

blessing and praising God; ascribe all to the riches of God's love; set the crown upon the head of free grace. God hath done more for you than if he had made you kings and queens; though you have not so much of the world as others, you are happier than the greatest monarchs upon earth; and, I dare say, you would not change with them. The apostles seldom speak of the new creation, but they join some thankful praises with it, 1 Pet. i. 3., "Blessed be

God, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope." Col. i. 12., "Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet for the inheritance in light." The new creature is a sign of election, a badge of adoption. What distinguishing love is this, that God should make any of us new creatures, when he hath left the greatest part of the world to perish in their sins! Such as are patterns of mercy, should be trumpets of praise.

### SERMON III.

JAMES iii. 6. "*And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.*"

THE apostle James in this scripture, describes the evil of the tongue, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity."

1. "It is a fire." It burns with intemperate heat; it causeth the heat of contention; it sets others in a flame.

2. "A world of iniquity." It was at first made to be an organ of God's praise, but it is become an instrument of unrighteousness. All the members of the body are sinful, as there is bitterness in every branch of wormwood, but the tongue is excessively sinful, "full of deadly poison," v. 8.

*Doctrine.* The tongue, though it be a little member, yet it hath a world of sin in it; the tongue is an unruly evil. I shall shew you some of the evils of the tongue.

1. The evil tongue is the silent tongue; it is wholly mute in matters of religion; it never speaks of God or of heaven, as if it cleaved to the roof of the mouth. Men are fluent and discursive enough in other things, but in matters of religion their lips are sealed up. If we come into some people's company, we do not know what religion they are of, whether Jews or Mahometans, for they never speak of Christ; they are like the man in the gospel, who was possessed with a dumb spirit, Mark ix. 17.

2. The evil tongue is the earthly tongue; men talk of nothing but the world, as if all their hopes were here, and they looked for an earthly eternity; these have earthly minds, John iii. 31., "He that is of the earth, speaketh of the earth."

3. The evil tongue is the hasty or angry tongue; they have no command of passions, but are carried away with them, as a chariot with wild horses. I know there is an holy anger, when we are angry with sin: Christ had this anger when they made the temple a place of merchandise, John ii. 15. That anger is without sin, which is against sin; but that is an evil tongue, which is presently blown up into exorbitant passion; this 'tongue is set on fire from hell.' A wrathful spirit is unsuitable to the gospel; it is a gospel of peace, and its author is the Prince of Peace, and it is sealed by the Spirit, who came in the form of a dove, a meek peaceable creature. Thou who art given much to passion, whose tongue is often set on fire, take heed thou dost not one day in hell desire a drop of water to cool thy tongue.

4. The evil tongue is the vain tongue, that vents itself in idle words: Ps. x. 7., "Under his tongue is vanity." A vain tongue shews a light heart; a good man's words are weighty and prudent; his lips are as a tree of life to feed many; his speech is edifying, Prov. x. 20., "The tongue of the just is as choice silver." But, Prov. xv. 2., "The mouth of fools pours out foolishness." How many idle away the day of grace in frivolous discourses? A wise man's words are like gold, weighty, and will sink into the hearts of others; but the words of many are light and feathery and will make no impression, Mat. xii. 36. "Every idle word that men shall speak,

they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment."

5. The evil tongue is the censorious tongue, James iv. 12., "Who art thou that judgest another?" Some make it a part of their religion to judge and censure others; they do not imitate their graces, but censure their failings; such an one is an hypocrite; this comes from pride. Were men's hearts more humble, their tongues would be more charitable. The censurer sits in the chair of pride, and passeth sentence upon another, and doth reprobate him; this is to usurp God's prerogative, and take his work out of his hands; it is God's work to judge, not ours. He who spends his time in censuring others, spends but little time in examining himself; he doth not see his own faults. There is not a greater sign of hypocrisy, than to be over hasty in judging and censuring persons.

