

stirreth up in me a greater fear of schisms, and divisions, and sects, than I had before. I pray you, therefore, add a short character of each sect, telling me what that evil is in each one which I must avoid.

P. That I must not do now, 1. Lest I be tedious. 2. And what I give you in writing will not be read by any of those sects, if they find a word against themselves.

I will now conclude with these five graces and duties, which must be your general helps against all temptations whatsoever.

I. You must^h grow in holy knowledge: children and fools are more easily cheated than the wise.

II. You must come to a full resolution. Resolve rather to die than wilfully sin. An unresolved person encourageth the tempter, and is more than half overcome already.

III. Be fearful of sinning, as conscious of your badness, and the multitude of temptations; and let watchfulness be your constant work.

IV. Be sure that your heart and life be wholly given up to God, and filled with good, and still employed in his service; and then the tempter will never find you disposed, or at leisure, for his turn. An empty heart (much more a carnal) and an idle life, is ready to entertain any motion unto sin.

V. Look still by faith to Christ and his Spirit, as your only strength. And trust not to your own understanding, goodness, or resolutions: for man, of himself, is very mutable. The Lord that hath converted you, confirm you, and preserve you.

THE SIXTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Instructions for a Holy Life.

- I. THE NECESSITY, REASON, AND MEANS OF HOLINESS.
- II. THE PARTS AND PRACTICE OF A HOLY LIFE.
 1. FOR PERSONAL DIRECTION.
 2. FOR FAMILY INSTRUCTION.

Speakers.—Paul, a Teacher; Saul, a Learner.

PAUL. Come, neighbour, methinks by this time you should so well understand your own condition, as to know yourself what further instructions to desire. What would you have me teach you next?

^h 1 Pet. ii. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 18; 2 Thess. i. 3; Eph. i. 17, 18; Phil. i. 9; Col. i. 9, and iii. 10; Prov. xiv. 10.

SAUL. You have already, in your familiar conference, made known to me what is the nature of Christianity and holiness, and what are the temptations which must be resisted. And I truly approve your wisdom in rather acquainting me with them beforehand, that I may be prepared, or may prevent them, than (as many do) to stay till I come to you in a temptation for resolution to help me out. For I know it is easier and cheaper to prevent the kindling of this fire than to quench it. And sometimes it falls among stubble, or gunpowder, and hath done its work before the sinner cometh to a minister for help. They are strange physicians who choose rather to cure diseases at the height, than to teach men how to prevent them. But I would yet entreat you to give me in writing some distinct instructions for a holy life. My reasons are, 1. I am afraid I shall not well set together what you gave me in conference, nor well remember it; and therefore would have it orderly before my eyes. 2. I would have somewhat to instruct my family with; and therefore desire you to write it me so as I may oft read it to them.

P. What is it particularly that you would have?

S. I. I would have you distinctly to write me down the true reasons and means of conversion and a holy life; for I know that it is the same reasons which made me a Christian which must keep me one. And, therefore, I would oft review them, as if I had never been converted; for if I forget what moved and turned my heart to God by Christ, I shall be ready to lose the effect, and to turn back. And I would read the same reasons often to my family.

II. I would desire you to set before me all the duties of a christian life, that I may see them together, and have the sum of them imprinted on my mind, and know how to enjoin them in my practice. And this summary, also, I would read often to my family.

P. Your desires are reasonable and seasonable: and both these are done in the two sheets which I published for families, some years ago. It is them, therefore, that I shall give you in answer to your desires.

But I must tell you, that the necessity of brevity constrained me to bring much into so narrow a room, that the style is too close and concise for your ignorant family; unless you will read it very often over to them, and remember that every word is to be marked, and explain it to them in more words as you go. For once reading, especially if it be carelessly, will not serve for the

understanding of so short and close a style. Ignorant hearers cannot receive much in few words; but must have a little matter in many words, oft and oft repeated, that their wits may have leisure to work upon it. And this will serve you instead of a catechism, while, in one discourse, all the heads of the catechism are delivered in a plain and practical manner. So that if you will read it over once a month to your family, and make them learn the heads of the second part by memory, it will help them unto a practical knowledge. But yet that you may have the same thing several ways, for fear of losing it, I will hereafter give you a catechism for your family besides; but this shall serve for this day's work.

I. The Necessity, Reason, and Means of Holiness.

1. To keep up the resolutions of the converted; and
2. To instruct those in families that need them.

Though the¹ saving of souls be a matter of inexpressible importance, yet (the Lord have mercy upon them) what abundance are there that think it not worthy of their serious inquiry; the reading of a good book one hour in a week. For the sake of these careless, slothful sinners, I have here spoken much in a little room, that they may not refuse to read and consider so short a lesson, unless they think their souls worth nothing. Sinner, as thou wilt shortly answer it before God, deny not to God, to thyself, and me, the sober pondering, and faithful practising, these few directions.

I. Begin at home, and know thyself: consider what it is to be a^k man. Thou art made a nobler creature than the brutes: they serve thee, and are governed by thee; and death ends all their pains and pleasures. But thou hast reason to rule thyself and them; to know thy God, and foresee thy end, and know thy way, and do thy duty. Thy reason, and free-will, and executive power, are part of the image of God upon thy nature; so is thy dominion over the brutes, as (under him) thou art their owner, their ruler, and their end. But thy holy wisdom, and goodness, and ability, is the chief part of his image, on which thy happiness depends. Thou hast a soul, that cannot be satisfied in knowing, till thy¹ knowledge reach to God himself; nor can it be disposed by any other; nor can it (or the societies of the

¹ Mark viii. 36; Matt. vi. 33; Job xxi. 14, and xxii. 17; Psalm i. 2, 3; xii., and xiv.

^k Psalm viii. 4—6; Gen. i. 26, 27, and ix. 6; Col. iii. 10.

¹ John xvii. 3, and iv. 6, 7; Jer. ix. 21.

world) be well governed, according to its nature, without regard to his sovereign authority, and without the hopes and ^m fears of joy and misery hereafter; nor can it be ⁿ happy in any thing, but seeing, and loving, and delighting in this God, as he is revealed in the other world. And is this nature given thee in vain? If the nature of all things be fitted to its ^o use and end, then it must needs be so with thine.

II. By knowing thyself, then, thou must needs know that there is a God; ^p and that he is thy Maker, and infinite in all perfections; and that he is thy Owner, thy Ruler, and thy Felicity, or End. He is mad that seeth not that such creatures have a cause, or maker, and that all the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the world is caused by a power, and wisdom, and goodness, which is greater than that of all the world. And who can be our owner, but he that made us? and who can be our highest governor but our owner; whose infinite, power, wisdom and goodness, maketh him only fit thereto. And if he be our Governor, he must needs have laws, with rewards for the good, and punishments for the bad, and must judge and execute accordingly. And if he be our chiefest Benefactor, and all that we have is from him, and all our hope and happiness is in him, nothing can be more clear than that the very nature of man doth prove that, in hope of future happiness, he should absolutely resign himself to the will and disposal of this God, and that he should ^q absolutely obey him, and that he should love and serve him with all his powers; it being impossible to love, obey, and please that God too much who is thus our Cause, our End, our All.

III. By knowing thus thyself and God, it is easy to know what primitive holiness and godliness is. Even this hearty, entire, and absolute resignation of the soul to God, as the infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, as our Creator, our Owner, Governor, and Felicity, or End; fully submitting to his disposals, obeying his laws, in hope of his promised rewards, and fear of his threatened punishments; and loving and delighting in himself, and all his appearances in the world; and desiring and seeking the endless sight and enjoyment of him in heavenly glory, and expressing these affections in daily prayer, thanksgiving, and praise. This is the use of all thy faculties,

ⁿ Luke xii. 4, 5.

