

A

**TREATISE OF DEATH,**  
**THE LAST ENEMY TO BE DESTROYED.**

SHOWING WHEREIN ITS ENMITY CONSISTETH,  
AND HOW IT IS DESTROYED.

*Part of it was preached at the Funeral of Elizabeth, the late wife of Mr.  
Joseph Baker, Pastor of the Church at St. Andrew's in Worcester.*

With some few Passages of the Life of the said Mrs. Baker, observed.

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“In whose eyes a vile person is contemned : but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.”—Psalm xv. 4.

“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory! The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”—1 Cor. xv. 55—57.



TO THE WORSHIPFUL  
THE  
MAYOR, ALDERMEN, AND SHERIFF  
OF THE  
CITY OF WORCESTER;  
WITH  
THE REST OF THE INHABITANTS; ESPECIALLY THOSE OF  
THE PARISHES OF ANDREW'S AND HELEN'S.

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WORSHIPFUL, AND THE REST BELOVED,

THE chief part of this following discourse being preached among you, and that upon an occasion which you are obliged to consider, (Isaiah lvii. 1,) being called, to publish it, I thought it meet to direct it first to your hands, and to take this opportunity plainly and seriously to exhort you in some matters that your present and everlasting peace is much concerned in.

Credible fame reporteth you to be a people not all of one mind or temper in the matters of God; but that, 1. some of you are godly, sober, and peaceable; 2. some well-meaning and zealous, but addicted to divisions; 3. some papists; 4. some hidiers, seduced by your late deceased neighbour Clement Writer, (to whom the quakers do approach in many opinions); 5. And too many profane and obstinate persons, that are heartily and seriously of no religion, but take occasion, from the divisions of the rest, to despise or neglect the ordinances of God, and join themselves to no assemblies.

1. To the first sort (having least need of my exhortation) I say no more, but "as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. And beware lest any man spoil you by deceit," &c. (Col. ii. 6—8.) Walk as "a chosen genera-

tion, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; to show forth the praises of him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation; for so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." (1 Pet. ii. 9, 12, 15.) Your labour and patience is known to the Lord, and how ye cannot bear them which are evil, but have tried them which say they speak from the Lord, and are apostles, and are not, and have found them liars; even the woman Jezebel, that is suffered to teach and seduce the people, calling herself a prophetess, who shall be cast into a bed of tribulation, and all that commit adultery with her, except they repent; and her children shall be killed with death; and all the churches shall know that Christ is he who searcheth the reins and hearts, and will give to every one according to their work. As for yourselves, we put upon you no other burden but that which you have already; hold fast till the Lord come. (Rev. ii.) Be watchful that ye fall not from your first love. And if any have declined, and grown remiss, remember how you have received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent, and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die, lest your candlestick should be removed." (Rev. iii. 2, 3, &c.) And "beware, lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. iii. 17, 18.) And I beseech you, brethren, "do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, amongst whom you and your brethren shine as lights in the world." (Phil. ii. 14, 15.) And if in well-doing you suffer, think it not strange, but rejoice that ye are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you, being glorified on your part, while he is evil spoken of on theirs." (1 Pet. iv. 12—14.)

2. To the second sort, inclinable to divisions, let me tender the counsel of the Holy Ghost. "My brethren, be not many masters (or teachers), knowing that ye shall receive the greater

condemnation. The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, and then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy; and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (Jam. iii. 1, 17, 18.) "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you, let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish,—for where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work." (Jam. iii. 13—16.) Look on those assemblies where the people, possessing the fear of God, are of one heart and mind, and walk together in love and holy order, and people give due honour and obedience to their faithful guides, and compare them with the congregations where professors are self-conceited, unruly, proud, and addicted to ostentation of themselves, and to divisions; and see which is likeliest to the primitive pattern, and in which it is that the power of godliness prospereth best, and the beauty of religion most appears, and Christians walk as Christians indeed. If pride had not brought the heavy judgment of infatuation or insensibility on many, the too clear discoveries of the fruits of divisions, in the numerous and sad experiences of this age, would have caused them to be abhorred as odious and destructive, by those that now think they do but transcend their lower brethren in holiness and zeal. "Now I beseech you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together, in the same mind, and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. i. 10.) "The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God." (Rom. xv. 5, 6.) "And I beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake, and be at peace among yourselves." (1 Thess. v. 12, 13.) And "mark them that cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." (Rom. xvi. 17.) And "if there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye our joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one

accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things (his own gifts and graces), but every man also on the things (the graces and gifts) of others; let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, (or emptied himself of all worldly glory." (Phil. ii. 1—7.) As if he had had no form or comeliness, and no beauty to the eye, for which we should desire him; but was despised and rejected of men, and not esteemed. (Isa. liii. 2—4.) It is not-(as you imagine) your extraordinary knowledge, zeal, and holiness, that inclineth you to divisions, and to censuring of your brethren: but it is pride and ignorance, and want of love. And if you grow to any ripeness in knowledge, humility, self-denial, and charity, you will bewail your dividing inclinations and courses, and reckon them among the greater and grievous of your sins, and cry out against them as much as your more charitable and experienced brethren do.

3. To the third sort (the papists) I shall say nothing here, because I cannot expect they should read it and consider it: and because we are so far disagreed in our principles, that we cannot treat with them on those rational terms as we may do with the rest of the inhabitants of the world, whether Christians, infidels, or heathens. As long as they build their faith and salvation on this supposition, that the eyes, and taste, and feeling of all the sound men in the world are deceived, in judging of bread and wine; and as long as they deny the certain experience of true believers, (telling us that we are void of charity and unjustified, because we are not of their church;) and as long as they fly from the judgment and tradition of the ancient and present church, (unless their small part may be taken for the whole, or the major vote;) and as long as they reject our appeal to the holy Scriptures; I know not well what we can say to them, which we can expect they should regard, any more than music is regarded by the deaf, or light by the blind, or argument by the distracted. If they had the moderation and charity impartially to peruse our writings, I durst confidently promise the recovery of multitudes of them, by the three writings which I have already published, and the more that others have said against them.

4. And for the fourth sort (the hidiers and the quakers), I

have said enough to them already in my book against infidelity, and those against popery and quakers; but in vain to those that have sinned unto death.

5. It is the fifth sort, therefore, that I shall chiefly address my speech to, who, I fear, are not the smallest part. It is an astonishing consideration to men that are awake, to observe the unreasonableness and stupidity of the ignorant, careless, sensual part of men, how little they love or fear the God whom their tongues confess; how little they value, or mind, or seek the everlasting glory which they take on them to believe; how little they fear and shun those flames which must feed for ever on the impenitent and unholy; how little they care or labour for their immortal souls, as if they were of the religion of their beasts; how bitterly many of them hate the holy ways commanded by the Lord, while yet they pretend to be themselves his servants, and to take the Scriptures to be his word; how sottishly and contemptuously they neglect and slight the holiness, without which there is no salvation; (Heb. xii. 14;) how eagerly they desire and seek the pleasing of their flesh, and the matters of this transitory life, while they call them vanity and vexation; how madly they will fall out with their own salvation, and, from the errors and sins of hypocrites or others, will pick quarrels against the doctrine, and ordinances, and ways of God; as if other men's faults should be exceeded by you, while you pretend to loathe them. If it be a sin to crack our faith by some particular error, what is it to dash it all to pieces? If it be odious in your eyes to deny some particular ordinance of God, what is it to neglect or profane them all? If it be their sin that quarrel in the way to heaven, and walk not in company, as love requireth them, what is it in you to run towards hell, and turn your backs on the holy laws and ways of God? If it be so lamentable to the nation and themselves, that so many have fallen into schism and disorder, what is it, then, that so many are ungodly, sensual, and worldly, and have no true religion at all in sincerity, and life, and power? Ungodliness is all heresy transcendently in the lump, and that in practice. A man that is so foolish as to plead, that arsenic is better than bread, may yet live himself, if he do not take it; but so cannot he, that eateth it instead of bread. Heretics only in speculation may be saved, but practical heretics cannot. You think it heinous to deny with the mouth, that there is a God, who made us, and is our only Lord and happiness, (and

so it is;) and is it not heinous, then, to deny him with the heart and life, and to deny him the love and obedience that is properly due to God? It is odious idolatry to bow to a creature as to God; and is it not odious to love, and honour, and obey a creature before him, and to seek it more eagerly, and mind it more seriously than God? If it be damnable infidelity to deny Christ to be the Redeemer, is it much less to turn away from him, and make light of him, and refuse his grace, while you seem to honour him? If it be damnable blasphemy to deny the Holy Ghost, what is it to resist and refuse him when he would sanctify you, and, perhaps, to make a scorn of holiness? If it be heresy to deny the holy catholic church, and the communion of saints, what is it to hate the holy members of the church, and to avoid, if not deride, the communion of saints? Be not deceived; God is not mocked; a mock religion and the name of Christianity will never save you. Do you know how near you are to judgment? and will you fearlessly thus heap up wrath, and lay in fuel for the everlasting flames? Do you know how speedily you shall wish, in the bitterness of your souls, that you had heard, and prayed, and laboured as for your lives, and redeemed your time, and obeyed your teachers? and yet will you now stand loitering, and quarrelling, and jesting and dallying in the matters of salvation? and will you live as if you had nothing but the world to mind, when you are even ready to step into the endless world? O sirs, do you know what you are doing? you are abusing the living God, and wronging the Lord Jesus, and trampling upon that mercy which would comfort you in your extremity, a drop of which you would be glad of: you are grieving your poor friends and teachers, and preparing for your endless grief. Alas! what should a faithful minister do for the saving of your souls? He seeth you befooled in your security, and carelessly passing on towards hell, and cannot help it: he sees you posting to your misery, where you will be out of the reach of all our exhortations, and where mercy will not follow you to be accepted or rejected: and though he see you almost past remedy, he cannot help you. He knoweth not, when he speaks to you, whether ever he shall speak unto you more, and whether ever you shall have another call and offer; and, therefore, he would fain speak effectually if he could; but it is not in his power. He knows that the matter sticks all at your own wills; and that if he could but procure your own consent to the most reasonable and necessary business in the world, the



work were done, and you might escape the everlasting flames ; and yet this is it that he cannot procure. Oh ! wonderful, that any man should be damned ; yea, that many men, and most men, should be damned, when they might be saved if they would, and will not. Yea, that no saying will serve to procure their consent, and make them willing. That we must look on our poor miserable neighbours in hell, and say, ‘ They might have been saved once, but would not : they had time and leave to turn to God, and to be holy and happy as well as others ; but we could never prevail with them to consent, and know the day of their visitation.’ Oh ! what should we do for the saving of careless, senseless souls ? Must we let them go ? Is there no remedy ? Shall ministers study to meet with their necessities, and tell them, with all possible plainness and compassion, of the evil that is a little before them, and teach them how they may escape it ? Why, this they do from day to day, and some will not hear them, but are tipping or idling, or making a jest of the preacher at home ; and others are hearing with prejudice and contempt ; and most are hardened into a senseless deadness ; and all seems to them but an empty sound : and they are so used to hear of heaven and hell, that they make as light of them, as if there were no such states. Alas ! that while millions are weeping and wailing in utter desperation for the neglecting of their day of grace, and turning away from him that called them ; our poor hearers at the same time should wilfully follow them, when they are told from God what others suffer. Alas ! that you should be sleepy and dead under those means that should waken you to prevent eternal death ; and that ever you should make merry so near damnation, and be sporting yourselves with the same kind of sins, that others at the same hour are tormented for. And is such madness as this remediless in people that seem as wise as others for worldly things ? Alas ! for any thing that we can do, experience tells us, that with the most it is remediless. Could we remedy it, our poor people should not wilfully run from Christ, and lie in the flames of hell for ever : could our persuasions and entreaties help it, they should not for ever be shut out of heaven, when it is offered to them as well as others. We bewail it from our hearts before the Lord, that we can entreat them no more earnestly, and beg not of them, as for our lives, to look before them, and hearken to the voice of grace, that they may be saved ; and a thousand times, in secret, we call ourselves hard-hearted, unmerciful, and

unfaithful (in too great a measure) that speak no more importunately for the saving of men's souls, when we know not whether we shall ever speak to them any more. Is this all that we can say or do in so terrible a case, and in a matter of such weight as men's salvation? The Lord forgive our great insensibility, and awaken us, that we may be fit to waken others. But yet for all this, with grief, we most complain, that our people feel not when we feel, and that they are senseless or asleep when we speak to them as seriously as we can; and that tears and moans do not prevail; but they go home and live as stupid, in an unconverted state, as if all were well with them, and they were not the men we speak to.

Oh! that you knew what a fearful judgment it is to be forsaken of God, because you would have none of him, and to be given up to your hearts' lust, to walk in your own counsels, because you would not hearken to his voice; (Psalm lxxxii. 11—13;) and to have God say, 'Let those wretches be ignorant, and careless, and fleshly and worldly, and filthy still. (Rev. xxii. 11.) Oh! that you knew (but not by experience) what a heavy plague it is to be so forsaken, as to have eyes that see not, or seeing, do not perceive; and to have ears that hear not, or to hear, and not understand; and so to be unconverted and unhealed; (Mark iv. 12;) and to be hardened and condemned by the word, and patience, and mercies, that do soften and save others, and should have saved you. Take heed lest Christ say, 'I have sent them my messenger long enough in vain; from henceforth never fruit grow on them; because they would not be converted, they shall not.' Take heed, lest he take you away from means, and quickly put an end to your opportunities. You see how fast men pass away, but little do you know how many are lamenting that they made no better use of time, and helps, and mercies, while they had them. Oh! hear while you may hear, for it will not be long; read while you may read, and pray while you may pray, and turn while you may turn; and go to your Christian friends and teachers, and inquire of them, what you must do to be saved, before inquiring be too late. Spend the Lord's-day, and what other time you can redeem, in holy preparations for your endless rest, while you have such a happy day to spend, Oh! sleep no longer in your sins, while God stands over you, lest, before you are aware, you awake in hell. Patience and mercy have their appointed time, and will not always wait and be despised. Oh!

let not your teachers be forced to say, ' We would have taught them publicly and privately, but they would not. We would have catechised the ignorant, and exhorted the negligent, but some of them would not come near us, and others of them gave us but the hearing, and went away such as they came.' If once, by forfeiting the gospel, the teachers whom you slight be taken from you, you may then sin on and take your course, till time, and help, and hope, are past.

The Providence that called me to this work was some warning to you. Though it was a removing of his helper, a pattern of meekness, and godliness, and charity, and he is left the more disconsolate in the prosecution of his work. God hath made him faithful to your souls, and careful for your happiness: he walks before you in humility, and self-denial, and patience, and peaceableness, and inoffensive life; he is willing to teach you publicly and privately in season; he manageth the work of God with prudence and moderation, and yet with zeal; carefully avoiding ungodliness and schism, or the countenancing of either of them. Were he not of eminent wisdom and integrity, his name would not be unspotted in a place where dividers and disputers, papists and quakers, and so many bitter enemies of godliness, do watch for matter of accusation and reproach against the faithful ministers of Christ. As you love the safety and happiness of your city, and of your souls, undervalue not such mercies, nor think it enough to put them off with your commendations and good word; it is not that which they live, and preach, and labour for; but for the conversion, edification, and salvation of your souls. Let them have this or they have nothing, if you should give them all you have. The enemies of the Gospel have no wiser cavil against the painful labourers of the Lord, than to call them hirelings, and blame them for looking after tithes, and great matters in the world. But as among all the faithful ministers of this country, through the great mercy of God, these adversaries are now almost ashamed to open their mouths with an accusation of covetousness, so this your reverend, faithful teacher hath stopped the mouth of all such calumny, as to him. When I invited him from a place of less work, and a competent maintenance, to accept of less than half that maintenance, with a far greater burden of work among you, he never stuck at it, as thinking he might be more serviceable to God, and win that which is better than the riches of this world. And if now you will frustrate his

expectations, and disappoint his labours and hopes of your salvation, it will be easier for Sodom in the day of judgment than for you. Alas! how sad it is to see a faithful minister longing and labouring for men's salvation, and many of them neglect him, and others picking groundless quarrels; and the proud, unruly, selfish part rebelling, and turning their backs upon their teachers whenever they will not humour them in their own ways, or when they deal but faithfully with their souls! Some, even of those that speak against disobedience, conventicles, and schism, turn away in disdain, if their children may not be needlessly baptised in private houses, and if that solemn ordinance may not be celebrated in a parlour conventicle. How many refuse to come to the minister in private to be instructed or catechised, or to confer with him about their necessary preparation for death and judgment! Is not this the case of many among you? Must not your teachers say he sent to you, and was willing to have done his part, and you refused? Little will ye now believe how heavy this will lie upon you one day, and how dear you shall pay for the causeless grieving and disappointment of your guides. It is not your surliness and passions that will then serve turn to answer God. Nor shall it save you to say, that ministers were of so many minds and ways that you knew not which of them to regard; for it was but one way that God in the holy Scripture did prescribe you; and all faithful ministers were agreed in the things which you reject, and in which you practically differ from them all. What! are we not all agreed that God is to be preferred before the world? and that you must first seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness? and that no man can be saved except he be converted and born again? and that he that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his; (Matt. vi. 33; John iii. 3, 5; Matt. xviii. 3; Rom. viii. 9;) and that you and your households should serve the Lord? (Josh. xxiv. 15.) Are we not all agreed that the law of the Lord must be your delight, and that you must meditate in it day and night? (Psalm i. 2, 3;) and that you must be constant and fervent in prayer? (1 Thess. v. 17; Luke xviii. 1, &c.) and that all that name the name of Christ must depart from iniquity; and that if ye live after the flesh ye shall die? (2 Tim. ii. 19; Rom. viii. 13.) You shall find one day that it was you only, and such as you, that practically differed from us in these points; but we differed not in these, or such as these, among ourselves. I never read that a man shall not see God because

he is episcopal, presbyterian, independent, no, nor anabaptist; or because he readeth not his prayers, or such like; but I read that no man shall see God without holiness. (Heb. xii. 14.)

It will not serve your turn in judgment to say that you were for this side, or that side, and, therefore, you hearkened not to the other side, as long as all those sides agree in the necessity of holiness, which you neglect. Why did you not learn of your own side, at least to forsake your tipping, and swearing, and worldly-mindedness, and to make it the daily trade of your lives to provide for life everlasting, and make sure work in the matter of your salvation? If you had learnt but this much of any side, you would cast away your siding more, and have loved and honoured them that feared the Lord, of what side soever, (Psalm xv. 4,) and have contemned the ungodly as vile persons, though they had been of your side. The Catholic church is one, and containeth all that heartily and practically believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, and live a holy, heavenly life. Leave off your siding, and keep this blessed, simple unity, and you will then be wiser than in a passion to cast yourselves into hell, because some fall out in the way to heaven.

Nor will it serve your turn at the bar of God to talk of the miscarriages or scandals of some that took on them to be godly, no more than to run out of the ark for the sake of Hain, or out of Christ's family for the sake of Judas. Whatever men are, God is just, and will do you no wrong; and you are called to believe in God, and to serve him, and not to believe in men. Nothing but wickedness could so far blind men as to make them think they may cast off their love and service to the Lord, because some others have dishonoured him; or that they may cast away their souls by carelessness, because some others have wounded their souls by particular sins. Do you dislike the sins of professors of godliness? So much the better. We desire you not to agree with them in sinning. Join with them in a holy life, and imitate them so far as they obey the Lord; and go as far beyond them in avoiding the sins that you are offended at as you can; and this it is that we desire. Suppose they were covetous, or liars, or schismatical, imitate them in holy duties, and fly as far from covetousness, lying, and schism, as you will.

You have had learned and godly bishops of this city; search

the writings of those of them that have left any of their labours to posterity, and see whether they speak for the same substantial of faith and godliness, which are now preached to you by those that you set so light by. Bishops Latimer, Parrey, Babington, &c., while they were bishops; and Robert Abbot, Hall, &c., before they were bishops, all excellent, learned, godly men, have here been preachers to your ancestors. Read their books, and you will find that they call men to that strictness and holiness of life which you cannot abide. Read your Bishop Babington on the Commandments, and see there how zealously he condemneth the profaners of the Lord's-day, and those that make it a day of idleness or sports. And what if one man think that one bishop should have hundreds of churches under his sole jurisdiction, and another man think that every full parish-church should have a bishop of their own, and that one parish will find him work enough, be he what he will (which is the difference now amongst us,) is this so heinous a disagreement as should frighten you from a holy life, which all agree for?