6. The evil tongue is the slanderous tongue, Ps. l. 20., "Thou sittest and slanderest thy own mother's son." Slandering is when we speak to the prejudice of another, and speak that which is not true. Worth and eminency are commonly blasted by slander; holiness itself is no shield from slander: "John Baptist came neither eating nor drinking, yet they say he hath a devil," Mat. xi. Come and let us smite him with the tongue. A slanderer wounds another's fame, and no physician can heal these wounds. The sword doth not make so deep a wound as the tongue. The Greek word for slanderer, signifies devil. Some think it is no great matter to belie and defame another; but know, this is to act the part of a devil. The slanderer's tongue is a two-edged sword, it wounds two at once; while the slanderer wounds another in his name, he wounds himself in his conscience. This is contrary to scripture, James iv. 11., "Speak not evil one of another." God takes this ill at our hands, to speak evil of others, especially such as are eminently holy, and help to bear up the honour of religion: Num. xii. 8., "Were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" What! my servant who hath wrought so many miracles,—whom I have spoken with in the mount face to face,—were not ye afraid to speak against him? So will God say,

Take heed of this, it is a sin our nature is very prone to; and remember, it is no less sin to rob another of his good name, than to steal his goods or wares out of his shop.

7. The evil tongue is the unclean tongue, that vents itself in filthy and scurrilous words, Eph. iv. 29., "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth" A sign of a great distemper, that the fever is high, when the tongue is black: a sign men's hearts are very evil, when such black words come from them.

8. The evil tongue is the lying tongue, Col. iii. 9., "Lie not one to another." The Cretians were noted for liars; Tit. i. 12., "The Cretians are alway liars." It becomes not Christians to be Cretians. Nothing is more contrary to God than a lie; it shews much irreligion; lying is a sin that doth not go alone, it ushers in other sins. Absalom told his father a lie, that he was going to pay his vow at Hebron, 2 Sam. xv. 7., and this lie was a preface to his treason. Lying is such a sin, as takes away all society and converse with men; how can you have converse with him, that you cannot trust a word he saith? It is a sin so sordid, that when the liar is convicted, he is ashamed. God's children have this character, they are "children that will not lie," Isa. lxiii. 8., the new nature in them will not suffer them. The liar is near a-kin to the devil, and the devil will shortly claim kindred with him, John viii. 44., "The devil is a liar, and the father of it." He seduced our first parents by a lie, Gen. iii. 4. How doth this sin incense God? He struck Ananias dead for telling a lie, Acts v. 5. The furnace of hell is heated to throw liars into, Rev. xxii. 15., "Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

9. The evil tongue is the flattering tongue, that will speak fair to one's face, but will defame, Prov. xxvi. 24., "He that hateth, dissembleth with his lips." When he speaketh fair, believe him not; dissembled love is worse than hatred. Some can commend and reproach, flatter and hate,—honey in their mouths, but a sting of malice in their hearts: better are the wounds of a friend, than the kisses of such an enemy. Hierom saith, "the Arian faction pretended friend-

ship; they (saith he) kissed my hands, but slandered me and sought my ruin." Many have dissembling tongues, they can say, your servant, and lay snares, Prov. xxix. 5., "A man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet." You oft think you have a friend in your bosom, but he proves a viper. To dissemble love is no better than to lie; for there is a pretence of that love which is not. Many are like Joab, 2 Sam. xx. 9., "And Joab said to Amasa, art thou in health, my brother? And he took him by the beard to kiss him, and he smote him in the fifth rib that he died." For my part, I must question his truth towards God, that will flatter and lie to his friend. God will bring such an one to shame at last, Prov. xxvi. 26., "Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation."

10. The evil tongue is the tongue given to boasting, James iii. 5., "The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things." There is an holy boasting, Ps. xlv. 8., "In God we boast all the day," when we triumph in his power and mercy: but it is a sinful boasting, when men display their trophies, boast of their own worth and eminency, that others may admire and cry them up; a man's self is his idol, and he loves to have this idol worshipped, Acts v. 36., "There arose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody." Sinful boasting is when men boast of their sins, Ps. lii. 1., "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man?" Some boast how wicked they have been; how many they have made drunk; how many they have deflowered; as if a beggar should boast of his sores; or a thief boast of being burnt in the hand; such as boast of their sinful exploits, will have little cause to rejoice, or hang up their trophies when they come to hell.