^m Psalm xvi. 5—11.

^o Isa. xlv. 18.

^p Psalm xiv. 1; xvi. 10; ix. 10; c.; xxiii.; xix. 1—3, and xlvii. 7; Gen. i. 1, and xviii. 25; Rev. i. 8; Rom. i. 19, 20; Ezek. xviii. 4; Mal. i. 6.

^q Matt. xxii. 37, and vi. 20, 21; Jer. v. 22; 2 Cor. v. 8, 9; viii. 5; vi. 16—18, and iv. 17, 18; Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Psalm x.; xxxvii. 4, and xl. 8; Col. iii. 1, 2.

the end and business of thy life, the health and happiness of thy soul. This is that holiness or godliness which God doth so much call for.

IV. And by this it is easy to know what a state of sin and ungodliness is.^r Even the want of all this holiness, and the setting up of carnal self instead of God. When men are proudly great, and wise, and good, in their own eyes, and would dispose of themselves, and all their concernments, and would rule themselves, and please themselves, according to the fleshly appetite and fancy; and therefore love most the pleasures, and profits, and honours of the world, as the provision to satisfy the desires of the flesh; and God shall be no further loved, obeyed, or pleased, than the love of fleshly pleasure will give leave; nor shall have any thing but what the flesh can spare. This is a wicked, a carnal, an ungodly state, though it break forth in various ways of sinning.

V. By this, experience itself may tell you that most men,^a yea, all, till grace renew them, are in this ungodly, miserable state, though only the Scripture tells us how this came to pass. Though all are not fornicators, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, nor persecutors, nor live not in the same way of sinning; yet selfishness, and pride, and sensuality, and the love of worldly things, ignorance, and ungodliness, are plainly become the common corruption of the nature of man; so that their hearts are turned to the world from God, and filled with impiety, filthiness, and injustice; and their reason is but a servant to their senses; and their mind,^t and love, and life is carnal: and this carnal mind is enmity to the holiness of God, and cannot be subject to his law. This corruption is hereditary, and is become, as it were, a nature to us, being the mortal malady of all our natures. And it is easy to know that such an unholy, wicked nature must needs be loathsome to God, and unfit for the happy enjoyment of his love,^u either here, or in the life to come; for what communion hath light with darkness?

VI. Hence, then, it is easy to see what grace is needful to a man's salvation. So odious a creature, such an unthankful rebel, that is turned away from God, and set against him, and defiled with all this filth of sin, must needs be both renewed

^r Psalm i., and xiv.; Heb. xii. 14; Rom. viii. 13, 19; xiii. 14, 15, and vi. 16; John iii. 3, 5, 6; 1 John ii. 15, 16; Luke xviii. 23, and xiv. 26, 23.

^a Rom. iii., and v. 12, 17, 19; Psalm xiv.; Eph. ii. 2, 3; John iii. 6.

^t Rom. viii. 5-7.

^u Psalm iv. 3; 2 Cor. vi. 14, 17.

and reconciled,^x sanctified and pardoned, if ever he will be saved. To love God, and be beloved by him, and to be delighted herein, in the sight of his glory, is the heaven and happiness of soules; and all this is contrary to an unholy state. Till men have new and holy hearts, they can neither see God, nor love him, nor delight in him, nor take him for their chief content, for the flesh and world have their delight and love: and till sin be pardoned,^y and God reconciled to the soul, what joy or peace can it expect from him whose nature and justice engageth him to loathe and punish it?

VII. And experience will tell you how insufficient^z you are for either of these two works yourselves, to renew your souls, or to reconcile them unto God. Will a nature that is carnal resist and overcome the flesh, and abhor the sin which it most dearly loveth? Will a worldly mind overcome the world? When custom hath rooted your natural corruptions, are they easily rooted up? Oh! how great and hard a work is it, to cause a blind, unbelieving sinner to set his heart on another world, and lay all his hopes in heaven, and to cast off all the things he seeth, for that God and glory which he never saw: and for a hardened, worldly, fleshly heart, to become wise and tender, and holy and heavenly, and abhor the sin which it most fondly loveth. And what can we do to satisfy justice, and reconcile such a rebel soul to God?

VIII. Nature and experience having thus acquainted you with your sin and misery, and what you want, will further tell you, that God^a doth not yet deal with you according to your deserts. He giveth you life, and time, and mercies, when your sin had forfeited all these. He obligeth you to repent and turn unto him. And, therefore, experience telling you that there is some hope, and that God hath found out some way of showing mercy to the children of wrath, reason will command you to inquire of all that are fit to teach you, what way of remedy God hath made known. And, as you may soon discover, that the religion of heathens and Mahometans is so far from showing the true remedy, that they are part of the disease itself: so you may learn, that a^b wonderful person, the Lord Jesus Christ, hath undertaken

^x Psalm xxxii. 1, 2; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Tit. ii. 14, and iii. 6—7; Heb. xiv. 14; Matt. v. 8.

^y Rom. v. 1—3.

^z Psalm xlix. 7, 8, 15; 1 Cor. ii. 11; Luke xi. 21; Heb. xiv. 12; 2 Pet. i. 3.

^a Acts xiv. 27, and xvii. 24, 27, 28; Rom. i. 19, 20, and ii. 4; Job xxxiii. 14—25; Matt. xii. 42, 43.

^b Isa. ix. 6, 7, and liii.; John iii. 16, 19; i. 1, 3, 4, and iii. 2.

the office of being the Redeemer and Saviour of the world, and that he, who is the eternal Word and Wisdom of the Father, hath wonderfully appeared in the nature of man, which he took from the Virgin Mary, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, that we might have a teacher sent from ^c heaven, infallibly and easily to acquaint the world with the will of God, and the unseen things of life eternal; how God ^d bare witness of his truth, by abundant, open, uncontrolled miracles; ^e how he conquered Satan and the world, and ^f gave us an example of perfect righteousness, and underwent the scorn and cruelty of sinners, and suffered the death of the cross, as a sacrifice for our sins, to reconcile us unto God; how he rose again the third day, and conquered death, and lived forty days longer on the earth, instructing his apostles, and giving them commission to preach the gospel to all the world, and then ascending bodily into heaven while they gazed after him; how he is now in heaven, both God and man in one person, the Teacher, and King, and High Priest of his church. Of him must we learn the way of life; by him must we be ruled, as the Physician of souls. All power is given him in heaven and earth. By his sacrifice, and merit, and intercession, must we be pardoned, and accepted with the Father; and only by him must we come to God. He hath procured and established a covenant of Grace, which baptism is the seal of, even that God will in him be our God and reconciled Father, and Christ will be our Saviour, and the Holy Ghost will be our Sanctifier, if we will unfeignedly consent; that is, if penitently and believingly we give up ourselves to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in these resolutions. This covenant, in the tenour of it, is a deed of gift of Christ, and pardon and salvation to all the world, if, by true faith and repentance, they will turn to God. And this shall be the law according to which he shall judge all that hear it at the last; for he is made a Judge of all, and will raise all the dead, and will justify his saints, and will judge them unto endless joy and glory, and condemn the unbelievers, impenitent and ^g ungodly, unto endless misery. The soul alone is judged at death; and body and soul at the resurrection. This Gospel the apostles preached to the world; and that it might be effectual to men's salvation, the ^h Holy Ghost