To conclude, remember, this is the day of your salvation. Ministers are your helpers; Christ and holiness are your way; Scripture is your rule; the godly must be your company; and the communion of saints your desire. If now any scandals, divisions, displeasures, or any seducements of secret or open adversaries of the truth, or temptations of Satan, the world, or flesh whatsoever, shall prevail with you to lose your day, to refuse your mercies, and to neglect Christ and your immortal souls, you are conquered and undone, and your enemy hath his will; and the more confidently and fearlessly you brave it out, the more is your misery, for the harder are your hearts, and the harder is your cure, and the surer and sorer will be your damnation. I have purposely avoided the enticing words of worldly wisdom, and a style that tends to claw your ears, and gain applause with airy wits, and have chosen these familiar words, and deal thus plainly and freely with you, because the greatness of the cause persuaded me I could not be too serious. Whether many of you will read it, and what success it shall have upon them, or how those that read it will take it, I cannot tell; but I know that I intended it for your good; and that whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, the ministers of Christ must not forbear to do their

duty, nor be rebellious themselves ; but our labours shall be acceptable with our Lord, and you shall know that his ministers were among you. (Ezek. ii. 3—8.) “Yet a little while is the light with you : walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you ; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.” (John xii. 35.) Oh, take this warning from Christ, and from

• An earnest desirer of your everlasting peace,

**RICHARD BAXTER.**





A  
**TREATISE OF DEATH,**  
THE  
**LAST ENEMY TO BE DESTROYED.**

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1 CORINTHIANS iv. 26.

*The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*

DEATH is the occasion of this day's meeting; and death must be the subject of our present meditations. I must speak of that which will shortly silence me, and you must hear of that which will speedily stop your ears: and we must spend this hour on that which waits to cut our thread, and take down our glass, and end our time, and tell us we have spent our last. But as it hath now done good by doing hurt, so we are to consider of the accidental benefits, as well as of the natural evil, from which the heavenly wisdom doth extract them. Death hath now bereaved a body of its soul, but thereby it hath sent that soul to Christ, where it hath now experience how good it is to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. (2 Cor. v. 8.) It hath separated a faithful wife from a beloved husband; but it hath sent her to a husband more dearly beloved, and taught her now, by experience, to say, that to be with Christ is best of all. (Phil. i. 23.) It hath deprived a sorrowful husband of a wife, and deprived us of a faithful friend: but it hath thereby brought us to the house of mourning, which is better for us than the house of feasting; (a paradox to the flesh, but an undoubted truth;) for here we may see the end of all men, and we who are yet living may lay it to our hearts. (Eccles. vii. 2, 3.) Yea, it hath brought us to the house of God, and occasioned this serious address to his holiness, that we may be instructed by his word, as we are warned by his works; and that we may be wise to understand, and to consider our latter end. (Deut. xxxii. 29.)

It is like you will think, to tell men of the evil or enmity of death is as needless a discourse as any could be chosen ; for who is there that is not naturally too sensible of this, and who doth not dread the name, or, at least, the face of death ? But there is accidentally a greater evil in it than that which nature teacheth men to fear : and while it is the king of terrors to the world, the most are ignorant of the greatest hurt that it doth them, or can do them ; or, at least, it is but little thought on ; which hath made me think it a needful work to tell you yet of much more evil in that which you abhor as the greatest evil : but so as withal to magnify our Redeemer, who overshooteth death in its own bow ; and causeth it, when it aims at the mark, to miss it ; and which causeth health by loathsome medicines ; and, by the dung of our bodily corruption, manureth his church to the greater felicity.

Such excellent skill of our wise physician we find expressed and exercised in this chapter, where an unhappy error against the resurrection hath happily occasioned an excellent discourse on that weighty subject, which may establish many a thousand souls, and serve to shame and destroy such heresies, till the resurrection come and prove itself. The great argument which the apostle most insisteth on to prove the resurrection, is Christ's own resurrection, where he entereth into a comparison between Christ and Adam ; showing that, as Adam first brought death upon himself, and then upon his posterity, so Christ, who was "made a quickening Spirit," did first rise himself as the first-fruits, and then at his coming will raise his own ; and "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." And this Christ will do as our victorious king, and the captain of our salvation, who, when he hath subdued every enemy, will then deliver up the kingdom to the Father ; and the last enemy which he will subdue is death, and therefore our resurrection is his final conquest.

The terms of the text have no difficulty in them. The doctrine which they express must be thus unfolded :

I. I must show you that death is an enemy, and what is meant by this expression, and wherein its enmity doth consist.

II. I shall show you that it is an enemy to be destroyed, though last, and how, and by what degrees it is destroyed. And then we shall make application of it to your further instruction and edification.

I. That you may know what is meant by an enemy here, you

must observe that man, being fallen into sin and misery, and Christ having undertaken the work of our redemption, the Scripture oft speaketh of our misery and recovery metaphorically in military terms : and so Satan is said to take us captive, and we to be his slaves, and Christ to be the captain of our salvation, and to redeem us from our bondage ; and thus our sin and misery, and all that hindereth the blessed ends of his undertaking, are called enemies. Death, therefore, is called an enemy to be destroyed, that is, a penal evil to be removed by the Redeemer, in order to our recovery, and the glory of his grace. 1. It is an evil. 2. A punishment procured by our sin, and executed by God's justice. 3. It is an evil that hindereth our felicity. These three things are included in the enmity.

That death is an enemy to nature is a thing that all understand : but all consider not how it is an enemy to our souls, to the exercise of grace, and, consequently, to the attainment of glory. I shall, therefore, having first spoken briefly of the former, insist a little longer upon the latter.

1. How great an enemy death is unto nature doth easily appear, in that, 1. It is the dissolution of the man. It maketh a man to become no man, by separating the soul from the body, and dissolving the body into its principles. It pulls down in a moment a curious frame that nature was long building and tenderly cherishing and preserving. The mother long nourisheth it in her bowels, and painfully brings it forth, and carefully brings it up. What labour doth it cost our parents and ourselves to make provision for this life, and death in a moment cuts it off. How careful are we to keep in these lamps, and to maintain the oil, and death extinguisheth them at a blast. How noble a creature doth it destroy ! To-day our parts are all in order, and busy about their several tasks ; our hearts are moving, our lungs are breathing, our stomachs are digesting, our blood and spirits by assimilation making more ; and to-morrow death takes off the poise, and all stands still, or draws the pins, and all the frame doth fall to pieces. We shall breathe no more, nor speak, nor think, nor walk no more : our pulse will beat no more ; our eyes shall see the light no more ; our ears shall hear the voice of man, delightful sounds, and melody, no more ; we shall taste no more our meat or drink ; our appetite is gone ; our strength is gone ; our natural warmth is turned into an

earthy cold ; our comeliness and beauty is turned into a ghastly, loathsome deformity ; our white and red doth soon turn into horrid blackness ; our tender flesh hath lost its feeling, and is become a senseless lump which feeleth not whither it is carried, nor how it is used ; that must be hidden in the earth, lest it annoy the living, that turns to loathsome putrefaction, and after that to common earth. Were all the once comely bodies which are now rotting in one churchyard uncovered, and here presented to your view, the sight would tell you, more effectually than my words do, what an enemy death is to our nature. When corruption hath finished its work, you see the earth which once was flesh ; you see the bones ; you see the skulls ; you see the holes where once were brains, and eyes, and mouth. This change death makes, and that universally and unavoidably. The prince cannot resist it by his majesty, for he hath sinned against the highest Majesty ; the strong cannot resist it by their strength, for it is the messenger of the Almighty. The commanders must obey it ; the conquerors must be conquered by it. The rich cannot bribe it ; the learned orator cannot persuade it to pass him by ; the skilful physician cannot save himself from the mortal stroke. Neither fields, nor gardens, earth, or sea, affordeth any medicine to prevent it. All have sinned, and all must die ; “Dust we are, and to dust we must return :” (Gen. iii. 19 :) and thus should we remain if the Lord of life should not revive us.

2. And it is not only to the body, but to the soul also, that death is naturally an enemy. The soul hath naturally a love and inclination to its body, and therefore it feareth a separation before, and desireth a restoration afterward. Abstracting joy and torment, heaven and hell, in our consideration, the state of separation as such is a natural evil : even to the human soul of Christ it was so, while his body remained in the grave. Which separated state is the *hades*, which our English calleth hell, that Christ is said to have gone into. And though (the soul of Christ, and) the souls of those that die in him, do pass into a far more happy state than they had in the flesh, yet that is accidentally, from rewarding justice and the bounty of the Lord, and not at all from death as death. The separation as such is still an evil ; and therefore the soul is still desirous of the body's resurrection, and knoweth that its felicity will then be greater, when the reunion and glorification hath perfected the whole man : so that

death as death is unwelcome to the soul itself, though death, as accidentally gainful, may be desired.

3. And to the unpardoned, unrenewed soul, death is the passage to everlasting misery, and in this regard is far more terrible than in all that hitherto hath been spoken. Oh! could the guilty soul be sure that there is no justice to take hold on it after death, and no more pain and sorrow to be felt, but that man died as a beast which hath no more to feel, or lose, then death would seem a tolerable evil; but it is the living death, the dying life, the endless wo, to which death leads the guilty soul, which makes it to be unspeakably terrible. The utter darkness, the unquenchable fire, the worm that dieth not, the everlasting flames of the wrath of God; these are the chief horror and sting of death to the ungodly. Oh! were it but to be turned into trees, or stones, or earth, or nothing, it were nothing, in comparison of this. But I pass by this, because it is not directly intended in my text.

4. The saints themselves being sanctified but in part, are but imperfectly assured of their salvation; and therefore, in that measure, as they remain in doubt, or unassured, death may be a double terror to them. They believe the threatenings, and know more than unbelievers do, what an insufferable loss it is to be deprived of the celestial glory; and what an unspeakable misery it is to bear the endless wrath of God: and therefore, so far as they have such fears, it must needs make death a terror to them.

5. But if there were nothing but death itself to be our enemy, the foreknowledge of it would increase the misery. A beast that knoweth not that he must die, is not tormented with the fears of death, though nature hath possessed them with a self-preserving fear, for the avoiding of an invading evil: but man foreknoweth that he must die; he hath still occasion to anticipate his terrors. That which will be, and certainly and shortly will be, is, in a manner, as if it were already: and, therefore, foreknowledge makes us as if we were always dying. We see our graves, our weeping friends, our fore-described corruption and dismal state, and so our life is a continual death. And thus death is an enemy to nature.

2. But this is not all, nor the greatest enmity that death hath to the godly. It is a lamentable hinderance to the work of grace, as I shall show you next in ten particulars.

1. The fears of death do much abate our desires after

God, as he is to be enjoyed by the separated soul. Though every believing, holy soul do love God above all, and take heaven for his home, and therefore sincerely longeth after it, yet when we know that death stands in the way, and that there is no coming thither but through this dreadful, narrow passage, this stoppeth, and lamentably dulleth our desires; and so the natural enmity turneth to a spiritual sorer enmity. For let a man be never so much a saint, he will still be a man, and therefore, as death will still be death, so nature will still be nature, and therefore, death, as death, will be abhorred. And we are such timorous sluggards, that we are easily discouraged by this lion in the way. The ugly porter affrighted us from those grateful thoughts of the New Jerusalem, the city of God, the heavenly inheritance, which otherwise the blessed object would produce. Our sanctified affections would be mounting upwards, and holy love would be working towards its blessed object, but death, standing in the way, suppresseth our desires, and turns us back, and frighteneth us from our Father's presence. We look up to Christ and the holy city as to a precious pearl in the bottom of the sea, or as to some dear and faithful friend, that is beyond some dreadful gulf. Fain would we enjoy him, but we dare not venture; we fear this dismal enemy in the way. He that can recover his health by a pleasant medicine, doth take it without any great reluctancy, but if a leg or an arm must be cut off, or a stone cut out by a painful, dangerous incision, what a striving doth it cause between the contrary passions? The love of life, and the love of ease, the fear of death, and the fear of suffering.

Could we but come to heaven as easily as innocent Adam might have done if he had conquered, what wings would it add to our desires! Might we be translated as Enoch, or conveyed thither in the chariot of Elias, what saint is there that would not long to see the face and glory of the Lord? Were it but to go to the top of a mountain, and there see Christ with Moses and Elias, in a glimpse of glory, as did the three disciples, who would not make haste, and say, "It is good for us to be here?" (Matt. xvii. 1—4.) But to travel so cheerfully with Abraham to the mount of Moriah, to sacrifice an only son, or with a martyr to the flames, is a harder task. This is the principal enmity of death; it deterreth our desires and thoughts from heaven, and maketh it a far harder matter to us to long after God than otherwise it would be. Yea, it causeth us to

fly from him, even when we truly love him, and where faith and love do work so strongly as to overcome these fears, yet do they meet with them as an enemy, and must fight before they overcome.

2. And as this enemy dulleth our desires, so doth it consequently cool our love, as to the exercise, and it hindereth our hope, and much abateth the complacency and joy that we should have in the believing thoughts of heaven, when we should be rejoicing in hope of the glory of God; (Rom. v. 2;) the face of death appearing to our thoughts, is naturally an enemy to our joy. When we think of the grave, and of dissolution, and corruption, and of our long abode in the places of darkness, of our contemned dust, and scattered bones, this damps our joyful thoughts of heaven, if supernatural grace do not make us conquerors.

But if we might pass from earth to heaven, as from one room to another, what haste should we make in our desires! How joyfully should we think and speak of heaven! Then we might live in the joy of the Holy Ghost, and easily delight ourselves in God, and comfort would be our daily food.

3. Moreover, as our natural enemy doth thus occasion the abatement of desire, and love, and joy, so also of our thankfulness for the glory that is promised us. God would have more praise from us, if we had more pleasing, joyful thoughts of our inheritance. We should magnify him from day to day, when we remember how we shall magnify him for ever. Our hearts would be turned into thankfulness, and our tongues would be extolling our dear Redeemer, and sounding forth his praise whom we must praise for ever, if dreadful death did not draw a veil to hide the heavenly glory from us.

4. And thus the dismal face of death doth hinder the heavenliness of our conversation. Our thoughts will be diverted when our complacency and desire is abated; our minds be willing to grow strange to heaven, when death still mingleth terror in our meditations. Whereas if we could have come to God in the way that was first appointed us, and could be clothed with glory, without being stripped of our present clothing by this terrible hand, how familiarly should we then converse above! How readily would our thoughts run out to Christ! Meditation of that glory would not be then so hard a work; our hearts would not be so backward to it as now they are.

5. Faith is much hindered, and infidelity much advantaged,

by death. Look either to the state of soul or body, and you will easily perceive the truth of this. The state of a soul incorporated we know by long experience. What kind of apprehensions, volitions, and affections belong to a soul while it acteth in the body, we feel or understand, but what manner of knowledge, will, or love, what joy, what sorrow, belong to souls that are separated from the bodies, it is not possible for us now distinctly and formally to conceive. And when men find themselves at a loss about the manner, they are tempted to doubt of the thing itself. The swarms of irreligious infidels that have denied the immortality and separated existence of the soul, are too full a proof of this, and good men have been haunted with this horrible temptation. Had there been no death, we had not been liable to this dangerous assault. The opinion of the sleeping of the soul till the resurrection is but a step to flat infidelity, and both of them hence receive their life, because a soul in flesh, when it cannot conceive to its satisfaction of the being, state, or action of a separated soul, is the easier drawn to question or deny it.

And in regard of the body, the difficulty and trial is as great. That a corpse resolved into dust, and perhaps first devoured by some other body, and turned into its substance, should be reunited to its soul, and so become a glorified body, is a point not easy for unsanctified nature to believe. When Paul preached of the resurrection to the learned Athenians, some mocked, and others turned off that discourse. (Acts xvii. 32.) It is no easier to believe the resurrection of the body, than the immortality or separated existence of the soul. Most of the world, even heathens and infidels, do confess the latter, but few of them comparatively believe the former. And if sin had not let in death upon our nature, this perilous difficulty had been prevented. Then we should not have been puzzled with the thoughts of either a corrupted body, or a separated soul.

6. And consequently, by all this already mentioned, our endeavours meet with a great impediment. If death weaken faith, desire, and hope, it must needs dull our endeavours. The deterred, discouraged soul moves slowly in the way of life, whereas, if death were not in our way, how cheerfully should we run towards heaven! Our thoughts of it would be still sweet, and these would be a powerful spring to action. When the will goes with full sails, the commanded faculty will the more easily follow. We should long so earnestly to be in heaven, if



death were not in the way, that nothing could easily stop us in our course. How earnestly should we pray! How seriously should we meditate and confer of heaven, and part with any thing to attain it. But that which dulls our desires of the end, must needs be an enemy to holy diligence, and dull us in the use of means.

7. This enemy also doth dangerously tempt us to fall in love with present things, and to take up the miserable portion of the worldling. When it hath weakened faith, and cooled our desires to the life to come, we shall be tempted to think that it is best to take such pleasure as may here be had, and feed on that where a sensual mind hath less discouragement. Whereas, if death did not stand in the way, and darken heaven to us, and turn back our desires, how easily should we get above these trifles, and perceive the vanity of all below, and how unworthy they are to be once regarded.

8. Moreover, it is much along of this last enemy that God is so dishonoured by the fears and droopings of believers. They are but imperfectly yet freed from this bondage, and accordingly they walk. Whereas, if the king of terrors were removed, we should have less of fear, and more of love, as living more in the sight and sense of love. And then we should glorify the God of love, and appear to the world as men of another world, and show them the faith and hope of saints in the heavenly cheerfulness of our lives, and no more dishonour the Lord and our profession by our uncomfortable despondencies, as we do.

9. Moreover, it is much along of this last enemy that many true Christians cannot perceive their own sincerity, but are overwhelmed with doubts and troublesome fears, lest they have not the faith and hope of saints, and lest the love of God abide not in them, and lest their hearts are more on earth than heaven. When they find themselves afraid of dying, and to have dark, amazing thoughts about eternity, and to think with less trouble and fear of earth than of the life to come, this makes them think that they are yet but worldlings, and have not placed their happiness with God, when perhaps it is but the fear of death that causeth these unjust conclusions. Christian, I shall tell thee more anon, that God may be truly loved and desired by thee, and heaven may be much more valued than earth, and yet the natural fears of death that standeth in thy way may much perplex thee, and make thee think that thou art averse

from God, when indeed thou art but averse from death, because yet this enemy is not overcome.

10. Lastly, this enemy is not the smallest cause of many of our particular sins, and of the apostasy of many hypocrites. Indeed it is one of the strongest of our temptations. Before man sinned, none could take away his life but God, and God would not have done it for any thing but sin. So that man had no temptations from the malice of enemies, or the pride of conquerors, or the fury of the passionate, or the power of tyrants, to be afraid of death, and to use any unlawful means to escape it. An avoidable death from the hand of God he was obliged moderately to fear, that is, to be afraid of sinning lest he die, else God would not have threatened him, if he would not have had him make use of a preventing fear. But now we have an unavoidable death to fear, and also an untimely death from the hand of man by God's permission. And the fear of these is a powerful temptation, otherwise Abraham would not have distrustively equivocated as he did to save his life, (Gen. xx. 11,) and Isaac after him do the same, when he sojourned in the same place. (Gen. xxvi. 7.) If the fear of death were not a strong temptation, Peter would not have thrice denied Christ, and that after so late a warning and engagement. Nor would all his disciples have forsaken him and fled. (Matt. xxvi. 56.) Nor would martyrs have a special reward, nor would Christ have been put to call upon his disciples, that they fear not them that can kill the body, (Luke xii. 4,) and to declare to men the necessity of self-denial in this point of life, and that none can be his disciple that loves his life before him. (Matt. xvi. 25 ; Luke xiv. 26.) He is a Christian indeed that so loveth God that he will not sin to save his life. But what is it that an hypocrite will not do to escape death? He will equivocate and forswear himself with the jesuit and familist; he will forsake not only his dearest friend, but Christ also and his conscience. What a multitude of the most heinous sins are daily committed through the fears of death. Thousands where the inquisition ruleth are kept in popery by it, and thousands are kept in mahometanism by it. Thousands are drawn by it to betray their countries; to deny the truth; to betray the church and cause of Christ, and, finally, to betray their souls unto perdition. Some of them presume to deny Christ wilfully, because that Peter had pardon that denied him through surprise, and through in-

firmity, but they will not repent with Peter, and die for him after their repentance. He that hath the power of an hypocrite's life, may prescribe him what he shall believe and do; may write him down the rule of his religion, and tell him what changes he shall make, what oaths he shall take, what party he shall side with, and command him so many sins a day as you make your horse go so many miles. Satan, no doubt, had much experience of the power of this temptation when he boasted so confidently of it against Job, (ii. 4,) "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." And it is true, no doubt, of those that love nothing better than their lives. Satan thought that the fear of death would make a man do any thing, and of too many he may boldly make this boast, 'Let me but have power of their lives, and I will make them say any thing, and swear any thing, and be for any cause or party, and do any thing against God or man.' When lesser matters can do so much, as common, sad experience showeth us, no wonder if the fear of death can do it.

3. In brief, you may see by what is said that death is become an enemy to our souls, by being first the enemy of our natures. The interest of our bodies works much on our souls, much more the interest of the whole man. The principle of self-love was planted in nature in order to self-preservation, and the government of the world. Nature doth necessarily abhor its own destruction. And therefore this destruction standing in the way, is become an exceeding great hinderance to our affections, which takes them off from the life to come.

