ‘ He is a consuming fire ;’ but to his children he hath doves’ eyes, which are the emblem of meekness ; he hath eyes dropping tears of love and compassion.

‘ His cheeks are as a bed of spices,’ ver. 13. There is an aromatic perfume comes from him to refresh a fainting soul. Some expositors understand this bed of spices to be meant of the fragrantcy of his virtues, which are in scripture compared to sweet ointments.

Thus the spouse goes on decyphering Christ’s beauty ; at last being in an holy rapture of spirit, she winds up all with this epiphonema, or passionate strain of affection ; ‘ his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely.’

‘ His mouth is most sweet ;’ The Chaldee paraphraseth it, the words of his palate are as sweet as honey ; in the Hebrew, his mouth is sweetnesses. That mouth must needs be sweet which hath the words of eternal life, John vi. 68. That mouth must needs be sweet, a kiss of whose lips can make death sweet to a believer ; well might the spouse say, ‘ Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,’ Cant. i. 2.

‘ Yea, he is altogether lovely ;’ as if the spouse had said, What do I go to set Christ forth in his several parts, his head of gold, his eyes like doves, his hands as gold rings set with beryl, his belly as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires, &c. Alas, what is all this that I have been speaking of Christ ? how barren is my invention, how dull are my expressions ! whatever I have said of him falls infinitely short of his worth ; but this I affirm, ‘ he is altogether lovely.’

The original is, he is all made up of loves and delights, he is all that may excite desire. So Hierom and Ambrose render it; he is composed of sweetness and amiableness, so Gregory Nyssen.

The text you see contains a glorious and magnificent description of Christ; 'He is altogether lovely.' Behold here a spring full of the water of life; and whosoever brings his vessel hither, a heart fit to receive this water, may be refreshed, as the woman of Samaria coming to Jacob's well, for Christ is here. The text is a sacred cabinet which contains in it, first the jewel, Christ, in this word He; secondly, the price of this jewel, altogether lovely.

The truth resulting from this word is this. That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

He is the most amazing and delightful object; the very name of Jesus Christ is as a precious ointment poured forth. It is said that the letters of this name were found engraven on Ignatius' heart; Jesus Christ is in every believer's heart, Col. i. 23. Christ in you; and nothing can do better there, for he is altogether lovely.

This whole book of the Canticles is bespangled with the praises of Christ. Homer might praise Achilles, Hierome might commend Nepotian; but who can set forth Christ's praise? all that I can say, will be no more than the dark shadow in the picture; and yet it will be so much as may represent him very lovely. That Christ is thus transcendently lovely, will appear four manner of ways.

1. By Titles, 2. By Types, 3. By Resemblances, 4. By Demonstrations.

1. By Titles, which are so many jewels hung upon his crown; he is called 'The Desire of all nations,' Hag. ii. 7. 'The Prince of peace,' Isa. ix. 7. 'The holy One of God,' Acts ii. 27. 'Elect, Precious,' 1 Pet. ii. 6. These are lovely titles.

2. By types; He was prefigured by such types as were lovely, and these types were either of persons or things.

1. Christ was typified by persons most lovely. I will name but three.

Moses prefigured and typified out Christ in four things:

1. In his natural beauty; he was a goodly child, Exod. ii. 2. Josephus saith, Moses was so fair, that he drew the eyes of all to him, and that those who had seen him were so amazed at his beauty, and did feed on it with such delight, that they were unwilling to look off again. And herein he was a type of Christ, in whom are all sparkling beauties to be found; he is altogether lovely.

2. Moses was a type of Christ in his education; he was bred up a while at court, and, as Josephus saith, Pharaoh's daughter set a crown of gold upon his head; but leaving the court, he went and lived in the land of Midian, Exod. ii. 15. So Christ left the royal court of heaven to come and live in the world.

3. Moses was a type of Christ in his office; he was a prophet; Deut. xxxiv. 10. 'And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses. He acquainted Israel with the mind of God, he gave them the two tables of the law. So Jesus Christ is a prophet, Luke xxiv. 19. He reveals to his people the mysteries of Salvation. He unseals the book of God's decree, and makes known his will, Rev. v. 5. 'He is counted worthy of more glory than Moses.'

4. Moses was a type of Christ in his noble acts; 1. He was a deliverer of the people from the Egyptian furnace; he was a temporal saviour. So Jesus Christ, his name signifies a Saviour, Matt. 21. 'He shall save his people from their sins.

2. Moses was an intercessor for Israel, and turned away the wrath of God from them, Numb. xiv.

So Christ is the saints' advocate, Rom. viii. 34.
 'Who also maketh intercession for us.'

2. Christ was typified by David.

1. David was a king; So is Christ adorned with regal power, he is a king to govern his people, Rev. xv. 3. and to conquer his enemies, Psal. cx. 1. 2. David was a man 'after God's own heart.' This did prefigure Christ, in whom 'God was well pleased,' Mat. iii. 17.

3. Christ was typified by Solomon. 1. In his name which signifies peaceable; so Christ is called 'The prince of peace,' Isa. ix. 7. This the angels proclaimed at his incarnation, Luke ii. 14. 'Peace on earth;' all his wars tend to peace; he gives that peace which passeth all understanding. 2. Solomon typified Christ in his government: his was a most flourishing kingdom, 2 Chron. ix. 22. King Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches; so Christ's kingdom is very glorious, all his subjects are made kings; he reigns in heaven and earth; and 'of his kingdom is no end.' 3. Solomon typified Christ in his wisdom; he was the oracle of his age, 1 Kings iv. 31. He was wiser than all men. So Christ received the unction from his Father; he had a spirit of wisdom and holiness poured upon him without measure, John iii. 34. Isa. xi. 2. Behold, 'A greater than Solomon is here.' Thus Jesus Christ was prefigured by those persons who were most lovely.

2. Christ was typified by things most lovely. I will instance only in five.

Type 1. Christ was typified by the pillar of cloud and fire, which was Israel's guide and conductor in the wilderness, Ex. xiii. 21. This did typify Christ our pillar of cloud, who 'guides our feet into the way of peace,' Luke i. 79. The cloud was unerring, for God was in it; such is Christ, who is the

way and the truth, John xiv. 6. How lovely is this pillar to behold!

Type 2. By the manna. This pointed at Christ. He is like the manna in three things.

1. The figure of manna was circular, Exod. xvi. 14. 'There lay a small round thing,' &c. The circle is a figure of perfection; this typified out Christ in whom is all perfection.

2. The manna was a meat prepared for Israel in an extraordinary manner, so the Hebrew word (from whence manna seems to be derived) signifies to prepare. Manna was a meat cooked and dressed in heaven; God himself prepared it, and then served it in: thus Jesus Christ was like manna, he was prepared and set apart by his Father to the blessed work of Mediatorship, Heb. x. 5. 'A body hast thou prepared me.'

3. The Jewish Rabbins say, Manna suited itself to every one's palate; whatever he desired, that he found in manna; so Jesus Christ suits himself to every christian's condition; he is full of quickening, strengthening, comforting virtue. What fools are they that prefer the earthly mammon before this heavenly manna!

Type 3. By the mercy seat, which was a sacred emblem or hieroglyphic, representing the mercy of God to his people; there the Lord did give forth his oracles and answers of peace to his people, Ex. xxv. 22. 'There will I meet thee, and I will commune with thee,' &c. This mercy-seat was a type of Christ; in and through whom God is appeased towards us. Therefore he is called a propitiation, Rom. iii. 25. O how lovely is this mercy-seat! we could not speak to God in prayer, nor would he commune with us, were it not for this blessed propitiatory. The Hebrew word for mercy-seat signifies a covering, to shew that in Christ the sins of believers are covered.

Type 4. Christ was prefigured by the brazen serpent, Numb. xxi. 9. The brazen serpent resembled Christ two ways. 1. It was made like a serpent, but it was no real serpent; so Christ was 'in the likeness of sinful flesh,' Rom. viii. 3. but he was not a sinner; he was made sin, but he knew no sin. Christ was as void of sin, as the brazen serpent was of a sting.

2. When the people of Israel were stung by the fiery serpents, ver. 6. then whosoever did look up on the brazen serpent were cured. Thus when sin stings the souls of men (for it is a serpent with five stings; it stings men with guilt, shame, horror of conscience, death, the curse of God;) now Christ, that brazen serpent, being looked upon with a penitent believing eye, cures these deadly stings. Oh how lovely is this brazen serpent! many of the Jews (saith Tostatus) worshipped the serpent of brass; let us in our hearts adore this brazen serpent the Lord Jesus.

Type 5. Christ was typified by Noah's ark, which saved Noah and his family from the flood. Thus, when the wrath of God, as a deluge, overflows the wicked, Christ is the ark in which the believer sails above those bloody waves, and is preserved from drowning. And is not the Lord Jesus lovely? all these types did but serve to shadow forth the divine excellencies of Christ, and render him amiable in our eyes.

3. That Christ is thus lovely, appears by those things to which the scripture doth resemble him. He is compared to things most illustrious. There are seven lovely resemblances of Christ in scripture.

1. He is resembled to a Rose, Cant. ii. 1. 'I am the rose or Sharon.' The rose is the queen of flowers: it is most delicious for colour and scent; to shew that fragrant perfume which Christ sends forth. All roses, though beautiful, have their prickles;

only the Rose of Sharon excepted ; so sweet is this rose of paradise, that it makes us become ' a sweet savour to God,' Eph. 1. 6. This rose never loseth its colour nor fragrancy, and is it not very lovely ?

2. Christ is resembled to a Vine, Job. xv. 1. The vine, as Pliny saith, is the noblest of plants ; to this is Christ compared. Oh what lovely clusters grow upon this Vine ! the fruits of justification, sanctification, &c. These bunches of grapes hang upon the Lord Jesus. We are beholden to this Vine, Hos. xiv. 8. ' From me is thy fruit found ;' nay, Christ excels the vine : For, 1. Though there be many things in the vine-tree besides the fruit, useful, the leaves, the gum, the ashes of the vine, yet the wood of the vine is useless, Ezek. xv. 3. ' Will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel on ? now herein Christ is more lovely than the vine-tree ; there is nothing in Christ but is useful. We have need of his human nature ; we have need of his divine nature ; we have need of his offices, influences, privileges ; there is nothing in this vine we can be without. Oh how blessed are the branches of this vine ! The virgin Mary was saved not by bearing the vine, but by being ingrafted into the vine.

3. Christ is resembled to a corner-stone, 1 Pet. ii. 6. and that in two respects. 1. The whole weight of the building lies upon the corner-stone ; so the weight of our salvation lies upon Christ, 1. Cor. iii. 11, 12. 2. The corner-stone doth knit and unite together both parts of the building ; so when God and man were at variance, Christ, as the corner-stone, did unite them together ; yea, and did cement them with his own blood. Oh, how lovely and precious is this stone !

4. He is resembled to a Rock, 1 Cor. x. 3. ' That Rock was Christ.' He is a rock in a threefold sense. 1. He is a rock for offence. The rock breaks the waves ; the church being built upon Christ, all the

adversaries that come against her, are like a ship coming full sail against a rock. 2. A rock for defence; the dove hides in the rock, Cant. ii. 15. 'O my dove in the cliffs of the rock.' Christ's wounds are the cliffs of the rock, where the believing soul, this dove, hides itself. 3. A rock for comfort, and that two ways; 1. The rock is a screen to shade off the heat; so Christ is called, Isa. xxxi. 2. 'A shadow from the heat;' He shades a poor sinner from the scorplings of God's wrath. 2. Honey came out of the rock, Deut. xxxii. 13. 'He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock.' The honey of the promises, and the oil of gladness come out of this blessed rock.

5. Christ is compared to a 'river in a dry ground,' Isa. xxxii. 2. When by nature we are as a scorched heath, dry and barren, Christ sends forth the sacred influences of his blood and Spirit, making us like the fields of Sharon, full of moisture and fertility; and are not these silver streams lovely?

6. Christ is resembled to a Rich Treasury. Riches are lovely in men's eyes, Ephes. iii. 8. 'The unsearchable riches of Christ;' the angels can never dig to the bottom of this golden mine. Christ hath the true monopoly, because he hath those riches as are no where else to be found. The riches of his merit, the riches of his Spirit. Christ hath a partnership with his Father, John. xvi. 15. 'All that the Father hath are mine:' He is crowned with the riches of the Deity. Alexander regarded not the kingdom of Macedonia, when he heard of the riches of India; a christian will in a manner despise all other riches when he hath Christ's riches, Phil. iii. 8.

7. Christ is resembled to a beautiful Robe, Isa. lxi. 10. 'He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. Hierom interprets it of Christ: His

righteousness is a lovely robe; no robe of gold or ermine, wherewith kings are invested, is so honourable as this: in this robe we shine as angels in God's eyes: the high-priest's glorious vestments, Exod. xxviii. 2. the mitre, the robe, the ephod of gold, and the breast-plate of precious stones, did all but serve to set out the beautiful garment of Christ's righteousness wherewith a believer is adorned. Thus Christ appears lovely in these several resemblances, which can but faintly shadow out his beauty.

4. Christ's loveliness appears by demonstrations; these two in particular.

He is lovely, 1. In himself. 2. In the account of others.

1. He is lovely in himself, and that five manner of ways. 1. He is lovely in his person; and that, 1. As he is man, Psal. xlv. 2. 'Thou art fairer than the children of men.' The Hebrew is emphatical in the form, it denotes excellency of beauty: For tho' it be said 'he hath no comeliness,' Isa. liii. 2. that was in regard of his afflictions, which did so disfigure, and as it were draw a veil over his glory, yet certainly the person of Christ was incomparably fair, as Hierom and Chrysostom observe; and if his body on earth was so beautiful, what is it now in heaven! the apostle calls it 'a glorious body,' Phil. iii. 21. If Christ can make a lily of the field more beautiful than Solomon in all his glory, how fair is he himself? how white is that lily which grows in paradise?

2. Christ's person is lovely as he is God-man. He may not unfitly be compared to Jacob's ladder, which reached from earth to heaven; Christ's human nature, which was the foot of the ladder, stood upon the earth; his divine nature, which was the top of the ladder, reached to heaven. The Arians and Socinians deny his Godhead, as the Valentians

do his manhood. If the Godhead be in him, he must needs be God, but the Godhead shines in him, Col. ii. 9. 'In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead;' and to confirm us in this truth, let us consult with those scriptures which do clearly assert his Godhead, 1 Cor. viii. 6. 'To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things; and Phil. ii. 6. who 'being in the form of God,' which is as much, saith Basil, as to exist in the essence of God, 1 Tim. iii. 16. 'God was manifest in the flesh;' and 1 John v. 20. 'We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ, THIS IS THE TRUE GOD.' Besides these testimonies of scripture which do expressly assert the Godhead of Christ, it may be clearly demonstrated by those incommunicable properties belonging to the Deity, which are ascribed to Christ, and are the flowers of his crown.

- As, 1. Omnipotency, Heb. i. 3.
 - 2. Omniscience, Mark ii. 8.
 - 3. Ubiquity, Mat. xxvii. 20.
 - 4. A power of sealing pardons, Matt. ix. 6.
 - 5. The mission of the Holy Ghost, John xvi. 7.
 - 6. Co-equality with God the Father, Phil. ii. 6.
- both in power, John v. 19, 21. and dignity, John v. 23.

Thus we see his Godhead proved; and as he is God-man, he is altogether lovely. He is the very picture of his Father's glory: therefore he is called the express image, and character of his person, Heb. i. 3. The very effigies and print of God's face is seen in Christ; the glory of God's wisdom, holiness, mercy, doth most transparently shine forth in him; thus his person is lovely.

2. Christ is lovely in his disposition—A good nature is able to render deformity itself lovely. Christ is lovely, not only in his complexion, but in his dis-

position; he is of a loving and merciful disposition; and in this sense may be called the delight of mankind. It is reported of Marcus Aurelius the emperor, that he was of a most affable winning temper, given to clemency, and every day he would set one hour apart to hear the causes of the poor. Thus Jesus Christ is of a most sweet disposition, 'He will not always chide,' Psal. ciii. 9. He is inclinable to shew mercy to the penitent, 'He delights in mercy,' Micah vii. 18. He invites sinners to come to him, Mat. xi. 28. He begs of them that they would be saved, 2 Cor. v. 20. He knocks at their hearts by his Spirit, till his head be filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, Rev. iii. 20. If any poor soul accepts of his offer, and doth arise and go to him, how doth Christ welcome him? Christ makes the feast, Luke xv. 23. and the angels make the music, ver. 7. But if men will not receive the tenders of grace, Christ grieves, Mark iii. 5. He is like a judge that passeth the sentence with tears in his eyes, Luke xix. 42. 'And when he came nigh the city, he wept.' Ah sinners, I come to save you, but you put away salvation from you: I come with healing under my wings, but you bolt out your physician: I would have you but open your hearts to receive me, and I will open heaven to receive you, but you will rather stay with your sins and die, than come to me and live, Psal. lxxxi. 11. 'Israel would none of me.' Well, sinners, I will weep at your funerals: Oh, how lovely is Christ in his disposition! he comes with his suppling oil to pour into sinners wounds: he would fain break their hearts with his mercies: he labours to overcome their *evil* with his *good*.

3. Christ is lovely in his sufferings, when he did make expiation for our sins; but what, lovely in his sufferings? lovely when he was buffeted, spit upon, besmeared with blood? O yes! he was most

lovely upon the cross, because then he shewed most love to us; he bled love at every vein; his drops of blood were love-drops. The more bloody, the more lovely. The more Christ endured for us, the more dear he ought to be to us. Osorius, writing of the sufferings of Christ, saith, that the crown of thorns bored his head with seventy-two wounds; and Tully, when he speaks of the death of the cross, shews his rhetoric best by an aposiopesis, or silence; "What shall I say of this death?" Though a great orator, he wanted words to express it.

Nor did Christ only endure pain in his body, but agony in his soul. He conflicted with the wrath of God; which he could never have done, if he had not been more than a man. We read that the 'altar of wood was overlaid with brass,' that so the fire on the altar might not 'consume the wood,' *Exod. xxvii. 1, 2.* This altar was a type of Jesus Christ. The human nature of Christ, which was the wood, was covered with the Divine nature, which was like brass, else the fire of God's wrath had consumed it; and all this Christ suffered was in our stead, *Is. liii. 5.* we eat the sour grape, and his teeth were set on edge: We climbed the tree, we stole the forbidden fruit, and Christ goes up the ladder of the cross, and dies. Oh how lovely ought a bleeding Saviour to be in our eyes? Let us wear this blessed crucifix always in our heart. The cross of Christ, saith Damascen, is the golden key that opens paradise to us. How beautiful is Christ upon the cross! the ruddiness of his blood took away the redness of our guilt. How lovely are those wounds which wounded the red dragon! when this blessed rock was smitten, water came out of it to cleanse us, and blood to cheer us, *1 John v. 6.* When Christ was on the cross, saith Bernard, now the vine was cut, and salvation came to us in the blood of the Vine: O how lovely is

this bleeding Vine! Christ's Crucifixion is our Coronation.

4. Christ is lovely in his graces; his graces, as a divine embroidery, did bespangle and set him off in the eyes of the world. Grace was not in Christ as a quality but essence, as light is intrinsic to the sun, and is of the essence of it. Christ did open a box of precious perfume, and because of the savours of his ointments the virgins love him, Cant. i. 2. In Christ there was a constellation of all the graces; how did he shine in wisdom, humility, zeal, heavenly-mindedness; and, which did not a little adorn him, *His Meekness*. How lovely was Christ in his graces!

1. He came into the world meek, Matt. xxi. 5. 'Behold thy king cometh meek.' He came not with a sword or sceptre in his hand, but with an olive branch of peace in his mouth, he preached tidings of peace, Matt. xi. 29. Though he was the Lion of Judah, yet he was the Lamb of God.

2. When he was in the world, he was a pattern of meekness, 1 Pet. ii. 23. 'When he was reviled, he reviled not again.' He left his Father's bosom, that hive of sweetness, to come and live here; and truly, he exchanged his palace for a dunghill; how oft was he called a friend of sinners, nay he was charged to have a devil, but see how mildly he answers, (this dove had no gall) John viii. 49. 'I have not a devil, but I honour my Father.' All his words were steeped in honey.

3. When he was going out of the world, he shewed unparalleled meekness. He prays for his enemies, 'Father forgive them,' Luke xxiii. 34. When the soldiers came to take him by force, one would have thought he should have called for fire from heaven as the man of God did, 2 Kings i. 10. but behold 'Grace was poured into his lips,' Psal. xlv. 2. see what a mild answer he gives, enough to

have made the hardest heart relent, Matt. xxvi. 55. 'Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves to take me?' what wrong, I pray, have I done you? What have I stolen from the world but their sins? what have I robbed them of, but the wrath of God? O the mildness of this Saviour! surely had not the soldiers' hearts been very hard (for in the whole story of Christ's passion I do not read of one soldier converted; there was a thief indeed converted, but no soldier) Christ's meekness would have melted them into tears of repentance; when he was led away to be crucified, 'he went as a lamb to the slaughter; he opened not his mouth,' Isa. liii. 7. He opened his side, but not his mouth in repining; and was not Christ lovely in his meekness? No wonder the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the likeness of a Dove; not a lion or eagle, but a Dove, which is the emblem of meekness.

5. Christ is lovely in his Conversation. What was said of Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 23. they were 'lovely in their lives,' is much more true of Christ. His life, saith Chrysostom, was purer than the sun-beams. All the ethics of Aristotle, all the wisdom of Greece, could never so describe virtue as it was lively portrayed out in Christ's holy example. His life was a fair copy; never did any one write without blotting besides Christ; he is called 'a Lamb without spot,' 1 Pet. i. 19. His lips did never speak a word amiss, Luke iv. 22. 'All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.' Thus were his lips like lilies, 'dropping pure myrrh,' Cant. v. 13. His foot did never tread a step awry. He who was a way to others, did never go out of the way himself. He was so pure that no temptation could fasten upon him. Temptation to Christ was like the throwing a bur upon a crystal glass,

which will not stick, but glides off. 'The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me,' John xiv. 30. There was no powder for the devil's fire to take. What was Christ's whole life but a pattern of good works? 'He went about doing good,' Acts x. 38. he was either anointing the blind, or healing the sick, or raising the dead; either preaching, or working miracles. Thus he was altogether lovely.

2. Christ is lovely in the account of others. Three ways Christ is lovely,

1. To God his Father. 2. To the saints. 3. To the angels.

1. He is lovely to God his Father. God is infinitely taken with him. Christ is called the Rose of Sharon, and how doth God delight to smell this rose! Isa. xlii. 1. 'My elect in whom my soul delights.' Surely if there be loveliness enough in Christ to delight the heart of God, there may well be enough in him to delight us. Christ is the centre where all the lines of his Father's love do meet.

2. Christ is lovely in the account and esteem of his saints, 2 Thess. i. 10. 'He shall be admired of all them that believe.' He is admired now, and he shall be more admired of them. Well may the saints admire to see Christ sitting in the bright robe of their flesh above the angels in glory. Well may they admire to see their nature united with the Deity. O how lovely and beautiful is this sight! Well may Christ be admired of his saints.

3. Christ is lovely in the esteem of the angels. They adore him, Heb. i. 6. 'And let all the angels of God worship him.' The cherubims which did represent the angels, are painted with their faces looking upwards, to shew, that the angels in heaven all are still looking upward, as admiring, and being ravished with the amazing beauties of Jesus Christ.

Use 1. Information. And it hath three branches.

Branch 1. Behold here, as in a scripture-glass,

the transcendent excellencies of the Lord Jesus, he is altogether lovely, he is a fair prospect set before us. I wonder not that Paul, that seraphic saint, 'desired to know nothing save Jesus Christ,' 1 Cor. ii. 2. What would he know more? he is altogether lovely; no wonder the apostles 'left all and followed him,' Matt. xix. 27. had I the tongue of angels, I could never set forth Christ in all his lively and lovely colours. Besides what hath been said, take a further view of Christ's lovely excellencies in three particulars.

1. He is our Light. Light is a glorious creature, Eccl. xi. 7. 'Truly the light is sweet;' the light pulls off the veil, and draws aside the dark curtains of the night, making every thing appear in its fresh colours. Thus Jesus Christ is lovely; he is called 'that true light,' John i. 9. and the 'bright morning star,' Rev. xxii. 16. when the soul is benighted with ignorance, Christ is the morning-star that enlightens it. He is the 'Sun of Righteousness,' Mal. iv. 2. This Sun of Righteousness is more glorious than that in the firmament, 1. The sun in the firmament rises and sets, but the Sun of Righteousness, when it once riseth upon the soul in conversion, never sets finally upon him; it may pull in its beams when the clouds of our sin come between, but it comes out of the cloud again, (as it did to David) it never sets finally. 2. The sun in the firmament only shines upon us, but the Sun of Righteousness shines within us, Gal. i. 16. but when it pleased God to 'reveal his Son in me.' The sun in the firmament shines only upon our faces; but the Sun of Righteousness shines in our hearts, 2 Cor. iv. 6. 'God hath shined in our hearts;' how sweet are these beams! 3. The sun in the firmament shines only in the day time, but the Sun of Righteousness shines in the night; in the night of desertion and affliction this Sun shines, Psal. cxii. 4. 'Unto the up-

right there ariseth light in darkness.' O how lovely is this Sun of Righteousness! by the bright beams of this Sun we see God.

2. Christ is our Food. He is not only lovely to the eye, but to the taste, John vi. 55. 'My flesh is meat indeed.' This is princely fare; it was never prepared for the angels, but for us. It is lovely feeding here; all the rarities of heaven are served in this dish.

'And my blood is drink indeed;' This blood is better than wine. 1. Wine may be taken in excess; Noah took too much of the grape; but it is otherwise with the wine of Christ's blood, there is no fear of excess here. Though a drop be sweet, yet the more we drink, the better; the deeper, the sweeter! 'Drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved,' Cant. v. i. Excess here makes us sober! 2. Wine, though it cheers the heart, yet at some times, if it be taken, it may be hurtful; give wine in a fever, and it is as bad as poison. But this wine of Christ's blood is best in a fever. When the heart burns as hot as hell in the sense of God's wrath, and is as it were, in a spiritual agony and fever: now a drop of Christ's blood doth allay the inflammation, and sweetly refresheth the soul; it is lovely drinking at this fountain.

3. Christ is our Life, Col. iii. 4. 'When Christ who is our life shall appear.' Life is sweet; life makes every thing comfortable. In this the devil said true, 'skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life,' Job ii. 9. A man will cast the plate and jewels overboard to save his life; he will lose a leg or an arm to preserve the vital parts.

Is life lovely, and is not Christ who is our life lovely? He was typified by the 'tree of life in the garden,' Gen. ii. 9. That tree was symbolical, as Austin saith; it was a pledge and sign of life, if man had continued in obedience. It was certainly a love-

ly tree, but it was only a type of Christ, who is called 'the tree of life,' Rev. ii. 7. This tree of life the Lord Jesus, is a better tree than that which grew in paradise; Adam's tree in paradise might preserve life, but it could not prevent death; there was dying for all that; but this tree of life, Jesus Christ, prevents death, John xi. 26. 'Whosoever believeth in me, shall never die; that is, not die the second death,' Rev. ii. 14. This blessed tree is an antidote against death. If there were a tree to be found in the world that could preserve men from dying, how far would they go on pilgrimage? what vast sums of money would they give for one leaf of that tree? Such a tree is Christ, he will keep you from dying, and is not this a tree very lovely? In particular, there is a threefold life flows from Jesus Christ. 1. The life of grace, John 1. 16. 'Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.' This life is a bud of eternity; it is a life purchased for us by Christ's death. 2. The life of comfort, which is the cream of life, Joh. xvi. 22. 'Your heart shall rejoice.' This is an holy jubilation of spirit; so sweet and ravishing is this joy, that if David, when he had lost his joy, had lost also his crown, and God had put the question to him, which of these two he would have restored? David would have said, Lord 'Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation,' Psal. li. 12. Rather my comfort, than my crown. It is Hilary term with a christian while these joys last. 3. The life of glory, John xvii. 22. This is the most noble life; this is to live the life of angels, nay, to live the life of God; It is the highest elevation and perfection of the reasonable creature; and may we not cry out with Chrysostom, "What more lovely than Christ," from whom these golden streams of life flow? Oh that all this might make him amiable in our eyes!

What should we admire? what should we rejoice

in but Christ? Christ's beauty, like his coat, is without seam. We read of Absalom, 2 Sam. xiv. 25. 'in all Israel there was none to be so praised as Absalom for his beauty, from the sole of his foot, even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him.' This may be far more truly applied to Christ. He is the Mirror of beauty, the Map of perfection, the Paradise of delight. He is the crown of the gospel; if the gospel be the field, Christ is the pearl hid in this field; if the gospel be the ring, Christ is the diamond in this ring, He is the glory of heaven, Rev. xxi. 23. 'The Lamb is the light thereof,' Well might Saint Paul account all things dross and dung for Christ, Phil. iii. 8.

Branch 2. If Christ be altogether lovely, it shews us the true reason why men do not embrace Christ; namely, because they are ignorant of his beauty. A blind man doth not admire the colours in a rainbow; when the God of this world hath blinded mens' eyes, they see not any excellency in Christ; therefore they cry out, as here the watchmen did, 'What is thy beloved more than another beloved?' ver. 9. Men admire not the sun, because the cloud of their ignorance comes between. Christ is a treasure, but an hid treasure; he is fairer than the children of men, but to a natural person he is like Moses with a veil upon his face. The men of the world see not the stupendous beauty of Christ. He doth not want worth, but they want eyes. O unhappy man (saith Austin) who knowest all things else but Christ! thy knowledge will but serve to light thee to hell.

Quest. But you will say to me, What, not know Christ? I hope we are better bred than so; hath Christ been preached so long in our streets, and not know him;

Ans. 1. I wish there were not many persons grossly ignorant of Christ, who understand nothing of

his person, offices, privileges: A reverend divine told me, that not long since, he went to visit a neighbour of his parish lying on his death-bed, a man fourscore years of age, one that came frequently to church; and questioning him what sin was, he said he knew not; and what Christ was, he told him he knew not; but saith the minister to him, if thou dost not know Christ, how dost thou think to go to heaven? his answer was this, If I cannot get to heaven, I must stay by the way: O gross ignorance! Balaam's ass spoke better sense to the prophet, Numb. xxii. 28.

That people have been very ignorant of Jesus Christ, appears by this, because they have been so inclinable to error, so greedy to drink in every new opinion as soon as the devil hath set it abroad.

Ans. 2. But my second answer is this; whereas you say, Can we be ignorant of Christ in this broad day-light of the gospel? I say, a man may have excellent notions of Christ, and may be able to make an elegant discourse of him, and yet not know him savingly. Though he be not grossly ignorant of Christ, yet he may be spiritually ignorant. There is a threefold defect in the knowledge of most.

It is a speculation without Conviction, Affection, Operation.

1. It is a speculation without Conviction. Men are not thoroughly convinced of the excellencies of Christ; John xvi. 18. 'And when he (that is the Holy Ghost) comes, he shall convince the world of sin.'

Strange! Was not Christ in the world? had not he made many sermons about sin? It is true, he had, but the Jews were not yet convinced of it, therefore he shall send his Spirit to convince them. 'And of righteousness.'] Why? had not Christ told them that there was no righteousness to be found but in him, that they could graft their hopes of sal-

vation upon no other stock besides? yes, they had heard Christ say so, but they were not yet convinced; therefore the Spirit shall come and convince them. Hence I gather that men may have a speculation of Christ, yet be ignorant of him, that is, not know him convincingly; and that they have not a convincing knowledge, is clear; for were they convinced in their conscience of the lovely excellencies of Christ, would they value a lust or trifle? would they, with Judas, prefer thirty pieces of silver before him?

2. It is a speculation without Affection; men have notions of Christ, but are not warmed with love to Christ. Their knowledge is like the moon, it hath light in it, but no heat. True knowledge of Christ is like fire to the ice, it melts it into water; so this knowledge melts the sinner into tears of love. I do the hypocrite no wrong to tell him he bears no true affection to Jesus Christ. There is a great deal of difference between the knowledge that the prisoner hath of the judge, and the knowledge that the child hath of the parent. The prisoner knows the judge, but hath no affection to his person; his knowledge is joined with fear and hatred; but the child's knowledge of his parent is joined with affection, he loves to be in his presence. The hypocrite knows Christ as the prisoner doth the judge, or as the devils knew him, Mark i. 24. with a knowledge of horror and amazement; whereas true knowledge is filial; the affections are drawn forth in an inflamed manner after him. The apostle hath an elegant expression to set forth the nature of true knowledge; he calls it the 'savour of knowledge,' 2 Cor. ii. 14. as a man tastes a savoury sweetness in his meat. Hypocrites have no taste.

3. It is a speculation without Operation. The knowledge that hypocrites have of Christ, hath no saving influence upon them, it doth not make them

more holy; it is one thing to have a notion of Christ, another thing to fetch virtue from Christ. The knowledge of hypocrites is a dead, barren knowledge: It brings not forth the child of obedience. There is a great deal of difference between a scholar that studies physic for the theory and notion, that he may have the rules of it lying before him, and one that studies physic to practise; hypocrites are not practitioners; they are all head, no feet; they 'walk not in Christ,' Col. ii. 6. Their knowledge is informing, but not transforming; it doth not make them a jot the better, it leaves not a spiritual-tincture of holiness behind. The flux of blood runs still, and such a knowledge is no better than ignorance, 1 John ii. 4. 'He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.' A man may have a knowledge of speculation, and be no better than a devil. And this is the reason why men do not embrace Christ, who is infinitely lovely, because they know not his worth; though they are not grossly ignorant of Christ, yet they are spiritually ignorant. 'To this day the veil is upon their hearts.'

Branch 3. Information. If Jesus Christ be so lovely, it shews us the misery of a man out of Christ.

1. That lives without Christ. 2. That dies without Christ.

1. Behold his misery that lives without Christ. He is very deformed and unlovely; for all loveliness flows from Christ. A sinner in the state of nature, is like an infant tumbling in its blood, Ezek. xvi. 6. 'Thou wert in thy blood,' Lev. xiii. The leper in the law was but the sad emblem of a sinner.

1. The leper was to live alone, as being unworthy to come into the congregation of the holy. 2. The leper did wear three marks to be known by, his garments torn, his head bare, his mouth covered. 3. He was to cry unclean, unclean. This spiritual le-

prosy is upon every Christless sinner. Therefore a man in a state of unregeneracy, is in scripture compared to things most unlovely and unbeautiful. To a dog, Rev. xxii. 15. a swine, 2 Pet. ii. 22. A viper. Mat. iii. 7. a devil, John vi. 70. A sinner's heart is a poisoned spring; it is like a piece of muddy ground which defiles the purest water that runs through it. The heathen had this kind of notion ingrafted into them; for, as authors report, they had their stone pots of water set at the doors of their temple, where they used to wash before they went to sacrifice; a sinner is blind, Rev. iii. 17. and the more blind, because he thinks he sees: He is dead; and although he may be decked with some moral virtues, this is but like strowing flowers upon a dead corpse, Eph. ii. 1. dead things have no beauty in them; a sinner out of Christ is a filthy excrementitious creature; he runs nothing but dregs, he is hell epitomized. There is no part of him sound. The man who had his 'running issue in his flesh, Lev. xv. 2. was but a type of a sinner who hath the plague-sores of sin running upon him, 1 Kings viii. 38. Oh how ghastly and deformed is every Christless soul! God loathes him, Zach. xi. 8. 'My soul loathed them.' So abominable and unsavory is a sinner, that God stands afar off, Psal. cxxxviii. 6. He will not come near the stench of him. The sinner is so deformed and diseased, that when he comes to be converted, the first thing he doth, is to loathe himself, Ezek. xxxvi. 13. 'Ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities.' Thus unlovely is every person out of Christ. If he brags of his goodness, it is because he never yet looked his face in the glass of God's word, that would discover his spots and blemishes.

2. Behold his misery that dies without Christ. Though Jesus Christ be so infinitely beautiful, the sinner shall see none of his beauty. Christ will put a vail upon his face, as Moses did when his face

shined, Exod. xxxiv. 33. Nay, that is not all; though Christ be so lovely in himself, yet to an ungodly sinner he will be terrible to behold. A wicked man shall see nothing in Christ that is lovely. The Sun of Righteousness will be eclipsed to him, his beauty will be changed into fury. The Lamb will be turned to a Lion. Christ's visage will strike the heart of a sinner with horror and amazement. King Ahasuerus was pleasant to queen Esther to behold when he held forth the golden sceptre; but how dreadful was his visage to Haman, when he arose from the banquet of wine in his wrath! His look did carry death in its face: So, though Christ be so lovely in himself, and full of smiling beauty to his saints; yet, to those who reject him, and die in their sins, O how ghastly and affrighting will his looks be! his eyes will be as a flame of fire, Rev. i. 14. Christ is represented with a bow and a crown, Rev. vi. 2. Give me leave to allude. Christ will appear to the saints with a crown, very lovely and glorious to behold, but to the wicked he will appear with his bow, to shoot at them with the arrows of his indignation. We read, Psal. vii. 2. 'Clouds and darkness are round about him.' To believers Christ will shine forth with his rays of majesty and beauty; but to the wicked he will cover himself with a cloud of displeasure; this will be the hell of hell to the damned; they shall be shut out from a sight of Christ's glory, and shall behold only a sight of his wrath. They shall cry to the mountains to cover them from 'the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,' Rev. vi. 16. The human nature of Christ, saith Hierom, will be as terrible to a sinner as the sight of hell fire.

Use 2. Exhortation. Branch 1. If Christ be so infinitely lovely, then let us labour to get a part in Christ, that the cursed deformity of our nature may

be taken away, and the bespangled beauties of holiness may shine in us. It is little comfort for the soul to say, Christ is altogether lovely, unless it can also say, 'My beloved is mine,' Cant. ii. 16. Ignatius cared not what befel him so he had Christ. Clear thy interest. The ground of privilege is union. There are, saith Bernard, many christians who have nothing of Christ in them. Oh labour to be made one with Christ, to have Christ not only in thy Bible but in thy heart; renounce thy own beauty, all thy parts, moralities, duties; these are a rotten bough to hold by, Phil. iii. 9. 'That I may be found in him not having mine own righteousness.' When Augustus Cesar desired the senate of Rome to join some with him in the consulship, the senate answered that they held it a great disparagement to him to join any consul with him; so Jesus Christ takes it as a great disparagement to him to join our duties in equipage with his merits. O sinner, cast away thy beggars rags, that thou mayest put on Christ's lovely robes. I would not take thee off from thy duty, but from confidence in duty. Noah's dove might make use of her wings to fly, but she did not trust to her wings, but to the ark. A man makes use of his feet to go over a bridge, but he trusts to the bridge for safety. Christians while they walk with the feet of obedience, must trust to Christ as the bridge to lead them over the devouring sea of hell; in short, if thou wouldst get an interest in Christ, rely on Christ by faith, and resign up thyself to Christ by service. A believer with one hand receives Christ, and with the other hand gives up himself to Christ. Christ saith to a believer, 'with my body, yea with my blood I thee endow, and a believer saith to Christ, 'with my soul I thee worship.' O christian, part with all for a part in this lovely Saviour.

2. *Branch.* If Christ be thus full of sparkling

beauties, then fall in love with this lovely object, and with the spouse, 'be sick of love to Christ.' Beauty doth draw love. Ministers are paranymphe, friends of the bridegroom. This day I come a wooing for your love. Love him who is so lovely. Let Christ lie as a bundle of myrrh always between your breasts. 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Love, saith Chrysostom, is the diamond that only the queen wears, viz. The gracious soul. Oh that all these surpassing beauties of Christ might kindle a flame of divine love in christians hearts. Christ's is the very extract and quintessence of beauty, he is a whole paradise of delight. He is the flower of Sharon, enriched with orient colours, and perfumed with the sweetest savour; Oh wear this flower not in your bosom, but in your heart, and be always smelling to it; and shew your love to this lovely Saviour.

1. By the degrees of it.—2. By the effects of it.

1. By the degrees of it. Love him above all other things; let him carry away the crown and the glory from the creature. 1. Love him more than thy relations, Mat. x. 37. 'He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. Nay, our love to relations must be hatred in comparison of our love to Christ, Luke xiv. 26. Great is our love to relations. The creatures void of reason teach natural affection; the young stork feeds the dam, and helps to carry her when she is old and can hardly fly. Children should exceed, and outfly the stork in affection. There is a story in the French Academy of a daughter, who when her father was condemned to die by famine, she made shift to get to him, and gave him suck with her own breasts, which being made known, she obtained his pardon: but Christ must be dearer to us than all; he must weigh heavier than relations in the balance

of our affections ; for ' he is altogether lovely.' If parents lie as a stumbling block in our way to Christ, if they either come in competition with Christ, or stand in opposition against Christ, we must either leap over them, or tread upon them.

2. Love Christ more than thy estate. Gold is but shining dust ; though it may be lovely ; yet it is not altogether lovely. 1. Gold is worse than thyself, it is of an earthly extract. If thou lovest any thing, love something which is better than thyself ; and that only is Christ, who is altogether lovely. 2. Riches ' avail not in the day of wrath,' Prov. xi. 4. Riches are no life-guard to defend us from divine fury ; but how lovely is Christ who can screen off the fire of God's wrath from thee ! Oh then love him more than these perishable things. Christ's gleanings are better than the world's vintage. Be not like Noah's raven, which, when it had found a carrion to feed on, cared not for returning home to the ark. He that loseth all for Christ, shall find all in Christ.

3. Love Christ more than thy life, Rev. xii. 11. ' They loved not their lives to the death.' They carried their sufferings as ensigns of their glory. They had pangs of love stronger than the pangs of death. Did the Curtii die for the Romans, the Coddii for the Athenians, and shall not we be willing to lay down our lives for Christ who is so infinitely lovely ?

2. Shew your love to this lovely Saviour by the effects of love.

1. The first fruit of love is desire of converse. Love is a transporting of the affections ; Lovers desire to be often talking and conversing together before the marriage-day. Christ converseth with the soul by his Spirit, and the soul converseth with him by prayer and meditation. The soul that loves Christ, desires to be much in his presence. He loves

the ordinances, he thinks it is good lying in the way where Christ passeth by. Ordinances are the chariots of salvation. Christ rides into the believers' hearts in these chariots. Ordinances are the feast of fat things. The soul feasts with Christ here, Cant. ii. 4. 'He brought me to the banqueting house,' &c. In the Hebrew it is, he brought me to the house of wine. Word, prayer, sacraments, are to a christian the house of wine. Here, often Christ turns the water of tears into wine. How lovely is this house of wine! The ordinances are the lattice where Christ looks forth and shews his smiling face to his saints. Christ's parents found him in the temple, Luke ii. 46. The soul that loves Christ, desires conference with him in the temple.

2. *Fruit of love.* 2. Where there is love to Christ, there is sympathy. Friends that love do grieve and rejoice together; they have sympathizing spirits. Homer describing Agamemnon's grief, when he was forced to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia, brings in all his friends weeping with him, and accompanying him to the sacrifice in mourning. And I remember Aristotle in his Rhetoric spends almost a whole chapter upon this, proving a sympathy among friends. Lovers grieve together: thus, if we love Christ, we shall grieve for those things that grieve him, Psal. cxix. 158. 'I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved.' We shall grieve to see truth bleeding, heretics increasing. We shall grieve to see toleration setting up its mast and topsail; and multitudes sailing in this ship to hell. Toleration is the grave of reformation. It was a charge drawn up against the angel of Pergamos, that he had them there, nestling and brooding, who held the doctrine of Baalam, Rev. ii. 14. By toleration we adopt other mens' sins, and make them our own. I pray God this doth not hasten England's funerals. He who loves Christ, will lay these things to heart.

3. Fruit of love. 3. He who loves Christ, will endeavour to preserve his memory. Friends that bear respect will preserve the memory of those persons they love, by keeping their pictures, letters, love-tokens ; sometimes by preserving their monuments. Herein Artemisia, queen of Caria, shewed an act of singular love to her husband Mausolus ; for he being dead, she caused his body to be reduced to ashes and to be mingled in her drink every day, so making her body a living tomb to hold her dead husband. Thus the soul that loves Christ will be often eating his body and drinking his blood in the sacrament, that he may remember Christ's death till he come. They that live without sacraments, shew plainly that they have no love to Christ, because they do not desire to preserve his memory among them.

4. Fruit of love. 4. He that bears love to Christ, this lovely object, will not entertain any other lovers ; 'What have I to do any more with idols ?' Hos. xiv. 8. The Hebrew word is with sorrows : indeed sin raiseth a tempest of sorrow in the soul ; and he that is espoused to Christ, hath now changed his judgment ; those sins he before looked upon as lovers, now he looks upon as sorrows. He that loves Christ, can look a temptation in the face, and turn his back upon it. When Cyrus would have tempted the chaste wife of Tygranes, she took no notice of him, though a king ; she had a husband at home. When sin, like Mercury's rod with a snake about it, would wind itself subtilly into the soul, he that loves Christ, dares not give it entertainment ; he saith, All the rooms are taken up already for Christ, and a better guest cannot come, for he is altogether lovely.

3. Branch. If Christ be so lovely in himself, then you that profess Christ, labour to render him lovely in the eyes of others. And that two ways.

1. By commending him, and telling others of his beauty, that they may admire him. So the spouse in this chapter labours to pourtray and set him forth in his glory. 'My beloved is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand. Tell others that Christ is all marrow, all sweetness. He is the richest jewel in the cabinet of heaven: Set up the trophies of his honour, triumph in his praises, that you may tempt others to fall in love with his person. The tongue is the organ of praise; it is pity the organs are so often out of tune, in murmuring and complaining? Oh let these organs be still going, let our tongues sing forth the praises of him who is altogether lovely. Daughters of the blood-royal have the pictures of kings brought to them, and by seeing the pictures, they fall in love with their persons, and are married to them; by our commendations of Christ, we should so paint out Christ to others, and draw his picture, that when they see his picture they may fall in love with him, and the match may be presently struck up.

2. Render Christ lovely in the eyes of others by adorning his gospel, and 'walking worthy of Christ' Col. i. 10. It is an honour to a master to have good servants, and how doth it proclaim Christ to be lovely, and glorious, when they that profess him are eminent for piety! 1 Pet. ii. 9. Christ appears lovely in the holy lives of his people.

Brethren, there are some persons among us whose scandalous impieties, masked over with religion, hath made Christ appear unlovely in the eyes of others; it is enough to make them afraid to have any thing to do with Christ; as if he did abet men in their sin, or at least connive at them. The blood of some will not make reparation for the injury which their sins have done to Christ. I have read of certain images which on the outside were covered with gold and pearl, resembling Jupiter and Nep-

tune, but within nothing but spiders and cobwebs; and have not we many who have been covered with the gold and pearl of profession, resembling the saints of the Most High, but within, as Christ saith, 'full of all uncleanness?' Mat. xxiii. 27. insomuch that we may see the spiders creeping out of them. O that all who profess the name of Christ 'might depart from iniquity,' 2 Tim. ii. 19. that they might set a crown of honour upon the head of Christ, and make him appear lovely in the eyes of others.

Use ull. Consolation. Here is comfort to them who are by faith married to Christ: this is their glorious privilege, Christ's beauty and loveliness shall be put upon them; they shall shine by his beams; this is the apex and crown of honour; the saints shall not only behold Christ's glory, but be transformed into it, 1 John iii. 2. 'We shall be like him' that is, irradiated and enamelled with his glory. Christ is compared to the beautiful lily, Cant. i. 2. His lily-whiteness shall be put upon his saints. A glorified soul shall be a perfect mirror, or crystal, where the beauty of Christ shall be transparent. Moses married a blackamore, but he could not make her fair; but whomsoever Christ marries, he alters their complexion, he makes them altogether lovely. Other beauty causeth pride; but no such worm breeds in heaven. The saints in glory shall admire their own beauty, but not grow proud of it. Other beauty is soon lost. The eye weeps to see its furrowed brows, the cheeks blush at their own paleness; but this is a never fading beauty; age cannot wither it; it retains its glossiness, the white and vermillion mixed together to all eternity. Think of this, O ye saints, who mourn now for your sins, and bewail your spiritual deformities (you are comely, yet black) remember, by virtue of your union with Christ you shall be glorious creatures; then shall your clothing be of wrought gold, then shall you be brought

unto the king in raiment of needle-work, and you shall hear Christ pronounce that blessed word, Cant. iv. 7. 'Thou art all fair my love, and there is no spot in thee.'

THE

UPRIGHT MAN'S CHARACTER.

PSALM xxxvii. 37. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.*

SINCERITY is of universal importance to a christian. It is the sauce which seasons religion and makes it savoury. Sincerity is the jewel that God is most delighted with, Psal. li. 6. 'Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and to speak plain, all our pompous shew of holiness without this soul of sincerity to enliven it, is but folly set forth in its embroidery; it is but going to hell in a more devout manner than others. The consideration of which hath put me upon this subject in this place of solemn worship and concourse; and to quicken your attention, you have God himself calling to you to take notice in these words, 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.'

The Hebrew word for upright hath two significations. 1. It signifies plainness of heart; the upright man is not plaited in folds; he is without collusion or double dealing, 'In his spirit there is no guile,' Psal. xxxii. 2.

The upright man hath no subterfuges, his tongue and his heart go together, as a well-made dial goes with the sun; he is down-right upright.

2. This word upright signifies a *man approved*; the upright man is one whom God thinks highly of; and better have God's approbation than the world's acclamation; the plainer the diamond is, the richer; and the more plain the heart is, the more it shines in God's eyes.

In the words there are three parts; 1. The Prospect, *the Upright man*. 2. The Aspect, *Behold*. 3. The Reason, *for the end of that man is peace*. Or thus. 1. Here is the godly man's character, *He is upright*. 2. His crown, *the end of that man is peace*. The words present us with this doctrinal conclusion.

The end of an upright man is crowned with peace.

That I may illustrate this, I shall shew you, 1. Who this upright man is, that we may know him when we meet him. 2. The blessed end he makes, the end of that man is peace.

1. *The upright man's character*. 1. Who this upright man is. I shall shew you the innocency of Christ's dove; we live in an age wherein most pretend to saintship, but it is to be feared they are not upright saints; but, like the woman in the gospel, whom 'Satan bowed together,' Luke xiii. 11. I shall give you several characteristical signs of an upright christian.

I. *Character*. The upright man, his heart is for God. Hence that phrase 'upright in heart,' Psal. lxiv. 10. It is the heart God calls for, Prov. xxiii. 26. 'My son give me thy heart;' the heart is a virgin, hath many suitors, and, among the rest, God himself becomes a suitor. The heart is like the *primum mobile*, which carries all the other orbs along with it. If the heart be for God, then our tears, our alms, all is for God. The heart is the fort-royal that commands all the rest. The high-priest when he was to cut up the beast for sacrifice, the first

thing he looked upon was the heart, and if that had any blemish, it was rejected. It is not the gift, but the heart God respects. 'This people honour me with their lips, but their heart is removed far from me,' Isa. xxix. 13. they did move, not live; like the finger that moves upon the dial, but there is no life within; or like the tombs in the church which have their eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, but no heart to animate that devotion; in religion the heart is all, Eph. v. 9. 'Making melody in your hearts to the Lord.' It is the heart makes the music. The upright man gives God his heart. It is reported of Cranmer, that after his flesh and bones were consumed in the flame, his heart was found whole: so an upright man in the midst of his infirmities, his heart is kept whole for God, he hath not an heart and an heart; an heart for God, and for sin. God loves a broken heart, not a divided heart.

II. *Character.* The upright man works by an upright rule. There are many false crooked rules which the upright man dares not go by. As,

1. *False Rule.* 1. *Opinion.* It is (say some) the opinion of such as are pious and learned. This is a false rule, it is not the opinion of others can make a thing unlawful, warrantable: If a synod of divines, if an assembly of angels, should say we might worship God by an image, their opinion could not make this authentic and lawful; an upright christian will not make another's opinion his Bible.

The best guides may sometimes go wrong. Peter preacheth circumcision, the very doctrine of the pseudo-apostles, Gal. ii. 11. Peter himself was not infallible; the upright man is no adorer of opinion; when the stream of Arianism swelled so high that it did overflow a great part of the world, Athanasius did swim against the stream; he was invincible in the truth.

2. False Rule. 2. Custom. It hath been the custom of the place, or the religion of our ancestors. This is a false rule; 'The customs of the people are vain,' Jer. x. 3. and as for our progenitors and ancestors, a son may better take his land from his father, than his religion. How many of our forefathers lived in times of popery, and stumbled to hell in the dark? are we therefore bound to follow their blind zeal? a wise man will not set his watch by the clock, but by the sun.

3. False Rule. 3. Conscience. It is, saith one, my conscience. This is no rule for an upright man; the conscience of a sinner is defiled, Tit. i. 15. conscience being defiled may err; an erring conscience cannot be a rule, Acts xxvi. 9. 'I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus;' he who is an heretic may plead conscience; admit conscience to be a rule, and we open the door to all mutinies and massacres; if the devil get into a man's conscience, whither will he not carry him?

4. Fake Rule. Another false rule is, Providence; providence sits at the helm, and disposeth of all events and contingencies; but providence is not a rule for the upright man to walk by; we are indeed to observe God's providence, Psal. cvii. 43. 'Whoso is wise will observe these things;' but we are not to be infallibly led by it. Providence is a christian's diurnal, not his Bible.

When the wicked prosper, it doth not follow that their way is good, or that God favours them. God's candle, as Job saith, 'may shine upon their head,' and yet his wrath hang over their head. It is the greatest judgment to thrive in a way of sin. Dionysius, when he had robbed the temple, and afterwards had a fair gale to bring home his stolen plunder; See, saith he, how the gods love sacrilege!

The philosopher saith, a calm is sometimes the forerunner of an earthquake. Haman's banquet did but usher in execution. God may let men succeed, that their judgment may exceed.

The upright man will not go by these rules, but leaving such false guides he makes the word of God his star to follow. This is the judge and umpire of all his actions, 'To the law, to the testimony,' Isa. viii. 20. The Old and New Testaments are the two lips by which God speaks to us, and are the pair of compasses by which the upright man draws the whole circumference of his life.

The Montanists and Enthusiasts talk of revelations, and some now-a-days of a light within them; the canon of scripture is above any revelation. The apostle speaks of a voice from heaven, 1 Pet. i. 18. 'And this voice which came from heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount;' yet, saith he, 'we have a more sure word,' ver. 19. The word of God ought to be more sacred and infallible to us, than a voice from heaven.

III. *Character.* An upright man works from an upright principle, and that is, 'Faith working by love,' Gal. v. 6.

1. He acts from a principle of faith, Hab. ii. 4. 'The just shall live by his faith.' The upright man,

1. Hears in faith; it is called 'the hearing of faith,' Gal. iii. 2. Faith concocts the word. 2. He prays in faith; it is called the 'prayer of faith,' Jam. v. 15. David sprinkles faith in his prayer, Ps. li. 7. 'Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me,' &c. in the Hebrew it runs in the future, 'Thou shalt purge me, thou shalt wash me.' It is the voice of one that believes as well as prays; prayer is the arrow, and faith is the bow out of which we shoot to the throne of grace; a faithless prayer is a fruitless prayer. Prayer without faith is like a gun discharged without a bullet. The upright man prays in

faith. 3. He weeps in faith, Mark ix. 24. 'The father of the child cried out with tears, Lord, I believe.' When his tears dropt to the earth, his faith reached heaven.

2. An upright man acts from a principle of love, Cant. i. 4. 'The upright love thee.' Love is as the spring in the watch, it moves the wheels of obedience; the upright christian is carried to heaven in a fiery chariot of love; love doth meliorate and ripen every duty, and make it come off with a better relish. Divine love is like musk among linen which perfumes it. This gives a fragrant redolency to all our services; A small token sent in love is accepted. 'The upright love thee.'

Hypocrites serve God only for fear; as the slave works in the galley, or as the Parthians worship the devil that he should do them no hurt. Hypocrites' obedience is forced like water out of a still by the fire. The thoughts of hell-fire make the water of tears drop from their eyes. The upright christian acts purely from love, 2 Cor. v. 14. 'The love of Christ constraineth me; an upright soul loves Christ more than he fears hell.'

IV. *Character.* An upright christian works to an upright end: he makes God's glory his ultimate end; his aims are right. God's glory is the upright man's mark, and though he shoots short of the mark, yet because he aims at it, it is accepted. This is the question the upright man propounds to himself, Will this bring glory to God? he labours still to bring in some revenues into the exchequer of heaven; He prefers the glory of God before whatsoever comes in competition with, or stands in opposition against it. If life be laid in one ballance, and God's glory in the other, the glory of God out-weighs. 'They loved not their lives to the death,' Rev. xii. 11. If my wife and children, saith Hierom, should hang about me, and dissuade

me from doing my duty ; if my mother should shew me her breasts that gave me suck, I would trample upon all, and I would fly to the cross.

The upright man prefers the glory of God before his own salvation, Rom. ix. 1. 'I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my kinsmen according to the flesh.' Paul knew it was impossible he could be accursed from Christ. The book of life hath no errata in it ; besides, Paul knew it unlawful to wish he were accursed from Christ ; but the meaning is, supposing, that by his breaking off, and some of the Jews grafting into Christ, God might be more honoured, such was his zeal for God's glory, that he could even wish himself accursed from Christ : God's glory was dearer to him than his own salvation.

The hypocrite serves God, 1. For gain. He looks at the emoluments and profits which come in by religion ; it is not the power of godliness the hypocrite loves, but the gain of godliness ; it is not the fire of the altar, but the gold of the altar which he adores. This is a religious wickedness. 'Ephraim is an heifer that loves to tread out the corn,' Hos. x. 11. God made a law, Deut. xxv. 4. that the ox, while he was treading out the corn, 'should not be muzzled,' he might eat as he would. Ephraim liked this ; hypocrites love religion for the provender it brings ; it is the loaves, not the miracles, draw them to Christ. Demetrius cries up the goddess Diana, Acts xix. 27. but it was not her temple, but her silver shrines he cared for ; many fall in love with religion, not for her beauty but her jewels. Camero of Bourdeaux, a French divine, speaks of a lawyer in his time who turned protestant, only for worldly respect, that he might get preferment. There is a story of a monk, who went like a mortified man with his eyes down upon the ground, who afterwards was made abbot ; and being asked

why he went in that submiss posture with his eyes down? saith he, "I was looking for the keys of the abbey, and now I have found them." The moral of it is good: the hypocrite doth sacrifice *Deo, et lari*; while he serves God, he seeks himself; like the wasp that comes to the gally-pot for the honey, or the fox that follows the lion for the prey he lets fall. The hypocrite makes use of religion, only as the fisherman doth of his net, to catch preferment.

2. He serves God for applause; hypocrites look not at God's glory, but vain glory. They serve God rather to save their credit, than to save their souls: hypocrites pray 'to be seen of men,' Mat. vi. 5. that they may be set upon a theatre, and have spectators; when they give alms 'they blow a trumpet,' Mat vi. 2. and their hearts were as hollow as their trumpets; they did it 'that they might have glory of men,' ver. 2. It was not giving alms, but selling them; they sold them for praise and applause: 'Verily I say unto you, saith Christ, they have their reward.' The hypocrite may make his acquittance, and write, Received in full payment. he hath all he must look for; an upright heart makes the glory of God his centre.

V. *Character.* An upright man is uniform in religion, he looks with an equal eye at all God's commands. 'The tables were written on both sides, Exod. xxxii. 15. an upright christian turns both sides of the tables; he looks at duties of the second table as well as duties of the first; he knows all have the same stamp of divine authority upon them. It is said in the honour of Zachary and Elizabeth, they walked 'in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord;' an upright christian though he fails in every duty, yet he makes conscience of every duty; he will as well worship God in the closet as in the temple; he often casts up the accounts be-

tween God and conscience. He wears his eyes at home as well as abroad; and had rather use the looking-glass of the word to look into his own heart, than the broad spectacles of censure to look into the faults of others; he walks soberly, in acts of temperance, righteously, in acts of justice, godly, in acts of piety.