^c John i. 18.^d Acts ii. 22; Heb. ii. 3, 4.^e Matt. iv.^f 1 Pet. ii. 22—25; Matt. xxvi. 27, 28, and xxv.; Acts i.; Heb. iv.; viii. 9, 13; viii. 6, 7, and vii. 25; Eph. i. 22, 23; Rom. v. 1, 3, 9; 1 John v. 10, 12; John v. 22, and iii. 18, 19.^g Luke xvi.^h Acts ii.; John xvii. 23.

was first given to inspire the preachers of it, and enable them to speak in various languages, and infallibly agree in one, and to work many great and open miracles to prove their word to those they preached to; and by this means they¹ planted the church, which ordinary ministers must increase, and teach, and oversee, to the end of the world, till all the elect be gathered in. And the same² Holy Spirit hath undertaken it, as his work, to accompany this Gospel, and by it to convert men's souls, illuminating and sanctifying them; and, by a secret³ regeneration, to renew their natures, and bring them to that knowledge, and obedience, and love of God, which is the primitive holiness for which we were created, and from which we fell. And thus, by a Saviour and a Sanctifier, must all be reconciled and renewed, that will be glorified with God in heaven. All this you may learn from the sacred Scriptures, which were⁴ written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and sealed by multitudes of open⁵ miracles, and contain the very image and superscription of God, and have been received and preserved by the church, as the certain oracles of God, and blessed by him through all generations, to the sanctifying of many souls.

IX. When you understand all this, it is time for you to⁶ look home, and understand now what state your souls are in. That you were made capable of holiness and happiness, you know; that you and all men are fallen from God, and holiness, and happiness, unto self, and sin, and misery, you know; that you are so far redeemed by Christ, you know, as to have a pardoning and saving covenant tendered you, and Christ and mercy offered to your choice. But whether you are truly penitent believers, and renewed by the Holy Ghost, and so united unto Christ, this is the question yet unresolved; this is the work that is yet to do, without which there is no salvation; and if thou die before it is done, wo to thee that ever thou wast a man! Except a man be⁷ regenerate by the Spirit, and converted, and made a new creature, and of carnal be made spiritual, and of earthly be made heavenly, and of selfish and sinful be made holy and obedient to God, he can never be saved, no more than the devil himself can be saved. And if this be so, (as nothing is more sure,) I require thee now, who redest these words, as thou re-

¹ Matt. xxvii. 19, 20; Acts xiv. 23; xx., and xxvi. 17, 18.

² Rom. viii. 9.

³ Tit. iii. 5, 6; John xiii. 5, 6.

⁴ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

⁵ Heb. ii. 3, 4.

⁶ 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Psalm iv. 4; 2 Pet. i. 10.

⁷ John iii. 5; 2 Cor. v. 17; Rom. viii. 7, 9; Phil. iii. 18, 20.

gardest thy salvation, as thou wouldest escape hell fire, and stand with comfort before Christ and his angels at the last, that thou soberly consider whether reason command thee not to try thy state, whether thou art thus ^a renewed by the Spirit of Christ or not; and to ^r call for help to those that can advise thee, and follow on the search till thou know thy case; and if thy soul be a stranger to this sanctifying work, whether reason command thee not, without any delay, to make out to Christ, and beg his Spirit, and cast away thy sins, and give up thyself entirely to thy God, thy Saviour, and Sanctifier, and enter into his covenant with a full resolution never to forsake him; to deny thyself, and the desires of the flesh, and this deceitful, transitory world, and lay out all thy hopes on heaven, and speedily, whatever it cost thee, to make sure of the felicity which hath no end. And darest thou refuse this, when God and conscience do command it? And, further, I advise you,

X. Understand how it is that Satan hindereth souls from being sanctified, that you may know how to resist his wiles. Some he deceiveth by ^s malicious suggestions, that holiness is nothing but fancy or hypocrisy! (And if God, and death, and heaven, and hell were fancies, this might be believed). Some he debaucheth by the power of fleshly appetite and lust, so that their sins will not let their reason speak; some he keepeth in utter ignorance, by the evil education of ignorant parents, and the negligence of ^t ungodly, soul-murdering teachers; some he deceiveth by worldly hopes, and keepeth their minds so taken up with worldly things, that the matters of eternity can have but some loose, ineffectual thoughts, as bad as none; some are entangled in ^u ill company, who make a scorn of a holy life, or feed them with continual diversions and vain delights; and some are so ^x hardened in their sin, that they are even past feeling, and neither fear God's wrath, nor care for their salvation, but hear these things as men asleep, and nothing will awake them. Some are discouraged with a conceit that godliness is a life so ^y grievous, sad, and melancholy, that, rather than endure it, they will venture their souls, come on it what will, as if it were a grievous life to love God and hope for endless joys, and a pleasant life to love the world and sin, and live within a step of

^a Acts xvi. 14.

^r Acts ii. 37; xvi. 30, and xi. 23; 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2; Rev. ii. 7.

^s Acts xxiv. 14; xxviii. 23, and xxiv. 5, 6.

^t Mal. ii. 7, 9; Hos. iv. 9.

^u Eph. iv. 18, 19.

^x Prov. xiii. 20.

^y Mal. i. 13.

hell! Some that are convinced, do^a put off their conversion with delays, and think it is time enough hereafter, and are purposing and promising till it be too late, and life, and time, and hope be ended; and some that see there is a necessity of holiness, are^a cheated by some dead opinions, or names, or shows, or images of holiness, either because they hold a strict opinion, or because they join with a religious party, or because they are of that which they think is the true church, or because they are baptised with water, and observe the outward parts of worship; and perhaps because they offer God a great deal of lip-service, and lifeless ceremony, which never savoured of a holy soul. Thus deadness, sensuality, worldliness, and hypocrisy do hinder millions from sanctification and salvation.

XI. If ever thou wouldest be saved, oppress not reason by sensuality or diversions; but sometimes^b retire for sober consideration. Distracted and sleepy reason is unuseful; God and conscience have a great deal to say to thee, which in a crowd of company and business thou art not fit to hear. It is a^c doleful case, that a man who hath a God, a Christ, a soul, a heaven, a hell to think of, will allow them none but running thoughts, and not once in a week bestow one hour in manlike, serious^d consideration of them! Sure thou hast no greater things to mind. Resolve, then, sometimes to spend half an hour in the deepest thoughts of thy everlasting state.

XII. ^e Look upon this world and all its pleasures as a man of reason, who foreseeeth the end, and not as a beast, that liveth but by sense, or present objects. Do I need to tell thee, man, that thou must die? Cannot carcasses, and bones, and dust instruct thee to see the end of earthly glory, and all the pleasures of the flesh? Is it a controversy whether thy flesh must shortly perish? and wilt thou yet provide for it before thy soul? What a sad farewell must thou shortly take, of all that worldlings sell their souls for! And O how quickly will this be! Alas, man, the day is even at hand. A few days more, and thou art gone! And darest thou live unready, and part with heaven for such a world as this?

^a Matt. xxv. 8, 8, 12, and xxiv. 43, 44.

^a John viii. 39, 42, 44; Rom. iii. 1, 2; Gal. iv. 29, and i. 14; Matt. xiii. 19—22, and xv. 2, 3, 6.

^b Psalm iv. 4; Hag. i. 5; Deut. xxxii. 7, 29.

^c Isa. i. 3.

