

“Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?” Though he were a favourite, and God had spoken with him face to face, yet God gives him a check for it; it turned his smile into a frown. 2. Prejudicial to us; Moses’ rash speech shut him out of Canaan; it may shut us out of heaven, of which that was but a type. Origen notes, he had sinned most in his tongue; and God punished him most in his tongue.

6th *Motive*. He who offends not in his tongue, is a perfect man; an high expression; “if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man;” that is, attains to a very high degree, in the highest form of Christ’s school. A prudent man, or an upright man; or comparatively, in comparison of others, such as have not gotten the conquest over their passions, he is far above them, and, in comparison of them, he is a perfect man; such an one was holy Cranmer, that could not be provoked by the ill carriage of others, but requited injuries with kindness.

7th *Motive*. You must give an account to God, as well of your speeches, as your

actions, Mat. xii. 36., “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment;” words of no account, will have an heavy account. And, if God will reckon with men for every idle, angry word, then, what will he do for sinful oaths? “Oh that my words were now written!” Job xix. 23. Truly, if many people’s words were written, they would be ashamed of them. And, let me tell you, your words are written: Rev. xv. “The books were opened.” In the book of God’s remembrance all your words are written; you had need then be careful you offend not with your tongue; God writes down all you speak, and you must give an account to him. When Latimer heard the pen going behind the hangings, he was careful in his answers; and let me tell you, as your words are, such will your sentence be; when the books are opened, God will proceed with you in judicature, according to your words; by your words you shall be saved or condemned: Mat. xii. 37., “By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

SERMON IV.

GAL. vi. 9. “*And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*”

IN the verses before the text, the apostle had laid down a proposition, “What a man soweth that shall he reap,” ver. 7.; he that sows in sin shall reap in sorrow; he that sows the seeds of grace shall reap glory; there is the proposition. In the text, the apostle makes the application. Let us not be weary in well-doing. We that have sown the good seed of repentance, and an holy life, “Let us not be weary; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

I. A Dehortation: “Let us not be weary.”

II. The argument: ‘We shall reap in due season.’

I. A Dehortation; “Let us not be weary.” Where there is, 1. Something implied,—that we are apt to be weary in well-doing. 2. Something expressed,—that we ought not to be weary in well-doing.

1. The thing implied, that, we are apt to be weary in well-doing. This weariness is not from the regenerate part, but the fleshly; as Peter’s sinking in the water, was not from the faith in him, but the fear; this weariness in a Christian course is occasioned from four things:

(1.) From the revilings of the world, Ps. lxxi. 10., “My enemies speak against me.” Innocency is no shield against reproach. But why should this make us weary of well-doing? Did not Jesus Christ undergo reproach for us, when the Jews put a crown of thorns on him, and bowed the knee in scorn? Is it any dishonour to us to be reproached for doing that which is good? Is it any disparagement to a virgin to be reproached for her beauty and chastity? Our reproaches for Christ, we should bind as a crown about our head. Now a

Spirit of glory rests upon us, 1 Pet. iv. 14., "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you." *Regium est bene facere et male audire.* He that clips our credit to make it weigh lighter, makes our crown heavier.

(2.) That which is apt to occasion weariness in well-doing, is the present sufferings we are exposed to, 2 Cor. iv. 8., "We are troubled on every side." But why should this make us weary in well-doing? Is not our life a warfare? It is no more strange to meet with sufferings in religion, than for a mariner to meet with storms, or a soldier to meet with bullets. Do not we consider upon what terms we are entered into religion? Did not we vow in baptism to fight under Christ's banner? Doth not our Lord tell us, we must take "up the cross and follow" him? Mat. xvi. 24. Is not this part of the legacy Christ hath bequeathed us? John xvi. 33. We would partake of Christ's glory but not of his sufferings: besides, doth not many a man suffer for his sins? Do not men's lusts bring them to an untimely end? Do men suffer for their sins, and do we think much to suffer for Christ? How did St. Paul rejoice in sufferings? 2 Cor. vii. 4. How did he glory in it? "As a woman that is proud of her jewels," CHRYSOSTOME. Why should sufferings make us faint? who would not be willing to tread upon a few thorns, that is going to a kingdom.