An hypocrite will pick and choose in religion: in some duties he is zealous, in others remiss; 'Ye pay tythe of mint, and annise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith,' Matt. xxiii. 23. Jehu was zealous against the idolatry of Ahab, but gives a toleration to the golden calves, 2 Kings x. 29. Jehu's obedience was lame on one foot. Some will go over the smooth way of religion, they are for easy duties, but they like not the rugged way of self-denial and mortification: the plough when it comes to a stiff piece of earth, makes a baulk; an upright christian, with Caleb, follows God fully; Numb. xiv. 24. and where we are so ingenuous as to do our best, God will be so indulgent as to pass by our worst.

VI. *Character.* An upright christian doth not go stooping. The Hebrew for upright signifies to go straight. The upright man will not stoop to any thing against his conscience. The Greek for upright used in the Septuagint, signifies, a man that doth not bend. The upright christian doth not whirl about, or sinfully prostitute himself to the lusts and humours of men; the apostles could not flatter or cringe, Acts iv. 19. 'Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye?'

The upright christian dares not palliate or justify the sins of men; this were with holy water to wash the devil's face, Isa. i. 20, 23. 'Woe to them that call evil good, which justify the wicked for reward.'

Propercius speaks of a spring in Italy which makes the black oxen that drink of it look white; a fit emblem of those parasites that can make the worst men look white,

An upright man dares not keep back any part of God's truth, Acts xx. 27. 'I have declared unto you all the counsel of God.' It is cowardice and treason to conceal any part of our commission.

An upright man will not neglect a known duty for fear of losing a party. Some upon this very ground have forborne to declare against error for fear of a party falling off from them. If men will fall off from us for doing our duty, my opinion is, they are better lost than kept. Others have neglected to have the hands of the presbytery laid upon them, only because this would displease a party; how many apocryphal preachers are now among us? in the bishops' times we had many ministers who were no preachers, and now we have many preachers who are no ministers: The upright man had rather be without his head-piece than his breast-plate, and had rather men should account him for imprudent, than God should accuse him for unfaithful. An upright man will not let any interest bias him from the truth. The saints are compared to pillars, Rev. iii. 12. the pillar stands upright. Unsound christians are like willows which will bend every way; a good christian is like the 'palm tree which grows upright,' Jer. x. 5. When we let men lord it over our consciences, if they bid us break our vows, sell our religion, we are ductile, and malleable to any thing, like hot iron which may be beat into any form; like wool, that will receive any die, this argues much unsoundness of heart. An upright christian will not be bent awry, he goes without stooping.

VII. *Character.* An upright christian is zealous for God, Rev. ii. 2. 'Thou canst not bear them which

are evil ;' uprightness is the white, and zeal is the sanguine, which makes the right complexion of a christian. Zeal is a mixed affection ; it is a compound of love and anger, it boils up the spirits to the height, and makes them run over ; zeal is a fire kindled from heaven ; blessed be its anger, for it is without sin, and its wrath, for it is against sin. When Paul saw their idolatry at Athens, ' his spirit was stirred in him,' Acts xvii. 16. he was in a burning fit of zeal. Moses a meek man, tho' cool in his own cause, yet hot in God's, when Israel had committed idolatry, ' Moses' anger waxed hot,' Ex. xxxii. 19. He breaks the tables, grinds the calf to powder, strows it on the water, and makes the children of Israel to drink of it.

An upright christian takes a dishonour done to God more heinous than a disgrace done to himself ; can the true child endure to hear the father reproached ? When Croesus' son, tho' born dumb, saw them go about to kill his father, his tongue strings unloosed, and he cried out, " Kill not king Croesus !" He that can hear Christ's divinity spoken against by the socinian, his ordinances cried down by the libertine, and his blood not rise, and his zeal not sparkle forth, is a traitor to the crown of heaven. Did Christ open his sides for us when the blood ran out, and shall not we open our mouths in his vindication ? how were the saints in former times fired with zeal for God ? They were, as Cyprian affirms, like lions breathing forth the heavenly flame of zeal.

VIII. *Character.* An upright christian will not allow himself in any known sin ; he dares not touch the forbidden fruit, Gen. xxxix. 9. ' How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God ?' Though it be a complexion-sin, he disinherits it. There is no man but doth propend and incline more to one sin than another ; as in the body there

is one humour predominant, or as in the hive there is one master-bee ; so in the heart there is one master-sin : there is one sin which is not only near to a man as the garment, but dear to him as the right eye. This sin is satan's fort-royal, all his strength lies here ; and though we beat down his out-works, gross sin, yet if we let him hold this fort of complexion sin, it is as much as he desires. The devil can hold a man as fast by this one link, as by a whole chain of vices. The fowler hath the bird fast enough by one wing. Now an upright christian will not indulge himself in this complexion-sin, Ps. xviii. 24. ' I was also upright before him, and kept myself from mine iniquity.' An upright christian takes the sacrificing knife of mortification, and runs it through his dearest sin. Herod did many things, but there was one sin so dear to him, that he would sooner behead the prophet, than behead that sin. Herod would have a gap for his incest. An upright heart is not only angry with sin (which may admit of reconciliation), but hates sin, and if he sees this serpent creeping into his bosom, the nearer it is the more he hates it.

IX. *Character.* An upright christian is right in his judgment; he doth not lean to error; his head doth not turn round, Though there will be differences in lesser matters, things indifferent and disputable (and indeed where there are not such clear *vestigia* and footings in scripture, here there must be some grains of allowance), yet in the fundamentals of religion, the upright christian keeps his standing.

Error when it is not only *circa*, but *fundamentum*, is dangerous; a man may as well go to hell by error as by moral vice; gross sins stab to the heart, error poisons; there is less hopes of an erroneous person than a profane; the profane person sins, and doth not repent; the erroneous sins, and holds it a sin to repent; the one is without tears, the other

cries down tears. The upright christian is not tainted with this leprosy ; he hath rectitude in his mind.

X. Character. An upright man is of a sympathizing spirit, he lays to heart the miseries of Zion. This argues much sincerity. Pliny speaks of the golden vine, which feels no injury from wind or storms. The church triumphant may be compared to this golden vine, which is above all storms of injury, and flourisheth in perpetual glory : but the church militant is not a golden vine, but a bleeding vine, now where there is sincerity, there is sympathy.

An hypocrite may be affected with his own miseries, but an upright heart is affected with the church's miseries. I confess an hypocrite may be sensible of the miseries of the public, so far as he himself is concerned, as a man may be troubled to hear of such a ship cast away, wherein were much merchant's goods, because he himself had a share in it, and his cabin is lost ; but an upright christian, though he be not touched in his own particular, he is out of the bill of mortality, yet because it goes ill with the church, and religion seems to lose ground, he counts the church's loss his loss, he weeps in Zion's tears, and bleeds in her wounds.

Jeremy, that weeping prophet, makes the church's miseries his own, Lam. iii. 1. ' I am the man that hath seen affliction.' He suffered least in his own person, for he had a protection granted ; the king gave order that he should be well looked to, Jer. xxxix. 11. 12. but he felt most in regard of sympathy. Though they were Sion's miseries, they were Jeremiah's lamentations ; he felt Israel's hard cords through his soft bed. Nehemiah lays to heart the miseries of the church, his complexion begins to alter, and he looks sad, Neh. ii. 3. ' Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers sepulchres lies waste ?' What,

sad, when the king's cup-bearer and wine is so near? Oh, but it fared ill with the church of God; therefore he grows weary of the court, he leaves his wine, and mingles his drink with weeping. Here was an upright man.

True grace ennobles the heart, dilates the affections, and carries out a man beyond the sphere of his private concerns, making him mind the church's condition as his own. Oh, how few upright saints! may not that charge be drawn up against sundry persons? Amos vi. 4. 'That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, that chaunt to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.'

It is with most people as with a drunken man fast asleep, he is not sensible of any thing that is done; let others be killed by him, and lie a-bleeding, he is not sensible. He sleeps securely in his wine. Thus it is with too many who are drunk with the wine of prosperity, and fallen fast asleep, though the church of God lie bleeding of her wounds by them, and ready to bleed to death; they are not sensible, they have quite forgotten Jerusalem. Like Themistocles, who when one offered to teach him the Art of Memory, he desired that he would teach him the Art of Forgetfulness. The devil hath taught many men this art. They have forgotten the miseries of the church; such may suspect themselves to be unsound. The saints are called lively stones, 1 Pet. ii. 5. therefore if there be any breach in the spiritual house they must be sensible. Is not the church Christ's spouse? and to see her smitten, and Christ through her sides, will not this affect our hearts? 'The church is 'the apple of God's eye,' Zach. ii. 8.

and to see the apple of his eye weep, will not this draw tears from us? An upright heart cannot but grieve to sit by the church's bed-side, and hear her dying groans.

XI. *Character.* The upright man is liberal and communicative. 1. He hath a liberal heart towards the maintenance of God's worship. He will not let the fire of God's altar go out for want of pouring on a little oil; what vast sums of gold and silver did David prepare for the house of God! 1 Chron. xxix. 3. 'Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of my own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal,' &c. Hypocrites, if they may have golden purses, are content to have wooden priests. They love a cheap gospel, they are loath to be put to too much charges. How many have lost their souls to save charges! The upright christian will not offer that to God which costs him nothing.

2. The upright man hath a liberal heart to Christ's poor, Psal. cxii. 9. 'he hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endures for ever.' The Hebrew word for godly signifies merciful: The upright man pours the golden oil of mercy into the wounds of others. The poor man's hand is Christ's treasury; the upright saint is ever casting into Christ's treasury; mercy and liberality is the ensign that integrity displays.

The more excellent any thing is, the more diffusive. The clouds pour down their silver showers, the sun doth send abroad its golden beams. 'The end of life is usefulness.' What benefit is there of a diamond in the rock; and what better is it to have a great estate, if this diamond be shut up in a rocky heart.

What shall we say to self-interested men? are these upright? 'All seek their own,' Phil. ii. 21. you may as well extract oil out of a flint, as a drop of charity from them. Some observe the ground is most barren near golden mines; and indeed it is too often so in a spiritual sense; those whom God hath most enriched with estates, are most barren in good works. How can he say he hath an upright heart, that hath a withered hand? how dares he say he loves God in sincerity? 1 John iii. 17. 'Whoso hath this world's good, and sees his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwells the love of God in him?

What shall we think of such as instead of scattering abroad the seeds of mercy and compassion to others, care not how they wrong others; are these to be accounted upright? 'Christ made himself poor to make us rich, 1 Cor. vi. 8. and these make others poor, to make themselves rich; instead of giving the poor a covering, they take away their covering from them; like the hedge hog that rolls and laps itself in its own soft down, and turns out the bristles to others; an emblem of these, who if they may gratify themselves, they turn out the bristles, they care not what mischief or prejudice they do to others. These are those who raise the honour of their own families out of the ruin of others. They are not birds of paradise, but birds of prey, and which is worse, to do this under the mask of profession, this is just as if a thief should commit a robbery in the judge's own robes; or as if a woman should play the harlot having the Bible lying before her. These are none of the race of the upright. The upright man is a public good in the place where he lives; he is given to works of mercy; he is like God, who 'makes his springs to run among the vallies,' Psal. civ. 10. so doth the upright man make

his springs of charity to run among the vallies of poverty.

XII. Character. The upright man is progressive in holiness; he pursues after further degrees of sanctity, Job xvii. 9. 'He that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.' Uprightness is in the heart, as seed in the earth, which will encrease, Col. ii. 9. Unsound christians rest in some faint desires and formalities; it is with hypocrites as with the body in an atrophy, which, though it receives food, yet thrives not. The upright christian 'follows on to know the Lord,' Hos. vi. 3. It was Charles the fifth's motto, *Plus ultra, on further*: They say of the crocodile, 'it hath never done growing.' Hierom writes of Paulinus, that in the first part of his life he excelled others, in the latter part he excelled himself. The upright man is not like Hezekiah's sun, which went backward, nor like Joshua's sun, which stood still; but like David's sun, which goes forward, and as a champion doth run his race.

Obj. But may a child of God say, I fear I am not upright, for I do not perceive that I wax stronger?

Ans. Thou mayest thrive in grace, though thou doest not perceive it. The plant grows, but not always in one place. Sometimes it grows in the branches, sometimes secretly in the root: so an upright soul still grows, but not always in the same grace; sometimes higher in the branches, in knowledge; sometimes he thrives in the root, in humility; which is as needful as any other growth. If thou art not more tall, yet if thou art more lowly, here is a progress, and this progress evidenceth the vitals of sincerity.

XIII. Character. The upright man orders his conversation aright, Psal. l. 23. 'To him that orders his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.' The upright man is a pattern of ho-

liness; he treads evenly, he walks as Christ did, 1 John ii. 8. Though the main work of religion lies within, yet 'our light must so shine,' that others may behold it; the foundation of sincerity is in the heart, yet its beautiful frontispiece appears in the conversation. The saints are called jewels, because they cast a sparkling lustre in the eyes of others. An upright christian is like Solomon's temple, gold within and without: sincerity is a holy leaven, which if it be in the heart, will work itself into the life, and make it swell and rise as high as heaven, Phil. iii. 20.

Some brag they have good hearts, but their lives are crooked. They hope to go to heaven, but 'their steps take hold of hell,' Prov. v. 5. an upright christian sets a crown of honour upon the head of religion, he doth not only profess the gospel, but adorn it, he labours to walk so regularly and holily, that if we could suppose the Bible to be lost, it might be found again in his life.

XIV. Character. The upright man will be good in bad times. The laurel keeps its freshness and greenness in the winter season, Job xxvi. 6. 'My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go, my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.' Uprightness is a complexion which will not alter. The upright man's zeal is like the fire which the vestal virgins kept in Rome always burning.

The hypocrite seems upright, till times of trial come. The crystal looks like pearl till it comes to the hammering. The hypocrite is good only in sunshine; he cannot sail in a storm, but retreats to the shore. Naturalists report of the Chelydonian stone, that it will retain its virtue no longer than it is enclosed in gold. An emblem of hypocrites who are good only while they are enclosed in golden prosperity; take them out of the gold, and they lose that virtue they did seem to have. Unsound professors, like green timber, shrink in the hot sun of

persecution. The heat of the fiery trial cools their zeal.

An upright man whatsoever he loseth, he holds fast his integrity; he is like wine full of spirits, which is good to the last drawing. The three children, or rather the three champions were invincible in their courage, Dan. iii. 18. neither Nebuchadnezzar's music could flatter them, nor his furnace scare them out of their religion. Paul glories in his sufferings, Rom. v. 3. he rattles his chain, and displays it as an ensign of honour. Ignatius calls his fetters his spiritual pearls; they were as precious to him as a necklace of pearl; thus the upright man, though death be in the way, spurs on to the end of the race; he is most swift towards the centre. Of him it may be said, 'Thou hast kept the best wine until now.'

XV. *Character.* An upright man endeavours to make others upright; it is his work to 'make crooked things straight. Where there is life, there is a power of propagation, 1 Cor. iv. 14. 'In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel;' a good man labours to make others good; as fire doth assimilate, and turn every thing into its own nature, Luke xxi. 32. 'When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.' The upright man is in the place of God to his brother, he encreaseth his knowledge, confirms his faith, enflames his love, if he sees his brother declining, he labours to bring him back; when the house begins to lean, you put under a straight piece of timber to support it. Another beginning to lean to error, the upright christian, as straight timber, doth underprop and support him.

And thus I have set before you the upright man, he is worth a marking and beholding. I have drawn the upright man's picture; and the use I would make of all is this, That you would fall in love with

this picture, and that you would endeavour to resemble it.

And there is a great motive in the text to make you fall in love with uprightness. See what a badge of honour is put upon the upright man. God calls him perfect, 'Mark the perfect man.'

Quest. But can any man be perfect in this life? 'Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?' Prov. xx. 9.

Ans. Far be it from me to hold with the Catherists and Familists, that a christian is pure from sin in this life. If there were no Bible to confute that opinion, a christian's own experience might do it. We find the continual motions of sin working in our members. Paul cries out of 'a body of death,' Rom. vii. 24. The saints, though they are comely, yet black, Cant. i. 5.—Grace in this life is like gold in the ore, full of mixture; but yet, in an evangelical sense, the upright man is said to be perfect, and that five manner of ways.

1. An upright man is perfect with a perfection of parts, though not of degrees. There is no part of him but is embroidered, and bespangled with grace; though he be sanctified but in part, yet in every part; therefore grace in a believer is called the new man, Col. iii. 10. The work of the Spirit in the heart is a thorough work, Psal. li. 2. 'Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity.' Grace in the heart is like air in the twilight; there is no part of the air but hath some light in it, and in this sense the upright man is perfect.

2. The upright man is perfect comparatively, in regard of others. Thus 'Noah was perfect in his generation,' Gen. vi. 9. Noah, compared with the profane world, was a perfect man; gold in the ore compared with lead or brass is perfect; a field of wheat, though it may have some thistles growing in it, yet, compared with a field of tares, is perfect.

3. The upright man is perfect in regard of his aims; he doth level at the mark of perfection: the upright man breathes after perfection, and therefore he is said 'not to sin,' 1 John iii. 9. because though he be not without sin, yet his will is against sin; he hath voted sin down, though this bosom-traitor rebels. When he fails, he weeps; and this is a gospel-perfection.

4. The upright man is perfect through the righteousness of Christ; he is perfectly justified, Col. ii. 10. 'Ye are complete in him;' through the red glass every thing appears red; so through the glass of Christ's blood, the soul is looked upon as beautiful and glorious: He that hath on Christ's seamless coat, is perfect: He that hath the righteousness of God, is perfect, 2 Cor. v. 21.

6. God calls the upright man perfect, because he intends to make him so. Christ calls his spouse his undefiled, Cant. v. 2. 'Open to me, my dove, my undefiled,' or as the original is, my perfect; not that the spouse is so, she hath her spots and blemishes, but yet undefiled, because Christ intends to make her so. God hath chosen us to perfection, Ephes. i. 4. A limner that hath begun the rude draught of a picture, he looks upon it what he intends to make it; he intends to lay it in its own orient colours; in this life there is but the first draught, the imperfect lineaments of grace drawn in our souls, yet God calls us perfect, because he intends by the pencil of the holy Ghost to draw us out in our orient beauty, and lay the vermilion colour of glory upon us. Thus the upright man is perfect, it is as sure to be done as if it were done already.

And so much for the first part of my text. The upright man's character.

I proceed now briefly to the second, which is, the upright man's crown, in these words, 'The end

of that man is peace;' as the upright is honourable while he lives, he is perfect; so he is happy when he dies. 'His end is peace.' The word peace, incircles all blessedness in it. 'The end of that man is peace;' a wise man looks to the end of a thing, Eccl. vii. 8. 'Better is the end of a thing than the beginning.' So peaceable is the end of an upright man, that Balaam desired it, Numb. xxiii. 10. 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'

Now the upright man goes off the stage of this world wearing a triple crown of peace. 1. He hath peace with God; God saith to him, 'Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' I have nothing against thee; thou hast laid thy sins to heart, and I will not lay them to thy charge. The Jewish Rabbins say, that Moses died with a kiss from God's mouth; the upright man dies embracing Christ and kissing the promises.

2. He hath peace with conscience, 1 John v. 10. 'He that believes hath the witness in himself;' his end must needs be peace that hath a smiling God, and a smiling conscience. Austin calls it the paradise of a good conscience: a godly man is in this paradise before he dies. What sweet music doth the bird of conscience make in the breast of a believer! be of good comfort saith conscience, thou hast walked uprightly in a crooked generation, fear not death, This is the foretaste of heaven; here is manna in the golden pot; he that dies with peace of conscience, flies to heaven as Noah's dove to the ark with an olive Branch in his mouth.

3. The upright man hath peace with the saints; he hath their good word, they embalm his memory, and erect for him monuments of honour in their hearts. Thus the upright man's end is peace, he is renowned among the people of God; he inherits

not their censure, but their praise; he is carried to his grave with a shower of tears.

Use 1. Information. See a great difference between the godly and the wicked in their end. 'The end of the upright man is peace,' but 'the end of the wicked is to be cut off,' Psal. xxxvii. 38. A wicked man's end is shame and horror, he dies with convulsion-fits of conscience; he lives in a calm, but dies in a storm, Job xxvii. 20. 'A tempest steals him away in the night;' like those Pliny speaks of, which swim along pleasantly till they fall into the dead sea; to every sinner I say as Abner to Joab, 2 Sam. ii. 26. 'Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?'

What is the end of hypocrites? Job viii. 18. 'Their hope shall be cut off:' What is the end of apostates? 2 Pet. ii. 20. 'For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, their latter end is worse with them.' Peter Castellon, bishop of Marston, having gotten a great estate, began to inveigh in his sermons at Orleans against the profession of religion; sitting at a time in his chair, he fell into a strange disease which no physician had ever seen; one part of his body was extreme hot, and burned like fire, the other part cold and frozen like ice, and thus with cries and groans finished his life. 'The end of the wicked is to be cut off;' when they are at their lives end, they are at their wits end, Psal. cvii. 27.

Object. But do we not see the worst men go out of the world as quietly and smoothly as any; do not they die in peace?

Ans. 1. If a wicked man seems to have peace at death, it is not from the knowledge of his happiness, but from the ignorance of his danger; Haman went merrily to the banquet, but little did he think what

a second course was to be served in, and that his life must pay the shot.

Ans. 2. A wicked man may die in a lethargy, but not in peace; Nabal died quietly, but he were a fool that would wish his soul with Nabal's. Conscience may be like a lion asleep, but when this lion awakes, it will roar upon the sinner.

Ans. 3. A wicked man may die in presumption, but not in peace; he hopes all is well with him, but there is a great deal of difference between presumption and peace. It will be so much the worse to go to hell with hopes of heaven; a wicked man fancies to himself a good condition; he dies in a fancy, but not in peace; and observe, for the most part, God drives a sinner out of his fool's paradise before he dies. God lets loose conscience upon him, guilt spoils his music; and before his life is cut off, his hope is cut off. I will conclude this with that saying of Christ, Luke xi. 21. 'While the strong man keeps possession, all his goods are in peace.' The peace a sinner seems to have, is but the devil's peace: His serenity is but security, and whatever he may promise himself, Satan doth but still him with rattles. He that lives graceless, dies peaceless.

Use. 2. Here is infinite comfort to the upright man, 'His end is peace; if you look to the beginning of his life it is not eligible, his life is interwoven with troubles, 'We are troubled on every side,' 2 Cor. iv. 8. like a ship that hath the waves beating on both sides; but, the end is peace; and the smoothness of the end may make amends for the ruggedness of the way. The upright man, though he lives in a storm, he dies in a calm, Jer. xxxi. 17. 'There is hope in thine end.' The end crowns all; the upright man, though he drinks wormwood while he lives, yet he swims in honey when he dies; the upright man with Simeon, 'Departs in peace,' Luke ii, 29. and his ending in peace is but his en-

trance into peace,' Isa. lvii. 2. 'He shall enter into peace; his dying day is his marriage day. Grace gives both the flowers and the crop: the sweet flowers of peace here, and the full crop of glory hereafter. Paula, that religious lady, when one had read to her that scripture, Cant. ii. 11. 'The singing of birds is come:' yes saith she, the singing of birds is now come, and so being full of peace mounted off from her death-bed, and went triumphing, and as it were, singing into heaven: Then, 'Shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart,' Psal. xxxii. 11. Peace is that never-fading garland which shall be set upon the head of the upright, so saith my text, 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.'

THE

ONE THING NECESSARY.

PHIL. ii. 12. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

IF there be any thing excellent, it is salvation; if there be any thing necessary, it is working out salvation; if there be any tool to work with, it is holy fear; 'Work out your salvation with fear.'

The words are a grave and serious exhortation, needful, not only for those christians which lived in the apostle's time, but may fitly be calculated for the meridian of this age wherein we live.

In the text observe first, the manner of insinuation, My beloved. The apostle did labour by all means to ingratiate and wind himself into the hearts of the Philippians. He prescribes a gospel pill, and dips it

in sugar, that it may go down the better. He labours to possess the Philippians of this maxim, that whatever he did speak to them about their souls, was purely in love. Sometimes he steeps his words in tears, and speaks weeping; sometimes he dips them in honey. Paul knew how to reprove, it was part of his office, and a piece of his spiritual surgery; Rebuke them sharply, or as the Greek is, cuttingly; but when he had done lancing, he knew how to pour wine and oil into the wound. He holds forth the breast as a nurse, and willing not only to impart his sermon to the people, but his soul.

And herein the apostle Paul sets a copy to all the ministers of Christ; their hearts must be fired not with heat of passion, but love towards their people. They are Christ's ambassadors, and must come with an olive branch of peace in their mouths. 'If I speak with the tongue of angels, and have not love, I am as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal,' 1 Cor. xiii. 1. It is better to love as a pastor, than speak as an angel. Love is that flower of delight which should grow in the heart, and send forth its perfume in the lips of every minister. Those which come in the spirit of meekness to their people, are like to do most good; knotty hearts will be soonest wrought upon by love; the fire will go where the wedge cannot; the thunderbolt may break, but the sun melts: when love sends forth its sweet influence, it melts a sinner into tears; the joints being hard and stiff, the rubbing them with oil doth supple them; the best way to supple an hard heart, and make it tender, is to ply it with this oil of love. And thus much for the manner of insinuation, my beloved.

I proceed now to the exhortation itself; 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.' Which words do branch themselves into these three particulars.

First, The act, work out. 2dly, The object, your own salvation. 3dly, The manner how we should work it out, with fear and trembling. I shall speak principally of the two first, and draw in the other briefly in the applicatory.

The preposition is this, That it should be a christian's great work to be working out his salvation. The great God hath put us into the world as into a vineyard, and here is the work he hath set us about, the working out salvation; there is a parallel scripture to this, 2 Pet. i. 10. 'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.' When estate, friends, life cannot be made sure, let this be made sure. The Greek signifies to study, or beat the brains about a thing. This word in the text, 'work out,' implies two things. First, a shaking off spiritual sloth.' Sloth is a pillow on which many have slept the sleep of death. Secondly, it implies an uniting and rallying together all the powers of our souls that we may attend the business of salvation. God hath enacted a law in paradise, that no man shall eat of the tree of life, but in the sweat of his brows.

That which is in the text called working, hath various appellations in scripture. First, Sometimes it is called striving, Luke xiii. 29, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate;' strive as in an agony, or bloody sweat. Secondly, Sometimes it is called seeking, Mat. vi. 33. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God; as a man that hath lost a treasure seeks diligently for it. We have lost salvation. Adam, by eating the tree of knowledge, lost the tree of life. Now seek, take David's candle and lanthorn, and search for salvation. The word seek, as a learned writer notes, signifies to pursue a thing with inflamed desires, as a condemned man desires a pardon. Thirdly, Sometimes it is called running in a race,

1 Cor. ix. 24. 'So run that ye may obtain.' The apostle seems to allude to the games of Olympus, which were celebrated every fifth year in honour of Jupiter; in those games they did put forth all their strength. It is a long race from earth to heaven; lay aside all weights of sin which will hinder you in the race, and reach forward with a winged swiftness to lay hold upon the mark. Fourthly, Sometimes it is called offering violence to heaven, Matt. xi. 12. 'The kingdom of heaven suffers violence.' There must not only be diligence, but violence; we must not only pray, but pray fervently, James v. 16. not only repent, but 'be zealous and repent,' Rev. iii. 19. not only love, but 'be sick of love,' Cant. ii. 5. This is offering violence; it is a metaphor taken from a castle that holds out in siege, and will not be taken but by storm; so the kingdom of heaven holds out against a supine lazy christian, and will not be taken but by storm.

I proceed now to the reasons enforcing this holy sweat and industry about salvation; and they are three; we must work out our salvation, because of,

1. The difficulty of this work. 2. The rareness of it. 3. The possibility of it.

1. The difficulty of this work; it is a work that may make us labour to the going down of the sun of our life, Dan. vi. 14. Now this difficulty about the work of salvation will appear four manner of ways.

First, From the nature of the work. There is a metamorphosis to be wrought. 1. The heart is to be changed. The heart is the very nursery of sin. It is the magazine where all the weapons of unrighteousness lie. It is a lesser hell. The heart is full of antipathy against God, it is angry with converting grace: now, that the bias of the heart should be changed, what a work is this! How should we beg of Christ, that he who turned the water into wine,

would turn the water, or rather poison of nature into the wine of grace?

Secondly, The current of the life is to be altered. That the tide of sin, which before did run so strong, should be turned; this is not easy. That the sinner which before was sailing hell-ward, and wanted neither wind nor tide to carry him, should now alter his course, and sail to a new port, this is a work indeed. The water may easily be dammed up, but no art or industry can make it run backward in its own channel. It was by a miracle that the river Jordan was driven back. To see the earthly man become heavenly: to see a sinner move contrary to himself in the ways of Christ and holiness, is as strange as to see the earth fly upward, or the bowl run contrary to its own bias.

Secondly, Salvation-work is difficult in regard of the deceits about the work. The heart is ready to take many false stiches in this work of salvation. It hath the heart of self-deceit, like those that can cog a die; therefore Austin cries out, The heart is a great deep. The heart is apt to deceive about this work of salvation two ways.

First, It will often make a man take morality for grace. Alas, morality is but nature refined, old Adam put in a better dress. A moralized man is but a tame devil. There may be a fair stream of civility running, and yet much vermin of pride and atheism lie at the bottom; the garnishment of moral excellency, is but the setting a garland of flowers upon a dead man. How easy is it to be deceived in the business of salvation, and with Ixion to embrace a cloud instead of Juno? Civility is not grace, though it be a good wall to plant the vine of grace against.

Secondly, The heart will be ready to deceive us in this work of salvation, and make us take a shew of grace for grace. Pliny saith, there is a beryl stone resembles the true diamond. So there is something

that looks like grace, which is not; there are two graces which help much to the working our salvation, and we are soon deceived in them. First, Repentance. True repentance is when we weep for sin; when we weep for it as it is a defiling thing, it blots the image of God, stains the virginity of the soul; as it is an act of unkindness, it is a kicking against the breast that gives us milk: but how easy is it to prevaricate in this? 1. Many think they repent, when it is not the offence, but the penalty troubles them; not the treason, but the bloody axe. 2. They think they repent when they shed a few tears; but though this ice begins to melt a little, it freezeth again; they go on still in sin; many weep for their unkind dealings with God, as Saul did for his unkindness to David; He said to David, 'Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil,' 1 Sam. xxiv. 17. 'And he lift up his voice and wept,' ver. 16. But for all this he follows David again, and pursues after him, 1 Sam. xxvi. Secondly, So men can lift up their voice and weep for sin, yet follow their sins again. Thirdly, others forsake sin, but still they retain the love of it in their hearts. Like the snake that casts the coat, but keeps the sting; there is as much difference between false and true tears, as between channel water and spring water.

Secondly, Another grace conducive to salvation, is faith; but how easily are men cozened with a counterfeit pearl? There is this deceit about faith, when men apply the promises of the word, but not the precepts; the promise is salvation, the precept is 'working out; they will take the one, but not the other; as if a physician should prescribe two recipes to his patient, a pill and a julip, he will take the julip because it is pleasant, but not the pill: many will take Christ as a Saviour, but refuse him

as a prince ; receive his benefits, but not submit to his laws ; this is to ‘ put asunder what God hath joined together.’ There being therefore such mistakes and deceits about this work of salvation, we had need be the more cautious and curious in this work.

Thirdly, the difficulty about salvation-work ariseth from the remora’s and hindrances of this work. These hindrances are either,

1. From within, viz. the flesh : this is a sly enemy. The flesh cries out for ease ; it ‘ lusts against the spirit,’ Gal. v. 17. ‘ We are bid to ‘ crucify the flesh,’ Gal. v. 24. but how many wounds must we give with the sword of the Spirit, before the flesh will be perfectly crucified ?

2. We meet with hindrances in this work from without.

1. Tentations ; our whole life, saith Austin, is a temptation. We tread among snares ; there is a snare in company recreation, yea, our table is oft a snare ; Satan is still fishing for our souls : how often doth he lay a train of temptation to blow up the fort of our grace ! The apostle tells us of his ‘ fiery darts.’ Eph. vi. 16. Tentations are called darts for their swiftness, they are shot in suddenly ; and fiery for their terribleness, they are shot like flashes of fire into the soul, which do amaze and affright ; and doth not this retard the work of salvation, and make it difficult ?

2. Reproaches ; ‘ This sect is every where spoken against,’ Acts xxviii. 22. The old serpent is ever spitting his venom at religion, and the professors of it. I may allude to that, 1 Cor. x. 1. ‘ All our fathers were under the cloud.’ All the saints of old have passed to heaven under a cloud of contumely and reproach ; the world puts them in their black book, whom God will put in his rubrick : The throat of the wicked is an open sepulchre, to

bury the good names of professors in. Those who have been the ensign-bearers of religion, and have carried her colours.

1. Sometimes they have been traduced and slandered. Paul was reported to be a seditious man, 2 Tim. ii. 9. The popish Rhemists traduced Calvin, and fathered upon him this opinion, that God was the author of sin, and that he died cursing; though Beza, who was an eye-witness, and wrote his life and death, confuted their slander, and relates what a comfortable end he made. Martin Bucer, that blessed man, who cried out in an holy triumph, I am Christ's, and the devil hath nothing to do with me; yet the papists slanderously report of him, that he should deny Christ to be the Messiah come in the flesh; but he who was the orator at his funeral, was his compurgator. The like slander did the Jesuites in Burgundia raise of Beza, that holy man; they say, that he perceiving death to be at hand, renounced his former profession of the gospel, and was perfectly reconciled to the church of Rome. This was so false, that Beza, who lived after the slander went abroad, did himself, with great indignation, refute it.

2. Sometimes the saints have had the trial of cruel mockings, Heb. xi. 36. Cyprian was called in a jeer Coprian; Athanasius, Satanasius; David was the song of the drunkards, Psal. lxxix. 12. I doubt not but Noah had many a bitter taunt when he was building the ark so many years before the flood, they would laugh at him, and censure him for an old doating fool, that would be wiser than all the world beside. Thus when we see the flood of God's wrath coming upon the world, and we begin to build the ark and work out our salvation, men will be venting their scorn and derision: What? you will be holier than others, more precise than needs? all this serves to retard salvation-work, and make it difficult.

3. A third hindrance in this work, is open violence, Gal. iv. 29. 'As he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so is it now;' no sooner doth a man give up his name to Christ, and seriously set upon the working out his salvation, but the world raiseth her train-bands, and sets all the Militia of Hell against him. God's church is like Abraham's ram, tied in a bush of thorns, witness the ten persecutions in the time of Nero, Domitian, Trajan, &c. A man strictly holy is the white that is shot at; if the world's music will not prevail, it hath its furnace ready, 2 Tim. iii. 12. be assured Christ and his cross are never parted. It is with us in our building for heaven, as it was with the Jews in their building the wall; 'Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon,' Nehem. iv. 17. So we must not only be builders, but warriors; with one hand we must work, and with the other hand hold a weapon, viz. the sword of the Spirit, and fight the good fight of faith; this is another hindrance in the work, no sooner do we begin to set out for heaven, but 'Bonds and afflictions abide us,' Acts xx. 23. The world sounds an alarm, and no cessation of arms till death.

4. That which makes salvation-work hard, is, it is a slippery work. 'Look to yourselves that we lose not those things which we have wrought,' John ii. 8. This work falls down almost as fast as we build. An ordinary artificer, when he hath been at work, he finds his work the next morning just as he left it; but it is not so with us, when we have been working out salvation by prayer, fasting, meditation, and leave this work awhile, we shall not find our work as we left it, a great deal of our work is fallen down again. We had need be often

called upon, 'To strengthen the things which are ready to die,' Rev. iii. 2. No sooner is a christian taken off from the fire of the sanctuary, but he is ready to cool and freeze again in security. He is like a watch, when he hath been wound up towards heaven, he doth quickly unwind to earth and sin again. When the gold hath been purified in the furnace, it remains pure; but it is not so with the heart, let it be heated in an ordinance, let it be purged in the furnace of affliction, it doth not remain pure, but quickly gathers soil and corruption; we are seldom long in a good frame. All this shews how difficult the work of salvation is, we must not only work, but set a watch too.

Quest. 1. But why hath God made the way to heaven so hard, why must there be this working?

Ans. 1. To make us set an high estimate upon heavenly things. If salvation were easily come by, we should not have valued it to its worth. If diamonds were ordinary, they would be slighted; but because they are hard to come by, they are in great esteem. Tertullian saith, that when pearls grew common in Rome, they wore them upon their shoes, which was the next way to tread them under feet. Salvation is such a pearl as God will not have slighted, therefore it must be acquired by holy industry. God loves not that the price of spiritual mercies should fall; they that will have this precious flower of salvation, must gather it in the sweat of their brows.

2. We must work and take pains that we may be fitted for heaven; a father will give his son the inheritance, but first he will give him education that he may be fit for it. God will settle salvation upon us, but first, he 'Makes us meet for the inheritance,' Col. i. 12. While we are working, we are running and fitting for heaven; sin is weakening, grace is ripening; while we are in com-

bat, we are fitting for the crown. First you season the vessel before you pour in the wine; God will season us with grace, before he pours in the wine of glory.

Quest. 2. But if there must be this working, how is it said that Christ's yoke is easy?

Ans. To the fleshly part it is hard; but where there is a new and holy principle infused, Christ's yoke is easy, 'tis not a yoke but a crown. When the wheels of the soul are oiled with grace, now a christian moves in the way of religion with facility and alacrity. A child delights in obeying his father; it was Paul's heaven to serve God. 'I delight in the law of God in the inner man,' Rom. vii. 22. and how swiftly is the soul carried upon those wings. Christ's service is freedom; therefore the Apostle calls it, 'A law of liberty,' Jam. i. 25. To serve God, to love God, to enjoy God, is the sweetest liberty in the world; Christ doth not, as Pharaoh, 'Make his people serve with rigour,' Exod. i. 13. but he lays upon them the 'Constraints of love,' 2 Cor. v. 14. His precepts are not burthens, but privileges: not fetters, but ornaments. Thus his yoke is easy, but to an unregenerate man the yoke hath a nail in it, it galls and vexeth, nay so far as corruption prevails, the best heart finds some reluctance. And so much for the first reason, the difficulty of the work.

The second reason why we must put forth so much holy sweat and industry about salvation, is, because of the rareness of this work; 'but few shall be saved;' therefore we had need work the harder that we may be in the number of these few. The way to hell is a broad way; the causeway of it is paved with riches and pleasure; it hath a golden causeway, therefore there are daily so many travellers in it; but the way to heaven lies out of the road, it is an unbeaten path, and few can find it. The

criers up of universal grace, say, that Christ died intentionally for all; but then why are not all saved? can Christ be frustrate of his intention? some are so gross to aver that all shall actually be saved: but hath not our Lord Christ told us, 'That the gate is strait, and few there be that find it,' Matt. vii. 14. how all can go in at this gate, and yet but few find it, seems to me a paradox. The drove of men goes to the shambles; 'But a remnant shall be saved,' Rom. ix. 27. The whole piece is cut off and goes to the devil, a remnant only saved; most of the world are wind-falls. That olive tree, Isa. xvii. 16. With two or three olive berries on the top of the uppermost bough may be a fit emblem of the paucity of those that shall be saved. Satan goes away with the harvest, God hath only a few gleanings. In this great city, if it should go by vote and by pole, the devil would carry it. Some of the learned observe, that divide the world into thirty equal parts, nineteen of those thirty are overspread with heathenish idolatry; six of the eleven remaining with the doctrine of Mahomet, so that there remains but five parts of the thirty where there is any thing of christianity; among those christians so many seduced papists on one hand, and formal protestants on the other, that surely but few are saved. It being thus, it should make us strive the more, that we may be of the number of those few who shall inherit salvation.

The third reason why we should put forth so much vigour about the work of salvation, is, because of the possibility of the work. Impossibility kills all endeavour; who will take pains for that which he thinks there is no hope of ever obtaining? but 'there is hope in Israel concerning this.' Salvation is a thing feasible, it may be had; O christians, though the gate of paradise be strait, yet the gate is open. It is shut against the devils, it is yet

open to you; who would not crowd hard to get in? It is but paring off your sins, it is but unloading some of your thick clay; it is but assuaging the swelling humour of your pride, and you may get in at the strait gate. This possibility, nay probability of salvation may put life into your endeavour. If there be corn to be had, why should you sit starving in your sins any longer?

Use 1. Information. It shews us that salvation is not so facile a thing as most do imagine; many do fancy a fine easy way to heaven; a sigh, or tear, or Lord have mercy, will save them; these are in a golden dream. The text tells us of working out salvation. Basil compares the way to heaven to a man going over a narrow bridge, if he treads never so little aside, he falls in and drowns. He that thinks the way is easy, was never yet in the way. There are so many precepts to obey, so many promises to believe, so many tentations to resist, that we shall not find the way easy. There must not only be diligence, but violence. Beloved, heaven's gate is not like that iron gate which opened to Peter of its own accord; no, there must be knocking and striving. Jacob obtained the blessing in the garments of Esau. Esau in the Hebrew signifies working; if you would wear this embroidered garment of salvation, you must have it by working, 'work out your salvation.' Hannibal forced a way for his army over the Alps; we must force our way to glory through difficulties. I like the impress one gave, viz. a hand with a pick-axe digging a way through a rock, with this motto, "either I will find a way, or make it;" we must to heaven thro' sweat and blood. There is nothing got without hard labour: You cannot have the world without labour, and would you have Christ and salvation? Do men dig for lead and not much more for gold? It is observable that Adam in paradise was not idle, but did dress the vineyard.

The angels themselves, though they are glorious spirits, yet they are ministring spirits. God hath put this diligence into creatures void of reason. The bee is a most industrious creature, all of them have their several work to do in the hive. Some of the bees do trim the honey, some work the wax, some frame the comb, and others lie sentinel at the door of the hive to keep out the drone. Is the bee so industrious by the instinct of nature in the working of honey? Oh how industrious ought we to be in the working out salvation!

Use 2. Reproof. Out of this text, as out of a spiritual quiver, I may draw several arrows of reproof.

1. It reproves them that prefer other things before salvation; who labour more for the bread that perisheth, than for salvation. Their chief care is how to live in the world, and get a present subsistence; 'All the labour of man is for his mouth.' Eccl. vi. 7. The body shall be tended and looked after, which is but the brutish part, but the poor soul is kept to hard commons; this is for christians to turn heathens, Matt. vi. 'For after all these things the Gentiles seek.' God never sent us hither only to wear fine clothes, or fare sumptuously every day; but that we should drive a trade for salvation. If this be not done, we have shot before the mark all this while. We have but trimmed the scabbard, but let the soul, that blade of admirable metal, rust and canker.

2. *Branch*; It reproves such as instead of working stand all the day idle in the vineyard. They have some faint velleities, they wish for salvation but do not work. The idle christian is like a soldier that hath a good mind to the spoil and treasure of a castle, but is loath to put himself to any trouble or hazard: men could be content to have salvation, if it would, (like those ripe figs) Nahum iii. 12. 'Fall into

the mouth of the eater.' The 'sluggard puts his hand in his bosom,' Prov. xix. 24. and is loath to pluck it out, though it be to lay hold of a crown. 'They stretch themselves (saith the prophet) upon beds of ivory, Amos vi. 4. Men had rather lie upon a soft bed, than go to heaven in a fiery chariot of zeal. Chrysostom calls idleness the root of despair; an idle christian revels out his time unprofitably. He stands in the world for a cypher, and be assured God writes down no cyphers in the book of life. An idle person is a fit subject for the devil to work upon. We do not use to sow seed in fallow ground, but the devil sows most of his seed of temptation in hearts that lie fallow. Hierome observes of the crab-fish, that when the oyster opens herself the crab-fish flings into her mouth a little stone that the oyster cannot shut herself again, and so the crab devours her: The devil like this crab when he takes men gaping, (as it is usual for them that are idle) then he throws in his stones of temptation, and so devours them.

3. Branch; It reproves such as instead of making religion a work, they make it a play; these are they that have found out a new way to heaven, who make the way easier than ever Christ made it; such as tell us there is no law to a believer, and if there be no law, then no transgression; and if no transgression, then there needs no repentance. Between the Arminian and the Antinomian it is a very short cut to heaven; the Arminian saith we have power in ourselves to believe, and the Antinomian saith that a believer is not under any law, he is bound to no duty, Christ hath done all for him. So that by taking this stride he is presently in heaven: If this doctrine be true, then every day is a play-day, and the Apostle mistook himself when he said, 'Work out your salvation.'

4. Branch; It reproves them that instead of

working out their salvation, do dispute away their salvation. 1. Such as dispute against the authority of scripture, and would make our faith a fable. 2. Such as dispute against the immortality of the soul, and so at once would pull down the court of conscience. 3. Such as dispute against the divinity of Christ. This may be called indeed the doctrine of devils. It is a doctrine diametrically opposite to that scripture, 1 John v. 20. 'We are in him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ; this is the true God,' which text is a bulwark against the Socinian. O the patience of God, that those who open their mouths blasphemously against Christ, the earth doth not open her mouth and swallow them up! That such should have any connivance, (if not more) who dare impugn the divinity of the Son of God, is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation. Some of the best heathen writers affirm that there were edicts and punishments enacted by heathen princes and states in matters of religion. An heathen would not suffer his God to be blasphemed; and shall christians suffer it?

5. Branch; It reproves them who instead of pursuing their own salvation, pursue their own destruction. These are profane persons, who go to hell in the sweat of their brows.

1. Drunkards; What they get in the temple, they lose in the tavern; they steep the sermons they hear in wine. 'Woe to the drunkards in Ephraim,' Isa. xxviii. 1. I may change the word and say, the drunkards of England. There is a kind of wine you call lachrymae, which signifies tears; such a wine the damned drink of, which is burned with the wrath of God, and this shall be the drunkards cup.

2. Swearers; These swear away their salvation. The swearer it seems hath but bad credit; he must stake down an oath, or none will trust him; but

Let him remember he runs his soul into a premunire. Swear not at all; if we must give an account for idle words, shall not idle oaths be put in the count-book? When the scab breaketh forth in the lip, that man is to be pronounced unclean. Every oath is a wound given to the soul, and every wound hath a mouth to cry to heaven for vengeance. Some are boiled up to that height of wickedness, that, like mad dogs, they fly in the face of heaven by cursing; and let a minister tell them of their sin, let him but go about to bring them home again, as the law did provide one should bring home his neighbour's ass when he went astray, Exod. xxiii. 4. and they will kick against the reproof. Like lime, by pouring on the water of a reprehension, they are the more enflamed. These are upon the spar to damnation; but I will not touch this pitch any longer.

3. Adulterers; The adulterer's heart, like the swearer's tongue, 'is set on fire of hell.' Creatures void of reason will rise up in judgment against such. It is reported of the stork, that chaste creature, that it confines itself to its own nest; and if any of the storks leaving his own mate, joins with any other, the rest fall upon him, and pluck his feathers from him. God would have the adulterer put to death, Deut. xxii. 22. Gregory observes concerning the stream of fire and brimstone poured upon Sodom, God sent that noisome plague to let them see the filthiness of their sin. This sin of adultery is a soul-damning sin, 1 Cor. vi. 9. The adulterer, like the flie, doth so long fly about the candle, that at last he singeth his soul. This sin, though it begins comical, it ends tragical; will it not be bitterness in the end? 2 Sam. ii. 26. This sweet calm is before an earthquake; after the womens' hair, come the lion's teeth, Rev. ix. 7.

6. Branch. It reproves them who put off this great work of salvation till they are past their la-

bour. They put of repentance till old age and sickness.

1. Till old age; when they are fit for no other work, then they will begin this. Old age is no good age to repent in. When the fingers are stiff, it is ill learning to play on the lute; when the heart is grown hard and stiff in wickedness, it is but ill tuning the penitential string; a tender plant is easily removed, but it is hard to pluck up an old tree that is rooted. An old sinner that hath been a long time rooting in sin is hardly plucked out of his natural estate. In matters of salvation it is dangerous to adjourn; the longer men go on in sin, the more full possession Satan hath of them; the longer poison stays in the stomach, the more mortal. It is a madness to put off the work of salvation till evening and sunset. 'The night cometh when no man can work.' It were a very unwise course for a mariner, while the ship is sound, the tackling strong, the wind favourable, the sea calm, to lie idle at anchor; and when the ship begins to leak, and the tempest to rise, now to launch forth and hoist up sails for a voyage; so he is who neglects the time of health and strength, and when old age comes, and his tackling is even broken, now begins his voyage towards heaven. It is very questionable whether God will accept of our repentance when it is so late. He calls for the first-fruits, and do we think to put him off with the gleanings? this was not the least reason why God rejected Cain's offering, because it was so long before he brought it. 'In process of time Cain brought the fruit of the ground, Gen. iv. 3. or, as the original is more emphatical, 'at the end of many days;' it seems it was stale before he brought it. How unworthy is this, for men to give the devil their strength and marrow, and then come and lay their old bones upon God's altar? It is true, God may shew mercy at last, but

such ran a desperate hazard; a sinner in the time of his old age, sleeps between death and the devil, as Peter slept between two soldiers.

2. Till sickness; he were very unwise, who being to go a long journey, should lay the heaviest load on the weakest horse. What imprudence is it to lay the heavy load of repentance on thyself, when in-feeble by sickness? when the hands shake, the lips quiver, the sinews shrink, the heart faints? Perhaps thou shalt have no time of sickness; perhaps not the use of thy senses; perhaps God will deny thee his grace, and then where is thy repentance? it is just, that he who forgets God in the time of health, God should forget him in the time of sickness.

7. *Branch.* It reproves them who begin to work, but do not work out their salvation. It is not enough to begin well, it is Justinian's note; some have, like Jehu, driven furiously in religion, but within a while their chariot wheels have been taken off. We live in the fall of the leaf: divers we have observed, who did once put forth fair blossoms, and give good hopes of their conversion, but their spring is turned into autumn; they have left off working for heaven; a sign the motion was but artificial, not vital. 'Israel hath cast off the thing that is good,' Hos. viii. 3. Such as were once diligent and zealous in prayer, hearing, holy conference, now they have left off the thing that is good; they have tired in the march to heaven. I have often thought there are many may be resembled to Nebuchadnezzar's image, at first they seem to have an head of gold; they looked like glorious professors; then afterwards they seemed to be silver, then brass, then iron, then clay; they have at last degenerated into sin: thus like fair mornings they have been soon overcast. Epiphanius observes of the Gnosticks, at first they seemed to be a strict holy people, but

afterwards they fell to libertinism. Some are grown so impudent, that they brag of their apostacy; time was when they did read and pray in their families, but now they thank God they are grown wiser, and they surcease from these duties; just as if you should hear the devil boast, that once he was an angel of light, but now he is turned to an angel of darkness; apostates are the richest spoils that Satan goes away with; these he will hang up in hell for triumph. Such as have left off working, let them read that thundering scripture. 2 Pet. ii. 21. For 'It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment.' By leaving off working, they unravel all they have done before; 'they lose their reward.' He that runs half the race and then faints, loseth the garland.

Use. 8. And so I proceed to the next use which is of exhortation, to persuade you all in the bowels of Christ to set about this great work, 'the working out your salvation.' Beloved, here is a plot for heaven, and I would have you all in this plot; rally together all the powers of your souls; give neither God nor yourselves rest, till you have 'made your election sure.' Christians, fall to work; do it early, earnestly, incessantly. Pursue salvation as in a holy chace; other things are but matters of convenience, salvation is a matter of necessity. Either you must do the work that christians are doing, or you must do the work that devils are doing. Oh, you that never yet took one stitch in this work of salvation, now begin. Religion is a good trade if it be well followed. Be assured there is no salvation without working. But here I must lay down a caution to prevent mistakes.

Caution. Though we shall not be saved without working, yet not for our working. We do not work out salvation by way of merit. Bellarmine

saith, we merit heaven *ex condigno*; no; though we are saved in the use of means, yet by grace too, Eph. ii. 5. There must be plowing and sowing the ground, but yet no crop can be expected without the influence of the sun: so there must be working, but no crop of salvation can be hoped for without the sunshine of free grace: 'It is your Father's good pleasure to give you a kingdom, Luke xii. 32. Give? why, might some say, we have wrought hard for it? ay, but heaven is a donative; though you work for it, yet it is the good pleasure of God to bestow it. Still look up to Christ's merit; it is not your sweat, but his blood saves. That your working cannot merit salvation, is clear, 'It is God that works in you to will and to do, ver. 13. It is not your working, but God's co-working. For as the scribe guides the child's hand, or he cannot write; so the Spirit of God must afford his auxiliary concurrence, or our work stands still, how then can any man merit by working, when it is God that helps him to work? I shall now, having laid down this caution, re-assume the exhortation, and persuade you to the working out salvation; but I must first remove two objections which lie in the way.

Object. 1. You bid us work out salvation; but we have no power to work.

Ans. 1. It is true, we have not power; I deny that we have *libertatem arbitrii*; man before conversion is purely passive: therefore the scripture calls it 'a heart of stone,' Ezek. xxxvi. A man in his pure naturals, can no more prepare himself to his own converting, than the stone can prepare itself to its own softening. But yet when God begins to draw, we may follow. Those dry bones in Ezekiel could not of themselves live, but when breath came into them, then 'they lived and stood upon their feet,' Ezek. xxxvii. 10.

Quest. But suppose God hath not dropt in a prin-

ciple of grace? suppose he hath not caused breath to enter?

Answ. Yet use the means. Though you cannot work spiritually, yet work physically; do what you are able, and that for two reasons.

1. Because a man by neglecting the means, doth destroy himself. As a man by not sending to the physician, may be said to be the cause of his own death.

2. God is not wanting to us when we do what we are able. Urge the promise, 'Seek and ye shall find,' Matt. vii. 7. Put this bond in suit by prayer: you say you have no power, but have you not a promise? act so far as you can. Though I dare not say as the Arminian, when we do exert and put forth nature, God is bound to give grace; yet this I say, God is not wanting to them that seek his grace: Nay, I will say more, he denies his grace to none but them that wilfully refuse it, John v. 40.

Obj. 2. The second objection is this; But to what purpose should I work? there is a decree past, if God hath decreed I shall be saved, I shall be saved.

Ans. God decrees salvation in a way of working, 2 Thess. ii. 13. Origin, in his book against Celsus, observes a subtile argument of some who disputed about Fate and Destiny. One gave counsel to his sick friend not to send for the physician, because, saith he, it is appointed by destiny whether thou shalt recover or not. If it be thy destiny to recover, then thou needest not the physician; if it be not thy destiny, then the physician will do thee no good: the like fallacy doth the devil use to men; he bids them not work; if God hath decreed they shall be saved, they shall be saved, and there is no need of working; if he hath not decreed their salvation, then their working will do them no good; this is an argument fetched out of the devil's topicks. But we

say, God decrees the end in the use of means; God did decree that Israel should enter into Canaan, but first they must fight with the sons of Anak. God decreed that Hezekiah should recover out of his sickness, but let him lay a fig to the boil, Isa. xxxviii. 21. We do not argue thus in other things. A man doth not say, If God hath decreed I shall have a crop this year, I shall have a crop; what need I plow, or sow, or manure the land? No, he will use the means, and expect a crop. Though 'the blessing of the Lord maketh rich,' Prov. x. 21. yet it is as true, 'the diligent hand maketh rich,' Prov. x. 4. God's decreeing is carried on by our working.

And thus having removed these objections, let me now persuade you to set about this blessed work, the working out your salvation; and that my words may the better prevail, I shall propound several arguments by way of motive to excite you to this work.

Argument. 1. The first argument or motive to working, is taken from the preciousness of the soul; well may we take pains that we may secure this from danger. The soul is a divine spark kindled by the breath of God. It doth out-balance the world, Matt. xvi. 26. If the world be the Book of God, as Origin calls it, the soul is the Image of God. Plato calls the soul a glass of the Trinity. It is a bright mirror in which some refracted beams of God's wisdom and holiness do shine forth; the soul is a blossom of eternity. God hath made the soul capable of communion with himself. It would bankrupt the world to give half the price of a soul. How highly did Christ value the soul when he sold himself to buy it? O then, what pity is it that this excellent soul, (this soul for which God called a council in heaven when he made it) should miscarry and be undone to all eternity? who would not rather work

night and day, than lose such a soul? The jewel is invaluable, the loss irreparable.

2. Holy activity and industry doth ennoble a christian. The more excellent any thing is, the more active. The sun is a glorious creature, it never stands still, but is going his circuit round the world. Fire is the purest element, and the most active; it is ever sparkling and flaming; the angels are the most noble creatures, and the most nimble, therefore they are represented by the cherubims, with their wings displayed. God himself is (as the schoolmen speak) a most pure act: Homer saith of Agamemnon, that he did sometimes resemble Jupiter in feature, Pallas in wisdom, Mars in valour; by holy activity we resemble God who is a most pure act. The phoenix flies with a coronet on its head; the industrious christian wants not a coronet; his sweat ennobles him; his labour is his ensign of honour. Solomon tells us that 'drowsiness clothes a man with rags,' Prov. xxiii, 21. Infamy is one of the rags that hang upon him; God hates a dull temper. We read in the law, that the ass, being a dull creature, must not be offered up in sacrifice. Spiritual activity is a badge of honour.

2. Working out salvation is that which will make death and heaven sweet to us.

1. It will sweeten death. He that hath been hard at work all day, how quietly doth he sleep at night? you that have been working out salvation all your lives, how comfortably may you lay down your head at night in the grave, upon a pillow of dust, in hopes of a glorious resurrection? this will be a death-bed cordial.

2. It will sweeten heaven. The more pains we have taken for heaven, the sweeter will it be when we come there. It is delightful for a man to look over his work and see the fruit appear. When he hath been planting trees in his orchard, or setting

flowers, it is pleasant to behold and review his labours: Thus in heaven, when we shall see the fruit of our labours, 'the end of our faith, salvation,' 1 Pet. i. 9. this will make heaven the sweeter. The more pains we have taken for heaven, the more welcome it will be; the more sweat, the more sweet. When a man hath been sinning, the pleasure is gone, and the sting remains; but when he hath been repenting, the labour is gone, and the joy remains.

Arg. 4. Yet you have time to work. This text and sermon would be out of season to preach to the damned in hell. If I should bid them work, it is too late, their time is past, it is night with the devils, it is yet day with you; 'Work while it is day,' John ix. 4. If you lose your day, you lose your souls. This is the season for your souls. Now God commands, now the Spirit breathes, now ministers beseech, and as so many bells of Aaron would chime in your souls to Christ. O improve your season; this is your seed-time, now sow the seeds of faith and repentance. If when you have seasons, you want hearts, the time may come when you have hearts, you shall want seasons. Take time while you may, the mariner hoists up his sails while the wind blows, never had a people a fairer gale for heaven than you of this city, and will you not set forward in your voyage? What riding is there to the term: I warrant you the lawyer will not lose his term; O my brethren, now is the term-time for your souls, now plead with God for mercy, or at least get Christ to plead for you.

Think seriously of these four things.

First, Our life doth unravel apace. Gregory compares our life to the mariner in a ship going full sail; we are every day sailing apace to eternity.

Secondly, The seasons of grace though they are precious, yet not permanent. Abused mercies will,

like Noah's dove, take their wings and fly from us. England's golden hour will soon run out; gospel blessings are very sweet, but very swift. 'Now they are hid from thine eyes,' Luke xix. 42. We know not how soon the golden candlestick may remove.

Thirdly, There is a time when the Spirit hath done striving. There are certain spring tides of the Spirit, and these being neglected, possibly we may never see another tide come in. When conscience hath done speaking, usually the Spirit hath done striving.