^d Job xxxiv. 27; Jer. xxiii. 20; Psalm cxix. 59.

^e 2 Cor. iv. 18; Deut. xxxii. 29; 1 John ii. 17; 1 Cor. vii. 31; Luke xii. 19, 20; John xiv. 1, 2; 1 Thess. v. 13.

XIII. And then think soberly of the^f life to come. What it is for a soul to appear before the living God, and be judged to endless joy or misery. If the devil tempt thee to doubt of such a life, remember that nature, and Scripture, and the world's consent, and his own temptations, are witnesses against him. O man! canst thou pass one day, in company, or alone, in business, or in idleness, without some sober thoughts of everlastingness? Nothing more showeth that the hearts of men are asleep or dead, than that the thoughts of endless joy or pain, so near at hand, constrain them not to be holy, and overcome not all the temptations of the flesh, as toys, and inconsiderable things.

XIV. Mark well what mind most men are of, when they come to^s die. Unless it be some desperate, forsaken wretch, do they not all speak well of a holy life; and wish that their lives had been spent in the most fervent love of God, and strictest obedience to his laws? Do they then speak well of lust and pleasures, and magnify the wealth and honours of the world? Had they not then rather die as the most mortified saints, than as careless, fleshly, worldly sinners? And dost thou see and know this, and yet wilt thou not be instructed, and be wise in time?

XV. Think well what manner of men those were, whose^h names are now honoured for their holiness. What manner of life did St. Peter, and Paul, St. Cyprian, St. Augustin, and all other saints and martyrs live? Was it a life of fleshly sports and pleasures? Did they deride or persecute a holy life? Were they not more strictly holy than any that thou knowest? And is he not self-condemned that honoureth the names of saints, and will not imitate them?

XVI. Think what the difference is between a Christian and anⁱ heathen. You are loth to be heathens or infidels, but do you think a Christian excelleth them but in opinion? He that is not holier than they, is worse, and shall suffer more than they.

XVII: Think what the difference is between a^k godly Christian and an ungodly. Do not all the opposers of holiness among us yet speak for the same God, and Christ, and Scripture, and

^f Luke xii. 4; Eccl. xii. 7; 2 Pet. iii. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 18; Phil. iii. 18, 20.

^s Num. xxiii. 10; Matt. xxv. 8, and vii. 21, 22; Prov. i. 28, 29.

^h Matt. xxiii. 29—31, 33; Heb. xi. 38; John viii. 39.

ⁱ Matt. x. 15; Rom. ii.; Acts. x. 34, 35.

^k Rom. ii. 12, 23, 29; Matt. xxv. 28; Luke xix. 22; Acts xxiv. 15; Gal. iv. 29.

profess the same creed, and religion, with those whom they oppose? And is not this Christ the Author of our holiness, and this Scripture the commander of it? Search and see, whether the difference be not this, that the godly are serious in their profession, and the ungodly are hypocrites, who hate and oppose the practice of the very things which themselves profess; whose religion serveth but to condemn them, while their lives are contrary to their tongues.

XVIII. Understand what the devil's policy is, by raising so many¹ sects, and factions, and controversies about religion in the world. Even to make some think that they are religious, because they can prate for their opinions, or because they think their party is the best, because their faction is the greatest, or the least, the uppermost, or the suffering side. And to turr: holy, edifying conference into vain jangling, and to make men atheists, suspecting all religion, and true to none, because of men's diversity of minds: but remember that christian religion is but one, and a thing easily known by its ancient rule; and the universal church, containing all Christians, is but one. And if carnal interest or opinions so distract men, that one party saith, 'We are all the church,' and another saith, 'It is we,' (as if the kitchen were all the house, or one town or village all the kingdom,) wilt thou be mad with seeing this distraction? Hearken, sinner. All these sects, in the day of judgment, shall concur as witnesses against thee, if thou be unholy, because, however else they differed,^m all of them, that are Christians, professed the necessity of holiness, and subscribed to that Scripture which requireth it. Though thou canst not easily resolve every controversy, thou mayest easily know the true religion. It is that which Christ and his apostles taught; which all Christians have professed; which Scripture requireth; which is firstⁿ pure, and then peaceable; most spiritual, heavenly, charitable, and just.

XIX. Away from that^o company which is sensual, and an enemy to reason, sobriety, and holiness; and consequently to God, themselves, and thee. Can they be wise for thee, that are foolish for themselves? or friends to thee, that are undoing themselves? or have any pity on thy soul, when they make a

¹ Eph. iv. 3, 14, &c.; Acts xx. 30; 1 Cor. xi. 19, and xii.; 2 Tim. iv. 3, and ii. 14, 16; 1 Tim. i. 5, 6; Tit. iii. 9; Matt. xii. 25; Rom. ii. 12, 27—29.

^m Gal. i. 7, 8; Matt. xxviii. 20.

ⁿ Jam. iii. 17.

^o Eph. v. 11; Prov. xxiii. 20; 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18; Psalm xv. 4; Deut. xlii. 3.

jest of their own damnation? • Will they help thee to heaven, who are running so furiously to hell? Choose better familiars, if thou wouldest be better.

XX. Judge not of a holy life by hearsay, for it cannot so be known.^p Try it awhile, and then judge as thou findest it. Speak not against the things thou knowest not. Hadst thou but lived in the love of God, and the lively belief of endless glory, and the delights of holiness, and fears of hell, but for one month or day, and with such a heart hadst^q cast away thy sin, and called upon God, and ordered thy family in a holy manner, especially on the Lord's day, I dare boldly say experience would constrain thee to^r justify a holy life. But yet I must tell thee, it is not true holiness, if thou do but try it with^s exceptions and reserves. If, therefore, God hath convinced thee that this is his will and way, I adjure thee, as in his dreadful presence, that thou^t delay no longer, but resolve, and absolutely give up thyself to God, as thy heavenly Father, thy Saviour, and thy Sanctifier, and make an everlasting covenant with him, and then he and all his mercies will be thine. His grace will help thee, and his mercy pardon thee. His ministers will instruct thee, and his people pray for thee and assist thee. His angels will guard thee, and his Spirit comfort thee: and when flesh must fail, and thou must leave this world, thy Saviour will then receive thy soul, and bring it into the participation of his glory: and he will raise thy body, and justify thee before the world, and make thee equal to the angels; and thou shalt live in the sight and love of God, and in the everlasting pleasures of his glory. This is the end of faith and holiness. But if thou harden thy heart, and refusest mercy,^u everlasting wo will be thy portion, and then there will be no remedy.

And now, reader, I beg of thee, and I beg of God, on my bended knees, that these few words may sink into thy heart, and that thou wouldest read them over and over again, and bethink thee, as a man that must shortly die, whether any deserve thy love and obedience more than God; and thy thankful remembrance more than Christ; and thy care and diligence more than thy salvation? Is there any felicity more desirable than heaven?

^p John v. 40, and vi. 35, 37, 45; Luke xiv. 29, 30.

Isa. lv. 6, 7.

^r Matt. xi. 19.

Luke xiv. 33.

^s Rev. xlii. 17; ii., and iii.; John i. 12; 1 John v. 12; Psalm xxxiv. 7, and lxxiii. 26; Matt. xxv.; Luke xx. 36; Heb. ii. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 12.