1. It is a very great hinderance to the conversion of those that are yet carnal, imprisoned in their unbelief. It is hard to win their hearts to such a state of happiness that cannot be obtained but by yielding unto death.

2. And to the truly godly it is naturally an impediment, and a great temptation in the points before expressed. And though it prevail not against them, it exceedingly hindereth them. And thus I have showed you that death is an enemy, further than, I doubt, the most consider of.

If the unbeliever shall here tell me that death is not the fruit of sin, but natural to man, though he had never sinned, and therefore that I lay all this on God, I answer him, that mortality, as it signifieth a *posse mori*, a natural capacity of dying, was natural to us in our innocency, or else death could not be threatened as a penalty. And if I grant as much of a natural dispo-

sition in the body to a dissolution, if not prevented by a glorifying change, it will no whit advantage their impious cause. But withal, man was then so far immortal, as that he had a *posse non mori*, a natural capacity of not dying, and the *mori-etur vel non morietur*, the actual event of life or death, was laid by the Lord of life and death upon his obedience or disobedience. And man having sinned, justice must be done, and so we came under a *non posse non mori*, an impossibility of escaping death, (ordinarily,) because of the peremptory sentence of our Judge. But the day of our deliverance is at hand, when we shall attain a *non posse mori*, a certain consummate immortality, when the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed, and how that is done, I shall next inquire.

You have seen the ugly face of death; you are next to see a little of the love of our great Redeemer. You have heard what sin hath done; you are next to hear what grace hath done, and what it will do. You have seen the strength of the enemy; you are now to take notice of the victory of the Redeemer, and see how he conquereth all this strength.

1. The beginning of the conquest is in this world. 2. The perfection will not be till the day of resurrection, when this last enemy shall be destroyed.

1. Meritoriously death is conquered by death. The death of sinners by the Mediator's death. Not that he intended in his meritorious work to save us from the stroke of death by a prevention, but to deliver us from it after by a resurrection. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead." (1 Cor. xv. 21.) "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) Satan, as God's executioner, and as the prosperous tempter, is said to have had the power of death. The fears of this dreadful executioner are a continual bondage, which we are liable to, through all our lives, till we perceive the deliverance which the death of the Lord of life hath purchased us. 1st. By death, Christ hath satisfied the justice that was armed by sin against us. 2nd. By death he hath showed us, that death is a tolerable evil, and to be yielded to in hope of following life.

2. Actually he conquered death by his resurrection. This

was the day of grace's triumph : this day he showed to heaven, to hell, and to earth, that death was conquerable ; yea, that this personal death was actually overcome. The blessed souls beheld it to their joy, beholding in the resurrection of their Head, a virtual resurrection of their own bodies. The devils saw it, and therefore saw that they had no hopes of holding the bodies of the saints in the power of the grave. The damned souls were acquainted with it, and therefore knew that their sinful bodies must be restored to bear their part in suffering. The believing saints on earth perceive it, and therefore see that their bonds are broken, and that to the righteous there is hope in death ; and that our head being actually risen, assureth us that we shall also rise. " For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him : " (1 Thess. iv. 14 :) and as " Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him ; " (Rom. vi. 9 ;) so shall we rise and die no more. This was the beginning of the church's triumph. " This is the day that the Lord hath made, (even the day which the church on earth must celebrate with joy and praise, till the day of our resurrection ;) we will rejoice and be glad in it. " (Psalm cxviii. 24.) The resurrection of our Lord hath, 1st, assured us of the consummation of his satisfaction ; 2d, of the truth of all his word, and so of his promises of our resurrection ; 3d, that death is actually conquered, and a resurrection possible ; 4th, that believers shall certainly rise when their head and Saviour is risen, to prepare them an everlasting kingdom, and to assure them that thus he will raise them at the last. A bare promise would not have been so strong a help to faith, as to the actual rising of Christ, as a pledge of the performance. " But now Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept : " (1 Cor. xv. 20 :) " for because he liveth, we shall live also. " (John xiv. 19.)

3. The next degree of destruction to this enemy was by the gift of his justifying and sanctifying grace. Four special benefits were then bestowed on us, which are antidotes against the enmity of death. 1. One is the gift of saving faith, by which we look beyond the grave, as far as to eternity. And this doth most powerfully disable death to terrify and discourage us, and raiseth us above our natural fears, and showeth us (though but in a glass) the exceeding eternal weight of glory which churlish death shall help us to. So that when the

eye of the unbeliever looketh no further than the grave, believing souls can enter into heaven and see their glorified Lord, and thence fetch love, and hope, and joy, notwithstanding the terrors of interposing death. The eye of faith foreseeth the "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, and causeth us therein greatly to rejoice, though now for a season, (if need be,) we are in heaviness through manifold temptations." (1 Peter i. 5, 6.) And so victorious is this faith against all the storms that do assault us, "That the trial of it, though with fire, doth but discover that it is much more precious than gold that perisheth, and it shall be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having never seen in the flesh, we love; and though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice with unspeakable glorious joy; and shall shortly receive the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls." (1 Peter i. 7—9.) Thus faith, though it destroy not death itself, destroyeth the malignity and enmity of death; while it seeth the things that are beyond it, and the time when death shall be destroyed, and the life where death shall be no more. Faith is like David's three mighty men that brake through the host of the Philistines to fetch him the waters of Bethlehem, for which he longed. (2 Sam. xxiii. 15, 16.) When the thirsty soul saith, 'Oh, that one would give me drink of the waters of salvation!' faith breaks through death which standeth in the way, and fetcheth these living waters to the soul. We may say of death as it is said of the world: "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith: who is he that overcometh the world; but he that believeth?" &c. (1 John v. 4, 5.) "For greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John iv. 4.) The believing soul, foreseeing the day when death shall be swallowed up in victory, may sing beforehand, the triumphing song, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.) "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction (though it reach to death) which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, (and therefore not worthy to be looked at,) but the things which are not seen are eternal," and therefore more prevalent with a

believing soul, than either the enticing pleasures of sin for a season, or the light and short afflictions, or the death that standeth in our way. (2 Cor. iv. 16—18; Heb. ii. 24—26.)

2. A second antidote against the enmity of death, that is given us at the time of our conversion, is, the pardon of our sins, and justification of our persons by the blood and merits of Jesus Christ. When once we are forgiven, we are out of the reach of the greatest terror, being saved from the second death. Though we must feel the killing stroke, we are delivered from the damning stroke. Yea, more than so, it shall save us by destroying us; it shall let us into the glorious presence of our Lord, by taking us from the presence of our mortal friends; it shall help us into eternity, by cutting off our time. For in the hour that we were justified and made the adopted sons of God, we were also made the heirs of heaven, even co-heirs with Christ, and shall be glorified with him, when we have suffered with him. (Rom. viii. 17.) As death was promoting the life of the world when it was killing the Lord of life himself, so is it hastening the deliverance of believers when it seems to be undoing them. No wonder if death be that man's terror that must be conveyed by it into hell, or that imagineth that he shall perish as the beast. But to him that knows it will be his passage into rest, and that angels shall convey his soul to Christ, what an antidote is there ready for his faith to use against the enmity and excess of fears. Hence faith proceedeth in its triumph; "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.) Let him inordinately fear death that is loth to be with Christ, or that is yet the heir of death eternal. Let him fear that is yet in the bondage of his sin, and in the power of the prince of darkness, and is not by justification delivered from the curse. But joy and holy triumph are more seemly for the justified.

3. A third antidote against the enmity of death is, the holiness of the soul. By this the power of sin is mortified; and, therefore, the fears of death cannot actuate and use it, as in others they may do. By this, the interest of the flesh is cast aside as nothing, and the flesh itself is crucified with Christ: and, therefore, the destruction of the flesh will seem the more tolerable, and the fears of it will be a less temptation to the soul. By this we are already crucified to the world, and the world to us; and therefore we can more easily leave the world.

We now live by another life than we did before; being dead in ourselves, our life is hid with Christ in God; and being crucified with Christ, we now so live, as that it is not we, but Christ liveth in us: the life which we live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God that hath loved us. (Gal. ii. 20.) The things that made this life too dear to us are now, as it were, annihilated to us; and when we see they are nothing, they can do nothing with us. Sanctification also maketh us so weary of sin, as being our hated enemy, that we are the more willing to die, that it may die that causeth us to die: and especially the Holy Ghost, which we then receive, is in us a divine and heavenly nature, and so inclineth us to God and heaven. This nature principally consisteth in the superlative love of God. And love carrieth out the soul to the beloved. As the nature of a prisoner in a dungeon carrieth him to desire liberty and light; so the nature of a holy soul in flesh inclineth it to desire to be with Christ. As love maketh husband, and wife, and dearest friends to think the time long while they are asunder; so doth the love of the soul to God. How fain would the holy, loving soul behold the pleased face of God, and be glorified in the beholding of his glory, and live under the fullest influences of his love. This is our conquest over the enmity of death. As strong as death is, love is stronger. "Love is strong as death,—the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame (which will not, by the terrible face of death, be hindered from ascending up to God). Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, (that is, to bribe it, and divert it from its object,) it would utterly be contemned." (Sol. Song viii. 6, 7.) If the love of David could carry Jonathan to hazard his life, and deny a kingdom for him, and the love of David to Absalom made him wish that he had died for him, and the love of friends, (yea, lustful love,) hath carried many to cast away their lives; no wonder if the love of God in his saints prevail against the fear of death. The power of holy love made Moses say, "Else let my name be blotted out of the book of life." And it made Paul say, that he could wish that he were accursed from Christ for his brethren and kindred according to the flesh. (Rom. ix. 3.) And, doubtless, he felt the fire burning in his breast when he broke out into that triumphant challenge, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness,



or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 35—39.) You see here what it is that conquereth the enmity of death in our sanctification; even that powerful love of God that is then given us, which will go to him through the most cruel death.

4. A fourth antidote that is given us by Christ against the enmity of death, is the Holy Ghost, as he is the comforter of the saints. He makes it his work to corroborate and confirm them. As sin hath woven calamities into our lives, and filled us with troubles, and griefs, and fears; so Christ doth send his Spirit to undo these works of Satan, and to be a comforter, as well as a sanctifier to his members. As the sanctifying Spirit striveth against the enticing, sinful flesh, so the comforting Spirit striveth against the troubling flesh; as also against the persecuting, as well as the tempting world, and the vexing, as well as the tempting devil. "And greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John iv. 4.) The Spirit of Christ overcomes the disquieting, as well as the tempting spirit; but with some difference; because our comforts are not in this life so necessary to us as our holiness. Joy being part of our reward, is not to be expected certainly or constantly, in any high degree, till we come to the state of our reward: and, therefore, though the Holy Ghost will carry on the work of sanctification, universally, constantly, and certainly in the elect; yet, in many of them, his comforting work is more obscure and interrupted. And yet he is a conqueror here: for his works must be judged of in reference to their ends: and our comfort on earth is given us for our encouragement in holy ways, that we be not stopped or diverted by the fear of enemies; and also to help on our love to God, and to quicken us in thanks and praise, and draw up our hearts to the life to come, and make us more serviceable to others. And such a measure of comfort we shall have as conduceth to these ends, and is suitable to our present state, and the employment God hath for us in the world if we do not wilfully grieve our Comforter, and quench our joys.

So that when death and the grave appear before, and our

flesh is terrified with the sight of these Anakims, and we say, 'We are not able to overcome them,' and so brings up an evil report upon the promised land, and casts us sometimes into murmuring, lamentation, and weakening discouragements, yet does the Holy Ghost cause faith and hope (as Caleb and Joshua) to still the soul, (Numb. xiii.,) and causeth us to contemn these giants, and say "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it." (Ver. 30.) The comforting Spirit showeth us his death that conquered death, (Heb. ii. 14, 15,) even the cross on which he triumphed openly when he seemed to be conquered. (Col. ii. 15.) He showeth us the glorious resurrection of our Head, and his promise of our own resurrection. He showeth us our glorified Lord, to whom we may boldly and confidently commend our departing souls. (Acts vii. 59.) And he showeth us the angels that are ready to be their convoy. And he maketh all these considerations effectual, and inwardly exciteth our love and heavenly desires, and giveth us a triumphing courage and consolation. So that death doth not encounter us alone, and in our own strength, but finds us armed and led on by the Lord of life, who helps us by a sling and stone to conquer this Goliath. If a draught of wine, or some spiritfult reviving liquor can take off fears and make men bold, what then may the Spirit of Christ do by his powerful encouragements and comforts on the soul. Did we but see Christ or an angel standing by our sick-beds, and saying 'Fear not, I will convoy thy soul to God; this day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' what an unspeakable comfort would this be to a dying man? Why, the Spirit is Christ's agent here on earth; and what the Spirit speaks, Christ speaks; and, therefore, we may take its comforting words as spoken to us by Christ himself; who spoke the like to the penitent thief, to show believers the virtue of his cross, and what they also may expect from him in their extremity. And our Physician is most wise, and keeps his cordials for a fainting time. The Spirit useth to sustain and comfort us most in our greatest necessities. We need not comforts against death so much in the time of prosperity and health as when death draws near. In health we have ordinarily more need of quickening than of comforting; and more need to be awakened from security to a due preparation for death, than to be freed from the terrible forethoughts of it; though inordinate fears of death be hurtful to us, security and deadness hurts us more; and therefore the Spirit worketh according to our necessities. And when death

is nearest, and like to be most dreadful, he usually giveth the liveliest sense of the joys beyond it, to abate the enmity, and encourage the departing soul. And if the comfort be but small, it is precious, because it is most pure, as being then mixed with no carnal joys; and because it is most seasonable in so great a strait. If we have no more but mere support, it will be yet a precious mercy. And thus I have done with the third degree of the destruction of death's enmity, by these four antidotes, which we receive at our conversion, and the consequents thereof.

4. The fourth degree of this enemy's destruction is by itself, or rather by Christ at the time, and by the means of death, which, contrary to its nature, shall advantage our felicity. When death hath done its worst, it hath half killed itself in killing us. It hath then dismissed our imprisoned souls, and ended even our fears of death, and our fears of all the evils of this life. It hath ended our cares, and griefs, and groans. It hath finished our work, and ended all our weariness and trouble. And more than this it ends our sinning, and so destroyeth that which caused it, and that which the inordinate fears of itself had caused in us. It is the time when sin shall gasp its last, and so far our physician will perfect the cure; and our greatest enemy shall follow us no further. It is the door by which the soul must pass to Christ in paradise.

If any papist shall hence plead that therefore all men must be perfect without sin before death, or else go to purgatory to be cleansed, because as we die, so Christ will find us; or if they ask how death can perfect us? I answer them, 'It is Christ our physician that finisheth the cure, and death is the time in which he doeth it.' And if he undertake then to do it, it concerns not us to be too inquisitive how he doeth it. What if the patient understand not how blood-letting cureth the infected blood that is left behind? Must he therefore plead against his physician? and say, 'It will not be done,' because he knoweth not how it is done? We feel that here we have our sinful imperfections. We have for all that a promise that we shall be with Christ when death hath made its separation; and we are assured that no sin doth enter there. And is not this enough for us to know.

But yet I see not why the difficulty of the objection should trouble us at all. Death doth remove us from this sinful flesh, and admits the soul into the sight of God. And in the very in-

stant of its remove it must needs be perfected, even by that remove, and by the first appearance of his blessed face. If you bring a candle into a dark room, the access of the light expelleth the darkness at the same instant; and you cannot say that they consist together one moment of time. So cold is expelled by the approach of heat. And thus when death hath opened the door, and let us into the immortal light, neither before nor after, but in that instant, all the darkness and sinful imperfections of our souls are dissipated. Throw an empty bottle into the sea, and the emptiness ceaseth by the filling of the water, neither before nor after, but in that instant.

If this should not satisfy any, let it satisfy them, that the Holy Ghost in the instant of death can perfect his work.

So that we need not assert a perfection on earth, (which on their grounds must be the case of all that will escape hell and purgatory,) nor yet any purgatory torments after death, for the deliverance of the soul from the relics of sin; seeing, at the instant of death, by the Spirit, or by the deposition of the flesh, or by the sight of God, or by the sight of our glorified Redeemer, or by all, this work will be easily and infallibly accomplished.

5. The last degree and perfect conquest will be at the resurrection. And this is the victory that is mentioned in my text. All that is fore-mentioned doth abate the enmity, and conquer death in some degree; but the enmity, and the enemy itself, is conquered at the resurrection, and not till then. And therefore death is the last enemy to be destroyed. The body lieth under the penal effects of sin until the resurrection. And it is penal to the soul to be in a state of separation from the body, though it be a state of glory that it is in with Christ: for it is deprived of the fulness of glory, which it shall attain at the resurrection, when the whole man shall be perfected and glorified together. Then it is that the Mediator's work will be accomplished; and all things shall be restored; and all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth. (John v. 28.) "For this is the Father's will that sent him, that of all that he hath given him, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John vi. 39, 40.) We "have hope towards God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts xxiv. 15.) "As by man came death, so by man came also the resurrection from the dead." (1 Cor. xv. 21.) "And there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." (Rev.

xxi. 4.) No more diseases, or fears of death, or grave, or of corruption. No terrible enemy shall stand betwixt us and our Lord, to frighten our hearts from looking towards him. O what a birth-day will that be, when graves shall bring forth so many millions of souls for glory! How joyful will the soul and body meet that were separated so long! Then sin hath done its worst, and can do no more. Then Christ hath done all and hath no more to do as our Redeemer, but to justify us in judgment, and give us possession of the joy that he is preparing. And then he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father.

If you expect now that I should give you reasons why death is the last enemy to be destroyed, though much might be said from the nature of the matter, the wisdom and will of God shall be to me instead of all other reasons, being the fountain and the sum of all. He knows best the order that is agreeable to his works and ends, to his honour, and to our good. And therefore to his wisdom we submit, in the patient expectance of the accomplishment of his promises.

*Use.* 1. I now come to show you the usefulness of this doctrine, for the further information of our understandings, the well-ordering of our hearts, and the reforming of our lives. And first, you may hence be easily resolved, whether death be truly penal to the godly? Which some have been pleased to make a controversy of late. Though I am past doubt but the hearts of those men do apprehend it as a punishment whose tongues and pens do plead for the contrary. "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return," was part of the sentence passed on Adam and all his posterity; which then proved its punishment, and it was not remitted to Adam, that at the same time had the promise of a Redeemer, nor is it remitted to any of us all. Were it not for sin, God would not inflict it; who hath sworn that he takes "no pleasure in the death of sinners;" and that he "afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the sons of men." But my text itself decides the controversy: sin and punishment are the evils that Christ removeth; and if death were no punishment, (as it is no sin,) how could it be an enemy, and the last enemy to be destroyed by the Redeemer? When we feel the enmity before described against our souls, and also know its enmity to our bodies, we cannot think that God would do all this, were it not for sin. Especially when we read that "death passeth upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12.) And that "the wages of sin is death." (Rom. vi. 23.) Though Christ do us

good by it, that proveth it not to be no punishment ; for castigatory punishments are purposely to do good to the chastised. Indeed we may say, "O death, where is thy sting?" Because that the mortal evil to the soul is taken out ; and because we foresee the resurrection by faith, when we shall have the victory by Christ. But thence to conclude that death hath no sting now to a believer, is not only besides, but against the text ; which, telling us that the sting of death is sin, and that the strength of sin is the law, doth inform us, that death could not kill us, and be death to us, if sin gave it not a sting to do it with. As sin could not oblige us to this punishment, if the threatening of the law were not its strength. But Christ hath begun the conquest, and will finish it.

*Use 2.* From all this enmity in death, we may see what it is that sin hath done ; and, consequently, how vile and odious it is, and how we should esteem and use it. Sin hath not only forfeited our happiness, but laid those impediments in the way of our recovery, which will find us work, and cause our danger and sorrow while we live. And death is not the least of these impediments. O foolish man, that still will love such a mortal enemy ! If another would rob them but of a groat, or defame them, or deprive them of any accommodation, how easily can they hate them, and how hardly are they reconciled to them. But sin depriveth them of their lives, and separates the soul and body asunder, and forfeiteth their everlasting happiness ; and sets death betwixt them and the glory that is purchased by Christ, and yet they love it, and will not leave it. Though God has made them, and sustains them, and provides for them, and all their hope and help is in him, they are not so easily drawn to love him ; and yet they can love the sin that would undo them. Though Christ would deliver them, and bring them to everlasting blessedness, and hath assumed flesh, and laid down his life to testify his love to them, yet are they not easily brought to love him ; but the sin that made them enemies to God, and hath brought them so near to everlasting misery, this they can love, that deserves no love. A minister, or other friend, that would draw them from their sin to God, and help to save them, they quarrel against, as if he were their enemy ; but their foolish companions, that can laugh and jest with them at the door of hell, and clap them on the back, and drive away the care of their salvation, and harden them against the fear of God, these are the only acceptable men to them. O Christians !

leave this folly to the world, and do you judge of sin by its sad effects. You feel, (if you have any feeling in you,) in some measure, what it hath done against your souls. The weakness of your faith and love, the distance of your hearts from God, your doubts and troubles, tell you that it is not your friend; you must shortly know what it will do to your bodies. As it keeps them in pain, and weariness, and weakness, so it will, ere long, deliver them up to the jaws of death, which will spare them no more than the beasts that perish. Had it not been for sin we should have had no cause to fear a dissolution; nor have had any use for a coffin or a winding-sheet; nor have been beholden to a grave, to hide our carcasses from the sight and smell of the living. But as Enoch and Elias were translated when they had walked with God, even so should we: as those that are alive, and remain at the coming of Christ, shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they ever be with the Lord. (1 Thess. iv. 17.)