Fourthly, The loss of gospel opportunities will be the hell of hell. When a sinner shall at the last day think with himself, O what might I have been! I might have been as rich as the angels, as rich as heaven could make me. I had a season to work in, but I lost it. This, this will be as a vulture gnawing upon him, this will enhance and accent his misery. And let this persuade you speedily to work out your salvation.

Fifthly, You may do this work and not hinder your other work; working out salvation and working in a calling are not inconsistent. And this I insert to prevent an objection. Some may say, but if I work so hard for heaven, I shall have no time for my trade. No sure, the wise God would never make any of his commands to interfere; as he would have you 'seek his kingdom,' Matt. vi. 33. so he would have you 'provide for your family,' 1 Tim. v. 8. you may drive two trades together. I like not of those that make the church exclude the shop, that swallow up all their time in hearing, but 'neglect their work at home,' 2 Thess. iii. 11. They are like the lilies of the field which toil not, neither do they spin. God never sealed warrant to idleness. He both commands and commends diligence in a calling. Which may the rather encourage us to

look after salvation, because this work will not take us off our other work. A man may with Caleb 'follow God fully,' Numb. xiv. 34. and yet 'with David follow the ewes great with young,' Psal. lxxviii. 71. Piety and industry may dwell together.

Sixthly, The inexcusableness of those that neglect working out their salvation. Methinks I hear God expostulating the case with men at the last day, after this manner, 'Why did ye not work?' I gave you time to work, I gave you light to work by, I gave you my gospel, my ministers, I bestowed talents upon you to trade, I set the recompense of reward before you; why did ye not work out your salvation? Either it must be sloth or stubbornness. Was their any work ye did of greater concernment? You could work in brick, but not in gold. What can you say for yourselves why the sentence should not pass? Oh how will the sinner be left speechless at such a time, and how will this cut him to the heart to think with himself he neglected salvation, and could give no reason for it?

Seventhly, The inexpressible misery of such as do not work out salvation. Those that sleep in spring, shall beg in harvest. After death, when they look to receive a full crop of glory, they will be put to beg, as Dives for one drop of water. Vagrant persons that will not work, are sent to the house of correction: such as will not work out salvation, let them know, hell is God's house of correction, that they must be sent to.

Eighthly, If all this doth not prevail, consider, what it is we are working for; none will take pains for a trifle; we are working for a crown, for a throne, for a paradise, and all this is comprised in that one word, salvation. Here is a whet-stone to industry. All men desire salvation. It is the crown of our hopes; we should not think any labour too much

for this. What pains will men take for earthly crowns and sceptres! and suppose all the kingdoms of the world were more illustrious than they are, their foundations of gold, their walls of pearl, their windows of sapphire, what were all this to that kingdom we are labouring for? We may as well span the firmament, as set forth this in all its splendour and magnificence. Salvation is a beautiful thing, it is as far above our thoughts as it is beyond our deserts. O how should this add wings to our endeavours! The merchant will run through the intemperate zones of heat and cold for a little prize. The soldier, for a rich booty, will endure the bullet and sword, he will gladly undergo a bloody spring for a golden harvest: O then, how much more should we spend our holy sweat for this blessed prize of salvation!

And so having laid down some arguments by way of motive, to persuade to this work, I shall now propound some means by way of direction to help us in this work; and here I shall shew you what are those things to be removed which will hinder our working, and what are those things to be prosecuted which will further it.

1. We must remove those things which will hinder our working out salvation. There are six bars in the way to salvation which must be removed.

1. The entanglements of the world. While the foot is in a snare, a man cannot run. The world is a snare; while our feet are in it, we cannot 'run the race set before us,' Heb. xii. 1. If a man were to climb up a steep rock, and had weights tied to his legs, they would hinder his ascent; too many golden weights will hinder us from climbing up this steep rock that leads to salvation. While the mill of a trade is going, it makes such a noise that we can hardly hear the minister 'lifting up his voice like a trumpet.' The world chokes our zeal and appetite

after heavenly things; the earth puts out the fire; the music of the world charms us asleep, and then we cannot work. In mines of gold there are killing damps. O how many souls have been destroyed with a damp arising from the earth!

The second bar in the way to salvation is sadness and uncheerfulness: when a man's heart is sad, he is unfit to go about his work; he is like an untuned instrument. Under fears and discouragements we act but faintly in religion. David labours to chide himself out of this spiritual melancholy, 'why art thou cast down O my soul?' Ps. xlii. 4. Cheerfulness quickens; the Lacedemonians used music in their battles to excite their spirits and make them fight more valiantly. Cheerfulness is like music to the soul, it excites to duty, it oils the wheels of the affections: cheerfulness makes service come off with delight, and we are never carried so swift in religion as upon the wings of delight. Melancholy takes off our chariot wheels, and then we drive on heavily.

The third bar in the way to salvation is spiritual sloth. This is a great impediment to our working. It was said of Israel, 'they despised the pleasant land,' Psal. cvi. 24. what should be the reason? Canaan was a paradise of delight, a type of heaven; aye, but they thought it would cost them a great deal of trouble and hazard in the getting, and they would rather go without it, they despised the pleasant land. Are there not millions among us who had rather go sleeping to hell, than sweating to heaven? I have read of certain Spaniards that live near where there is great store of fish, yet are so lazy that they will not be at the pains to catch them, but buy of their neighbours: such a sinful stupidity and sloth is upon the most, that though Christ be near them, though salvation is offered in the gospel, yet they will not work out salvation. 'Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep,' Prov. xix. 15. Adam lost his rib

when he was asleep; many a man loseth his soul in this deep sleep.

The fourth bar in the way to salvation is, an opinion of the easiness of salvation; God is merciful, and the worst come to the worst, it is but repent.

1. God is merciful, it is true, but withal he is just; he must not wrong his justice by shewing mercy; therefore observe that clause in the proclamation, Exod. xxxiv. 6. 'He will by no means clear the guilty.' If a king did proclaim, that only those should be pardoned who came in, and submitted to his sceptre; could any, still persisting in rebellion, claim the benefit of that pardon? O sinner, wouldst thou have mercy, and wilt not disband the weapons of unrighteousness?

2. It is but repent. But repent? It is such a *but* that we cannot hit unless God direct our arrow. Tell me O sinner, is it easy for a dead man to live and walk? thou art spiritually dead, and wrapt up in thy winding sheet, Eph. ii. 2. Is regeneration easy? are there no pangs in the new birth? is self-denial easy, dost thou know what religion must cost, and what it may cost? it must cost you the parting with your lusts, it may cost you the parting with your life; take heed of this obstruction. Salvation is not *per saltum*; thousands have gone to hell upon this mistake. The broad spectacles of presumption have made the strait gate seem wider than it is.

The fifth bar in the way to salvation is, carnal friends. It is dangerous listening to their voice. The serpent did speak in Eve. Job's wife would have called him off from serving God, 'Dost thou still retain thine integrity,' Job ii. 9. what, still pray and weep? here the devil did hand over a temptation to Job by his wife. Carnal friends will be calling us off from our work. What needs all this ado? less pains will serve. We read that some of Christ's kindred, when they saw Christ so earnest in preaching,

would give him a check, Mark iii. 21. ' His friends went to lay hold on him;' our friends and kindred would sometimes stand in our way to heaven, and judging our zeal madness, would lay hold of us and hinder us from working out our salvation. Such friends Spira met with; for advising with them, whether he should revoke his former opinions concerning Luther's doctrine, or persist in them to the death, they wished him to recant, and so openly abjuring his former faith, he became like a living man in hell.

The sixth bar in the way to salvation is evil company. They will take us off our work; the sweet waters lose their freshness when they run into the salt; christians lose their freshness and savouriness among the wicked; Christ's doves will be sullied by lying among these pots. Sinful company is like the water in a smith's forge, which quencheth the iron be it ever so hot; such cool good affections. The wicked have the plague of the heart, 1 Kings viii. 38. and their breath is infectious. They will discourage us from working out our salvation; just as he who is a suitor to a woman, and is very earnest in his suit, there comes one and tells him, he knows something by the woman of ill report, some impediment; the man hearing this, is presently taken off, and the suit ceaseth; so it is with many a man who begins to be a suitor to religion, fain he would have the match made up, and he grows very hot and violent in the suit, and falls a working out his salvation; but then there come some of his confederates, and they tell him they know something by religion that is of ill report. ' This sect is every where spoken against.' There must be so much strictness and mortification that he must never look to see good days more; hereupon he is discouraged, and so the match is broke off. Take heed of such persons, they are devils covered with flesh;

they are, as one saith, like Herod, who would have killed Christ as soon as he was born: Thus, when Christ is, as it were, beginning to be formed in the heart, they would in a spiritual sense kill him.

And thus I have shewn you the bars that lie in the way to salvation, which are to be removed.

I proceed now in the second place to lay down some helps conducive to salvation.

The first is in the text, fear and trembling. This is not a fear of doubting, but a fear of diligence. This fear is requisite in the working out salvation. 'Let us fear lest we come short,' Heb. iv. 1. fear is a remedy against presumption. Hope is like the cork to the net, it keeps the soul from sinking in despair; and fear is like the lead to the net, it keeps the soul from floating in presumption. Fear is that flaming sword that turns every way to keep out sin from entering; fear quickens; it is an antidote against sloth. 'Noah being moved with fear, prepared an ark,' Heb. xi. 8. The traveller, lest night should overtake him before he gets to his journey's end, spurs on the faster. Fear causeth circumspection; he that walks in fear treads warily; fear is a preservative against apostacy; 'I will put my fear in your hearts, and ye shall not depart from me,' Jer. xxxii. 40. The fear of falling keeps us from falling: Fear is the badge and livery of a christian. The saints of old were 'men fearing God,' Mal. iii. 17. It is reported of holy Anselm, that he spent most of his thoughts about the day of judgment. 'Blessed is he that fears always,' Prov. xxviii. 14. Fear is a christian's garrison; the way to be secure is always to fear: this is one of the best tools for a christian to work with.

Secondly, Another great help in working out salvation is love. Love makes the work come off with delight; seven years labour seemed nothing to Jacob, because of the love that he did bear to Ra-

chel. Love facilitates every thing. It is like wings to the bird, like wheels to the chariot, like sails to the ship, it carries the soul on swiftly and cheerfully in duty; love is never weary: It is an excellent saying of Gregory, Let but a man get the love of the world into his heart, and he will quickly be rich. So do but get the love of religion into your heart, and you will quickly be rich in grace. Love is a vigorous active grace, it despiseth dangers, it tramples upon difficulties; like a mighty torrent it carries all before it. This is the grace 'takes heaven by violence.' Get but your hearts well heated with this grace, and you will be fitted for this work.

A third thing conducive to salvation is, work in the strength of Christ. 'I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me,' Phil. iii. 13. Never go to work alone. Samson's strength lay in his hair. And a christian's strength lies in Christ. When you are to do any duty, to resist any temptation, to subdue any lust, set upon it in the strength of Christ; some go out against sin in the strength of resolutions and vows, and they are soon-foiled: Do as Samson, he first cried to heaven for help, and then having taken hold of the pillars, he pulled down the house upon the lords of the Philistines. When we engage Christ in the work, and so take hold upon the pillar of an ordinance, we then bring down the house upon the head of our lusts.

Fourthly, Work low, be humble, think not to merit by your working. Either Satan would keep us from working, or else he would make us proud of our working. God must pardon our works before he crowns them. If we could pray as angels, shed rivers of tears, build churches, erect hospitals, and should have a conceit that we merited by this, it would be as a dead fly in the box of perfume, it would stain and eclipse the glory of the work. Our duties, like good wine, relish of a bad cask: They

are but glittering sins. Let not pride poison our holy things; when we have been working for heaven, we should say as good Nehemiah, 'Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy,' Nehem. xiii. 22.

5. Work upon your knees; be much in prayer. Beg the Spirit of God to help you in the work; make that prayer, 'Awake O North wind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden,' Cant. iv. ult. We had need have this Spirit blow upon us, there being so many contrary winds blowing against us, and considering how soon holy affections are apt to wither. The garden hath not more need of wind to make its fruit flow out, than we of the Spirit, to make our graces flourish. Philip joined himself to the Eunuch's chariot, Acts viii. 29. God's Spirit must join itself to our chariot: as the mariner hath his hand to the helm, so he hath his eye to the star. While we are working we must look up to the Spirit; what is our preparation without the Spirit's operation? what is all our rowing without a gale from heaven? 'The Spirit lifted me up,' Ezek. iii. 14. God's Spirit must both infuse grace and excite it. We read of a 'wheel within a wheel,' Ezek. i. 16. The Spirit of God is that inner wheel that must move the wheel of our endeavours. To conclude all, pray to God to bless you in your work; 'The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong,' Eccl. ix. 11. nothing prospers without a blessing; and what way to obtain it but by prayer? It is a saying of one of the ancients, The saints carry the keys of heaven at their girdle. Prayer beats the weapon out of the enemy's hand, and gets the blessing out of God's hand.

Lastly, Work in hope; the apostle saith, 'he that ploughs shall plough in hope,' 1 Cor. ix. 10. Hope is the soul's anchor, Heb. vi. 19. cast this anchor upon the promise, and you shall never sink.

Nothing more hinders us in our working than unbelief. Sure saith a christian, I may toil all day for salvation and catch nothing. 'What! is there 'no balm in Gilead?' Is there no mercy-seat? O, sprinkle faith in every duty, look up to free grace, fix your eye upon the blood of Christ; would you be saved? to your working join believing.

THE
GODLY MAN'S PICTURE,
DRAWN WITH A
SCRIPTURE-PENCIL.

PSALM xxxii. 6. *For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee.*

CHAP. I.

Containing the Preface, or Introduction.

HOLY David, in the front of this psalm, shews us wherein true happiness consists; not in beauty, honour, riches, (the world's trinity) but in the forgiveness of sin. Ver. 1. 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.' The Hebrew word to forgive, signifies to carry out of sight; which well agrees with that, Jer. l. 20. 'In those days, saith the Lord, the sins of Judah shall be sought for, and they shall not be found.' This is an incomprehensible blessing, and such as lays a foundation for all other

mercies. I shall but glance at it, and lay down these five assertions about it.

1. Forgiveness is an act of God's free grace. The Greek word to forgive deciphers the original of pardon; it ariseth not from any thing inherent in us, but is the pure result of free grace, Isa. xliii. 25. 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake.' When a creditor forgives a debtor, he doth it freely. Pardon of sin is a fine thread, spun out of the bowels of free grace. Paul cries out, 'I obtained mercy,' 1 Tim. i. 13. The Greek signifies, 'I was be-mercied;' he who is pardoned, is all bestrewed with mercy. When the Lord pardons a sinner, he doth not pay a debt, but give a legacy.

2. God in forgiving sin, remits the guilt and penalty. Guilt cries for justice; no sooner had Adam eaten the apple; but he saw the flaming sword, and heard the curse; but in remission God doth indulge the sinner; he seems to say thus to him, Though thou art fallen into the hands of my justice, and deservest to die, yet I will absolve thee, and whatever is charged upon thee, shall be discharged.

3. Forgiveness of sin is thro' the blood of Christ. Free grace is the impulsive cause, Christ's blood is the meritorious, Heb. ix. 22. 'Without shedding of blood is no remission.' Justice would be revenged either on the sinner or the Surety. Every pardon is the price of blood.

4. Before sin is forgiven, it must be repented of. Therefore repentance and remission are linked together, Luke xxiv. 47. 'That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.' Not that repentance doth in a popish sense merit forgiveness; Christ's blood must wash our tears: but repentance is a qualification, though not a cause. He who is humbled for sin, will the more value pardon-mercy. When there is nothing in the soul but

clouds of sorrow, and now God sends a pardon, which is a setting up a rainbow in the cloud, to tell the sinner, that the flood of wrath shall not overflow him; O what joy is there at the sight of this rainbow! The soul that was before steeped in tears, now melts in love to God, Luke vii. 38, 47.

5. God having forgiven sin, he will call it no more into remembrance, Jer. xxxi. 34. The Lord will make an act of indemnity, he will not upbraid us with former unkindnesses, or sue us with a cancelled bond, Micah vii. 19. 'He will cast our sins into the depth of the sea.' Sin shall not be cast in as a cork which riseth up again, but as lead which sinks to the bottom. How should we all labour for this covenant-blessing?

1. How sad is the want of it! It must needs be ill with the malefactor who wants his pardon: all the curses of God stand in full force against the unpardoned sinner; his very blessings are cursed, Mal.

ii. 2. Caesar wondered at one of his soldiers, that was so merry when he was in debt. Can the sinner be merry who is heir to all God's curses, and knows not how soon he may take up his lodgings among the damned?

2. How sweet is it to have it! 1. The pardoned soul is out of the gunshot of hell, Rom. viii. 33. Satan may accuse, but Christ will show a discharge.

2. The pardoned soul may go to God with boldness in prayer. Guilt clips the wings of prayer, that it cannot fly to the throne of grace; but forgiveness breeds confidence: he who hath his pardon may look his prince in the face with comfort.

This great mercy of pardon David had obtained, as appears, verse 5. 'Thou forgavest me.' And because he had found God a God of pardons, therefore he encourageth others to seek God, in the words of the text, 'For this cause shall every one that is godly pray unto thee.'

CHAP. II.

*Opening the Nature of Godliness.**Every one that is godly.***I**T will be first inquired, *What godliness is?*

I answer in general, Godliness is the sacred impression and workmanship of God in a man, whereby of carnal, he is made spiritual. When godliness is wrought in a person, he doth not receive a new soul, but he hath another spirit, Num. xiv. 24. The faculties are not new, but the qualities; the strings are the same, but the tone is mended. Concerning godliness I shall lay down these seven maxims or positions.

1. Godliness is a real thing, it is not shadow, but substance. Godliness is not the feverish conceit of a sick brain; a christian is no enthusiast, one whose religion is made up all of fancy. Godliness hath truth for its foundation; it is called the way of truth, Psal. cxix. 30. Godliness is a ray and beam that shines from God: if God be true, then godliness is true.

2. Godliness is an intrinsical thing: it lies chiefly in the heart, Rom. ii. 29. 'Circumcision is that of the heart. The dew lies on the leaf, the sap is hid in the root. The moralist's religion is all in the leaf, it consists only in externals: but godliness is an holy sap which is radicated in the soul, Psal. li. 6. 'In the hidden part, thou shalt make me to know wisdom.' The Chaldee expounds it, In the close place of the heart.

3. Godliness is a supernatural thing; by nature we inherit nothing but evil, Rom. vii. 5. 'When we were in the flesh, the motions of sin did work in our members: we did suck in sin as naturally

as our mother's milk; but godliness is the wisdom from above, Jam. iii. 17. It is breathed in from heaven. God must light up the lamp of grace in the heart; weeds grow of themselves, flowers are planted. Godliness is a celestial plant that comes from the New Jerusalem: therefore it is called a fruit of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. A man hath no more power to change himself, than to create himself.

4. Godliness is an extensive thing; it is a sacred heaven that spreads itself into the whole soul, 1 Thess. v. 23. 'The God of peace sanctify you wholly.' There is light in the understanding, order in the affections, pliability in the will, exemplariness in the life. We do not call a blackamoor white, because he hath white teeth: he is not godly who is good only in some part. Grace is called the new man, Col. iii. 10. not a new eye or tongue, but a new man; he who is godly is good all over; tho' he be regenerate but in part, yet it is in every part.

5. Godliness is an intense thing; it doth not lie in a dead formality and indifferency, but is vigorous and flaming, Rom. xii. 11. 'Fervent in spirit.' We call water hot, when it is so in the third or fourth degree. He is godly whose devotion is enflamed, and his heart boils over in holy affections.

6. Godliness is a glorious thing: as the jewel to the ring, so is piety to the soul, bespangling it in God's eyes. Reason makes us men, godliness makes us earthly angels; by it we 'partake of the divine nature,' 2 Pet. i. 4. Godliness is near a kin to glory, 2 Pet. i. 3. Glory and virtue. Godliness is glory in the seed, and glory is godliness in the flower.

7. Godliness is a permanent thing. One saith, Denominations are given from the habit. We do not call him sanguine that blusheth, but he who is of a ruddy complexion, 1 Sam. vii. 42. A blush of godliness is not enough to denominate a christian,

but godliness must be the temper and complexion of the soul. Godliness is a fixed thing: there is a great deal of difference between a stake in the hedge and a tree in the garden; a stake rots and moulders, but a tree, having life in it, abides and flourisheth. When godliness hath taken root in the soul, it abides to eternity, 1 John iii. 9. 'His seed remaineth in him.' Godliness being engraven in the heart by the Holy Ghost, as with the point of a diamond, can never be razed out.

CHAP. IIL

A Reproof to such as are but Pretenders to Godliness.

HERE is a sharp reprehension to such as are alchymy christians, who do only make a show of godliness: like Michal, who put an image in the bed, and so deceived Saul's messengers, 1 Sam. xix. 16. these our Saviour calls whited sepulchres, Matt. xxiii. 27. They do not practise virtue, but counterfeit it. In ancient times a third part of the inhabitants of this island were called Picts, which signifies painted; it is to be feared they still retain their old name: how many are painted only with the vermilion of a profession, whose seeming lustre dazzles the eyes of beholders, but within there is nothing but putrefaction, Matt. xxiii. 27. Hypocrites are like the swan, which hath white feathers but a black skin; or like the lily, which hath a fair colour but a bad scent, Rev. iii. 1. 'Thou hast a name to live, but thou art dead.' These the apostle Jude compares to 'clouds without water,' ver. 12. they pretend to be full of the Spirit, but they are empty clouds; their goodness is but a religious cheat.

Ques. But why do persons content themselves with a shew of godliness?

Ans. This helps to keep up their fame, 1 Sam. xv.

30. 'Honour me before the people.' Men are ambitious of credit, and would gain repute in the world, therefore they will dress themselves in the garb and mode of religion, that others may write them down for saints. But alas, what is one the better to have others to commend him, and his conscience condemn him? What good will it do a man when he is in hell, that others think he is gone to heaven? O beware of this; counterfeit piety is double iniquity.

1. To have only a show of godliness is a God-enraging sin: he who is a pretender to saintship, but his heart tells him he hath nothing but the name, he carries Christ in his Bible, but not in his heart; some politic design spurs him on in the ways of God; he makes religion a lacquey to his carnal interest: what is this but to abuse God to his face, and to serve the devil in Christ's livery? Hypocrisy makes the fury rise up in God's face; therefore he calls such persons the 'generation of his wrath,' Isa. x. 6. God will send them to hell to do penance for their hypocrisy.

2. To make only a show of godliness, is self-delusion. Ajax in his phrenzy took sheep for men; but it is a worse mistake to take a show of grace for grace. This is for one to put a cheat upon himself, James i. 22. 'Deceiving your own souls.' He who hath counterfeit gold instead of true, wrongs himself most. The hypocrite deceives others while he lives, but deceives himself when he dies.

3. To have only a name, and make a show of godliness, is odious to God and man. The hypocrite is born under a sad planet, he is abhorred of all. Wicked men hate him because he makes a show, and God hates him because he doth but make a show: the wicked hate him because he hath so much a mask of godliness, and God hates him because he hath no more, Acts xxvi. 28. 'Thou hast almost persuaded me to be a christian.' The wicked hate

the hypocrite because he is almost a christian, and God hates him because he is but almost.

4. To be only comets, and make a show of piety is a vain thing. Hypocrites lose all they have done. Their dissembling tears drop beside God's bottle, their prayers and fasts prove abortive, Zech. vii. 5. 'When ye fasted and mourned, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?' as God will not recompense a slothful, so neither a treacherous servant. All the hypocrite's reward is in this life, Matt. vi. 5. 'They have their reward.' A poor reward, the empty breath of men. The hypocrite may make his acquittance, and write, Received in full payment. Augustus Cæsar had great triumphs granted him, but the senate would not suffer him to be consul, or sit in the senate-house. Hypocrites may have the praise of men, but tho' these triumphs be granted them, they shall never have the privilege to sit in the senate-house of heaven. What acceptance can he look for from God, whose heart tells him he is no better than a mountebank in divinity?

5. To have only a pretence to godliness will yield no comfort at death. Will painted gold enrich a man? will painted wine refresh him that is thirsty? will the paint of godliness stand thee in any stead? what were the foolish virgins better for their blazing lamps, when they wanted oil? what is the lamp of profession, without the oil of grace? He who hath only a painted holiness, shall have a painted happiness.

6. Thou who hast nothing but a specious pretext and mask of piety, exposest thyself to Satan's scorn. Thou shalt be brought forth at the last day as Samson, Judg. xvi. 25. to make the devil sport. He will say, What is become of all thy vows, tears, confessions? Is all thy religion come to this? Didst thou so often defy the devil, and art thou now come to dwell with me? Couldst thou meet with no weapon

to kill thee, but what was made of gospel metal? Couldst thou suck poison no where but out of ordinances? Couldst thou find no way to hell but by seeming godly? What a vexation will this be, to have the devil so reproach a man! It is sad to be insulted over in this life: Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, when she saw she was reserved by the enemy for a triumph, that she might avoid the infamy, put asps to her breasts, and died. What then will it be to have the devil triumph over a man at the last day?

Let us therefore take heed of this kind of pageantry, or devout stage-play. That which may make us the more to fear our hearts, is, when we see tall cedars in the church worm-eaten with hypocrisy. Balaam a prophet, Jehu a king, Judas an apostle, all of them stand to this day upon record for hypocrites.

It is true, there are the seeds of this sin in the best; but as it was with the leprosy under the law, all that had risings, or spots in the skin of the flesh, were not reputed unclean, and put out of the camp, Lev. xiii. 6. so all that have the risings of hypocrisy in them, are not to be judged hypocrites, for these may be the 'spots of God's children,' Deut. xxxii. 5. But that which denominates an hypocrite, is, when hypocrisy is predominant, and is like a spreading humour in the body.

Ques. When is a man under the power and reGENCY of hypocrisy?

Ans. There are two signs of its predominancy. 1. A squint eye, when one serves God for sinister ends. 2. A right eye, when there is some sin dear to a man, which he cannot part with. These two are as shrewd signs of an hypocrite as any I know.

O, let us take David's candle and lanthorn, and search for this leaven, and burn it before the Lord.

Christian, if thou mournest for hypocrisy, yet findest this sin so potent, that thou canst not get

the mastery of it, go to Christ, beg of him that he would exercise his kingly office in thy soul; that he would subdue this sin, and put it under the yoke. Beg of Christ to exercise his spiritual chirurgery upon thee; desire him to lance thy heart, and cut out the rotten, and that he would apply the medicine of his blood to heal thee of thy hypocrisy. Often make that prayer of David, Psal. cxix. 80. 'Let my heart be found in thy statutes.' Lord, let me be any thing rather than an hypocrite. Two hearts will exclude one from heaven.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing the Characters of a Godly Man.

Inquiry 2d. **I**T will be inquired in the next place, Who is the godly man?

For the full answer whereunto, I shall lay down several specifical signs and characters of a godly man.

SECT. I.

1. The first fundamental sign is, a godly man is a man of knowledge, Prov. xiv. 18. 'The prudent are crowned with knowledge.' The saints are called wise virgins, Matt. xxv. 4. A natural man may have some discursive knowledge of God, but he knoweth nothing as he ought to know, 1 Cor. viii. 2. He knows not God savingly: he may have the eye of reason open, but he discerns not the things of God after a spiritual manner. Waters cannot go beyond their spring-head: vapours cannot rise higher than the sun draws them. A natural man cannot act above his sphere; he is no more able to judge aright of sacred things, than a blind man is to judge of colours. 1. He sees not the evil of his heart; if

a face be ever so black and deformed, yet it is not seen under a veil; the heart of a sinner is so black, that nothing but hell can pattern it, yet the veil of ignorance hides it. 2. He sees not the beauties of a Saviour, Christ is a pearl, but an hid pearl.

But a godly man is taught of God, 1 John ii. 27. 'The anointing teacheth you all things;' that is, all things essential to salvation. A godly man hath 'the good knowledge of the Lord, 2 Chron. xxx. 22. he hath sound wisdom, Prov. iii. 21. He knows God in Christ: to know God out of Christ, is to know him an enemy; but to know him in Christ is sweet and delicious. A gracious soul hath the savour of knowledge, 2 Cor. ii. 14. There is a great difference between one that hath read of a country, or viewed it on the map, and another who hath lived in the country, and tasted the fruits and spices of it. The knowledge wherewith a godly man is adorned, hath these eight rare ingredients in it.

1. It is a grounded knowledge, Col. i. 27. 'If ye continue in the faith grounded.' It is not a believing as the church believes, but this knowledge rests upon a double basis, the word and Spirit; the one is a guide, the other a witness: saving knowledge is not pendulous or doubtful, but hath a certainty in it, John vi. 69. We believe, and are sure thou art that Christ, 2 Cor. v. 6. Being always confident, a godly man holds no more than he will die for: the martyrs were so confirmed in the knowledge of the truth, that they would seal it with their blood.

2. It is an appretiative knowledge. The lapidary is said to know a jewel, who hath skill to value it: he knows God, who esteems him above the glory of heaven, Psal. cxiii. 4. and the comforts of the earth. To compare other things with God, is to de-

base Deity; as if you should compare the shining of a glow-worm with the sun.

3. The knowledge of a godly man is quickening, Psal. cxix. 93. 'I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me.' Knowledge in a natural man's head, is like a torch in a dead man's hand: true knowledge animates. A godly man is like John Baptist, 'a burning and a shining lamp;' he doth not only shine by illumination, but burn by affection. The spouse's knowledge made her 'sick of love,' Cant. ii. 5. I am wounded with love. I am like a deer that is struck with a dart, my soul lies a bleeding, and nothing can cure me but a sight of him whom my soul loves.

4. Divine knowledge is appropriating, Job xix. 25. 'I know that my Redeemer liveth. A medicine is best when it is applied; this applicative knowledge is joyful. Christ is called a surety, Heb. vii. 22. O what joy, when I am drowned in debt, to know that Christ is my surety. Christ is called an advocate, 1 John ii. 1. The Greek word for advocate signifies a comforter. O what comfort is it, when I have a bad cause, to know Christ is my advocate, who never lost any cause he pleaded!

Ques. But how shall I know that I make a right application of Christ? an hypocrite may think he applies when he doth not. Balaam, though a sorcerer, yet said, My God, Numb. xxii. 38.

Ans. He who rightly applies Christ, puts these two together, Jesus and Lord, Phil. iii. 8. Christ Jesus my Lord: many take Christ as a Jesus, but refuse him as a Lord. Do you join Prince and Saviour? Acts v. 31. Would you as well be ruled by Christ's laws, as saved by his blood? Christ is a priest upon his throne, Zech. vi. 13. He will never be a priest to intercede, unless your heart be the throne where he sways his sceptre: a true applying

of Christ is, when we so take him for an husband, that we give up ourselves to him as a Lord.

2. He who rightly applies Christ, fetcheth virtue from him: the woman in the gospel having touched Christ, felt virtue coming from him, and her fountain of blood was dried up, Mark v. 29. This is to apply Christ, when we feel a sin-mortifying virtue flow from him. Naturalists tell us, there is an antipathy between the diamond and the loadstone, insomuch that if a piece of iron be laid by the diamond, the diamond will not suffer it to be drawn away by the loadstone; so that knowledge which is applicatory, hath an antipathy against sin, and will not suffer the heart to be drawn away by it.

5. The knowledge of a godly man is transforming, 2 Cor. iii. 8. 'We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image.' As a painter, looking upon a face, draws a face like it in the picture: so, looking upon Christ in the glass of the gospel, we are changed into his similitude. We may look upon other objects that are glorious yet not be made glorious by them: a deformed face may look upon beauty, and yet not be made beautiful, a wounded man may look upon a surgeon, and yet not be healed: but this is the excellency of divine knowledge, it give us such a sight of Christ, as makes us partake of his nature: as Moses, when he had seen God's back parts, his face shined, some of the rays and beams of God's glory fell upon him.

6. The knowledge of a godly man is self-emptying; carnal knowledge makes the head giddy with pride, 1 Cor. viii. 2. True knowledge brings a man out of love with himself; the more he knows, the more he blusheth at his own ignorance. David, a bright star in God's church, yet he thought himself rather a cloud than a star, Psal. lxxiii. 22.

7. The knowledge of a godly man is growing; Col. i. 10. 'Increasing in the knowledge of God.' True knowledge is like the light of the morning, which increaseth in the horizon till it comes to the meridian: so sweet is spiritual knowledge, that the more a saint knows, the more thirsty he is of knowledge; it is called the riches of knowledge, 1 Cor. i. 5. The more riches a man hath, the more still he desires; though Paul knew Christ, yet he would know him more, Phil. iii. 10. 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.'

8. The knowledge of a godly man is practical, John x. 4. 'The sheep follow him, for they know his voice.' Though God requires knowledge more than burnt-offering, Hos. vi. 6. yet it is a knowledge accompanied with obedience: true knowledge doth not only mend a christian's sight, but mends his pace. It is a reproach to a christian to live in a contradiction to his knowledge, to know he should be strict and holy, yet to live loosely: not to obey, is all one as not to know, 1 Sam. ii. 12. 'The sons of Eli knew not the Lord:' they could not but know, for they taught others the knowledge of the Lord; yet they are said not to know, because they did not obey: when knowledge and practice, like Castor and Pollux, appear together, then they presage much happiness.

Use 1. Let us try ourselves by this character.

1. Are they godly, who are still in the region of darkness? Prov. xix. 2. 'That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good;' ignorant persons cannot give God a reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1. It is sad, that after the Sun of Righteousness hath shined so long in our hemisphere, yet that persons should be under the power of ignorance: perhaps in the things of this world they are knowing enough, none shall out-reach them, but in the things of God they have no knowledge. Nahash would

make a covenant with Israel; that he might put out their right eyes, 1 Sam. xi. 1. The devil hath left men their left eye, knowledge in secular matters but he hath put out their right eye, they understand not the mystery of godliness; it may be said of them as of the Jews, 'To this day the veil is upon their heart,' 2 Cor. iii. 15. Many christians are no better than baptized heathens. What a shame is it to be without knowledge? 1 Cor. xv. 34. 'Some have not the knowledge of God, I speak this to your shame.' Men think it a shame to be ignorant in their trade, but no shame to be ignorant of God; there is no going to heaven blindfold, Isa. xxvii. 11. 'It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them.'

Surely ignorance in these days is affected; it is one thing not to know, another thing not to be willing to know, John iii. 19. 'They loved darkness rather than light. It is the owl loves the dark: sinners are like the Atlantes, a people in Æthiopia, which curse the sun. Wicked men shut their eyes wilfully, Matt. xiii. 15. and God shuts them judicially, Isa. vi. 10.

2. Are they godly, who though they have knowledge, yet they know not as they ought to know; they know not God experimentally: how many knowing persons are ignorant? They have illumination, but not sanctification; their knowledge hath not a powerful influence upon them to make them better. If you set up an hundred torches in a garden, they will not make the flowers grow, but the sun is influential: many are so far from being better for their knowledge, that they are worse, Isa. lvii. 10. 'Thy knowledge hath perverted thee;' the knowledge of most makes them more cunning in sin; these have little cause to glory in their knowledge. Absalom might boast of the hair of his head,

but that hanged him ; so these may boast of the knowledge of their head, but it will destroy them.

3. Are they godly, who, though they have some glimmering of knowledge, yet no fiducial applying of Christ ; many of the old world knew there was an ark, but were drowned, because they did not get into the ark ; knowledge, which is not applying, will but light a man to hell ; it were better to live an Indian, than to die an infidel under the gospel. Christ not believed in, is terrible. Moses' rod, when it was in his hand, did a great deal of good, it wrought miracles ; but when it was out of his hand, it became a serpent : so Christ, when laid hold on by the hand of faith, is full of comfort, but not laid hold on, will prove a serpent to sting.

Use 2. As we would evidence ourselves godly, let us labour for this good knowledge of the Lord : what pains will men take for the gaining of natural knowledge ? I have read of one Benchorat, who spent forty years in finding out the motion of the eight sphere ; what pains then should we take in finding out the knowledge of God in Christ ? There must be digging and searching for it, as one would search for a vein of silver, Prov. ii. 3. ' If thou seekest her as silver.'

Motive 1. This is the best knowledge, it doth as far surpass all other, as the diamond doth the crystal ; no jewel we wear doth so adorn us as this, Prov. iii. 15, ' She is more precious than rubies.' Job xxviii. 12, 13. ' Man knoweth not the price thereof, the deep saith, It is not in me, it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.' The dark chaos was a fit emblem of an ignorant soul, Gen. i. 2. but when God lights up the lamp of knowledge in the mind, what a new creation is there ? How doth the soul sparkle as the sun in its glory ?

Motive 2. This knowledge is comfortable ; we

may say of the knowledge of nature, as Solomon, Eccl. i. 18. He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.' The knowledge of arts and sciences is gathering of straw, but the knowledge of God in Christ is gathering of pearl. This knowledge ushers in salvation, 1 Tim. ii. 4.

Ques. But how shall we get this saving knowledge?

Ans. Not by the power of nature: some speak of reason well improved how far it will go; but alas, the plumb-line of reason is too short to fathom the deep things of God; a man can no more by the power of reason reach the saving knowledge of God, than a pigmy can reach the pyramids: the light of nature will no more help us to see Christ, than the light of a candle will help us to understand, 1 Cor. ii. 14. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them.' What shall we do then to know God in a soul-saving manner? I answer, let us implore the help of God's Spirit. Paul never saw himself blind till a light shined from heaven, Acts ix. 3. God must anoint our eyes ere we can see: what needed Christ have bid Laodicea to come to him for eye-salve, if she could see before, Rev. iii. 18. Oh! let us beg the Spirit, which is a Spirit of revelation, Eph. i. 17. Saving knowledge is not by speculation, but by inspiration, Job xxxii. 8. 'The inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.'

We may have excellent notions in divinity, but the Holy Ghost must enable us to know them after a spiritual manner; a man may see the figures upon a dial, but he cannot tell how the day goes unless the sun shine. We may read many truths in the Bible, but we cannot know them savingly till God's Spirit doth shine upon us, 1 Cor. ii. 10. 'The Spirit searching all things, yea, the deep things of God.' The scripture discovers Christ to us, but the

Spirit reveals Christ in us, Gal. i. 16. The Spirit makes known that which all the world cannot do, namely the sense of God's love.

Use 3. You who have this salvific sanctifying knowledge flourishing in you, bless God for it; this is the heavenly anointing: the most excellent objects cannot be seen in the dark, but when the light appears, then every flower shines in its native beauty. So, while men are in the midnight of a natural estate, the beauty of holiness is hid from them; but when the light of the Spirit comes in a saving manner, then those truths they slighted before, appear in that glorious lustre, as transports them with wonder and love.

Bless God, ye saints, that he hath taken off your spiritual cataract, and hath given you to discern those things, which by nature's spectacles you could never see. How thankful was Christ to his Father for this, Matt. xi. 25. 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' How should you admire free grace, that God hath not only brought the light to you, but given you eyes to see it! that he hath enabled you to know the truth as it is in Jesus, Eph. iv. 21. That he hath opened, not only the eye of your understanding, but the eye of your conscience: this is a mercy you can never be enough thankful for, that God hath so enlightened you, that you should not sleep the sleep of death,

Sect. 2.

2. The godly man is a man acted by faith; as gold is the most precious among the metals, so is faith among the graces. Faith cuts us off from the wild olive of nature, and innoculates us into Christ: faith is the vital artery of the soul, Hab. ii. 4. 'The

just shall live by faith.' Such as are destitute of faith, though they breathe, yet they want life; faith is the quickner of the graces; not a grace stirs, till faith sets it a-work: faith is to the soul, as the animal spirits are to the body, they excite lively operations in the body; faith excites repentance; it is like the fire to the still which makes it drop. When I believe God's love to me, this makes me weep that I should sin against so good a God; faith is the mother of hope, first we believe the promise, then we hope for it: faith is the oil which feeds the lamp of hope; faith and hope are two turtle-graces, take away one and the other languisheth. If the sinews be cut, the body is lame; if the sinew of faith be cut, hope is lame; faith is the ground of patience: he who believes God is his God, and all providences work for his good, doth patiently yield up himself to the will of God; thus faith is a living principle: and the life of a saint is nothing else but a life of faith; his prayer is the breathing of faith, James v. 15. His obedience is the result of faith, Rom. xvi. 26. A godly man by faith lives in Christ, as the beam lives in the sun, Gal. ii. 20. I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me. A christian by the power of faith sees above reason, treads above the moon, 2 Cor. iv. 18. by faith his heart is finally quieted, Psal. cxii. 7. he trusts himself and all his affairs with God: as in a time of war, men get into a garrison, and trust themselves and their treasure there: so the name of the Lord is a strong tower, Prov. xviii. 10. and a believer trusts all that ever he is worth in this garrison, 2 Tim. i. 12. 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day.' God trusted Paul with his gospel, and Paul trusted God with his soul.

Faith is a catholicon, or remedy against all troubles; it is a godly man's sheet anchor that he casts

out into the sea of God's mercy, and is kept from sinking in despair.

Use. Let us try ourselves by this character : alas, how far are they from being godly, that are destitute of faith ! such as are altogether drowned in sense. Most men are spiritually blind, they can see but just before them, 2 Pet. i. 9. I have read of a people in India who are born with one eye : such are they who are born with the eye of reason, but want the eye of faith ; who because they do not see God with bodily eyes, they do not believe a God ; they may as well not believe they have souls, because being spirits they cannot be seen.

O where is he who lives in excelsis, who is gotten into the upper region, and sees things not seen, Heb. xi. 27. Did men live by faith, would they use sinful policy for a livelihood ? Were there faith would there be so much fraud ? did faith live, would men like dead fish swim down the stream ? in this age there is scarce so much faith to be found among men, as there is among the devils, for they believe and tremble, James ii. 19. It was a grave and serious speech of Mr. Greenham, that he feared not Papaism, but Atheism would be England's ruin. But I shall not expatiate, having been more large upon this head in another discourse.

SECT. 3.

3. A godly man is fired with love to God, Psal. cxvi. 1. Faith and love are the two poles on which all religion turns. A true saint is carried in that chariot, the midst whereof is paved with love, Cant. iii. 10. As faith doth quicken, so love doth sweeten every duty ; the sun mellows the fruit, so love mellows the services of religion, and makes them come off with a better relish : a godly man is sick of love, John xxi. 2. ' Lord, thou knowest I love

thee.' Though dear Saviour I did deny thee, yet it was for want of strength, not for want of love. God is the fountain and quintessence of goodness, his beauty and sweetness lay constraints of love upon a gracious heart. God is the saint's portion, Psal. cxix. 57. And what more loved than a portion? I would hate my own soul, saith one, If I found it not loving God. A godly man loves God, therefore delights to be in his presence; he loves God, therefore takes comfort in nothing without him, Cant. iii. 3. 'Saw ye him whom my soul loveth.'

The pious soul loves God, therefore thirsts after him; the more he hath of God, the more still he desires; a sip of the wine of the Spirit, provokes the appetite after more: the soul loves God, therefore rejoiceth to think of his appearance, 2 Tim. iv. 8. He loves him, therefore longs to be with him: Christ was in Paul's heart, and Paul would be in Christ's bosom, Phil. i. 23. When the soul is once like God, it would be fain with God. A gracious heart cries out, O that I had wings, that I might flee away, and be with my love Christ. The bird desires to be out of the cage, though it be hung with pearl.

Such is the love a gracious soul bears to God, that many waters cannot quench it: he loves a frowning God.

Though I am out of sight and clean forgot.

Let me not love thee, if I love thee not.

Herb. Poem.

A godly man loves God, though he be reduced to straits. A mother and her child of nine years old, being ready to perish of hunger, the child looking upon its mother, said, "Mother, do you think God will starve us?" No, child, said the mother, he will not: The child replied "But if he do, we must love him, and serve him."

Use. Let us try our godliness by this touchstone. Do we love God? is he our treasure and centre? Can we with David call God our joy, yea, our exceeding joy? Psal. xliii. 4. Do we delight in drawing nigh to him, and come before him with singing? Psal. c. 2. Do we love him for his beauty more than his jewels? Do we love him, when he seems not to love us?

If this be the sign of a godly man, how few will be found in the number? Where is the man whose heart is dilated in love to God? Many court him, but few love him. People are for the most part eaten up with self-love; they love their ease, their worldly profit, their lusts, but they have not a drop of love to God: did they love God, would they be so willing to be rid of him, Job xxi. 14. They say to the Almighty, depart from us. Did they love God, would they tear his name by their oaths? doth he love his father who shoots him to the heart? Though they worship God they do not love him; they are like the soldiers that bowed the knee to Christ, and mocked him, Mat. xxvii. 29. He whose heart is a grave, in which the love of God is buried, deserves to have that curse written upon his tomb-stone, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. 'Let him be Anathema Maranatha.' A soul void of divine love, is a temper that best suits with damned spirits. But I shall wave this, and pass to the next.

SECT. 4.

4. A godly man is like God, he hath the same judgment with God; he thinks of things as God doth? he hath a God like disposition; he partakes of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. A godly man doth bear God's name and image; godliness is God-likeness. It is one thing to profess God, another thing to resemble him.

A godly man is like God in holiness: holiness is the most orient pearl of the King of heaven's crown, Exod. xv. 11. Glorious in holiness. God's power makes him mighty, his mercy makes him lovely, but his holiness makes him glorious; the holiness of God is the intrinsic purity of his nature, and his abhorrency of sin: a godly man bears some kind of analogy with God in this; he hath the holy oil of consecration upon him, Psal. cxvi. 16. Aaron the saint of the Lord. Holiness is the badge and livery of Christ's people, Isa. xliii. 18. The people of thy holiness: the godly are as well an holy as a royal priesthood, 1 Pet. ii. 9. Nor have they only a frontispiece of holiness, like the Egyptian temples, which were fair without; but they are like Solomon's temple, which had gold within; they have written upon their heart, holiness to the Lord; the holiness of the saints consists in their conformity to God's will, which is the rule and pattern of all holiness.

Holiness is a man's glory; Aaron put on garments for glory and beauty, Exod. xxviii. 2. So when a person is invested with the embroidered garment of holiness, it is for glory and beauty.

The goodness of a Christian lies in his holiness, as the goodness of the air lies in the clearness of it; the worth of gold is the pureness.

Quest. Wherein do the godly discover their holiness?

Ans. 1. In hating the garment spotted by the flesh, Jude 23. The godly do set themselves against evil, both in purpose and practice; they are fearful of that which looks like sin, 1 Thess. v. 22. The appearance of evil may prejudice a weak Christian; if it doth not defile a man's own conscience, it may offend his brother's conscience; and to sin against him, is to sin against Christ, 1 Cor. viii. 12. A godly man will not go as far as he may, lest he go fur-

ther than he should; he will not swallow down all that others (bribed with preferment) may plead for: it is easy to put a golden colour upon a rotten stuff.

2. The godly discover their holiness in being advocates for holiness, Psal. cxix. 6. 'I will speak of thy testimonies before kings, and will not be ashamed.' When piety is calumniated in the world, the saints will stand up in the defence of it; they will wipe off the dust of a reproach from the face of religion; holiness defends the godly, and they will defend holiness; it defends them from danger, and they will defend it from disgrace.

Use 1. How can those be reputed godly, who are unlike God? They have nothing of God in them, not one shred of holiness: they call themselves christians, but blot out the word holiness; you may as well call it day at midnight.

So impudent are some, that they boast they are none of the holy ones: Is it not the Spirit of holiness which marks the sheep of Christ from the goats? Eph. i. 13. 'Ye were sealed (or marked) with the Holy Spirit.' And is it a matter for men to boast of, that they have none of the Spirit's earmark upon them? Doth not the apostle say, 'That without holiness no man shall see the Lord,' Heb. xii. 14. Such as bless themselves in their unholiness, had best go ring the bells for joy that they shall never see God.

Others there are that hate holiness; sin and holiness never meet but they fight: holiness dischargeth its fire of zeal against sin, and sin spits its venom of malice at holiness: many pretend to love Christ as a Saviour, but hate him as he is the Holy One, Acts. iii. 14.

Use 2. Let us labour to be like God in holiness.

Motive 1. This is God's great design he drives on in the world; it is the end of the word preached:

the silver drops of the sanctuary are to water the seed of grace, and make a crop of holiness spring up: What use is there of the promises but to bribe us to holiness? What are all God's providential dispensations, but to excite holiness? As the Lord makes use of all the seasons of the year, frost, and heat, to bring on the harvest, so all prosperous and adverse providences, are for the promoting the work of holiness in the soul. What is the end of the mission of the Spirit, but to make the heart holy? When the air is unwholesome by reason of foggy vapours, the wind is a fan to winnow and purify the air: so the blowing of God's Spirit upon the heart, is to purify it, and make it holy.

Motive 2. Holiness is that alone which God is delighted with: Tamerlane being presented with a pot of gold, asked whether the gold had his father's stamp upon it; but when he saw it had the Roman stamp, he rejected it. Holiness is God's stamp and impress; if he doth not see this stamp upon us, he will not own us.

Motive 3. Holiness fits us for communion with God; communion with God is a paradox to the men of the world; every one that hangs about the court, doth not speak with the king: we may approach to God in duties, and as it were hang about the court of heaven, yet not have communion with God: that which keeps up the intercourse with God is holiness; the holy heart enjoys much of God's presence; he feels heart-warming and heart-comforting virtue in an ordinance: where God sees his likeness, there he gives his love.

SECT. 5.

5. A godly man is very exact and curious about the worship of God; the Greek word for godly signifies a right worshipper of God; a godly man doth

reverence divine institutions, and is more for the purity of worship than the pomp; mixture in sacred things is like a dash in the wine, which though it gives it a colour, yet doth but adulterate it; the Lord would have Moses make the tabernacle according to the pattern in the mount, Ex. xxv. 40. If Moses had left out any thing in the pattern, or added any thing to it, it would have been very provoking; the Lord hath always given testimonies of his displeasure against such as have corrupted his worship; Nadab and Abihu 'offered strange fire,' (other than God had sanctified) 'upon the altar;' 'And fire went out from the Lord, and devoured them,' Lev. x. 1. Whatsoever is not of God's own appointment in his worship, that he looks upon as strange fire; and no wonder he is so highly incensed at it, for as if God were not wise enough to appoint the manner how he will be served; men will go to prescribe to him, and as if the rules for his worship were defective, they will attempt to mend the copy, and superadd their inventions.

A godly man dares not vary from the pattern which God hath shewn him in the scripture; and probably this might not be the least reason, why David was called a man after God's own heart, because he kept the springs of God's worship pure, and in matters sacred, did not superinduce any thing of his own devising.

Use. By this character we may try ourselves, whether we are godly: are we tender about the things of God? do we observe that mode of worship, which hath the stamp of divine authority upon it? it is of dangerous consequence to make a medley in religion.

1. Those who will add to one part of God's worship, will be as ready to take away from another, Mark vii. 7. 'Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the traditions of men.' They who

will bring in a tradition, will in time lay aside a command: this the Papists are highly guilty of; they bring in altars and crucifixes, and lay aside the second commandment; they bring in oil and cream in baptism, and leave out the cup in the Lord's supper; they bring in praying for the dead, and lay aside reading the scriptures intelligibly to the living; they who will introduce that into God's worship which he hath not commanded, will be as ready to blot out that which he hath commanded.

2. Those who are for outward commixtures in God's worship, are usually regardless of the vitals of religion; living by faith, leading a strict mortified life, these things are less minded by them: wasps have their combs, but no honey in them; the religion of many may be likened to those ears which run all into straw.

3. Superstition and profaneness kiss each other; hath it not been known that those who have kneeled at a pillar, have reeled against a post?

4. Such as are devoted to superstition, are seldom or ever converted, Matt. xxi. 31. 'Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you;' it was spoken to the chief priests, who were high formalists; and the reason why such persons are seldom wrought on savingly, is, because they have a secret antipathy against the power of godliness. The snake is of a fine colour, but it hath a sting, so outwardly men may look zealous and devout, but retain a sting of hatred in their hearts against goodness. Hence it is, that they who have been most hot for superstition, have been most hot for persecution. The church of Rome wears white linen, (an emblem of innocency) but the Spirit of God paints her out in scarlet, Rev. xvii. 4. Whence is this? not only because she puts on a scarlet robe, but because her body is of a scarlet dye, having

embrued her hands in the blood of the saints, Rev. xvii. 6.

Let us then, as we would demonstrate ourselves godly, keep close to the rule of worship, and in the things of Jehovah, go no further than we can say, 'It is written.'

SECT. 6.

6. A godly man is a servant of God, and not a servant of men. This character hath two distinct branches, I shall speak of both in order.

1. A godly man is a servant of God, Ezra v. 11. 'We are the servants of the God of heaven,' Col. iv. 12. 'Epaphras, a servant of Christ.'

Quest. In what sense is a godly man a servant of God?

Ans. In seven respects.

1. A servant leaves all others, and confines himself to one master; so a godly man leaves the service of sin, and betakes himself to the service of God, Rom. vi. 22. Sin is a tyrannizing thing; a sinner is a slave, when he sins with most freedom: the wages which sin gives, may deter us from its service, Rom. vi. 23. 'The wages of sin is death.' Here is damnable pay! A godly man lists himself in God's family, and is one of his menial servants, Ps. cxvi. 16. 'O Lord, truly I am thy servant, truly I am thy servant.' David useth an ingemination; as if he had said, Lord, I have taken earnest, none else can lay claim to me: my ear is bored to thy service.

2. A servant is not at his own dispose, but at the dispose of his master: a servant must not do what he pleases, but be at the will of his lord. Thus a godly man is God's servant, he is wholly at God's dispose, he hath no will of his own. Thy will be done on earth. Some will say to the godly, why

cannot you do as others? Why will not you drink and swear, and profane the sabbath as others do? the godly are God's servants, they must not do what they will, but be under the rules of the family; they must do nothing but what they can show their master's hand for.

3. A servant is bound, there are covenants and indentures sealed between him and his master. Thus there are indentures drawn in baptism; and in conversion, the indentures are renewed and sealed; we do there bind ourselves to God to be his sworn servants, Psal. cxix. 106. 'I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.' A godly man hath tied himself to the Lord by vow, Psal. lvi. 12. and he makes conscience of his vow; he had rather die by persecution, than live by perjury.

4. A servant doth not only wear his master's livery, but doth his work: thus a godly man works for God; Paul 'did spend, and was spent for Christ,' 2 Cor. xii. 15. He outwrought all the other apostles, 1 Cor. xv. 10. A godly man is active for God to his last breath, Psal. cxix. 112. only, 'The dead rest from their labours.'

5. A servant follows his master; thus a godly man is a servant of God, while others wander after the beast, Rev. xiii. 3. he follows after the Lamb, Rev. xiv. 4. He will tread in the steps of Christ; if a master leap over hedge and ditch, the servant will follow him: a godly man will follow Christ through afflictions, Luke ix. 23. 'If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross daily, and follow me.' Peter would follow Christ upon the water; a godly man will follow Christ though it be death every step: he will keep his goodness, when others are bad; as all the water in the salt sea cannot make the fish salt, but still they retain their freshness; so all the wickedness in the world, cannot

make a godly man wicked, but still he retains his piety; he will follow Christ in the worst times.

6. A servant is satisfied with his master's allowance: he doth not say, I will have such provisions made ready, if he hath short commons he doth not find fault; he knows he is a servant, and is at his master's carving; in this sense a godly man is God's servant; he is willing to be at God's allowance; if he hath but some leavings he doth not grumble. Paul knew he was a servant, therefore whether more or less fell to his share, he was indifferent, Phil. iv. 12. When christians murmur at their condition, they forget that they are servants, and must be at the allowance of their heavenly Master: thou that hast the least bit from God, will die in his debt.

7. A servant will stand up for the honour of his master; he cannot hear his master reproached, but will vindicate his credit. Thus every godly man will stand up for the honour of his Master, Christ, Psal. cxix. 139. 'My zeal hath consumed me.' A servant of God appears for his truths: they who can hear God's name reproached, and his ways spoken against, yet be silent, God will be ashamed of such servants, and discard them before men and angels.

Use. Let us declare ourselves godly, by being servants of the most high God.

Motive. Consider, 1. God is the best Master, he is punctual in all his promises, 1 Kings viii. 23. 'There is no God like thee in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant with thy servants.' Verse 56. 'there hath not failed one word of all his good promise.' God is of a most sweet and gracious disposition; he hath this property, he is 'slow to anger,' Psal. ciii. 9. and 'ready to forgive,' Psal. lxxxvi. 5. In our wants he doth relieve us, in our weakness he doth pity us; he reveals his secrets to his servants, Psal. xxv. 14. Prov. iii. 32. He waits on his servants: was there ever such a ma-

ster? Luke xii. 37. 'Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.' When we are sick he makes our bed, Psal. xli. 3. 'Thou wilt make all their bed in their sickness.' He holds our head when we are fainting: other masters may forget their servants, and cast them off when they are old, but God will not, Isa. xlv. 21. 'Thou art my servant, O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.' It is a slander to say, God is an hard Master.

2. God's service is the best service: There are six privileges in God's service.

1. Freedom. Though the saints are bound to God's service, yet they serve him freely: God's Spirit, which is called a free Spirit, Psal. li. 12. makes them free and cheerful in obedience: the Spirit carries them upon the wings of delight; it makes duty a privilege: it doth not force, but draw: it enlargeth the heart in love, and fills it with joy: God's service is perfect freedom.

2. Honour. David the king professeth himself one of God's pensioners, Psal. cxliii. 12. 'I am thy servant.' Paul, when he would blaze his coat of arms, and set forth his best heraldry, he doth not call himself Paul, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, or Paul of the tribe of Benjamin, but Paul a servant of Christ, Rom. i. 1. Theodosius thought it a greater dignity to be God's servant, than to be an emperor. Christ himself, who is equal with his Father, yet is not ashamed of the title servant, Isa. liii. 11. Every servant of God is a son, every subject a prince: it is more honour to serve God, than to have kings to serve us: the angels in heaven are servitors to the saints on earth.

3. Safety. God takes care of his servants; he gives them a protection, Isa. xli. 9, 10. 'Thou art

my servant, fear not, I am with thee.' God hides his servants. Psal. xxvii. 5. 'In the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me;' that is, he shall keep me safe, as in the most holy place of the sanctuary, where none but the priests might enter. Christ's wings are both for healing and for hiding, Mal. iv. 2. for curing and securing us: the devil and his instruments would soon devour the servants of God, if he did not set an invincible guard about them, and cover them with the golden feathers of his protection, Psal. xci. 4. 'I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee,' Acts xviii. 10. God's watchful eye is ever upon his people, and the enemies shall not do the mischief they intend, they shall not be destroyers, but physicians.

4. Gain. Atheists say, 'It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances?' Mal. iii. 14. Besides the vails which God gives in this life (sweet peace of conscience) he reserves his best wine till last; he gives a glorious kingdom to his servants, Heb. xii. 28. The servants of God may for a while be kept under and abused, but they shall have preferment at last, John xii. 26. 'Where I am there shall my servant be.'

5. Assistance. Other masters cut out work for their servants, but do not help them in their work; but our master in heaven doth not only give us work, but strength, Psal. cxxxviii. 3. 'Thou strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.' God bids us serve him, and he will enable us to serve him, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. 'I will cause you to walk in my statutes.' The Lord doth not only fit work for us, but fits us for our work; with his command he gives power.

6. Supplies. A master will not let his servants want: God's servants shall be provided for, Psal. xxxvii. 3. 'Verily thou shalt be fed.' Doth God give us a Christ, and will he deny us a crust? Gen. xlviii. 15. 'The God who hath fed me all my days:'

If God doth not give us what we crave, he will give us what we need: the wicked are fed, who are dogs, Phil. iii. 2. If a man feeds his dog, sure he will feed his servant: Oh then, who would not be in love with God's service?