^u Luke xix. 27; Prov. xxix. 1, and i. 25.

or any misery more terrible than hell? or any thing so regardable as that which is everlasting? will a few days' fleshly pleasures pay for the loss of heaven and thy immortal soul? or will thy sin and prosperity be sweet at death, and in the day of judgment? As thou art a man, and as ever thou believest there is a God, and a world to come, and as thou carest for thy soul, whether it be saved or damned; I beseech thee, I charge thee, think of these things; think of them once a day at least! think of them with thy most sober, serious thoughts! Heaven is not a maygame, and hell is not a flea-biting: make not a jest of salvation or damnation. I know thou livest in a distracted world, where thou mayest hear some laughing at such things as these, and scorning at a holy life, and fastening odious reproaches on the godly, and merrily drinking, and playing, and prating away their time, and then saying that they will trust God with their souls, and hope to be saved without so much ado! But if all these men do not change their minds, and be not shortly down in the mouth, and would not be glad to eat their words, and wish that they had lived a holy life, though it had cost them scorn and suffering in the world, let me bear the shame of a deceiver for ever: but if God and thy conscience bear witness against thy sin, and tell thee that a holy life is best; regard not the gainsayings of a Bedlam world, which is drunk with the delusions of the flesh: but give up thy soul and life to God, by Jesus Christ, in a faithful covenant! Delay no longer, man, but resolve; resolve immediately, resolve unchangeably; and God will be thine, and thou shalt be his for ever. Amen. Lord, have mercy on this sinner! and so let it be resolved by thee and him.

The Parts and Practice of a Holy Life; for Personal and Family Instruction.

All is not ² done when men have begun a religious life. All trees that blossom prove not fruitful; and all fruit comes not to perfection. Many fall off, who seemed to have good beginnings: and many dishonour the name of Christ, by their scandals and infirmities. Many do grieve their teachers' hearts, and lamentably disturb the church of Christ, by their ignorance, errors, self-conceitedness, unruliness, headiness, contentiousness, sidings

² Col. i. 23; Heb. iv. 1; 2 Pet. ii. 20; 1 Cor. iii.; Gal. iii., and iv.; Matt. xiii. 41, and xviii. 7.

and divisions: insomuch that the^v scandals and the feuds of Christians are the great impediments of the conversion of the infidel and heathen world, by exposing Christianity to their contempt and scorn, as if it were but the error of men, as unholy, and worldly, and proud as others, that can never agree among themselves: and many, by their passions and selfishness, are a trouble to the families and neighbours where they live: and more by their weaknesses and great distempers, are snares, vexations, and burdens to themselves. Whereas Christianity in its true constitution is a life of such holy^a light and love, such purity and peace, such fruitfulness and heavenliness, as if it were accordingly showed forth in the lives of Christians, would command admiration and reverence from the world, and do more to their conversion than swords or words alone can do: and it would make Christians useful and amiable to each other; and their lives a feast and pleasure to themselves. I hope it may prove some help to those excellent ends, and to the securing men's salvation, if, in a few sound, experienced directions, I open to you the duties of a christian life.

I. Keep still the true^a form of christian doctrine, desire, and duty, orderly printed on your minds: that is, understand it clearly and distinctly, and remember it. I mean the great points of religion contained in catechisms: you may still grow in the clearer understanding of your catechisms, if you live an hundred years: let not the words only, but the matter, be as familiar in your minds as the rooms of your house are. Such^b solid knowledge will establish you against seduction and unbelief, and will be still within you a ready help for every grace, and every duty, as the skill of an artificer is for his work: and for want of this, when you come among infidels or heretics, their reasonings may seem unanswerable to you, and shake, if not overthrow, your faith: and you will easily err in lesser points, and trouble the church with your dreams and wranglings. This is the calamity of many professors; that while they will be most censorious judges in every controversy about church matters, they know not well the doctrine of the catechism.

II. Live daily by faith on^c Jesus Christ, as the Mediator

^v Phil. iii. 18, 19; Acts xx. 30.

^a Matt. v. 16; 1 Pet. iii. 1; ii. 15, and i. 8; 2 Cor. i. 12.

^b 2 Tim. i. 13, and iii. 7; Heb. v. 12; Phil. i. 9; Rom. xv. 14.

^c Eph. iv. 13, 14; Col. i. 9; ii. 3, and iii. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 4.

^d John xvii. 3, and xvi. 33; Eph. iii. 17, 18; i. 22, 23, and iv. 6, 16; Matt. xxviii. 19; Rom. v.; 2 Cor. xii. 9; 1 John v. 4; Heb. iv. 14, 16; Col. iii. 3, 4; Acts vii. 59.

between God and you : being well grounded in the belief of the Gospel, and understanding Christ's office, make use of him still in all your wants. Think on the fatherly love of God, as coming to you through him alone ; and of the Spirit, as given by him, your Head ; and of the covenant of grace, as enacted and sealed by him ; and of the ministry as sent by him ; and of all time, and helps, and hope, as procured and given by him. When you think of sin and infirmity, and temptations, think also of his sufficient pardoning, justifying, and victorious grace. When thou thinkest of the world, the flesh, and the devil, think how he overcometh them. Let his doctrine, and the pattern of his most perfect life, be always before you as your rule. In all your doubts, and fears, and wants, go to him in the Spirit, and to the Father by him, and him alone. Take him as the root of your life and mercies, and live as upon him and by his life. And when you die, resign your souls to him, that they may be with him where he is, and see his glory. To live on Christ, and use him in every want and address to God, is more than a general, confused believing in him.

III. So believe in the Holy Ghost as to ^d live and work by him, as the body doth by the soul. You are not ^e baptised into his name in vain ; but too few understand the sense and reason of it. The Spirit is sent by Christ for two great works : 1. To the apostles (and prophets) to ^f inspire them infallibly to preach the Gospel, and confirm it by miracles, and leave it on record for following ages in the holy Scriptures. 2. To all his ^g members, to illuminate and sanctify them, to believe and obey this sacred doctrine, beside his common gift to many to understand and preach it. The Spirit, having first indited the Gospel, doth by it first regenerate, and after govern, all true believers. He is not now given us for the revealing of new doctrines, but to understand and obey the ^h doctrine revealed and sealed by him long ago. As the sun doth, by its sweet and secret influence, both give and cherish the natural life of things, sensitive and vegetative, so doth Christ, by his ⁱ Spirit, our spiritual life. As you do no work but by your natural life, you should do none but by your spiritual life. You must not only believe, and love, and pray by it, but manage all your calling by it ; for "Holiness to the Lord,"

^d Gal. v. 16, 25.

^e Matt. xxviii. 19.

^f John xvi. 13 ; Heb. ii. 3, 4.

^g 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13 ; Rom. viii. 9, 13 ; John iii. 5, 6.

^h 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16 ; Jude 19, 20.

ⁱ Ezek. xxxvi. 27 ; Isa. xlv. 3 ; Rom. viii. 1, 5 ; 1 Cor. vi. 11 ; Zech. xiv. 20.

must be written upon all. All things are sanctified to you, because you, being sanctified to God, devote all to him, and use all for him; and, therefore, must do all in the strength and conduct of the Spirit.