Use sin, therefore, as it will use you. Spare it not, for it will not spare you. It is your murderer, and the murderer of the world. Use it therefore as a murderer should be used. Kill it before it kills you; and then, though it kill your bodies, it shall not be able to kill your souls; and though it bring you to the grave, as it did your head, it shall not be able to keep you there. If the thoughts of death, and the grave, and rottenness, be not pleasant to you, let not the thoughts of sin be pleasant. Harken to every temptation to sin, as you would harken to a temptation to self-murder; and as you would do if the devil brought you a knife, and tempted you to cut your throat with it; so do when he offereth you the bait of sin. You love not death, love not the cause of death. Be ashamed to stand weeping over a buried friend, and never to weep over a sinning or ungodly friend, nor once to give them a compassionate, earnest exhortation to save their souls. Is it nothing to be "dead in trespasses and sins?" (Eph. ii. 1, 5; Col. ii. 13.) Yea, it is a worse death than this, that is the wages of sin, and the fruit which it brings forth. (Rom. vi. 21, 23, and vii. 5.) Surely God would never thus use men's bodies, and forsake them soul and body for ever, if sin were not a most odious thing. What a poison is this that kills so many millions, and damneth so many millions, and cannot be cured but by the blood of Christ! That killed our physician that never tasted it, because he came

so near to us! O unbelieving, stupid souls! that smart and sin, and groan and sin, and weep and lament our bodily sufferings, and yet sin still! that fear a grave, and fear not sin! that have heard, and seen, and felt so much of the sad effects, and yet sin still! (Psalm lxxviii. 32.) Alas! that murderers should be so common, and that we should be no wiser, when we have paid so dear a price for wisdom!

*Use 3.* From the enmity of death we may further learn, that man hath now a need of grace for such exceeding difficulties which were not before him in his state of innocency. Though Adam was able to have obeyed perfectly without sin, and had grace sufficient to have upheld him, and conquered temptations, if he had done his part, which by that grace he might have done; yet whether that grace was sufficient to the works that we are called to, is a doubt that many have been much troubled with. It is certain that he was able to have done any thing that was suitable to his present state, if it were commanded him; and it is certain that much that is now our duty, would have been unsuitable to his state. But whether it belonged to his perfection, to be able and fit for such duties, (that were then unsuitable to him,) on supposition they had been suitable and duties, this is the difficulty which some make to prove that such works cannot now be required of us without suitable help, because we lost no such grace in Adam. But this need not trouble us; for, first, though Adam was put on no such difficulty in particular as to encounter death, yet the perfect obedience to the whole law required a great degree of internal, habitual holiness; and, to determine the case, whether our particular difficulties, or his sinless, perfect obedience, required greater strength and help, is a matter of more difficulty than use. For, secondly, it is but about the degrees of holiness in him and us, and not about the kind, that the difficulty lieth. For it is the same end that he was created for, and disposed to by nature, and that we are redeemed for, and disposed to supernaturally.

But yet it is worthy our observation what a difficulty sin hath cast before us in the way of life, which Adam was unacquainted with; that so we may see the nature of our works, and the excellency of the Redeemer's grace. Adam was but to seek the continuance of his life, and a translation to glory, without the terrors of interposing death; he was never called to prepare to



die, nor to think of the state of a separated soul; nor to mind, and love, and seek a glory to which there is no (ordinary) passage but by death. This is the difficulty that hath caused, against which we have need of the special assistance of the example, and doctrine, and promise, and Spirit of the Redeemer. Adam was never put to study how to get over this dreadful gulf. The threatening of death was to raise such a fear in him as was necessary to prevent it; but those fears did rather hold him closer to the way of life, than stand between him and life, to his discouragement. But we have a death to fear which must be suffered, that cannot be avoided. The strange condition of a separated soul (so unlike to its state while resident in the body) doth require in us a special faith to apprehend it, and a special revelation to discover it. To desire, and love, and long for, and labour after such a time as this, when one part of us must lie rotting in the grave, and the separated soul must be with Christ alone till the resurrection, and to believe and hope for that resurrection, and to deny ourselves, and forsake all the world, and lay down our lives when Christ requireth it, by the power of this faith and hope, this is a work that innocent Adam never knew; this is the high employment of a Christian. To have our hearts and conversations in heaven, (Matt. vi. 21; Phil. iii. 20,) when death must first dissolve us before we can possess it, here is the noble work of faith.

*Use 4.* Moreover, this enmity of death may help us to understand the reason of the sufferings and death of Christ. That he gave his life a ransom for us, and a sacrifice for sin, and so to make satisfaction to the offended Majesty, is a truth that every Christian doth believe. But there was another reason of his death that all of us do not duly consider of, and improve, to the promoting of our sanctification as we ought. Death is so great an enemy, as you have heard, and so powerful to deter our hearts from God, and dull our desires to the heavenly felicity, that Christ was fain to go before us, to embolden the hearts of believers to follow him. He suffered death (with the rest of his afflictions) to show us that it is a tolerable evil. Had he not gone before and overcome it, it would have detained us its captives. Had he not merited and purchased us a blessed resurrection, and opened heaven to all believers, and by death overcome him that had the power of death, (as God's executioner,) that is, the devil, we should, all our lifetime, have been still subjected unto bondage, by the fears

of death. (Heb. ii. 14.) But when we see that Christ hath led the way, as the victorious Captain of our salvation, and that he is made perfect by sufferings, (in his advancement unto glory,) and that, for the sufferings of death (which by the grace of God he tasted for every man), he is crowned with glory and honour. (Heb. ii. 9, 10.) This puts a holy valour into the soul, and causeth us cheerfully to follow him. Had we gone first, and the task of conquering death been ours, we had been overcome. But he that hath led us on, hath hewed down the enemy before him, and first prepared us the way, and then called us to follow him, and to pass the way that he hath first made safe, and also showed us, by his example, that it is now made passable. For it was one in our nature, that calleth us his brethren, that took not the nature of angels, but of the seed of Abraham, that is one with us, as the Sanctifier and the sanctified are, and to whom as children we are given, who hath passed through death and the grave before us, and therefore we may the boldlier follow him. (Heb. ii. 11—13, 16.) “Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name.” (Phil. ii. 8, 9.) Hereby he hath showed us that death is not so dreadful a thing, but that voluntary obedience may and must submit unto it. As Abraham’s faith and obedience were tried in the offering up of his son to death at God’s command, so the children of Abraham, and the heirs of the promise, must follow him in offering up themselves, if God require it, and in submitting to our natural death (for that he doth require of all). Examples work more than bare precepts; and the experiments of others do take more with us than mere directions. It satisfieth a sick man more to read a book of medicinal observations, where he meets with many that were in his own case, and finds what cured them, than to read the praxis or medicinal recipes alone. It encourageth the patient much, when the physician tells him, ‘I have cured many of your disease by such a medicine; nay, I was cured thus of the same myself.’ So doth it embolden a believer to lay down his life, when he hath not only a promise of a better life, but seeth that the promiser went that way to heaven before him. Oh, therefore, let us learn and use this choice remedy, against the immoderate fear of death. Let faith take a view of him that was dead and is alive, that was buried and is risen, and was humbled and is now exalted. Think

with yourselves, when you must think of dying, that you are but following your conquering Lord, and going the way that he hath gone before you, and suffering what he underwent and conquered. And, therefore, though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, resolve that you will fear no evil. (Psalm xxiii. 4.) And if he call you after him, follow him with a christian boldness. As Peter cast himself into the sea, and walked on the waters, when he saw Christ walk there, and had his command; so let us venture on the jaws of death, while we trace his steps, and hear his encouraging commands and promises. (John xxi. 7; Matt. xiv. 28, 29.)

*Use 5.* Moreover, from this doctrine we may be informed of the mistakes of many Christians, that think they have no saving grace because they are afraid of dying, and because these fears deter their souls from desiring to be with Christ. And hence they may perceive that there is another cause of these distempers, even the enmity of death that standeth in the way. You think that if you had any love to Christ you should more desire to be with him, and that if your treasure were in heaven, your hearts would be more there, and that if you truly took it for your felicity, you could not be so unwilling to be removed to it, for no man is unwilling to be happy, or to attain his end. But stay a little, and better consider of your case. Is it Christ that your heart is thus averse to? Or is it only death that standeth in the way? You are not, I hope, unwilling to see the face of God, nor unwilling to be translated from earth to heaven, but unwilling to die. It is not because you love the creature better than the Creator, but because you are afraid of death. You may love God, and long to be perfected in holiness, and to see his glory, and to have the most near communion with him, and yet at the same time you may fear this enemy that standeth in your way, I mean, not only the pain of death, but principally the dissolution of our natures, and the separation of the soul from the body, and its abode in a separated state, and the body's abode in dust and darkness. Grace itself is not given us to reconcile us to corruption, and make death, as death, to seem desirable, but to cause us patiently to bear the evil, because of the good that is beyond it. It is not our duty to love death as death. Had it not been naturally an evil to be dreaded and avoided, God would not have made it the matter of his threatening, nor would it have been a fit means to restrain men from transgression. To threaten a man with

a benefit, as such, is a contradiction. Inquire, therefore, into your hearts, whether there be not a belief of heaven, a love to God, a desire to enjoy and please him, even while you draw back, and seem to be averse; and whether it be not only a lothness to die, and not a lothness to be with Christ.

For the fuller discovery of this, (because I find that our comfort much dependeth on it,) I shall try you by these following questions.

Quest. 1. What is it that is ungrateful to you in your meditations of your change? Is it God and heaven, or is it death? If it be only death, it seems it is not the want of love to God and heaven that causeth your averseness. If it be God himself that is ungrateful to your thoughts, it is because you desire not his nearer presence, or communion with him in the state of glory. Or is it only because you fear lest you have no interest in his love, and shall not attain the blessedness which you desire? If it be the first, I must confess it proves a graceless soul, and signifieth the want of love to God. But if it be the latter only, it may stand with grace, for desire is a true signification of love, though there be doubts and fears lest we shall miss the attainment of those desires.

Quest. 2. Would you not gladly hear the news of your removal, if you might be changed without death, and translated to heaven as Enoch and Elias were, and as Christ at his ascension? Had you not far rather be thus changed than abide on earth? If so, then it seems it is not God and heaven that you are against, but death. Nay, if you could reach heaven by travelling a thousand miles, would you not gladly take the journey as soon as you had got assurance of your title to it, and done the work of God on earth? If it were but as Peter, James, and John, to go with Christ into an exceeding high mountain, and there to see him in glory, (Matt. xvii. 1,) would you not gladly do it? It seems that thou desirest to see the Lord, and thy love is to him, though thou be afraid of death.

Quest. 3. Consider of the nature of the heavenly felicity, and try whether thou love it in the several parts. One part is our personal perfection, that our souls shall be free from ignorance, and error, and sin, and sorrow, and enlarged for the perfect love of God, and our bodies at the resurrection made like the glorious body of our Lord, (Phil. iii. 21,) and wouldest thou not be thus perfected in soul and body? Another part is, that we should live with the society of angels and glorified saints.

And wouldest thou not rather have such society than the company of sinners, and enemies, and imperfect saints on earth? Another part is, we shall see our glorified Head, and be with him where he is, that we may behold his glory. And doth not thy heart desire this? But the perfection of our happiness is, that we shall see the face of the glory of God, which is the light of that world, as truly as the sun is the light of this; and that we shall be filled up with the feeling of his love, and abound with love to him again, and perfectly delighted in this communion of love, and express in the praises of the Lord, and thus make up the new Jerusalem, where God will place his glorious presence, and in which he will for evermore take pleasure. And is there anything in this that thy soul is against, and which thou dost not value above this world? If thou find that all the parts are sweet, and the description of heaven is most grateful to thee, and that this is the state that thou wouldest be in, it seems then it is not heaven, but death, that thou art averse from, and that maketh thee so loth to hear the tidings of thy change.

Quest. 4. Coudest thou not joyfully see the coming of Christ, if it were this day, if thou have done thy work, and art assured of his love? The apostle hath told us by the word of the Lord, that "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first, and then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) And this is the doctrine that comforteth believers. (Verse 18.) Would it not rejoice your hearts if you were sure to live to see the coming of the Lord, and to see his glorious appearing and return? If you were not to die, but to be caught up thus to meet the Lord, and to be changed immediately into an immortal, incorruptible, glorious state, would you be averse to this? Would it not be the greatest joy that you could desire? For my own part, I must confess to you, that death, as death, appeareth to me as an enemy, and my nature doth abhor and fear it. But the thoughts of the coming of the Lord are most sweet and joyful to me; so that if I were but sure that I should live to see it, and that the trumpet should sound, and the dead should rise, and the Lord appear before the period of my age, it would be the joyfullest tidings to me in the world. Oh, that I might see his kingdom come! It is the character of his saints to love his appearing,

(2 Tim. iv. 8,) and to look "for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." (Tit. ii. 13.) "The Spirit and the bride say, Come : even so, come, Lord Jesus," (Rev. xxii. 17, 20,) come quickly, is the voice of faith, and hope, and love. But I find not that his servants are thus characterized by their desires to die. It is, therefore, the presence of their Lord that they desire ; but it is death that they abhor. And, therefore, though they can submit to death, it is the coming of Christ that they love and long for ; and it is interposing death that causeth them to draw back. Let not Christians be discouraged by mistakes, and think that they love not God and glory, because they love not this enemy in the way, nor think that they are graceless or unbelieving worldlings, because they are afraid of death, as death.

But perhaps you will say, that if grace prevail not against the fears of death, then fear is predominant, and we are not sincere. To which I answer, that you must distinguish between such a prevailing as maintaineth our sincerity, and such a prevailing as also procureth our fortitude and joy. If grace prevail not to keep us upright in a holy life, renouncing the world, and crucifying the flesh, and devoting ourselves entirely to God, though the fear of death would draw us from it, then it is a sign that we are not sincere. But if grace do this much, and yet prevail not against all fears and unwillingness to die, but leave us under uncomfortable, hideous thoughts of death, this proves us not to be unsound. For the soul may savingly love God that is afraid of death, and he may truly love the end, that fears this dark and dismal way. Yet must there be so much to prove our uprightness, as that in our deliberate choice we will rather voluntarily pass through death, either natural or violent, than lose the happiness beyond it. Though we love not death, yet we love God and heaven so well that we will submit to it. And though we fear it and abhor it, yet not so much as we fear and abhor the loss of heaven. Let not poor Christians therefore wrong themselves, and deny the graces of the Spirit, as if they had more mind of earth than heaven, and of things temporal than of things eternal, because they are afraid to die. All suffering is grievous, and not joyous to our nature. Paul himself desired not to be unclothed, but "clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life," (2 Cor. v. 2, 4,) it being better to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. Even Christ himself had a will that desired that the cup might

have passed from him, if it had been agreeable to his Father's will, and the ends of his undertaken office. (Matt. xxvi. 41, 42.) Raise therefore no unjust conclusions from these natural fears, nor from the imperfection of our conquest; but praise him that relieveth us, and abateth the enmity of death, and furnisheth us with his antidotes, and will destroy his enemy at last.

*Use 6.* From the nimity of death we may further learn to study and magnify the victorious grace of our Redeemer, which overcometh the enemy, and turneth our hurt into our benefit, and maketh death a door of life. Though death be the enemy that seemeth to conquer us, and to destroy and utterly undo us, yet being conquered itself by Christ; it is used by him to our great advantage, and sanctified to be a very great help to our salvation. The suffering of Christ himself was in the hour of his enemies, and the power of darkness, (Luke xxii. 53,) which seemed to have prevailed against him; when yet it was but a destroying of death by death, and the purchasing of life and salvation for the world. So also in our death, though sin and Satan seem to conquer, it is they that are conquered, and not we, who are supervictors through him that hath loved us. (Rom. viii. 37.) They destroy themselves when they seem to have destroyed us. As the serpent bruised but the heel of Christ, who bruised his head; so doth he bruise but our heel, who, in that conflict, and by the means of his own execution through the strength of Christ, do bruise his head. (Gen. iii. 15.) And this is the upshot of all his enmity against the woman's holy seed. Though death was unsuitable to innocent man, and is still a natural enemy to us all; yet unto sinners it is an evil that is suitable and fit to destroy the greater evil that did cause it, and to prevent the everlasting evil. The foreknowledge of our certain death is a very great help to keep us humble, and disgrace all the seducing pleasures of the flesh, and all the profits and honours of the world, and so to enervate all temptations. It is a singular help to quicken a stupid, careless sinner, and to awaken men to prepare for the life to come, and to excite them to seek first the kingdom of God, and to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure; and to consider, seeing all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons they ought to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hastening to the coming of the day of God. (2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.) When we drop asleep, the remembrance of death may quickly awake us; when we grow slack, it is our spur to put us on, to mend our

pace. Who is so mad as wilfully to sin with death in his eye? Or who so dead as, with death in his eye, to refuse to live a godly life, if he have any spiritual light and feeling? Experience telleth us, that when health and folly cause us to promise ourselves long life, and think that death is a great way off, it lamentably cools our zeal, and strengthens our temptations, and dulls our souls to holy operations. And the approach of death puts life into all our apprehensions and affections. It is a wonderful hard thing to maintain our lively apprehensions, and strong affections, and tenderness of conscience, and self-denial, and easy contempt of earthly things, when we put far from us the day of death. We see what a stir men make for the profits and honours of this world, and how fast they hold their fleshly pleasures, while they are in health, and how contemptuously they speak of all, and bitterly complain of the vanity and vexation when they come to die. And if our lives and the world be brought hereby into such disorders, when men live so short a time on earth, what monsters of ambition, and covetousness, and luxury would men be, if they lived as long as before the flood, even to eight hundred or nine hundred years of age? Doubtless long life was so great a temptation then to man (in his corrupt state), that it is no wonder if his wickedness was great upon the earth; and if it prepared for that great destruction of the universal deluge. Should men live now but to the age of three hundred or four hundred years, I fear it would so tempt them to overvalue the world, and so embolden them to delay repentance, that one would be as a wolf to another, and the weak but be a prey to the strong, and wickedness would overwhelm the world, despising the reins, and bearing down religious and civil opposition. But when we stand over the grave, and see our friends laid in the dust, how mortified do we seem? How do we even shake the head at the folly of ambitious and covetous worldlings, and are ashamed to think of fleshly lusts! So far are men from owning their vanities, when that silent teacher standeth by. It is death that helps to humble the proud, and abate the arrogancy and obstinacy of the wicked, and make them regard the messengers of Christ, that before despised them and their message. It is death that stayeth the ebullition of distracting thoughts and passions, and helpeth to bring men to themselves, and fixeth giddy, discomposed minds, and helps to settle the light and the unsettled, and to restrain the worst. As we are beholden to the gallows for our purses and our lives, so are we to the grave and hell for much



of the order that is in the world, and our peace and freedom procured thereby. But it is a greater good that it procureth to believers.

If you ask, how is all this to be ascribed to Christ? I answer, many ways. 1. It is he that hath now the keys or power of death and hell, even he that liveth and was dead, and that liveth for evermore, (Rev. i. 18,) and therefore is to be feared by the world. 2. It is he that hath by his blood and covenant brought us the hope of everlasting life, which is it that giveth the efficacy to death. Without this, men would be but desperate, and think that it is better have a little pleasure than none at all; and so would give up themselves to sin, and desperately gratify their flesh by all the wickedness they could devise. 3. And it is Christ that teacheth men the right use of death, by his holy doctrine, having brought life and immortality to light by his gospel. 4. And it is Christ that sendeth forth the holy Spirit, which only doth so illuminate the mind, and quicken and dispose the heart, that death may be savingly improved. The poison is our own, but it is his skill and love that hath made a sovereign antidote of it. And let our bodies die, so our sin may die. If the foresight of death destroy our sin, and further our sanctification, and the hour of death doth end our fears, and enter us into the state of glory; though we will love death as death never the better for this, much less the sin that caused it, yet must we admire the love of our Redeemer.