Motive 3. We are engaged to serve God; we are 'bought with a price,' 1 Cor. vi. 20. It is a metaphor taken from such as do ransom captives out of prison by paying a sum of money for them, they are to be at the service of him who ransomed them; so when the devil hath taken us prisoners, Christ ransomed us with a price, not of money, but blood; therefore we are to be at his service: if any can lay a better claim to us than Christ, we may serve them; but Christ having the best right to us, we are to cleave to him, and enrol ourselves for ever in his service.

II. I pass to the second branch of this character. A godly man is not the servant of men, 1 Cor. vii. 23, 'Be ye not the servants of men.'

Quest. But is there no service we owe to men?

Ans. There is a threefold serving of men.

1. There is a civil service we owe to men; as the inferior to the superior: the servant is a living tool, as one saith, Ephes. vi. 5, 'Servants obey your masters.'

2. There is a religious service we owe to men, when we are serviceable to their souls, 2 Cor. iv. 5. 'Your servants for Jesus' sake.'

3. There is a sinful serving of men; this consists in three things.

1. When we prefer men's injunctions before God's institutions; God commands one thing, man commands another; God saith, sanctify the sabbath, man saith, profane it; when men's edicts have more force upon us than God's precepts, this is to be the servants of men.

2. When we do voluntarily prostitute ourselves

to the impure lusts of men; we let them lord it over our consciences: when we are ductile and frameable to any thing, either Arminian or Atheist, either for the Gospel or the Alcoran, when we will be what others will have us; just of Issachar's temper, Gen. xlix. 14. 'Isaachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens.' This is not humility, but sordidness, and it is a serving of men.

3. When we are advocates in a bad cause, pleading for any impious, unjustifiable actings; when we baptize sin with the name of religion, and with our oratory wash the devil's face; this is to be the servants of men: in these cases a godly person will not so unman himself as to serve men: he saith as Paul, Gal. i. 10. 'If I pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ.' And as Peter, Acts v. 23. 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'

Use. How many leagues distant are they from godliness, who do either, for fear of punishment or hope of preferment, comply with the sinful commands of men, who will put their conscience into any yoke, and sail with any wind that blows profit; these are the servants of men; they have abjured their baptismal vow, and renounced the Lord that bought them.

He who is such a Proteus, who can change into any form, and bow as low as hell to please men, I would say two things to him.

1. Thou that hast learned all thy postures, who canst cringe and tack about, how wilt thou look Christ in the face another day? When thou shalt say upon thy death-bed, Lord, look upon thy servant, Christ shall disclaim thee, and say, My servant! no, thou didst renounce my service, thou wert a servant of men, depart from me, I know you not. What a cooling card will this be at that day?

2. What doth a man get by sinfully enslaving himself? He gets a blot in his name, a curse in his

estate, an hell in his conscience, nay, even those that he basely stooped to, will scorn and despise him. How did the high priests kick off Judas, Mat. xxvii. 4. 'Look thou to that.'

That we may not be the servants of men, let us abandon fear, Esther viii. 17. and advance faith; faith is a world-conquering grace, 1 John v. 4. It overcomes the world's music and furnace; it steels a christian with divine courage, and makes him stand immoveable, as a rock in the midst of the sea.

SECT 7.

7. A godly man is a Christ-prizer. To illustrate this, I shall show,

1. That Jesus Christ is in himself precious.

2. That a godly man esteems him precious.

1. That Jesus Christ is in himself precious, 1 Pet. ii. 6. 'Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious.' Christ is compared to things most precious.

1. To a bundle of myrrh, Cant. i. 13. Myrrh is very precious, it was one of the chief spices whereof the holy anointing oil was made, Ex. xxx. 25.

1. Myrrh is of a perfuming nature; so Christ perfumes our persons and services, that they are a sweet odour to God; whence is it the church, that heavenly bride, is so perfumed with grace, Cant. iii. 6. but because Christ, that myrrh-tree, hath dropped upon her.

2. Myrrh is of an exhilarating nature; the smell of it doth comfort and refresh the spirits; so Christ doth comfort the souls of his people, when they are fainting under their sins and sufferings.

2. Christ is compared to a pearl, Mat. xiii. 46. 'When he had found one pearl of great price.' Christ this pearl was little in regard of his humility,

but of infinite value. Jesus Christ is a pearl that God wears in his own bosom ; a pearl, whose lustre drowns the world's glory ; a pearl that enricheth the soul, the angelical part of man ; a pearl that enlightens heaven ; a pearl so precious, that it makes us precious to God ; a pearl that is cordial and restorative ; a pearl more worth than heaven. The preciousness of Christ is seen three ways.

1. He is precious in his person, he is the picture of his Father's glory, Heb. i. 3.

2. Christ is precious in his offices, which are several rays of the Sun of Righteousness.

1. Christ's prophetic office is precious. He is the great oracle of heaven ; he hath a preciousness above all the prophets which went before him ; he teacheth not only the ear, but the heart ; he who hath the key of David in his hand opened the heart of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14.

2. Christ's priestly office is precious : this is the solid basis of our comfort, Heb. ix. 16. ' Now once hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.' By virtue of this sacrifice, the soul may go to God with boldness ; Lord, give me heaven, Christ hath purchased it for me ; he hung upon the cross, that I might sit upon the throne. Christ's blood and incense are the two hinges on which our salvation turns.

3. Christ's regal office is precious, Rev. xix. 16. ' He hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. Christ hath a pre-eminence above all other kings for majesty ; he hath the highest throne, the richest crown, the largest dominions, and the longest possession, Heb. i. 8. ' Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.' Though Christ hath many assessors, yet no successors. Christ sets up his sceptre where no other king doth ; he rules the will and affections ; his power binds the conscience : the angels take the

oath of allegiance to him, Heb. i. 6. Christ's kingship is seen in two royal acts.

1. In ruling his people. 2. In over-ruling his enemies.

1. In ruling his people. He rules with clemency; his regal rod hath honey at the end of it: Christ displays the ensign of mercy, which makes so many volunteers run to his standard, Psal. cx. 3. Holiness without mercy, and justice without mercy, were dreadful; but mercy encourageth poor sinners to trust in him.

2. In over-ruling his enemies. He pulls down their pride, befools their policy, restrains their malice, Psal. lxxvi. 10. 'The remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain; or, as it is in the Hebrew, 'Thou shalt girdle up.' That stone 'cut out of the mountain without hands, which smote the image,' Dan. ii. 34. was an emblem, saith Austin, of Christ's monarchical power, conquering and triumphing over his enemies.

3. Christ is precious in his benefits; by Christ all dangers are removed, through Christ all mercies are conveyed; in his blood flows justification, purification, fructification, pacification, adoption, perseverance, glorification. This will be matter of sublimest joy to eternity. We read, that those who had passed over the sea of glass, stood with their harps, and did sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, Rev. xv. 2. So when the saints of God have passed over the glassy sea of this world, they shall sing hallelujahs to the Lamb, who hath redeemed them from sin and hell, and hath translated them into that glorious paradise, where they shall see God for ever and ever.

2. The second thing to be illustrated is, that every godly man doth set an high value and estimate upon Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 7. 'Unto you therefore who believe, he is precious;' in the Greek it is, an

honour. Believers have an honourable esteem of Christ; the Psalmist speaks like one captivated with Christ's amazing beauty, Psal. lxxiii. 25. 'There is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.' He did not say he had nothing; he had many comforts on earth, but he desired none but God; as if a wife should say there is no one's company she prizeth like her husband's. How did David prize Christ, Psal. xiv. 2. 'Thou art fairer than the Children of men. The spouse in the Canticles looked upon Christ as the Coriphæus, the most incomparable one, Cant. v. 10. 'The chief among ten thousand.' Christ outvies all others, Cant. ii. 3. 'As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.' Christ doth infinitely more excel all the beauties and glories of this visible world, than the apple-tree doth surpass the trees of the wild forest. So did Paul prize Christ, that he made him his chief study. 1 Cor. ii. 2. 'I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ;' I judged not any thing else of worth: Paul did best know Christ, 1 Cor. ix. 1. 'Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?' He saw him with his bodily eyes in a vision, when he was wrapped up into the third heaven, 2 Cor. xii. 2. and he saw him with the eye of his faith, in the blessed supper, therefore he did best know him; and behold, how he did slight and viliprize other things, in comparison of Christ, Phil. iii. 8. 'I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.' Gain he counted loss, and gold dung for Christ. Indeed a godly person cannot choose but set an high valuation upon Christ, he sees a fulness of worth in him.

1. A fulness in regard of variety, Gal. ii. 3. 'In whom are hid all treasures.' No country hath all commodities of its own growth; but Christ hath all

kind of fulness; fulness of merit, of spirit, of love; he hath a treasure adequate to all our wants.

2. A fulness in regard of degree; Christ hath not only a few drops, or rays, but is more full of goodness than the sun is of light; he hath the fulness of the Godhead, Col. ii. 9.

3. A fulness in regard of duration: the fulness in the creature, like the brooks of Arabia, is soon dried up: but Christ's fulness is inexhaustible, it is a fulness overflowing and ever flowing.

And this fulness is for believers: Christ is, as Luther saith, a common treasury or magazine for the saints, John i. 16. 'Of his fulness have we all received.' Set a glass under a still, and it receives water out of the still, drop by drop; so those who are united to Christ, have the dews and drops of his grace distilling upon them. Well then may Christ be admired of all them that believe.

Use 1. Is a godly man an high prizer of Christ, then what is to be thought of them who do not put a value upon Christ, are they godly or no? There are four sorts of persons who do not prize Christ.

1. The Jews. They believe not in Christ, 2 Cor. iii. 15. 'Unto this day the veil is upon their heart:' they expect a Messiah yet to come, as their own Talmud reports; they blaspheme Christ, they slight righteousness imputed: they despise the virgin Mary, calling her in derision *Marah*, which signifies bitterness: they vilify the gospel: they deny the christian sabbath; they have the Christians in abomination; they hold it not lawful for a Jew to take physic of a Christian. Schecardus relates of one *Bendema* a Jew, that being stung by a serpent, a Christian came to heal him, but he refused his help, and chose rather to die, than to be healed by a Christian: so do the Jews hate Christ, and all that wear his livery.

2. The Socinians, who acknowledge only Christ's

humanity; this is to make him below the angels; for the human nature, simply considered, is inferior to the angelical, Psalm viii. 5.

3. Proud professors, who do not lay the whole stress of their salvation upon Christ, but would mingle their dross with his gold, their duties with his merits; this is to steal a jewel from Christ's crown, and implicitly to deny him to be a perfect Saviour.

4. Airy speculatists, who prefer the study of the arts and sciences before Christ; not but that the knowledge of these is commendable; Moses was skilled in all the knowledge of the Egyptians. Acts vii. 22. Human learning is of good use to prepare for the study of better things; as a coarser dye prepares the cloth for a richer and deeper dye; but the fault is when the study of Christ is neglected: the knowledge of Christ ought to have the pre-eminence. It was not sure without a mystery, that God suffered all Solomon's writings about birds and plants to be lost; but what he wrote about spiritual wisdom hath been miraculously preserved; as if God would teach us, that to know Christ (the true wisdom, Prov. viii. 12.) is the crowning knowledge: one leaf of this tree of life, will give us more comfort on a death-bed, than the whole idea and platform of human science. What is it to know all the motions of the orbs, and influence of the stars, and in the mean time to be ignorant of Christ, the bright Morning Star? Rev. xxii. 16. What is it to understand the nature of minerals or precious stones, and not to know Christ the true corner-stone, Is. xxviii. 16. It is an undervaluing, yea, despising of Christ, when with the loadstone we draw iron and straw to us, but neglect him who hath tried gold to give us, Rev. iii. 18.

Use. Is it the sign of a godly person to be a Christ prizer? then let us try our godliness by this: do we set an high estimation upon Christ?

Quest. How shall we know that?

Answ. 1. If we are prizers of Christ, then we prefer him in our judgments before other things. We value Christ above honour and riches, the pearl of price lies nearest our heart; he who prizeth Christ, esteems the gleanings of Christ better than the world's vintage: he counts the worst things of Christ, better than the best things of the world, Heb. xi. 26. "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." And is it thus with us? is the price of worldly things fallen? Gregory Nazianzen did solemnly bless God, that he had any thing to lose for Christ's sake. But alas, how few Nazianzens are to be found! You shall hear some say, they have honourable thoughts of Christ, but they prize their land and estate above him. The young man in the gospel preferred his bags of gold before Christ: Judas valued thirty pieces of silver above him. May it not be feared, if an hour of trial come, there are many would rather renounce their baptism, and throw off Christ's livery, than hazard the loss of their earthly possessions for him.

2. If we are prizers of Christ, we cannot live without him; things which we value, we know not how to be without: a man may live without music but not without food. A child of God can want health and friends, but he cannot want Christ: in the absence of Christ he saith as Job, 'I went mourning without the sun,' Job xxx. 28. I have the star-light of creature comforts, but I want the Sun of Righteousness. Give me children, said Rachel, or I die, Gen. xxx. 1. So saith the soul, Lord give me Christ, or I die; one drop of the water of life to quench my thirst. Let us try by this, do they prize Christ, who can make a shift well enough to be without him? Give a child a rattle, and it will not mind gold; if men have but world-

ly accommodations, corn and wine, they can be well enough content without Christ: Christ is a spiritual rock, 1 Cor. x. 4. Let men have but oil in the cruse, they care not for honey out of the rock. If their trading be gone, they complain, but if God takes away the gospel, which is the ark wherein Christ the manna is hid, they are quiet and tame enough. Do these prize Christ, who can sit down content without him.

4. If we are prizers of Christ, then we shall not grudge at any pains to get him. He who prizeth gold, will dig for it in the mine, Psal. lxxiii. 8. 'My soul followeth hard after God.' Plutarch reports of the Gauls, an ancient people in France, after they had tasted the sweet wine of the Italian grape, they inquired after the country, and never rested till they had arrived at it. He in whose eye Christ is precious, never rests till he hath gotten Christ, Cant. iii. 1, 2, 4. 'I sought him whom my soul loveth, I held him, and would not let him go.'

Try by this, many say they have Christ in high veneration; but they are not industrious in the use of means to obtain him. If Christ would drop as a ripe fig into their mouths, they could be content to have him, but they will not put themselves to too much trouble to get him: doth he prize his health, who will not put himself upon physic or exercise.

4. If we are prizers of Christ, then we take much complacency in Christ: what joy doth a man take in that which he counts his treasure? He who prizeth Christ, makes him the head of his joy: he can delight in Christ, when other delights are gone, Hab. iii. 17. 'Though the fig-tree doth not flourish, yet I will rejoice in the Lord.' 'Though a flower in a man's garden die, yet he can delight in his money and jewels: he who esteems Christ, can solace himself in Christ, when there is an autumn upon all other comforts.'

5. If we are prizers of Christ, then we will part with our dearest lusts for him. Paul saith of the Galatians, they did so esteem him, that they were ready to have pulled out their own eyes, and have given him, Gal. iv. 15. He who esteems Christ, will pull out that lust which is his right eye. A wise man will throw away a poison for a cordial; he who sets an high value upon Christ, will part with his pride, unjust gain, sinful passions; he will set his feet upon the neck of his sins, Josh. x. 24.

Try by this, how they can be said to prize Christ, who will not leave a vanity for him; not a spot in the face, not an oath, not an intemperate cup: what a scorn and contempt do they put upon the Lord Jesus, who prefer a damning lust before a saving Christ?

6. If we are prizers of Christ, we shall think we cannot have him at too dear a rate. We may buy gold too dear, but we cannot purchase Christ too dear; though we part with our blood for him, it is no dear bargain: the apostles rejoiced that they were graced so much, as to be disgraced for Christ. They esteemed their fetters more precious than bracelets of gold; let not him say he prizeth Christ, who refuseth to bear his cross, Matt. xii. 11. 'When persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.'

7. If we are prizers of Christ, we will be willing to help others to a part in him; that which we esteem excellent, we are desirous our friend should have a share in: if a man hath found a spring of water, he will call others that they may drink, and satisfy their thirst. Do we commend Christ to others? Do we take them by the hand, and lead them to Christ? This shows how few prize Christ, because they strive not more that their relations should have a part in him: they get land and riches

for their posterity, but have no care to leave them the pearl of price for their portion.

8. If we are prizers of Christ, then we prize him in health as well as in sickness; when we are enlarged, as well as when we are straitened; a friend is prized at all times; the rose of Sharon is always sweet. He who values a Saviour aright, hath as precious thoughts of him in a day of prosperity, as in a day of adversity. The wicked make use of Christ only when they are in straits; as the elders of Gilead went to Jephthah when they were in distress, Judges xi. 7. Themistocles complained of the Athenians, that they ran to him but as to a tree, to shelter them in a storm: sinners desire Christ only for a shelter. The Hebrews never chose their Judges, but when they were in some imminent dangers; godless persons never look after Christ but at death, when they are in danger of hell.

Use 3. As we would evidence to the world that we have the impress of godliness on us, let us be prizers of Jesus Christ; he is elect, precious: Christ is the wonder of beauty. Pliny saith of the mulberry tree, there is nothing in it but what is medicinal and useful, the fruit, leaves, bark; so there is nothing in Christ but what is precious; his name is precious, his virtues precious, his blood precious.

O then, let us have endearing thoughts of Christ; let him be accounted our chief treasure and delight: this is the reason why millions perish, because they do not prize Christ. Christ is the door by which men are to enter into heaven, John x. 9. If they do not know this door, or are so proud that they will not stoop to go in at it, how can they be saved? That we may have Christ-admiring thoughts, let us consider,

1. We cannot prize Christ at too high a rate; we may prize other things above their worth, that is our sin; we commonly over-rate the creature;

we think there is more in it than there is; therefore God withers our gourd, because we over-prize it. But we cannot raise our esteem high enough of Christ, he is beyond all value: there is no ruby or diamond but the jeweller can set a just price upon it, he can say it is worth so much, and no more; but Christ's worth can never be fully known: no seraphim can set a due value on him; his are unsearchable riches, Eph. iii. 8. Christ is more precious than the soul, than the angels, than heaven.

2. Jesus Christ hath highly prized us: he took our flesh upon him, he made his soul an offering for us. How precious was our salvation to Christ? shall not we prize and adore him, who hath put such a value upon us.

3. Not to prize Christ is high imprudence; Christ is our guide to glory; it is folly for a man to slight his guide; he is our physician, it is folly to despise our physician.

What, to set light by Christ for things of no value? Matt. xxiii. 17. 'Ye fools and blind.' How is a fool tried, but by shewing him an apple and a piece of gold, if he choose the apple before the gold, he is judged to be a fool, and his estate is begged: how many such ideots are there, who prefer husks before manna, the gaudy empty things of this life before the Prince of glory, will not Satan beg them at last for fools?

4. Such as slight Christ now, and say, There is no beauty in him that he should be desired; there is a day shortly coming when Christ will as much slight them; he will set as light by them as they do by him; he will say, 'I know you not,' Luke xiii. 27. What a slighting word will that be, when men shall cry, Lord Jesus save us, and he shall say, I was offered to you, but 'you would none of me;' you scorned me, and now I will set light by you, and your salvation: 'Depart from me, I know you

not.' This is all that sinners get by rejecting the Lord of life; Christ will slight them at the day of judgment, who have slighted him in the day of grace.

SECT. 8.

8. A godly man is an evangelical weeper. David did sometimes sing with his harp, and sometimes the organ of his eye did weep, Psal. vi. 6. 'I water my couch with tears.' Christ calls his spouse his dove, Cant. ii. 14. The dove is a weeping creature: grace dissolves and liquifies the soul, causing a spiritual thaw; the sorrow of the heart runs out at the eye.

The Rabbins report, that the same night that Israel departed out of Egypt towards Canaan, all the idols of Egypt were broken down by lightning and earthquake; so at that very time men go forth out of their natural condition towards heaven, all the idols of sin in the heart must be broken down by repentance. A melting heart is the chief branch of the covenant of grace, and the product of the Spirit, Zech. xii. 10. 'I will pour upon the house of David the spirit of grace, and they shall look on me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him.'

Quest. But why is a godly man a weeper? Is not sin pardoned, which is the ground of joy? Hath not he had a transforming work upon his heart? why then doth he weep?

Ans. A godly man finds matter enough of weeping.

1. He weeps for the in-being of sin, the law in his members, the ebullitions, and first risings of sin; his nature is a poisoned fountain. A regenerate person grieves that he carries that about him which is enmity to God; his heart is like the wide

sea, wherein there are creeping things innumerable; vain sinful thoughts; a child of God laments hidden wickedness, he hath more evil in him than he knows of. There are those meanders in his heart which he cannot trace; an unknown world of sin, Psal. xix. 12. 'Who can understand his errors?'

2. A godly man weeps for the adherency of corruption; if he could get rid of sin, there were some comfort, but he cannot shake off this viper. Sin cleaves to him as the leprosy to the wall, Lev. xiv. 39. 'Though a child of God forsakes his sin, yet sin will not forsake him, Dan. vii. 12.' 'Concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season.' So, though the dominion of sin is taken away, yet the life of it is prolonged for a season; and while sin lives it molests. The Persians were daily enemies to the Romans, and would be invading upon their frontiers: so sin wars against the soul, 1 Pet. ii. 7. and no cessation of arms till death; will not this cause tears?

3. A child of God weeps that he is sometimes overcome by the prevalency of corruption, Rom. vii. 19. 'The evil I would not, that do I.' Paul was like a man carried down the stream: how oft is a saint overpowered with pride and passion! When David had sinned, he steeped his soul in the brinish tears of repentance. It cannot but grieve a regenerate person to think he should be so foolish, as after he hath felt the smart of sin, yet to put this fire in his bosom again.

4. A godly heart grieves that he cannot be more holy; it troubles him that he shoots so short of the rule and standard which God hath set. I should, saith he, love the Lord with all my heart; but how defective is my love? How far short do I come of what I should be, nay, of what I might have been?

What can I see in my life, but either blanks or blots?

5. A godly man weeps sometimes; out of the sense of God's love. Gold is the finest and most solid of all metals, yet is soonest melted with the fire; gracious hearts, which are golden hearts, are the soonest melted into tears by the fire of God's love. I once knew an holy man, who walking in his garden, and shedding plenty of tears, a friend coming to him accidentally, asked him why he wept? He brake forth into this pathetic expression, O the love of Christ, the love of Christ. Thus have we seen the cloud melted into water by the sun beams.

6. A godly person weeps, because the sins he commits are in some sense worse than the sins of other men; the sin of a justified person is very odious.

1. Because he acts contrary to his own principles; he doth not only sin against the rule, but against his principles, against his knowledge, vows, prayers, hopes, experiences; he knows how dear sin will cost him, yet he adventures upon the forbidden fruit.

2. The sin of a justified person is odious, because it is a sin of unkindness, 2. Kings xi. 9. Peter's denying of Christ was a sin against love: Christ had enrolled him among the apostles, he had taken him up into the mount of transfiguration, and shewed him the glory of heaven in a vision, yet after all this signal mercy, that he should deny Christ, it was high ingratitude. This made him go out and weep bitterly, Mat. xxvi. 75. he baptized himself, as it were in his own tears. The sins of the godly go nearest to God's heart; other sins anger God, these grieve him; the sins of the wicked pierce Christ's sides, the sins of the godly wound his heart; the unkindness of a spouse goes nearest the heart of her husband.

8. The sin of a justified person is odious, because it reflects more dishonour upon God, 2 Sam. xii.

14. 'By this deed, thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.' The sins of God's people put black spots in the face of religion. Thus we see what cause there is, why a child of God should weep even after conversion.

Now this sorrow of a godly man for sin, is not a despairing sorrow; he doth not mourn without hope, Psal. lxxv. 3. 'Iniquities prevail against me.' There is the holy soul weeping; as for our transgressions thou shalt purge them away; there is faith triumphing.

Divine sorrow is excellent; there is as much difference between the sorrow of a godly man and a wicked, as between the water of a spring which is clear and sweet, and the water of the sea which is salt and brackish. A godly man's sorrow hath these three qualifications,

1. It is internal, it is a sorrow of soul; hypocrites disfigure their faces, Mat. vi. 16. Godly sorrow goes deep, it is a pricking at the heart, Acts. ii. 37. True sorrow is a spiritual martyrdom, therefore called soul-affliction, Lev. xxiii. 29.

2. Godly sorrow is ingenuous; it is more for the evil that is in sin, than the evil which follows after; it is more for the spot than the sting: hypocrites weep for sin only as it brings affliction. I have read of a fountain that never sends forth streams but the evening before a famine: hypocrites never send forth the streams of their tears but when God's judgments are approaching.

3. Godly sorrow is influential; it makes the heart better, Eccles. vii. 3. 'By the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.' Divine tears do not only wet, but wash, they purge out the love of sin.

Use. How far are they from being godly, who

scarce ever shed a tear for sin: if they lose a near relation, they weep, but though they are in danger of losing God and their souls, they weep not. How few know what it is to be in an agony for sin, or what a broken heart means; their eyes are not like the fish-pools of Heshbon, full of water; but rather like the mountains of Gilboa, which had no dew upon them. It was a greater plague for Pharaoh to have his heart turned into stone, than to have his rivers turned into blood.

Others, if they do sometimes shed a tear, yet they are never the better, they go on in wickedness and do not drown their sins in their tears.

Use 2. Let us labour for this divine character, be weepers. This is a repentance not to be repented of. It is reported of Mr. Bradford the martyr, that he was of so melting a spirit, that he seldom sat down to his meat but some tears trickled down his cheeks. There are two lavers to wash away sin, blood and tears; the blood of Christ washeth away the guilt of sin, tears wash away the filth; repenting tears are precious, God puts them in his bottle. They are beautifying; a tear in the eye doth more adorn than a ring on the finger; oil makes the face to shine, tears make the heart to shine; tears are comforting; a sinner's mirth turns to melancholy, a saint's mourning turns to music. Repentance may be compared to myrrh, which though it be bitter to the taste, it is comforting to the spirits; repentance may be bitter to the fleshly part, but it is most refreshing to the spiritual. Wax that melts is fit for the seal: a melting soul is fit to take the stamp of all heavenly blessings; let us give Christ the water of our tears, and he will give us the wine of his blood.

SECT. 9.

9. A godly man is a lover of the word, Ps. cxix. 97. 'O how love I thy law!'

1. A godly man loves the word written. Chrysostom compares the scripture to a garden set with knots and flowers. A godly man delights to walk in this garden, and sweetly solace himself; he loves every branch and parcel of the word.

1. He loves the counselling part of the word, as it is a directory and a rule of life; the word is the mercurial statue which points us to our duty; it contains in it *credenda et facienda*, things to be believed and practised. A godly man loves the aphorisms of the word.

2. A godly man loves the minatory part of the word. The scripture, like the garden of Eden, as it hath a tree of life in it, so it hath a flaming sword at the gates of it; this is the threatening of the word; it flasheth fire in the face of every person that goes on obstinately in wickedness, Psalm lxxviii. 21. 'God shall wound the hairy scalp of such an one, as goes on still in his tresspasses.' The word gives no indulgence to evil; it will not let a man halt between sin and God; the true mother would not let the child be divided, and God will not have the heart divided. The word thunders out threatenings against the very appearance of evil; it is like that flying roll full of curses, Zech. v. 3.

A godly man loves the menaces of the word, he knows there is love in every threatening; God would not have us perish, therefore doth mercifully threaten us, that he may scare us from sin: God's threatenings are as the sea mark, which shows the rocks in the sea, and threateneth death to such as come near; the threatening is a curbing bit to check

us that we may not run in a full career to hell; there is a mercy in every threatening.

3. A godly man loves the consolatory part of the word, the promises; he goes feeding upon these, as Samson went on his way eating the honey-comb. The promises are all marrow and sweetness; they are our bezoar-stone when we are fainting, they are the conduits of the water of life, Psal. xciv. 29. 'In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.' The promises were David's harp to drive away sad thoughts; they were the breasts which milked out divine consolation to him.

A godly man shews his love to the word written.

1. By diligent reading of it: the noble Bereans did search the scriptures daily, Acts. xxi. 11. Apollos was mighty in the scriptures. The word is our *magna charta* for heaven, we should be daily reading over this charter. The word shews what is truth, and what is error; it is the field where the pearl of price is hid: how should we dig for this pearl! A godly man's heart is the library to hold the word of God, it dwells richly in him. It is reported of Melancthon, that when he was young, he carried the Bible always about him, and did greedily read in it. The word hath a double work, to teach us, and to judge us: they that will not be taught by the word, shall be judged by the word. Oh let us make the scripture familiar to us! What if it should be as in the time of Dioclesian, who commanded by proclamation the Bible to be burned; or as in queen Mary's days, wherein it was death to have a Bible in English; by diligent conversing with scripture, we may carry a Bible in our head.

2. A godly man shews his love to the word, by frequent meditating in it, Psal. cxix. 97. 'It is my meditation all the day.' A pious soul meditates of

the verity and sanctity of the word; he hath not only a few transient thoughts, but lays his mind steeping in the scripture: by meditation he sucks from this sweet flower, and concocts holy truth in his mind.

3. He shews his love to the word by delighting in it, it is his recreation, Jer. xv. 16. 'Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.' Never did a man take such delight in a dish that he loved, as the prophet did in the word. And indeed, how can a saint choose but take great complacency in the word, because all that ever he hopes to be worth is contained in it? Doth not a son take pleasure in reading over his father's will and testament, where he makes a conveyance of his estate to him?

4. He shews his love to the word, by hiding it, Psal. cxix. 11. 'Thy word have I hid in my heart;' as one hides a treasure that it should not be stolen away. The word is the jewel, the heart is the cabinet where it must be locked up; many hide the word in their memory but not in their heart. And why would David enclose the word in his heart? 'That I might be kept from sinning against thee.' As one would carry an antidote about him when he comes to an infected place; so a godly man carries the word in his heart as a spiritual antidote to preserve him from the infection of sin: why have so many been poisoned with error, others with moral vice, but because they have not hid the word as an holy antidote in their heart.

5. He shews his love to the word by defending it; a wise man will not let his land be taken from him, but will defend his title. David looked upon the word as his land of inheritance, Psal. cxix. 111. 'Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever.' And do you think he would let his inheri-

tance be wrested out of his hands? A godly man will not only dispute for the word, but die for it, Rev. vi. 9. 'I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God.'

6. He shews his love to the word, by preferring it above things most precious. 1. Above food, Job xxiii. 12. 'I have esteemed the words of his mouth above my necessary food.' 2. Above riches, Psalm cxix. 72. 'The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.' 3. Above worldly honour. Memorable is the story of king Edward the sixth, who upon the day of his coronation, when they presented before him three swords, signifying to him that he was monarch of three kingdoms; the king said, There is yet one sword wanting; being asked what that was? he answered, the Holy Bible, which is the sword of the Spirit, and is to be preferred before these ensigns of royalty.

7. He shews his love to the word, by talking of it, Psal. cxix. 172. 'My tongue shall speak of thy word.' As a covetous man is talking of his rich purchase, so a godly man is speaking of the word: what a treasure it is, how full of beauty and suavity; they whose mouths the devil hath gagged, who never speak of God's word, it is a sign they never reaped any good by it.

8. He shews his love to the word, by conforming to it: the word is his sun dial, by which he sets his life, the balance in which he weighs his actions; he copies out the word in his daily walk, 2 Tim. iv. 7. 'I have kept the faith.' Paul kept the doctrine of faith, and lived the life of faith.

Quest. Why is a godly man a lover of the word?

Ans. 1. Because of the excellency of the word.

1. The word written is our pillar of fire to guide us; it shews us what rocks we are to avoid: it is

the chart by which we sail to the New Jerusalem.

2. The word is a spiritual optic glass, through which we may see our own hearts: the glass of nature which the heathen had, discovered spots in their conversation, but this glass discovers spots in the imagination; that glass discovered the spots of their unrighteousness, this discovers the spots of our righteousness, Rom. vii. 9. 'When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died;' when the word came as a glass, all my opinion of self-righteousness died.

3. The word of God is a sovereign comfort in distress; while we follow this cloud, the rock follows us, Psal. cxix. 50. 'This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me.' Christ is the fountain of living water, the word is the golden pipe through which it runs; what can revive at the hour of death, but the word of life, Phil. ii. 16.

1. A godly man loves the word, because of the efficacy it hath had upon him, this day-star hath risen in his heart, and ushered in the Sun of Righteousness.

2. A godly man loves the word preached, which is a commentary upon the word written: the scriptures are the sovereign oils and balsams, the preaching of the word is the pouring of them out: the scriptures are the precious spices, the preaching of the word is the beating of these spices, which causeth a wonderful fragrancy and delight. The word preached is the fod of God's strength, Psal. cx. 2. and the breath of his lips, Isa. xi. 4. What was once said of the city of Thebes, that it was built by the sound of Amphius' harp, is much more true of soul conversion, it is built by the sound of the gospel harp; therefore the preaching of the word is called, 'the power of God to salvation,' 1 Cor. i. 24. By this, Christ is said, (now) to speak to us from hea-

ven, Heb. xii. 25. This ministry of the word is to be preferred before the ministry of angels.

A godly man loves the word preached, partly from the good he hath found by it: he hath felt the dew fall with this manna; and partly because of God's institution; the Lord hath appointed this ordinance to save him; the king's image makes the coin go current; the stamp of divine authority upon the word preached, makes it an engine conducive to men's salvation.

Use Let us try by this character, whether we are godly, are we lovers of the word?

1. Do we love the word written? What sums of money did the martyrs give for a few leaves of the Bible? Do we make the word our familiar? As Moses had often the rod of God in his hand, so should we have the book of God in our hand: when we want direction, do we consult with this sacred oracle? When we find corruptions strong, do we make use of this sword of the Spirit to hew them down? When we are disconsolate, do we go to this aquavitæ bottle for comfort? Then we are lovers of the word! But alas, how can they say they love the scriptures, who are seldom conversant in them? their eyes begin to be sore when they look upon a Bible: the two testaments are hung by like rusty armour, which is seldom or ever made use of: the Lord wrote the law with his own finger, but though God took pains to write, men will not take pains to read; they had rather look upon a pack of cards than upon a Bible.

2. Do we love the word preached? Do we prize it in our judgments? Do we receive it into our hearts? Do we fear the loss of the word preached, more than the loss of peace and trading? Is it the removal of the ark that troubles us?

Again, do we attend the word with reverential devotion? When the judge is giving his charge up-

on the bench all attend, when the word is preached, the great God is giving us his charge, do we listen to it as to a matter of life and death? This is a good sign we love the word.

Again, do we love the sanctity of the word? The word preached is to beat down sin, and advance holiness: do we love it for its spirituality and purity? Many love the word preached only for its eloquence and notion; they come to a sermon as to a music-lecture, or as to a garden to pick flowers, but not to have their lusts subdued, or their hearts bettered: these are like a foolish woman, which paints her face, but neglects her health,

Again, do we love the convictions of the word? Do we love the word when it comes home to our conscience, and shoots its arrows of reproof at our sins? It is the minister's duty sometimes to reprove: he that can give smooth words in the pulpit, but knows not how to reprove, is like a sword with a fine hilt, without an edge, 'Rebuke them sharply,' Tit. ii. 15. Dip the nail in oil, reprove in love, strike the nail home. Now Christian, when the word toucheth upon thy sin, and saith, 'Thou art the man,' dost thou love the reproof? Canst thou bless God that the sword of the Spirit hath divided between thee and thy lusts? This is indeed a sign of grace, and shews thou art a lover of the word.

A corrupt heart loves the comforts of the word, but not the reproofs, 'they hate him that rebuketh in the gate,' Amos v. 10. Like venomous creatures, that upon the least touch spit poison, Acts vii. 54. 'When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and gnashed upon him with their teeth.' When Stephen touched them to the quick, they were mad and could not endure it.

Quest. How shall we know that we love the reproofs of the word?

Ans. 1. When we desire to sit under an heart-

searching ministry; who cares for physic that will not work? A godly man chooseth not to sit under such a ministry as will not work upon his conscience.

2. When we pray that the word may meet with our sins; if there be any traitorous lust got into the heart, we would have it found out, and execution done upon it; we would not have sin covered, but cured; we can open our breast to the bullet of the word, and say, Lord, smite this sin.

3. When we are thankful for a reproof, Psalm cxli. 5. 'Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head.' David was glad of a reproof. Suppose a man were in the mouth of a lion, and another should shoot the lion and save the man, would he not be thankful? So, when we are in the mouth of sin, as of a lion, and the minister by a reproof shoots this sin to death, shall not we be thankful? A gracious soul rejoiceth when the sharp lance of the word hath let out his imposthume; he wears a reproof as a jewel on his ear, Prov. xxv. 12. 'As an ear-ring of gold, so is a re-prover on an obedient ear.' To conclude, it is convincing preaching that must do the soul good; a nipping reproof prepares for comfort, as a nipping frost prepares for the sweet flowers of spring.

SECT. 10.

10. A godly man hath the Spirit of God residing in him, 2 Tim. i. 14. 'The Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us,' Gal. iv. 6. The schoolmen move the question, whether a man receives the Holy Ghost himself or no? Montanus held that the godly have so God's Spirit in them that they partake of his essence, and are become one person with himself; but this

amounts to no less than blasphemy; then it would follow, that every saint were to be worshipped.

I conceive the Spirit is in the godly *per modum influxus*, they have the presence, and receive the sacred influences of it. When the sun comes into a room, not the body of the sun is there, but the beams that sparkle from it. Indeed, some divines have thought that the godly have more than the influx of the Spirit, though to say how it is more, is ineffable, and is fitter for some seraphic pen to describe than mine. The Spirit of God discovers itself in a gracious soul two ways.

1. By its motions. These are some of that sweet perfume the Spirit breathes upon the heart, whereby it is raised into a kind of angelical frame.

2. The Spirit discovers itself in the godly by its virtues. These are various.

1. God's Spirit hath a teaching virtue, the Spirit teacheth convincingly, John xvi. 8. It doth so teach as it doth persuade.

2. God's Spirit hath a sanctifying virtue, the heart naturally is polluted, but when the Spirit comes into it, it works sin out, and grace in. The Spirit of God was represented by the dove, an emblem of purity; the Spirit makes the heart a temple for pureness, and a paradise for pleasantness. The holy oil of consecration, was nothing else but a prefiguring of the Spirit: the Spirit sanctifies a man's fancy, causing it to mint holy meditations; it sanctifies his will, biassing it to good: so that now it shall be as delightful to serve God, as before it was to sin against him: sweet powders perfume the linen; so God's Spirit in a man perfumes him with holiness, and makes his heart a map of heaven.

3. God's Spirit hath a vivifying virtue, 'The Spirit giveth life,' John vi. 63. As the blowing in an organ makes it sound, so the breathing of the Spirit causeth life and motion. When the prophet Elijah

stretched himself upon the dead child, it revived; so God's Spirit stretching itself upon the soul infuseth life into it.

As our life, so our liveliness is from the Spirit's operation, 'The Spirit lifted me up,' Ezek. iii. 14. When the heart is bowed down, and is listless to duty, the Spirit of God lifts it up, it puts a sharp edge upon the affections, it makes love ardent, hope lively; the Spirit takes off the weights of the soul, and gives it wings, 'Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadab,' Cant. vi. 12. The wheels of the soul were before pulled off, and it did drive on heavily, but when the Spirit of God possesseth a man, now he runs swiftly in the ways of God, and his soul is as the chariots of Amminadab.

4. God's Spirit hath a jurisdictional virtue, it rules and governs; God's Spirit sits paramount in the soul, it gives check to the violence of corruption; it will not suffer a man to be vain and loose as others: the Spirit of God will not be put out of office, it exerciseth its authority over the heart, 'Bringing every thought to the obedience of Christ,' 2 Cor. x. 5.

5. The Spirit hath a mollifying virtue; therefore it is compared to fire which softens the wax: the Spirit turns flint into flesh, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 'I will give you an heart of flesh.' How shall this be effected? ver. 27. 'I will put my Spirit within you.' While the heart is hard, it lies like a log, and is not wrought upon either with judgments or mercies, but when God's Spirit comes in, it makes a man's heart as tender as his eye, and now it is made yielding to divine impressions.

6. The Spirit of God hath a corroborating virtue, it infuseth strength and assistance for work, it is a 'Spirit of power,' God's Spirit carries a man above himself, 'Strengthened with might by his Spi-

rit in the inner man,' Eph. iii. 16. The Spirit confirms faith, animates courage, it lifts at one end of the cross, and makes it lighter to be borne; the Spirit gives not only a sufficiency of strength but a redundancy.

Quest. How shall we know whether we act in the strength of God's Spirit, or in the strength of our own abilities?

Answ. 1. When we do humbly cast ourselves upon God for assistance; as David going out against Goliath, did cast himself upon God for help, 1 Sam. xvii. 45. 'I come to thee in the name of the Lord.' 2. When our duties are divinely qualified, we do them with pure aims. 3. When we have found God going along with us, we give him the glory of all. This doth clearly evince, that the duty was carried on by the strength of God's Spirit, more than by any innate abilities of our own.

7. God's Spirit hath a comforting virtue; disconsolacy may arise in a gracious heart; as the heaven, though it be a bright lucid body, yet hath interposition of clouds; this sadness is caused usually through the malice of Satan, who, if he cannot destroy us, he will disturb us, but God's Spirit within us doth sweetly cheer and revive; he is called the Comforter, these comforts are real and infallible; hence it is called the seal of the Spirit, Eph. i. 13. When a deed is sealed, it is firm and unquestionable; so when a Christian hath the seal of the Spirit, his comforts are confirmed: every godly man hath these revivings of the Spirit in some degree, he hath the seminals and initials of joy, though the flower be not fully ripe and blown.

Quest. How doth the Spirit give comfort?

Answ. 1. By shewing us that we are in a state of grace: a Christian cannot always see his riches; the work of grace may be written in the heart like short hand, which a Christian cannot read: the Spi-

rit gives him a key to open these dark characters, and spell out his adoption, whereupon he hath joy and peace, 1 Cor. ii. 12. 'We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God.'

2. The Spirit comforts, by giving us some ravishing apprehensions of God's love, Rom. v. 5. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. God's love is a box of precious ointment, and it is only the Spirit can break open this box, and fill us with the sweet perfume of it.

3. The Spirit comforts, by carrying us to the blood of Christ; as when a man is weary and ready to faint, carry him to the water, and he is refreshed: so, when we are fainting under the burden of sin, the Spirit carries us to the fountain of Christ's blood, Zech. xii. 1. 'In that day there shall be a fountain opened,' &c. The Spirit enables us to drink the waters of justification which run out of Christ's sides: the Spirit applies whatever Christ hath purchased, it shows us that our sins are done away in Christ, and though we are spotted in ourselves, we are undefiled in our head.

4. The Spirit comforts, by enabling conscience to comfort; the child must be taught before it can speak: the Spirit opens the mouth of conscience, and helps it to speak, and witness to a man that his estate is good, whereupon he begins to receive comfort, Rom. xi. 2. My conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost. Conscience draws up a certificate for a man, then the Holy Ghost comes and sets his hand to the certificate.

5. The Spirit conveys the oil of joy through two golden pipes, 1. The ordinances. 2. The promises.

1. The ordinances: As Christ in his prayer had his countenance changed, Luke ix. 29. there was a glorious lustre upon his face; so often in the use of holy ordinances, the godly have such raptures

of joy, and soul-transfigurations, that they have been carried above the world and despised all things below.

2. The promises: The promises are comfortable
1. For their sureness, Rom. iv. 16. God in the promises hath laid down his truth to pawn. 2. For their suitableness, being calculated for every christian's condition. The promises are like a physic-garden, there is no disease but some herb may be found there to cure it; but the promises of themselves cannot comfort, only the Spirit enables us to suck those honey-combs; the promises are like a limbeck full of herbs, but this limbeck will not drop, unless the fire be put under: so when the Spirit of God (which is compared to fire) is put to the limbeck of the promises, then they distil consolation. Thus we see how the Spirit is in the godly by its virtues.

Obj. But is this the sign of a godly man to be filled with the Spirit? Are not the wicked said to partake of the Holy Ghost? Heb. vi. 4.

Ans. Wicked men may partake of the Spirit's working, but not of its indwelling; they may have God's Spirit move upon them, the Godly have it enter into them, Ezek. iii. 24.

Obj. But the unregenerate taste of the heavenly gift?

Ans. It is with them as cooks, who may have a smack and taste of the meat they dress, but they are not nourished by it; tasting there is opposed to eating: the godly have not only a drop or taste of the Spirit, but it is in them as a river of living water, John vii. 38.

Use 1. It brands them for ungodly, who have none of God's Spirit, Rom. viii. 9. 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' And if he be none of Christ's then whose is he? to what regiment doth he belong? It is the misery

of a sinner he hath none of God's Spirit: methinks it is very offensive to hear men say, "Take not thy holy Spirit from us," who never had God's Spirit in them. Will they say they have God's Spirit in them, who are drunkards and swearers? Have they God's Spirit who are malicious and unclean? It were blasphemy to say these have the Spirit: will the blessed Spirit leave his celestial palace, to live in a prison? A sinner's heart is a jail, both for darkness and noisomeness, and will God's free Spirit be confined to a prison? a sinner's heart is the emblem of hell, what should God's Spirit do there? Wicked hearts are not a temple, but an hog-sty, where the unclean spirit makes his abode, Eph. ii. 2. 'The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.' We would be loath to live in an house haunted with evil spirits; a sinner's heart is haunted, John xiii. 27. 'After the sop Satan entered.' Satan ventures upon the godly, but enters into the wicked; when the devils went into the herd of swine, they ran violently down a steep place into the sea, Matt. viii. 32. Whence is it men run so greedily to the commission of sin, but because the devil hath entered into these swine.

3. This cuts them off from being godly, who not only want the Spirit, but deride it: like those Jews, Acts ii. 13. 'These men are full of new wine;' and indeed so the apostles were, they were full of the wine of the Spirit. How is God's Spirit scoffed at by the sons of Belial? These, say they, are men of the Spirit. O wretches, to make those tongues, which should be organs of God's praise, instruments to blaspheme; have you none to throw your squibs at but the Spirit? Deriding of the Spirit comes very near to the despighting of it: How can men be sanctified but by the Spirit? therefore to reproach that, is to make merry with their own damnation.

Use 2 As you would be listed in the number of the godly, labour for the indwelling of the Spirit; pray with Melancthon, Lord, inflame my soul with thy holy Spirit! and with the spouse, 'Awake, O north wind, and come thou south, blow upon my garden,' Cant. iv. 16. As a mariner would desire a wind to carry him to sea, so beg the prosperous gales of the Spirit, and the promise may add wings to prayer, Luke xi. 13. 'If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Spirit to them that ask him?' God's Spirit is a rich jewel, go to him for it, Lord, give me thy Spirit, where is the jewel thou didst promise me? When shall my soul be as Gideon's fleece, wet with the dew of heaven?

Consider how needful the Spirit is, without it we can do nothing acceptably to God.

1. We cannot pray without it: it is a spirit of supplication, Zech. xii. 10. It both helps the invention, and the affection, Rom. viii. 26. The Spirit helps us with sighs and groans.

2. We cannot resist temptation without it, Acts i. 8. 'Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you.' He who hath the tide of corrupt nature, and the wind of temptation, must needs be carried down the stream of sin, if the contrary wind of the Spirit doth not blow.

3. We cannot be fruitful without the Spirit.

Why is the Spirit compared to dew and rain, but to shew us how unable we are to bring forth a crop of grace, unless the dew of God fall upon us?

4. Without the Spirit no ordinance is effectual to us; ordinances are the conduit-pipes of grace, but the Spirit is the spring. Some content themselves that they have a Levite to their priest, but never look any further; as if a merchant should content himself that his ship hath good tackling, and is well

manned, though it never have a gale of wind: the ship of ordinances will not carry us to heaven, tho' an angel were the pilot, unless the wind of God's Spirit blow: the Spirit is the soul of the word, without which it is but a dead letter: ministers may prescribe physic, but it is God's Spirit must make it work. Our hearts are like David's body, when it grew old, 'They covered him with clothes but he gat no heat,' 1 Kings i. 1. So though the ministers of God ply us, with prayers and counsels as with hot clothes, yet we are cold and chill till God's Spirit comes, and then we say as the disciples, Luke xxiv. 32, 'Did not our hearts burn within us?' Oh therefore, what need have we of the Spirit?

5. You who have the blessed Spirit manifested by its energy and vital operations; 1. Acknowledge God's distinguishing love; the Spirit is an ear mark of election, John iii. 24, Christ gave the bag to Judas, but not his Spirit: the Spirit is a love token; where God gives his Spirit for a pawn, he gives himself for a portion; the Spirit is an epitomizing blessing, it is put for all things, Mat. vii. 11. What were you without the Spirit, but as so many carcases? Without this Christ would not profit you: the blood of God is not enough without the breath of God. Oh then, be thankful for the Spirit; this loadstone will never leave drawing you, till it hath drawn you up to heaven.

2. If you have this Spirit, do not grieve it, Eph. iv. 30. Shall we grieve our Comforter?

Quest. How do we grieve the Spirit?

Ans. 1. When we unkindly repel the motions of it; the Spirit sometimes whispers in our ears, and calls to us, as God did to Jacob, Gen. xxxi. 1. 'Arise, go to Bethel.' So saith the Spirit, Arise, go to prayer, retire thyself to meet thy God. Now, when we stifle these motions, and entertain temptations to vanity, this is a grieving of the Spirit, if we

check the motions of the Spirit, we shall lose the comforts of the Spirit.

2. We grieve the Spirit, when we deny the work of the Spirit in our hearts; if one gives another a token, and he should deny it, and say he never received it, this were to abuse the love of his friend: so, Christian, when God hath given thee his Spirit, witnessed by those meltings of heart, and passionate breathings after heaven, yet thou deniest that ever thou hadst any renewing work of the Spirit in thee, this is high ingratitude, and is a grieving of the good Spirit; renounce the sinful works of the flesh, but do not deny the gracious work of the Spirit.

SECT. 11.

11. The godly man is an humble man; he is like the sun in the zenith, which when it is at the highest, shows lowest. Austin calls humility the mother of the graces? but ere I show you who is the humble man, I shall lay down three distinctions.

1. I distinguish between being humbled and humble; a man may be humbled, and not humble; a sinner may be humbled by affliction, his condition is low, but not his disposition; a godly man is not only humbled, but humble; his heart is as low as his condition.

2. I distinguish between outward humility and inward; there is a great deal of difference between an humble carriage, and an humble spirit; a person may carry it humbly.

1. Towards others, yet be proud; who more humble than Absalom in his outward behaviour? 2 Sam. xv. 5. 'When any man came near to do him obeisance, Absalom took him by the hand and kissed him.' But though he had an humble carriage, he aspired after the crown, ver. 10. 'As soon

as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.' Here was pride dressed in humility's mantle.

2. A man may behave himself humbly towards God, yet be proud, 1 Kings xxi. 27. 'Ahab put on sackcloth, and fasted, and went softly, but his heart was not humble: a man may bow his head like a bulrush, yet lift up the ensigns of pride in his heart.

3. I distinguish between humility and policy: many make a shew of humility to work their own ends: the papists seem to be the most humble mortified saints, but it is rather subtilty than humility; for by this means they get the revenues of the earth into their possession; all this may be, and yet no godliness.

Quest. How may a Christian know that he is humble, and consequently godly?

Answ. 1. An humble soul is emptied of all swelling thoughts of himself. Bernard calls humility a self-annihilation, Job xxii. 29. 'Thou wilt save the humble.' In the Hebrew it is, 'Him that is of low eyes.' An humble man hath lower thoughts of himself than others can have of him: David, though a king, yet looked upon himself as a worm; Ps. xxii. 6. 'I am a worm, and no man.' Bradford a martyr, yet subscribes himself a sinner, Job x. 15. 'If I am righteous, I will not lift up my head.' Like the violet, a sweet flower, but hangs down the head.

2. An humble soul thinks better of others than of himself, Phil. ii. 3. 'Let each esteem others better than themselves.' An humble man values others at an higher rate than himself; and the reason is, because he can better see his own heart than he can another's; he sees his own corruption, and thinks sure it is not so with others, their graces are not so weak as his, their corruptions are not so strong; sure,

thinks he, they have better hearts than I : an humble Christian studies his own infirmities, and another's excellencies, and that makes him put a higher value upon others than himself, Prov. xxx. 2. 'Surely I am more brutish than any man.' And Paul, though he was the chief of the apostles, yet he calls himself the least of saints, Eph. iii. 8.

3. An humble soul hath a low esteem of his duties; pride is apt to breed in our holy things, as the worm breeds in the sweetest fruit, and froth comes from the most generous wine : an humble person doth not only deny his sins, but his duties; when he hath prayed and wept, alas, saith he, how little have I done, God might damn me for all this ! He saith as good Nehemiah, chap. xiii. 22. 'Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and spare me.' Remember, Lord, how I have poured out my soul, but spare me, and pardon me; he sees that his best duties weigh many grains too light, therefore he desires Christ's merits may be put into the scales. The humble saint blusheth when he looks upon his copy, he sees he cannot write even, nor without blotting; this humbles him to think that his best duties run dregs : he drops poison upon his sacrifice : Oh, saith he, I dare not say I have prayed or wept; those which I write down for duties, God might write down for sins.

4. An humble man is ever preferring bills of indictment against himself; he complains not of his condition, but of his heart : O this evil heart of unbelief? Lord, saith Hooper, I am hell, but thou art heaven. An hypocrite is ever telling how good he is; an humble soul is ever saying how bad he is : Paul, that high-flown saint, who was caught up into the third heaven, how doth this bird of paradise bemoan himself for his corruptions, Rom. vii. 24. 'O wretched man that I am.' Holy Bradford subscribes himself, the hard-hearted sinner : the more

knowledge an humble Christian hath, the more he complains of ignorance; the more faith, the more he bewails his unbelief.

5. An humble man will justify God in an afflicted condition, Neh. ix. 38. 'Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us.' If man oppress and calumniate, the humble soul acknowledgeth God's righteousness in the midst of severity, 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. 'Lo, I have sinned.' Lord, my pride, my barrenness, my sermon-surfeiting hath been the procuring cause of all these judgments; when clouds are round about God, yet 'righteousness is the habitation of his throne,' Psal. xcvi. 2.

6. An humble soul is a Christ-magnifier; he gives the glory of all his actions to Christ and free grace: king Canutus took the crown off his own head, and set it upon a crucifix; so an humble saint takes the crown of honour from his own head, and sets it upon Christ's: and the reason is, from that love he bears to Christ: love can part with any thing to the object loved. Isaac loved Rebekah, and he gave away his jewels to her, Gen. xxiv. 53. The humble saint loves Christ entirely, therefore can part with any thing to him; he gives away the honour and praise of all he doth to Christ, let Christ wear those jewels.

7. An humble soul is willing to take a reproof for sin; a wicked man is too high to stoop to a reproof: the prophet Micaiah used to tell king Ahab of his sin; and saith he, 'I hate him,' 1 Kings xxii. 8. Reproof to a proud man is like pouring water on lime, which grows the more hot; a gracious soul loves him that reproves, Prov. ix. 8. 'Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.' The humble-spirited Christian can bear the reproach of an enemy, and the reproof of a friend.

8. An humble man is willing to have his name and parts eclipsed, so God's glory may be more increased;

he is content to be outshined by others in gifts and esteem, so that the crown of Christ may shine the brighter: this is the humble man's motto, "Let me decrease, let Christ increase." It is his desire that Christ should be exalted, and if this be thus effected, let who will be the instrument, he rejoiceth. Phil. i. 17. 'Some preach Christ of envy.' They preached to get away some of Paul's hearers; well, saith he, 'Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice,' ver. 18. An humble Christian is content to be laid aside, if God hath any other tools to work with which may bring him more glory.

9. An humble saint likes that condition which God sees best for him; a proud man murmurs he hath no more, an humble man wonders he hath so much, Gen. xxxii. 10. 'I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies:' when the heart lies low, it can stoop to a low condition. A Christian looking upon his sins, wonders it is no worse with him, he doth not say his mercies are small, but his sins are great; he knows the worst piece God carves him, is better than he deserves, therefore takes it thankfully upon his knees.

10. An humble Christian will stoop to the meanest person, and the lowest office, he will visit the poorest member of Christ. Lazarus' sores are more precious to him than Dives' purple; he doth not say, 'Stand by, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou;' but, 'condescends to men of low estate,' Isa. xlv. 5. Rom. xii. 16.

Use 1. Is humility the inseparable character of a Christian? then let us try our hearts by this touchstone. Are we humble? Alas, where doth their godliness appear, who are swelled with pride, and ready to burst? But though men are proud, they will not confess it: this bastard of pride is born, but none are willing to father it; therefore let

me ask a few questions, and let conscience answer.

1. Are they not proud who are given to glorying? 1 Cor. v. 6. Your glorying is not good. 1. Who glory in their riches, their hearts swell with their estates. Bernard calls pride the rich man's cousin. Thy heart is lifted up because of thy riches, Ezek. xxviii. 5. 2. Who glory in their apparel. Many dress themselves in such fashions as they make the devil fall in love with them: black spots, gaudy attire, naked breasts, what are these but the flags and banners which pride doth display? 3. Who glory in their beauty. The body is but dust and blood kneaded together: Solomon saith, 'Beauty is vain,' Prov. xxxi. 30. yet so vain are some as to be proud of vanity. 4. Who glory in their gifts. These trappings and ornaments do not set them off in God's eyes: an angel is a knowing creature, but take away humility from an angel, and he is a devil.

2. Are they not proud who are highly opinionated of their own excellencies? who beholding themselves in the multiplying glass of self-love, appear in their own eyes better than they are: Simon Magus gave out that he himself was some great one,' Acts viii. 9. Alexander would needs be son to Jupiter, and of the race of the gods. Sapor king of Persia stiles himself brother of the sun and moon.

I have read of a Pope, who trod upon the neck of Frederick the Emperor, and as a cloak for his pride, cited that text, Psal. xci. 13. 'Thou shalt tread upon the lion, and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.' No such idol as self; the proud man bows down to this idol.

3. Are they not proud who despise others? Luke xviii. 9. 'The Pharisees trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.' The people of the Chinese say, that Europe hath one

eye, and they have two, and all the world else is blind. A proud man looks upon others with such an eye of scorn, as Goliath did upon David, 1 Sam. xvii. 42. 'When the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him.' They who stand upon the pinnacle of pride, look upon other men no bigger than crows.

4. Are they not proud who are the trumpets of their own praise? Acts v. 36. 'Before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody.' A proud man is the herald of his own good deeds, he blazeth his own fame, and therein is his vice, to paint his own virtue.

5. Are they not proud who take the glory due to God, to themselves? Dan. iv. 30. 'Is not this great Babylon I have built? So saith the proud man, are not these the prayers I have made? Are not these the works of charity I have done? When Herod had made an oration, the people cried him up for a god, Acts xii. 22. he was well content to have that honour done to him. Pride is the greatest sacrilege, it robs God of his glory.

6. Are they not proud who are never pleased with their condition? they speak hardly of God, taxing his care and wisdom, as if he had not dealt well with them. A proud man God himself cannot please, but like Momus, he is ever finding fault, and flying in the face of heaven.

Oh, let us search if there be none of this leaven of pride in us: man is naturally a proud piece of flesh; this sin runs in the blood; our first parents fell by their pride, they did aspire after a Deity, there are seeds of this in the best, but the godly do not allow themselves in it; they labour to kill this weed by mortification. But certainly where this sin is regnant and prevailing, it cannot stand with grace; you may as well call him a prudent man who wants discretion, as a godly man who wants humility.

Use 2. Labour for this character, be humble. It is an apostolical exhortation, 1 Pet. v. 5. 'Be clothed with humility.' Put it on as an embroidered robe; better want any thing than humility; better want parts than humility, nay, better want the comforts of the Spirit, than want humility, Micah vi. 8. 'What doth the Lord require of thee, but to walk humbly with thy God?'