IV. Live wholly upon God, ^k as all in all; as the first efficient, principal dirigent, and final cause of all things. Let faith, hope, and love, be daily feeding on him. Let "Our Father which art in heaven," be first inscribed on your hearts, that he may seem most amiable to you, and you may boldly trust him, and filial love may be the spring of duty. Make use of the Son and Spirit to lead you to the Father; and of faith in Christ, to kindle and keep alive the love of God. The love of God is our primitive holiness, and specially called, with its fruits, our sanctification, which faith in Christ is but a means to. Let it be your principal end, in studying Christ, to see the goodness, love, and amiableness of God in him: a condemning God is not so easily loved as a gracious, reconciled God. You have so much of the Spirit as you have love to God: this is the proper gift of the Spirit to all the adopted sons of God, to cause them, with filial affection and dependence, to cry "Abba, Father." Know not, desire not, love not any creature, but purely as subordinate to God. Without him, let it be nothing to you but as the glass without the face, or scattered letters without the sense, or as the corpse without the soul. ^l Call nothing prosperity, or pleasure, but his love; and nothing adversity, or misery, but his displeasure, and the cause and fruits of it. When any thing would seem lovely and desirable, which is against him, call it ^m dung. And hear that man as ⁿ Satan, or the serpent, that would entice you from him; and count him but vanity, a worm, and dust, that would affright you from your duty to him. Fear him much, but love him more. Let ^o love be the soul and end of every other duty; it is the end and reason of all the rest; but it hath no end, or reason, but its object. Think of no other heaven, and end, and happiness of man, but love, the final act, and God, the final object. Place not your religion in any thing but the love of God, with its means and fruits. Own no grief, desire, or joy, but a mourning, a seeking, and a rejoicing love.

^k 1 Cor. x. 31; Rom. xi. 36, and v. 1, 3; 2 Cor. v. 7, 8, 19; 1 John lii. 1; Matt. xxii. 37; Eph. i. 6; Gal. iv. 4—6.

^l Psalm xxx. 5, and lxiii. 3.

^m Phil. iii. 7, 8.

ⁿ Matt. xvi. 23.

^o 2 Thess. lii. 5; 2 Cor. xlii. 14.

V. Live in the belief and hopes of heaven, and^p seek it as your part and end; and daily delight your souls in the forethoughts of the endless sight and love of God. As God is seen on earth but as in a glass, so he is proportionably enjoyed. But when mourning, seeking love hath done, and sin and enemies are overcome, and we behold the glory of God in heaven, the delights of love will then be perfect. You may desire more on earth than you may hope for. Look not for a kingdom of this world, nor for Mount Zion in the wilderness. Christ reigneth on earth, as Moses in the camp, to guide us to the land of promise: our perfect blessedness will be, where the kingdom is delivered up to the Father, and God is all in all. A doubt, or a strange heartless thought of heaven, is water cast on the sacred fire, to quench your holiness and your joy. Can you travel one whole day to such an end, and never think of the place that you are going to? Which must be intended in every righteous act, either notably, or by the ready, unobserved act of a potent habit. When earth is at the best, it will not be heaven. You live no further by faith like Christians, than you either live for heaven in seeking it, or else upon heaven, in hope and joy.

VI. Labour to make religion your pleasure and^q delight. Look often to God, to heaven, to Christ, to the Spirit, to the promises, to all your mercies. Call over your experiences, and think what matter of high delight is still before you, and how unseemly it is, and how injurious to your profession, for one, that saith he hopes for heaven, to live as sadly as those that have no higher hopes than earth. How should that man be filled with joy, who must live in the joys of heaven for ever? Especially rejoice when the messengers of death do tell you that your endless joy is near. If God and heaven, with all our mercies in the way, be not reason enough for a joyful life, there can be none at all. Abhor all suggestions which would make religion seem a tedious, irksome life. And take heed that you represent it not so to others: for you will never make them in love with that which you make them not perceive to be delectable and lovely. Not as the hypocrite, by forcing and framing his reli-

^p Col. iii. 1, 2, 4; Matt. vi. 19—21, 33; 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18, and v. 7; Luke xii. 20; Heb. vi. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 28; Eph. iv. 6, and i. 23; Phil. iii. 18, 20; Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26; John xviii. 36.

^q Psalm i. 2, 3; lxxxiv. 2, 10; lxiii. 3, 5; xxxvii. 4; ix. 19; cxix. 48, 70, cxii. 1, and xxxii. 11; Isa. lviii. 14; Rom. xiv. 17, and v. 1, 3, 5; 1 Pet. i. 8; Matt. v. 11, 12.

gion to his carnal mind and pleasure; but bringing up the heart to a holy suitableness, to the pleasure of religion.

VII. Watch, as for your souls, against this flattering, tempting^r world; especially when it is represented as more sweet and delectable than God, and holiness, and heaven. This world, with its pleasure, wealth, and honours, is it that is put in the balance by Satan, against God, and holiness, and heaven; and no man shall have better than he chooseth and preferreth. The bait taketh advantage of the brutish part, when reason is asleep; and if, by the help of sense it get the throne, the beast will ride and rule the man, and reason become a slave to sensuality. When you hear the serpent, see his sting, and see death attending the forbidden fruit. When you are rising, look down and see how far you have to fall. His reason, as-well as faith, is weak, who for such fool gauds as the pomp and vanities of this world, can forget God, and his soul, and death, and judgment, heaven and hell, yea, and deliberately command them to stand by. What knowledge or experience can do good on that man who will venture so much for such a world, which all that have tried it call vanity at the last? How deplorable, then, is a worldling's case! O fear the world, when it smileth, or seems sweet and amiable. Love it not, if you love your God, and your salvation.

VIII. Fly from temptations, and crucify the^a flesh, and keep a constant government over your appetite and senses. Many who had no designed stated vice, or worldly interest, have shamefully fallen by the sudden surprise of appetite or lust. When custom hath taught these to be greedy, and violent, like a hungry dog, or a lusting boar, it is not a sluggish wish or purpose that will mortify or rule them. How dangerous a case is that man in, who hath so greedy a beast continually to restrain, that if he do but neglect his watch one hour, is ready to run him headlong into hell! Who can be safe, that standeth long on so terrible a precipice? The tears and sorrows of many years may, perhaps, not repair the loss which one hour or act may bring. The case of David, and many another, are dreadful warnings. Know what it is that you are most in danger of; whether lust and idleness, or excess in meat, or drink, or play; and there set the strongest watch for your preservation. Make

^r Gal. vi. 14, and i. 4; 1 John ii. 15, 16, and v. 4, 5; Jam. i. 27; iv. 4, 5; j. 11, and v. 1, 2, 4; Rom. xii. 2; Tit. ii. 12; Matt. xix. 24; Luke xii. 16, 21; xvi. 26, and viii. 14; Heb. xi. 26.

^a Rom. viii. 1, 13, and xiii. 14; Gal. v. 17, 24; Jude viii. 23; 2 Pet. ii. 10; Eph. ii. 3; 1 Pet. ii. 11; Matt. vi. 13, and xxvi. 41; Luke viii. 13.

it your daily business to mortify that lust; and scorn that your brutish sense or appetite should conquer reason. Yet trust not purposes alone, but away from the temptation; touch not, ye a look not on, the tempting bait; keep far enough off, if you desire to be safe. What miseries come from small beginnings: temptation leads to sin, and small sins to greater, and those to hell. And sin and hell are not to be played with. Open your sin or temptation to some friend, that shame may save you from danger.

IX. Keep up a constant, skilful government over your^t passions and your tongues. To this end, keep a tender conscience, which will smart when in any of these you sin; let holy passions be well ordered, and selfish, carnal passions be restrained; let yourⁿ tongues know their duties to God and man, and labour to be skilful and resolute in performing them; know all the sins of the tongue, that you may avoid them, for your innocency and peace do much depend on the prudent government of your tongues.