11. The evil tongue is the swearing tongue, Mat. v. 34., "Swear not at all." The scripture allows an oath for the ending of a controversy, and to clear the truth, Heb. vi. 16.; but in ordinary discourse to use an oath, and so to take God's name in vain, is sinful. Swearing may be called "the unfruitful works of darkness," there is neither pleasure nor profit in it: it is like an hook the fish comes to without a

bait, Jer. xxiii. 10., "Because of swearing the land mourneth." Some think it the grace of their speech; but, if God will reckon with men for idle words, what will he do for sinful oaths?

OBJ. *But it is only a petty oath, they swear by their faith?*

Ans. Sure they which have so much faith in their mouth, have none in their heart. "But it is my custom:" Is this an excuse, or an aggravation of the sin? If a malefactor should be arraigned for robbing, and he should say to the judge, spare me, it is my custom to rob on the highway; the judge would say, thou shalt the rather die. For every oath thou swearest, God puts a drop of wrath into his vial.

OBJ. *But—may some think—what though now and then I swear an oath? Words are but wind.*

Ans. But they are such a wind as will blow thee into hell, without repentance.

12. The railing tongue is an evil tongue: this is a plague-sore breaking out at the tongue, when we give opprobrious language. When the dispute was between the archangel and the devil about the body of Moses, Jude, ver. 9., "The archangel durst not bring a railing accusation against him, but said, the Lord rebuke thee." The archangel durst not rail against the devil. Railing oft ends in reviling, and so men bring themselves into a premunire, and are "in danger of hell fire," Mat. v. 22.

13. The seducing tongue is an evil tongue. The tongue that by fine rhetoric decoys men into error, Rom. xvi. 18., "By fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." A fair tongue can put off bad wares; error is bad ware, which a seducing tongue can put off. The deceit lies in this; a smooth tongue can make error look so like truth, that you can hardly know them asunder; as thus, in justification, Christ bears infinite love to justified persons; this is a glorious truth, but under this notion, the Antinomian presseth *libertinism*; believers may take more liberty to sin, and God sees no sin in them. Thus, by crying up justification, they destroy sanctification; here is the seducing tongue; and error is as dangerous as vice; one may die by poison as well as by a pistol.

14. The evil tongue is the cruel tongue, that speaks to the wounding the hearts of others. The tongue is made almost in the fashion of a sword; and the tongue is sharp as a sword, Ps. lvii. 4., "Their tongue is a sharp sword." Kind, loving words should be spoken to such as are of a heavy heart, Job vi. 14., "To him that is afflicted pity should be shown." Healing words are fittest for a broken heart: but that is a cruel, unmerciful tongue, which speaks such words to the afflicted, as to cut them to the heart, Ps. lxxix. 26., "They talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded." Hannah was a woman of a troubled spirit, 1 Sam. i. 10. "She was in bitterness of soul, and wept sore." And now Eli, ver. 14., "Said unto her, how long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee." This word was like pouring vinegar into the wound. When Job was afflicted with God's hand, his friends, instead of comforting him, told him he was an hypocrite, Job xi. 2. These were cutting words, which went to his heart: instead of giving him cordials in his fainting, they use corrosives. This is to lay more weight upon a dying man.

15. The evil tongue is the murmuring tongue, Jude 16., "These are murmurers." Murmuring is discontent breaking out at the lips; men quarrel with God, and tax his providence as if he had not dealt well with them. Why should any murmur or be discontented at their condition? Doth God owe them any thing? Or, can they deserve any thing at his hands? O, how uncomely is it to murmur at providence! It is fittest for a Cain to be wroth with God, Gen. iv. 6. (1.) Murmuring proceeds from unbelief. When men distrust God's promise, then they murmur at his providence, Ps. cvi. 24, 25., "They believed not his word, but murmured." When faith grows low, then passion grows high. (2.) Murmuring proceeds from pride. Men think they have deserved better; and, because they are crossed, therefore they utter discontented expressions against God. He who is humble bears any thing from God; he knows his punishment is less than his sin, therefore saith, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord," Micah vii. 9. But