1. The more worth any man hath, the more humble he is. Feathers fly up, but gold descends. The golden saint descends in humility. Some of the ancients have compared humility to the Celidonian stone, which is little for substance, but of rare virtue.

2. God loves an humble soul. It is not our high birth, but our low hearts God delights in. An humble spirit is God's prospect, Isa. lxvi. 2. 'To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit;' an humble heart is God's palace, Isa. lvii. 15. 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of an humble spirit.' Great personages, besides their houses of state, have lesser houses which upon occasion they retreat to. Besides God's house of state in heaven, he hath the humble soul for his retiring-house, where he takes up his rest, and doth solace himself. Let Italy boast that it is for pleasure the garden of the world; an humble heart glories in this, that it is the presence-chamber of the great King,

3. The times we live in are humbling. The Lord seems to say to us now, as he did to Israel, Exod. xxxiii. 5. 'Put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do to thee.' My displeasure is breaking forth, I have eclipsed the light of the sanctuary, I have stained the waters with blood, I have shot the arrow of pestilence, therefore lay down your pride, put off your ornaments. Wo to them that lift themselves up, when God is casting them

down. When should a people be humble if not under the rod? 1 Pet. v. 6. 'Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.' When God afflicts his people, and cuts them short in their privileges, it is time then to sew sackcloth on their skin, and defile their horn (or honour) in the dust, Job xvi. 15.

4. What an horrid sin pride is! Chrysostom calls it the mother of hell. Pride is a complicated evil: as one saith, Justice comprehends all virtue in it; so pride comprehends all vice. It is a spiritual drunkenness; it flies up as wine into the brain, and intoxicates it. It is idolatry; a proud man is a self-worshipper. It is revenge; Haman plots Mordecai's death, because he would not bow the knee. How odious is this sin to God! Prov. xvi. 5. 'Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord.'

5. The mischief of pride. It is the break-neck of souls, Zeph. ii. 9. Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, &c. this shall they have for their pride. The doves saith Pliny, take a pride in their feathers, and in their flying high, at last they fly so high that they are a prey to the hawk. Men fly so high in pride, that at last they are a prey to the devil, the prince of the air.

6. Humility raiseth one's esteem in the eyes of others, all give respect to the humble, Prov. xv. 33. 'Before honour is humility.'

Quest. What means may we use to be humble?

Ans. 1. Let us set before us the golden pattern of Christ. He commenced doctor in humility, Phil. ii. 7. 'But made himself of no reputation, and was made in the likeness of flesh.' O what abasement was it for the Son of God to take our flesh? nay, that Christ should take our nature when it was in disgrace, being stained with sin, this was the wonder of humility. Look upon an humble Saviour, and let the plumes of pride fall.

2. Study God's immensity and purity : a sight of glory humbles. Elijah wrapped his face in a mantle when God's glory passed before him, 1 Kings xix. 13. The stars vanish when the sun appears.

3. Let us study ourselves. First, our dark side : by looking our faces in the glass of the word we see our spots : what a world of sin swarms in us ! We may say as Bernard, Lord, I am nothing but either sinfulness or barrenness.

Secondly, Our light side. Is there any good in us? 1. How disproportionable is it to the means of grace we have enjoyed ! There is still something lacking in our faith, 1 Thess. iii. 10. O Christian be not proud of what thou hast, but be humble for what thou wantest.

2. The grace we have is not of our own growth ; we are beholden to Christ and free grace for it : as he said of that axe which fell in the water, 1 Kings vi. 5. ' Alas, master, for it was borrowed,' so may I say of all the good and excellency in us, it is borrowed. Were it not folly to be proud of a ring that is lent? for who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? 1 Cor. iv. 7. The moon hath no cause to be proud of her light, when she borrows it from the sun.

3. How far short do we come of others? perhaps other Christians are giants in grace ; they are in Christ not only before us, but above us. We are but as the foot in Christ's body, they are as the eye.

4. Our beauty is spotted. The church is said to be fair as the moon, Cant. vi. 1. which, when it shines brightest, hath a dark spot in it ; faith is mixed with infidelity : a Christian hath that in his very grace may humble him.

5. If we would be humble, let us contemplate our mortality. Shall dust exalt itself? The thoughts of the grave should bury our pride. They say when there is a tympany in the body, the hand of a dead

man stroaking that part, cures the tympany. The serious meditation of death, is enough to cure the tympany of pride.

SECT. 12.

12. A godly man is a praying man. This is in the text, 'Every one that is godly shall pray unto thee.' As soon as grace is poured in, prayer is poured out, Psal. cix. 4. 'But I give myself to prayer;' in the Hebrew it is, 'But I prayer.' Prayer and I are all one; prayer is the soul's traffic with heaven; God comes down to us by his Spirit, and we go up to him by prayer. Caligula placed his effigies in the capitol, whispering in Jupiter's ear; prayer whispers in God's ear. A godly man cannot live without prayer: a man cannot live unless he takes breath; nor can the soul unless it breathes forth its desires to God. As soon as the babe of grace is born, it cries; no sooner was Paul converted, but, 'Behold he prayeth,' Acts ix. 11. No doubt he prayed before being a Pharisee, but it was either superficially or superstitiously; but when the work of grace had passed upon his soul, behold, now, he prays. A godly man is every day upon the mount of prayer; he begins the day with prayer; before he opens his shop, he opens his heart to God. We use to burn sweet perfumes in our houses; a godly man's house is an house of perfume, he airs it with the incense of prayer; he engageth in no business without seeking God. Scipio never entered into the senate house, but first he ascended the capitol, where he did his devotion. A godly man consults with God in every thing, he asks his leave, and his blessing: the Grecians asked counsel at their oracles; so doth a godly man inquire at the divine oracle, Gen. xxiv. 12. A true saint continually shoots up his heart to heaven by sacred ejaculations.

Quest. Is prayer a sign of a godly man, may not an hypocrite pray eloquently, and with seeming devotion?

Ans. He may, 'They seek me daily;' Isa. lviii. 2. but an hypocrite doth not pray in the spirit. A man may have the gift of prayer, and not have the spirit of prayer.

Quest. How shall we know that we have the spirit of prayer?

Ans. When the prayer which we make is spiritual?

Quest. What is it to make a spiritual prayer?

Ans. When we pray with knowledge; under the law, Aaron was to light the lamps, when he burned the incense upon the altar. Incense did typify prayer, and the lighting of the lamps did typify knowledge; when the incense of prayer burns, the lamp of knowledge must be lighted, 'I will pray with the understanding,' 1 Cor. xiv. 15. We must know the majesty and holiness of God, that we may be deeply affected with reverence when we come before him; we must put up such petitions as are exactly adequate and agreeable to God's will, 'Be not rash with thy mouth to utter any thing before God,' Eccl. v. 2. The Lord would not have the blind offered to him. How can we pray with affection, when we do not pray with judgment? The papists pray in an unknown tongue; Christ may reply to them as he did to the mother of Zebedee's children, 'Ye ask, ye know not what,' Matt. xx. 22. He that prays he knows not how, shall be heard he knows not when.

2. A spiritual prayer is, when the heart and spirit pray; there are not only words but desires. It is excellent when a man can say, Lord, my heart prays. 'Hannah prayed in her heart.' The sound of a trumpet comes from within; and the excellent music of prayer comes from within the heart; if

the heart doth not go along in duty, it is speaking, not praying.

3. A spiritual prayer is, a fervent prayer, an effectual fervent prayer prevails much. The heart, like *primum mobile*, should carry the affections in a most zealous and rapid manner; fervency is the wing of prayer, by which it ascends to heaven: prayer is expressed by sighs and groans. It is not so much the gifts of the Spirit, as the groans of the Spirit God likes. Prayer is called a wrestling, Gen. xxxii. 24. and pouring out of the soul, 1 Sam. i. 15. Prayer is compared to incense, Psal. cxli. 2. Incense without fire makes no sweet smell; prayer without fervency, is like incense without fire: Christ prayed with strong cries and tears; crying prayer prevails. When the heart is inflamed in prayer, a Christian is carried as it were in a fiery chariot up to heaven.

4. A spiritual prayer is such as comes from a broken heart: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. The incense was to be beaten, to typify the breaking of the heart in prayer. It is not the voluble tongue, but the melting heart God accepts. Oh, saith a Christian, I cannot pray as others; as Moses said to the Lord, -I am not eloquent: but canst thou weep and sigh? doth thy soul melt out at thy eyes? God accepts broken expressions, when they come from broken hearts: I have read of a plant that bears no fruit, but it weeps forth a kind of gum which is very costly; so, though thou dost not flourish with those gifts and expressions as others, yet if thou canst weep forth tears from a contrite heart, these are exceeding precious to God, and he will put them in his bottle: Jacob wept in prayer, and had 'power over the angel,' Hos. xii. 4.

5. A spiritual prayer is a believing prayer, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive,' Mat. xxi. 22. The reason why so many prayers suffer shipwreck, is because they split against

the rock of unbelief; praying without faith is shooting without bullets. When faith takes prayer by the hand, then we draw near to God; we should come to God in prayer, as the leper, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst heal me, Matt. viii. 2. It is a disparagement to Deity, to have such a whisper in the heart, that God's ear is heavy, and cannot hear, Isa. lix. 1. What is said of the people of Israel, may be applied to prayer, 'It could not enter in, because of unbelief,' Heb. iii. 19.

6. A spiritual prayer is an holy prayer, 'Wherefore lift up holy hands,' 1 Tim. ii. 8. Prayer must be offered upon the altar of a pure heart; sin lived in, makes the heart hard, and God's ear deaf; sin stops the mouth of prayer, it doth as the thief to the traveller, puts a gag in his mouth, that he cannot speak; sin poisons and infects prayer. A wicked man's prayer is sick of the plague, and will God come hear him? The loadstone loseth its virtue, when it is bespread with garlick; so doth prayer when it is polluted with sin; 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me,' Ps. lxxvi. 18. It is foolish to pray against sin, and then to sin against prayer; a spiritual prayer, like the spirits of wine, must be refined, and taken off the lees and dregs of sin; 'That they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness,' Mal. iii. 3. If the heart be holy, this altar will sanctify the gift.

7. A spiritual prayer is an humble prayer, Psal. x. 17. 'Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble.' Prayer is the asking of an alms, which requires humility; 'The publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner,' Luke xviii. 13. God's incomprehensible glory may even amaze us, and strike an holy consternation into us, when we approach nigh to him, 'O my God, I blush to lift up my face to

thee,' Ezra. ix. 6. It is comely to see a poor nothing lie prostrate at the feet of its Maker, 'Behold, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes,' Gen. xviii. 27. The lower the heart descends, the higher the prayer ascends.

8. A spiritual prayer is, when we pray in the name of Christ. To pray in the name of Christ, is not only to name Christ in prayer, but to pray in the hope and confidence of Christ's mediation. As a child claims his estate in the right of his father, who purchased it, so we come for mercy in Christ's name, who hath purchased it for us in his blood: unless we pray thus, we do not pray at all; nay, we rather provoke God: as it was with Uzziah, when he would offer incense without a priest, God was angry, and struck him with leprosy, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16. So, when we do not come in Christ's name in prayer, we offer up incense without a priest, and what can we expect but to meet with wrath?

9. A spiritual prayer is, when we pray out of love to prayer: a wicked man may pray, but he doth not love prayer. 'Will he delight himself in the Almighty?' Job xxvii. 10. A godly man is carried upon the wings of delight; he is never so well as when he is praying; he is not forced with fear, but fired with love, Isa. lvi. 7. 'I will make them joyful in my house of prayer.'

10. A spiritual prayer is, when we have spiritual ends in prayer. There is a vast difference between a spiritual prayer, and a carnal desire: the ends of a hypocrite are secular and carnal; he looks askint in prayer; it is not the sense of his spiritual wants that moves him, but rather lust, James iv. 3. 'Ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.' The sinner prays more for food than grace; this God doth not interpret praying, but howling, Hos.

vii. 14. 'They howled upon their beds: they assemble for corn and wine.'

Prayers which want a good aim want a good answer. A godly man hath spiritual ends in prayer; he sends out his prayer as a merchant sends out his ship, that he may have large returns of spiritual blessings; his design in prayer is, that his heart may be more holy, and that he may have more communion with God. A godly man drives the trade of prayer, that he may increase the stock of grace.

11. A spiritual prayer is accompanied with the use of means; there must be means as well as prayers. When Hezekiah was sick, he did not only pray for recovery, but he laid a lump of figs to the boil, Isa. xxxviii. 21. This it is in the case of the soul, when we pray against sin, and avoid temptations, when we pray for grace, and improve opportunities, this is laying a fig to the boil, which will make us recover. To pray for holiness, and neglect the means, is like winding up the clock, and pulling off the weights.

12. A spiritual prayer is that which leaves a spiritual frame behind upon the heart; a Christian is better after prayer, he hath gotten more strength over sin, as a man by exercise gets strength: the heart after prayer keeps a tincture of holiness, as the vessel savours and relisheth of the wine that is put into it. Moses having been with God on the mount, his face shined; so having been on the mount of prayer, our graces shine, and our lives shine. This is the sign of a godly man, he prays in the spirit; this is the right kind of praying; the gift of prayer is ordinary, like culinary fire; but spiritual prayer is more rare and excellent, like elementary fire which comes from heaven.

Use 1. Is a godly man of a praying spirit? Then this excludes them from being godly,

1. Who pray not at all; their houses are unhallowed houses: it is made the note of a reprobate, he calls not upon God, Psal. xiv. 4. Doth that indigent creature think to have an alms who never asks it? Do they think to have mercy from God who never seek it? Truly then God should befriend them more than he did his own Son; 'He offered up prayers and supplications with strong cries,' Heb. v. 7. None of God's children are tongue-tied, Gal. iv. 6. 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' Creatures by the instinct of nature cry to God, 'the young ravens which cry,' Psal. cxlvii. 9. 'The lions seek their meat from God,' Psal. civ. 21. Not to cry to God, is worse than brutish.

2. Others pray, but it is seldom; like that profane atheist Heylin speaks of, who told God he was no common beggar, he never troubled him before, and if he would hear him now, he would never trouble him again.

3. Others pray, but not in the Holy Ghost, Jude 20. they are rather parrots, than weeping doves; their hearts do not melt in prayer; they exercise their invention more than their affection.

Use 2. As you would evidence the new birth, cry, Abba, Father; be men of prayer: pray at least twice a day. In the temple there was the morning and evening sacrifice: Daniel prayed three times a day: nay, so did he love prayer, that he would not neglect prayer to save his life, Dan. vi. 10. Luther spent three hours every day in prayer.

Object. But what needs prayer, when God hath made so many promises of blessings?

Ans. Prayer is the condition annexed to the promise; promises turn upon the hinge of prayer, 'I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel.' A king promiseth a pardon, but it must be

sued out. David had a promise that God would build him an house, but he sued out the promise by prayer, 2 Sam. vii. 25. Christ himself had all the promises made sure to him, yet he prayed, and spent whole nights in prayer.

Therefore if you would be counted godly, be given to prayer; prayer sanctifies your mercies; prayer weeds out sin, and waters grace.

That I may encourage Christians, and hold up their heads in prayer, as Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands, let me propound these few considerations.

1. Prayer is a seed sown in God's ears; other seed sown in the ground may be picked up by the birds, but this seed, especially if watered with tears, is too precious to be lost.

2. Consider the power of prayer. The apostle having set down the whole armour of a Christian, brings in prayer as the chief part, Eph. vi. 18. Without this, saith Zanchy, all the rest are little worth. By prayer, Moses divided the red sea; Joshua stopped the course of the sun, and made it stand still, Josh. x. 13. Nay, prayer made the Sun of Righteousness stand still, 'And Jesus stood still,' Luke xviii. 40. Prayer is the inlet to all blessings, spiritual and temporal. When Aurelius Antoninus went against the Germans, he had in his army a regiment of Christians, who upon their earnest prayer, obtained rain for the refreshment of his army; and because of the power of their prayers, he called them the thundering regiment. Prayer hath a power in it to destroy the insolent enemies of the church. We read, the two witnesses have a flame at their lips; fire proceeds out of their mouths which devours their enemies: Rev. xi. 5. This fire is certainly to be interpreted of their prayers. David prayed, 'Lord turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness,' 2 Sam. xv. 31. this prayer made Ahithophel hang

himself. Moses' prayer against Amalek did more than Joshua's sword: prayer hath a kind of omnipotency in it; it hath raised the dead, overcome angels, cast out devils; it hath influence upon God himself: Jacob's prayer held God, 'I will not let thee go, till thou bless me,' Gen. xxxii. 26. Prayer finds God free, but leaves him bound.

3. Jesus Christ prays over our prayers again; he takes the dross out, and presents nothing but pure gold to his Father. Christ mingles his sweet odours with the prayers of the saints: think of the dignity of his person, he is God; and the sweetness of his relation, he is a Son: Oh then, what encouragement is here for us to pray! Our prayers are put in the hand of a Mediator; though as they come from us they are weak and imperfect, yet as they come from Christ they are mighty and powerful.

4. The sweet promises which God hath made to prayer, 'He will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry,' Isa. xxx. 19. 'Then shall ye go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart,' Jer. xxix. 13. 'Before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear,' Isa. xiv. 24. These promises keep the head of prayer above water; God is bound with his own promises, as Samson was bound with his own hair.

Let us then double our files, and, with our Saviour, pray yet more earnestly, Luke xxii. 44. Let us be importunate suitors, and resolve, with Bernard, that we will not come away from God, without God: prayer is a petard, which will make heaven's gates flee open.

Quest. How shall we do to pray aright?

Ans. Implore the Spirit of God. 'Praying in the Holy Ghost,' Jude 20. The Holy Ghost both indites prayer and inflames it: God understands no

other language but that of his Spirit; pray for the Holy Ghost, that you may pray in the Holy Ghost.

SECT. 13.

13. A godly man is a sincere man, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whose spirit there is no guile.' The word for sincere signifies without plait and folds: a godly man is plain hearted, having no subtle subterfuges; religion is the livery a godly man wears, and this livery is lined with sincerity.

Quest. Wherein doth the godly man's sincerity appear?

Ans. 1. The godly man is that which he seems to be; he is a Jew inwardly. Grace runs through his heart, as silver through the veins of the earth: the hypocrite is not what he seems.

A picture is like a man, but it wants breath: the hypocrite is an effigy, a picture, he doth not breathe forth sanctity: he is but like an angel on a sign-post: a godly man answers to his profession, as a transcript to the original.

2. The godly man labours to approve himself to God in every thing, 2 Cor. v. 9. 'We labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' It is better to have God approve, than the world applaud: they that did run in the olympic race, laboured to have his approbation, who was the judge and umpire of the race. There is a time shortly coming, when a smile from God's face will be infinitely better than all the applauses of men: how sweet will that word be, 'Well done thou good and faithful servant,' Matt. xxv. 21. A godly man is ambitious of God's letters-testimonial: the hypocrite desires to carry it fair with men; Saul was for the vogue of the people, 1 Sam. xv. 30. A godly man approves his heart to God, who is both the Spectator and the Judge.

3. The godly man is ingenuous in laying open his sins, Psal. xxxli. 5. 'I confessed my sin to thee, and my iniquity have I not hid.' The hypocrite doth veil and smother his sin; he doth not *abscindere peccatum*, but *abscondere*; like a patient that hath some loathsome disease in his body, he will rather die than confess his disease: but a godly man's sincerity is seen in this, he will confess and shame himself for sin, 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. 'Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly.' Nay, a child of God will confess sin in particular; an unsound Christian will confess sin by wholesale, he will acknowledge he is a sinner in general; whereas David doth as it were point with his finger to the sore, Psal. li. 4. 'I have done this evil;' he doth not say, I have done evil, but this evil; he points at his blood-guiltiness.

4. The godly man hath blessed designs in all he doth? he propounds this end in every ordinance, that he may have more acquaintance with God, and bring more glory to God; as the herb heliotropium turns about according to the motion of the sun; so a godly man's actions do all move towards the glory of God: it is an axiom in philosophy, The means are in order to the end. A godly man's praying and worshipping is, that he may honour God, though he shoots short; yet he takes a right aim; the hypocrite minds nothing but self-interest, the sails of his mill move not, but when the wind of preferment blows, he never dives into the water of the sanctuary, but to fetch up a piece of gold at the bottom.

5. The godly man abhors dissimulation towards men, his heart goes along with his tongue, he cannot flatter and hate, Psal. xxxviii. 3. commend and censure, Rom. xii. 9. 'Let love be without dissimulation.' Dissembled love is worse than hatred; counterfeiting of friendship is no better than a lie,

Psal. lxxviii. 36. for there is a pretence of that which is not. Many are like Joab, 'He took Amasa by the beard to kiss him, and smote him with his sword in the fifth rib, that he died.'

There is a river in Spain, where the fish seem to be of a golden colour, but take them out of the water, and they are like other fish. All is not gold that glisters; there are some pretend much kindness, but they are like great veins which have little blood; if you lean upon them, they are as a leg out of joint; for my part, I much question his truth towards God, that will flatter and lie to his friend, 'He that hideth hatred with lying lips is a fool,' Prov. x. 18. By all that hath been said, we may try whether we have this note of a godly man, to be sincere.

Sincerity, as I conceive, is not properly a grace, but rather the ingredient into every grace: sincerity is that which doth qualify grace, and without which grace is not true, 'Grace be with them which love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,' Eph. vi. 24. Sincerity qualifies our love; sincerity is to grace as the blood and spirits are to the body; there can be no life without the blood, so no grace without sincerity.

Use. As we would be reputed godly, let us labour for this character of sincerity.

1. Sincerity renders us lovely in God's eyes; God saith of the sincere soul as of Sion, Ps. cxxxii. 14. 'This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.' A sincere heart is God's paradise of delight: Noah found grace in God's eyes; why, what did God see in Noah? He was girt with the girdle of sincerity, Gen. vi. 9. 'Noah was perfect in his generation.' Truth resembles God, and when God sees a sincere heart, he sees his own image, and he cannot choose but fall in love with it,

Prov. xi. 20. 'He that is upright in his way, is God's delight.'

2. Sincerity makes our services find acceptance with God: the church of Philadelphia had but little strength; her grace was weak, her services slender, yet of all the churches Christ wrote to, he found the least fault with her: What was the reason? because she was most sincere, Rev. iii. 8. 'Thou hast kept fast my word, and hast not denied my name.' Though we cannot pay God all we owe, yet a little in current coin is accepted: God takes sincerity for full payment. A little gold, tho' rusty, is better than alchemy be it ever so bright; a little sincerity, though rusted over with many infirmities, is of more value with God, than all the glorious flourishes of hypocrites.

3. Sincerity is our safety; false hearts that will step out of God's way, and use carnal policy, when they think to be most safe, they are least secure; he that walketh purely, walketh surely, Prov. x. 9. A sincere Christian will do nothing but what the word warrants, and that is safe as to the conscience. Nay, oftentimes such as are upright in their way, the Lord takes care of their outward safety, Psal. iv. 8. I laid me down and slept, David was now surrounded with enemies, yet God did so encamp about him by his providence, that he could sleep securely as in a garrison, ver. 5. The Lord sustained me. The only way to be safe, is to be sincere.

4. Sincerity is gospel perfection, Job i. 8. 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man.' Though a Christian be full of infirmities, and like a child that is put out to nurse, weak and feeble, yet God looks upon him as if he were completely righteous: every true saint hath the Thummim of perfection upon his breast-plate.

5. Sincerity is that which the devil strikes most

at: Satan's spite was not so much at Job's estate as his integrity; he would have wrested the shield of sincerity from him, but Job held that fast, Job xxvii. 6. A thief doth not fight for an empty purse, but for money: the devil would have robbed Job of the jewel of a good conscience, and then he had been poor Job indeed; Satan doth not oppose profession, but sincerity: let men go to church, and make glorious pretences to holiness, Satan doth not oppose this; this doth him no hurt, nor them no good; but if men will be sincerely pious, then Satan musters up all his forces against them. Now that which the devil doth most assault, we must labour most to maintain; sincerity is our fort-royal, where our chief treasure lies; this fort is most shot at, therefore let us be more careful to preserve it. While a man keeps his castle, his castle will keep him: while we keep sincerity, sincerity will keep us.

6. Sincerity is the beauty of a Christian: wherein lies the beauty of a diamond, but in this, that it is a true diamond? If it be counterfeit, it is worth nothing: so, wherein lies the beauty of a Christian, but in this, that he hath 'truth in the inward parts,' Psal. li. 6. Sincerity is a Christian's ensign of glory; it is both his breast-plate to defend him, and his crown to adorn him.

7. The vileness of hypocrisy: the Lord would have no leaven offered up in sacrifice; leaven did typify hypocrisy, Luke xii. 1. The hypocrite doth the devil double service, under the vizard of piety, he can sin more, and be less suspected, Matt. xxiii. 14. 'Wo unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers.' Who would think they were guilty of extortion, that would pray so many hours together? Who would suspect him of false weights, that hath the Bible so often in his hand? Who

would think he would slander, that seems to fear an oath? Hypocrites are the worst sort of sinners, they reflect infinite dishonour upon religion: hypocrisy for the most part ends in scandal, and that brings an evil report upon the ways of God; one man breaking, makes such as are honest suspected; one scandalous hypocrite, makes the world suspect that all professors are so; the hypocrite was born to do religion a spite, and to bring it into an odium.

The hypocrite is a liar, he worships God with his knee, and his lusts with his heart; like those, 2 Kings xvii. 33. *They feared the Lord and served their own gods.*

The hypocrite is an impudent sinner, he knows his heart is false, yet he goes on: Judas knew himself to be an hypocrite; he asks, *Master is it I?* Christ replies, *Thou hast said it:* yet so shameless was he as to persist in his falseness, and betray Christ. All the plagues and curses written in the book of God, are the hypocrite's portion; hell is his place of rendezvous, Matt. xxiv. 51. Hypocrites are the chief guests the devil expects, and he will make them as welcome, as fire and brimstone can make them.

8. If the heart be sincere, God will wink at many failings, Num. xxiii. 21. 'He hath not seen iniquity in Jacob, God's love doth not make him blind, he can see infirmities, but how? Not with an eye of revenge, but pity, as a physician sees a disease in his patient to heal him. God doth not see iniquity in Jacob, so as to destroy him, but to heal him, Isa. lvii. 18. 'He went on stowardly, I have seen his ways, and I will heal him.' How much pride, vanity, passion, doth the Lord pass by in his sincere ones! He sees the integrity, and pardons the infirmity: how much did God overlook in Asa? 'The high places were not removed.' Yet it is said, 2 Chron. xv. 17. 'The heart of Asa was perfect all

his days.' We esteem of a picture, though it be not drawn at the full length: so, though the graces of God's people are not drawn at their full length, nay, have many scars and spots, yet having something of God in sincerity, they shall find mercy; God loves the sincere, and it is the nature of love to cover infirmity, Prov. xii. 10.

9. Nothing but sincerity will give us comfort in an hour of trouble. King Hezekiah thought he had been dying, yet this revived him, that conscience drew up a certificate for him, Isa. xxxviii. 2. 'Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth,' &c. Sincerity was the best flower of his crown. What a golden shield will this be against Satan, when he shall roar upon us by his temptations, and set our sins before us on our death-bed? Then we shall answer, It is true, Satan, these have been our miscarriages, but we have bewailed them: if we have sinned, it was against the bent and purpose of our heart; this will stop the devil's mouth, and put him to a retreat; therefore labour for this jewel of sincerity, 1 John iii. 21. 'If our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence towards God.' If we are cleared at the petty sessions in our own conscience, then we may be confident, we shall be acquitted at the great assizes at the day of judgment.

SECT. 14.

14. A godly man is an heavenly man; heaven is in him, before he is in heaven; the Greek word for saint, signifies a man taken off from the earth: a person may live in one place, yet belong to another: he may live in Spain, yet be a free denizen of England; Pomponius dwelt at Athens, yet was a citizen of Rome: so, a godly man is a while in the world, but he belongs to the Jerusalem above; that is the place to which he aspires: every day is ascen-

sion day with a believer. The saints are called stars, for their sublimeness; they are gotten above into the upper-region, Prov. xv. 24. 'The way of life is above to the wise. A godly man is heavenly six ways.

1. In his Election. 2. In his Disposition. 3. In his Communication. 4. In his Operation. 5. In his Expectation. 6. In his Conversation.

1. A godly man is heavenly in his election; he chooseth heavenly objects: David did choose to be a residentiary in God's house, Psalm lxxxiv. 10. A godly person chooseth Christ and grace, before the most illustrious things under the sun: That a man is that his choice is; and this choosing of God is best seen in a critical hour. When Christ and the world come in competition, and we part with the world to keep Christ and a good conscience, a sign we have chosen the better part, Luke x. 42.

2. A Godly man is heavenly in his disposition: he sets his affections on things above, Col. iii. 2. He sends his heart to heaven before he comes there; he looks upon the world, but as a beautiful prison, and he cannot be much in love with his fetters, though they are made of gold. An holy person contemplates glory and eternity; his desires have gotten wings, and are fled to heaven: grace is in the heart like fire, which makes it sparkle upwards in divine breathings and ejaculations.

3. A godly man is heavenly in his communication, his words are powdered with salt to season others, Col. iv. 6. As soon as Christ was risen from the grave, he was speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts i. 3. No sooner is a man risen out of the grave of unregeneracy, but he is speaking of heaven, Eccles. x. 12. 'The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious:' he speaks so heavenly, as if he had already been in heaven; the love he bears to God, will not suffer him to be silent: the spouse being sick of love, her tongue was

as the pen of a ready writer, Cant. v. 10. 'My beloved is white and ruddy, his head is of fine gold.' If wine be in the house, the bush will be hung forth; where there is a principle of godliness in the heart it will vent itself at the lips, the bush will be hung forth.

How can they be termed godly, 1. Who are possessed with a dumb devil? They never have any good discourse; they are fluent and discursive enough in secular things; they can speak of their wares and drugs, they can tell what a good crop they have had, but in matters of religion they are as if their tongue did cleave to the roof of their mouth. There are many persons, if you come into their company, you cannot tell what to make of them, whether they are Turks or Atheists, for they never speak a word of Christ.

2. Whose tongues are set on fire of hell: their lips do not drop honey but poison to the defiling of others. Plutarch saith, Speech ought to be like gold, which is then of most value when it hath least dross in it. O the unclean malicious words some persons utter! What an unsavoury stench comes from these dunghills: those lips have need have David's bridle, Psal. xxxix. 1. that gallop so fast in sin. Can the body be healthful when the tongue is black? Can the heart be holy when the devil is in the lips? A godly man speaks the language of Canaan, Mal. iii. 16. 'They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another.'

4. A godly man is heavenly in his operation. the motions of the planets are celestial: a godly man is sublime and sacred in his motions, he works out salvation, he puts forth all his strength; as they did in the olympics, that he may obtain the garland made of the flowers of paradise; he prays, fasts, watcheth, he offers violence to heaven, he is divinely actuated, he carries on God's interest in the world, he doth angel's work, he is in his operations seraphical.

5. A godly man is heavenly in his expectation ; his hopes are above the world, Titus i. 2. ' In hope of eternal life.' A godly man casts anchor within the veil ; he hopes to have his fetters of sin filed off ; he hopes for such things as eye hath not seen ; he hopes for a kingdom when he dies ; a kingdom promised by the Father, purchased by the Son, assured by the Holy Ghost : as an heir lives in hope when such a great estate shall befall him ; so a child of God, who is a co-heir with Christ, hopes for glory : this hope comforts him in all varieties of condition, Rom. v. 2. ' We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.'

1. This hope comforts a godly man in affliction : hope doth lighten and sweeten the most severe dispensations. A child of God can laugh with tears in his eyes ; the time is shortly coming, when the cross shall be taken off his shoulders, and a crown set upon his head : a saint, at present miserable with a thousand troubles, will, in an instant, be clothed with robes of immortality, and advanced above seraphims.

2. This hope comforts a godly man in death, Prov. xiv. 32. ' The righteous hath hope in his death. If one should ask a dying saint, when all his earthly comforts were gone, what he had left ? he would say, ' The helmet of hope.' I have read of a martyr woman, who, when the persecutor commanded that her breasts should be cut off, she said, Tyrant, do thy worst, I have two breasts which thou canst not touch, the one of faith, the other of hope. A soul that hath this blessed hope, is above the desire of life, or the fear of death. Would one be troubled to exchange a sorry lease for an inheritance that will be for him and his heirs ? Who would care to part with life, which is a lease will soon be run out, to be possessed of a glorious inheritance in light ? Col. i. 12.

6. A godly man is heavenly in his conversation; he casts such a lustre of holiness, as adorns his profession; he lives as if he had seen the Lord with bodily eyes; what zeal, sanctity, humility, shines forth in his life: a godly person doth emulate not only the angels, but imitates Christ himself, 1 John ii. 6. The Macedonians celebrate the birth day of Alexander, on which day they wear his picture about their necks, set with pearl, and rich jewels; so a godly man carries the lively picture of Christ about him, in the heavenliness of his deportment, Phil. iii. 20. 'Our conversation is in heaven.'

Use 1. They must needs be cast over the bar for ungodly, who are eaten up with the world; godly and earthly is a contradiction, Phil. iii. 18, 19. 'For many walk, of whom I now tell you, even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose god is their belly, who mind earthly things.' We read the earth swallowed up Korah alive, Numb. xvi. 32. This judgment is on many, the earth swallows up their time, and thoughts, and discourse, they are buried twice; their hearts are buried in the earth before their bodies. How sad is it that the soul, that princely thing, which is made for communion with God and angels, should be put to the mill to grind, and made a slave to the earth? How is the soul become like the prodigal, choosing rather to converse with swine, and feed upon husks, than to aspire after communion with the blessed Deity? Thus doth Satan befool men, and keep them from heaven, by making them seek an heaven here.

Use 2. As we would evidence ourselves to be born of God, let us be of a sublime heavenly temper. We shall never go to heaven when we die, unless we are in heaven whilst we live. That we may be more noble, and raised in our affections, let us seriously weigh these four considerations.

1. God himself sounds a retreat to us, to call us

off the world, 1 John ii. 15. 'Love not the world' do not hunt after the honours and profits of it : and as God's precepts, so his providences, are to beat us off the world. Why doth he send war and pestilence? 'What means the heat of this great anger?' Surely dying times are to make men die to the world.

2. Consider how much below a Christian it is to be earthly-minded. We laugh sometimes at children when we see them busying themselves about toys, blowing bubbles in the air out of a shell, kissing their babies, &c. when in the mean time we do the same ; at death what will all the world be which we hug and kiss, but as a baby of clouts, it will yield us no more comfort then; and to be taken up with these things, how far is it below an heaven-born soul! nay, for such as profess to be ennobled with a principle of piety, and to have their hopes above, for them to have their hearts below, how do they disparage their heavenly calling, and spot their silver wings of grace, by beliming them with earth?

3. Consider what a poor contemptible thing the world is; it is not worth setting the affections on, it cannot fill the heart; if Satan should take a Christian up to the mount of temptation, and show him all the kingdoms and glory of the world, what could he show him but a fancy, an apparition? Nothing here can be proportionable to the immense soul of man, Job xx. 22. 'In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits;' here is want in plenty ; the creature will no more fill the soul, than a drop will fill the bucket: and that little sweet we suck from the creature, is intermixed with some bitterness, like that cup which the Jews gave Christ, Matt. xv. 23. 'They gave him to drink, wine mingled with myrrh.' And this imperfect sweet will not last long. 1 John ii. 17. The world passeth away. The crea

ture doth but salute us, and is presently upon the wing: the world rings changes, it is never constant but in its disappointments; how quickly may we remove our lodgings, and make our pillow in the dust? The world is but a great inn, where we are to stay a night or two, and be gone; what madness is it so to set our heart upon our inn, as to forget our home?

1. Consider what a glorious place heaven is: we read of an angel coming down from heaven, 'who did tread with his right foot on the sea, and with his left foot on the earth,' Rev. x. 2. Had we but once been in heaven, and viewed the superlative glory of it, how might we in an holy scorn trample with one foot upon the earth, and with the other foot upon the sea! Heaven is called a better country Heb. xi. 16. 'But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly.' Heaven is said to be a better country, in opposition to the country where we now sojourn. What should we mind but that better country?

Quest. In what sense is heaven a better country?

Ans. 1. In that country above there are better delights; there is a tree of life, the rivers of pleasure; there is amazing beauty, unsearchable riches; there are the delights of angels; there is the flower of joy fully blown; there is more than we can ask or think, Eph. iii. 20. There is glory in its full dimensions, and beyond all hyperbole.

2. In that country there is a better dwelling-house. 1. It is an house not made with hands, 2 Cor. v. 1. to denote the excellency of it! There was never any house but was made with hands; but the house above surpasseth the art of man or angel; none besides God could lay a stone in that building. 2. It is eternal in the heavens; it is not a sojourning house; but a mansion-house; it is an house will never be out of repair. Wisdom hath built this

house, and hewn out her seven pillars,' Prov. viii. 1. which can never moulder.

8. In that country there are better provisions : In our Father's house is bread enough. Heaven was typified by Canaan, which did flow with milk and honey : there is the royal feast, the spiced wine ; there is angels food, there are those rare viands and dainties served in, as exceed not only our expressions but our faith.

4. In that country is better society : there is God blessed for ever : how infinitely sweet and ravishing will a smile of his face be ? The king's presence makes the court. There are the glorious cherubims ; in this terrestrial country where we now live, we are among wolves and serpents : in that country above, we shall be among angels ; there are 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' Heb. xii. 23. Here the people of God are clouded with infirmities, we see them with spots in their faces, they are full of pride, passion, censoriousness ; in that Jerusalem above, we shall see them in their royal attire, decked with unparalleled beauty, not having the least tincture or shadow of sin upon them.

5. In that country there is a better air to breathe in : we go into the country for air ; the best air is only to be had in that better country. 1. It is a more temperate air, the climate is calm and moderate, we shall neither freeze with the cold, nor faint with the heat. 2. It is a brighter air, there is a better light shines there ? the Sun of Righteousness enlightens that horizon with his glorious beams, Rev. xxi. 23. 'The Lamb is the light thereof.' 3. It is a purer air. The fens, which are full of black vapours, we count a bad air, and unwholesome to live in : this world is a place of bogs and fens, where the noxious vapours of sin arise, which make it pestilential and unwholesome to live in ; but in that country above, there are none of these vapours,

but a sweet perfume of holiness; there is the smell of the orange tree and the pomegranate; there is the myrrh and cassia coming from Christ, which sends forth a most odoriferous smell.

6. In that country there is a better soil: the land or soil is better.

1. For its altitude; the earth lying low, is of a baser pedigree; the element, which is nearest heaven, is purer, and more excellent, as the fire; that country above is the high country, Psal. xxiv. 3. it is seated above all the visible orbs.

2. It is a better land for its fertility, it bears a richer crop: the richest harvest on earth is the golden harvest, but the country above yields nobler commodities; there are pearls celestial, there is the spiritual vine, there is the honey-comb of God's love dropping, there is the water of life, the hidden manna; there is the fruit that doth not rot, flowers that never fade; there is a crop which cannot be quite reaped, it will be ever reaping-time in heaven, and all this the land yields, without the labour of ploughing or sowing.

3. It is a better land for its inoffensiveness: there are no briers there; the world is a wilderness where are wicked men, and 'the best of them is a brier,' Micah vii. 4. They will be tearing the people of God in their spiritual liberties, but in the country above there is not one brier to be seen, all the briers are burned.

4. It is a better land for the rareness of the prospect: all that a man sees there is his own: I account that the best prospect, where a man can see furthest on his own ground.

7. In that country is better union; all the inhabitants are knit together in love: the poisonous weed of malice doth not grow there: there is harmony without division, and charity without envy: in that

country above, as in Solomon's temple, no noise of hammer is heard.

8. In that country is better employment ; while we are here we are complaining of our wants, weeping over our sins, but there we shall be praising God. How will the birds of paradise chirp when they are in that celestial country? There the morning stars will sing together, and all the saints of God shout for joy.

O what should we aspire after, but this country above! Such as have their eyes opened, will see that it doth infinitely excel. An ignorant man looks upon a star, and it appears to him as a little silver-spot; but the Astronomer, who hath his instrument to judge of the dimension of a star, knows it to be many degrees larger than the earth: so, a natural man hears of the heavenly country, that it is very glorious, but it is at a great distance; and because he hath not a spirit of discerning, the world looks bigger in his eye; but such as are spiritual artists, who have the instrument of faith to judge of heaven, will say, it is far the better country, and thither will they hasten with the sails of desire.

SECT. 15.

15. A godly man is a zealous man ; grace turns a saint into a seraphim, it makes him burn in holy zeal: zeal is a mixed affection, a compound of love and anger ; it carries forth our love to God, and anger against sin in the most intense manner. Zeal is the flame of the affections : a godly man hath a double baptism, of water and fire, he is baptized with a spirit of zeal, he is zealous for God's honour, truth, worship, Psal. cxix. 136. 'My zeal hath consumed me.' It was a crown set on Phineas his head, 'he was zealous for his God,' Numb. xxv. 12. Moses being touched with a coal from God's

altar, in his zeal he breaks the tables, *Exod. xxxii. 19.* Our blessed Saviour in his zeal, whips the buyers and sellers out of the temple, *John ii. 17.* 'The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.'

But there is a preternatural heat, something looking like zeal, which is not; a comet looks like a star: I shall therefore show some differences between a true and a false zeal.

1. A false zeal is a blind zeal, *Rom. x. 2.* 'They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge,' this is not the fire of the Spirit, but wild-fire. The Athenians were very devout and zealous, but they knew not for what, *Acts xvii. 23.* 'I found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God.' Thus the papists are zealous in their way, but they have taken away the key of knowledge.

A false zeal is a self-seeking zeal, Jehu cries, Come, see my zeal for the Lord, *2 Kings x. 16.* but it was not zeal, but ambition, he was fishing for a crown. Demetrius pleads for the goddess Diana, but it was not her temple, but her silver-shrines he was zealous for. Such zealots Ignatius complains of in his time, that they made a trade of Christ and religion, thereby to enrich themselves. It is probable many in King Henry the eighth's time were forward to pull down the abbies, not out of zeal against popery, but that they might build their own houses upon the ruin of those abbies; like eagles which fly aloft, but their eyes are down upon their prey: if blind zeal be punished seven fold, hypocritical zeal shall be punished seventy and seven fold.

3. A false preposterous zeal, is a misguided zeal; it runs out most in things which are not commanded. It is the sign of an hypocrite to be zealous for traditions, and careless of institutions. The Pharisees were more zealous about washing of their cups than their hearts.

4. A false zeal is fired with passion. James and

John, when they would call for fire from heaven, were rebuked by our Saviour, Luke ix. 45. 'Ye know not what spirit ye are of,' it was not zeal but choler: many have espoused the cause of religion, rather out of faction and humour, than out of zeal for the truth.

But the zeal of a godly man, is a true and holy zeal, which evidenceth itself in the effects of it.

1. True zeal cannot bear an injury done to God; zeal makes the blood rise, when God's honour is impeached, Rom. ii. 2. 'I know thy works, and labour, and patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; he who zealously affects his friend, cannot hear him spoken against and be silent.

2. True zeal will encounter with the greatest difficulties; when the world holds out a gorgon's head of danger to discourage us, zeal casts out fear; it is quickened by opposition. Zeal doth not say, There is a lion in the way; zeal will charge thro' an army of daggers; it will march in the face of death. Let news be brought to Paul, that he was way-laid, 'In every city bonds and imprisonments did abide him,' this sets a keener edge upon his zeal, Acts xxi. 13. 'I am ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.' As sharp frosts do by an antiparistasis make the fire burn hotter; so, sharp oppositions do but inflame zeal the more.

3. True zeal, as it hath knowledge to go before it, so it hath sanctity to follow after it; wisdom leads the van of zeal, and holiness brings up the rear. An hypocrite seems to be zealous, but he is vitious; the godly man is white and ruddy, white in purity, as well as ruddy in zeal; Christ's zeal was hotter than the fire, and his holiness purer than the sun.

4. Zeal that is genuine loves truth when it is despised and opposed, Psal. cxix. 126. 'They have made void thy law, therefore I love thy command-

ments above gold :’ the more others deride holiness the more we love it : what is religion the worse for others disgracing it ? Doth a diamond sparkle the less, because a blind man disparageth it ? The more outrageous the wicked are against the truth, the more courageous the godly are for it. When Michal scoffed at David’s religious dancing before the ark, ‘ If (saith he) this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile,’ 2 Sam. vi. 22.

5. True zeal causeth fervency in duty, Rom. xii. 11, ‘ fervent in spirit.’ Zeal makes us hear with reverence, pray with affection, love with ardency. God kindled Moses’ sacrifice from heaven, Lev. ix. 24. ‘ There came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering.’ When we are zealous in devotion, and our heart waxeth hot within us, here is a fire from heaven kindling our sacrifice : how odious is it for a man to be all fire when he is sinning, and all ice when he is praying : a pious heart, like water seething hot, boils over in holy affections.

6. True zeal is never out of breath, though it be violent it is perpetual ; no waters can quench the flame of zeal, it is torrid in the frigid zone. The heat of zeal is like the natural heat coming from the heart, which lasts as long as life : that zeal which is not constant, was never true.

Use 1. How opposite are they to godliness, who cry down zeal, and count it a religious phrenzy ? They are for the light of knowledge, but not for the heart of zeal. When Basil was earnest in preaching against the Arian heresy, it was interpreted folly and dotage. Religion is a matter requires zeal ; the kingdom of heaven will not be taken but by violence, Matt. xii. 11.

Obj. But why so much fervour in religion ? what becomes then of prudence !

Ans. Though prudence be to direct zeal, yet not

to destroy it; because sight is requisite, must the body therefore have no heat? If prudence be the eye in religion, zeal is the heart.

Quest. But where is moderation?

Ans. Though moderation in things of indifference be commendable, and doubtless it would much tend to the settling the peace of the church; yet in the main articles of faith, wherein God's glory and our salvation lie at stake; here moderation is nothing else but sinful neutrality. It was Calvin's advice to Melancthon, that he should not so affect the name of moderate, that at length he lost all his zeal.

Obj. But the Apostle presseth moderation, Phil. iv. 5. 'Let your moderation be known to all.'

Ans. The apostle speaks there of moderating our passion; the Greek word for moderation, signifies candour, and meekness, opposite to rash anger; and so the word is rendered in another place, Patient, 1 Tim. iii. 8. By moderation then, is meant, meekness of spirit; and that is clear by the subsequent words, 'The Lord is at hand.' As if the Apostle had said, Avenge not yourselves, for the Lord is at hand, he is ready to avenge your personal wrongs: but this doth not at all hinder, but that, in matters of religion, a Christian should be zealous.

2. What strangers are they to godliness, who have no zeal for the glory of God? They can see his ordinances despised, his worship adulterated, yet their spirits are not at all stirred in them. How many are of a dull, lukewarm temper, zealous for their own secular interest, but have no zeal for the things of heaven; hot in their own cause, but cool in God's. The Lord doth most abominate lukewarm professors, I had almost said, he is sick of them, Rev. iii. 15. 'I would thou wert cold or hot, (any thing but lukewarm) but because thou

art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.' A lukewarm Christian is but dough baked, just like Ephraim, Hos. vii. 8. 'Ephraim is a cake not turned.' To keep up a form of religion without zeal, is to be like those bodies the angels assumed, which moved, but had no life in them. I would ask these tepid neutral professors this question. If religion be not a good cause, why did they undertake it at first? if it be, why do they go so faintly about it? Why have they no more holy ardours of soul? These persons would fain go to heaven in a soft bed, but are loath to be carried thither in a fiery chariot of zeal. Remember, God will be zealous, against them who are not zealous; he provides the fire of hell, for those that want the fire of zeal.

Use 2. As you would be found in the catalogue of the godly, labour for zeal; as good be of no religion, as not be zealous in religion. Beware of carnal policy: this is one of those three things which Luther feared would be the death of religion. Some men have been too wise to be saved. Their discretion hath quenched their zeal: beware of sloth, which is an enemy to zeal: 'Be zealous and repent,' Rev. iii. 19. Christians, what do you reserve your zeal for? Is it for your gold that perisheth? Or for your lusts that will make you perish? Can you bestow your zeal better than upon God? How zealous have men been in a false religion? Isa. xlvi. 6. 'They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance.' The Jews did spare no cost in their idolatrous worship, nay, Jer. xxxii. 35. 'They cause their sons and daughters to pass thro' the fire to Molech.' They were so zealous in their idol-worship, that they would sacrifice their sons and daughters to their false gods: how far did the purblind heathens go in their false zeal? When the Tribunes of Rome complained they wanted gold in

their treasures, to offer to Apollo, the Roman matrons plucked off their chains of gold, and rings, and bracelets, and gave them to the priests to offer up in sacrifice; were these so zealous in their sinful worship, and will not you be zealous in the worship of the true God? Can you lose any thing by your zeal? Shall it not be super-abundantly recompensed? What is heaven worth? What is a sight of God worth? Was not Jesus Christ zealous for you? He sweated drops of blood, he conflicted with his Father's wrath; how zealous was he for your redemption, and have you no zeal for him? Is there any thing you yourselves hate more than dulness and slothfulness in your servants? You are weary of such servants: do you dislike a dull temper in others, and not in yourselves? What are all your duties without zeal, but mere fancies and nullities.

Do you know what a glorious thing zeal is? It is the lustre that sparkles from grace, it is the flame of love; it resembles the Holy Ghost, Acts ii. 2. 'There appeared cloven tongues like fire, which sat upon them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.' Tongues of fire, were an emblem to represent that fire of zeal, which the Spirit poured upon them.

Zeal makes all our religious performances prevalent with God. When the iron is red hot, it enters best; and when our services are red hot with zeal, they soonest pierce heaven.

SECT. 16.

16. A godly man is a patient man, James v. 11. 'Ye have heard of the patience of Job.' Patience is a star which shines in a dark night: there is a two-fold patience.

1. Patience in waiting 2. Patience in bearing.
1. Patience in waiting: a godly man, if he hath

not his desire presently, he will wait till the mercy be ripe, Psal. cxxx. 6. 'My soul waiteth for the Lord.' Good reason God should have the timing of our mercies, Isa. lx. 22. 'I the Lord will hasten it in his time.' Deliverance may tarry beyond our time; but it will not tarry beyond God's time.

Why should not we wait patiently upon God?

1. We are servants; it becomes servants to be in a waiting posture. 2. We wait upon every thing else; we wait upon the fire till it burns; we wait upon the seed till it grows, James v. 7. Why cannot we wait upon God? 3. God hath waited upon us, Isa. xxx. 18. Did not he wait for our repentance? How often did he come year after year before he found fruit? Did God wait upon us, and cannot we wait upon him? A godly man is content to stay God's leisure, 'Though the vision tarry, he will wait for it.' Hab. ii. 3.

2. Patience in bearing: This patience is twofold.

1. Either in regard of man: when we bear injuries without revenging. Or, 2. In regard of God; when we bear his hand without repining: a good man will not only do God's will, but bear his will, Mic. vii. 9. 'I will bear the indignation of the Lord.' This patient bearing of God's will is not,

1. A stoical apathy: patience is not insensibleness under God's hand; we ought to be sensible.

2. It is not patience upon force: to bear a thing because we cannot help it; which, as Erasmus saith, is rather necessity than patience. But, patience is a cheerful submission of our will to God, Acts xxi. 14. The will of the Lord be done. A godly man doth acquiesce in what God doth, as being not only good, but best for him: the great quarrel between God and us, is, whose will shall stand: now the regenerate will, falls in with the will of God. There are four things opposite to this patient frame of soul.

1. **Disquiet of spirit.** When the soul is discomposed, and pulled off the hinges, insomuch that it is unfit for holy duties; when the strings of a lute are snarled, the lute is not fit to make music; so, when a Christian's spirit is perplexed and disturbed, he cannot make melody in his heart to the Lord.

2. **Discontent;** which is a sullen dogged humour: when a man is not angry at his sins, but at his condition, this is different from patience: discontent is the daughter of pride.

3. **Prejudice,** which is a dislike of God and his ways, and a falling off from religion: sinners have hard thoughts of God, and if he doth but touch them in a tender part, they will presently be gone from him, and throw off his livery.

4. **Self-vindication,** when instead of being humbled under God's hand, a man justifies himself, as if he had not deserved what he suffers. A proud sinner stands upon his own defence, and is ready to accuse God of unrighteousness, which is as if we should tax the sun with darkness; this is far from patience. A godly man subscribes to God's wisdom, and submits to his will; he saith not only, 'Good is the will of the Lord,' Isa. xxxix. 8. but good is the rod of the Lord.

Use. As we would demonstrate ourselves godly, let us be eminent in this grace of patience, Eccles. vii. 8. 'The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.' There are some graces which we shall have no need of in heaven; we shall have no need of faith when we have full vision, nor patience when we have perfect joy; but in a dark sorrowful night, there is need of these stars to shine, Heb. x. 36. Let us show our patience in bearing God's will; patience in bearing God's will is twofold,

1. When God removes any comfort from us.

2. When God imposeth any evil upon us.

1. We must be patient when God removes any

comfort from us : doth God take away any of our relations? Ezek. xxiv. 16. 'I will take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke;' yet it is our duty patiently to acquiesce in the will of God : the loss of a dear relation, is like the pulling away a limb from the body.

But grace will make our hearts calm and sedate, and work us to an holy patience under such a severe dispensation. I shall lay down eight considerations, which may be as spiritual physic to kill the worm of impatience under the loss of relations.

1. The Lord never takes away any comfort from his people, but he gives them that which is better. The disciples parted with Christ's corporal presence, and he sent them the Holy Ghost. God eclipseth one joy, and augments another; he doth but make an exchange, he takes away a flower and gives a diamond.

2. Godly friends dying are in a better condition, they are taken away from the evil to come, Isa. lvii.

1. They are out of the storm and are gotten to the haven, Rev. xv. 13. 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.' The godly have a portion promised them upon their marriage with Christ, but the portion is not paid till the day of their death: the saints at death are preferred to communion with God, they have that they so long hoped for, and prayed for, why then should we be impatient at our friends preferment?

3. Thou that art a saint, hast a friend in heaven which thou canst not lose. The Jews have a saying at their funerals, "Let thy consolation be in heaven." Art thou a close mourner, look up to heaven, and fetch comfort thence, thy best kindred are above, Psal. xxvii. 10. 'When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.' God will be with thee in the hour of death, Psalm xxiii. 4. 'Though I walk in the valley of the sha-

dow of death, thou art with me.' Other friends thou canst not keep, God is a friend thou canst not lose; he will be thy guide in life, thy hope in death, thy reward after death.

4. Perhaps God is correcting thee for a fault, and if so, it becomes thee to be patient; it may be thy friend had more of thy love than God, and therefore God did take away such a relation, that the stream of thy love may run back to him again. A gracious woman having been deprived, first of her children, "Lord, saith she, thou hast a plot upon me, thou intendest to have all my love;" God doth not like it, to have any creature set upon the throne of our affections, he will take away that comfort, and then he shall lie nearest our heart. If an husband doth bestow a jewel upon his wife, and she doth so fall in love with that jewel, as to forget her husband, he will take away that jewel, that her love may return to him again; a dear relation is this jewel, if we begin to idolize it, God will take away the jewel, that our love may return to him again.

5. A godly relation is parted with, but not lost: that is lost which we are out of hope of ever seeing again: religious friends are but gone a little before. A time will shortly come, when there shall be a meeting without parting, 1 Thess. v. 10. How glad is one friend to see another that hath been long absent? Oh, what glorious acclamations shall there be, when old relations shall meet together in heaven, and be in each others embraces? When a great prince lands at the shore, the guns go off in token of joy; when godly friends shall be all landed at the heavenly shore, and shall congratulate one another's felicity, what stupendous joy will there be? what music in the choir of angels? How will heaven ring of their praises? and that which is the crown of all, they who were here joined in the flesh, shall be joined nearer than ever in the mystical body, and shall lie

together in Christ's bosom, 1 Thess. iv. 17. that bed
 of perfume.

6. We have deserved worse at God's hands; hath he taken away a child, a wife, a parent? He might have taken away his Spirit? Hath he deprived us of a relation? He might have deprived us of salvation; doth he put wormwood in the cup? We have deserved poison, Ezra ix. 18. 'Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve;' we have a sea of sin, and but a drop of suffering.

7. The patient soul doth most sweetly enjoy itself; an impatient man is like a troubled sea, that cannot rest: he tortures himself upon the rack of his own griefs and passions, whereas, patience calms the heart, as Christ did the sea when it was rough; and now there is a sabbath in the heart, yea, an heaven, Luke xxi. 19. 'In your patience possess ye your souls:' by faith a man possesseth God, and by patience he possesseth himself.

8. How patient have many of the saints been when the Lord hath broken the very staff of their comfort, in bereaving them of relations; the Lord took away Job's children, and he was so far from murmuring, that he falls a blessing, Job i. 21. 'The Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' God foretold the death of Eli's sons, 1 Sam. ii. 34. 'In one day they shall die both of them;' but how patiently did he take this sad news, 1 Sam. iii. 18. "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." See the difference between Eli and Pharaoh, Pharaoh said, 'Who is the Lord?' Exod. v. 2. Eli saith, 'It is the Lord.' When God struck two of Aaron's sons dead, Lev. x. 2. 'Aaron held his peace;' patience opens the ear, but shuts the mouth, it opens the ear to hear the rod, but shuts the mouth that it hath not a word to say against God. Behold, here the patterns of patience; and shall not we write after their fair copies? These

are heart-quieting considerations, when God sets a death's head upon our comforts, and removes dear relations from us.

2. We must be patient when God inflicts any evil upon us, Rom. xii. 12. 'Patient in tribulation.'

1. The Lord sometimes lays heavy affliction upon his people, Psal. xxxviii. 2. 'Thy hand lies sore upon me.' The Hebrew word for afflicted, signifies to be melted; God seems to melt his people in a furnace.

2. God doth sometimes lay divers afflictions on saints, Job xix. 19. 'He multiplieth my wounds;' as we have divers ways of sinning, so the Lord hath divers ways of afflicting; some he melts away their estates, others he chains to a sick-bed, others, he confines to a prison? God hath various arrows in his quiver, which he shoots.

3. Sometimes God lets the affliction lie long, Psal. lxxiv. 9. 'There is no more any prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.' As it is with diseases, there are some chronical, that linger and hang about the body several years together; so it is with afflictions, the Lord is pleased to exercise many of his precious ones with chronical afflictions, such as lie upon them a long time; now in all cases, it becomes the saints, patiently to rest in the will of God; the Greek word for patient, is a metaphor, alluding to one who stands invincibly under a burden. This is the right notion of patience, when we bear affliction invincibly without fainting or fretting.

The trial of a pilot is seen in a storm, so is the trial of a Christian seen in affliction: he hath the right art of navigation, who, when the boisterous winds blow from heaven, doth steer the ship of his soul wisely, and not dash upon the rock of impatience, a Christian should always keep a decorum, not behaving himself unseemly, or disguising him-

self with intemperate passion, when the hand of God lies upon him. Patience adorns suffering; affliction in scripture is compared to a net, Psalm lxxvi. 11. 'Thou broughtest us into the net.' Such as have escaped the devil's net, yet the Lord suffers them to be taken in the net of affliction, but they must not be as a wild bull in a net, Isa. ii. 20. to kick and fling against their Maker, but lie patiently till God break the net, and make a way for their escape. I shall propound four cogent arguments, to excite patience under those evils which God inflicts on us.

1. Afflictions are for our benefit, Heb. xii. 9. 'He for our profit.' We pray that God would take such a course with us as may do our souls good; when God is afflicting us, he is hearing our prayers, he doth it for our profit: not that afflictions do in themselves profit us, but as God's Spirit works with them. For as the waters of Bethesda could not give health of themselves, unless the angel descended and stirred the water, John v. 4. so, the waters of affliction are not in themselves healing, till God's Spirit co-operates and sanctifies them to us. Afflictions are many ways profitable.