X. Govern your^x thoughts with constant, skilful diligence. In this, right habits and affections will do most by inclining them unto good; it is easy to think on that which we love. Be not unfurnished of matter for your thoughts to work upon; and often retire yourselves for serious meditation. Be not so solitary and deep in musings as to overstretch your thoughts, and confound your minds, or take you off from necessary converse with others; but be sure that you be considerate, and dwell much at home, and converse most with your consciences and your God, with whom you have the greatest business. Leave not your thoughts unemployed or ungoverned; scatter them not abroad upon impertinent vanities: O that you knew what daily business you have for them. Most men are wicked, deceived, and undone, because they are inconsiderate, and dare not, or will not, retiredly and soberly use their reason; or use it but as a slave in chains, in the service of their passion, lust, and interests. He was never wise, or good, or happy, who was not soberly and impartially considerate. How to be good, to do good, and finally enjoy good, must be the sum of all your thoughts. Keep them first holy, then charitable, clean, and chaste; and quickly check them when they look towards sin.

^t Jam. i. 19, and iii. 13, 17; 1 Pet. iii. 4; Matt. v. 5; Eph. iv. 2, 3; Col. iii. 12.

ⁿ Jam. i. 26, and iii. 5, 6; Psalm xxxiv. 13; Prov. xviii. 21.

^x Deut. xv. 9, and xxxii. 29; 2 Cor. x. 5; Gen. vi. 5; Psalm x. 4; xciv. 19, and cxix. 59, 113; Prov. xii. 5, and xv. 26, xxx. 32; Jer. iv. 14.

XI. Let ⁷ time be exceeding precious in your eyes, and carefully and diligently redeem it. What haste doth it make, and how quickly will it be gone; and then how highly will it be valued, when a minute of it can never be recalled! O what important business have we for every moment of our time, if we should live a thousand years! Take not that man to be well in his wits, or to know his God, his end, his work, or his danger, who hath time to spare. Redeem it, not only from needless sports, and plays, and idleness, and curiosity, and compliment, and excess of sleep, and chat, and worldliness, but also from the entanglement of lesser good, which would hinder you from greater. Spend time as men that are ready to pass into another world, where every minute must be accounted for; and it must go with us for ever as we lived here. Let not health deceive you into the expectation of living long, and so into a senseless negligence; see your glass running, and keep a reckoning of the expense of time; and spend it just as you would review it when it is gone.

XII. Let the ^{*} love of all, in their several capacities, become, as it were, your very nature, and doing them all the good you can be very much of the business of your lives. God must be loved in all his creatures: his natural image on all men, and his spiritual image on his saints. Our neighbour must be loved as our natural selves; that is, our natural neighbour as our natural self, with a love of benevolence; and our spiritual neighbour as our spiritual self, with a love of complacence. In opposition to complacence, we may hate our sinful neighbour as we must ourselves; (much more;) but, in opposition to benevolence, we must neither hate ourselves, our neighbour, or our enemy. O that men knew how much of Christianity doth consist in love and doing good! With what eyes do they read the Gospel, who see not this in every page. Abhor all that selfishness, pride, and passion, which are the enemies of love; and those opinions, and factions, and censurings, and backbitings, which would destroy it. Take him that speaketh evil of another to you, without a just cause or call, to be Satan's messenger, entreating you to hate your brother, or to abate your love; for to persuade you

⁷ Eph. v. 16; John xiv. 1, 2, and ix. 4; Acts xvii. 21; 1 Cor. vii. 29; 2 Cor. vi. 2; Luke xix. 42, 44; Psalm xxxix. 4; Matt. xxv. 10, 12.

^{*} 1 Tim. i. 5, 6; Matt. xix. 19, and v. 44, 45; Rom. xiii. 10, and xv. 1, 3; 1 John i. 16; Eph. iv. 2, 15, 16; Col. ii. 2, and i. 4; 1 Tim. 6, 11; Jam. iii. 17, and iv. 11; Phil. ii. 1, 2, and ii. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 9; John xiii. 35; 1 Cor. xiii.; Gal. vi. 10; Tit. ii. 14.

that a man is bad, is directly to persuade you so far to hate him. Not that the good and bad must be confounded; but love will call none bad without constraining evidence. Rebuke backbiters; hurt no man, and speak evil of no man, unless it be not only just, but necessary to some greater good. Love is lovely; they that love shall be beloved. Hating and hurting makes men hateful. "Love thy neighbour as thyself," and "Do as thou wouldest be done by," are the golden rules of our duty to men, which must be deeply written on your hearts. For want of this, there is nothing so false, so bad, so cruel, which you may not be drawn to think, or say, or do, against your brethren. Selfishness, and want of love, do as naturally tend to ambition and covetousness, and thence to cruelty, against all that stand in the way of their desires, as the nature of a wolf to kill the lambs. All factions, and contentions, and persecutions, in the world, proceed from selfishness, and want of charity. Devouring malice is the devilish nature. Be as zealous in doing good to all as Satan's servants are in hurting: take it as the use of all your talents, and use them as you would hear of it at last. Let it be your business, and not a matter on the by, especially for public good and men's salvation; and what you cannot do yourselves, persuade others to. Give them good books, and draw them to the means which are most like to profit them.

XIII. Understand the right terms of church communion; especially the unity of the universal church, and the universal communion which you must hold with all the parts; and the difference between the church as visible and invisible. For want of these, how woful are our divisions! Read oft 1 Cor. xii., and Eph. iv. 1—17; John xvii. 21—23; Acts iv. 32, and ii. 42; 1 Cor. i. 10, 11, 13, and iii. 3; Rom. xvi. 17; Phil. ii. 1—4; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13, Acts xx. 30; 1 Cor. xi. 19; Tit. iii. 10; Jam. iii.; Col. i. 4; Heb. x. 25; Acts viii. 37, and xii. 13; 1 Cor. i. 2, 12, 13; iii. 3, 4, and xi. 18, 21. Study these well. You must have union and communion, in faith and love, with all the Christians in the world; and refuse not local communion when you have a just call, so far as they put you not on sinning. Let your usual meeting be with the purest church, if you lawfully may, and still respect the public good; but sometimes occasionally communicate even with defective, faulty churches, so be it they are true Christians, and put you not on sin; that so you may show that you own them as Christians, though you disown their corruptions. Think not your presence maketh all the faults

of ministry, worship, or people, to be yours, for then I would join with no church in the world. Know, that as the mystical church consisteth of heart covenanters, so doth the church, as visible, consist of verbal covenanters, which make a credible profession of consent. And that nature and Scripture teach us to take every man's word as credible, till perfidiousness forfeit his credit; which forfeiture must be proved, before any sober profession can be taken for an insufficient title. ^a Grudge not, then, at the communion of any professed Christian in the church visible; though we must do our part to cast out the obstinately impenitent by discipline, which, if we cannot do, the fault is not ours. The presence of hypocrites is no hurt, but oft a mercy to the sincere: how small else would the church seem in the world. Outward privileges belong to outward covenanters, and inward mercies to the sincere. ^b Division is wounding, and tends to death. Abhor it, as you love the church's welfare, or your own. The wisdom from above is first pure, and then peaceable: never separate what God conjoineth. It is the earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom, which causeth bitter envying, and strife, and confusion, and every evil work. "Blessed are the peace-makers."

