

is to keep it off by lawful means. But what is your main care? that you may avoid trouble or sin? Is this your business, that you may not dishonour God in any condition? It is no matter what becomes of you else, so you may be obedient, you refer that to God.

5. How do you make use of Christ? to save you from trouble, sorrow, sickness, or from sin? The great thing Christ came to save us from was sin: Mat. i. 21, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.' Now how would you make use of him? to save you only from the evil after sin, or the evil of sin? A true broken heart is not only troubled for the guilt of sin, but for the power of it. They would not only be saved from hell and the horrors of a wounded conscience, but would be freed from the tyranny of sin; they would have sin subdued as well as pardoned, and not only be eased from the smart of it. Therefore the prophet admires God upon this account, both for the pardoning and subduing of sin: Micah vii. 18, 19, 'Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity? . . . He will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the sea.' They would fain be acquainted with mortification as well as pardon. A loose desire of happiness is but natural: John vi. 34, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread!' All would be happy.

6. What makes you most to desire heaven? afflictions or sins? A beast will forsake the place where it can find neither meat nor rest. And therefore to desire heaven only because it keeps off affliction and trouble, that may be but a natural act. Men usually make heaven a reserve and a retreat; when they are beaten out of the world, they then fly to heaven. But now when we are troubled, we are here in this world conflicting with and complaining of sin, while others are glorifying God above, freed from all sin; we groan for heaven not out of a burden of afflictions, but out of the longings of the new nature, we have had a taste of some beginnings of grace, and would fain have it perfected; this discovers a right temper of spirit: Rom. vii. 23, 'We which have the first-fruits of the Spirit groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption—to wit, the redemption of our bodies;' when the corruptions we have here make us groan for heaven: Rom. vii. 24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?'

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## SERMON LXI.

*Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*  
—HEB. xi. 26.

IN the constellation of worthies represented in this chapter, Moses shineth forth as a star of the first magnitude, and his faith is commended to us for vanquishing all sorts of temptations. We are assaulted both on the right hand and on the left with the delights of sense and the terrors of sense; *per blanda et aspera*, by rough encounters, and by the softer

and more insinuating sort of temptations. But terrors could not break the constancy of his resolution for God, nor delights pervert him, and detain him from God and his service. Not terrors. The account of his withstanding left-hand temptations you have, ver. 27, 'By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king.' The wrath of Pharaoh could not affright him from his duty. Nor could delights pervert him. Now the right-hand temptations, which are of the most pleasing sort, were not of one kind. Moses' trial was a complicated trial; all things that might gain upon the heart of man were presented to him. That which is wont to entice men from God is either honours, pleasures, or riches. Any of these singly is enough to prevail with a heart disposed or biassed by a carnal inclination. But Moses was of another temper, he despised all these at once; though Satan thought to detain and withhold him from God by a threefold cord, yet it was too weak to hold him. Solomon tells us, Eccles. iv. 12, 'A threefold cord is not easily broken.' Yet still by faith he broke through; this threefold cord was too weak to hold him from his duty. We are told, in 1 John ii. 16, 'All that is in the world is either the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, or the pride of life.' A world of temptation was let loose upon Moses at once. If honour would move him, he was adopted and taken to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter; but he would not nibble at that bait, ver. 24. If pleasure would have moved him, he might have enjoyed the height and cream of it in Pharaoh's court; whereas, in the course he took he could expect nothing but afflictions and tedious labours; but yet this would not do either—'He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,' ver. 25. The third worldly interest was riches, and how he overcame this temptation is in this 26th ver.—'Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.'

In which words observe—

1. The effect of his faith—*He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.*
2. The ground of it—*For he had respect unto the recompense of reward.*

First, Let us begin with the effect and fruit of his faith; that is set down comparatively. Where take notice (1.) Of the things compared; (2.) The esteem and preference of the one above the other.