pride raises discontent; and hence comes murmurings. Murmuring is a sin that God cannot bear, Numb. xiv. 27., "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation that murmur against me?" The murmurer discovers much ingratitude; a murmuring tongue is always an unthankful tongue; he considers not how much he is a debtor to free grace, and whatever he hath is more than God owes him; he considers not that his mercies outweigh his afflictions; there's more honey than wormwood in his cup; he considers not what God hath done for him, more than such as are better than he; he hath the finest of wheat, when others feed, as Daniel, on pulse. The murmurer, I say, doth not consider this; but, because he is crossed in some small matter, he repines against God. O ingratitude! Israel, though they had manna from heaven, to satisfy their hunger, angel's food, yet murmured for want of quails; not content that God should supply their want, but must satisfy their lust too. O unthankful! Israel's murmuring cost many of them their lives, 1 Cor. x. 10., "Neither murmur ye, as some of them did, and were destroyed of the destroyer." Their speeches were venomous, and God punished them with venomous serpents.

16. The evil tongue is the scoffing tongue. The scoffer sits in the chair of scorn, and derides religion; surely the devil hath taken great possession of men, when they have arrived at such a degree of sin, as to scoff at holiness. It was foretold as a sin of the last times, 2 Pet. iii. 3., "There shall come in the last days scoffers." Some scoff at the authority of scripture, the Deity of Christ, the immortality of the soul; this is the worst sort of tongues. When men have laid aside the veil of modesty, and their consciences are seared, then they fall a scoffing at religion; and when once they are come to this, their case is desperate; no reproofs will reclaim them; tell them of their sin, and they will hate you the more, Prov. ix. 8., "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee." Such a man is on the threshold of damnation.

17. The evil tongue is the tongue given to cursing, Ps. x. 7., "His mouth is full of cursing:" a wishing some great evil to be-



fal another; cursing is the scum that boils off from a wicked heart. Though it is true, the curse causeless shall not come,—it is not in man's power to make another cursed,—yet to wish a curse is a fearful sin. If to hate our brother be murder, 1 John iii. 15.; then to curse him, which is the highest degree of hatred, must needs be murder. To use an execration or curse, is for a man to do what in him lies, to damn another. Some wish a curse upon themselves: so the Jews, “his blood be upon us,” &c. And so do your “God damn-me's,” as if damnation did not come fast enough, Ps. cix. 17., “As he loved cursing so let it come to him.”

18. The evil tongue is the unjust tongue; that will for a piece of money open its mouth in a bad cause. The lawyer hath *linguam venalem*, a tongue that will be sold for money, Ps. lxxxii. 2., “How long will you judge unjustly?” Some will plead any cause, though never so bad: though it appears the deeds are forged, the witnesses bribed, there's perjury in the cause; yet they will plead it. When a man pleads a bad cause he is the devil's attorney: as God hates false weights, so a false cause. Better be born dumb, than open one's mouth in a bad cause. O what times are we in! Many pervert justice, and, for enriching themselves, overthrow a righteous cause; these are worse than they that rob, for they fleece men's estates under a colour of law, and ruin them under a pretence of doing justice.

Use 1. Branch 1. See what a blow we have sustained by the fall; it hath put out of frame the whole course of nature. Original sin hath diffused itself as a poison into all the members of the body; it hath made the eye unchaste,—the hands full of bribes,—amongst the rest it hath defiled the tongue, “it is a world of iniquity.” That which was made to be the organ of God's praise, is become a weapon of unrighteousness.

Branch 2. If there be so much evil in the tongue, what is the heart? If the stream be so full of water, how full of water is the fountain? If there be a world of iniquity in the tongue, how many worlds of sin are there in the heart? Ps. v. 9. “Their in-

ward part is very wickedness.” If the tongue, which is the outward part, be so wicked, the inward part is very wickedness, Ps. lxiv. 6., “The heart is deep;” it is such a deep as cannot be fathomed; deep pride, hypocrisy, atheism. The heart is like the sea, where is the leviathan, and creeping things innumerable, Ps. civ. If the skin hath boils of leprosy in it, how much corruption is in the blood? If the tongue be so bad, how diabolical is the heart? It is the heart sets the tongue a-work: “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:” There are the seeds of all atheism and blasphemy, Mat. xv. 19, 20., “Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries; these defile a man.” If a branch of wormwood be so bitter, then how bitter is the root? O, what a root of bitterness grows in a man's heart! Some say they have good hearts; but if the tongue be so bad, what is the heart? If I see a smoke come out of the top of a chimney, what a fire burns within? Prov. vi. 12, 14., “A wicked man walketh with a froward mouth; frowardness is in his heart.” Solomon shews the reason why the mouth is so froward, “Frowardness is in his heart.” The heart is a store-house of wickedness, therefore called the “evil treasure of the heart,” Mat. xii. 35. Original righteousness was a good treasure, but we were robbed of that; and now there is an evil treasure of sin. The word treasure, denotes plenty; to shew the fulness and abundance of sin that is in the heart. The heart is a lesser hell, which is a matter of deep humiliation; the heart is, like the Egyptian temples, full of spiders and serpents.