1. They make men sober and wise: physicians appoint distracted persons to be bound in chains and to be dieted, and to have hard fare, to bring them to the use of reason: many run stark mad in prosperity, they neither know God nor themselves? the Lord therefore binds them with cords of affliction, that he may bring them to their understandings, Job xxxvi. 8. 'If they be held in cords of affliction, then he shews them their transgression, he openeth also their ear to discipline.'

2. Afflictions are a friend to grace.

1. They beget grace: Beza acknowledged God laid the foundation of his conversion in a violent sickness at Paris.

2. They augment grace, the people of God are

beholden to their troubles: they had never had so much grace, if they had not met with such sore trials; now, the waters run, and the spices flow forth. The saints thrive by afflictions, as the Lacedemonians grew rich by war; God makes grace flourish most in the fall of the leaf.

3. Afflictions quicken our pace in the way to heaven; it is with us, as with children sent on an errand, if they meet with apples or flowers by the way, they linger and make no great haste home, but if any thing fright them, then they run with all the speed they can to their father's house: so, in prosperity, we are gathering the apples and flowers, and do not much mind heaven, but if troubles begin to arise, and the times grow frightful, then we make more haste to heaven, and with David, 'run the way of God's commandments,' Psal. cxix. 32.

2. God intermixeth mercy with affliction: he steeps his sword of justice in the oil of mercy; there was no night so dark, but Israel had a pillar of fire in it, there is no condition so dismal, but we may see a pillar of fire to give light: if the body be in pain, conscience is in peace, there is mercy; affliction is for the prevention of sin, there is mercy: In the ark there was a rod and a pot of manna, the emblem of a Christian's condition, mercy interlined with judgment, Psalm ci. 1. here is the rod and manna.

3. Patience evidenceth much of God in the heart: patience is one of God's titles, Rom. xv. 1. The God of patience: thou that hast thy heart cast into this blessed mould, it is a sign God hath imparted much of his own nature to thee, thou shinest with some of his beams.

Impatience evidenceth much unsoundness of heart: as it is in the body, if the body be of that temper that every little scratch of a pin makes the flesh to rankle, you will say, sure this man's flesh is very un-

sound ; so, for every petty cross to fly out in impatience and quarrel with providence, it is the sign of a distempered Christian ; if there be any grace in such a heart, they must have good eyes that can see it ; but he who is of a patient spirit, is a graduate in religion, and doth much participate of the divine nature.

4. The end of affliction is glorious ; the Jews were captive in Babylon, but what was the end ? they departed out of Babylon with vessels of silver, with gold and precious things, Ezra i. 6. So, what is the end of affliction, it ends in endless glory, Acts xiv. 22. 2 Cor. iv. 17. How may this rock our impatient hearts quiet ? who would not willingly travel through a little dirty way, and plowed lands, at the end whereof is a fair meadow, and in that meadow a golden mine ?

Quest. How shall I get my heart turned into a patient frame ?

Ans. 1. Get faith ; all our impatience proceeds from unbelief ; faith is the breeder of patience : when a storm of passion begins to arise, faith saith to the heart as Christ to the sea, Peace, be still, and there is presently a calm.

Quest. How doth faith work patience ?

Ans. Faith argues the soul into patience : faith is like that town-clerk in Ephesus, who allayed the contention of the multitude, and argued them soberly into peace, Acts xix. 35, 36. So, when impatience begins to clamour and make an hubbub in the soul, faith appeaseth the tumult, and argues the soul into holy patience. Saith faith, ‘ Why art thou disquieted, O my soul ? ’ Art thou afflicted ? Is it not thy Father hath done it ? He is carving and polishing thee, to make thee fit for glory ; he smites that he may save ; what is thy trial ? Is it sickness ? God shakes the tree of thy body, that some fruit may fall, ‘ even the peaceable fruit of righteousness,’

Heb. xii. 11. Art thou driven from thy habitation? God hath prepared for thee a city, Heb. xi. 16. Dost thou suffer reproach for Christ's sake? 'The Spirit of God and glory rests upon thee,' 1 Pet. iv. 14. Thus faith argues and disputes the soul into patience.

2. Pray to God for patience, patience is a flower of God's planting, pray that it may grow in your heart, and send forth its sweet perfume; prayer is an holy charm, to charm down the evil spirit; prayer composeth the heart, and puts it in tune, when impatience hath broken the strings, and put all into a confusion. O, go to God; prayer delights God's ear, it melts his heart, it opens his hand: God cannot deny a praying soul: seek to him with importunity, and either he will remove the affliction, or, which is better, he will remove thy impatience.

SECT. 17.

17. A godly man is a thankful man; praise and thanksgiving is the work of heaven, and he begins that work here, which he shall be always doing in heaven. The Jews have a saying, The world subsists by three things, the law, the worship of God, and thankfulness; as if where thankfulness were wanting, one of the pillars of the world were taken away, and it were ready to fall. The Hebrew word for praise, comes from a radix, that signifies to shoot up; the godly man sends up his praises as a volley of shot towards heaven. David who was modelled after God's heart, how melodiously did he warble out God's praises? therefore was called 'The sweet singer of Israel,' 1 Sam. xxiii. 1. Take a Christian at the worst, yet he is thankful: The prophet Jonah, who was a man of a waspish spirit;

the sea did not so work with the tempest, as Jonah's heart wrought with passion; yet, through this cloud you might see grace appear: he had a thankful heart. Jonah ii. 9. 'I will sacrifice to thee with the voice of thanksgiving, I will pay that which I have vowed.' For the clearer illustrating of this, I shall lay down these four particulars.

1. Praise and thanksgiving is a saint-like work; we find in scripture, the godly are still called upon to praise God, Psal. cxxxv. 20. 'Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.' Psalm cxlix. 5. 'Let, the saints be joyful in glory, let the high praises of God be in their mouth.' Praise is a work proper to a saint.

1. None but the godly can praise God aright; as all have not skill to play on the lute, so every one cannot sound forth the harmonious praises of God; wicked men are bound to praise God, but they are not fit to praise him; none but a living Christian can tune God's praise; wicked men are dead in sin: how can they lift up God's praises, that are dead? Isa. xxxviii. 19. 'The grave cannot praise thee.' A wicked man stains and eclipseth God's praise: if a foul hand work in damask, or flowered sattin, it will slur the beauty of it; God will say to the sinner, 'What hast thou to do to take my name into thy mouth?' Psal. l. 16.

2. Praise is not comely for any but the godly, Psalm xxxiii. 1. 'Praise is comely for the righteous.' A profane man stuck with God's praises, is like a dunghill stuck with flowers; praise in the mouth of a sinner, is like an oracle in the mouth of a fool; how uncomely is it for him to praise God, whose whole life is a dishonouring of God? It is as undecent for a wicked man to praise God, who goes on in sinful practices, as it is for an usurer to talk of living by faith, or for the devil to quote scripture; the godly only are fit to be choiristers

in God's praises; it is called, 'The garment of praise,' Isa. lxi. 3. this garment sits handsome only on a saint's back.

2. Thanksgiving is a more noble part of God's worship: our wants may send us to prayer, but it argues an heart highly ingenuous to bless God; the raven cries, the lark sings: in petition we act like men, in thanksgiving we act like angels.

3. Thanksgiving is a God-exalting work, Psal. l. 23. 'Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me.' Though nothing can add the least cubit to God's essential glory, yet praise exalts him in the eyes of others: praise is a setting forth of God's honour, a lifting up of his name, a displaying the trophy of his goodness, a proclaiming his excellency, a spreading his renown, a breaking open the box of ointment, whereby the sweet savour and perfume of God's name is sent abroad into the world.

4. Praise is a more distinguishing work: by this a Christian excels all the infernal spirits. Dost thou talk of God? so can the devil, he brought scripture to Christ: dost thou profess religion? so can the devil, he transforms himself into an angel of light: dost thou fast? he never eats: dost thou believe? they have a faith of assent, 'they believe and tremble,' James ii. 19. but, as Moses wrought such a miracle, as none of the magicians could do the like; so here is a work Christians may be doing, which none of the devils can do, and that is the work of thanksgiving; they blaspheme, but do not bless; satan hath his fiery darts, but not his harp and viol.

Use 1. See here the true genius and complexion of a godly man; he is much in doxologies and praises. It is a saying of Lactantius, "He cannot be a good man, who is unthankful to God." A godly man is a God-exalter; the saints are 'temples of the Holy Ghost,' 1 Cor. iii. 16. where should

God's praise be sounded but in his temples? A good heart is never weary of praising God, Psal. xxxiv. 1. 'His praise shall continually be in my mouth.' Some will be thankful while the memory of the mercy is fresh, but afterwards leave off. The Carthaginians used at first to send the tenth of their yearly revenue to Hercules, but by degrees they grew weary, and left off sending. David, as long as he drew his breath, would chirp forth God's praise, Psal. cxlvi. 2. 'I will sing praises to my God while I have any being.' David would not now and then give God a fit of music, and then the instrument must be hung up, but he would be continually celebrating God's praise.

A godly man will express his thankfulness in every duty, he mingles thanksgiving with prayer, Psal. iv. 6. 'In every thing by prayer, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.' Thanksgiving is the more divine part of prayer; in our petitions we express our own necessities, in our thanksgivings we declare God's excellencies. Then prayer goes up as incense, when it is perfumed with thanksgiving.

And as a godly man expresseth thankfulness in every duty, so in every condition; he will be thankful in adversity, as well as in prosperity, 1 Thess. v. 18. 'In every thing giving thanks:' a gracious soul is thankful and rejoiceth, that he is drawn nearer to God, though it be by the cords of affliction; when it goes well with him, he praiseth God's mercy; when it goes ill with him, he magnifies God's justice: when God hath a rod in his hand, a godly man will have a psalm in his mouth. The devil's smiting of Job, was like the striking upon a musical instrument, he sounded forth praise, 'The Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' Job. i. 22. God's spiritual plants, when they are

cut, and do bleed, drop thankfulness, the saints' tears cannot drown their praises.

2. If this be the sign of a godly man, then the number of the godly will appear to be very small. Few are in the work of praise, sinners cut God short of his thank-offering, Luke xvii. 17. 'Where are the nine!' Of ten lepers healed, there was but one returned to give praise; the most of the world are sepulchres, to bury God's praise? you shall hear some swearing and cursing, but few that bless God: praise is the yearly rent that men sit at; but most are behind hand with their rent. God gave king Hezekiah a famous deliverance, 'But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him, 2 Chron. xxxii. 23. that *but*, was a blot in his scutcheon; some instead of being thankful to God, render evil for good; they are the worse for mercy, Deut. xxii. 6. 'Do ye thus requite the Lord, foolish people and unwise?' This is like the toad, that converts the most wholesome herb to poison; where shall we find a grateful Christian? We read of the saints, Rev. v. 8. 'Having harps in their hand;' the emblem of praise: many have tears in their eyes, and complaints in their mouths, but few that have harps in their hand, who are blessing and praising the name of God.

Use 2. Let us put ourselves upon a scrutiny, and examine by this character whether we are godly: are we thankful for mercy? It is an hard thing to be thankful.

Quest. How may we know whether we are rightly thankful?

Ans. 1. When we are careful to register God's mercy, 1 Chron. xvi. 4. 'David appointed certain of the Levites, to record, and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel:' Physicians say, the memory is the first thing that decays; it is true in spirituals, Psal. cvi. 13. 'They soon forgot his works.'

A godly man enters down his mercies, as a physician his receipts into a book, that they may not be lost. Mercies are jewels that should be locked up; a child of God keeps two books always by him, one to write his sins in, that he may be humble, the other to write his mercies in, that he may be thankful.

2. Then we are rightly thankful, when our hearts are the chief instruments in the music of praise, Ps. cxi. 1. 'I will praise the Lord with my whole heart.' David would not only put his viol in tune, but his heart; if the heart doth not join with the tongue, there can be no concert: where the heart is wanting, the parrot is as good a choirister as the Christian.

3. Then we are rightly thankful, when the favours which we receive, endear our love to God the more. David's miraculous preservation from death, drew forth his love to God, Psal. cxvi. 1. 'I love the Lord;' it is one thing to love our mercies, another thing to love the Lord; many love their deliverance, but not their deliverer; God is to be loved more than his mercies.

4. Then we are rightly thankful, when in giving our praise to God, we take all worthiness from ourselves, Gen. xxxii 10. 'I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies thou hast shewed unto thy servant;' as if Jacob had said, Lord, the worst bit thou carvest me is better than I deserve. 2 Sam. ix, 7. 'Mephiboseth bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant that thou shouldest look on such a dead dog as I am?' so a thankful Christian when he takes a survey of his blessings, and sees how much he enjoys that others better than he want, Lord, saith he, what am I, a dead dog, that free grace should look upon me, and that thou shouldst crown me with such loving-kindness?

5. Then we are rightly thankful, when we put

God's mercies out to use; we turn our enjoyments into improvements; the Lord gives us health, and we spend and are spent for Christ, 2 Cor. xii. 15. He gives us an estate, and we honour the Lord with our substance, Prov. iii. 9. He gives us children, and we dedicate them to God, and educate them for God; we do not bury our talents but trade with them: this is to put out our mercies to use. A gracious heart is like a piece of good ground, that having received the seed of mercy, thrusts forth a crop of obedience.

6. Then we are rightly thankful, when we can have our hearts more enlarged for spiritual mercies than for temporal, Eph. i. 3. 'Blessed be God, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings.' A godly man blesseth God more for a fruitful heart, than a full crop; he is more thankful for Christ, than for a kingdom: Socrates was wont to say, He loved the king's smile more than his gold: a pious soul is more thankful for a smile of God's face, than he would be for the gold of the Indies.

7. Then we are rightly thankful, when mercy is a whet to duty; it causeth a spirit of activity for God: mercy is not as the sun to the fire, to dull it, but as oil to the wheels, to make it run faster. David wisely argues from mercy to duty, Psal cxvi. 8. 'Thou hast delivered my soul from death, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.' It was a saying of Bernard, Lord, I have two mites, a soul and a body, and I give them both to thee.

8. Then we are rightly thankful, when we ex-cite others to this angelical work of praise: David would not only bless God himself, but calls upon others to do so, 'Praise ye the Lord,' Psal. cxi. 1. That is the sweetest music which is in concert; when many saints join together in concert, then they make heaven ring of their praises; as one drunkard will be calling upon another, so in an holy sense,

one Christian must be stirring up another to the work of thankfulness.

9. Then we are rightly thankful, when we do not only speak God's praise, but live his praise; it is called *gratiarum actio*, then we give thanks, when we live thanks; such as are mirrors of mercy, should be patterns of piety, Obad. 17. 'Upon mount Sion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness.' To give God oral praise, and dishonour him in our lives, is to commit a barbarism in religion, and is to be like those Jews, who bowed the knee to Christ, and then did spit upon him, Mark xv. 19.

10. Then we are rightly thankful, when we do propagate God's praises to posterity, we tell our children what God hath done for us: in such a want he supplied us, in such a sickness he raised us, in such a temptation he succoured us, Psalm xlv. 1. 'O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.' By transmitting our experiences to our children. God's name is eternized, and his mercies will bring forth a plentiful crop of praise when we are gone. Heman puts the question, Psal. lxxxviii. 10. 'Shall the dead praise thee?' Yes, in this sense, when we are dead, we praise God, because having left the chronicle of God's mercies with our children, we put them upon thankfulness, and so make God's praise live, when we are dead.

Use 3. Let us evidence our godliness by gratefulness, Psal. xxix. 2. 'Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.'

1. It is a good thing to be thankful, Psal. cxlvii. 1. 'It is good to sing praises to our God.' It is ill when the tongue, that organ of praise, is out of tune, and doth jar, by murmuring and discontent; but it is a good thing to be thankful: it is good, because this is all the creature can do to lift up

God's name; and it is good, because it tends to the making us good: the more thankful we are, the more holy: while we pay this tribute of praise, our stock of grace increaseth: in other debts, the more we pay, the less we have, but the more we pay this debt of thankfulness, the more grace we have.

2. Thankfulness is the quit-rent we owe to God, Psalm cxlviii. 11, 13. 'Kings of the earth, and all people, let them praise the name of the Lord:' praise is the tribute or custom, to be paid into the King of heaven's exchequer: surely while God renews our lease, we must renew our rent.

3. The great cause we have to be thankful; it is a principle grafted in nature, to be thankful for benefits; the heathens praised Jupiter for their victories.

What full clusters of mercies hang upon us? When we go to enumerate God's mercies, we must with David, confess ourselves to be nonplussed, Ps. xl. 5. 'Many, O lord my God, are the wonderful works which thou hast done, they cannot be reckoned up in order.' And as God's mercies are past numbering, so they are past measuring. David takes the longest measuring-line he could get; he measures from earth to the clouds, nay, above the clouds, yet this measure would not reach the height of God's mercies, Psal. cviii. 4. 'Thy mercy is great above the heavens:' O how hath God enriched us with his silver showers? a whole constellation of mercies hath shined in our hemisphere.

1. What temporal favours have we received; every day we see a new tide of mercy coming in; the wings of mercy have covered us, the breasts of mercy have fed us, Gen. xlviii. 15. 'The God which hath fed me all my life long to this day.' What snares laid for us have been broken? what fears blown over? the Lord hath made our bed, when

he hath made others' graves; he hath taken such care of us, as if he had none else to take care for; never was the cloud of providence so black, but we might see a rainbow of love in the cloud; we have been made to swim in a sea of mercy, and doth not all this call for thankfulness?

2. That which may put a string more into the instrument of our praise, and make it sound louder, is to consider what spiritual blessings God hath conferred on us: he hath given us of the upper-springs, he hath opened the wardrobe of heaven, and fetched us out a better garment than any of the angels wear; he hath given us the best robe, and put upon us the ring of faith, whereby we are married to him; these are mercies of the first magnitude, which deserve to have an asterisk put upon them, and God keeps the best wine till last; here he gives us mercies but by retail, the greatest things are laid up; here are some honey drops, and foretastes of God's love, the rivers of pleasures are reserved for paradise; well may we take the harp and viol, and triumph in God's praise: who can tread upon these hot coals of God's love, and his heart not burn in thankfulness?

4. Thankfulness is the best policy, there is nothing lost by it; to be thankful for one mercy is the way to have more; it is like pouring water into a pump, which fetcheth out more: musicians love to sound their trumpets where there is the best echo; and God loves to bestow his mercies where there is the best echo of thankfulness.

5. Thankfulness is a frame of heart God delights in: if repentance be the joy of heaven, praise is the music. Bernard calls thankfulness the sweet balm that drops from a Christian.

Four sacrifices God is much pleased with: the sacrifice of Christ's blood, the sacrifice of a broken heart, the sacrifice of alms, and the sacrifice of

thanksgiving. Praise and thanksgiving, saith Mr. Greenham, is the most excellent part of God's worship; for this shall continue in the heavenly choir, when all other exercises of religion shall cease.

6. What an horrid thing ingratitude is! it gives a dye and tincture to every other sin, and makes it crimson: ingratitude is the spirits of baseness, Obad. ver. 7. 'They that eat thy bread, have laid a wound under thee.' Ingratitude is worse than brutish, Isa. i. 3. It is reported of Julius Cæsar, that he would never forgive an ungrateful person: though God be a sin-pardoning God, he scarce knows how to pardon for this, Jer. v. 7. 'How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me; when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery.' Draco, whose laws were written in blood, published an edict, that if any man had received a benefit from another, and it could be proved against him, that he had not been grateful for it, he should be put to death; an unthankful person is a monster in nature, a paradox in christianity; he is the scorn of heaven, and the plague of earth: an ungrateful man never doth well but in one thing, that is when he dies.

7. The not being thankful, is the cause of all the judgments which have lain upon us: our unthankfulness for health, hath been the cause of so much mortality; our gospel unthankfulness, and sermon surfeiting, hath been the reason why God hath put so many lights under a bushel; as Bradford said, "My unthankfulness was the death of king Edward the sixth." Who will bestow cost on a piece of ground that brings forth nothing but briars? Unthankfulness stops the golden vial of God's bounty, that it will not drop.

Quest. How shall we do to be thankful?

Ans. 1. If you would be thankful, get an heart

deeply humbled in the sense of your own vileness ; a broken heart is the best pipe to sound forth God's praise ; he who studies his sins, wonders that he hath any thing, and that God should shine upon such a dunghill, 1 Tim. i. 18. ' Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, but I obtained mercy.' How thankful was he ? how did he trumpet forth free-grace ? a proud man will never be thankful, he looks upon all his mercies, to be either of his own procuring or deserving ; if he hath an estate, this he hath by his wit and industry, not considering that scripture, Deut. viii. 18. ' Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God ; for it is he that gives thee power to get riches.' Pride stops the current of gratitude. O Christian, think of thy unworthiness, see thyself the least of saints, and the chief of sinners, and then thou wilt be thankful.

2. Labour for sound evidences of God's love to you ; read God's love in the impress of holiness upon your hearts ; God's love poured in, will make the vessels of mercy run over with thankfulness, Rev. i. 5, 6. ' Unto him that loved us, be glory and dominion for ever and ever.' The deepest springs yield the sweetest water ; hearts deeply sensible of God's love, yield the sweetest praises.

SECT. 18.

18. A godly man is a lover of the saints ; the best way to discern grace in one's self, is to love grace in others, 1 John iii. 14. ' We know we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.'

What is religion, but religation, a knitting together of hearts ; faith knits us to God, and love knits us one to another : There is a twofold love to others.

1. A civil love : a godly man hath a love of ci-

vility to all, Gen. xxiii. 7. 'Abraham stood up and bowed to the children of Heth:' though they were extraneous, and not within the pale of the covenant, yet Abraham was affable to them: grace doth sweeten and refine nature, 1 Pet. iii. 8. 'Be courteous.' We are to have a love of civility to all.

1. As they are of the same lump and mould with ourselves, and are a piece of God's curious needle-work.

2. Because our sweet deportment towards them, may be a means to win upon them, and make them in love with the ways of God: a morose rugged carriage, often alienates the hearts of others, and hardens them the more against holiness; whereas a loving behaviour is very obliging, and may be as a loadstone to draw them to religion.

2. There is a pious and an holy love, and this a godly man doth bear chiefly to them who are of the household of faith: the other was a love of courtesy, this of complacency. Our love to the saints, saith Austin, should be more than to our natural relations, because the bond of the Spirit is nearer than that of blood. This love to the saints, which evidenceth a man godly, must have seven ingredients in it.

1. Love to the saints must be sincere, 1 John iii. 18. 'Let us not love in word, or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.' The honey that drops from the comb is pure, so must love be pure without deceit: many are like Naphtali, Gen. xlix. 21. 'He giveth goodly words.' Pretended love is like a painted fire, which hath no heat in it. Some hide malice under a false veil of love; I have read of Antoninus the Emperor, where he made a shew of friendship, there he intended the most mischief.

2. Love to the saints must be spiritual, we must love them because they are saints; not out of self-respects, because they are affable, or have been kind

to us: but we must love them under a spiritual notion; because of the good that is in them; we are to reverence their holiness, else it is a carnal love.

2. Love to the saints must be extensive, we must love all that bear God's image.

1. Though they have many infirmities: a christian in this life is like a good face full of freckles: thou that canst not love another because of his imperfections, didst never yet see thy own face in the glass; thy brother's infirmities may make thee pity him, his graces must make thee love him.

2. We must love the saints, though in some things they do not coalesce and agree with us: another Christian may differ from me in less matters, either because he hath more light than I, or because he hath less light; if he differs from me, because he hath more light, then I have no reason to censure him; if because he hath less light, then I ought to bear with him, as the weaker vessel: in things of an indifferent nature, there ought to be a Christian connivance.

3. We must love the saints, though their graces outvie and surpass ours: we ought to bless God for the eminency of another's grace, because hereby religion is honoured; pride is not quite slain in a believer; saints themselves are apt to grudge and repine at each others' excellencies; is it not strange that the same person should hate one man for his sin, and envy another for his virtue? Christians had need look to their hearts. Then is love right and genuine, when we can rejoice in the graces of others, though they seem to eclipse ours.

4. Love to the saints must be appretiating: we must esteem their persons above others, Psal. xv. 4. 'He honours them that fear the Lord.' We are to look upon the wicked as lumber, but upon the saints as jewels; these must be had in high veneration.

5. Love to the saints must be social: we should delight in their company, Psal. cxix. 68. 'I am a companion of all them that fear thee.' It is a kind of hell to be in the company of the wicked, where we cannot choose but hear God's name dishonoured. It was a capital crime to have carried the image of Tiberius, engraven upon a ring or coin into any sordid place: they who have the image of God engraven upon them, should not go into any sinful sordid company. Never but two, that I read of, who were living, did desire to keep company with the dead, and they were possessed with the devil, Matt. viii. 28. What comfort can a living Christian have, to converse with the dead? Jude ver. 12. But the society of saints is eligible; this is not to walk among the tombs, but among beds of spices. Believers are Christ's garden, their graces are the flowers, their savoury discourse is the fragrant smell of these flowers.

6. Love to the saints must be demonstrative: we should be ready to do all the offices of love to them; vindicate their names, contribute to their necessities, and, like the good Samaritan, pour oil and wine into their wounds, Luke x. 34, 35. Love cannot be concealed, but is active in it's sphere, and will lay out itself for the good of others.

7. Love to the saints must be constant, 1 John iv. 16. 'He that dwelleth in love.' Our love must not only lodge for a night, but we must dwell in love, Heb. xiii. 1. 'Let brotherly love continue.' As love must be sincere without hypocrisy, so constant without deficiency; love must be like the pulse, always beating; not like those Galatians, who at one time were ready to pull out their eyes for Paul, Gal. iv. 15. and afterwards were ready to pluck out his eyes: love should not expire but with our life. And surely, if our love to the saints be thus divinely qualified, we may hopefully conclude that we are en-

rolled among the godly, John xiii. 35. 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.'

That which induceth a godly man to love the saints, is, because he is nearly related to them; there ought to be a love among relations, there is a spiritual consanguinity among believers, they have all one head, therefore should all have one heart; they are stones of the same building, 1 Pet. ii. 5. and shall not these stones be cemented together with love?

Use 1. Is this the distinguishing mark of a godly man, to be a lover of the saints? Then how sad is it to see this grace of love in an eclipse! This character of godliness is almost blotted out among Christians: England was once a fair garden, where the flower of love did grow, but sure now this flower is either plucked or withered; where is that amity and unity that should be among Christians? I appeal to you, would there be that censuring and despising, that reproaching and undermining one another, if there were love? Instead of bitter tears, there are bitter spirits; a sign iniquity abounds, because the love of many waxeth cold; there is that distance among some professors, as if they had not received the same Spirit, or as if they did not hope for the same heaven. In the primitive times, there was so much love among the godly, as set the heathens a wondering; and now there is so little, as may set Christians a blushing.

Use 2. As we would be written down for saints in God's kalender, let us love the brotherhood, 1 Pet. ii. 17. They who shall one day live together, should love together; what is it makes a disciple but love? John xiii. 35. The devil hath knowledge, but that which makes him a devil is, that he wants love. To persuade Christians to love, consider,

1. The saints have that in them which may make us love them; they are the curious embroidery and

workmanship of the Holy Ghost, Eph. ii. 10. They have those rare lineaments of grace, as none but a pencil from heaven could draw; their eyes sparkle forth beauty, Cant. iv. 9. 'Their breasts are like clusters of grapes,' Cant. vii. 7. This makes Christ himself delight in his spouse; 'The King is held in the galleries.' The church is 'the daughter of a prince,' Cant. vii. 1. She is waited on by angels, Heb. i. 14. She hath a palace of glory reserved for her, John xiv. 2. And may not all this draw forth our love.

2. Consider how evil it is for the saints not to love.

1. It is unnatural; the saints are Christ's lambs, John xxi. 15. for a dog to worry a lamb is usual, but for one lamb to worry another is unnatural: the saints are brethren, 1 Pet. iii. 8. how barbarous is it for brethren not to love?

2. Not to love is a foolish thing: have not God's people enemies enough, that they should fly in the faces of one another? The wicked confederate against the godly, Psal. lxxxiii. 3. 'They have taken crafty counsel against thy people.' Though there may fall out a private grudge betwixt such as are wicked, yet they will all agree and unite against the saints: if two grey-hounds are snarling at a bone, yet put up an hare between them, and they will leave the bone, and follow after the hare; so, if wicked men have private differences amongst themselves, yet if the godly be near them, they will leave snarling at one another. and will pursue after the godly: now, when God's people have so many enemies abroad, who watch for their halting and are glad when they can do them a mischief: shall the saints fall out, and divide into parties amongst themselves?

3. Not to love is very unseasonable; God's people are in a common calamity, they suffer in one

cause, and for them to disagree is altogether unreasonable: why doth the Lord bring his people together in affliction, but to bring them together in affection. Metals will unite in a furnace; if ever Christians unite, it should be in the furnace of affliction. Chrysostom compares affliction to a shepherd's dog, which makes all the sheep run together. God's rod hath this loud voice in it, 'Love one another;' how unworthy is it when Christians are suffering together, to be then striving together?

4. Not to love is very sinful.

1. For Christians not to love, is to live in a contradiction to scripture: the Apostle is continually beating upon this string of love, as if it made the sweetest music in religion, Rom. xiii. 8. Col. iii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 22. 1 John iii. 11. 1 John iv. 21. 'This commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also.' Not to love, is to walk antipodes to the word; can he be a good physician who goes against the rules of physic? Can he be a good Christian who goes against the rules of religion?

2. Want of love among Christians, doth much silence the Spirit of prayer; hot passions make cold prayers; where animosities and contentions prevail, instead of praying one for another, Christians will be ready to pray one against another; like the disciples, who prayed for fire from heaven upon the Samaritans, Luke ix. 54. and will God, think you, hear such prayers as come from a wrathful heart? Will he eat of our unleavened bread? Will he accept of those duties, which are soured with bitterness of Spirit? Shall that prayer ever go up as incense, which is offered with the strange fire of our sinful passions?

3. These heart-burnings hinder the progress of piety in our own souls: the flower of grace will not grow in a wrathful heart; the body may as well

thrive while it hath the plague, as a soul can that is infected with malice. While Christians are debating, grace is abating; as the spleen grows, health decays, and as hatred increaseth, holiness declines.

5. Not to love is very fatal; the differences among God's people portend ruin: all mischiefs come in at this gap of sin and division, Mat. xii. 25. Animosities among saints may make God leave his temple, Ezek. x. 4. 'The glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood upon the threshold.' Doth not God seem to stand upon the threshold of his house, as if he were taking his wings to flee; and, 'Wo to us if God depart from us,' Hos. ix. 12. If the master leave the ship, it is near sinking indeed; if God leave a land, it must needs sink in ruin.

Quest. How shall we attain this excellent grace of love?

Ans. 1. Beware of the devil's footposts; I mean such as run on his errand, and make it their work to blow the coals of contention among Christians, and render one party odious to another.

2. Keep up friendly meetings; Christians should not be shy of one another, as if they had the plague.

3. Let us plead that promise, Jer. xxxii. 39. 'I will give them one heart, and one way.' Let us pray that there may be no strife among Christians, but who shall love most; let us pray that God would divide Babylon, and unite Sion.

Use 3. Is this a mark of a godly man, to love the saints? Then they must stand indicted for ungodly, who hate the saints; the wicked have an implacable malice against God's people, and how can antipathies be reconciled? To hate saintship is a brand of a reprobate; they that malign the godly are the curse of the creation; if all the scalding drops in God's vial will make them miserable, they shall be so: never did any who were the haters and perse-

cutors of saints, thrive upon that trade. What became of Julian, Dioclesian, Maximinus, Valerian, cardinal Crescentius, and others? Some of them their bowels came out, others choaked with their own blood, that they might be set up as standing monuments of God's vengeance, Psal. xxxiv. 21. 'They that hate the righteous shall be desolate.'

SECT. 19.

19. A godly man doth not indulge himself in any sin. Though sin lives in him, yet he doth not live in sin. Every man that hath wine in him, is not in wine. A godly man may step into sin through infirmity, but he doth not keep the road, Psalm cxxxix. 24. 'See if there be any way of wickedness in me.'

Quest. What is it to indulge sin?

Ans. 1. To give the breast to it, and feed it: as a fond parent humours his child, and lets him have what he will, so to indulge sin is to humour sin.

2. To indulge sin, is to commit it with delight, 1 Thess. ii. 12. 'They have pleasure in unrighteousness.'

In this sense a godly man doth not indulge sin; tho' sin be in him, he is troubled at it, and would fain get rid of it; there is as much difference between sin in the wicked, and the godly, as between poison being in a serpent, and in a man; poison in a serpent is in its natural place, and is delightful: but poison in a man's body is offensive, and he useth antidotes to expel it. So sin in a wicked man is delightful, being in its natural place, but sin in a child of God is burdensome, and he useth all means to expel it. This pares off from the sin; the will is against it. A godly man enters his protest against sin, Rom. vii. 15. 'What I do, I allow not.'

A child of God while he commits sin, hates the sin he commits, Rom. vii. in particular, there are four sorts of sins which a godly man will not allow himself in.

1. Secret sins: some are more modest than to commit gross sin: that would be a stain to their reputation; but they will sit brooding upon sin in a corner, 1 Sam. xxiii. 9. Saul secretly practised mischief. All will not sin in a balcony, but perhaps they will sin behind the curtain. Rachel did not carry her father's images as a sumpter-cloth, to be exposed to public view, but she put them under her, and sat upon them, Gen. xxxi. 34. Many carry their sins secretly, as a candle in a dark lantern.

But a godly man dares not sin secretly. 1. He knows that God sees in secret, Psal. xlv. 21. As God cannot be deceived by our subtilty, so he can, not be excluded by our secrecy.

2. A godly man knows that secret sins are in some sense worse than others: they discover more guilt and atheism; the curtain sinner makes himself believe God doth not see, Ezek. viii. 12. 'Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel have done in the dark; for they say, The Lord seeth us not.' They that have bad eyes think the sun is dim: how doth this provoke God; that men's atheism should give the lie to his omniscien- cy, Psal. xciv. 9: 'He that formed the eye, shall he not see?'

3. A godly man knows that secret sins shall not escape God's justice: a judge on the bench can punish no offence but what is proved by witnesses; he cannot punish the treason of the heart: but the sins of the heart are as visible to God, as if they were written upon the forehead. As God will reward secret duties, so he will revenge secret sins.

4. A godly man will not allow himself in gain-

ful sins. Gain is the golden bait, with which satan fisheth for souls.

This was the last temptation he used to Christ, Mat. iv. 9. 'All this will I give thee.' But Christ saw the hook under the bait. Many who have escaped gross sins, yet are caught in a golden net: to gain the world, they will use indirect courses. A godly man dares not travel for riches through the devil's highway. Those are sad gains, that make a man lose peace of conscience, and heaven at last. He who getteth an estate by injustice, stuffs his pillow with thorns, and his head will lie very uneasy when he comes to die.

3. A godly man will not allow himself in a beloved sin; there is usually one sin that is the favourite, the sin which the heart is most fond of: a beloved sin lies in a man's bosom, as the disciple, whom Jesus loved, leaned on his bosom, John xiii. 23. A godly man will not indulge a darling sin. Ps. xviii. 23. 'I have kept myself from mine iniquity.' The sin of my constitution, to which the bias of my heart doth more naturally incline. 1 Kings xxii. 31. 'Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king:' a godly man fights with this king sin. The oracle of Apollo answered the people of Cyrrha, that if they would live in peace among themselves, they must make continual war with those strangers which were upon their confines. If we would have peace in our souls, we must maintain a war against our complexion-sin, and never leave till it be subdued.

Quest. How shall we know the beloved sin?

Ans. 1. That sin which a man doth not love to have reproved, is the darling sin. Herod could not endure to have his incest spoken against; if the prophet meddles with that sin, it shall cost him his head: men can be content to have other sins de-claimed against, but if the minister puts his finger

upon the sore, and toucheth this sin, their hearts begin to burn in malice against him; a shrewd sign that is the Herodias.

2. That sin the thoughts run most upon, is the darling sin; which way the thoughts go, the heart goes; he that is in love with a person, cannot keep his thoughts off the object: examine what sin runs most in your mind, what sin is first in your thoughts, and salutes you in the morning, that is the predominant sin.

3. That sin which hath most power over us, and doth most easily lead us captive, that is the beloved of the soul: there are some sins a man can make better resistance against; if they come for entertainment, he can more easily put them off: but there is one sin, if that comes to be a suitor, he cannot deny it, but is overcome by it, this is the bosom-sin. The young man in the gospel, had given a repulse to many sins, but there was one sin foiled him, that was covetousness: Christians, mark what sins you are soonest led captive by, that is the harlot in your bosom. It is a sad thing that a man should be so bewitched by lust, that if it ask to part with, not only half the kingdom, Esther vii. 2. but the whole kingdom of heaven, he must part with it, to gratify that lust.

4. That sin which men use arguments to defend, is the beloved sin: he that hath a jewel in his bosom, will defend it as his life; so, when there is any sin in the bosom, men will defend it; the sin we are advocates and disputants for, is the complexion-sin; if the sin be passion, and we plead for it, Jonah iv. 9. 'I do well to be angry.' If the sin be covetousness, and we vindicate it, and perhaps wrest scripture to justify it, that is the sin which lies nearest the heart.

5. That sin which doth most trouble us, and flies most in our face in an hour of sickness and distress, that is the Delilah-sin: when Joseph's brethren were

distressed, their sin came to remembrance, in selling their brother, Gen. xlii. 21. 'We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of our brother when he besought us, and we would not hear, therefore is this distress come upon us.' So, when a man is upon his sick-bed, and conscience shall say, thou hast been guilty of such a sin, thou didst go on in it, and roll it as honey under thy tongue, conscience reads a sad lecture, sure that was the beloved-sin.

6. That sin which a man doth most hardly let go his hold of, is the endeared sin: Jacobb could of all his sons most hardly part with Benjamin, Gen. xlii. 36. 'Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away:' So, saith the sinner, this and that sin I have parted with, but must Benjamin go, must I part with this delightful sin? that goes to the heart. As it is with a castle that hath several forts about it, the first and second forts are taken, but when it comes to the castle, the governor will rather fight and die than yield that; so a man may suffer some of his sins to be demolished, but when it comes to one sin, that is the taking of the castle, he will never yield to part with that; surely that is the master-sin.

The complexion-sin is a God-provoking sin. The wise men of Troy counselled Priam to send back Helena to the Grecians, not suffering himself to be any longer abused by the charms of her beauty, because the keeping her within the city, would lay the foundation of a fatal war: so should we put away our Delilah-sin, lest it incense the God of heaven, and make him commence a war against us.

The complexion-sin is of all others the most dangerous; as Samson's strength lay in his hair, so the strength of sin lies in this beloved sin; this is like a humour striking to the heart, which brings death. A godly man will lay the axe of repentance to this

sin, and hew it down; he sets this sin, as Uriah, in the fore-front of the battle, that it may be slain: he will sacrifice this Isaac, he will pluck out this right eye, that he may see the better to go to heaven.

4. A godly man will not allow himself in those which the world counts lesser sins: there is no such thing as little sins, yet some may be deemed less comparatively; but a good man will not allow himself in these.

As, 1. Sins of omission. Some think it no great matter to omit family, or closet-prayer; they can go several months and God never hear of them. A godly man will as soon live without food, as without prayer; he knows every creature of God is sanctified by prayer, 1 Tim. iv. 5. The bird may shame many Christians, it never takes a drop, but the eye is lift up towards heaven.

2. A godly man dares not allow himself in vain frothy discourse, much less in that which looks like an oath: if God will reckon for idle words, will he not much more for idle oaths?

3. A godly man dares not allow himself in rash censuring. Some think this a small matter, they will not swear, but they will slander: this is very evil; thou woundest a man in that which is dearest to him. He who is godly turns all his censures upon himself, he judgeth himself for his own sins, but is very chary and tender of the good name of another.

Use. As you would be numbered among the genealogies of the saints, do not indulge yourselves in any sin; consider the mischief that one sin lived in will do.

1. One sin gives satan as much advantage against thee as more: the fowler can hold the bird by one wing: satan held Judas fast by one sin.

2. One sin lived in argues the heart is not sound;

he who hides one rebel in his house is a traitor to the crown ; that person who indulgeth one sin, is a traitorous hypocrite.

3. One sin will make way for more ; as a little thief can open the door to more : sin is linked and chained together : one sin will draw on more : David's adultery made way for murder. One sin never goes alone ; if there be but one nest egg, the devil can brood upon it.

4. One sin is as well a breach of God's law as more, James ii. 10. ' He that shall offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' If the king make a law against felony, treason, murder, if a man be guilty but of one of these, he is as well a transgressor of the law, as if he were guilty of all.

5. One sin lived in keeps out Christ from entering ; one stone in the pipe keeps out the water ; one sin indulged obstructs the soul, and keeps the streams of Christ's blood from running into it.

6. One sin lived in will spoil all thy good duties : a drop of poison will spoil a glass of wine ; Abimelech, a bastard, destroyed threescore and ten of his brethren, Judges ix. 5. One bastard sin will destroy threescore and ten prayers ; one dead fly will corrupt the box of ointment, Eccl. x. 1.

7. One sin lived in will be a canker-worm to eat out the peace of conscience ; it takes away the manna out of the ark, and leaves only a rod.

One sin is a pirate to rob a Christian of his comfort ; one jarring string brings all the music out of tune : one sin countenanced, will spoil the music of conscience.

8. One sin allowed will damn as well as more ; one disease is enough to kill ; if a fence be made ever so strong, leave open but one gap, the wild beast may enter, and tread down the corn : if there be but one sin allowed in the soul, you set open a gap for the devil to enter. It is a simile of Chysostom,

A soldier that hath his head-piece and breast-plate on, if in but one place he want armour, the bullet may enter there, and he may as well be shot, as if he had no armour on: so if thou favourest but one sin, thou leavest a part of thy soul unarmed, and the bullet of God's wrath may enter there, and shoot thee. One sin may shut thee out of heaven: and, as Hierom saith, What difference is there in being shut out for more sins, or for one? Therefore take heed of cherishing one sin: one millstone will sink a man into the sea as well as an hundred.

9. One sin harboured in the soul will unfit for suffering: how soon may an hour of trial come? he who hath an hurt in his shoulder cannot carry an heavy burden, and he who hath any guilt in his conscience cannot carry the cross of Christ: will he deny his life for Christ that cannot deny his lust for Christ? One sin in the soul unmortified will bring forth the bitter fruit of apostacy.

Would you then shew yourselves godly, give a bill of divorce to every sin; kill the Goliath sin, Rom. vi. 12. 'Let not sin reign:' in the original it is, let not sin 'king it over you.' Grace and sin may be together, but grace and the love of sin cannot. Therefore parley with sin no longer, but with the spear of mortification, let out the heart-blood of every sin, Rom. viii. 13.

SECT. 20.

20. A godly man is good in his relations: to be good in general is not enough, but we must show forth piety in our relations.

1. He is godly who is good as a magistrate: the magistrate is God's representative; a godly magistrate holds the balance of justice, and gives to every one his right, Deut. xvi. 19. 'Thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift, for a gift doth

blind the eyes. A magistrate must judge the cause, not the person: he who suffers himself to be corrupted with bribes, is not a judge, but a party: a magistrate must do that which is 'according to law,' Acts xxiii. 3. And that he may do justice, he must examine the cause; the archer that will shoot right, must first see the mark.

2. He is godly who is good as a minister. A minister must be,

1. Painful, 2 Tim. iv: 1, 2. 'Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season.' The minister must not be idle: sloth is as inexcusable in a minister as sleep in a centinel. John Baptist was a voice crying, Matt. iii. 3. A dumb minister is of no more use than a dead physician: a man of God must work in the Lord's vineyard. It was Austin's wish, that Christ might find him at his coming, either praying or preaching.

2. A minister must be knowing, Mal. ii. 7. 'The priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth.' It was said in honour of Nazianzen, that he was *an ocean of divinity*. The prophets of old were called Seers, 1 Sam. ix. 9. It is absurd to have our seers blind: Christ said to Peter, 'Feed my sheep,' John xxi. 16. But how sad is it when the shepherds need to be fed? Ignorance in a minister is like blindness in an oculist. Under the law, he who had the plague in his head was unclean, Lev. xiii. 44.

3. A minister must preach plain, suiting his matter and style to the capacity of his auditory, 1 Cor. xiv. 19. Some ministers, like eagles, love to soar aloft in abstruse metaphysical notions; thinking they are most admired when they are least understood; they who preach in clouds, instead of hitting their people's conscience, shoot over their heads.

4. A minister must be zealous in reproving sin, Titus i. 13. 'Rebuke them sharply.' Epiphanius

saith of Elijah, he sucked fire out of his mother's breasts; a man of God must suck the fire of zeal out of the breasts of scripture. Zeal in a minister, is as proper as fire on the altar; some are afraid to reprove, like the sword-fish, which hath a sword in his head, but is without an heart: so they carry the sword of the Spirit about them, but have no heart to draw it out in a reproof against sin; how many have sewed pillows under their people, Ezek. xiii. 18, making them sleep so securely, that they have never waked till they have been in hell.

5. A minister must be holy in heart and life.

1. In heart. How sad is it for a minister to preach that to others which he never felt in his own soul? to exhort others to holiness and himself a stranger to it? O that it were not thus too often! how many blow the Lord's trumpet with a foul breath?

2. In life. The priests under the law, before they served at the altar washed in the laver; such as serve in the Lord's house, must first be washed from gross sin in the laver of repentance: the life of a minister should be a walking Bible. Basil said of Nazianzen, he did thunder in his doctrine, and lighten in his conversation: a minister must imitate John Baptist, who was not only 'a voice crying,' Isa. xl. 3. but 'a light shining,' John v. 35. They disgrace this excellent calling, who live in a contradiction to what they preach; they turn their codices into calices, their books into cups, and though they are angels by office, yet are devil's in their lives, Jer. xxiii. 15.

3. He is godly who is good as an husband, he fills up that relation with love, Eph. v. 25. 'Husbands love your wives.' The vine twisting its branches about the elm, and embracing it, may be an emblem of that entire love, which should be in the conjugal relation; a married condition will be sad, if it hath cares to imbitter it, and not love

to sweeten it : love is the best diamond in the marriage ring : ' Isaac loved Rebekah,' Gen. xxiv. 57. Unkindnesses in this near relation, are very unhappy. We read in heathen authors, that Clytemnestra the wife of Agamemnon, to revenge an injury received from her husband, first rent the vail of her chastity, and afterwards consented to his death. The husband should shew his love to his wife, by covering infirmities, by avoiding occasions of strife, by sweet endearing expressions, by pious counsel, by love-tokens, by encouraging what he sees amiable and virtuous in her, by mutual prayer, by associating with her, unless detained by urgency of business : the pilot that goes from his ship, and quite leaves it to the merciless waves, declares that he doth not esteem it, or reckon any treasure to be in it.

The apostle gives a good reason why there should be mutual love between husband and wife, 1 Pet. iii. 7. ' That your prayers be not hindered : ' where passions prevail, there prayer is either intermitted, or interrupted.

4. He is godly who is good as a father.

1. A father must drop holy instructions into his children, Eph. vi. 4. ' Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' Thus did Abraham, Gen. xviii. 19. ' I know Abraham, that he will command his children, and his household, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.' Children are young plants, which must be watered with good education, that they may with Obadiah, fear the Lord ' from their youth up,' 1 Kings xviii. 12. Plato saith, In vain doth he expect an harvest, who hath been negligent in sowing ; nor can a parent look to reap any good from a child, where he hath not sown the seed of wholesome instruction ; and though, notwithstanding of all good counsel and admonition, the child should die in sin, yet it is a comfort to a godly parent, to think

that before his child died, he gave it spiritual physic.

2. A parent must pray for his children: Monica the mother of Austin, prayed for his conversion, and one said, It was impossible a son of so many prayers and tears should miscarry. 'The soul of thy child is in a snare, and wilt thou not pray that it may be recovered 'out of the snare of the devil,' 2 Tim. ii. 26. Many parents are careful to lay up portions for their children, but they do not lay up prayers for them.

3. A parent must give his children discipline, Prov. xxiii. 13. 'Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die.' The rod beats out the dust and moth of sin: a child indulged and humoured in wickedness, will prove a burden instead of a blessing: David cockered Adonijah, 1 Kings i. 6. 'His father had not displeased him at any time, saying, why hast thou done so?' and he afterwards was a grief of heart to his father, and would have put him off his throne: correction is a hedge of thorns, to stop children in their full career to hell.

5. He is godly, who is good as a master; a godly man promotes religion in his family; he sets up piety in his house, as well as in his heart, Ps. ci. 2. 'I will walk within my house with a perfect heart,' Josh. xxiv. 15. 'I, and my household will serve the Lord.' I find it written to the honour of Cranmer, his family was a nursery of piety: a godly man's house is a little church, Col. iv. 15. 'The church which is in his house.'

1. A good man makes known the oracles of God, to them who are under his roof: he reads the word, perfumes his house with prayer. It is recorded of the Jews, that they had sacrifices in their family, as well as in the tabernacle, Exod. xii. 3.

2. A godly man provides necessaries; he relieves

his servants in health and sickness: he is not like that Amalekite, who shook off his servant when he was sick, 1 Sam. xxx. 13. but rather like the good centurion, who sought to Christ for the healing of his sick servant, Mat. viii. 5.

3. A godly man sets his servants a good example, he is sober and heavenly in his deportment, his virtuous life is a fair glass for the servants of the family to dress themselves by.

6. He is godly, who is good in the relation of a child, 'He honours his parents.' Philo the Jew placed the fifth commandment in the first table; as if children had not performed their whole devotion to God, till they had given honour to their parents. This honouring of parents consists in two things:

1. In reverencing their persons: which reverence is shewn both by humility of speech and gesture; the contrary to this is, when a child doth behave himself unseemly and proudly. Among the Lacedemonians, if a child had carried himself imperiously towards his parent, it was published by authority, that it was lawful for the father to appoint whom he would to be his heir, and to disinherit that child.

2. Honouring of parents lies in obeying their commands, Eph. vi. 1. 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord.' Duty is the interest-money which children pay their parents for the principal they have had from them. Christ hath set all children a pattern of obedience to their parents, Luke ii. 51. 'He was subject unto them.' The Rechabites were eminent for this, Jer. xxxv. 5. 'I set before the Rechabites pots full of wine, and said to them, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever.' Solon, among the many laws he made, one asked him, Why he

made no law against disobedient children? He answered, because he thought none would be so wicked. God hath punished children who have refused to pay the tribute of obedience. Absalom, a disobedient son, was hanged in an oak betwixt heaven and earth, as being worthy of neither. Manlius an old man, being reduced to much poverty, and having a rich son, he entreated him only for an alms, but could not obtain it: the son disowned him as his father, and gave him reproachful language; the poor old man let tears fall, as witnesses of his grief, and went away; God, to revenge this disobedience of the son, soon after struck him with frenzy; he in whose heart godliness lives, makes as well conscience of the fifth commandment as the first.

7. He is godly, who is good as a servant, Col. iii. 22. Eph. vi. 5. 'Servants be subject to them who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling.' The goodness of servants lies,

1. In diligence: Abraham's servant made haste to dispatch the business his master intrusted him with, Gen. xxiv. 33.

2. Cheerfulness: servants must be free-willers. Thus the centurion's servants, Luke vii. 8. 'If I say to one go, he goeth.'

3. Faithfulness: which consists in two things.

1. In not defrauding, Tit. ii. 10. 'Not purloining.'

2. In keeping counsel; it argues the badness of a stomach, when it cannot retain what is put into it; and the badness of a servant when he cannot retain those secrets which his master hath committed to him.

4. Silence, Tit. ii. 9. 'Not answering again.' It is better to mend a fault than to mince it; and that which may quicken a servant in his work, is that encouraging scripture, Col. iii. 24. 'Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the

inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ.' If Christ should bid you do a piece of work for him, would ye not do it? While you serve your master, you serve the Lord Christ. If you ask what salary you shall have? 'Ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance.'

Use 1. Is this the grand sign of a godly man, to be relatively holy? then the Lord be merciful to us, how few godly ones are to be found? Many put on the coat of profession, they will pray and discourse of points of religion, but, 'What means the bleating of the sheep?' They are not good in their relations. How ill doth it sound, when Christians are defective in relative piety. Can we call him godly who is a bad magistrate? He perverts equity, Psal. lviii. 1. 'Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men? you weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.' Can we call him godly who is a bad parent? he never teacheth his children the way to heaven: he is like the ostrich which is 'cruel to her young,' Job xxxix. 19. Can we call him godly who is a bad master? Many masters leave their religion at church, as the clerk doth his book: they have nothing of God at home: their houses are not Bethels but Bethavens; not little temples but little hells. How many masters at the last day must hold up their hand at the bar? Though they have fed their servants' bellies, they have starved their souls. Can we call him godly who is a bad child? He stops his ear to his parent's counsel; you may as well call him a good subject who is disloyal. Can we call him godly who is a bad servant? He is slothful and wilful; He is more ready to spy a fault in another than to mend it in himself. To call one godly who is bad in his relations is a contradiction, it is to call evil good, Isa. v. 20.

Use 2. As we desire to have God approve us, let us shew forth godliness in our relations: not to be

good in our relations spoils all our other good things; Naaman was an honourable man, but he was a leper, 2 Kings v. i. that *but* spoiled all: so such an one is a great hearer, but he neglects relative duties, this stains the beauty of all his other actions: as in printing, though the letter be ever so well carved, yet if it be not set in the right place it spoils the sense; so let a man have many things commendable in him, yet if he be not good in his right place, making conscience how he walks in his relations, he doth hurt to religion. There are many to whom Christ will say at last as to the young man, Luke xviii. 22. 'Yet lackest thou one thing,' thou hast miscarried in thy relative capacity; as therefore we tender our salvation, and the honour of religion, let us shine forth in that orb of relation, where God hath fixed us.

SECT. 21.

21. A godly man doth spiritual things in a spiritual manner, Phil. iii. 3. 'We are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit:' Spirit worship is virgin-worship, 1 Pet. ii. 5. 'Ye are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices;' not only spiritual for the matter, but the quality; a wicked man either lives in the total neglect of duty, or else dischargeth it in a dull careless manner, instead of 'using the world, as if he used it not,' he serves God as if he served him not; a godly man spiritualizeth duty, he is not only for the doing of holy things, but for the holy doing of things.

Quest. What is it to perform spiritual duties spiritually?

Ans. It consists in three things.

1. To do duties from a spiritual principle, viz. a renewed principle of grace; let a man have gifts to

admiration, let him have the most melting, ravishing expressions, let him speak like an angel dropped out of heaven, yet his duties may not be spiritual, because he wants the grace of the Spirit: whatever a moral unregenerate person doth, is but nature refined; though he may do duties better than a godly man, yet not so well; better as to the matter and elegance, yet not so well, as wanting a renewed principle: a crab-tree may bear as well as a pippin, the fruit may be bigger and fairer to the eye, yet it is not so good fruit as the other, because it doth not come from so good a stock; so an unregenerate person may perform as many duties as a child of God, and these may seem more glorious to the outward view, but they are harsh and sour, because they do not come from the sweet and pleasant root of grace: a true saint gives God that wine which comes from the pure grape of the Spirit.

2. To perform duties spiritually, is to do them with the utmost attention: a Christian is very serious, and labours to keep his thoughts close to the work in hand, 1 Cor. vii. 35. 'That he may attend upon the Lord without distraction.'

Quest. But may not a godly man have roving thoughts in duty?

Ans. Yes, sad experience sets seal to it, the thoughts will be dancing up and down in prayer; the saints are called stars, and many times in duty they are wandering stars. The heart is like quicksilver which will not fix. It is hard to tie two good thoughts together; we cannot lock our hearts so close, but that distracting thoughts like wind will get in. Hierom complains of himself; Sometimes, saith he, when I am about God's service, I am walking in the galleries, or casting up of accounts.

But these wandering thoughts in the godly are not allowed, Ps. cxix. 113. 'I hate vain thoughts,'

they come as unwelcome guests, which are no sooner spied, but are turned out of doors.

Quest. Whence do these impertinent thoughts arise in the godly?

Ans. 1. From the pravity of nature, they are the mud which the heart casts up.

2. From Satan: the devil, if he cannot hinder us from duty, he will hinder us in duty: when we come before the Lord, he is at our right hand to resist us, Zech. iii. 1. as when one is going to write, another stands at his elbow and jogs him, that he cannot write even; Satan will set vain objects before the fancy, to cause a diversion. The devil doth not oppose formality, but fervency; if he sees we set ourselves in good earnest to seek God, he will be whispering things in our ears that we can scarce mind what we are doing.

3. These impertinent thoughts arise from the world: these vermin are bred out of the earth, worldly business oft crowds into our duties, and while we are speaking to God, our hearts are talking with the world, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. 'They sit before me as my people, but their heart goes after their covetousness.' While we are hearing the word, or meditating, one worldly business or other commonly knocks at the door, and we are taken off the duty, while we are in the duty. It is with us as with Abraham, when he was going to worship, the fowls came down upon the sacrifice, Gen. xv. 11.

Quest. How may we get rid of these wandering thoughts, that we may be more spiritual in duty?

Ans. 1. Eye God's purity; he is an holy God whom we serve, and cannot endure when we are worshipping him, that we should converse with vanity. Will a king like it, that while his subject is speaking to him, he should be playing with a feather? will God endure light feathery hearts? How

devout and reverend are the angels, they cover their faces and cry, 'Holy, holy.'

2. Think of the grand importance of the duties we are engaged in: as David said concerning his building an house for God, 2 Chron. xxix. 1. 'The work is great;' when we are hearing the word, the work is great; this is the word by which we shall be judged: when we are at prayer, the work is great, we are pleading for the life of our souls, and is this a time to trifle?

3. Come with affection to duty: the nature of love is to fix the mind upon the object: he who is in love, his thoughts are still upon the person he loves, and nothing can take them off; he that loves the world his thoughts are ever intent upon it; were our hearts more fired with love, they would be more fixed in duty. And, O what cause have we to love duty! Is not this the direct road to heaven? Do we not meet with God here? Can the spouse be better than in her husband's company? Where can the soul be better than in drawing nigh to God?

4. Consider the mischief that these distracting vain thoughts do; they fly-blow our duties, they hinder fervency, they shew high irreverence, they tempt God to turn away his ear from us; how do we think God should mind our prayers, when we ourselves scarcely mind them?

5. To do duties spiritually, is to do them in faith, Heb. xi, 4. 'By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice than Cain.' The holy oil for the tabernacle had several spices put into it, Exod. xxx, 34. Faith is the sweet spice which must be put into duty. It is a wrong to God, to doubt either of his mercy or truth; a Christian may venture his soul upon the public faith of heaven.

Use 1. How far are they out of the way of godliness who are unspiritual in their worship? Who

do not duties from a renewed principle, and with the utmost intention of soul, but merely to stop the mouth of conscience: many people look no farther than the bare doing of duties, but never mind how they are done. God doth not judge of our duties by the length, but by the love: when men put God off with the dreggish part of duty, may not he say as Isa. lviii. 5. 'Is it such a fast that I have chosen? Are these the duties I require? I called for the heart and spirit, and you bring nothing but the carcase of duty, should I receive comfort in this?

Use 2. Let us shew ourselves godly, by being more spiritual in duty; it is not how much we do, but how well. A musician is commended not for playing long, but for playing well: we must not only do what God appoints, but as God appoints. Oh, how many are unspiritual in spiritual things! they bring their services, but not their hearts; they give God the skin, not the fat of the offering: God is a Spirit, John iv. 24. and it is the spirituality of duty he is best pleased with, 1 Pet. ii. 5. 'Spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.' The spirits of the wine are best; so is the spiritual part of duty, Eph. v. 19. 'Making melody in your hearts to the Lord:' It is the heart makes the music; the spiritualizing of duty gives life to it; without this, it is dead praying, dead hearing, and dead things are not pleasing; a dead flower hath no beauty, a dead breast hath no sweetness.