And it is not only the peril but also the terror of death that we are in part delivered from. Though Christ himself was in a bloody sweat in his agony before his death, and cried out on the cross, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" because he bore the sins of the world; yet death is welcome to many of his followers, that drink of his cup, and are baptised with his baptism; for they taste not of these dregs which he drank up, and they are strengthened by his supporting grace. He that doth comfort them against sin and hell, doth also comfort them against death. So great is the glory that he hath promised them, and so great is his comforting, confirming grace, that dreadful death is not great enough to prevail against them. As it was too weak to conquer Christ; so is it too weak to conquer his Spirit in his people's souls. Without Christ we could not live, and we durst not die; but through him we can do and suffer all things, and can boldly pass through this dark and shady vale of death; yea, we can desire to depart and to be with

Christ as best for us : for to live is Christ and to die is gain. (Phil. i. 21, 23.) For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And therefore sometimes we can groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. And we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord ; we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord ; and therefore labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him : for we walk by faith and not by sight : and it is God that hath wrought us for the self-same thing, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit. (2 Cor. v. 1—10.) Though we long not to die, yet we long to see the face of God. And though we lay down our bodies with natural unwillingness, yet we lay down our sin and sorrows with gladness and spiritual delight. And though our hearts are ready to faint, as Peter's when he walked to Christ upon the waters, yet Christ puts forth his hand of love, and soon recovereth us from our fear and danger.

Melancholy and impatience may make men weary of their lives, and rush upon death with a false conceit that it will end their sorrows ; but this is not to conquer death, but to be conquered by a lesser evil ; and it is not an effect of fortitude, but of an imbecility and impotency of mind. And if a Brutus, a Cato, or a Seneca, be his own executioner, they do but choose a lesser evil, (in their conceits,) even a death which they account honourable, before a more ignominious death, or a life of shame, and scorn, and misery. But the true believer is raised above the fears of death by the love of God, and the hopes of glory ; and death (though ungrateful in itself) is welcome to him, as the way to his felicity.

Let tyrants and soldiers take it for their glory, that they can take away men's lives, (that is, they have the power of a serpent, or of ratsbane,) as if it were their honour to be their country's pestilence, and a ruler and a dose of poison were things of equal strength and use. But it is the glory of Christ to enable his disciples to conquer death, and bear the fury of the most cruel persecutors. The martyrs have been more joyful in their sufferings, than the judges that condemned them in their pomp and glory. When we are pressed above strength, and despair of life, and have the sentence of death in ourselves, we are then taught to trust in the living God that raiseth the dead. (2 Cor. i. 8—10.)

The saints by faith have been "tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:" they have "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword." (Heb. xi. 35—37.) "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ;" (1 Cor. xv. 57;) "They overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and love not their lives unto the death." (Rev. xii. 11.) They "fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." (Luke xii. 4.) They trust upon his promise that hath said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues: O grave, I will be thy destruction." (Hos. xiii. 14.) "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalm cxvi. 15.) "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. xiv. 13.)

*Use 7.* Moreover, from the enmity of death we may be directed which way to bend our cares: and seeing where our difficulty most lieth, we may see which way our most diligent preparations must be turned. Death cannot be prevented, but the malignant influence of it on our souls may be much abated. If you let it work without an antidote, it will make you live like unbelieving worldlings; it will deter your hearts from heaven, and dull your love to God himself, and make your meditations of him, and of your everlasting rest, to be seldom, and ungrateful to you; and it will make you say, "It is good to be here;" and have sweeter thoughts of this present life, than of your inheritance: it will rob you of much of your heavenly delights, and fill you with slavish fears of death, and subject you unto bondage all your lives, and make you die with agony and horror, so that your lives and deaths will be dishonourable to your holy faith, and to your Lord. If it were merely our own suffering by fears and horrors, or merely our loss of spiritual delights, the matter were great, but not so great. But it is more than this. For when our joys are overwhelmed with the fears of death, and turned into sorrows, our love to God will be abated, and we shall deny him the thanks and cheerful praises, which should be much of the employment of our lives. And we shall be much discomposed and unfitted for his service, and shall much dishonour him in the world; and shall strengthen our temptations

to the overvaluing of earthly things. Think it not therefore a small, or an indifferent matter, to fortify your souls against these malignant fears of death. Make this your daily care and work ; your peace, your safety, your innocency, and usefulness, and the honour of God, do much lie on it. And it is a work of such exceeding difficulty that it requireth the best of your skill and diligence ; and when all is done, it must be the illuminating, quickening beams of grace, and the shining face of the eternal love that must do the work ; though yet your diligence is necessary to attend the Spirit, and use the means in subservience to grace, and in expectation of these celestial rays.

And above all, take heed lest you should think that carnal mirth, or mere security, and casting away the thoughts of death, will serve to overcome these fears ; or that it is enough that you resolve against them. For it is your safety that must be looked to, as well as your present ease and peace ; and fear must be so overcome, as that a greater misery may not follow : presumption and security will be of very short continuance. To die without fear, and pass into endless desperation, which fear should have wakened you to prevent, is no desirable kind of dying. And besides, resolving against the terrors of death will not prevent them. When death draws near, it will amaze you in despite of all your resolutions, if you are not furnished with a better antidote. The more jocund you have been in carnal mirth, and the more you have presumptuously slighted death, it is likely your horror will be the greater when it comes. And therefore see that you make a wise and safe preparation, and that you groundedly and methodically cure these fears, and not securely cast them away. Though I have given you, to this end, some directions in other writings, (in *The Saint's Rest*, and in the *Treatise of Self-denial*, and that of *Crucifying the World*,) yet I shall add here these following helps, which, faithfully observed and practised, will much promote your victory over death, which conquereth all the strength of flesh, and glory of this world.

Direct. 1. If you would overcome the danger and the fears of death, make sure of your conversion that it is sound : and see that you be absolutely devoted unto God without reserves. Should you be deceived in your foundations, your life, and hopes, and joys, would all be delusory things. Till sin be mortified, and your souls reconciled to God in Christ, you are still in danger of worse than death, and it is but the senselessness of your

dead condition that keepeth you from the terrors of damnation. But if you are sure that you are quickened by renewing grace, and possessed by the sanctifying Spirit, and made partakers of the divine nature, you have then the earnest of your inheritance, (Eph. i. 14 ; 2 Cor. i. 22, and v. 5,) and the fire is kindled in your breast, that in despite of death will mount you up to God.

Direct. 2. To conquer the enmity of death you must live by faith in Jesus Christ ; as men that are emptied of themselves, and ransomed from his hands that had the power of death, and as men that are redeemed from the curse, and are now made heirs of the grace of life, being made his members, who is the Lord of life, even the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. The serious, believing study of his design and office, (to destroy sin and death, and to bring many sons to glory,) and also of his voluntary suffering, and his obedience to the death of the cross, may raise us above the fears of death. When we live by faith as branches of this blessed vine, and are righteous with his righteousness, justified by his blood and merits, and sanctified by his word and Spirit, and find that we are united to him, we may then be sure that death cannot conquer us, and nothing can take us out of his hands, for our life being hid with Christ in God, we know that we shall live, because he liveth, (Col. iii. 3 ; John xiv. 19,) and that when Christ, who is our life, appeareth, we shall also appear with him in glory, (Col. iii. 4,) and that he will "change our vile bodies, and make them like unto his glorious body, by his mighty power by which he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. iii. 21.) In our own strength we dare not stand the charge of death, and with it the charge of the law, and of our consciences. How dreadfully should we then be foiled and nonplussed if we must be found in no other righteousness but what we have received from the first Adam, and have wrought by the strength received from him. But being gathered under the wings of Christ, as the chickens under the wings of the hen, (Matt. xxiii. 37,) and being found then in him, having the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, we may boldly answer to all that can be charged on us to our terror. If we "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings and are made conformable unto his death ;" (Phil. iii. 10 ;) if we are dead with him to the world, and risen with him to a holy life ; if we have believingly traced him in his sufferings

and conquest, and perceive by faith how we participate in his victories, we shall then be able to grapple with the hands of death, and though we know the grave must be for awhile the prison of our flesh, we can by faith foresee the opening of our prison doors, and the loosing of our bonds, and the day of our last and full redemption. It strengtheneth us exceedingly to look "unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." When we consider what he endured against himself, we shall not be weary, nor faint in our minds. (Heb. xii. 2, 3.)

Direct. 3. Live also by faith on the heavenly glory. As one eye of faith must be on an humbled, crucified Christ, so must the other be on heaven, on a glorified Christ, and on the glory and everlasting love of God, which we shall there enjoy. This is it that conquereth the fears of death when we believe that we shall pass through it into everlasting life. If a man for health will take the most ungrateful potion, (the bitterness being short, and the benefit long,) and if he will suffer the surgeon to let out his blood, and in case of necessity to cut off a member, how light should we make of death, that have the assured hopes of glory to encourage us! What door so strait that we would not pass through if we could to our dearest friend! What way so foul that we would not travel to our beloved home! And shall death seem intolerable to us, that letteth in our souls to Christ? Well might Paul say, "To die is gain." (Phil. i. 21.) When we gain deliverance from all those sins that did here beset us, and all those sorrows that sin had bred, we gain the accomplishment of our desires, and the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls. We gain the crown that fadeth not away; a place before the throne of Christ, in the temple of God, in the city of God, the new Jerusalem; to eat of the hidden manna, and of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God (Rev. ii. 3.) We gain the place prepared for us by Christ in his Father's house. (John xiv. 1, 2.) For we shall be with him where he is, that we may behold his glory. (John xvii. 24.) We shall gain the sight of the glory of God, and the feeling of his most precious love, and the fulness of joy that is in his presence, and the everlasting pleasures at his right hand. (Psalm xvi. 11.) And shall we think much to die for such a gain? We will put off our clothes, and welcome sleep, which is the image of death, that our bodies may have rest, and

refuse not thus to die every night, that we may rise more refreshed for our employments in the morning. And shall we stick at the unclathing of our souls in order to their everlasting rest? Set but the eye of faith to the prospective of the promise, and take a serious, frequent view of the promised land, and this, if any thing, will make death more welcome than physic to the sick, than unclathing to a beggar that puts on new, or better clothes. Shall a poor man cheerfully ply his labour all day in hope of a little wages at night, and shall not a believer cheerfully yield to death in hope of everlasting glory? So far as heaven is soundly believed, and our conversations and hearts are there, the fears of death will be assuaged, and nothing else will well assuage them.

Direct. 4. Moreover, if you will conquer the enmity of death, do all that you can to increase and exercise the love of God in you. For love will so incline you to the blessed object of it, that death will not be able to keep down the flame. Were God set as a seal upon our hearts, we should find that "Love is as strong as death, the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame; many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it." (Sol. Song viii. 6, 7.) If carnal love have made the amorous to choose death that they might passionately express it, especially when they have heard of the death of their beloved; and if natural fortitude and love to their country have made many valiant men, though heathens, to contemn death, and readily lay down their lives; and if the love of fame and vainglory in a surviving name have caused many to die through pride; how much more will the powerful love of God put on the soul to leave this flesh and pass through death, that we may see his face, and fully enjoy the object of our love. So much as you love God, so much will you be above the terrors of the grave, and passed through death for the enjoyment of your beloved. "Perfect love casteth out fear," and "he that feareth is not made perfect in love." In death and judgment we shall have boldness if our love be perfect. (1 John iv. 17, 18.) This maketh the martyrs cheerfully lay down their lives for Christ; and love is glad of so precious an opportunity for its exercise and manifestation. Love is a restless working thing, that will give you no rest till your desires are attained, and you be with God. Nothing is so valiant as love. It rejoiceth when it meeteth with difficulties, which it may encounter for the sake of our beloved: it contemneth dangers; it

glorieth in sufferings; though it be humble, and layeth by all thoughts of merit, yet it rejoiceth in sufferings for Christ, and glorieth in the cross, and in the participation of his sufferings, and in the honourable wounds and scars which we receive for him that died for us.

Direct. 5. To overcome the terrors and enmity of death, it is necessary that we keep the conscience clear from the guilt of wilful sin, and of impenitency. If it may be, see that you wound it not; if you have wounded it, presently seek a cure, and live not in a wounded state. The face of death will waken conscience, and cause it to speak much louder than it did in health and in prosperity; and then sin will seem another thing, and wrath more terrible than it did in your security. Conscience will do much to make your burden light or heavy. If conscience groundedly speak peace, and all be sound and well at home, death will be less terrible, the heart being fortified against its enmity. But to have a pained body and a pained soul; a dying body, and a scorched conscience, that is afraid of everlasting death, this is a terrible case indeed. Speedily, therefore, get rid of sin, and get your consciences thoroughly cleansed by sound repentance and the blood of Christ. For so much sin as you bring to your death-bed, so much bitterness will there be in death. Away then with that sin that conscience tells you of, and touch the forbidden fruit no more, and kindle not the sparks of hell in your souls to make the sting of death more venomous. As it will quiet a believing soul through Christ, when he can say with Hezekiah, "Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight." (Isa. xxxviii. 3.) And it will be our rejoicing if we have "the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our conversation in the world." (2 Cor. i. 12.) So will it be most terrible to die in the fears of unpardoned sin, and to have conscience scourging us with the remembrance of our folly, when God is afflicting us, and we have need of a well-composed mind to bear the troubles of our flesh. A little from without is grievous, when any thing is amiss within. Get home, therefore, to Christ without delay; and cease not till you have peace in him, that death may find your consciences whole.

Direct. 6. Redeeming time is another means to prevent the hurtful fears of death. When we foreknow that it will shortly end our time, let us make the best of time while we have it.



And then when we find that our work is done, and that we did not loiter nor lose the time that God vouchsafed us, the end of it will be less grievous to us. A man that studieth his duty, and spareth for no cost or pains, and is as loth to lose an hour's time, as a covetous man is to lose an hundred pounds, will look back on his life, and look before him to his death, with greater peace, and less perplexity, than another man; but the thoughts of death must needs be terrible to a man that hath trifled away his life, and been an unthrift of his time. To think when you must die, that now you are at your last day or hour; and withal, to think how many hours you vainly lost, and that you knew not the worth of time till it was gone, will make death more bitter than now you can imagine. What else is death but the ending of our time? And what can be more necessary to a comfortable end, than faithfully to use it while we have it?

Direct. 7. Another help against the enmity of death is, the crucifying of the flesh, with its affections and lusts; and the conquest of the world by the life of faith, and crucifying it by the cross of Christ, and dying daily by the patient suffering of the cross ourselves. When we are loose from all things under the sun, and there is nothing that entangleth our affections on earth, a great part of the difficulty is then removed; but death will tear the heart that is glued to any thing in this world. Possess, therefore, as if you possessed not, and rejoice as if you rejoiced not, and use the world as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world doth pass away. (1 Cor. vii. 29—31.) It is much for the sake of our flesh that must perish, that death doth seem so bitter to us. If, therefore, we can thoroughly subdue the flesh and live above its pleasures and desires, we shall the more easily bear its dissolution. Set up your senses then a little more, and let your hearts grow stranger to this world; and if you have known any persons, relations, accommodations after the flesh, from henceforth know them so no more. How terrible is death to an earthly-minded man, that had neglected his soul for a treasure here, which must then be dissipated in a moment. How easy is death to a heavenly mind, that is thoroughly weaned from this world, and taketh it but for his pilgrimage or passage unto life; and hath made it the business of his days to lay up for himself a treasure in heaven. He that hath unfeignedly made heaven his end in the course of his life, will most readily pass to it on the hardest terms, for every man is willing to attain his end.

Direct. 8. It will much help us against the enmity of death to be duly conformed to the image of God in the hatred of sin and love of holiness ; and especially in the point of justice. When we hate sin thoroughly, and find it so incorporated into our flesh, that they must live and die together, it will make death the more easy to us, because it will be the death of sin ; even of that sin which we most hate, and that God hateth, and that hath cost us so dear as it hath done. When we are in love with holiness, and know that we shall never be perfect in it till after death, it will make death the more welcome, as the passage to our desired life. When the justice, even the castigatory and vindictive justice of God, is more amiable in our eyes, and we are not blinded by self-love, to judge of God and of his ways, according to the interest of our flesh, we shall then consent to his dissolving stroke, and then see the bitterness of death proceedeth from that which is good in God, though from that which is evil in ourselves. Doubtless, as justice is one of the blessed attributes of God, so should it be amiable to man, there being nothing in God but what is lovely. It is the prevalency of self-love that makes men so insensible of the excellency of divine justice, while they speak so respectfully of his mercy. So far as men are carnal and selfish, they cannot love that by which they smart, or of which they are in danger ; but the soul that is got above itself, and is united unto God in Christ, and hath that image of God which containeth the impress and effect of all his attributes, hath such an habit of impartial justice in himself, and such a hatred of sin, and such a desire that the honour of God should be vindicated and maintained, and such an approbation of the justice of God, that he can the more easily consent or submit to the dissolving stroke of death ; he hateth his own sin, and loatheth himself for all his abominations, and is possessed with that justice that provoketh him to self-revenge in an ordinate sort, and therefore doth love and honour that justice that inflicteth on him the penalty of death, (especially since mercy hath made it a useful castigation,) as some penitent malefactors have been so sensible of their crimes, that they have not deprecated death, but consented to it as a needful work of justice (as it is written of the penitent murderer lately hanged at London). So holiness doth contain such a hatred of our own sins, and such impartial justice on God's behalf, that it will cause us to subscribe to the righteousness of his sentence, and the more quietly to yield to the stroke of death.

Direct. 9. It will somewhat abate the fears of death, to consider the restlessness and troubles of this life, and the manifold evils that end at death. And because this consideration is little available with men in prosperity, it pleaseth God to exercise us with adversity, that when we find there is no hope of rest on earth, we may look after it where it is, and venture on death by the impulse of necessity. Here we are continually burdened with ourselves, annoyed by our corruptions, and pained by the diseases of our souls; or endangered most when pained least. And would we be thus still? We live in the continual smart of the fruit of our own folly, and the hurts that we catch by our careless or inconsiderate walking, like children that often fall and cry; and would we still live such a life as this? The weakness of our faith, the darkness of our minds, the distance and strangeness of our souls to God, are a continual languishing and trouble to our hearts. How grievous is it to us that we can love him no more, nor be more assured of his love to us; that we find continually so much of the creature, and so little of God upon our hearts; that carnal affections are so easily kindled in us, and the love of God will scarce be kept in any life by the richest mercies, the most powerful means, and by our greatest diligence. Oh! what a death is it to our hearts that so many odious temptations should have such free access, such ready entertainment, such small resistance, and so great success: that such horrid thoughts of unbelief should look into our minds, and stay so long, and be so familiar with us, that the blessed mysteries of the gospel, and the state of separated souls, and the happiness of the life to come, are known so slightly, and believed so weakly and imperfectly, and meet with so many carnal questionings and doubts; that when we should be solacing our souls in the forethoughts of heaven, we look toward it with such strangeness and amazement, as if we staggered at the promise of God through unbelief; and there is so much atheism in our affections, God being almost as no God to them sometimes, and heaven almost as no heaven to them, that it shows there is too much in our understandings. Oh! what a death is it to our minds, that when we should live in the love of infinite goodness, we find such a remnant of carnal enmity, and God hath such resistance, and so narrow, so short, so cold, so unkind entertainment in those hearts that were made to love him, and that should know and own no love but his. What a bond-

age is it that our souls are so entangled with the creatures, and so detained from the love of God; and that we draggle on this earth, and can reach no higher; and the delightful communion with God and a conversation in heaven, are things that we have so small experience of. Alas! that we that are made for God, and should live to him, and be still upon his work, and know no other, should be so biassed by the flesh, and captivated by self-love, and lost at home, that our affections and intentions do hardly get above ourselves; but there we are too prone to terminate them all, and lose our God, even in a seeming religiousness, while we will be Gods to ourselves. How grievous is it that such wonders and glorious appearances of God, as are contained in the incarnation, life, and death of Christ, and in all the parts of the work of our redemption, should no more affect us than they do, nor take up our souls in more thankful admiration, nor ravish us into higher joys. Alas! that heaven commands our souls no more from earth. That such an infinite glory is so near to us, and we enjoy so little of it, and have no more savour of it upon our souls. That in the hands of God, and before his face, we do no more regard him. That the great and wonderful matters of our faith do so little affect us, that we are tempted thereby to question the sincerity of our faith, if not the reality of the things believed; and that so little of these great and wondrous things appeareth in our lives, that we tempt the world to think our faith is but a fancy. Is not all this grievous to an honest heart? And should we not be so far weary of such a life as this, as to be willing to depart and be with Christ.

If it would so much rejoice a gracious soul to have a stronger faith, a more lively hope, a more tender conscience, a more humble, self-abhorring heart, to be more fervent in prayer, more resolute against temptations, and more successfully to fight against them; with what desire and joy then should we look towards heaven, where we shall be above our strongest faith and hope, and have no more need of the healing graces or the healing ordinances, nor be put upon self-afflicting work, nor troubled with the temptations, nor terrified by the face of any enemy.

Now, if we will vigorously appear for God against a sinful generation, how many will appear against us? How bitterly will they reproach us; how falsely will they slander us; and say all manner of evil against us? and it is well if we escape

the violence of their hands. And what should be our joy in all these sufferings, but that "great is our reward in heaven." (Matt. v. 12.)