Use 2. Of reproof. It reproves such as abuse their tongues in all manner of evil speaking, lying, slandering, rash anger. The heart is a vessel full of sin, and the tongue sets it abroad. O how fast do men's tongues gallop in sin! They say, they give God their hearts; but let the devil take possession of their tongues, Ps. xii. 4., “Our lips are our own, who is the Lord over us?” Who hath any thing to do with our words? Who shall control us? Who is our lord? There is no engine the devil makes more use of than the tongue; what errors, contentions, impieties, have been

propagated this way, to the dishonour of the High God! David calls his tongue his glory, Ps. lvii. 8., "Awake my glory." Why did he call his tongue his glory, but because by it he did set forth God's glory in praising him? But a wicked man's tongue is not his glory, but his shame; with his tongue he wounds the glory of God; "it is set on fire of hell."

*Use 3. Confutation.* Branch 1. It confutes the Catharists and Perfectists, that plead for perfection in this life. If the tongue hath so many evils in it, how are they perfect? Prov. xx. 9., "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from sin?" He makes a challenge to all the world. But the Perfectist saith, he is pure from sin: like Isidore the monk, *Non habeo Domine, quod mihi ignoscas*: I have nothing, Lord, for thee to pardon. If pure and perfect, then they put Christ out of office, he hath nothing to do for them as an advocate, they have no need of his intercession: but, Eccl. vii. 20., "There is not a just man upon earth, that doth good, and sinneth not;" how proud and supercilious are they who hold they are perfect, when the holiest men alive, at some time or other, offend in their tongues? There is no perfection on this side the grave.

Branch 2. It confutes the Arminians, those patrons of free-will: they say, they have power to their own salvation,—they can change their heart. The apostle saith, "the tongue can no man tame," James iii. 8. If they cannot bridle their tongue, how can they conquer their will? If they cannot master this little member, how can they change their nature?

*Use 4. Caution.* Take heed to your tongue; have a care that ye offend not with your tongue, Ps. xxxiv. 14., "Keep thy tongue from evil." Ps. xxxix. 1., "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue." An hard lesson! Pambas said he was above twenty years learning that scripture, not to offend with his tongue. The tongue is an unruly member; God hath set a double hedge before the tongue, the teeth and lips, to keep it within its bounds, that it do not speak vainly. O look to your tongue! When a city is besieged, he that keeps the gates of

the city, keeps the whole city safe; so if you keep the gates or doors of your mouth, you keep your whole soul.

*Rules for the well ordering and regulating your words, or the governing of your tongue, that you do not dishonour God therewith.*

*1st Rule.* If you would have better tongues, labour for better hearts. It is the heart hath influence upon the tongue. If the heart be vain and earthly, the tongue will be so; if the heart be holy, the tongue will be so. Look to thy heart, get a better heart, and a better tongue.

*QUEST. How shall I get my heart bettered?*

*Ans.* Get a principle of grace infused. Grace is like the salt east into the spring; grace changeth the heart, and sanctifies all the members of the body,—it sanctifies the eyes, and makes them chaste,—it sanctifies the tongue, and makes it meek and calm. When the Holy Ghost came upon the apostles, "they began to speak with other tongues," Acts ii. 4: when God's Spirit comes on a man with a sanctifying work, he speaks with another tongue; the speech is heavenly. Grace makes the heart serious, and that cures the levity of the tongue; when the heart is serious, the words are savoury.