Quest. How may we do to perform duties in a spiritual manner?

Ans. 1. Let the soul be kept a virgin; lust doth besot and dispirit a man; beware of any tincture of uncleanness, James i. 21. Wood that is full of sap will not easily burn; and an heart steeped in sin, is not fit to burn in holy devotion. Can he be spiritual in worship, who feeds carnal lust? Hosea iv. 11. 'Whoredom and wine, and new wine, take away

the heart.' Any sin lived in takes away the heart : such an one hath no heart to pray, or meditate ; the more alive the heart is in sin, the more it dies to duty.

2. If we would be spiritual in duty, let us revolve these two things in our mind. 1. The profit which comes from a duty performed in a spiritual manner ; it enfeebles corruption, it increaseth grace, it defeats Satan, it strengthens our communion with God, it breeds peace of conscience, it procures answers of mercy, and it leaves the heart always in a better tune.

2. The danger of doing duties in an unspiritual manner, they are as if they had not been done ; for what the heart doth not do, is not done : duties slubbered over, turn ordinances into judgments : therefore many, though they are often in duty, they go away worse from duty. If physic be not well made, and the ingredients rightly tempered, it is as bad as poison for the body : so if duties are not well performed, they leave the heart more hard and sinful than before.

Duties unspiritual oft create judgments temporal, 1 Chron. xv. 13. ' The Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.' Therefore God makes breaches in families and relations, because persons worship him not in that manner and due order which he requires.

3. If we would have our duties spiritual, we must get our hearts spiritual ; an earthly heart cannot be spiritual in duty. Let us beg of God a spiritual palate, to relish a sweetness in holy things ; for want of spiritual hearts we come to duty without delight, and go away without profit : If a man would have the wheels of his watch move regularly, he must mend the spring. Christian, if thou wouldst move

more spiritually in duty, get the spring of thy heart mended.

SECT. 22.

22. A godly man is thorough paced in religion, he obeys every command of God, Acts xiii. 22. 'I have found David a man after my own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.' In the Greek, all my wills. A godly man labours to walk according to the full breadth and latitude of God's law; every command hath the same stamp of divine authority upon it, and he who is godly, will obey one command as well as another, Psalm cxix. 6. 'Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.'

A godly man goes through all the body of religion, as the sun through all the signs of the zodiac. He that is to play upon a ten-stringed instrument, must strike upon every string, or he spoils all the music. The ten commandments may be compared to a ten-stringed instrument, we must obey every commandment, strike upon every string, or we can make no sweet music in religion. True obedience is filial; it is fit the child should obey the parent in all just and sober commands: God's laws are like the curtains of the tabernacle, which were looped together; they are like a chain of gold, where all the links are coupled: a conscientious man will not willingly break one link of this chain; if one command be violated, the whole chain is broken, James ii. 10. 'Whosoever shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, is guilty of all.' A voluntary breach of one of God's laws, involves a man in the guilt, and exposeth him to the curse of the whole law. True obedience is entire and uniform; a good heart, like the needle, points that way which the loadstone draws.

This is a grand difference between a child of God and an hypocrite; the hypocrite doth pick and chuse in religion; some duties he will perform which are more facile, and do gratify his pride, or interest, but other duties he makes no reckoning of, Matt. xxiii. 23. 'Ye pay tythe of mint, and anise, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.' To sweat in some duties of religion, and freeze in others, is the symptom of a distempered Christian. Jehu was zealous in destroying the idolatry of Baal, but let the golden calves of Jeroboam stand, 2 Kings x. 30. This shows men are not good in truth, when they are good by halves. If your servant should do some of your work you set him about, and leave the rest undone, how would you like that? The Lord saith, 'Walk before me, and be perfect,' Gen. xvii. 1. How are our hearts perfect with God, when we prevaricate with him? Some things we will do, and other things we leave undone; he is good, who is good universally.

There are ten duties God calls for, which a godly man will conscientiously perform; and indeed those duties may serve as so many other characters and touchstones to try our godliness by.

1. A godly man will be often calling his heart to account: he takes the candle of the word, and searcheth his inward parts, Psalm lxxvii. 6. 'I commune with my own heart, and my spirit made diligent search:' a gracious soul searcheth whether there be any duty omitted, any sin cherished; he examines his evidences for heaven; as he will not take his gold upon trust, so neither his grace: he is a spiritual merchant, he casts up the estate of his soul, to see what he is worth: he 'sets his house in order:' often reckonings keep God and conscience friends; a carnal person cannot abide this heart-work, he is ignorant how the affairs go in his soul:

he is like a man, who is well acquainted in foreign parts, but a stranger in his own country.

2. A godly man is much in closet-prayer, he keeps his hours for private devotion; Jacob when he was left alone, wrestled with God, Gen. xxxii. 24. So when a gracious heart is alone, it wrestles in prayer, and will not leave God till it hath a blessing; a devout Christian exerciseth eyes of faith, and knees of prayer.

Hypocrites, who have nothing of religion, besides the frontispiece, love to be seen. Christ hath characterized them, Matt. vi. 5. 'They love to pray in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen.' The hypocrite is devout in the temple; there all will gaze on him; but he is a stranger to secret communion with God; he is in the church a saint, but in his closet an atheist; a good Christian holds intelligence with heaven: Private prayer keeps up the trade of godliness; when closet-holiness is laid aside, there is a stab given to the heart of religion.

3. A godly man is diligent in his calling; he takes care to provide for his family: the church must not exclude the shop. It is a speech of Mr. Perkins, Though a man be endued with excellent gifts, and hears the word with reverence, and receives the sacrament, yet if he practises not the duties of his calling, all is but hypocrisy; religion did never grant a patent for idleness, 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. 'There are some who walk among you disorderly, working not at all; them that are such, we command and exhort, by our Lord Jesus, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.' That bread eats most sweet, which is got with most sweat; a godly man had rather fast, than eat the bread of idleness. Vain professors talk of living by faith, but do not live in a calling; they are like the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin: an idle person is the devil's tennis-ball, which he bandies up and

down with temptation, and at last the ball falls into the hazard.

4. A godly man sets bounds to himself in things lawful; he abates in matters of recreation and diet, he takes only so much for the recruits of nature, as may the better dispose him for God's service. Hierom lived abstemiously, his diet was a few dried figs and cold water. And Austin in his confessions saith thus, "Lord, thou hast taught me, to go to my meat as to a medicine." If the snaffle of reason, much more should the curbing bit of grace check the appetite: the life of a sinner is brutish; the glutton feeds without fear. Jude 12. and the drunkard drinks without reason. Too much oil chokes the lamp, whereas a lesser quantity makes it burn brighter; a godly man holds the golden bridle of temperance, and will not suffer his table to be a snare.

5. A godly man is careful about moral righteousness; he makes conscience of equity, as well as piety; the scripture hath linked both together, Luke i. 75. 'That we might serve him in righteousness and true holiness:' holiness, there, is the first table; righteousness, there, is the second table: though a man may be morally righteous, and not godly, yet no man can be godly, but he must be morally righteous. This moral righteousness is seen in our dealings with men; a good man observes that golden maxim, Mat. vii. 12. 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' There is a threefold injustice in matters of dealing.

1. Using of false weights, Hos. xii. 7. 'The balances of deceit are in his hands:' men by making their weights lighter make their sin heavier, Amos v. 8. 'They make the ephah small:' the ephah was a measure they used in selling; they made the ephah small, they gave but scant measure; a godly man who takes the Bible in one hand, dares not use false weights in the other

2. Imbasing a commodity, Amos viii. 6. 'They sell the refuse of the wheat:' they would pick out the best grains of the wheat, and sell the worst at the same price as they did the best, Isa. i. 22. 'Thy wine is mixed with water:' they did adulterate their wine, yet made their customers believe it came from the pure grape.

3. Taking a great deal more than the commodity is worth, Lev. xxv. 14. 'If thou sell ought to thy neighbour, ye shall not oppress one another:' a godly man deals exactly but not exactingly, he will sell so as to help himself but not damnify another. His motto is, 'A conscience void of offence towards God and towards men,' Acts xxiii. 16.

The hypocrite separates these two which God hath joined together, righteousness and holiness, he pretends to be pure but is not just: this brings religion into contempt, when men hang forth Christ's colours, yet will use fraudulent circumvention, and under a mask of piety, neglect morality; a godly man makes conscience of the second table as well as the first.

6. A godly man will forgive them that have wronged him, revenge is sweet to nature. A gracious spirit passeth by affronts, forgets injuries, and counts it a greater victory to conquer an enemy by patience than by power: this is truly heroical, 'To overcome evil with good.' Though I would not trust an enemy, yet I would endeavour to love him, though I would exclude him out of my creed, yet not out of my prayer, Mat. v. 44.

Quest. But doth every godly man arrive at this, to forgive, yea, love his enemies?

Ans. He doth it in a gospel sense, that is, 1. He subscribes to it in his judgment, as a thing which ought to be done, Rom. vii. 18. 'With my mind I serve the law of God.' 2. A godly man

mourns that he cannot love his enemies more, Rom. vii. 24. 'O wretched man that I am.' O this base cankered heart of mine, that hath received so much mercy, and can shew so little! I have had talents forgiven me, yet I can hardly forgive pence. 3. A godly man prays that God will give him an heart to forgive his enemies: Lord pluck this root of bitterness out of me, perfume my soul with love, make me a dove without gall. 4. A godly man doth in the strength of Christ resolve and strive against all rancour and virulency of spirit. This is in a gospel-sense to love our enemies; a wicked man cannot do this, his malice boils up to revenge.

7. A godly man lays to heart the miseries of the church, Psal. cxxxvii. 1. 'We wept when we remembered Sion.' I have read of certain trees, whose leaves if cut or touched, the other leaves begin to contract and shrink up themselves, and for a space hang down their heads: such a spiritual sympathy is there among Christians, when other parts of God's church suffer, they feel themselves as it were touched in their own persons. Ambrose reports, that when Theodosius was sick unto death, he was more troubled about the church of God than about his own sickness. When Æneas would have saved Anchises' life, saith he, "Far be it from me that I should desire to live when Troy is buried in its ruins;" there are in music two unisons, if you strike one you shall perceive the other to stir, as if it were affected: when the Lord strikes others, a godly heart is deeply affected, Isa. xvi. 11. 'My bowels shall sound like an harp.' Though it be well with a child of God in his own particular, he dwells in an house of cedar, yet he grieves to see it go ill with the public. Queen Esther enjoyed the king's favour, and all the delights of the court, yet when a bloody warrant was signed for the death of the

Jews, she mourns and fasts, and ventures her own life to save theirs.

8. A godly man is contented with his present condition: if provisions grow low, his heart is tempered to his condition. Many, saith Cato, blame me because I want, and I blame them because they cannot want. A godly man puts a candid interpretation upon providence; when God brews him a bitter cup, this, saith he, is my diet-drink; it is to purge me, and do my soul good, therefore he is well-content, Psal. iv. 11.

9. A godly man is fruitful in good works, Tit. ii. 7. The Hebrew word for godly signifies merciful; implying, that to be godly and charitable are one and the same. A good man feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, 'He is ever merciful,' Psalm xxxvii. 26. The more devout sort of the Jews at this day, distribute the tenth part of their estate to the poor; and they have a proverb among them, give the tenth, and you will grow rich. The hypocrite is all for faith, nothing for works; like the laurel that makes a flourish but bears no fruit.

10. A godly man will suffer persecution: he will be married to Christ, though he settle no other jointure upon him but the cross; he suffers out of choice, Heb. xi. 35. and with a spirit of gallantry. Argerius wrote a letter to his friend, dated, 'From the pleasant garden of the Leonine prison.' The blessed martyrs, who put on the whole armour of God, did, by their courage, blunt the edge of persecution. The juniper tree makes the coolest shadow, and the hottest coal; so persecution makes the coal of love hotter, and the shadow of death cooler.

Thus a godly man goes round the whole circle of religious duties, and obeys God in whatever he commands.

Obj. But it is impossible for any one to walk ac-

cording to the full breadth of God's law, and to follow God fully.

Ans. There is a twofold obeying God's law; the first is perfect; when all is done that the law requires, this we cannot arrive at in this life. Secondly, There is an incomplete obedience, which in Christ is accepted. This consists in four things.

1. An approving of all God's commandments, Rom. vii. 12. 'The commandment is just, and holy, and good;' and verse 16. 'I consent to the law that it is good.' There is both assent and consent.

2. A sweet complacency in God's commands, Ps. cxix. 47. 'I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved.'

3. A cordial desire to walk in all God's commands, Psalm cxix. 5. 'O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.'

4. A real endeavour to tread in every path of the command, Psal. cxix. 59. 'I turned my feet unto thy testimonies.' Zacharias had his failings, he did hesitate through unbelief, for which he was stricken dumb, yet it is said he did walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameless, Luke i. 6. Because he did cordially endeavour to obey God in all things. Evangelical obedience is true for the essence, though not perfect for the degree; and wherein it comes short, Christ puts his merits into the scale, and then there is full weight.

SECT. 23.

23. A godly man walks with God, Gen. vi. 9. 'Noah walked with God.' The age in which Noah lived was very corrupt, verse 5. 'The wickedness of man was great in the earth.' But the iniquity of the times could not put Noah out of his walk; 'Noah walked with God.' Noah is called 'a preacher of righteousness.' 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. Noah preached,

1. By doctrine: his preaching was (say some of the Rabbins) after this manner, 'Turn ye from your evil ways, that the waters of the flood come not upon you, and cut off the whole seed of the race of Adam.'

2. Noah preached by his life; he preached by his humility, patience, sanctity: Noah walked with God.

Quest. What is it to walk with God?

Ans. Walking with God imports five things.

1. A walking as under God's eye: Noah did reverence a Deity. A godly man sets himself as in God's presence, knowing his Judge looks on, Psal. xvi. 8. 'I have set the Lord always before me:' Here was David's optics.

2. Walking with God implies the familiarity and intimacy the soul hath with God: friends walk together, and solace themselves one with another: the godly make known their requests to God, and he makes known his love to them. There is a sweet intercourse between God and his people, 1 John i.

3. 'Our communion is with the Father, and his Son Jesus.'

3. Walking with God, is walking above the earth: a godly man is elevated above all sublunary objects; that person must ascend very high, who walks with God: a dwarf cannot walk among the stars; nor can a dwarfish earthly soul walk with God.

4. Walking with God, denotes visible piety: walking is a visible posture; grace must be conspicuous to the beholders. He walks with God, who discovers something of God in his carriage: he shines forth in a Bible conversation.

5. Walking with God imports a continued progress in grace; it is not only a step but a walk; there is a going on towards perfection: a godly man doth not sit down in the middle of his way, but goes on till he comes at the end of his faith, 1 Pet. i. 9. Though a good man may be *extra se-*

milam, yet not *extra viam*: he may through infirmity step aside, as Peter did, but he recovers himself by repentance, and goes on in a progress of holiness, Job xvii. 9. 'The righteous also shall hold on his way.'

Use 1. See from hence, how improper it is to call them godly, who do not walk with God: they would have Noah's crown, but they do not love Noah's walk. Most are found in the devil's black walk, Phil. iii. 18. 'Many walk, of whom I tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.'

1. Some will commend walking with God, and say it is the rarest life in the world, but will not set one foot in the way? all that commend wine do not come up to the price; many a father commends virtue to his child, but doth not set him a pattern.

2. Others walk a few steps in the good old way Jer. vi. 16. but they retreat back again: if the ways of God were not good, why did they enter into them? If they were good, why did they forsake them? 2 Pet. ii. 21 'For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment.'

3. Others slander walking with God, that it is a melancholy walk, and such as are less zealous, are more prosperous; this God accounts blasphemy, 2 Pet. ii. 2. 'The way of truth shall be evil spoken of:' In the Greek it is, it shall be blasphemed.

4. Others deride walking with God, as if it were a way of foolish preciseness: What, you will be of the holy tribe? You will be wiser than others? There are some persons, if it were in their power, would jeer holiness out of the world: the chair of the scornful stands at the mouth of hell, Prov. xix. 29.

5. Others instead of walking with God, walk after the flesh, 2 Pet. ii. 10.

1. They walk by fleshly opinions. 2. They walk after fleshly lusts.

1. They walk by fleshly opinions. There are six of these.

1. That it is best to do as the most do, to steer after the course of the world; to be in the mode, not to get a new heart, but to get into a new fashion.

2. That reason is the best judge and umpire in matters of religion; we must believe no farther than we can see: for a man to become a fool that he may be wise, 1 Cor. iii. 18. to be saved purely by the righteousness of another, Phil. iii. 9. to keep all by losing all, Mat. x. 39. this the natural man will by no means put in his creed.

3. That a little religion will serve the turn: the lifeless form may in policy be kept up, but zeal is frenzy; the world thinks that religion to be best, which like leaf-gold, is spread very thin.

4. That way is not good which is exposed to affliction: a stick, though it be straight, yet under water it seems crooked: so religion, if it be under affliction, appears to a carnal eye crooked.

5. That all a man's care should be for the present; as that profane cardinal said, He would leave his part in paradise, to keep his cardinalship in Paris.

6. That sinning is better than suffering: it is more discretion to keep the skin whole than the conscience pure. These are such rules as the crooked serpent hath found out, which, whosoever walk by, shall not know peace.

2. They walk after fleshly lusts, they do turn caterers for the flesh, Rom. xiii. 14. Such an one was the emperor Heliogabalus, he so indulged the flesh, that he never sat but among sweet flowers, mixed with amber and musk; he attired himself with purple set with precious stones; he burned in

his lamps, instead of oil, a costly balsam brought from Arabia, very odoriferous; he bathed himself in perfumed waters, he did put his body to no other use but to be a drainer for meat and drink to run through.

Thus sinners walk after the flesh, if a drunken or unclean lust call, they gratify it; they brand all for cowards, who dare not sin after the same rate as they do. These, instead of walking with God, walk contrary to him: lust is the compass they sail by, Satan is their pilot, and hell the port they are bound for.

Use 2. Let us try whether we have this character of the godly, do we walk with God? That may be known,

1. By the way we walk in; it is a private retired way, wherein only some few holy ones walk; therefore it is called a path-way, to distinguish it from the common road, Prov. xii. 21. 'In the path-way thereof is no death.'

2. If we walk with God, then we walk in the fear of God, Gen. v. 22. 'Enoch walked with God.' The Chaldee version renders it, he walked in the fear of the Lord; the godly are fearful of that which may displease God, Gen. xxxix. 9. 'How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' This is not a base servile fear, but,

1. A fear springing from affection, Hos. iii. 5. a child fears to offend his father, out of the tender affection he bears to him: this made holy Anselm say, If sin were on one side, and hell on the other, I would rather leap into hell, than willingly offend my God.

2. It is a fear joined with affiance, Heb. xi. 7. 'By faith, Noah moved with fear:' faith and fear go hand in hand; when the soul looks upon God's holiness, he fears; when he looks upon God's promises, he believes. A godly man doth tremble, yet

trust; fear preserves reverence, faith preserves cheerfulness; fear keeps the soul from lightness, faith keeps it from overmuch sadness. By this we may know whether we walk with God, if we walk in the fear of God, we are fearful of infringing his laws, and forfeiting his love: it is a brand set upon sinners, Rom. iii. 18. 'They have not the fear of God before their eyes.' The godly fear and offend, Psal. iv. 4. the wicked offend and fear not, Jer. v. 23. 24. Loose and dissolute walking will soon estrange God from us, and make him weary of our company, 2 Cor. iv. 4. 'What communion hath light with darkness?'

Use 3. Let me persuade all who would be accounted godly, to get into Noah's walk, Tho' the truth of grace be in the heart, yet the beauty of it is seen in the walk.

1. Walking with God is very pleasing to God: he that walks with God, declares to the world what is the company he loves most: 'His fellowship is with the Father;' he counts those the sweetest hours which are spent with God; this is very grateful and acceptable to God, Gen. v. 24. 'Enoch walked with God.' And see how kindly God took this at Enoch's hands, Heb. xi. 4. 'He had this testimony that he pleased God.'

2. Close walking with God will be a good means to entice and allure others to walk with him. The apostle exhorts wives to walk so, that the husbands might be won by the conversation of the wives, 1 Pet. iii. 1. Justin Martyr confessed he became a Christian, by beholding the holy and innocent lives of the primitive saints.

3. Close walking with God would put to silence the adversaries of the truth, 1 Pet. ii. 15. A loose carriage puts a sword into wicked men's hands to wound religion: what a sad thing is it, when it shall be said of professors, they are as proud, as cove-

tous, as unjust as others? Will not this expose the ways of God to contempt? But holy and close walking would stop the mouths of sinners, that they should not be able to speak against God's people, without giving themselves the lie. Satan came to Christ, and found nothing in him, John xiv. 30. What a confounding thing will it be to the wicked when they shall have nothing to fasten as a crime upon the godly, but their holiness, Dan. vi. 5. 'We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.'

4. Walking with God is a pleasant walk; the ways of wisdom are called, Pleasantness, Prov. iii. 17. Is not the light pleasant? Psal. lxxxix. 15. 'They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.' Walking with God is like walking among beds of spices, which send forth a fragrant perfume. This is it which brings peace, Acts. ix. 31. 'Walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the joy of the Holy Ghost.' While we walk with God, what sweet music doth the bird of conscience make in our breast? Psal. cxxxviii. 5. 'They shall sing in the ways of the Lord.'

5. Walking with God is honourable; it is a credit for one of an inferior rank to walk with a king: What greater dignity can be put on a mortal man, than to converse with his Maker, and to take a turn with God every day?

6. Walking with God leads to rest, Heb. iv. 9. 'There remains a rest for the people of God.' The philosopher saith, Motion tends to rest. Indeed there is a motion which doth not tend to rest: they who walk with their sins shall never have rest, Rev. iv. 8. 'They rest not day and night:' but they that walk with God, shall sit down in the kingdom of God, Luke xiii. 29. as a weary traveller when he comes home sits down and rests him, Rev. iii. 21.

‘To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne.’ A throne denotes honour, and sitting denotes rest.

7. Walking with God is the most safe walking; walking in the ways of sin, is like walking upon the edge of a river: the sinner treads upon the banks of the bottomless pit, and if death gives him a jog, he tumbles in; but it is safe walking in God’s way, Prov. iii. 23. ‘Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely: he walks safe who walks with a guard; he that walks with God shall have God’s Spirit to guard him from sin, and God’s angels to guard him from danger, Psal. xci. 11.

8. Walking with God will make death sweet; it was Augustus’ wish that he might have a quiet easy death without much pain. If any thing make our pillow easy at death, it will be this, that we have walked with God in our generation: Do we think walking with God can do us any hurt? Did we ever hear any cry out upon their death-bed, that they have been too holy, that they have prayed too much, or walked with God too much? no; that which hath cut them to the heart, hath been this, that they have not walked more closely with God; they have wrung their hands, and torn their hair, to think that they have been so bewitched with the pleasures of the world: close walking with God, will make our enemy death, to be at peace with us. King Ahasuerus, when he could not sleep, called for the Book of Records, and read in it, Esther vi. 1. So, when the violence of sickness causeth sleep to depart from our eyes, and we can call for conscience (that book of records) and find written in it, such a day we humbled our souls by fasting, such a day our hearts melted in prayer; such a day we had sweet communion with God; what a reviving will this be? How may we look death in the face with comfort, and say, Lord, now take us up to thee in heav-

en; where we have so often been by affection, let us now be by fruition.

9. Walking with God is the best way to know the mind of God: friends who walk together, impart their secrets one to another, Psal. xxv. 14. 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.' Noah walked with God, and the Lord revealed a great secret to him, of destroying the old world, and saving him in the ark. Abraham walked with God, Gen. xxiv. 40. and God made him one of his privy council, Gen. xviii. 17. 'Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?' God doth sometimes sweetly unbosom himself to the soul in prayer, and in the holy supper, as Christ made himself known to the disciples, in the breaking of bread, Luke xxiv. 35.

10. They who walk with God shall not be wholly left of God: the Lord may retire himself for a time, to make his people cry after him the more, but he will not quite leave them, Isa. liv. 8. 'I hid my face for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.' God will not cast off any of his old acquaintance, he will not part with one that hath borne him company. 'Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him,' Gen. v. 24. He took him up to heaven, as the Arabic renders it; 'Enoch was lodged in the bosom of divine love.'

Quest. How may we do to walk with God?

Ans. Get out of the old road of sin: he that would walk in a pleasant meadow, must turn out of the road. The way of sin is full of travellers, there are so many travelling in this road, that hell, though it be of a great circumference, is fain to enlarge itself, and make room for them, Isa. v. 14. This way of sin seems pleasant, but the end is damnable. 'I have,' saith the harlot, 'perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon, Prov. vii.

17. See how with one sweet, the cinnamon, there were two bitters, myrrh, and aloes: for that little sweet in sin at present, there will be a far greater proportion of bitterness afterwards: therefore get out of these briers, you cannot walk with God and sin, 2 Cor. vi. 14. 'What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?'

2. If you would walk with God, get acquaintance with him, Job xxii. 21. 'Acquaint now thyself with him.' Know God in his attributes and promises; strangers do not walk together.

3. Get all differences removed, Amos iii. 3. 'Can two walk together except they are agreed? This agreement and reconciliation is made by faith, Rom. iii. 25. 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood.' When once we are friends, then we shall be called up to the mount as Moses, and have this dignity conferred on us, to be the favourites of heaven, and to walk with God.

4. If you would walk with God, get a liking to the ways of God: they are adorned with beauty, Prov. iv. 18. sweetened with pleasure, Prov. iii. 17. fenced with truth, Rev. xv. 3. accompanied with life, Acts ii. 28. lengthened with eternity, Hab. iii. 6. be enamoured with the way of religion, and you will soon walk in it.

5. If you would walk with God, take hold of his arm; such as walk in their own strength, will soon grow weary and tire: Psal. lxxi. 16. 'I will go in the strength of the Lord God:' We cannot walk with God without God; let us press him with his promise, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. 'I will cause you to walk in my statutes.' If God take us by the hand, then we shall walk and not faint, Isa. xl. 31.

SECT. 24.

24. He who is godly labours to be an instrument of making others godly: he is not content to go to heaven alone, but would bring others thither: spiders work only for themselves, but bees work for others. A godly man is both a diamond and a loadstone; a diamond for the sparkling lustre of grace, and a loadstone for his attractiveness, he is ever drawing others to the embracing of piety: living things have a propagating virtue: where religion lives in the heart, there will be an endeavour to propagate the life of grace in those we converse with, Philemon ver. 10. 'My son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.' Though God be the fountain of grace, yet the saints are pipes to transmit living streams to others. This thirsty endeavour after the conversion of souls, proceeds,

1. From the nature of godliness, it is like fire, which assimilates and turns every thing into its own nature: where there is the fire of grace in the heart, it will endeavour to inflame others: grace is an holy leaven, which will be seasoning and leavening others with divine principles. Paul would fain have converted Agrippa; how did he court him with rhetoric? Acts xxvi. 27. 'King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest:' his zeal and eloquence had almost captivated the King, verse 28. 'Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.'

2. A godly man attempts the conversion of others, out of a spirit of compassion: grace makes the heart tender; a godly man cannot choose but pity such as are in the gall of bitterness; he sees what a deadly cup is a brewing for the wicked; they must, without repentance, be bound over to God's wrath; the fire which rained on Sodom, was

but a painted fire in comparison of hell-fire ; this is a fire with a vengeance, Jude vii. ' Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire : ' now, a godly man seeing captive sinners ready to be damned, labours to convert them from the error of their way, 2 Cor. v. 11. ' Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.'

3. A goodly man endeavours the good of others, out of an holy zeal he bears to Christ's glory : the glory of Christ is dear to him, as his own salvation ; therefore that this may be promoted, he labours to bring in souls to Christ.

It is a glory to Christ, when multitudes are born to him : every star adds a lustre to the sky, every convert is a member added to Christ's body, and a jewel adorning his crown. Though Christ's glory cannot be increased, as he is God, yet, as he is Mediator, it may ; the more are saved, the more Christ is exalted : why else should the angels rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, Luke xv. 10. but because now Christ's glory shines the more ?

Use 1. This excludes them from the number of the godly, who are spiritual eunuchs, they labour not to promote the salvation of others. Did men love Christ, they would endeavour to draw as many as they could to him. He who loves his captain, will persuade others to come under his banner ; this un-masks the hypocrite. Tho' an hypocrite may make a show of grace himself, yet he never minds the procuring grace in others ; he is without bowels, I may allude to that, Zech. xi. 9. ' That which dies let it die, and that which is cut off, let it be cut off.' Let souls go to the devil, he cares not.

2. How far are they from being godly, who instead of endeavouring grace in others, labour to destroy all hopeful beginnings of grace in them ? Instead of drawing them to Christ, they draw them

from Christ; their work is to poison and mischief souls: this mischieving of souls is three ways.

1. By evil edicts: so Jeroboam made Israel sin, 1 Kings xvii. 26. He forced them to idolatry.

2. By evil examples: examples speak louder than precepts; but principally the examples of great ones are influential: men placed on high, are like the pillar of cloud, when that went, Israel went; if great ones move irregularly, others will follow after.

3. By evil company; the breath of sinners is infectious; they are like the dragon which cast a flood out of his mouth, Rev. xii. 15. They cast a flood of oaths out of their mouth: Wicked tongues are set on fire of hell, James iii. 6. The sinner finds match and powder, and the devil finds fire: The wicked are ever setting snares and temptations before others, as the prophet speaks in another sense, Jer. xxxv. 5. 'I set pots full of wine, and cups, and said unto them, drink.' So the wicked set pots of wine before others, and make them drink till reason be stupified, and lust enflamed: these are prodigiously wicked, who make men proselytes to the devil; how sad will their doom be, who, besides their own sins, have the blood of others to answer for?

4. If it be the sign of a godly man to promote grace in others, then much more ought he to promote it in his near relations. A godly man will be careful that his children should know God: he would be sorry that any of his flesh should burn in hell; he labours to see Christ formed in them, who are himself in another edition. Austin saith, that his mother Monica travelled with greater care and pain for his spiritual birth, than for his natural.

The time of childhood is the fittest time to be sowing seeds of religion in our children, Is. xxviii. 9. 'Whom shall we make understand doctrine?

‘Them that are weaned from the milk, that are drawn from the breasts.’ The wax, while it is soft and tender, will take any impression: children while they are young, will fear a reproof, when they are old they will hate it.

1. It is pleasing to God that our children should know him betimes: when you come into a garden, you love to pluck the young bud, and smell to it; God loves a saint in the bud: of all the trees the Lord made choice of in a prophetic vision, it was the almond tree, which blossoms one of the first of the trees, Jer. ii. 11. Such an almond tree is an early convert.

2. By endeavouring to bring up our children in the fear of the Lord, we shall provide for God’s glory when we are dead. A godly man should not only honour God while he lives, but do something that may promote God’s glory when he is dead: our children being seasoned with gracious principles, will stand up in our room, when we are gone, and will glorify God in their generation. A good piece of ground doth not only bear a fore-crop, but an after-crop; he that is godly doth not only bear God a crop of obedience himself while he lives, but by principling his child with religion, he bears God an after-crop when he is dead.

Use 2. Let all who have God’s name named upon them, do what in them lies to advance piety in others: a knife touched with the loadstone will draw the needle; he whose heart is divinely touched with the loadstone of God’s Spirit, will endeavour to draw those who are near him to Christ. The heathen could say, “We are not born for ourselves only.” The more excellent any thing is, the more communicative; in the body every member is diffusive, the eye conveys light, the head spirits, the liver blood; a Christian must not move altogether within his own circle, but endeavour the welfare of

others; to be diffusively good, makes us resemble God, whose sacred influence is universal.

And surely it will be no grief of heart when conscience can witness for us, that we have brought glory to God in this manner, by labouring to fill heaven.

Not that this is any way meritorious, or hath any casual influence upon our salvation. Christ's blood is the cause? but our promoting God's glory in the conversion of others, is a signal evidence of our salvation: as the rainbow is not a cause why God will not drown the world, but it is a sign that he will not drown it; or as Rahab's scarlet thread she hung out of the window, was not a cause why she was exempted from destruction, but it was a sign of her being exempted; so our building up others in the faith, is not a cause why we are saved, but it is a symbol of our piety, and a presage of our felicity.

And thus I have shown the marks and characters of a godly man. If a person thus described be reputed a fanatic, then Abraham, and Moses, and David, and Paul, were fanatics, which I think none will dare to affirm but atheists.

CAAP. V.

Containing Two Conclusions.

CONCERNING the characteristical signs afore-mentioned, I shall lay down two conclusions.

1. These characters are a Christian's box of evidences; for as an impenitent sinner hath the signs of reprobation upon him, whereby, as by so many spots and tokens, he may know he shall die; so he who can shew these happy signs of a godly man, may see the symptoms of salvation in his soul, and know he is 'passed from death to life;' he is as sure to go to heaven as if he were in heaven already;

such a person is undoubtedly a member of Christ, and if he should perish, then something of Christ might perish.

These blessed characters, may comfort a Christian under all worldly dejections : and diabolical suggestions : Satan tempts a child of God with this, that he is an hypocrite, and hath no title to the land of promise ; a Christian may pull out these evidences and put the devil to prove, that ever any wicked man or hypocrite had such a fair certificate to shew for heaven : Satan may sooner prove himself a liar, than the saint an hypocrite.

2. He who hath one of these characters in truth, hath seminally all, he who hath one link of a chain hath the whole chain.

Obj. But may a child of God say, “ Either I have not all these characters, or they are so weakly wrought in me, that I cannot discern them ? ”

Ans. To satisfy this scruple, you must diligently observe the distinction the scripture gives of Christians ; it casts them into several classes and orders ; some are little children, who are but newly laid to the breast of the gospel ; others are young men, who are grown to more maturity of grace, others are fathers who are ready to take their degree of glory, 1 John ii. 12. 13, 14. Now, you who are not in the first rank or classes, yet you may have the vitals of godliness, as well as those who have arrived at an higher stature in Christ ; the scripture speaks of the cedar, and the bruised reed, the last of which is as true a plant of the heavenly paradise as the other ; so that the weakest ought not to be discouraged ; all have not these characters of godliness written in text letters, if they be but dimly stamped upon their souls, God can read the work of his Spirit there. Though the seal be but weakly set upon the wax, it ratifies the will, and gives a real conveyance of an estate : if there be found but some

good thing towards the Lord, as it was said of Abijah, 1 Kings xiv. 18. God will accept it.

CHAP. VI.

Containing the First Use, exhorting all to become godly.

Use 1. FROM all that hath been said, I would draw three great uses.

First, Such as are still in their natural estate; who never yet did relish any sweetness in the things of God; let me beseech them in the bowels of Christ, that they would labour to get these characters of the godly engraven upon their hearts; tho' godliness be the object of the world's scorn and hatred, as in Tertullian's days the name of a Christian was a crime, yet be not ashamed to espouse godliness; know, that persecuted godliness, is better than prosperous wickedness; what will all the world avail a man without godliness? To be learned and ungodly, is like a devil transformed into an angel of light; to be beautiful and ungodly, is like a fair picture hung in an infected room; to be honourable in the world and ungodly, is like an ape in purple, or like that image which had an head of gold upon feet of clay; it is godliness that ennobles and consecrates the heart, making God and angels fall in love with it.

Labour for the reality of godliness, rest not in the common workings of God's Spirit; think not that it is enough to be intelligent and discursive, a man may discourse of religion to the admiration of others, yet not feel the sweetness of those things in his own soul: the lute gives a melodious sound to others, but is not at all sensible of the sound itself; Judas could make an elegant discourse of Christ, but did not feel virtue from him.

Rest not in having your affections a little stirred;

an hypocrite may have affections of sorrow, as Ahab; affections of desire, as Balaam, these are slight and flashy, and do not amount to real godliness. Oh! labour to be as the king's daughter, 'glorious within, Psal. xlv. 13.

That I may persuade the sons of men to become godly, I shall lay down some forcible motives and arguments, and the Lord make them as nails fastened by his Spirit.

1. Let men seriously weigh their misery, while they remain in a state of ungodliness; which may make them hasten out of this Sodom: the misery of ungodly men appears in nine particulars.

1. They are in a state of death, Eph. ii. 1. 'Dead in trespasses: dead they must needs be who are cut off from Christ, the principle of life; for as the body without the soul is dead, so is the soul without Christ. This spiritual death is visible in the effect; it bereaves men of their senses: sinners have no sense of God in them, Eph. iv. 19. 'Who being without feeling:' all their moral endowments, are but strewing flowers upon a dead corpse; and what is hell, but a sepulchre to bury the dead in.

2. Their offerings are polluted: not only the ploughing, Prov. xxi. 4. but the praying of the wicked is sin, Prov. xv. 8. 'The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.' If the water be foul in the well it cannot be clean in the bucket; if the heart be full of sin, the duties cannot be pure: in what a strait is every ungodly person? if he doth not come to the ordinance, he is a contemner of it, if he doth come, he is a defiler of it.

3. Such as live and die ungodly, have no right to the covenant of grace, Eph. ii. 12. 'At that time ye were without Christ, strangers from the covenants of promise.' And to be without covenant, is to be like one in the old world without an

ark. The covenant is the gospel-charter which is enriched with many glorious privileges, but who may plead the benefit of this covenant? Surely only such whose hearts are inlaid with grace. Read the charter, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 'A new heart will I give you, and I will put my Spirit within you:' then it follows, ver. 28. 'I will be your God.' A person dying in his ungodliness, hath no more to do with the new covenant than a ploughman hath to do with the privileges of a corporation.

God's writing is always before his seal, 2 Cor. iii. 3. 'Ye are declared to be the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.' Here is a golden epistle, the writing is the work of faith, the table it is written in, is the heart, the finger that writes it is the Spirit; now, after the Spirit's writing, follows the Spirit's sealing, Eph. i. 13. 'After ye believed, ye were sealed with the Spirit;' that is, ye were sealed up to an assurance of glory: what have ungodly men to do with the seal of the covenant, who have not the writing?

4. The ungodly are spiritual fools, Psal. lxxv. 4. 'I said unto the fools, deal not foolishly; and to the wicked, lift not up the horn.' If one had a child very beautiful, yet if he were a fool, the parent would take little joy in him. The scripture hath dressed the sinner in a fool's coat: and let me tell you, better be a fool void of reason, than a fool void of grace: this is the devil's fool, Prov. xiv. 9. Is not he a fool who refuseth a rich portion? God offers Christ and salvation, but the sinner refuseth this portion, Psal. lxxxix. 11. 'Israel would none of me.' Is not he a fool who prefers an annuity before an inheritance? Is not he a fool who tends his mortal part, and neglects his angelical part? As if one should paint the wall of his house,

and let the timber rot : is not he a fool who will feed the devil with his soul ? As that emperor who fed his lion with pheasant. Is not he a fool who lays a snare for himself ? Prov. i. 18. Who consults his own shame ? Hab. ii. 10. Who loves death ? Prov. viii. 36.

3. The ungodly are vile persons, Nah. i. 14. ' I will make thy grave, for thou art vile.' Sin makes men base, it blots their name, it taints their blood, Psal. xiv. 3. ' They are altogether become filthy ;' in the Hebrew it is, they are become stinking. Call wicked men ever so bad, you cannot call them out of their name : they are swine, Matt. vii. 6. Vipers, Matt. iii. 7. Devils, John vi. 70. The wicked are the dross and refuse, Psal. cxix. 119. And heaven is too pure to have any dross mingled with it.

6. Their temporal mercies are continued in judgment ; the wicked may have health and estate, yea, more than heart can wish, Psal. lxxiii. 8. ' But their table is a snare,' Psal. lxix. 22. Sinners have their mercies with God's leave, but not with his love : the people of Israel had better been without their quails, than to have had such sour sauce. The ungodly are usurpers, they want a spiritual title to what they possess : their good things are like cloth taken up at the drapers which is not paid for ; death will bring in a sad reckoning at last.

7. Their temporal judgments are not removed in mercy : Pharaoh had ten arrows shot at him (ten plagues) and all those plagues were removed, but his heart remained hard, those plagues were not removed in mercy : it was not a preservation, but a reservation : God reserved him for a signal monument of his justice, when he was drowned in the depth of the sea : God may relieve men's persons, when he doth not remit their sins ; the wicked may have sparing mercy, but not saving mercy.

8. The ungodly while they live are exposed to

the wrath of God, John iii. 36. 'He that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on him.' He who wants grace, is like one who wants a pardon, he is every hour in fear of execution: how can a wicked man rejoice? Over his head the sword of God's justice hangs, and under him hell-fire burns.

9. The ungodly at death must undergo God's fury and indignation, Psal. ix. 17. 'The wicked shall be turned into hell.' I have read of a load-stone in Ethiopia, which hath two corners, with one it draws the iron to it, with the other it puts the iron from it: so, God hath two hands, of mercy and justice, with the one he will draw the godly to heaven, with the other he will thrust the sinner to hell: and, O how dreadful is that place! It is called a fiery lake, Rev. xx. 15. a lake, to denote the plenty of torments in hell; a fiery lake, to shew the fierceness of them: fire is the most torturing element. Strabo in his geography mentions a lake in Galilee, of such a pestiferous nature, that it scaldeth off the skin of whatsoever is cast into it: but alas, that lake is cool, compared with this fiery lake, into which the damned are thrown. To demonstrate this fire terrible, there are two most pernicious qualities in it. 1. It is sulphurous, it is mixed with brimstone, Rev. xxi. 8. Which is unsavoury and suffocating. 2. It is inextinguishable; though the wicked shall be choked in the flames, yet not consumed, Rev. xx. 10. 'And the devil was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.' Behold the deplorable condition of all ungodly ones in the other world, they shall have a life that always dies and a death that always lives: may not this affright men out of their sins, and make them become godly? unless they are resolved to try how hot hell-fire is.

2. What rare persons the godly are, Prov. xii. 26. 'The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.' As the flower of the sun, as the wine of Lebanon, as the sparkling upon Aaron's breastplate, such is the orient splendour of a person embellished with godliness: the excellency of the persons of the godly, appears in seven particulars.

1. They are precious, therefore they are set apart for God, Psalm iv. 3. 'Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.' We set apart things that are precious; the godly are set apart as God's peculiar treasure' Psalm. cxxxv. 4. As his garden of delight, Cant. iv. 12. As his royal diadem, Isa. xlii. 3. The godly are the excellent of the earth, Psalm. xvi. 2. Comparable to fine gold, Lam. iv. 2. Double refined, Zech. xiii. 9. They are the glory of the creation, Isa. xlvi. 18. Origen compares the saints to sapphires and chrystal: God calls them Jewels, Mal. iii. 17. They are so:

1. For their value: Diamonds, saith Pliny, were not known a long time, but among Princes, and were hung upon their diadems: God doth so value his people, that he will give kingdoms for their ransom, Isa. xliii. 5. He laid his best jewel to pawn for them, John iii. 16.

2. They are jewels for their lustre: if one pearl of grace doth shine so bright that it doth delight Christ's heart, Cant. iv. 9. 'Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes:' that is, one of thy graces: then how illustrious are all the graces met in a constellation?

2. The godly are honourable, Isa. xliii. 4. 'Thou hast been honourable; the godly are a crown of glory in the hand of God, Isa. xxxii. 29. They are plants of renown, Ezek. xvi. 14. They are not only vessels of mercy, but vessels of honour, 2 Tim. ii. 11. Aristotle calls honour, the chief good thing. The godly are near a-kin to the blessed

Trinity; they have the tutelage and guardianship of angels: they have 'God's name written upon them,' Rev. iii. 12. and 'the Holy Ghost dwelling in them,' 2 Tim. i. 14.

The godly are a sacred priesthood: the priesthood under the law was honourable; the king's daughter was wife to Jehoiada the priest, 2 Chron. xxii. 11. It was a custom among the Egyptians, to have their kings chosen out of their priests. The saints are a divine priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, 1 Pet. ii. 9. They are co-heirs with Christ, Rom. viii. 17. They are kings, Rev. i. 6. Fovarinus relates of an ancient king, who invited a company of poor Christians, and made them a great feast, and being asked why he shewed so much respect to persons of such mean birth and extract, he told them, These I must honour as the children of the most High God, they will be kings and princes with me in another world. The godly are in some sense higher than the angels: the angels are Christ's friends, these are his spouse; the angels are called Morning Stars, Job xxxviii. 7. but the saints are clothed with the Sun of Righteousness, Rev. xii. 1. All men, saith Chrysostom, are ambitious of honour; behold then, the honour of the godly! Prov. vii. 8. 'Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom; exalt her, and she shall promote thee, she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.' The trophies of the saints' renown will be erected in another world.

3. The godly are beloved of God, Psal. xlvii. 4. 'The excellency of Jacob whom he loved:' an holy heart is the garden where God plants the flower of his love: God's love to his people is an ancient love, it bears date from eternity, Eph. i. 4. he loves them with a choice, distinguishing love, they are the 'dearly beloved of his soul,' Jer. xii. 7. The men of the world have bounty dropping from God's

fingers, but the godly have love dropping from God's heart: he gives the one a golden cup, the other a golden kiss; he loves the godly as he loves Christ, John xvii. 26. it is the same love for kind, though not for degree: here the saints do but sip of God's love, in heaven they shall drink of rivers of pleasure, Psalm xxxvi. 8. And this love of God is permanent; death may take away their life from them, but not God's love from them, Jer. xxxi. 3. 'I have loved thee with a love of perpetuity.'

4. The godly are prudent persons, they have 1. Good insight. And 2. Good foresight.

1. They have good insight, 1 Cor. ii. 16. 'He that is spiritual judgeth all things:' the godly have insight into 1. Persons. And 2. Things.

1. They have insight into persons: they have the anointing of God; and by a spirit of discerning, they can see some difference between the precious and the vile, Jer. xv. 19. God's people are not censorious, but they are judicious; they can see a wanton heart through a naked breast and a spotted face; they can see a revengeful spirit through a bitter tongue; they can guess at the tree by the fruit, Matt. xii. 33. They can see the plague tokens of sin appear in the wicked, which makes them remove from the tents of those sinners, Num. xvi. 26.

2. The godly have insight into things mysterious.

1. They can see much of the mystery of their own hearts: take the greatest politician, who understands the mystery of state, yet he doth not understand the mystery of his own heart; you shall hear him swear his heart is good: but a child of God sees much heart-corruption, 1 Kings viii. 38. tho' some flowers of grace grow there, yet he sees how fast the weeds of sin grow, therefore is continually weeding his heart by repentance and mortification.

2. The godly can discern the mystery of the times, 1 Chron. xii. 32. 'The children of Issachar

were men that had understanding of the time.' The godly can see when an age runs dregs, when God's name is dishonoured, his messengers despised, his gospel eclipsed; the people of God labour to keep their garments pure, Rev. xvi. 15. their care is, that the times may not be the worse for them, nor they the worse for the times.

3. The godly understand the mystery of living by faith, Heb. x. 38. 'The just shall live by faith,' they can trust God, where they cannot trace him; they can fetch comfort out of a promise, as Moses did water out of the rock: Hab. iii. 17. 'Though the fig-tree doth not blossom, yet I will rejoice in the Lord.'

2. The godly have good foresight: 1. They foresee the evil of a temptation, 2 Cor. ii. 11. 'We are not ignorant of his devices.' The wicked swallow temptations like pills, and when it is too late, feel those pills grip their conscience: but the godly foresee a temptation, and will not come near; they see a snake under the green grass: they know Satan's kindness is craftiness; he doth as Jephtha's daughter, he brings forth the timbrel, and danceth before men with a temptation, and then brings them very low, Judges xi. 35.

2. The godly foresee temporal danger, Prov. xxii. 3. 'A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself.' The people of God see when the cloud of wrath is ready to drop upon a nation, and they get into their chambers, Isa. xxvi. 20. the attributes and promises of God; and into the cliffs of the rock, the bleeding wounds of Christ, and hide themselves; well therefore may they be baptized with the name of wise virgins.

5. The godly are the bulwark of a nation, 2 Kings ii. 12. 'O my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.' The godly are the pillars to keep a city and nation from falling; they stave off

judgment from a land: It was said of old, so long as Hector lived, Troy could not be demolished: God would do nothing to Sodom till Lot was gone out of it, Gen. xix. 22. Golden Christians are brazen walls. The Lord would soon break up house in the world, were it not for the sake of a few religious ones: would God, think we, preserve the world only for drunkards and swearers? he would soon sink the ship of church and state, but that some of his elect are in it: yet such is the indiscretion of some men as to injure the saints, and to count them burdens, which are the chief blessings; Isa. xix. 24.

6. The godly are of a brave heroic spirit, Num. xiv. 24. 'My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit.' An excellent spirit was found in Daniel, chap. v. 12. The godly hate that which is base and sordid, they will not enrich their purses by enslaving their consciences; they are noble and courageous in God's cause, Prov. xxviii. 1. 'The righteous are bold as a lion.' The saints live suitably to their high birth, they breathe after God's love, they aspire after glory, they set their feet where worldly men set their heart; they display the banner of the gospel lifting up Christ's name and interest in the world.

7. The godly are happy persons: king Balak sent to curse the people of God, but the Lord would not suffer it, Numb. xxii. 12. 'God said unto Balaam, thou shalt not curse the people, for they are blessed:' and Moses afterwards records it as a thing memorable, that that intended curse of the king, God did convert into a blessing, Deut. xxiii. 5. 'The Lord thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee.' They must needs be happy who are always on the strongest side, Psalm. cxviii. 6. 'The Lord is on my side:' they are happy who have all conditions sanctified to them, who are crowned

with peace while they live, Psalm cxix. 165. and with glory when they die, Psalm lxxiii. 24. And may not this tempt all to become godly? Deut. xxxiii. 29. 'Happy art thou, O Israel, a people saved by the Lord.'

3. To endeavour after godliness, is most rational.

1. It is the highest act of reason, for a man to become another man: if while he remains in nature's soil, he is poisoned with sin, no more actually fit for communion with God, than a toad is fit to be made an angel, then it is very consonant to reason, that he should endeavour after a change.

2. It is rational, because this change is for the better, Eph. v. 8. 'Now are ye light in the Lord.' Will not any man be willing to exchange a dark prison for a king's palace? Will he not change away his brass for gold? Thou that becomest godly changest for the better: thou changest thy pride for humility, thy uncleanness for holiness: thou changest a lust that will damn thee for a Christ that will save thee; were not men besotted, had not their fall beat off their head-piece, they would see it were the most rational thing in the world to become godly.

4. The excellency of godliness.

The excellency of godliness appears several ways.

1. Godliness is our spiritual beauty, Psalm cx. 3. 'The beauties of holiness: godliness is to the soul, as the light to the world, to illustrate and adorn it. It is not greatness sets us off in God's eye, but goodness: what is the beauty of the angels but their sanctity? Godliness is the curious embroidery and workmanship of the Holy Ghost: a soul furnished with godliness is damasked with beauty, it is enamelled with purity; this is the 'clothing of wrought gold,' which makes the king of heaven fall in love with us: were there not an excellency in holiness, the hypocrite would never go about to paint it: godli-

ness sheds a glory and lustre upon the saints: what are the graces, but the golden feathers in which Christ's dove shines? Psalm lxxviii. 13.

2. Godliness is our defence; grace is called the armour of light, Rom. xiii. 12. it is light for beauty, and armour for defence. A Christian hath armour of God's making which cannot be shot through; he hath the shield of faith, the helmet of hope, the breast-plate of righteousness; this is armour of proof, which defends against the assaults of temptation, and the terror of hell.

3. Godliness breeds solid peace, Psal. cxix. 165. 'Great peace have they that love thy law.' Godliness composeth the heart, making it sedate and calm, like the upper region, where there are no winds and tempests. How can that heart be unquiet where the Prince of peace dwells, Col. i. 27. 'Christ in you.' An holy heart may be compared to the doors of Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi. 32. which were made of 'olive-tree, carved with open flowers.' There is the olive of peace, and the open flowers of joy in that heart: godliness doth not destroy a Christian's mirth, but refine it; his rose is without prickles, his wine without froth: he must needs be full of joy and peace who is a favourite of heaven; he may truly sing a *requiem* to his soul, and say, 'Soul take thy ease,' Luke xii. 19. King Ptolemy asked one how he might be in rest when he dreamed? He replied, "Let piety be the scope of all thy actions:" if one should ask me how he should be in rest when he is awake? I would return the like answer, Let his soul be inlaid with godliness.

4. Godliness is the best trade we can drive, it brings profit; wicked men say, 'it is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it?' Mal. iii. 14. To be sure there is no profit in sin, Prov. x. 2. 'Treasures of wickedness profit nothing.' But, 'godliness is profitable,' 1 Tim. iv. 8. It is like digging

in a gold mine, where there is gain as well as toil: godliness makes God himself over to us as a portion, Psal. xvi. 1. The Lord is the portion of my inheritance: If God be our portion, all our estate lies in jewels; where God gives himself, he gives every thing else; he who hath the manor hath all the royalties belonging to it: God is a portion that can neither be spent nor lost, Psal. lxxiii. 26. Thus we see godliness is a thriving trade.

And as godliness brings profit with it, so it is profitable for all things, 1 Tim. iv. 8. What is so besides godliness? Food will not give a man wisdom, gold will not give him health, honour will not give him beauty; but godliness is useful for all things, it fenceth off all troubles, it supplies all wants, it makes soul and body completely happy.

5. Godliness is an enduring substance, it knows no fall of the leaf. All worldly delights have a death's-head upon them; they are but shadows, and they are flying: earthly comforts are like Paul's friends who brought him to the ship, and there left him, Acts xx. 38. So, these will bring a man to his grave, and then take their farewell: but godliness is a possession we cannot be robbed of, it runs parallel with eternity; force cannot weaken it, age cannot wither it; it out-braves sufferings, it out-lives death, Prov. x. 2. Death may pluck the stalk of the body, but the flower of grace is not hurt.

6. Godliness is so excellent, that the worst men would have it when they are going hence: though at present godliness be despised, and under a cloud, yet at death all would be godly. A philosopher asking a young man, Whether he would be rich Croesus, or virtuous Socrates? answered, He would live with Croesus, and die with Socrates: So, men would live with the wicked in pleasure, but die with the godly, Numb. xxiii. 10. 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his.' If then

godliness be so desirable at death, why should we not pursue after it now? godliness is as needful now, and would be more feasible.

5. There are but few godly: they are as the gleanings after vintage; most receive the 'mark of the beast,' Rev. xiii. 17. The devil keeps open house for all comers, and he is never without guests: this may prevail with us to be godly; if the number of the saints be so small, how should we labour to be found among these pearls? Rom. ix. 27. 'But a remnant shall be saved:' it is better going to heaven with a few, than to hell in the crowd.

6. Consider how vain and contemptible other things are, about which persons void of godliness busy themselves: men are taken up about the things of this life, and, 'What profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?' Eccl. v. 16. can the wind fill? what is gold but dust? Amos iii. 8. which will sooner choke than satisfy: pull off the mask of the most beautiful thing under the sun, and look what is within, there is care and vexation; and the greatest care is yet behind, and that is account: the things of the world are but as a bubble in the water, or a meteor in the air.

But godliness hath a real worth in it; if you speak of true honour, it is to be born of God: if of true valour, it is 'to fight the good fight of faith:' if of true delight, it is to have 'joy in the Holy Ghost.' Oh then espouse godliness! Here is reality to be had; of other things we may say as Zech. x. 2. 'They comfort in vain.'

CHAP. VII.

Prescribing some Helps to Godliness.

Quest. **B**UT what shall we do that we may be godly?

Ans. I shall briefly lay down some rules or helps to godliness.

1. Be diligent in the use of all means that may promote godliness, Luke xiii. 24. 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate:' what is purpose without pursuit? when you have made your estimate of godliness, prosecute those mediums which are most expedient for obtaining it.

2. If you would be godly, take heed of the world: it is hard for a clod of dust to become a star, 1 John ii. 15. 'Love not the world:' many would be godly, but the honours and profits of the world divert them; where the world fills both head and heart, there is no room for Christ; he whose mind is rooted in the earth, is likely enough to deride godliness; when our Saviour was preaching against sin, the Pharisees, who were covetous, derided him, Luke xvi. 14. 'The world eats out the heart of godliness, as the ivy eats out the heart of the oak; the world kills with her silver darts.'

3. Inure yourselves to holy thoughts: serious meditation represents every thing in its native colour; it shews an evil in sin, and a lustre in grace. By holy thoughts the head grows clearer, and the heart better, Psal. cxix. 59. 'I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.' Did men step aside a little out of the noise and hurry of business, and spend but half an hour every day in thinking about their souls and eternity, it would produce a wonderful alteration in them, and tend very much to a real and blessed conversion.

4. Watch your hearts: it was Christ's watch-word to his disciples, Matt. xxiv. 42. 'Watch therefore;' the heart will precipitate us to sin before we are aware; a subtle heart needs a watchful eye; watch your thoughts, your affections; the heart hath a thousand doors to run out at: O keep close centinel in your souls! stand continually upon your watch-tower, Hab. ii. 1. When you have prayed against sin, watch against temptation; most wickedness in the world is committed for want of watchfulness; watchfulness maintains goodness, it is the selfedge which keeps religion from raveling out.

5. Make conscience of spending your time, Eph. v. 16. 'Redeeming the time:' many persons fool away their time; some in idle visits, others in recreations and pleasures, which secretly bewitch the heart, and take it off from better things: what are our golden hours for, but to mind our souls? Time misimproved, is not time lived, but time lost. Time is a precious commodity; a piece of wax in itself is not much worth, but as it is affixed to the label of a will, and conveys an estate, so it is of great value: thus time, simply in itself, is not so considerable, but as salvation is to be wrought out in it, and a conveyance of heaven depends upon the well improving of it; so it is of infinite concernment.

6. Think of your short stay in the world, 1 Chron. xxix. 15. 'Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.' There is but a span between the cradle and the grave: Solomon saith, 'There is a time to be born, and a time to die,' Eccl. iii. 2. but mentions no time of living, as if that were so short it were not worth naming; and time, when it is once gone, cannot be recalled; the scripture compares time to a flying eagle, Job ix. 26. yet, herein time differs from the eagle, the eagle flies forward, and then back again, but time

hath wings only to flee forward, it never returns back.

The serious thoughts of our short abode here would be a great means to promote godliness; what if death should come before we are ready? what if our life should breathe out, before God's Spirit hath breathed in? He that considers how fitting and winged his life is, will hasten his repentance; when God is about to make a short work, he will not make a long work.

7. Possess yourself with this maxim, that godliness is the end of your creation; God never sent men into the world, only to eat and drink and put on fine clothes, but that they 'might serve him in righteousness and holiness,' Luke i. 75. God made the world only as an attiring-room to dress our souls in; he sent us hither upon the grand errand of godliness: should nothing but the body, the brutish part, be looked after? This were basely to degenerate, yea, to invert and frustrate the very end of our being.

8. Be often among the godly: they are the 'salt of the earth,' and will help to season you. Their counsels may direct, their prayers may quicken: such holy sparks may be thrown into your breasts, as may kindle devotion in you: it is good to be among the saints to learn the trade of godliness, Prov. xiii. 20. 'He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.'

CHAP. VIII.

Exhorting such as have made a profession of godliness, to persevere.