XIV. Take heed of ^c pride and self-conceitedness in religion. If once you overvalue your own understandings, your crude conceptions and gross mistakes will delight you as some supernal light; and, instead of having compassion on the weak, you will be unruly, and despisers of your guides, and censorious contemners of all that differ from you; and persecutors of them, if you have power; and will think all intolerable, that take you not as oracles, and your words as law. Forget not, that the church hath always suffered by censorious, unruly professors on the one hand, (and O what divisions and scandals have they caused!) as well as by the profane and persecutors on the other: take heed of both. And when contentions are afoot, be quiet and silent, and not too forward, and keep up a zeal for love and peace.

XV. Be faithful and conscionable in all your ^d relations. Honour and obey your parents, and other superiors. Despise not, and resist not, government. If you suffer unjustly by them, be humbled for those sins which cause God to turn your protectors into afflictors; and, instead of murmuring and rebelling

^a Matt. xiii. 29, 41.

^b John xvi. 2; 1 Cor. i. 10; Rom. xvi. 17; Jam. iii. 14—18.

^c 1 Tim. iii. 6, and vi. 4; Col. ii. 18; 1 Cor. viii. 1, and iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5; Jam. iii. J, 17.

^d Eph. v., and vi.; Col. iii., and iv.; Rom. xiii. 1, 7; 1 Pet. ii. 13, 15

against them, reform yourselves, and then commit yourselves to God. Princes and pastors I will not speak to: subjects, and servants, and children, must obey their superiors as the officers of God.

XVI. Keep up the government of God in your ^c families: holy families must be the chief preservers of the interest of religion in the world. Let not the world turn God's service into a customary, lifeless form. Read the Scripture and edifying books to them; talk with them seriously about the state of their souls and everlasting life; pray with them fervently; watch over them diligently; be angry against sin, and meek in your own cause; be examples of wisdom, holiness, and patience; and see that the Lord's day be spent in holy preparation for eternity.

XVII. Let your ^f callings be managed in holiness and labouriousness. Live not in idleness: be not slothful in your work. Whether you be bound or free, in the ^s sweat of your brow you must eat your bread, and labour the six days, that you may have to give to him that needeth. Slothfulness is sensuality, as well as filthier sins. The body (that is able) must have fit employments as well as the soul; or else body and soul will fare the worse. But let all be but as the labour of a traveller, and aim at God and heaven in all.

XVIII. Deprive not yourselves of the benefit of an able, faithful ^a pastor, to whom you may open your case in secret; or at least of a holy, ^b faithful friend; and be not ^l displeased at their free reproofs. Wo to him that is alone! how blind and partial are we in our own cause! and how hard is it to know ourselves without an able, faithful helper! you forfeit this great mercy, when you love a flatterer, and angrily defend your sin.

XIX. ^k Prepare for sickness, sufferings, and death. Overvalue not prosperity, nor the favour of man! if selfish men prove false and cruel to you, even those of whom you have deserved best, marvel not at it, but pray for your enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, that God would turn their hearts, and pardon them. What a mercy is it to be driven from the world to God, when the love of the world is the greatest danger of the soul! Be ready to die, and you are ready for any thing: ask

^c Command. iv.; Jos. xxiv. 15; Dent. vi. 6-8; Dan. vi.

^f Heb. xiii. 5; Command. iv.; 2 Thess. iii. 10, 12; 1 Thess. iv. 7; 1 Tim. v. 13; Prov. xxxi.; 1 Cor. vii. 29. ^s Mat. ii. 7.

^a Eccl. iv. 10, 11.

^b Prov. xii. 1, and xv. 5, 10, 31; Heb. iii. 18.

^k Luke xii. 40; 2 Pet. i. 10; Phil. i. 21, 23; Jer. ix. 4, 5; Matt. vii. 4, 5; 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 4, 8.

your hearts seriously, what is it that I shall need at a dying hour? and let it speedily be got ready, and not be to seek in the time of your extremity.

Understand the true method of peace of conscience, and judge not of the state of your souls upon deceitful grounds. As presumptuous hopes do keep men from conversion, and embolden them in sin; so causeless fears do hinder our love and praise of God, by obscuring his loveliness: and they destroy our thankfulness, and our delight in God, and make us a burden to ourselves, and a grievous stumbling-block to others. The general grounds of all your comfort, are, 1. The ^l gracious nature of God. 2. The ^m sufficiency of Christ, and, 3. The truth, and ⁿ universality of the promise, which giveth Christ and life to all, if they will accept him: but this acceptance is the proof of your particular title; without which, these do but aggravate your sin. Consent to God's covenant is the true condition and proof of your title to God as your Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier, and so to the saving blessings of the covenant. Which consent, if you survive, must produce the duties which you consent to. He that heartily consenteth that God be his God, his Saviour, and Sanctifier, is in a state of life. But this includeth the ^o rejection of the world. Much knowledge, and memory, and utterance, and lively affections, are all very desirable: but you must judge your state by none of these; for they are all uncertain. But, 1. If God, and holiness, and heaven, have the highest estimation of your practical judgment, as being esteemed best for you; 2. And be preferred in the choice and resolution of your wills, and that habitually, before all the pleasures of the world; 3. And the first and chiefly sought in your endeavours; this is the infallible proof of your sanctification.

Christian; upon long and serious study and experience, I dare boldly commend these directions to thee, as the way of God, which will end in blessedness. The Lord resolve and strengthen thee to obey them.

This is the true constitution of Christianity: this is true godliness; and this is to be religious indeed; and all this is no more than to be seriously such, as all among us, in general words, profess to be. This is the religion which must differ-

^l Exod. xxxiv. 6.

^m Heb. vii. 25.

ⁿ John iii. 16, and iv. 42; 1 Tim. iv. 10, and ii. 4; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Rev. xxii. 17; Isa. lv. 1-3, 6, 7.

^o Luke xiv. 26, 33; 1 John ii. 15; Matt. vi. 19-21, 33; Col. iii. 1, 2; Rom. viii. 1, 13.

ence you from hypocrites ; which must settle you in peace, and make you an honour to your profession, and a blessing to those that dwell about you ! Happy is the land, the church, the family, which doth consist of such as these ! These are not they that either persecute or divide the church ; or that make their religion servant to their policy, to their ambitious designs, or fleshly lusts ; nor that make it the bellows of sedition, or rebellion, or of an envious, hurtful zeal ; or a snare for the innocent ; or a pistol to shoot at the upright in heart ; these are not they that have been the shame of their profession, the hardening of ungodly men and infidels, and that have caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. If any man will make a religion of or for his lusts, of papal tyranny, or pharisaical formality, or of his private opinions, or of proud censoriousness, and contempt of others, and of faction, and unwarrantable separations and divisions, and of standing at a more observable distance from common professors of Christianity than God would have them ; or of pulling up the hedge of discipline, and laying Christ's vineyard common to the wilderness. The storm is coming, when this religion, founded on the sand, will fall, and great will be the fall thereof. When the religion, which consisteth in faith and love to God and man, in mortifying the flesh, and crucifying the world, in self-denial, humility, and patience, in sincere obedience and faithfulness in all relations, in watchful self-government, in doing good, and in a divine and heavenly life, though it will be hated by the ungodly world, shall never be a dishonour to your Lord, nor deceive or disappoint your souls.

THE SEVENTH DAY'S CONFERENCE.

Of a Holy Family ; and how to govern it, and perform the duty of all Family Relations, and others.

Speakers.—Paul, a teacher ; and Saul, a learner.

PAUL. Welcome, Neighbour ; how do you like the new life which you have begun ? You have taken home instructions already which will find you work : but what do you find in the practising of them ?