*2d Rule.* If you would not sin in your tongue, call to mind how you have formerly offended in your tongue, and that will make you more watchful for the future. Have not you spoken words that have savoured of discontent or envy? Have not you been guilty of censuring and slandering? Have not you been disgusted with passion? Hath not your tongue out-run your discretion? Have not you spoken words that you have been sorry for afterwards, and have caused either shame or tears? O observe former failings, how you have sinned in your tongue, and that will be a good help for the future! David certainly made a critical observation upon some of his words, wherein he had offended: words of pride, Ps. xxx. 6., "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved." And, Ps. cxvi. 11., "I said in my haste all men are liars;" even Samuel, and all the prophets who promised me the kingdom, they are all liars; and I shall die before I can come to enjoy it. David having observed how he had of-

fended in his tongue, he is more careful of his words, and made a strict vow with himself, that he would look better to them, Ps. xxxix. 1., "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue." Look to the former slips of your tongue, and how you have by your words provoked God, and that will be a good means to make you more cautious for the future. A mariner that hath twice touched upon a rock, and been like to be cast away, will be more careful how he comes there again.

**3d Rule.** Watch your tongue: most sin is committed for want of watchfulness. As the tongue hath a double fence set about it, so it had need have a double watch. The tongue, when it is let loose, will be ready to speak loosely; watch it, lest it run beyond its bounds in frothy and sinful discourse, Prov. xxx. 32., "If thou hast thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy mouth:" that is—say some—lay thy hand upon thy mouth, in token of repentance. But it may bear another sense: if thou hast thought evil, if angry malicious thoughts come into thy mind, lay thy hand upon thy mouth to stop thy lips, that thy thoughts come not into words.

**4th Rule.** If you would not offend in your tongue, ponder your words well before you speak, Eccl. v. 2., "Be not rash with thy mouth." Some speak vainly, because inconsiderately; they do not weigh their words before they speak them. A talkative man doth not mind his words, but gives his tongue liberty; he may speak not only unadvisedly, but unholily, and give just offence.

**5th Rule.** If you would not offend in your tongue, pray to God to guard your tongue, Ps. cxli. 3., "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth." Set not about this work in your own strength, but implore God's help; "the tongue can no man tame," James iii. 8. But God can tame it; therefore go to him by prayer; pray, 'Lord, set a watch before the door of my lips;' keep me, that I may speak nothing to grieve thy Spirit, or that may tend to thy dishonour.

**6th Rule.** If you would be kept from evil speaking, inure your tongues to good speaking. If you would not have the cask

have a bad scent, put good liquor into it; so, if you would not have your tongue run out sinfully, let it be used to good discourse; speak often one to another of Christ, and the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. The spouse's lips dropped as an honey-comb, Cant. iv. 11.

**MOTIVES.** To beware of tongue sins.

**1st Motive.** If you have no care of your tongue, all your religion is vain, James i. 26. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, this man's religion is vain." Many an one will hear the word, and make a profession of religion, but cares not what liberty he takes in his tongue, to reproach and vilify others: this man's religion is vain; that is, 1. He hath no religion, his religion is but a shew or pretence. 2. It is vain, because it is ineffectual; it hath not that force upon him as religion ought.

**2d Motive.** The tongue discovers much of the heart; such as the tongue is, such commonly the heart is. A lascivious tongue shews a lustful heart; an earthly tongue a covetous heart; a murmuring tongue a discontented heart. The tongue is oft a commentary upon the heart.

**3d Motive.** To allow ourselves in the abuse of the tongue, cannot stand with grace. I know a good man may sometimes speak unadvisedly with his lips; he may fly out in words, be in a passion, but he doth not allow himself in it; when his passion is over, he weeps, Rom. vii. 15., "that which I do, I allow not:" but, for a man to allow himself in sin, censuring, slandering, dropping words like coals of fire; sure it is not consistent with grace.

**4th Motive.** The sins of the tongue are very defiling, James iii. 6., The tongue defileth. Defiling to one's self, and chiefly defiling to others. The tongue conveys poison into the ear of another; sometimes by false suggestions, raising prejudices in the mind of another against such a person; sometimes by passionate speeches, the spirit of another is provoked.

**5th Motive.** The sins of the tongue are provoking to God, and prejudicial to us. 1. Provoking to God; Ps. cvi. 33. Moses spake unadvisedly with his lips; what was this unadvised speech? Numb. xx 10.,

“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