Use 2. **M**Y next use is to exhort those who wear the mantle, and in the judgment of others are looked upon as godly, that they would

persevere, Heb. x. 28. 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith.' This is a seasonable exhortation in these times, when the devil's factors are abroad, whose whole work is to unsettle people, and make them fall off from that former strictness in religion which they have professed. It is much to be lamented to see Christians,

1. **Wavering in religion:** how many do we see **unresolved and unsteady;** like Reuben, 'unstable as water,' Gen. xlix. 4. These the apostle fitly compares to 'waves of the sea, and wandering stars,' Jude 13. They are not fixed in the principles of religion. Beza writes of one Bolsechus, his religion changed like the moon: Such were the Ebionites, who kept the Jewish sabbath, and the Christian: many professors are like the river Euripus, ebbing and flowing in matters of religion; they are like reeds, bending every way, either to the mass, or the Koran: they are like the planet mercury, which doth vary, and is seldom constant in its motion. When men think of heaven, and the recompense of reward, then they will be godly; but when they think of persecution, then they are like the Jews, who deserted Christ, and 'walked no more with him,' John vi. 66. Did men's faces alter as fast as their opinions, we should not know them: to be thus vacillant and wavering in religion, argues lightness: feathers are blown any way, so are feathery Christians.

2. It is to be lamented to see men fall from that godliness which once they seemed to have: they are turned to worldliness and wantonness; the very mantle of their profession is fallen off: and indeed if they were not fixed stars, it is no wonder to see them falling stars. This spiritual epilepsy, or falling-sickness, was never more rife; this is a dreadful sin, for men to fall from that godliness they seemed once to have. Chrysostom saith, Apostates are worse than

they who are openly flagitious, they bring an evil report upon godliness. The apostate, saith Tertulian, seems to put God and satan in the balance, and having weighed both their services, prefers the devil's service, and proclaims him to be the best master, in which respect the apostate is said to put 'Christ to open shame,' Heb. vi. 6.

This will be bitter in the end, Heb. x. 38. What a worm did Spira feel in his conscience? How did Stephen Gardiner cry out in horror of mind upon his death-bed, that he had denied his Master with Peter, but he had not repented with Peter.

That we may be steadfast in godliness, and persevere, let us do two things.

1. Let us take heed of those things which will make us by degrees fall off from our profession.

2. Let us beware of covetousness, 2 Tim. iii. 2. 'Men shall be covetous.' ver. 5. 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power.' One of Christ's own apostles was caught with a silver bait: covetousness will make a man betray a good cause, and make shipwreck of a good conscience. I have read of some in the time of the emperor Valens, who denied the Christian faith, to prevent the confiscation of their goods.

3. Beware of unbelief, Heb. iii. 12. 'Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.' No evil like an evil heart, no evil heart like an unbelieving heart; why so? It makes men depart from the blessed God; he that believes not God's mercy will not dread his justice; infidelity is the nurse of apostasy; therefore unbelieving and unstable go together, Psal. lxxviii. 22. 'They believed not in God,' ver. 41. 'They turned back and tempted God.'

4. Take heed of cowardliness: he must needs be evil who is afraid to be good, Prov. xxix. 25. 'The

fear of man bringeth a snare.' They who fear danger more than sin, to avoid danger will commit sin. Origen out of a spirit of fear, offered incense to the idol. Aristotle saith, 'The reason why the camelion turns into so many colours, is through excessive fear: fear will make men change their religion, as often as the camelion doth her colour. Christian, thou who hast made a profession of godliness so long, and others have noted thee for a saint in their calendar, why dost thou fear, and begin to shrink back? The cause is good which thou art embarked in; thou fightest against sin; thou hast a good captain which marcheth before thee; Christ 'the Captain of thy salvation,' Heb. ii. 10. What is it thou fearest? Is it loss of liberty? What is liberty worth when conscience is in bonds? Better lose thy liberty and keep thy peace, than lose thy peace and keep thy liberty? Is it loss of estate? dost thou say as Amaziah, 2 Chron. xxv. 9. 'What shall we do for the hundred talents?' I would answer with the prophet, 'the Lord can give thee much more than this:' he hath promised thee in this life an hundred-fold, and if that be not enough he will give thee life everlasting, Mat. xix. 29.

2. If you would hold fast the profession of godliness, use all means for perseverance. 1. Labour for a real work of grace in your soul; grace is the best fortification, Heb. xi. 9. 'It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace.'

Quest. What is this real work of grace?

Ans. It consists in two things.

1. It lies in an heart humbling work: the thorn of sin pricked Paul's conscience, Rom. vii. 9. 'Sin revived, and I died.' Though some are less humbled than others, as some bring forth children with less pangs, yet all have pangs.

2. Grace lies in an heart-changing work, 1 Cor. vi. 11. 'But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified;'

a man is so changed, as if another soul did live in the same body; if ever you would hold out in the ways of God, get this vital principle of grace; why do men change their religion, but because their hearts were never changed? they do not fall away from grace, but for want of grace.

2. If you would hold on in godliness, be deliberate and judicious, weigh things well in the balance, Luke xiv. 28. 'Which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost?' think with yourselves, what it will cost you to be godly: you must expect the hatred of the world, John xv. 19. the wicked hate the godly for their piety, it is strange they should do so; do we hate a flower because it is sweet? the godly are hated for the perfume of their graces; is a virgin hated for her beauty? the wicked hate the godly for the beauty of holiness which shines in them: and secret hatred will break forth into open violence, 2 Tim. iii. 12. Christians must count the cost before they build; why are people so hasty in laying down religion, but because they were so hasty in taking it up?

3. If you would hold fast your profession, get a clear distinct knowledge of God; know the love of the Father, the merit of the Son, the efficacy of the Holy Ghost. Such as know not God aright, will by degrees renounce their profession: the Samaritans sometimes sided with the Jews, when they were in favour, afterwards they disclaimed all kindred with the Jews, when they were persecuted by Antiochus; and no wonder they did shuffle so in their religion, if you consider what Christ saith of the Samaritans, John iv. 23. 'Ye worship ye know not what;' they were enveloped with ignorance; blind men are apt to fall, so are they who are blinded in their minds.

4. If you would persist in godliness, enter upon

it purely, out of choice, Psal. cxix. 30. 'I have chosen the way of truth:' espouse godliness for its own worth; he that would persevere, must rather chuse godliness with reproach, than sin with all its worldly pomp; he who takes up religion for fear, will lay it down again for fear; he who embraceth godliness for gain, will desert it when the jewels of preferment are pulled off; be not godly out of a worldly design, but a religious choice.

5. If you would persevere in godliness, labour after integrity; this will be a golden pillar to support you; a tree that is hollow must needs be blown down; the hypocrite sets up in the trade of religion, but he will soon break, Psal. lxxviii. 37. 'Their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast:' Judas was first a sly hypocrite, and then a traitor; if a piece of copper be gilded, the gilding will wash off, nothing will hold on but sincerity, Psal. xxv. 21. 'Let integrity preserve me:' How many storms was Job in? not only Satan, but God himself set against him, Job vii. 20. which was enough to have made him desist from being godly; yet Job stood fast, because he stood upright, Job xxvii. 6. 'My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me, so long as I live.' Those colours hold best which are laid in oil; if we would have our profession hold its colour, it must be laid in the oil of sincerity.

6. If you would hold out in godliness, hold up the life and fervour of duty, Rom. xii. 11. 'Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord:' We put coals to the fire to keep it from going out; when Christians grow into a dull formality, they begin to be dispirited, and by degrees abate in their godliness; none so fit to make an apostate as a lukewarm professor.

7. If you would persevere in godliness, be much in the exercise of self-denial, Matt. xi. 24. 'Let him deny himself,' self-ease, self-ends; whatever comes in

competition with, or stands in opposition to Christ's glory and interest, must be denied; self is the great snare; self-love undermines the power of godliness. The young man in the gospel might have followed Christ, but that something of self hindered, Matt. xix. 20, 22. Self-love is self-hatred; he will never get to heaven that cannot get beyond himself.

8. If you would hold on in godliness, preserve an holy jealousy over your hearts, Rom. xi. 20. 'Be not high-minded, but fear;' he that hath gun-powder in his house, fears lest it should catch fire; sin in the heart is like gun-powder, it may make us fear, lest a sparkle of temptation falling upon us, should blow us up. There are two things may make us always jealous of our hearts; the deceits of our hearts, and the lusts of our hearts: when Peter was afraid he should sink, and cried to Christ, 'Lord, save me,' then Christ took him by the hand and helped him, Matt. xiv. 31. but when Peter grew confident, and thought he could stand alone, then Christ suffered him to fall. Oh, let us be suspicious of ourselves, and in an holy sense, 'clothe ourselves with trembling,' Ezek. xxvi. 16.

9. If you would continue your progress in godliness, labour for assurance, 2 Pet. i. 10. 'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure;' he who is sure God is his God, is like a castle built upon a rock, all the powers of hell cannot shake him: how can he be constant in religion, who is at a loss about his spiritual estate, and knows not whether he hath grace or no? It will be a difficult matter for him to die for Christ, who doth not know that Christ died for him; assurance establisheth a Christian in shaking times; he is the likeliest to bear witness to the truth, who hath the Spirit of God bearing witness to his heart, Rom. viii. 16. Oh give diligence! be much in prayer, reading, holy

conference; these are the oil, without which the lamp of assurance will not shine.

10. If you would hold out in godliness, lay hold of God's strength: God is called the strength of Israel, 1 Sam. xv. 29. It is in his strength we stand, more than in our own; the child is safest in the nurse's hands; it is not our holding God, but his holding us preserves us; a little pinnacle tied fast to a rock is safe, so are we when we are tied to the Rock of ages, Eph. vi. 10.

CHAP. IX.

Motives to Persevere in Godliness.

THAT I may excite Christians to persevere in the profession of godliness, I shall propose these four considerations.

1. It is the glory and crown of a Christian to be gray-headed in godliness, Acts xxi. 16. 'Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple:' what an honour is it to see a Christian's garments red with blood, yet his conscience pure white, and his graces green and flourishing?

2. How do sinners persevere in their sins? they are settled on their lees, Zeph. i. 12, the judgments of God will not deter or remove them; they say to their sin, as Ruth to Naomi, Ruth i. 16. 'Where thou goest I will go, the Lord do so to me, and more, if ought but death part thee and me:' so nothing shall part between men and their sins; Oh! what a shame is it, that the wicked should be fixed in evil, and we unfixed in good? that they should be more constant in the devil's service than we are in Christ's.

3. Our perseverance in godliness may be a means to confirm others; Cyprian's hearers followed him to the place of his suffering, and seeing his steadfast-

ness in the faith, cried out, 'Let us also die with our holy pastor.' Phil. i. 14. 'Many of the brethren, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word.' Paul's zeal and constancy did animate the beholders; his prison-chain made converts in Nero's court; and two of those converts were afterwards martyrs, as history relates.

4. We shall lose nothing by our perseverance in godliness: There are eight glorious promises which God hath entailed upon the persevering saints.

The first is, Rev. ii. 10. 'Be thou constant to the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' Christian, thou mayest lose the breath of life, but not the crown of life.

The second promise is, Rev. ii. 7. 'To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life.' This tree of life is the Lord Jesus: this tree infuseth life and prevents death; in the day we eat of this tree, our eyes shall indeed be opened to see God.

The third promise is, Rev. ii. 17. 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.' This promise consists of three branches. 1. I will give to eat of the hidden manna; this is mysterious, it signifies the love of God, which is manna for its sweetness, and hidden for its rarity. 2. I will give him a white stone; this is absolution, it may be called a precious stone, saith Hierom. 3. And in the stone a new name; that is adoption; he shall be reputed an heir of heaven, and no man can know it, saving he who hath the privy seal of the Spirit to assure him of it.

The fourth promise is, Rev. iii. 5. 'He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Fa-

ther, and before his angels.' The persevering saint shall be clothed in white; this is an emblem of joy, Eccl. ix. 8. he shall put off his mourning, and be clothed in the white robe of glory; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life: God will blot a believer's sins out, but he will not blot his name out: the book of God's decree hath no errata in it. But I will confess his name; he who hath owned Christ on earth, and worn his colours, when it was death to wear them, Christ will not be ashamed of him, but will confess his name before his Father, and the holy angels. Oh, what a comfort and honour will it be to have a good look from Christ at the last day; nay, to have Christ own us by name, and say, 'These were they who stood up for my truth, and kept their garments pure in a defiling age; 'These shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.'

The fifth promise is, Rev. iii. 12. 'Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God.' Here are many excellent things couched in this promise; I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God: the hypocrite is a reed shaken with the wind, but the conquering saint shall be a glorious pillar; a pillar for strength, and a pillar in the temple for sanctity; and he shall go no more out: I understand this of a glorified state, he shall go no more out: that is, after he hath overcome, he shall go no more out to the wars; he shall never have sin or temptation more to conflict with, no more noise of drum or cannon shall be heard; but the believer having won the field, he shall now stay at home, and divide the spoil. And I will write upon him the name of my God; that is, he shall be openly acknowledged for my child; as the Son bears his father's name. How honourable must

that saint be who hath God's name written upon him! And I will write upon him the name of the city of my God; that is, he shall be enrolled as a denizen or citizen of the new Jerusalem above, he shall be made free of the angelical society.

The sixth promise is, Rev. ii. 26. 'He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.' This may have a double mystery, either it may be understood of the saints dwelling upon earth, they shall have power over the nations; their zeal and patience shall overpower the adversaries of truth, Acts vi. 10. or principally, it may be understood of the saints triumphing in heaven, they shall have power over the nations; they shall share with Christ in some of his power: they shall join with him in judging the world at the last day. 1 Cor. vi. 2. 'Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?'

The seventh promise is, Rev. iii. 21. 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne.' 1. Here is the saints dignity, they shall sit upon the throne. 2. Their safety, they shall sit with Christ; Christ holds them fast, and none shall pluck them out of his throne; the saints may be turned out of their houses, but they cannot be turned out of Christ's throne; men may as well pluck a star out of the sky, as a saint out of the throne.

The eighth promise is, Rev. ii. 18. 'I will give him the morning-star: Though the saints may be sullied with reproach in this life, they may be termed factious and disloyal; Paul himself suffered trouble, in the opinion of some, as an evil-doer, 2 Tim. ii. 9. yet God will bring forth the saint's righteousness as the light, and they shall shine as the morning-star, which is brighter than the rest, I will give him the morning-star, Rev. xxii. 16. This morning-star is meant of Christ, as if Christ had said, I will give the persevering saint some of my beauty, I

will put some of my splendid rays upon him, he shall have the next degree of glory to me, as the morning-star is next the sun.

○ what soul-ravishing promises are here! who would not persevere in godliness? He that is not wrought upon by these promises, is either a stone or a brute.

CHAP. X.

The Third Use referring to the Godly.

Use 3. **L**ET me in the next place direct myself to those who have a real work of godliness upon their hearts; and I would speak to them by way of,

1. Caution. 2. Counsel. 3. Comfort.

1. By way of caution, that they do not blur these characters of grace in their souls; tho' God's children cannot quite deface their graces, yet they may disfigure them; too much carnal liberty may weaken their evidences, and so dim their lustre that they cannot be read. These characters of the godly are precious things, the gold and crystal cannot be compared with them. O keep them fair written in your hearts! and they will be so many living comforts in a dying hour; it will not affright a Christian to have all the signs of death in his body, when he can see all the signs of grace in his soul; he will say as Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.'

2. By way of counsel, you who are enriched with the treasure of godliness, bless God for it: this flower doth not grow in nature's garden: when you had listed yourselves under the devil, and taken pay on his side, fighting against your own happiness, that then God should come with converting grace, and put forth a loving and gentle violence, causing you

to espouse his quarrel against Satan; when you had lain many years soaking in wickedness, as if you had been par-boiled for hell, that then God should lay you a steeping in Christ's blood, and breathe holiness into your heart, O what cause have you to write yourselves eternal debtors to free grace. He denies God to be the author of his grace, who doth not give him the praise of it; O acknowledge the love of God; admire distinguishing mercy, set the crown of your praise upon the head of free grace. If we are to be thankful for the fruits of the earth, much more for the fruits of the Spirit; it is well there is an eternity coming, when the saints shall triumph in God, and make his praise glorious.

3. Let me speak to the godly by way of comfort; you that have but the least dram of godliness in sincerity, let me give you two rich consolations.

1. That Jesus Christ will not discourage the weakest grace, but will cherish and preserve it to eternity: grace which is but newly budded, shall by the beams of the Sun of Righteousness be concocted and ripened into glory: this I shall speak more fully to in the next.

CHAP. XI.

Shewing that the least degree of godliness shall be preserved.

MAT. xiii. 20. *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.*

THIS text is spoken prophetically of Christ; he will not insult over the infirmities of his people, he will not crush grace in the infancy; 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax

shall he not quench,' Isa. xlii. 3. I begin with the first, the bruised reed.

Quest. What is to be understood here by a reed?

Ans. It is not to be taken literally, but mystically: It is a rational reed; the spiritual part of man, the soul, which may well be compared to a reed, because it is subject to imbecility, and shaking in this life, till it grow up unto a firm cedar in heaven.

Quest. What is meant by a bruised reed?

Ans. It is a soul humbled and bruised in the sense of sin, it weeps, but doth not despair; it is tossed upon the waves of fear, yet not without the anchor of hope.

Quest. What is meant by Christ's not breaking this reed?

Ans. The sense is, Christ will not discourage any mournful spirit, who is in the pangs of the new birth: if the bruise of sin be felt, it shall not be mortal: 'A bruised reed shall he not break.' In the words there is a *meiosis*, he will not break, that is, he will bind up the bruised reed, he will comfort it.

The result of the whole is, to show Christ's compassion to a poor dejected sinner, that smites upon his breast, and dares hardly lift up his eye for mercy, the bowels of the Lord Jesus yearn towards him, this bruised reed he will not break.

In the text there are two parts: 1. A supposition, a soul penitentially bruised. 2. A proposition, it shall not be broken.

Doct. The bruised soul shall not be broken, Psal. cxlvii. 3. 'He bindeth up their wounds.' For this end Christ received both his mission and unction, that he might bind up the bruised soul, Isa. lxi. 1. 'The Lord hath anointed me to bind up the broken-hearted,' But why will not Christ break a bruised reed?

1. Out of the sweetness of his nature, Jam. v. 11.

'The Lord is very pitiful,' he begets bowels in other creatures, therefore is called, 'The Father of mercies,' 2 Cor. i. 3, and surely he himself is not without bowels: when a poor soul is afflicted in spirit, God will not exercise harshness towards it, lest he should be thought to put off his own tender disposition. Hence it is, the Lord hath been ever solicitous for his bruised ones: as the mother is most careful of her children that are weak and sickly, Isa. xl. 11, 'He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.' Such as have been spiritually bruised, who, like lambs, are weakly and tender, Christ will carry them in the arms of free grace.

2. Jesus Christ will not break the bruised reed, because a contrite heart is his sacrifice, Psal. li. 17. A bruised spirit sends forth tears, which are as precious wine, Psal. lvi. 8. A bruised soul is big with holy desires; yea, is sick of love; therefore if a bruised reed hath such virtue in it, Christ will not break it; no spices when they are bruised are so fragrant to us, as a contrite spirit is to God.

3. The bruised reed shall not be broken, because it doth so nearly resemble Christ; Jesus Christ was once bruised on the cross, Isa. liii. 10, 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him;' his hands and his feet were bruised with the nails, his side was bruised with the spear: a bruised reed resembles a bruised Saviour; nay, a bruised reed is a member of Christ, which, though it be weak, Christ will not cut off, but cherish so much the more.

1. Will not Christ break the bruised reed? This tacitly implies he will break unbruised reeds; such as were never touched with trouble of spirit, but live and die in impenitency, these are hard reeds, or rather rocks; Christ will not break a bruised reed, but he will break an hard reed: many know not what it is to be bruised reeds; they are bruised out-

wardly by affliction, but they are not bruised for sin; they never knew what the pangs of the new birth meant. You shall hear some thank God they were always quiet, they never had any anxiety of spirit; these bless God for the greatest curse: such as are not bruised penitentially, shall be broken judicially; they whose hearts would not break for sin, shall break with despair; in hell there is nothing to be seen but an heap of stones, and an hammer; an heap of stones, that is hard hearts, and an hammer, that is God's power and justice, breaking them in pieces.

2. Will not Christ break a bruised reed? See then the gracious disposition of Jesus Christ, he is full of clemency and sympathy; though he may bruise the soul for sin, he will not break it: the surgeon may lance the body, and make it bleed, but he will bind up the wound; as Christ hath beams of majesty, so bowels of mercy: Christ gives the lion in his scutcheon, and the lamb: the lion in respect of his fierceness to the wicked, Psal. 1. 22. and the lamb in respect of his mildness to his people; his name is Jesus, a Saviour, and his office is an healer, Mal. iv. 2. Christ made a plaster of his own blood to heal a broken heart: Christ is the quintessence of love. One saith, if the sweetness of all flowers were in one flower, how sweet would that flower be; How full of mercy is Christ, in whom all mercy meets? Christ hath a skilful hand, and a tender heart: he will not break a bruised reed.

Some are so full of ostracism and cruelty, as to add affliction to affliction, which is to lay more weight on a dying man; but our Lord Jesus is a 'compassionate high-priest,' Heb. ii. 17. 'He is touched with the feeling of our infirmity;' every bruise of the soul goes to his heart; none refuse Christ but such as do not know him: he is nothing

but love incarnated: he himself was bruised, to heal them that are bruised.

3. See then what encouragement here is for faith! Had Christ said, he would break the bruised reed, then indeed there were ground for despair; but when Christ saith, he will not break a bruised reed, this opens a door of hope for humble bruised souls. Can we say we have been bruised for sin, why do we not believe? Why do we go drooping under our fears and discouragements, as if there were no mercy for us? Christ saith, 'He will heal the broken in heart,' Psal. cxlvii. 3. No, saith unbelief, he will not heal me: Christ saith he will cure the bruised soul; no, saith unbelief, he will kill it, unbelief, as it makes our comforts void; so it goes about to make the word void; as if all God's promises were but forgeries, or like blanks in a lottery: hath the Lord said, he will not break a bruised reed, can truth lie? O what a sin is unbelief! Some think it dreadful to be among the number of drunkards, swearers, whoremongers, let me tell you, it is no less dreadful to be among the number of unbelievers, Rev. xxi. 8. Unbelief is worse than any other sin, because it brings God into suspicion with the creature, it robs him of the richest jewel of his crown, and that is his truth, 1 John v. 10. 'He that believeth not, hath made God a liar.'

O then, let all humbled sinners go to Jesus Christ: Christ was bruised with desertion to heal them who are bruised with sin: if you can shew Christ your sores, and touch him by faith, you shall be healed of all your soul-bruises: will Christ not break thee? then do not undo thyself by despair.

Use 2. Will Jesus Christ not break a bruised reed? then it reproves those who do what in them lies to break the bruised reed; and they are such as go about to hinder the work of conversion in others, when they see them wounded and troubled for sin,

they dishearten them, by telling them, that religion is a sour melancholy thing, they had better return to their former pleasures. When an arrow of conviction is shot into their conscience, these pull it out again, and will not suffer the work of conviction to go forward. Thus when the soul is almost bruised, they hinder it from a thorough bruise: This is for men to be devils to others: if to shed the blood of another makes a man guilty, what is it to damn another's soul?

Use 3. This text is a spiritual honey-comb, dropping consolation into all bruised hearts; as in the body, when there is a lipothymy, or fainting of the vital spirits, we apply cordials; so when sinners are bruised for their sins, I shall give them some cordial-water to revive them: this text is comfortable to a poor soul, who sits with Job among the ashes, and is dejected in the sense of its unworthiness: Ah! saith the soul, I am unworthy of mercy; what am I, that ever God should look upon me? those who have greater parts and graces, perhaps may obtain a look from God, but alas! I am unworthy; doth thy unworthiness trouble thee? what more unworthy than a bruised reed? yet there is a promise made to that, 'A bruised reed he will not break;' the promise is not made to the fig-tree, or olive, which are fertile plants, but to the bruised reed. Though thou art despicable in thine own eyes, a poor shattered reed, yet thou mayest be glorious in the eyes of the Lord; let not thy unworthiness discourage thee: if thou seest thyself vile, and Christ precious, this promise is thine, Christ will not break thee, but will bind up thy wounds.

Quest. But how shall I know that I am savingly bruised?

Ans. Did God ever bring thee upon thy knees? hath thy proud heart been humbled? didst thou ever see thyself a sinner: and nothing but a sinner?

didst thou ever with a weeping eye, look upon Christ? and did those tears drop from the eye of faith? This is a gospel bruising: Canst thou say, Lord, though I do not see thee, ye I love thee, though I am in the dark, yet I cast anchor? This is to be a bruised reed.

Obj. But I fear I am not bruised enough.

Ans. It is hard to prescribe a just measure of humiliation; it is in the new birth, as in the natural, some bring forth with more pangs, some with fewer; but would you know when you are bruised enough? When your spirit is so troubled, that you are willing to let go those lusts which did bring in the greatest income of pleasure and delight; when sin is not only discarded but disgusted, then you have been bruised enough; then the physic is strong enough, when it hath purged out the disease; then the soul is bruised enough, when the love of sin is purged out.

Obj. But I fear I am not bruised as I should be, I find my heart so hard.

Ans. 1. We must distinguish between hardness of heart, and an hard heart; the best heart may have some hardness; but though there be some hardness in it; it is not an hard heart; denominations are from the better part: if we come into a field that hath tares and wheat in it, we do not call it a field of tares, but a wheat field; so, though there be hardness in the heart, as well as softness, yet God, who judgeth by that part which is more excellent, looks upon it as a soft heart.

2. There is a great difference between the hardness in the godly and the wicked; the one is natural, the other is only accidental; the hardness in a wicked man is like the hardness of a stone, which is an innate continued hardness; the hardness in a child of God, is like the hardness of ice, which is soon melted with the sun beams; perhaps God hath

at present withdrawn his Spirit, whereupon the heart is congealed as ice, but let God's Spirit, as the sun, return and shine upon the heart, now it hath a gracious thaw upon it, and it melts in love.

3. Dost thou not grieve under thy hardness? thou sighest for want of groans, thou weepest for want of tears: the hard reed cannot weep; if thou wert not a bruised reed, all this moisture could not come from thee.

Obj. 3. But I am a barren reed, I bring forth no fruit; therefore I fear I shall be broken.

Ans. Gracious hearts are apt to overlook the good that is in them; they can spy the worm in the leaf, but not the fruit. Why dost thou say thou art barren? If thou art a bruised reed, thou art not barren. The spiritual reed ingrafted into the true vine is fruitful; there is so much sap in Christ, as makes all who are inoculated into him to bear fruit; Christ distils grace, as drops of dew, upon the soul, Hos. xiv. 5, 6. 'I will be as the dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the lily, his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree.' That God, who made the dry rod blossom, will make the dry reed flourish.

So much for the first expression in the text: I proceed now to the second, 'The smoking flax shall he not quench.'

Quest. What is meant by smoke?

Ans. By smoke is meant corruption: smoke is offensive to the eye, so sin offends the pure eye of God.

Quest. What is meant by smoking flax?

Ans. It is meant grace mingled with corruption: with a little fire there may be much smoke, so with a little grace there may be much corruption.

Quest. What is Christ's not quenching the smoking flax?

Ans. The meaning is, though there be but a spark

of grace with much sin, Christ will not put out this spark. In the words there is a figure, 'he will not quench,' that is, he will increase: nothing more easy than to quench smoking flax, the least touch doth it; but Christ will not quench it; he will not blow the spark of grace out, but blow it up; he will increase it into a flame; he will make this smoking flax a burning taper.

Doct. That a little grace mixed with much corruption shall not be quenched. For the illustrating of this I shall shew you,

1. That often a little grace is mixed with much corruption. 2. That this little grace interlined with corruption shall not be quenched. 3. The reasons of the proposition.

1. Often in the godly a little grace is mingled with much corruption, Mark ix. 24. 'Lord, I believe,' there was some faith; 'Help my unbelief;' there was corruption mixed with it: there are in the best saints interweavings of sin and grace: a dark side with the light: much pride mixed with humility, much earthliness with heavenliness: grace in the godly doth relish of an old crab-tree stock. Nay, in many of the regenerate there is more corruption than grace, so much smoke that you can scarce discern any fire, so much distrust, that you can hardly see any faith, so much passion that you can hardly see any meekness. Jonah a peevish prophet, he quarrels with God: nay, he justifies his passion, Jonah iv. 9. 'I do well to be angry to death:' here was so much passion, that it was hard to see any grace. A Christian in this life is like a glass that hath more froth than wine; or like a diseased body that hath more humours than spirits; this may humble the best, to consider how much corruption is interlarded with their grace.

2. This little grace mixed with much corruption shall not be quenched: 'The smoking flax he will

not quench.' The disciples' faith was at first but small, 'They forsook Christ and fled,' Mat. xxvi. 56. Here was smoking flax, but Christ did not quench that little grace, but cherish and animate it; their faith afterwards grew stronger, and they did openly confess Christ, Acts iv. 29, 30. here was the flaming flax.

3. The reasons why Christ will not quench the smoking flax.

1. Because this little light which is in the smoking flax is of divine production, it comes from the Father of lights, and the Lord will not quench the work of his own grace: every thing by the instinct of nature will preserve its own: the hen that hatcheth her young will preserve and cherish them, she will not destroy them as soon as they are hatched: God, who hath put this tenderness into the creature to preserve its young, will much more cherish the work of his own Spirit in the heart. Will he light up the lamp of grace in the soul, and then put it out? This would neither be for his interest nor honour.

2. Christ will not quench the beginnings of grace, because a little grace is precious as well as more: a small pearl is of value. Though the pearl of faith be little, yet if it be a true pearl, it shines gloriously forth in God's eye: a goldsmith makes reckoning of the least filings of gold, and will not throw them away: the apple of the eye is but little, yet of great use, it can at once view an huge part of the heavens: a little faith can justify; a weak hand can tie the nuptial knot; a weak heart can unite to Christ as well as a strong; a little grace makes us like God: a silver penny bears the king's image upon it as well as a larger piece of coin: the least dram of grace bears God's image on it, and will God destroy his own image. When the temples in Greece were demolished, Xerxes caused the temple of Di-

ana to be preserved for the beauty of its structure ; when God shall destroy all the glory of the world, and set it on fire, yet he will not destroy the least grace, because it bears a print of his own likeness upon it ; that little spark in the smoking flax is a ray and beam of God's own glory.

8. Christ will not quench the smoking flax, because this little light in the flax may grow bigger : grace is resembled to a grain of mustard-seed, of all seeds it is the least, but ' when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree,' Matt. xiii. 32. The greatest grace was once little ; the oak was once an acorn ; the most renowned faith in the world was once in its spiritual infancy ; the greatest flame of zeal was once but smoking flax ; grace, like the waters of the sanctuary, riseth higher. If then the least embryo and seed of holiness be of a ripening and growing nature, the Lord will not suffer it to be abortive.

4. Christ will not quench the smoking flax, because when he preserves a little light in a great deal of smoke, here the glory of his power shines forth ; the trembling soul thinks it shall be swallowed up of sin, but God by preserving a little quantity of grace in the heart ; nay, by making that spark prevail over corruption, as the fire from heaven ' licked up the water in the trench,' 1 Kings xviii. 38. Now, God gets himself a glorious name, and carries away the trophies of honour, 2 Cor. xii. 9. ' My strength is made perfect in weakness.'

1. See the different dealings of God and men, men for a little smoke will quench a great deal of light ; God for a great deal of smoke will not quench a little light. It is the manner of the world, if they see a little failing in another, for that failing they will pass by and quench a great deal of worth : this is our nature, to aggravate a little fault, and diminish a great deal of virtue ; to see the infirmities,

and darken the excellencies of others; as we take more notice of the twinkling of a star, than the shining of a star; we censure others for their passion, but do not admire them for their piety. Thus for a little smoke that we see in others, we quench much light.

God doth not this, for a great deal of smoke he will not quench a little light: he sees the sincerity, and overlooks many infirmities, the least sparks of grace he cherisheth, and blows them gently with the breath of his Spirit, till they break forth into a flame.

2. If Christ will not quench the smoking flax, then we must not quench the smoking flax in ourselves; If grace doth not increase into so great a flame as we see in others, therefore to conclude we have no fire of the Spirit in us; this is to quench the smoking flax, and to bear false witness against ourselves; as we must not credit a false evidence, so neither must we deny a true; fire may be hid in the embers, so may grace be hid under many distempers of soul; some Christians are so skilful at this, in accusing themselves for want of grace, as if they had received a fee from Satan, to plead for him, against themselves.

This is a great mistake, to argue from the weakness of grace, to the nullity; it is one thing to be wanting in faith, and another to want faith: he whose eyesight is dim, is wanting in his sight, but he doth not want sight: a little grace is grace, though it be smothered under much corruption.

3. If the least spark of grace shall not be quenched, then this follows as a great truth, that there is no falling from grace? if the least dram of grace should perish, then the smoking flax should be quenched; grace may be shaken by fears and doubtings, but not blown up by the roots: I grant, seeming grace may be lost, this wildfire may be blown

out, but not the fire of the Spirit's kindling; grace may be dormant in the soul, but not dead, as a man in an apoplexy, doth not put forth vital operations: grace may be eclipsed, not extinguished, a Christian may lose his comfort, like a tree in autumn, that hath shed its fruit, but still there is sap in the vine, and the seed of God remains, 1 John iii. 9. Grace is a flower of eternity.

This smoking flax cannot be quenched by affliction, but is like those trees Pliny writes of, growing in the Red sea, which being beaten upon by the waves, stand immoveable, and though they are sometimes covered with water, flourish the more; grace is like a true orient diamond that sparkles, and cannot be broken.

I confess it is matter of wonder, that grace should not be wholly annihilated, especially if we consider two things. 1. The malice of Satan, he is a malignant spirit, and lays bars in our way to heaven; the devil, with the wind of temptation, labours to blow out the spark of grace in our heart; if this will not do, he stirs up wicked men, and raiseth the militia of hell against us: what a wonder is it, that this bright star of grace should not be swept down by the tail of the dragon?

2. It is an amazing thing that grace should subsist, if we consider the world of corruption in our hearts; sin makes the major part in a Christian; there is in the best heart more dregs than spirits. The heart swarms with sin: what a deal of pride and atheism is in the soul? now, is it not admirable that this lily of grace should be able to grow among so many thorns? Song ii. 2. It is as great a wonder, that a little grace should be preserved in the midst of so much corruption, as to see a taper burning in the sea, and not extinguished.

But though grace lives with so much difficulty, as the infant that struggles for breath, yet being

born of God, it is immortal: grace conflicting with corruption, is like a ship tossed and beaten with the waves, yet it weathers out the storm, and at last gets to the desired haven. If grace should expire, how could this text be verified, 'The smoking flax he will not quench.'

Quest. But whence is it that grace, even the least degree of it, should not be quenched?

Ans. It is from the mighty operation of the Holy Ghost: the Spirit of God, who is *origo originans*, doth continually excite and quicken grace in the heart: he is every day at work in a believer: he pours in oil, and keeps the lamp of grace burning. Grace is compared to a river of life, John viii. 38. The river of grace can never be dried up, for the Spirit of God is the spring which feeds it.

Now that the smoking flax cannot be quenched, is evident from the covenant of grace, Isa. liv. 10. 'The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but the covenant of my peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord.' If there be a falling from grace, how is it an immoveable covenant? If grace die, and the smoking flax be quenched, wherein is our state in Christ better than it was in Adam? The covenant of grace is called 'a better covenant,' Heb. vii. 22. How is it a better covenant than that which was made with Adam? Not only because it hath a better surety, and contains better privileges, but because it hath better conditions annexed to it; 'it is ordered in all things, and sure,' 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Such as are taken into the covenant, shall be as stars fixed in their orb, and shall never fall away: if grace might die, and be quenched, then it were not a better covenant.

Obj. But we are bid not to quench the Spirit, 1 Thess. v. 19. 'which implies that the grace of the Spirit may be lost, and the smoking flax quenched?

Ans. We must distinguish between the common work of the Spirit, and the sanctifying work, the one may be quenched, but not the other: the common work of the Spirit is like a picture drawn upon the ice, which is soon defaced: the sanctifying work is like a statue carved in gold, which endures. The gifts of the Spirit may be quenched, but not the grace: there is the enlightening of the Spirit, and the anointing; the enlightening of the Spirit may fail, but the anointing of the Spirit abides, 1 John ii. 27. 'The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you.' The hypocrite's blaze goes out, the true believer's spark lives and flourisheth, the one is the light of a comet which wastes and evaporates, the other is the light of a star which retains its lustre.

From all that hath been said, let a saint of the Lord be persuaded to these two things, 1. To believe his privilege. 2. To pursue his duty.

1. To believe his privilege: this is the incomparable and unparalleled happiness of a saint, that his coal shall not be quenched, 2 Sam. xiv. 7. That grace in his soul, which is minute and languid, shall not give up the ghost, but recover its strength, and increase with the increase of God: the Lord will make the smoking flax a burning lamp. It were very sad that a Christian should be continually upon the tropics, one day a member of Christ, and the next day a limb of Satan; one day to have grace shine in his soul, and the next day his light put out in obscurity: this would spill a Christian's comfort, and break asunder the golden chain of salvation; but be assured, O Christian, he that hath begun a good work, will ripen it into perfection: Christ will send forth judgment unto victory; he will make grace victorious over all opposite corruption. If grace should finally perish, what would become of

the smoking flax; and how would that title properly be given to Christ, 'Finisher of the faith?' Heb. xii. 2.

Obj. No question this is an undoubted privilege to such as are smoking flax, and have the least beginnings of grace, but I fear I am not smoking flax, I cannot see the light of grace in myself.

Ans. That I may comfort the smoking flax, Why dost thou thus dispute against thyself? What makes thee think thou hast no grace? I believe thou hast more than thou wouldest be willing to part with; thou valuest grace above the gold of Ophir. How couldest thou see the worth and lustre of this jewel, if God's Spirit had not opened thy eyes? Thou wouldest fain believe, and mournest that thou canst not believe; are not these tears the initials of faith? Thou desirest Christ, and canst not be satisfied without him; this beating of the pulse evidenceth life: the iron could not move upward, if the loadstone did not draw it: the heart could not ascend in holy breathings after God, if some heavenly loadstone had not been drawing it. Christian, canst thou say, sin is thy burden, Christ is thy delight? and as Peter once said, 'Lord, thou knowest I love thee:' this is smoking flax, and the Lord will not quench it; thy grace shall flourish into glory: God will sooner extinguish the light of the sun, than extinguish the dawning light of his Spirit in thy heart.

Let a Christian pursue his duty: There are two duties required of believers. 1. Love, 2. Labour.

1. Love. Will the Lord not quench the smoking flax, but make it at last victorious over all opposition? How should the smoking flax flame in love to God? Ps. xxxi. 23. 'O love the Lord, all ye his saints.' The saints owe much to God, and

when they have nothing to pay, it is hard if they cannot love him. O ye saints, it is God who carries on grace progressively in your souls: he is like a father who gives his son a small stock of money to begin with, and when he hath traded a little, he adds more to the stock: so, God adds continually to your stock; he is every day dropping oil into the lamp of your grace, and so keeps the lamp burning. This may inflame your love to God, who will not let the work of grace miscarry, but will bring it to perfection: 'The smoking flax he will not quench.' How should God's people long for heaven, when it will be their constant work to breathe forth love, and sound forth praise.

2. The second duty required of Christians is labour. Some may think, if Christ will not quench the smoking flax, but make it burn brighter to the meridian of glory, then we need take no pains, but leave God to bring his own work about. Take heed of drawing so bad a conclusion from such good premises: what I have spoken is to encourage faith, not to indulge sloth: do not think God will do our work for us, and we sit still. As God will blow up the spark of grace by his Spirit, so we must be blowing it up by holy endeavours; God will not bring us to heaven sleeping, but praying; the Lord told Paul, all in the ship should come safe to shore, but it must be in the use of means, Acts xxvii. 31. 'Except ye abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' So the saints shall certainly arrive at salvation, they shall come to shore at last, but they must abide in the ship, in the use of ordinances, else they cannot be saved. Christ assures his disciples, 'none shall pluck them out of his hand,' John x. 28. But yet he gives that counsel, 'Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation,' Matt. xxvi. 41. The seed of God shall not die, but we must water it with our

tears; the smoking flax shall not be quenched, but we must blow it up with the breath of our endeavour.

The second comfort to the godly is, that godliness advanceth them to a near and glorious union with Jesus Christ; but of this in our next.

CHAP. XII.

Shewing the mystical Union between Christ and the Saints.

CANT. ii. 16. *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.*

IN this book of the Canticles, we see the love of Christ and his church, running toward each other in a full torrent. The next contains three general parts.

1. A symbol of affection, 'My beloved.'
2. A term of appropriation, 'is mine.'
3. An holy resignation, 'I am his.'

Doct. That there is a conjugal union between Christ and believers.

The apostle having treated at large of marriage, he winds up the whole chapter thus, Eph. v. 32. 'This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.' What nearer than union? what sweeter? there is a twofold union with Christ.

1. A natural union; this all men have, Christ having taken our nature upon him, and not the angels, Heb. ii. 16. but if there be no more than this natural union, it will give little comfort; thousands are damned though Christ be united to their nature.

2. There is a sacred union, whereby we are mys-

tically united to Christ; the union with Christ is not personal; if Christ's essence were transfused into the person of a believer, then it would follow, that all which a believer doth should merit. But the union between Christ and a saint is,

1. **Fœderal**: 'my beloved is mine;' God the Father gives the bride, God the Son receives the bride, God the Holy Ghost ties the knot in marriage; he knits our wills to Christ, and Christ's love to us.

2. **This union is virtual**: Christ unites himself to his spouse by his graces and influences, John i. 16. 'Of his fulness have we all received and grace for grace.' Christ makes himself one with his spouse, by conveying his image, and stamping the impress of his own holiness upon her.

This union with Christ may well be called mystical, it is hard to describe the manner of it; as it is hard to shew the manner how the soul is united to the body, so how Christ is united to the soul; but though this union be spiritual, it is real. Things in nature work often insensibly, yet really, Eccl. xi. 5. We do not see the hand move on the dial, yet it moves; the sun exhales, and draws up the vapours of the earth insensibly, yet really, so the union between Christ and the soul, though it be imperceptible to the eye of reason, yet it is real, 1 Cor. vi. 17.

Before this union with Christ, there must be a separation; the heart must be separated from all other lovers; as in marriage there is a leaving of father and mother, Psal. xlv. 10. 'Forget all thine own people, and thy father's house;' so there must be a leaving of our former sins, a breaking off the old league with hell, before we can be united to Christ, Hos. xiv. 8. 'Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?' or as it is in the

Hebrew, With sorrows: those sins which were before looked upon as lovers, now they are sorrows; there must be a divorce before an union.

The end of our conjugal union with Christ is two-fold.

1. **Cohabitation:** this is one end of marriage, to live together, Eph. iii. 17. 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts;' it is not enough to give Christ a few complimentary visits in his ordinances, hypocrites may do so; but there must be a mutual association; we must dwell upon the thoughts of Christ, 1 John iv. 12, 16. 'He that dwelleth in God;' married persons should not live asunder.

2. **Fructification,** Rom. vii. 4. 'That ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.' The spouse brings forth the fruits of the Spirit, 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness,' Gal. v. 22. Barrenness is a shame in Christ's spouse.

This marriage-union with Christ, is the most noble and excellent union.

1. Christ unites himself to many: in other marriages there is but a person taken, but here millions are taken; alas! else poor souls might cry out, Christ hath married himself to such an one's person, but what is that to me? I am left out; no, Christ marries himself to thousands; it is an holy and chaste polygamy; multitudes of persons doth not defile this marriage-bed: no poor sinner but, bringing an humble believing heart, may be married to Christ.

2. In this holy marriage is a nearer conjunction than can be in any other; in other marriages, two make one flesh, but Christ and the believer make one spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 17. 'He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit:' now, as the soul is more excellent than the body, and admits of far greater joy;

so this spiritual union, brings in more astonishing delights and ravishments, than any other marriage relation is capable of: the joy that flows from the mystical union, 'Is unspeakable and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8.

3. This union with Christ never ceaseth.

Other marriages are soon at an end, death cuts asunder the marriage knot, but this conjugal union is eternal: thou that art once Christ's spouse, shalt never be a widow more, Hos. ii. 19. 'I will betroth thee unto me for ever.' To speak properly, our marriage with Christ begins, where other marriages end, at death.

In this life is but the contract: the Jews had a time set between their espousals and marriages, sometimes a year, or more: in this life is but the affiancing and contract, promises are made on both sides, and love passeth secretly between Christ and the soul; he gives some smiles of his face, and the soul sends up her sighs, and drops tears of love: but all this is but a previous work, and something tending to the marriage, the glorious completing and solemnizing of the nuptials is reserved for heaven; there is the marriage supper of the Lamb, Rev. xix. 9. and the bed of glory perfumed with love, where the souls of the elect shall be perpetually solacing themselves, 1 Thess. iv. 17. 'Then shall we ever be with the Lord;' so that death doth but begin our marriage with Christ.

Use 1. If Christ be the head of the body mystical, Eph. i. 22. then this doctrine doth behead the Pope, that man of sin, who usurps this prerogative, to be the head of the church, and so would defile Christ's marriage bed: what blasphemy is this? Two heads is monstrous; Christ is head, as he is husband, there is no vice-husband, no deputy in his room. The pope is the beast in the Reve-

lation, chap. xiii. 11. To make him head of the church, what were this, but to set the head of a beast upon the body of a man.

Use 2. Is there such a conjugal union, let us try whether we are united to Christ?

1. Have we chosen Christ to set our love upon? and is this choice founded upon knowledge?

2. Have we consented to the match? It is not enough that Christ is willing to have us, but are we willing to have him? God doth not so force salvation upon us, as that we shall have Christ whether we will or no; we must consent to have him; many approve of Christ, but do not give their consent: and this consent must be,

1. Pure and genuine, we consent to him for his own worth and excellency, Psal. xlv. 2. 'Thou art fairer than the children of men.'

2. It must be a present consent, 2 Cor. vi. 2. 'Now is the accepted time;' If we put Christ off with delays and excuses, perhaps he will come no more, he will leave off wooing, his Spirit shall no longer strive; and then, poor sinner, what wilt thou do? When God's wooing ends, thy woes begin.

3. Have we taken Christ? faith is the bond of the union; Christ is joined to us by his Spirit, and we are joined to him by faith; faith ties the marriage-knot.

4. Have we given up ourselves to Christ? thus the spouse in the text, *I am his*; as if she had said, All I have is for the use and service of Christ; have we made a surrender? have we given up our name and will to Christ? When the devil solicits by a temptation, do we say, We are not our own, we are Christ's, our tongues are his, we must not defile them with oaths; our bodies are his temple, we must not pollute them with sin: if it be thus, it

is a sign the Holy Ghost hath wrought that blessed union between Christ and us.

Use 3. Is there this mystical union? then from hence we may draw many inferences.

1. See the dignity of all true believers: they are joined in marriage with Christ, there is not only assimilation, but union, they are not only like Christ, but one with Christ; 'This honour have all the saints.' A king marrying a beggar, by virtue of the union, she is ennobled, and made of the blood-royal; as wicked men are united to the prince of darkness, and he settles hell upon them for their jointure; so the godly are divinely united to Christ, who is 'King of kings, and Lord of lords,' Rev. xix. 16. By virtue of this sacred union, the saints are dignified above the angels, Christ is their Lord, but not their husband.

2. See how happily all the saints are married; they are united to Christ, who is the best husband, Cant. v. 10. 'The chief of ten thousand.' Christ is a husband that cannot be paralleled, 1. For tender care. 2. For ardent affection.

1. For tender care: the spouse cannot be so tender of her own soul and credit, as Christ is tender of her, 1 Pet. v. 7. 'He careth for you.' Christ hath a debating with himself, a consulting and projecting how to carry on the work of our salvation; he transacts all our affairs, he minds our business as his own; indeed he himself is concerned in it; he brings in fresh supplies to his spouse: if she wanders out of the way, he guides her; if she stumble, he holds her by the hand; if she falls, he raiseth her; if she be dull, he quickens her by his Spirit; if she be froward, he draws her with cords of love; if she be sad, he comforts her with promises.

2. For ardent affection: no husband like Christ for love: the Lord saith to his people, 'I have lov-

ed you;' and they say, 'Wherein hast thou loved us?' Mal. i. 2. But we cannot say to Christ, wherein hast thou loved us? Christ hath given real demonstrations of his love to his spouse: he hath sent her his word, which is a love-letter: and he hath given her his Spirit, which is a love-token: Christ loves more than any other husband.

1. Christ puts upon his bride a richer robe, Isa. lxi. 10. 'He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.' In this robe God looks upon us as if we had not sinned: this is as truly ours to justify, as it is Christ's to bestow: this robe doth not only cover, but adorn: having on this robe we are reputed righteous, not only as angels, but as Christ, 2 Cor. v. 21. 'That we might be made the righteousness of God in him.'

2. Christ gives his bride not only his golden garments, but his image: he loves her into his own likeness. An husband may bear a dear affection to his wife, but he cannot stamp his own effigies upon her; if she be deformed, he may give her a vail to hide it, but he cannot put his beauty upon her; but Christ imparts the beauty of holiness to his spouse, Ezek. xvi. 14. 'Thou wert comely through my comeliness.' When Christ marries a soul, he makes it fair, Cant. iv. 7. 'Thou art all fair, my spouse.' Christ never thinks he hath loved his spouse enough, till he can see his own face in her.

3. Christ dischargeth those debts which no other husband can: our sins are the worst debts we owe, (if all the angels should go to make a purse, they could not pay one of these debts) but Christ frees us from these: he is both an husband and a surety; he saith to justice, as Paul concerning Onesimus, 'If he owes thee any thing, put it upon my score, I will repay it,' Philem. 19.

4. Christ hath suffered more for his spouse than ever any husband did for a wife : he suffered poverty and ignominy : he who crowned the heaven with stars, was himself crowned with thorns. He was called a companion of sinners, that we might be made companions of angels ; he was regardless of his life ; he leaped into the sea of his Father's wrath to save his spouse from drowning.

5. Christ's love doth not end with this life. He loves his spouse for ever, Hos. ii. 19. ' I will betroth thee unto me for ever.' Well might the apostle call it ' a love that passeth knowledge,' Eph. iii. 19.

3. See how rich believers are; they are matched into the crown of heaven ; and by virtue of the conjugal union all Christ's riches go to believers, communion is founded in union. Christ communicates his graces, John i. 16. As long as Christ hath it, believers shall not want ; and he communicates his privileges, justification, glorification : he settles a kingdom upon his spouse for her jointure, Heb. xii. 28. This is a key to the apostle's riddle, 2 Cor. vi. 10. ' As having nothing, yet possessing all.' By virtue of the marriage-union, the saints are interested in all Christ's riches.

4. See how fearful a sin it is to abuse the saints ; it is an injury done to Christ, for believers are mystically one with him, Acts ix. 4. ' Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?' when the body was wounded, the head, being in heaven, cried out ; in this sense men crucify Christ afresh, Heb. vi. 6, because what is done to his members, is done to him ; if Gideon was avenged upon those who slew his brethren, Judges viii. 21. will not Christ much more be avenged upon those that wrong his spouse ? Will a king endure to have his treasure rifled, his crown thrown in the dust, his queen beheaded ? Will Christ

bear with the affronts and injuries done to his bride? The saints are the apple of his eye, Zech. ii. 8. and they that strike at his eye, let them answer it, Isa. xlix. 26. 'I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine.'

3. See the reason why the saints do so rejoice in the word and sacrament, because here they meet with their husband Christ; the wife desires to be in the presence of her husband. The ordinances are the chariot in which Christ rides, the lattice thro' which he looks forth and shews his smiling face; Cant. ii. 9. here Christ displays the banner of love, Cant. ii. 4. The Lord's supper is nothing else but a pledge and earnest of that eternal communion the saints shall have with Christ in heaven: then he will take the spouse into his bosom; if Christ be so sweet in an ordinance, when we have but short glances, and dark glimpses of him by faith, O then, how delightful and ravishing will his presence be in heaven, when, we shall see him face to face, and be for ever in his loving embraces?

4. This mystical union affords much comfort to believers in several cases. 1. In case of the disrespects and unkindnesses of the world. Psal lv. 3. 'In wrath they hate me:' but though we live in an unkind world, we have a kind husband, John xv. 9. 'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.' What angel can tell how God the Father loves Christ? yet the Father's love to Christ, is made the copy and pattern of Christ's love to his spouse; this love of Christ as far exceeds all created love, as the sun out-shines the light of a torch; and is not this matter of comfort? What though the world hates me, yet Christ loves me.

2. It is comfort in case of weakness of grace: the believer cannot lay hold on Christ but with a trem-

bling hand ; there is a spirit of infirmity upon him. But O weak Christian ! here is strong consolation ; there is a conjugal union, thou art the spouse of Christ, and he will bear with thee as the weaker vessel ; will a husband divorce his wife, because she is weak and sickly ? No, he will be the more tender of her ; Christ hates treachery, but he will pity infirmity ; when the spouse is faint, and ready to be discouraged, Christ puts his left hand under her head, Cant. ii. 6. this is the spouse's comfort when she is weak, her husband can infuse strength into her, Isa. xlix. 5. 'My God shall be my strength.'

3. It is comfort in case of death : when believers die, they go to their husband ; who would not be willing to shoot the gulf of death, that they might meet with their husband Christ ? Phil. i. 23. I desire to loosen anchor, and be with Christ ; what though the way be dirty, seeing we are going to our friend ; when a woman is contracted, she longs for the day of marriage ; after the saints' funeral begins their marriage : the body is a prison to the soul ; who would not desire to exchange a prison for a marriage-bed ? How glad was Joseph to go out of prison to the king's court ? God is wise he lets us meet with changes and troubles here, that he may wean us from the world, and make us long for death : when the soul is divorced from the body it is married to Christ.

4. It is comfort in case of passing the sentence at the day of judgment : there is a marriage-union, and, O Christian, thy husband shall be thy judge : a wife would not fear to be cast at the bar, if her husband sat judge : what though the devil bring in many indictments against thee, Christ will expunge thy sins in his blood ; he will say, shall I condemn my spouse ? O what a comfort is this ? the husband

is the judge: Christ cannot pass the sentence against his spouse, but he must pass it against himself, for Christ and believers are one.

5. It is comfort in case of the saints' sufferings: the church of God is exposed in this life to many injuries, but she hath an husband in heaven, that is mindful of her, and will turn her waters into wine: now it is a time of mourning with the spouse, because the bridegroom is absent. Mat. ix. 15. But shortly she shall ~~put off~~ her mourning, Christ will wipe off the tears of blood from the cheeks of his spouse, Isa. xxv. 8. 'The Lord God will wipe off tears from off all faces.

Christ will comfort his spouse after the time wherein she hath been afflicted, he will solace her with his love, he will take away the cup of trembling, and give her the cup of consolation, and now she will forget all her sorrows, being called into the banqueting house of heaven, and having the banner of Christ's love displayed over her.

5. Let me press several duties upon such as have this marriage-union with Christ. 1. Make use of this relation, in two cases.

1. When the law brings in its indictments against you: here are, saith the law so many debts to be paid, and it demands satisfaction; acknowledge the debt, but turn over all to your husband Christ: it is a maxim in the law, that the suit must not go against the wife as long as the husband is living: tell satan when he accuseth thee, it is true the debt is mine, but go to my husband Christ, he will discharge it. Would we take this course, we might ease ourselves of much trouble; by faith we turn over the debt to our husband: believers are not in a state of widowhood, but marriage. Satan will never go to Christ, he knows justice is satisfied, and the debt-book cancelled, but he comes to

us for the debt that he may perplex us, we should send him to Christ, and then all law-suits would cease : this is a believer's triumph, when he is in himself guilty, in Christ he is worthy, when he is spotted in himself, he is pure in his head.

2. In case of desertion : Christ may (for ends best known to himself) step aside for a time, Cant. v. 6. ' My beloved had withdrawn himself ;' say not therefore Christ is quite gone ; it is a fruit of jealousy in a wife, when her husband hath left her a while, to think he is quite gone from her. Upon every removal out of sight, for us to say as Sion, ' The Lord hath forsaken me.' Isa. xlix. 14. This is jealousy, and it is a wrong done to the love of Christ, and the sweetness of this marriage relation : Christ may forsake his spouse in regard of comfort, but he will not forsake her in regard of union. An husband may be a thousand miles distant from his wife, but still he is an husband : Christ may leave his spouse, but still the marriage-knot holds.

2. Love your husband Christ, Cant. ii. 5. love him, though he be reproached and persecuted : a wife loves her husband when in prison : to inflame your love towards Christ, consider, 1. Nothing else is fit for your love : if Christ be your husband, it is not fit to have other lovers, that would make Christ grow jealous. 2. He is worthy of your love ; he is of unparalleled beauty, Cant. v. 10. ' Altogether lovely. 3. How pregnant is Christ's love towards you ? he loves you in your worst condition, he loves you in affliction : the goldsmith loves his gold in the furnace : he loves you notwithstanding your scars and blemishes. ' The saints' infirmities cannot wholly take off Christ's love from them, Jer. iii. 1. O then, how should the spouse be endeared in her love to Christ ? This will be the excellency of heaven, our love will then be as the sun in its full strength.

3. Rejoice in your husband Christ : hath Christ honoured you to take you into a marriage-relation, and make you one with himself, this calls for joy : by virtue of the union, believers go sharers with Christ in his riches. It was a custom among the Romans, when the wife was brought home, she received the keys of her husband's house, intimating, that the treasure and custody of the house was now committed to her : when Christ shall bring his bride home to those glorious mansions which he is gone before to prepare for her, John xiv. 2. he will deliver up the keys of his treasure to her, and she shall be as rich as heaven can make her ; and shall not the spouse rejoice and 'sing aloud upon her bed?' Psal. cxlix. 5. Christians, let the times be ever so sad, you may rejoice in your spiritual espousals, Hab. iii. 17. Let me tell you, it is a sin not to rejoice ; you disparage your husband Christ. When a wife is always sighing and weeping, what will others say, This woman hath a bad husband : is this the fruit of Christ's love to you, to reflect dishonour upon him ? a melancholy spouse sads Christ's heart : I deny not but a Christian should grieve for sins of daily incursion, but to be always weeping, as if he mourned without hope, is dishonourable to the marriage relation, Phil. iv. 4. 'Rejoice in the Lord always.' Rejoicing doth credit your husband ; Christ loves a cheerful bride ; and indeed the very end of God's making us sad, is to make us rejoice ; we sow in tears that we may reap in joy : the excessive sadness and contrition of the godly, will make others afraid to embrace Christ ; they will begin to question whether there be that satisfactory joy in religion as is pretended. Oh ye saints of God, forget not your consolation, let others see that you repent not of your choice ; it is joy that puts liveliness and activity into a Christian, Neh. viii. 10. 'The joy of

the Lord is your strength.' Then the soul is swiftest in duty, when it is carried upon the wings of joy.

4. Adorn this marriage-relation, that you may be a crown to your husband. 1. Wear a veil: we read of the spouse's veil, Cant. v. 7. This veil is humility. 2. Put on your jewels: these are the graces which for their lustre are compared to rows of pearl, and chains of gold, Cant. i. 10. These precious jewels distinguish Christ's bride from strangers. 3. Carry yourselves as becomes Christ's spouse.

1. In chastity. 2. In sanctity.

1. In chastity: be chaste in your judgments, defile not yourselves with error, error adulterates the mind, 1 Tim. vi. 5. It is one of satan's artifices, first to defile the judgment, then the conscience.

2. In sanctity: It is not for Christ's spouse to do as harlots; a naked breast a wanton tongue, doth not become a saint: Christ's spouse must shine forth in gospel purity, that she may make her husband fall in love with her. A woman being asked what dowry she brought her husband, answered, She had no dowry, but she promised to keep herself chaste: so, though we can bring to Christ no dowry, yet he looks we should keep ourselves pure, not spotting the breasts of our virginity, by contagious and scandalous sins. James i. 27.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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