(3.) That which is apt to occasion weariness in well-doing, is the deferring of the reward. We are apt to be discouraged and grow weary, if we have not what we desire presently; we are all for present pay. But consider, 1. Our work is not yet done; we have not yet finished the faith; the servant doth not receive his pay till his work be done. Even Christ's reward was referred till he had done his work; when he had completed our redemption, and said upon the cross, "It is finished," then he entered into glory. 2. God defers the reward, to make heaven more welcome to us. After all our praying, weeping, suffering, how sweet will the joys of paradise taste!

(4.) That which is apt to occasion weariness in well-doing, is the greatness and

difficulty of a Christian's work; but why should this make us weary? Difficulty whets a generous mind; the soldier's life hath its difficulties, but they raise his spirits the more; he loves to encounter hardship, and will endure a bloody fight for a golden harvest. Besides, where is the least principle of grace, it renders the way of religion, easy and pleasant. When the loadstone draws, it is easy for the iron to move: When God's Spirit draws we move in the way of religion with facility and delight. Christ's service is freedom. Ps. cxix. 45., "I will walk at liberty." To serve God, to love God, to enjoy God, is the sweetest liberty in the world. Besides, while we serve God, we gratify ourselves; as he who digs in a mine, while he sweats, he gets gold; while we glorify God, we promote our own glory.

II. The second thing expressed is, that we should not grow weary in a Christian course,—we should not tire in our race,—*"Let us not be weary in well-doing."* The Greek word, to be weary, signifies, to shrink back, as cowards in war; let it not be thus with us; let us not shrink back from Christ's colours, Heb. iv. 14., "Let us hold fast our profession:" We must not only hold forth our profession, but hold fast our profession. The crown is not given to him that fights, but to him that overcomes.

Use 1st. Of reproof. It reproves such as are weary of well-doing. These are falling stars, 2 Tim. iv. 10. Demas forsook God, and afterwards became a priest in an idol temple, Dorotheus. Hos. viii. 3., "Israel hath cast off the thing that is good." Many have thrown off Christ's livery; they have left off an holy course of life; they have turned to worldliness or wantonness, Gal. v. 7., "Ye did run well, who did hinder you?" Why did you tire in your race? 2 Pet. ii. 21., "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."

Use 2d. Exhortation: "Let us not be weary in well-doing." Consider,

1. The way of religion is of good report; Heb. xi. 2. By faith "the elders obtained a good report." Shall we be weary of that which is our credit? If indeed the Christian

religion were a thing that would bring shame or loss—as the ways of sin do—then we had cause to desert it, and grow weary of it; but it brings honour; Prov. iv. 9., “She shall give to thy head an ornament of grace.” Why then should we be weary of well-doing?

2. The beauty of a Christian is to hold on in piety without being weary: Acts xxi. 16., “Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple.” It is a beautiful sight to see silver hairs crowned with golden virtue. The beauty of a thing is when it comes to be finished, the beauty of a picture is, when it is drawn out in its full lineaments, and laid in its orient colours; the beauty of a Christian is, when he hath finished his faith, 2 Tim. iv. 7. It was the glory of the church of Thyatira, she kept her best wine till last, Rev. ii. 19., “I know thy works, and the last to be more than the first.”

3. Such as are weary of well-doing it is a sign they never acted in religion from choice, or from a principle of faith, but from the external spring of applause or preferment, so that, when these fail, their seeming goodness ceaseth.

4. God is never weary of doing us good; therefore we should not be weary of serving him. A king that is continually obliging his subjects by gifts and gratitudes, those subjects have no cause to be weary of serving their prince.

5. If we grow weary, and throw off religion, we make all we have done null and void; Ezek. xviii. 24., “When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.” He who hath been serving God, and doing angel’s work, if once he grows weary and desists, he unravels all his work, and misseth of the recompense of reward. He that runs half a race, and then tires, loseth the garland! O what folly is it to do well a while, and by apostacy to undo all! As if a limner with a pencil should draw a fair picture, and then come with his sponge and wipe it out again.

6. Consider the examples of such as have continued their progress unweariably in a Christian course. The apostle sets before our eyes a cloud of witnesses; Heb. xii. 1;

“Being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run the race that is set before us:” let us run it with swiftness and constancy. How many noble martyrs and confessors of old, have walked in the ways of God, though they have been strewed with thorns? They scorned preferments, laughed at imprisonments, and their love to Christ burned hotter than the fire. Polycarp, when he came before the proconsul, and he bade him deny Christ, replied, “I have served Christ these eighty-six years, and he hath not once hurt me, and shall I deny him now?” Tertullian saith, such was the constancy of the primitive saints, that the persecutors cried out, “What a misery is this, that we are more weary in tormenting, than they are in enduring torment!” Let us tread in their steps, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

7. It will be our comfort on our death-bed, to review a well-spent life. It was Augustin’s wish, that he might have a quiet easy death. If any thing make our pillow easy at death, it will be this, that we have been unweariable in God’s work; this will be a death-bed cordial. Did you ever know any repent at death that they had been too holy? Many have repented that they have followed the world too much, not that they have prayed too much, that they have repented too much. What hath made death sweet, but that they have “finished their course, and kept the faith.”