Alas! how are we continually here annoyed by the presence, and the motions, and the success of sin in ourselves and others. It dwelleth in us night and day; we cannot get it to stay behind; no, not when we address ourselves to God; not in our public worship, or our secret prayers; not for the space of one Lord's day, or one sermon, or one sacrament, in ordinary or extraordinary duty. O, what a blessed day and duty would it be, in which we could leave our sin behind us, and converse with God in spotless innocency, and worship and adore him without that darkness, and strangeness, and unbelief, and dullness, and doubtings, and distractions, that are now our daily miseries. Can we have grace, and not be weary of these corruptions? Can we have life, and not be pained with these diseases? And can we live in daily pain and weariness, and not be willing of release? Is there a gracious soul that groaneth not under the burden of these miseries? Yea, in every prayer, what do we else but confess them, and lament them, and groan for help and for deliverance? And yet shall we fear our day of freedom, and be loth that death should bring us news that our prayers are heard, and our groans have reached up to heaven; and that the bonds of flesh and sin shall be dissolved, and we shall have need to watch, and strive, and fear, and complain, and sigh, and weep no more? Shall the face of death discourage us from desiring such a blessed day, when we have so full assurance that, at last, this enemy also shall be destroyed? The Lord heal and pardon the hypocrisy of our complaints, together with the unbelief and cowardliness of our souls. Do we speak so much, and hear so much, and seem to do so much against sin, and yet had we rather keep it still than be stripped of it, together with the rags of our mortality? And yet had we rather dwell with sin, in tempting, troubling, corruptible flesh, than lay them by, and dwell with Christ? O Lord, how lamentably have we lost our wisdom, and drowned our minds in flesh and folly, by forsaking thee our light and life! How come our reasonable souls to be so bewitched, as, after all our convictions, complaints, and prayers, to be still more willing of our sickness than of the remedy, and more afraid of this bitter cup than of the poison that lodgeth in our bowels, which it would expel; and that after all the labour we have used, we had yet rather dwell with our greatest

enemy, than, by a less, to be transmitted to our dearest friend ; and had rather continue in a troublesome, weary, restless life, than by the sleep of death to pass to rest.

And this sin, in others also, is our trouble, though not so much as in ourselves. It maketh those our bitter enemies, whose good we most desire and endeavour, and causeth the unthankful world to requite us with malicious usage, for telling them the ungrateful truth, and seeking their salvation ; it makes our friends to be but half friends, and some of them too like our enemies. It puts a sting into the sweetest friendship, and mixeth smart with all our pleasures ; it worketh us grief from precious mercies, and abateth the comfort of our near relations ; so that our smart by the pricks is often greater than our pleasure in the sweetness of the rose. No friend is so smoothed and squared to the temper and interest of another, but that some inequality and unevenness doth remain, which makes the closure to be less near and steadfast. Even family relations are usually so imperfectly jointed and cemented, that when the winds of trial are anything high, they shake the frame ; and though they are but low, they find an entrance, and cause such a coldness of affections as is contrary to the nature and duty of the relations. Either a contrariety of opinions, or of natural temperature and humours, or else of the dispositions of the mind. Sometimes cross interests, and sometimes passions and cross words, do cause such discontents and sourness, such frowns, or jealousies, or distances, that our nearest friends are but as sackcloth on our skins, and as a shoe too strait for us, or as a garment that is unmeet, which pinch and trouble us in their use ; and those that should be to us as the apple of our eyes, are as the dust or smoke to them that vex or blind them : and the more we love them, the more it grieveth us to be crossed in our love. There is scarce any friend so wise, so good, so suitable to us, or so near, that we can always please. And the displeasure of a friend is as gravel in our shoes, or as nettles in our bed, oftentimes more grievous than the malice of an enemy. There is no such doing as this in heaven, because there is no such guest as sin. We shall love each other far more than we do here, and yet that love shall never be inordinate, nor in the least divert our love from God, but every saint and angel in the society shall be loved with the most chaste and pure affections, in a perfect subordination to the love of God, and so as that God himself in them shall be the chiefest object of that love. It is

there that our friends, being freed from all their imperfections, do neither tempt us to a carnal love, nor have any thing in them to discourage the love that is spiritual and pure. We have here our passionate friends, our self-conceited friends, our unkind, unthankful, selfish friends, our mutable and unfaithful friends, our contentious friends, that are like to enemies. And who have used us more hardly than our friends? But when we come to God, we shall have friends that are like God, that are wholly good, and are participatively turned into love; and having left behind them all that was unclean, and noisome, and troublesome to themselves, they have also cast off all that could be troublesome to us. Our love will be there without suspicions, without interruptions, unkindnesses, and discontents, without disappointments, frustrations, and dissatisfactions: for God himself will fully satisfy us; and we shall love his goodness and glory in his saints, as well as immediately in himself. Our friends are now lost at the turning of a straw. The change of their interest, their company, their opinions, the slanders of backbiters, and misrepresentations of malicious men, can cool their love, and kill their friendship. But heaven is a place of constant love. The love of saints, as all things else, is there eternal, and yet it declineth not with age. It is a world of love that we are hastening to; it is a life of love that we must there live; and a work of love, and perfect love, that we must be there employed in for ever. If here we have a pure, a dear, a faithful friend, that is without false-heartedness and deceit, that loveth us as his own soul, how quickly is he snatched away by death, and leaves us melted into tears, and mourning over his earthly relics, and looking upward with grieved hearts, as the disciples did after their ascending Lord. (Acts i. 9—11.) We are left almost as lifeless by such friends, as the body is left by the departed soul. We have nothing but grief to tell us that we live, and that our souls are not departed with them. We are left in greater lamentation than if we had never known faithful friends. And, alas! how quickly are they gone when once God sees them ripe for heaven, when drones and dullards live much longer. If we see a saint that is clear of judgment, and low in humility, and naked-hearted in sincerity, and that abounds in love to God and man, that is faithful and constant to his friend, and is above the pride and vanities of this world, and doth converse by a life of faith above, and is useful and exemplary in his generation. Alas! how soon is he snatched away;

and we are left in our temptations, repining and murmuring at God, as Jonah, when his gourd was withered, as if the Lord had destined this world to be the dwelling of unfaithful, worthless men, and envied us the presence of one eminent saint, one faithful friend, and one that (as Moses when he had talked with God) hath a face that shineth with the reflected rays of the heavenly glory, when, indeed, it is because this world is unworthy of them, (Heb. xi. 38,) not knowing their worth, nor how to use them, nor how to make use of them for their good. And because, when they are ripe and mellow for eternity, it is fit that God be served before us, and that heaven have the best, and that be left on earth that is earthly. Must heaven be deprived of its inhabitants? Must a saint that is ripe be kept from Christ, and so long kept from his inheritance, from the company of angels and the face of God, and all, lest we should be displeased, and grudge at God for glorifying those whom he destined to glory before the foundations of the world, and whom he purchased and prepared for glory? Must there be a place empty, and a voice be wanting in the heavenly choir, lest we should miss our friends on earth? Are we not hastening after them at the heels; and do we not hope to live with them for ever; and shall we grudge that they are gone a day, or week, or year, before us? O foolish, unbelieving souls! We mourn for them who are past mourning, and lament for our friends that are gone to rest, when we are left ourselves in a vexatious, restless, howling wilderness, as if it were better to be here. We mourn and weep for the souls that are triumphing in their Master's joy; and yet we say we believe, and hope, and labour, and wait for the same felicity. Shall the happiness of our friends be our sorrow and lamentation? O, did we but see these blessed souls, and where they are, and what they are enjoying, and what they are doing, we should be ashamed to mourn thus for their change! Do you think they would wish themselves again to be on earth? Or would they take it kindly of you if you could bring them down again into this world, though it were to reign in wealth and honour? O! how would they disdain or abhor the motion, unless the commanding will of God did make it a part of their obedience. And shall we grieve that they are not here, when to be here would be their grief?

But thus our lives are filled with griefs. Thus smiles and frowns, desires and denials, hopes and frustrations, endeavours and disappointments, do make a quotidian ague of our lives.



The persons and the things we love do contribute to our sorrows, as well as those we hate. If our friends are bad, or prove unkind, they gall and grieve us while they live: if they excel in holiness, fidelity, and suitableness, the dart that kills them deeply woundeth us; and the sweeter they were to us in their lives, the bitterer to us is their death. We cannot keep mercy, but sin is ready to take it from us, or else to mar it, and turn it into vinegar and gall. And doth not death (accidentally) befriend us, that puts an end to all these troubles, and lands us safe on the celestial shore, and puts us into the bosom of perpetual rest, where all is calm, and the storms and billows that tossed us here shall fear or trouble us no more? And thus death shall make us some recompense at last for the wrong it did us; and the mortal blow shall hurt us less than did the dreadful apparition of it in our forethoughts. Let not our fears, then, exceed the cause: though we fear the pangs and throes of travail, let us withal remember that we shall presently rejoice, and all the holy angels with us, that a soul is born into the world of glory, and death shall gain us much more than it deprived us of.

Direct. 10. The last direction that I shall give you to conquer the enmity of death is this: give up your wills entirely to the will of God, as knowing that his will is your beginning and your end, your safety, your felicity, and rest, in which you should gladly acquiesce. When you think of death, remember who it is that sends it; it is our Father's messenger, and is sent but to execute his will. And can there be any thing in the will of God that his servants should inordinately fear? Doubtless, his will is much safer and better for us than our own: and if, in general, it were offered to our choice, whether all particulars of our lives should be disposed of by God's will, or by ours, common reason might teach us to desire to be rather in God's hands than our own. The fulfilling of his will is the care and business of our lives; and therefore it should be a support and satisfaction to us at our death that it is but the fulfilling of his will. His justice and punishing will is good, though selfishness maketh it ungrateful to the offender. But his children that are dear to him, and taste no evil but that which worketh for their good, have no cause to quarrel at his will. Whatsoever our surest, dearest friends would have us take, or do, or suffer, we are ready to submit to, as being confident they will do nothing for our hurt (if they do but know what is for our good). And shall we not more boldly trust the will of God than of our dear-

est friend? He knows what he hath to do with us, and how he will dispose of us, and whither he will bring us, and his interest in us is more than ours in ourselves; and shall we then disturb him, as if we had to do with an enemy, or one that were evil, and not with love and infinite goodness? It is the will of God that must be the everlasting rest, the heaven, the pleasure of our souls; and shall we now so fear it, and fly from it, as if it were our ruin? Look which way you will through all the world, your souls will never find repose, nor satisfying quietness and content, but in the will of God. Let us, therefore, commit our souls to him, as to a faithful Creator, and desire unfeignedly the fulfilling of his will, and believe that there is no ground of confidence more firm. Abraham may boldly trust his son, his only son, on the will of God; and Christ himself, when he was to drink the bitter cup, submitted his own natural love of life to his Father's will saying, "Not my will, but thine be done." It is a most unworthy abuse of God, that we could be quiet, and rejoice, if our own wills, or our dearest friends, might dispose of our lives, and yet are distressed when they are at the dispose of the will of God.

But, perhaps, you will say, 'It is the error of my own will that hath procured my death: if it had been merely the fruit of the will of God, I could be easily satisfied.' Answ. Wo to us if we had not ground of comfort against the errors of our own wills. When our destruction is of ourselves, our help is of God. So much as is of ourselves in it is evil, but so much as is of God is good. I do not say that you should rest in your own wills, nor in your own ways, but in the will and ways of God. The rod is good, though the fault that makes it necessary be bad. The chastising will is good, though the sinning will be evil; and it is good that is intended to us, and shall be performed in the event.

Object. But how can we rest in the angry, afflicting will of God, when it is this that we must be humbled under; and it is the will of God that is the condemnation of the wicked? Answ. The effect being from a twofold cause (the sinning will of man, and the punishing will of God) is accordingly good as from the latter, and so far should be loved and consented to by all; and evil as from the former, and so may be abhorred. But to the saints there is yet greater consolation. Though affliction is their grief, as it signifieth God's displeasure, and causeth the smart or destruction of the flesh; yet it is their mercy, as it

proceedeth from the love of God, and prepareth them for the greatest mercies. And therefore, seeing God never bringeth evil on them that love him, but what is preparatory to a far greater good, we may well take comfort in our death, that it is our Father's will it should be so.

*Use 8.* If death shall be conquered as the last enemy, from hence Christians may receive exceeding consolation, as knowing that they have no enemy to their happiness, but such as shall be conquered by Christ; sooner or later he will overcome them all. Let faith, therefore, foresee the conquest in the conflict; and let us not, with too much despondency, hang down our heads before any enemy that we know shall be trodden down at last. We have burdensome corruptions, that exercise our graces, and grieve the Spirit, and wrong our Lord; but all these shall be overcome. Though we have heard, and read, and prayed, and meditated, and yet our sins remain alive, they shall be conquered at last. Our love, and joy, and praise, shall be everlasting; but our ignorance, and unbelief, and pride, and passion, shall not be everlasting. Our holiness shall be perfected, and have no end; but our sin shall be abolished, and have an end. Our friends shall abide with us for ever, and the holy love and communion of saints shall be perfected in heaven; but our enemies shall not abide with us for ever, nor malice follow us to our rest. The wicked have no comforts but what will have an end; and the forethought of that is sufficient to embitter even the present sweetness. And the godly have no sorrows but such as are of short continuance; and methinks the foresight of their end should sweeten the present bitter cup, and make our sorrows next to none. We sit weeping now in the midst of manifold afflictions; but we foresee the day when we shall weep no more, but all tears shall be wiped from our eyes by the tender hand of our merciful Redeemer. We are now afraid of love itself, even of our dear and blessed Father, lest he should hate us, or be angry with us for ever; but heaven will banish all these fears, when the perfect fruition of the eternal love hath perfected our love. Our doubtings and perplexities of mind are many and grievous, but they will be but short. When we have full possession we shall be past our doubts. Our work is now to pour out our grieved souls into the bosom of some faithful friend, or ease our troubled minds by complaining of our miseries to our faithful pastors, that from them we may have some words of direction

and consolation; but, oh! how different a work is it that we shall have in heaven, where no more complainings shall be heard from our mouths, nor no more sorrow shall possess our hearts? And we shall have no need of men to comfort us; but shall have comfort as naturally from the face of God, as we have light and heat, in the summer, from the sun. When we all make one celestial choir, to sing the praises of the King of Saints, how unlike will that melody be to the broken music of sighs, and groans, and lamentations, which we now take to be almost our best! We are now glad when we can find but words, and groans, and tears, to lament our sin and misery; but then our joy shall know no sorrow, nor our voice any sad and mournful tune. And may we not bear a while the sorrows that shall have so good an end? We shall shortly have laid by the hard, unprofitable, barren hearts, that are now our continual burden and disease. Love not your corruptions, Christians; but yet be patient under the unavoidable relics that offend you; remembering that your conflict will end in conquest, and your faith, and watchfulness, and patience will be put to it but a little while. Who would not enter willingly into the fight, when he may, beforehand, be assured that the field shall be cleared of every enemy? All this must be ascribed to our dear Redeemer. Had not he wrought the conquest, the enemies that vex us would have destroyed us, and the serpent that now doth but bruise our heel, would have bruised our head; and the sorrows that are wholesome, sanctified, and short, would have been mortal, venomous, and endless.

What suffering, then, can be so great in which a believer should not rejoice, when he is, beforehand, promised a gracious end? What though at the present it be not joyous, but grievous (in itself)? We should bear it with patience, when we know that at last it shall bring forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to all them that are exercised thereby. (Heb. xii. 11.) If we should be always abused, and always unthankfully and unkindly dealt with, or always under the scorn, or slanders, or persecutions of unreasonable men, or always under our poverty and toilsome labours, or always under our pains and pining sicknesses, we might then, indeed, distinnish our comforts. But when we know that it will be but a little while, and that all will end in rest and joy, and that our sorrows are but preparing for those joys; even reason itself is taught by faith

to bid us rejoice in all our tribulations, and to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. (Heb. xii. 12.) We make nothing to endure a sudden prick, that by blood-letting we may prevent a long disease. The short pain of pulling out a tooth is ordinarily endured to prevent a longer. A woman doth bear the pains of her travail because it is short, and tends to the bringing of a child into the world. Who would not submit to any labour or toil for a day, that he might win a life of plenty and delight by it? Who would not be spit upon, and made the scorn of the world for a day, if he might have his will for it as long as he liveth on earth? And should we not then cheerfully submit to our momentary afflictions, and the troubles of a few days, (which are light, and mixed with a world of mercies,) when we know that they are working for us a far more exceeding, eternal weight of glory? (2 Cor. iv. 17.) Our clamorous and malicious enemies, our quarrelsome brethren, our peevish friends, our burdensome corruptions and imperfections, will shortly trouble us no more. As our life is short, and but a dream and shadow, and therefore the pleasures of this world are no better; so our troubles also will be no longer, and are but sad dreams, and dark shadows, that quickly pass away. Our Lord that hath begun, and gone on so far, will finish his victories, and the last enemy shall shortly be destroyed.

And if the fearful doubting soul shall say, 'I know this is comfort to them that are in Christ, but what is it to me, that know not whether I have any part in him?' I answer, 1. The foundation of God still standeth sure; the Lord knoweth his own, even when some of them know not that they are his own. He knoweth his mark upon his sheep, when they know it not themselves. God doubteth not of his interest in thee, though thou doubt of thy interest in him. And thou art faster in the arms of his love, than by the arms of thy own faith; as the child is surer in the mother's arms than by its holding of the mother. And, moreover, your doubts and fears are part of the evil that shall be removed, and your bitterest sorrows that hence proceed shall with the rest of the enemies be destroyed.

2. But yet take heed that you unthankfully plead not against the mercies which you have received, and be not friends to those doubts and fears which are your enemies, and that you take not part with the enemy of your comforts. Why dost

thou doubt, poor humbled soul, of thy interest in Christ, that must make the conquest? Answer me but these few questions from thy heart.

Quest. 1. Did Christ ever show himself unkind to thee? or unwilling to receive thee, and have mercy on thee? Did he ever give thee cause to think so poorly of his love and grace as thy doubts do intimate thou dost? Hast thou not found him kind when thou wast unkind? and that he thought on thee when thou didst not think on him? And will he now forget thee, and end in wrath that begun in love? He desired thee when thou didst not desire him, and gave thee all thy desires after him: and will he now cross and deny the desires which he hath caused? He was found of thee, (or rather found thee,) when thou soughtest not after him; and can he reject thee now thou criest and callest for his grace? O think not hardly of his wondrous grace till he give thee cause. Let thy sweet experiences be remembered, to the shame of thy causeless doubts and fears; and let him that hath loved thee to the death be thought on as he is, and not as the unbelieving flesh would misrepresent him.

Quest. 2. If thou say that it is not his unkindness, but thy own, that feeds thy doubts, I further ask thee, is he not kind to the unkind, especially when they lament their own unkindness? Thou art not so unkind as thou wast in thy unconverted state, and yet he then expressed his love in thy conversion. He then sought thee when thou wentest astray, and brought thee carefully home into his fold, and there he hath kept thee ever since; and is he less kind now when thou art returned home? Dost thou not know that all his children have their frowardness, and are guilty of their unkindnesses to him? And yet he doth not therefore disown them, and turn them out of his family; but is tender of them in their froward weakness, because they are his own. How dealt he with the peevish prophet Jonah, that was "exceedingly displeased, and very angry," that God spared Nineveh, lest it should be a dishonour to his prophecy, inasmuch, that he wished that he might die, and not live; and after repined at the withering of his gourd, and the scorching of the sun that beat upon him? The Lord doth gently question him, "Dost thou well to be angry?" and after hence convinces him that the mercy which he valued to himself he should not envy to so many. (Jonah, iv.) How dealt he with the disciples that fell asleep, when they should have watched with Christ in

the night of his great agony? He doth not tell them, 'You are none of mine, because you could not watch with me one hour,' but tenderly excuseth that which they durst not excuse themselves. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." When he was on the cross, though "they all forsook him and fled," he was then so far from forsaking them, that he was manifesting to admiration that exceeding love that never would forsake them. And knowest thou not, poor, complaining soul! that the kindness of Christ overcometh all the unkindness of his children? And that his blood and grace is sufficient to save thee from greater sins than those that trouble thee? If thou hadst no sin, what use hadst thou for a Saviour? Will thy physician, therefore, cast thee off because thou art sick?

Quest. 3. Yea, hath not Christ already subdued so many of thy enemies as may assure thee he will subdue the rest? and begun that life in thee which may assure thee of eternal life? Once thou wast a despiser of God and his holy ways; but now it is far otherwise with thee. Hath he not broken the heart of thy pride, and worldliness, and sensuality, and made thee a new creature? And is not this a pledge that he will do the rest? Tell me plainly, hadst thou rather keep thy sin, or leave it? Hadst thou rather have liberty to commit it, or be delivered from it? Dost thou not hate it, and set thyself against it as thy enemy? Art thou not delivered from the reign and tyranny of it, which thou wast once under? And will he not perfect the conquest which he hath begun? He that hath thus far delivered thee from sin, thy greatest enemy, will deliver thee from all the sad effects of it. The blessed work of the Spirit in thy conversion did deliver thee from the bondage of the devil, from the power of darkness, and translated thee into the kingdom of Jesus Christ; then didst thou enter the holy warfare under his banners that was never overcome, in the victorious army that shall shortly begin their everlasting triumph. The sin which thou hatest, and longest to be delivered from, and art willing to use God's means against it, is the conquered enemy, which may assure thee of a full and final conquest, supposing that thy hatred is against all known sin, and that there is none so sweet or profitable in thy account which thou hadst not far rather leave than keep.

Quest. 4. Moreover, art thou not truly willing to yield to all the terms of grace? Thou hast heard of the yoke and burden

of Christ, and of the conditions of the gospel, on which peace is offered to the sinful world, and what Christ requireth of such as will be his disciples. What saith thy heart now to those terms? Do they seem so hard and grievous to thee, that thou wilt venture thy soul in thy state of sin, rather than accept of them? If this were so, thou hadst yet no part in Christ indeed. But if there be nothing that Christ requireth of thee that is not desirable in thy eyes, or which thou dost not stick at, so far as to turn away from him, and forsake him, and refuse his covenant and grace, rather than submit to such conditions, thou art then in covenant with him, and the blessings of the covenant belong to thee. Canst thou think that Christ hath purchased, and offered, and promised that which he will not give? Hath he sent forth his ministers, and commanded them to make the motion in his name, and to invite and compel men to come in, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God, and that yet he is unwilling to accept thee when thou dost consent? If Christ had been unwilling, he had not so dearly made the way, nor begun as a suitor to thy soul, nor so diligently sought thee as he hath done. If the blessings of the covenant are thine, then heaven is thine, which is the chiefest blessing? And if they be not thine, it is not because Christ is unwilling, but because thou art unwilling of his blessings on his terms. Nothing can deprive thee of them but thy refusal. Know, therefore, assuredly whether thou dost consent thyself to the terms of Christ, and whether thou art truly willing that he be thy Saviour; and if thy conscience bear thee faithful witness that it is so, dishonour not Christ, then, so far as to question whether he be willing, who hath done so much to put it out of doubt. The stop is at thy will, and not at his. If thou know that thou art willing, thou mayest know that Christ and his benefits are thine; and if thou be not willing, what makes thee wish, and groan, and pray, and labour in the use of means? Is it not for Christ and his benefits that thy heart thus worketh, and thou dost all this? Fear not, then, if thy own hand be to the covenant, it is most certain that the hand of Christ is at it.

Quest. 5. Moreover, I would ask thee, whether thou see not a beauty in holiness, which is the image of Christ, and whether thy soul do not desire it even in perfection? So that thou hadst rather, if thou hadst thy choice, be more holy than more rich or honourable in the world. If so, be assured that it is not without holiness that thou choosest and preferrest holiness.



Hadst thou not rather have more faith, and hope, and love to God, and patience and contentment, and communion with Christ, than have more of the favour and applause of man, or of the riches or pleasures of this world? If so, I would know of thee whether this be not from the Spirit of Christ within thee; and be not his image itself upon thee? And the motions of the new and heavenly nature, which is begotten in thee by the Holy Ghost? Undoubtedly it is. And the Spirit of Christ thus dwelling in thee is the earnest of thy inheritance. Dost thou find the Spirit of Christ thus working in thee, causing thee to love holiness, and hate all sin, and yet canst thou doubt of thy part in Christ?

Quest. 6. Moreover, canst thou not truly say, that Christ's friends so far as thou knowest them, are thy friends, and that which is against him thou takest as against thyself? If so, undoubtedly thy enemies also are to him as his enemies, and he will lay them at thy feet. Thy troubles are as his troubles; and in all thy afflictions he is as careful of thy good as if he himself were thereby afflicted. Fear not those enemies that Christ takes as his own. It is he that is engaged to overcome them.

And now when conscience itself beareth witness that thus it is with thy soul, and that thou wouldest fain be what God would have thee be, and desirest nothing than to be more like him, and nearer to him, and desirest no kind of life so much as that in which thou mayest be most serviceable to him; consider what a wrong it is, then, to Christ, and to the honour of his covenant and grace, and to thy poor, dejected soul, that thou shouldest lie questioning his love, and thy part in him, and looking about for matter of accusation, or causeless suspicion, against his Spirit working in thee; and that thou shouldest cast away the joy of the Lord, which is thy strength, and gratify the enemy of thy peace. When sickness is upon thee, and death draws nigh, thou shouldest then, with joy, lift up thy head, because thy warfare is almost accomplished, and thy Saviour ready to deliver thee the crown. Is this a time to fear and mourn, when thou art entering into endless joy? Is it a time of lamentation, when thou art almost at thy journey's end, ready to see thy Saviour's face, and to take thy place in the heavenly Jerusalem, amongst those millions of holy souls that are gone before thee? Is it seemly for thee to lament thus at the door, when they are feasted with such

inconceivable joys within? Dost thou know what thy brethren are now enjoying, and what the heavenly host are doing? How full they are of God, and how they are ravished with his light and love? And canst thou think it seemly to be so unlike them that are passing to them? I know there is such difference between imperfection and perfection, and between earth and heaven, that it justifieth our moderate sorrows, and commandeth us to take up infinitely short of their delights, till we are with them. But yet let there not be too great a disproportion between the members of Jesus Christ. We have the same Lord, and the same Spirit; and all that is theirs in possession is, in right and title, ours. They are our elder brethren, and, being at age, have possession of the inheritance; but we that are yet in the lap of the church on earth, our mother, and in the arms of our father's grace, are of the same family, and have the same nature in our low degree. They were once on earth as low as we, and we shall be shortly in heaven as high as they: am I now in flesh, in fears, in griefs? So was David, and Paul, and all the saints, a while ago; yea, and Christ himself. Am I beset with sin, and compassed with infirmities, and racked by my own distempered passion? So were the many saints now glorified; but the other day, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are." (James v. 17.) Am I maliced by dissenting adversaries? Do they privily lay snares for me, and watch my halting, and seek advantage against my name, and liberty, and life? So did they by David, and many others, now with Christ. But now these enemies are overcome. Art thou under pains, and consuming sicknesses? Are thine eyes held waking; and doth trouble and sorrow waste thy spirits? Doth thy flesh and thy heart fail thee, and thy friends prove silly comforters to thee? So was it with those thousands that are now in heaven, where the night of calamities is past, and the just have dominion in the morning; and glory hath banished all their griefs, and joys have made them forget their sorrows; unless as the remembrance of them doth promote these joys. Are thy friends lamenting thee, and grieved to see the signs of thy approaching death? Do they weep when they see thy pale face, and consumed body, and when they hear thy sighs and groans? Why thus it was once with the millions that are now triumphing with their Lord? They lay in sickness, and underwent the pains, and were lamented by their friends, as

thou art now. Even Christ himself was once in his agony, and some shook the head at him, and others pitied him, who should rather have wept for themselves, than for him. This is but the passage from the womb of mortality into the life of immortality, which all the saints have passed before thee that are now with Christ. Dost thou fear the dreadful face of death? Must thy tender flesh be turned to rottenness and dust? And must thou lie in darkness till the resurrection, and thy body remain as the common earth? And is not this the case of all those millions, whose souls now see the face of Christ? Did they not lie as thou must, and die as thou must, and pass by death to the life which they have now attained? Oh! then commit thy soul to Christ, and be quiet and comforted in his care and love. Trust him as the midwife of thy departing soul, who shall bring it safe into the light and life which thou art yet such a stranger to. But it is not strange to him, though it be strange to thee.

What was it that rejoiced thee all thy life, in thy prayers, and sufferings, and labours? Was it not the hopes of heaven? And was heaven the spring and motive of thy obedience, and the comfort of thy life? And yet wilt thou pass into it with heaviness? And shall thy approaches to it be thy sorrows? Didst thou pray for that which thou wouldest not have? Hast thou laboured for it, and denied thyself the pleasures of the world for it, and now art thou afraid to enter in? Fear not, poor soul! Thy Lord is there; thy husband, and thy head, and life is there, thou hast more there, a thousand-fold more, than thou hast here. Here thou must leave poor mourning friends, that languish in their own infirmities, and troubled thee as well as comforted thee while thou wast with them, and that are hastening after thee, and will shortly overtake thee. But there thou shalt find the souls of all the blessed saints that have lived since the creation till this age. That are all unclothed of the rags of their mortality, and have laid by their frailties with their flesh, and are made up of holiness, and prepared for joy, and will be suitable companions for thee in thy joys. Why shouldest thou be afraid to go the way that all the saints have gone before thee? Where there is one on earth, how many are there in heaven? And one of them is worth many of us. Art thou better than Noah, and Abraham, and David? than Peter, and Paul, and all the saints? Or dost thou not love their names, and wouldest thou

not be with them? Art thou loth to leave thy friends on earth? and hast thou not far better and more in heaven? Why then art thou not as loth to stay from them? Suppose that I, and such as I, were the friends that thou art loth to leave; what if we had died long before thee? If it be our company that thou lovest, thou shouldest then be willing to die, that thou mayest be with us. And if so, why then shouldest thou not be more willing to die, and be with Christ, and all his holy ones, that are so much more excellent than we? Wouldest thou have our company? Remove, then, willingly to that place where thou shalt have it to everlasting; and be not so loth to go from hence, where neither thou nor we can stay. Hadst thou rather travel with us, than dwell here with us? And rather here suffer with us, than reign in heaven with Christ and us?

Oh! what a brutish thing is flesh! What an unreasonable thing is unbelief! Shall we believe, and fly from the end of our belief? Shall we hope, and be loth to enjoy our hopes? Shall we desire and pray, and be afraid of attaining our desires, and lest our prayers should be heard? Shall we spend our lives in labour and travel, and be afraid of coming to our journey's end? Do you love life, or do you not? If not, why are you afraid of death? If you do, why then are you loth to pass into everlasting life? You know there is no hope of immortality on earth. Hence you must pass whether you will or not, as all your fathers have done before you; it is therefore in heaven, or nowhere, that endless life is to be had. If you can live here for ever, do. Hope for it, if any have done so before you. Go to some man of a thousand years old, and ask him how he made shift to draw out his life so long. But if you know that man walketh here in a vain show, and that his life is a shadow, a dream, a post; and that all these things shall be dissolved, and the fashion of them passeth away; is it not more reasonable that we should set our hearts on the place where there is hopes of our continuance, than where there is none? And where we must live for ever, than where we must be but for so short a time?

Alas! poor darkened, troubled soul! Is the presence of Christ less desirable in thy eyes than the presence of such sinful worms as we, whom thou art loth to part with? Is it more grievous to thee to be absent from us, than from thy Lord? from earth, than from heaven; from sinners, than from blessed

saints ; from trouble and frailty, than from glory ? Hast thou any thing here that thou shalt want in heaven ? Alas, that we should thus draw back from happiness, and follow Christ so heavily and sadly into life ! But all this is along of the enemies that now molest our peace. Indwelling sin, and a flattering world, and a brutish flesh, and interposing death, are our discouragements that drive us back. But all these enemies shall shortly be overcome.

Fear not death, then, let it do its worst. It can give thee but one deadly gripe that shall kill itself, and prove thy life ; as the wasp that leaves its sting behind, and can sting no more. It shall but snuff the candle of thy life, and make it shine brighter when it seems to be put out ; it is but an undressing, and a gentle sleep. That which thou couldest not here attain by all our preaching, and all thy prayers, and cares, and pains, thou shalt speedily attain by the help of death. It is but the messenger of thy gracious Lord, and calleth thee to him, to the place that he hath prepared.

Hearken not now to the great deceiver that would draw thee to unbelief, and cause thee to stagger at the promises of God, when thou hast followed him so far, and they are near to the full performance. Believe it as sure as thou believest that the sun doth shine upon thee, that God cannot lie : he is no deceiver. It was his mere love and bounty that caused him to make the promises, when he had no need for himself to make them. And shall he be then unfaithful, and not fulfil the promises which he hath freely made ? Believe it, faith is no delusion : it may be folly to trust man ; but it is worse than folly not to trust God. Believe it, heaven is not a shadow, nor the life of faith and holiness a dream. These sensible things have least reality ; these grosser substances are most drossy, delusory, and base. God is a spirit, who is the prime being, and the cause of all created beings : and the angels, and other celestial inhabitants that are nearest to him, are furthest from corporeity, and are spirits likest unto God. The further any thing is from spirituality, the further from that excellency and perfection which the creatures nearest God partake of ; the earth is baser than the air and fire ; the drossy flesh is baser than the soul ; and this lumpish, dirty, visible world, is incomparably below that spiritual world which we believe and wait for. And though thy conceptions of spirits, and the spiritual world, are low and dark, and much unsatisfying, remember still that thy Head is there ;

and it belongeth to him to know what thou shalt be, till thou art fit to know it, which will not be till thou art fit to enjoy it. Be satisfied that thy Father is in heaven, and that thy Lord is there; and that the Spirit that hath been so long at work within thee, preparing thee for it, dwelleth there. And let it suffice thee, that Christ knoweth what he will do with thee, and how he will employ thee to all eternity. And thou shalt very shortly see his face, and in his light thou shalt behold that light that shall fully satisfy thee, and shame all thy present doubts and fears; and if there were shame in heaven, would shame thee for them.

*Use 9.* From the enmity of death, and the necessity of a conquest, we may see what a wonderful mercy the resurrection of Christ himself was to the church, and what use we should make of it for the strengthening of our faith. It was not only impossible to man to conquer death by his own strength, and therefore it must be conquered by Christ; but it was also beyond our power to believe it, that ever the dead should rise to life, if Christ had not risen as the first-fruits, and convinced man, by eyesight, or certain testimony, that the thing is possible, and already done. But now what a pillar is here for faith: what a word of hope and joy is this, that Christ is risen. With this we will answer a thousand cavils of the tempter, and stop the mouth of the enemies of our faith, and put to flight our infidelity. As unlikely as it seems to flesh and blood, shall we ever doubt whether we shall rise again, when the Lord came down in flesh among us, that he might die and rise again himself, to show us as to our faces that we shall rise? This is the very gospel which we preach, and by which we must be saved; "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remained alive" when Paul wrote this, who was the last that saw him. (1 Cor. xv. 1—6.) Read over this chapter again and again, where our resurrection is proved by the resurrection of Christ.

No wonder, therefore, that the church, in all ages, ever since the very day of Christ's resurrection, hath kept the first day of the week as a holy festival in remembrance of it. Wherein, though they commemorated the whole work of our redemption, yet was it from the resurrection as the most glorious part that

the Spirit of Christ did choose the day. This hath been the joyful day to the church this 1625 years, or thereabouts; in which the ancient Christians would assemble themselves together, saluting one another with this joyful word, "The Lord is risen." And this is the day that the Lord hath blessed with the new birth and resurrection of millions of souls; so that it is most probable that all the six days of the week have not begot half so many souls for heaven, as this blessed day of the Lord's resurrection hath done. Let infidels, then, despise it, that believe not Christ's resurrection; but let it still be the church's joyful day. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes: this is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm cxviii. 23, 24.) In it "Let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms." (Psalm xc. 1, 2.) Every day let us remember the Lord's resurrection; but on this day let the joyful commemoration of it be our work.

We may see by the witness of the apostles, and their frequent preaching the resurrection of Christ, as if it were the sum of all the gospel, that this is a point that faith must especially build and feed upon, and that we must make the matter of our most frequent meditations. Oh, what vigour it addeth to our faith, when we are encountered by the sight of death, and of a grave, to remember seriously that "Christ is risen." Did he take flesh purposely that he might die and rise, and show us how he will raise his members? And will he, after all this, break his promise, and leave us in the dust for ever? It cannot be. Hath he conquered death for himself alone, and not for us? Hath he taken our nature into heaven, to be there alone, and will he not have all his members with him? Remember, then, Christian, when thou lookest on thy grave, that Christ was buried, and hath made the grave a bed of rest, that shall give up her trust when his trumpet sounds; and that his resurrection is the pledge of ours. Keep, therefore, thy rising and glorified Lord continually in thy eye. If Christ were not risen, our preaching were vain, and your faith were vain, and all men were miserable, but we most miserable that suffer so much for a life which we had no ground to hope for. (1 Cor. xv. 14, 17, 19.) But now we have an argument that infidelity itself is ashamed to encounter with; that hath been the means of the conversion of

the nations unto Christ; by which we may put even death itself to a defiance, as knowing it is now a conquered thing. If it could have held Christ captive, it might also have held us. But he being risen, we shall surely rise. Write it, therefore, Christians, upon your hearts; mention it more in your conference for the encouragement of your faith; write it on the grave-stones of your friends that "CHRIST IS RISEN," and that "BECAUSE HE LIVETH, WE SHALL LIVE ALSO," and that "OUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD," though we are dead, and when he shall appear who is our life, we shall also appear with him in glory. (John xiv. 19; Col. iii. 3, 4.) Though we must be sown in corruption, in weakness, and dishonour, we shall be raised in incorruption, strength, and honour. (1 Cor. xv. 42, 43.) While our souls behold the Lord in glory, we may bear with the winter that befalls our flesh till the spring of resurrection come. "Knowing that he that raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus—for which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day—while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. iv. 14, 16, 18.) As we are risen with Christ to newness of life, so we shall rise with him to glory.

*Use 10.* Lastly, if death be the last enemy to be destroyed at the resurrection, we may learn hence how earnestly believers should long and pray for the second coming of Christ, when this full and final conquest shall be made. Death shall do much for us, but the resurrection shall do more. Death sends the separated soul to Christ, but at his coming both soul and body shall be glorified. There is somewhat in death that is penal, even to believers, but in the coming of Christ, and their resurrection, there is nothing but glorifying grace. Death is the effect of sin, and of the first sentence passed upon sinners, but the resurrection of the just is the final destruction of the effects of sin. And, therefore, though the fears of death may perplex us, methinks we should long for the coming of Christ, there being nothing in that but what tends to the deliverance and glory of the saints. Whether he will come before the general resurrection, and reign on earth a thousand years, which some expect, I shall not presume to pass my determination. But sure I am, it is the work of faith, and character of his people, to "love his appearing," (2 Tim. iv. 8.)



“ and to wait for the Son of God from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come.” (1 Thess. i. 10.) And to wait “ for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. i. 7.) And to wait “ for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies,” with inward groanings. (Rom. viii. 23.) Oh! therefore, let us pray more earnestly for the coming of our Lord! And that “ the Lord would direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.” (2 Thess. iii. 5.) O blessed day, when that glorious appearing of our Lord shall put away all his servants’ shame, and shall communicate glory to his members, even to the bodies that had lain so long in dust, that to the eye of flesh there seemed to be no hope. Though the majesty and glory will cause our reverence, yet it will not be our terror, to the diminution of our joy. It is his enemies that would not have him rule over them, whom he cometh to destroy. (Luke xix. 27.) “ Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him;” as Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied. (Jude, verses 14, 15.) But the precious faith of the saints shall “ be found to praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. i. 7.) “ When the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” (1 Pet. v. 4.) He that was once offered to bear the sins of many, and now appeareth for us in the presence of God, shall, unto them that look for him, appear the second time, without sin, to salvation. (Heb. ix. 24, 28.) And “ when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.” (Col. iii. 4.) The Lord shall then “ come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.” (2 Thess. i. 10.) This is the day that all believers should long, and hope, and wait for, as being the accomplishment of all the work of their redemption, and all the desires and endeavours of their souls. It is the hope of this day that animateth the holy diligence of our lives, and makes us turn from the carelessness and sensuality of the world. “ For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: looking for that

blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Tit. ii. 11—13.) "The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." And though the Lord seem to delay, he is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness: for a day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hastening unto, the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. iii. 7—13.)