8. Think of the great reward we shall have, if we do not give over, or grow weary, and that is, glory and immortality. 1. This glory is ponderous; it is called a “weight of glory,” 2 Cor. iv. 17. The weight adds to the worth; the weightier a crown of gold is, the more it is worth. 2. It is satisfying, Ps. xvii. 15., “I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness.” This glory will abundantly recompense all our labours and sufferings. The joy of harvest will make amends for all the labour in sowing. O what harvest shall the saints reap! It will be always reaping time in heaven; and this reaping will be in due season; so the apostle saith in the text, “We shall reap in due season.” The husbandman doth not desire to reap till the

season; he will not reap his corn while it is green, but when it is ripe; so we shall reap the reward of glory in due season; when our work is done,—when our sins are purged out,—when our graces are come to their full growth,—then is the season of reaping; therefore let us not be weary of well-doing, but hold on in prayer, reading, and all the exercises of religion; we shall “reap in due season, if we faint not.” To keep us from fainting, know, that the reward promised is very near, Rom. xiii. 11., “Our salvation is nearer than when we believed.” We are but within a few days march of the heavenly Canaan; it is but a few more prayers and tears shed, and we shall be perfect in glory: as that martyr, Dr. Taylor said, “I have but one stile more to go over, and I shall be at my Father’s house.” Stay but a while, Christians, and your trouble shall be over, and your coronation-day shall come. Christ who is the oracle of truth hath said, “surely I come quickly,” Rev. xxii. 20. And yet death’s coming is sooner than Christ’s personal coming, and then begins the saint’s blessed jubilee.

QUEST. *What means shall we use, that we may not wax weary in a Christian course.*

Ans. 1. Let us shake off spiritual sloth; sloth saith, “there is a lion in the way.” He who is slothful, will soon grow weary; he is fitter to lie on his couch, than to run a race. It is a strange sight, to see a busy devil, and an idle Christian.

Ans. 2. If we would not grow weary, let

us pray for persevering grace. It was David’s prayer, Ps. cxix. 117., “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe;” and it was Beza’s prayer, “Lord, perfect what thou hast begun in me.” That we may hold on a Christian course, let us labour for three persevering graces. Faith keeps from fainting; faith gives a substance to things not seen, and makes them to be as it were present, Heb. xi. As a perspective glass makes those things which are at a distance near to the eye, so doth faith: heaven, and glory seem near. A Christian will not be weary of service, that hath the crown in his eye. The second persevering grace is hope. Hope animates the spirits: it is to the soul as cork to the net, which keeps it from sinking. Hope breeds patience, and patience breeds perseverance. Hope is compared to an anchor, Heb. vi. 19. The Christian never sins, but when he casts away his anchor. The third persevering grace is love. Love makes a man that he is never weary. Love may be compared to the rod of myrtle in the traveller’s hand, which refresheth him, and keeps him from being weary in his journey. He who loves the world, is never weary of following the world; he who loves God will never be weary of serving him; that is the reason why the saints and angels in heaven are never weary of praising and worshipping God; because their love to God is perfect, and love turns service into delight. Get the love of God in your hearts, and you will run in his ways, and not be weary.

SERMON V.

JAMES iv. 17. “*To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin.*”

THE apostle, in the former verses, had met with a sin common in those days, a sinful boasting among men, ver. 13, 14., “Go to now, ye that say, to-day or to-morrow, we will go into such a city, and buy and sell, and get gain; whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow,”—you may be in your graves before to-morrow,—“for what is your life? It is even a vapour.” A vapour being an exhalation, it

cannot continue long; as it is raised by the sun so it is dispersed by the wind; such is your life,—a vapour,—a short breath,—a flying shadow,—it appears for “a little time, and then vanisheth.” Well might they say, what need we be taught such a plain lesson? Who knows not all this, that life is a vapour, and that we ought not to boast what we will do to-morrow? The apostle seems in the text to meet with them