Beza marvelleth at Tertullian for saying that the Christians in their holy assemblies prayed *pro mora finis*, (Apologet. c. 39;) and so he might well enough, if it were not that to Christians the glory of God is dearer than their own felicity, and the salvation of millions more precious than the mere hastening of their own; and the glory of the church more desirable than our personal glory, and the hallowing of God's name were not to be prayed for before the coming of his kingdom, and the kingdom of grace must not necessarily go before the kingdom of glory. But as much as we long for the coming of our Lord, we are content to wait till the elect be gathered; and can pray that he will delay it, till the universal body be made up, and all are called that shall be glorified. But to ourselves that are brought out of Egypt into the wilderness, how desirable is the promised land. When we think on our own interest, we cry, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." The sooner the better. Then shall our eyes behold him, in whom we have believed: not as he was beheld on earth in his despised state; but as the glorious King of Saints, accompanied with the celestial host, coming in flaming fire to render vengeance to the rebellious, and rest and joy to believing souls, that waited for this day of his appearance. Then faith and patience shall give up their work; and sight, and fruition, and perfect love, shall everlastingly succeed them. The rage of persecutors shall no more

affright us; the folly of the multitude shall no more annoy us; the falseness of our seeming, selfish friends shall no more betray us; the pride of self-conceited men shall no more disturb us; the turbulency of men distracted by ambition shall cast us no more into confusions; the kingdom that we shall possess shall not be liable to mutations, nor be tossed with pride and faction as are these below. There is no monthly (or annual) change of governors and laws, as is in lunatic commonwealths; but there will be the same Lord and King, and the same laws and government, and the same subjects and obedience, without any mutinies, rebellions, or discontents, to all eternity. The church of which we shall then be members, shall not be divided into parties and factions, nor the members look strangely at each other, because of difference of opinions, or distance of affections, as now we find it, to our daily grief, in the militant church. We shall then need no tedious debates to reconcile us. Unity will be then quickly and easily procured. There will be no falling out in the presence of our Lord. There will be none of that darkness, uncharitableness, selfishness, or passion left, that now causeth our dissensions. When we have perfect light, and perfect love, the perfect peace will be easily attained, which here we labour for in vain. Now there is no peace in church or state, in cities or countries, in families, or scarce in our own souls. But when the glorious King of Peace hath put all his enemies under his feet, what then is left to make disturbance? Our enemies can injure us no more, for it is then their portion to suffer for all their former injuries to Christ and us: our friends will not injure us, (as here they do,) because their corruption and weakness is put off, and the relics of sin that caused the trouble are left behind. Oh, that is the sight that faith prepareth for, that is the day, the blessed day, that all our days are spent in seeking, and waiting, and praying for; then shall the glory of holiness appear, and the wisdom of the saints be justified by all, that now is justified by her children. Then it shall be known, whether faith or unbelief, whether a heavenly or earthly mind and life was the wiser and more justifiable course. Then shall all the world "discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." (Mal. iii. 18.) Then sin (that is now so obstinately defended and justified by such foolish cunning) shall never more find a tongue to plead for it, or a patron to defend it more. Then where is the man that will

stand forth and break a jest at godliness, or make a scorn of the holy diligence of believers? How pale then will those faces look that here were wont to jeer at piety! What terror will seize upon those hearts that here were wont to make themselves sport at the weaknesses of the upright servants of the Lord! That is the day that shall rectify all judgments, and cure the errors and contemptuous thoughts of an holy life, which no persuasions now can cure; that is the day that shall set all straight that now seems crooked; and shall satisfy us to the full that God was just, even when he prospered his enemies, and afflicted the souls that loved him, and walked in their integrity before him. We shall then see that which shall fully satisfy us of the reason and equity of all our sufferings which here we underwent; we shall marvel no more that God lets us weep, and groan, and pray, and turns away his face, and seems not to regard us. We shall then find that all our groans were heard, and all our tears and prayers did succeed, which we suspected had been lost. We shall then find that a duty performed in sincerity, through all our lives, was never lost; no, nor a holy thought, nor a "cup of cold water," that, from holy love, we gave to a disciple. We shall then see that our murmurings, and discontents, and jealous, unbelieving thoughts of God, which sickness, or poverty, or crosses did occasion, were all injurious to the Lord, and the fruit of infirmity; and that when we questioned his love on such accounts we knew not what we said. We shall then see that death, and grave, and devils, were all but matter for the glorifying of grace, and for the triumph of our Lord and us.

Up, then, my soul, and shake off thy unbelief and dulness. Look up, and long, and meet thy Lord. The more thou art afraid of death, the more desire that blessed day, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and the name of death shall be terrible no more. Though death be thy enemy, there is nothing but friendly in the coming of thy Lord. Though death dissolve thy nature, the resurrection shall restore it, and make thee full reparation, with advantage.

How glad would I have been to have seen Christ but with the wise men in the manger, or to have seen him disputing with the doctors in his childhood in the temple, or to have seen him do his miracles, or heard him preach, much more to have seen him as the three disciples, in his transfiguration, or to have seen him after his resurrection, and when he ascended up to heaven. But

how far is all this below the sight that we shall have of him when he comes in glory; when the brightness of his shining face shall make us think the sun was in darkness, and the glory of his attendants shall make us think what a sordid thing, and childish foolery was all the glory of this world. The face of love shall be then unveiled, and ravish us into the highest love and joy that our natures are capable of. Then doubt, and fear, and grieve, if thou canst! What, then, wilt thou think of all these disquieting, distrustful thoughts that now so wrong thy Lord and thee? If going into the sanctuary, and foreseeing the end, can cure our brutish misapprehensions of God's providences, (Psalm lxxiii. 17,) how perfectly will they be cured when we see the glorious face of Christ, and behold the new Jerusalem in its glory, and when we are numbered with the saints that judge the world. We shall never more be tempted, then, to condemn the generation of the just, nor to think it vain to serve the Lord, nor to envy the prosperity of the wicked, nor to stagger at the promise through unbelief, nor to think that our sickness, death, and grave, were any signs of unkindness or unmercifulness in God. We shall then be convinced that sight and flesh were unfit to censure the ways of God, or to be our guides.

Hasten, O Lord, this blessed day! Stay not till faith have left the earth, and infidelity, and impiety, and tyranny have conquered the rest of thine inheritance! Stay not till selfish, uncharitable pride hath vanquished love and self-denial, and planted its colonies of heresy, confusion, and cruelty, in thy dominions, and earth and hell be turned into one. Stay not till the eyes of thy servants fail, and their hearts and hopes do faint and languish with looking and waiting for thy salvation. But if yet the day be not at hand, oh, keep up faith, and hope, and love, till the sun of perfect love arise, and time hath prepared us for eternity, and grace for glory.

## SOME IMITABLE PASSAGES

OF THE

*Life of Elizabeth, late wife of Mr. Joseph Baker.*

THOUGH I spoke so little as was next to nothing, of our dear deceased friend, it was not because I wanted matter, or thought it unmeet; but I use it but seldom, lest I raise expectations of the like, where I cannot conscionably perform it. But he that hath promised to honour those that serve and honour him, (John xii. 26; 1 Sam. ii. 30,) and will come at last "to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," (2 Thess. i. 10,) I know will take it as a great and acceptable act of service, to proclaim the honour of his grace, and to give his servants their due on earth, whose souls are glorified with Christ in heaven, though serpentine enmity will repine, and the envious accuser.

It is not the history of the life of this precious servant of the Lord which I intend to give you, (for I was not many years acquainted with her,) but only some passages, which, either upon my certain knowledge, or her own diurnal of her course, or the most credible testimony of her most intimate, judicious, godly friends, I may boldly publish as true and imitable in this unto-ward, distempered generation.

She was born November, 1634, in Southwark, near London, the only child of Mr. John Godeschalk, *alias* Godscall. Her father dying in her childhood, she was left an orphan to the Chamber of London. Her mother after married Mr. Isaac Barton, with whom she had the benefit of religious education: but between sixteen and seventeen years of age, by the serious reading of the book called "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," she was more thoroughly awakened, and brought to set her heart on God, and to seek salvation with her chiefest care. From that time forward she was a more constant, diligent, serious hearer of the ablest ministers in London, rising early, and going far to hear them on the week days; waiting on God for his confirming

grace in the use of those ordinances, which empty, inexperienced hypocrites are easily tempted to despise. The sermons, which she constantly wrote, she diligently repeated at home, for the benefit of others; and every week read over some of those that she had heard long before, that the fruit of them might be retained and renewed; it being not novelty that she minded.

In the year 1654, being near one-and-twenty years of age, after seeking God, and waiting for his resolving, satisfying directions, she consented to be joined in marriage to Mr. Joseph Baker, by the approbation of her nearest friends, God having taken away her mother the year before. With him she approved herself, indeed, such a wife as Paul (no papist) describeth as meet for a bishop or pastor of the church; "even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things." (1 Tim. iii. 11.) Some instances I shall give for the imitation of others.

I. She was very exemplary in self-denial and humility: and having said thus much, what abundance have I comprehended! Oh, what a beauty doth self-denial and humility put on souls! Nay, what a treasure of everlasting consequence doth these two words express! I shall give you a few of the discoveries.

1. It appeared in her accompanying in London with the holiest, how mean soever, avoiding them that were proud, and vain, and carnal. She desired most to be acquainted with those that she perceived were best acquainted with God, neglecting the pomp and vain-glory of the world.

2. When she was called to a married state, though her portion, and other advantages, invited persons of greater estates in the world, she chose rather to marry a minister of known integrity, that might be a near and constant guide, stay, and comfort to her in the matters which she valued more than riches. And she missed not of her expectations for the few years that she lived with him. Even in this age, when the serpent is hissing in every corner at faithful ministers, and they are contemned both by profane and heretical malignants, she preferred a mean life with such a one, for her spiritual safety and solace, before the grandeur of the world.

3. When some inhabitants of the city of Worcester were earnest with me to help them to an able minister, Mr. Baker, then living in Kent, had about a hundred pounds per annum: and when, at my motion, he was readily willing to take a great charge in Worcester, upon a promise from two men to make the

maintenance fifty pounds a year, by a voluntary contribution, of the continuance of which he had no security, his wife was the promoter, and no discourager, of his self-denial, and never tempted him to look after greater things. And afterward, when I was afraid lest the smallness and uncertainty of the means, together with his discouragements from some of his people, might have occasioned his remove, and have heard of richer places mentioned to him, as he still answered that he had enough, and minded not removing without necessity, so was she ever of the same mind, and still seconded and confirmed him in such resolutions, even to follow God's work while they had a competency of their own, and to mind no more.

4. Her very speech and behaviour did so manifest meekness and humility, that, in a little converse with her, it might easily be discerned.

5. She thought nothing too mean for her that belonged to her in her family and relation, no employment, food, &c., saying often, that 'What God had made her duty was not too low a work for her.' And, indeed, when we know once that it is a work that God sets us upon, it signifieth much forgetfulness of him and ourselves, if we think it too base, or think ourselves too good to stoop to it.

6. No neighbour did seem too mean or poor for her familiar converse, if they were but willing.

7. She had a true esteem and cheerful love for the meanest of her husband's relations, and much rejoiced in her comfort in his kindred, recording it among her experienced mercies.

II. She was very constant and diligent in doing her part of family duties; teaching all the inferiors of her family, and labouring to season them with principles of holiness, and admonishing them of their sin and danger: never failing, on the Lord's day at night, to hear them read the Scriptures and recite their catechisms, when public duty, and all other family duty, was ended, and, in her husband's absence, praying with them. How much the imitation of such examples would conduce to the sanctifying of families is easy to be apprehended.

III. In secret duty she was very constant, and lived much in those two great soul-advancing works, meditation and prayer, in which she would not admit of interruptions. This inward, holy diligence was it that maintained spiritual life within, which is the spring of outward acceptable works. When communion with God, and daily labour upon our own hearts, is laid aside, or



negligently and remissly followed, grace languisheth first within, and then unfruitfulness, if not disorders and scandals, appear without.

IV. Her love to the Lord Jesus was evidenced by her great affection to his ordinances, and ways, and servants. A very hearty love she manifested to those on whom the image of God did appear, even the poorest and meanest, as well as the rich or eminent in the world. Nor did a difference in lesser matters, or any tolerable mistakes, alienate her affections from them.

V. She was a Christian of much plainness, simplicity, and singleness of heart. Far from a subtle, crafty, dissembling frame, and also from loquacity, or ostentation. And the world was very low in her eyes, to which she was long crucified, and on which she looked as a lifeless thing. Sensuality, and pampering the flesh, she much loathed. When she was invited to feasts she would oft complain that they occasioned a difficulty in maintaining a sense of the presence of God, whose company in all her company she preferred.

VI. She was a very careful estæmer and redeemer of her time. At home in her family the works of her general and particular calling took her up. When necessary business, and greater duties, gave way, she was seldom without a book in her hand, or some edifying discourse in her mouth, if there were opportunity. And abroad she was very weary of barren company, that spent the time in common chat, and dry discourses.

VII. She used good company practically and profitably, making use of what she heard for her own spiritual advantage. When I understood, out of her diary, that she wrote down some of my familiar discourses, with serious application to herself, it struck exceedingly deep to my heart, how much I have sinned all my days, since I undertook the person of a minister of Christ, by the slightness and unprofitableness of my discourse; and how careful ministers should be of their words, and how deliberately, wisely, and seriously they should speak about the things of God, and how diligently they should take all fit opportunities to that end; when we know not how silent hearers are affected with what we say. For aught we know, there may be some that will write down what we say in their books, or hearts, or both. And God and conscience write down all.

VIII. In her course of reading she was still laying in for use and practice. Her course was, when she read the Scriptures, to gather out passages, and sort and refer them to their several

uses, as some that were fit subjects for her meditations. Some for encouragement to prayer, and other duties. Promises suited to various conditions and wants, as her papers show.

And for other books, she would meddle with none but the sound and practical, and had no itch after the empty books, which make ostentation of novelty, and which opinionists are now so taken with ; nor did she like writing or preaching in envy and strife. And of good books she chose to read but few, and those very often over, that all might be well digested. Which is a course (for private Christians) that tends to avoid luxuriancy, and make them sincere, and solid, and established.

IX. She had the great blessing of a tender conscience. She did not slightly pass over small sins without penitent observation. Her diary records her trouble when causelessly she had neglected any ordinance ; or was hindered by rain, or small occasions : or if she had overslept herself, and lost a morning exercise in London, or came too late ; or if she were distracted in secret duty. And if she missed of a fast through misinformation and disappointments, and found not her heart duly sensible of the loss, that also she recorded. So did she her stirrings of anger, and her very angry looks, resolving to take more heed against them. Though all ought not to spend so much time in writing down their failings, yet all should watch and renew repentance.

X. She was very solicitous for the souls of her friends. As, for instance, her brothers-in-law, over whom she exercised a motherly care, instructing them, and watching over them, and telling them of miscarriages, and counselling them. Causing them to keep a constant course of reading the holy Scriptures, and meditating on it (as far as she could) : causing them to learn many chapters without book, and to read other good books in season ; earnestly praying for them in particular ; much desiring one or both should be ministers : and when her father-in-law appointed the eldest to go to France, she was much troubled for fear of his miscarriage among strangers, especially those of the Romish way.

XI. She was a serious mourner for the sins of the time and place she lived in.

XII. In sum, for strict, close, watchful, holy walking with God, even her husband professeth that she was a pattern to him. As I hinted before, she kept a daily account in writing (which is now to be seen, from the beginning of the year 1654), especially of these particulars :

1. Of the frame of her heart in every day's duty ; in meditation, prayer, hearing, reading, &c., whether lively or dull, &c.

2. Of those sins which she had especially to repent of, and watch against.

3. Of her resolutions and promises, and how she kept them.

4. Of all special providences to herself, husband, brothers, and others, and the improvement of them. As at the death of her son, who died with great sighs and groans, she recorded her sense of the special necessity of holy armour, and great preparation, for encounter, when her turn should come to be so removed to the everlasting habitation.

5. Of her returns of prayer, what answers, and grant of them she found.

6. Of the state of her soul upon examination ; how she found it, and what was the issue of her examination ; and in this it seems she was very exact and punctual. In which, though many times fears and doubtings did arise, yet hath she frequent records of the discovery of evidences, and comfortable assurance of sincerity. Sometimes when she hath heard sermons in London, that helped her in her search, and sometimes when she had been reading writings that tended that way, she recorded what evidences she found, and in what degree the discovery was ; if imperfect, resolving to take it up, and follow the search further. And if she had much joy, she received it with jealousy, and expectation of some humbling consequent. When any grace languished, she presently turned to some apt remedy. As, for instance, it is one of her notes, November, 1658, 'I found thoughts of eternity slight and strange, and ordinary employments very desirable ; at which I read Mr. B.'s Crucifixion, and was awakened to mortification and humiliation,' &c.

The last time that she had opportunity for this work, was two or three days before her delivery in childbearing, where she finally recorded the apprehensions she had, both of her bodily and spiritual state, in these words, 'Drawing near the time of my delivery, I am fallen into such weakness that my life is in hazard. I find some fears of death, but not very great, hoping, through grace, I die in the Lord.' I only mention these hints to show the method she used in her daily accounts. To those Christians that have full leisure, this course is good ; but I urge it not upon all. Those that have so great duties to take up that time, that they cannot spare so much to record their ordinary passages, such must remember what others record, and daily renew

repentance for their daily failings, and record only the extraordinary, observable, and more remarkable and memorable passages of their lives, lest they lose time for works of greater moment. But this excellent work of watchfulness must be performed by all.

And I think it was a considerable expression of her true wisdom, and care of her immortal soul, that when any extraordinary necessity required it, and she found such doubts, as of herself she was not able to deal with, she would go to some able, experienced minister to open her case, and seek assistance, (as she did, more than once, to my dear and ancient friend, Mr. Cross, who, in full age, is since gone after her to Christ,) and, therefore, chose a minister in marriage, that he might be a ready assistant in such cases of necessity, as well as a continual help.

At last came that death to summon her soul away to Christ, for which she had so seriously been preparing, and which she oft called a 'dark entry to her Father's palace.' After the death of her children, when she seemed to be somewhat repaired, after her last delivery, a violent convulsion suddenly surprised her, which, in a few days, brought her to her end. Her understanding, by the fits, being at last debilitated, she finding it somewhat hard to speak sensibly, excused it, and said, 'I shall ere long speak another language,' which were the last words which she spake with a tongue of flesh, and laying speechless eighteen hours after, she departed, Aug. 17, 1659. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. xiv. 13.)

Our turn is coming. Shortly we shall also lay by flesh. This is our day of preparation; there is no preparing time but this. Did men but know the difference between the death of the holy and the unholy, which doth not appear to fleshly eyes, how speedily would they turn! how seriously would they meditate! how fervently would they pray! how carefully would they live! how constantly, painfully, and resolutely would they labour! Did they well consider the difference between dying prepared and unprepared, and of what difficulty, and yet everlasting consequence, it is to die well; oh! then, what manner of persons would men be, in all manner of holy conversation and godliness, and all their lives would then be a continued preparation for death, as all their lives are hastening towards it.

And now I shall only desire you, for the right understanding of all that I have here said, and to prevent the cavils of blinded malice, to observe these three or four particulars.

1. That though I knew so much of her as easily maketh me believe the rest, upon so sure a testimony, and saw her diary, yet the most of this history of her life is the collection and observation of such faithful witnesses as had much better opportunity than I to know the secrets of her soul and life.

2. That it is no wonder if many, that knew her, perceived not all this by her that is here expressed; for that knowledge of our outward carriage at a distance will not tell our neighbours what we do in our closets, where God hath commanded us to shut our door upon us, that our Father which seeth in secret, may reward us openly. And many of the most humble and sincere servants of the Lord are so afraid of hypocrisy, and hate ostentation, that their justification and glory is only to be expected from the Searcher of hearts, and a few of their more intimate acquaintance; though this was not the case before us, the example described being more conspicuous.

3. That I over-passed the large expressions of her charity, which you may hear from the poor, and her intimate acquaintance, as I have done; that I may not grate upon the modesty of her surviving friends, who must participate in the commendations.

4. That it is the benefit of the living that is my principal end. Scripture itself is written much in history, that we may have matter of imitation before our eyes.

5. If any say that here is no mention of her faults, I answer, Though I had acquaintance with her, I knew them not, nor ever heard from any other so much as might enable me to accuse her, if I were her enemy. Yet I doubt not but she was imperfect, and had faults, though unknown to me. The example of holiness I have briefly proposed. They that would see examples of iniquity, may look abroad in the world, and find enough; I need not be the accuser of the saints to furnish them. And I think if they inquire here of any thing notable, they will be hard put to it to find enough to cover the accuser's shame.

6. It is the honour of Christ, and grace in his members, more than the honour of his servants, that I seek.

7. And I would not speak that in commendation of the living which I do of the dead, who are out of the reach of all

temptations of being lifted up with pride thereby ; unless it be such whose reputation the interest of Christ and the gospel commandeth me to vindicate.

8. Lastly, I am so far from lifting up one above the rest of the members of Christ by these commendations, and from abasing others, whose names I mention not, that I intend the honour of all in one, and think that in the substance I describe all saints in describing one. I am not about a popish work, of making a wonder of a saint, as of a phoenix, or some rare, unusual thing. Saints with them must be canonized, and their names put in the calendar ; and yet their blind malice tells the world that there are no such things as saints among us. But I rejoice in the many that I have communion with, and the many that have lately stepped before me into heaven, and are safe there, out of the reach of malice, and of sin, and all the enemies of their peace ; and have left me mourning, and yet rejoicing ; fearing, and yet hoping ; and, with some desires, looking after them here behind : and the faster Christ calls away his chosen ones, whose graces were amiable in mine eyes, the more willing he maketh me to follow them, and to leave this world of darkness, confusion, wickedness, danger, vanity, and vexation, and to meet these precious souls in life, where we shall rejoice that we are past this howling wilderness, and shall for ever be with the Lord.

END OF THE SEVENTEENTH VOLUME.