1. The things compared are 'the reproach of Christ, and the treasures of Egypt.' The latter needs no explication, for Egypt was known to be a fruitful and an opulent kingdom, and Moses might have had a large share of the riches of it in Pharaoh's court, being adopted to be his daughter's son; these are the treasures of Egypt. Only the other branch, 'the reproach of Christ,' needs a little opening. How could Moses delight in the reproach of Christ, who was not now in being, I mean as to the flesh? Let me open that a little. The word 'reproach' is not taken here for reproach in word, but in deed; not for reviling, but for oppression, poverty, bondage, persecutions; the people believing in the Messiah were most reproachfully afflicted and oppressed in Egypt, that is the meaning of the word reproach. But how was this 'the reproach of Christ?' It must be so called either—

[1.] Because it was such another thing as the reproach of Christ, or somewhat like the shameful suffering which he afterwards endured ; or else—

[2.] Because it was a type of Christ's reproach ; or—

[3.] Because Christ was the occasion of it, and it was endured for his sake ; or else—

[4.] It must be for this reason, because Christ had relation to that people, and communion with them as their head ; for he was always head of the church, whether of Jews or Gentiles. Now let us see which of these reasons is to be preferred.

1. The first cannot be said that it is called the reproach of Christ, because it was like the shameful death Christ endured. It is not the manner of scripture to express things by the name of everything they are like unto ; then why not the reproach of David, Isaiah, or some other of the prophets, or the reproach of Paul himself, as well as the reproach of Christ, if there were no more special reason for it but only the likeness ? The indignities they suffered in Egypt were as like the sufferings of Paul or Isaiah, as the sufferings of Christ.

2. Nor is it as if this reproach were a type of Christ's sufferings ; for the type is not called by the name of the antitype ; that cannot well be. The brazen serpent is not called Christ, nor manna Christ, nor Samson Christ, nor David Christ. Indeed the antitype may be called by the name of the type ; Christ may be called the brazen serpent, and David, and the propitiation, and the sacrifice, to show the accommodation of those things to him. The antitype, the substance, may take the name of the type ; but it is no way convenient to imagine that the type should have the name of the antitype and substance.

3. Neither was it for Christ's sake, or for their faith in the Messiah, that the Egyptians thus disgracefully oppressed the Israelites ; for neither did the Israelites incur those afflictions for Christ's sake, nor did the Egyptians inflict them upon that account. There was no thought of any such matter on the one side nor on the other. That that moved them to oppress Israel was their envy at their increasing multitude, as you may see, Exod. i. 9, 10. And therefore they cannot be called the reproaches of Christ, as if they were endured for his sake.

4. Well then, nothing remains but the last reason, that they are the reproaches of Christ, because Christ then had communion with that people, though he were not yet born according to the flesh. And so the phrase teacheth us a double truth.

1. That Christ had a being before he was born of the virgin. He tells us so, John viii. 58, 'Before Abraham was I am.' And we read of tempting of Christ in the wilderness : 1 Cor. x. 9, 'Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted him.' Christ was perpetual head of the Church, and in his own person did lead his people, and was present in the midst of them under the notion of the angel of the covenant : Exod. xxiii. 20-22, 'Behold I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared : beware of him, and obey his voice ; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him. For mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites,' &c.

This angel can be no other than Christ; it is his office to keep us in the way, and to bring us into the place which God hath prepared for us; it is he that must be obeyed by the people of God; it is he that must pardon our transgressions; upon him is God's name, for he will not give his glory to another, nor communicate his name to any other that is not of the same substance with himself. Well then, whatever this people suffered, it was the reproach of Christ, who had taken them into his protection. As their tempting of God was a tempting of Christ, who led them in the wilderness, so their sufferings was the reproach of Christ.

2. It informs us also of this truth, that there is a communion between Christ and his people. The reproach that lighteth upon the members reflecteth upon the head: Isa. lxiii. 9, 'In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them.' Look to the context, and you shall see he plainly alludes to the angel of the covenant that he spake of before. So Zech. ii. 8, 'He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye;' what is done to them, is done to him, either by way of injury or courtesy. So Mat. xxv. 34, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me;' and Acts ix. 4, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' And to come closer to the notion of the text: 2 Cor. i. 5, 'As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.' All that we endure are called the sufferings of Christ. Nay, nearer yet, it is called Christ's reproach: Heb. xiii. 13, 'Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.' Well, the meaning is this—Moses yielded to be contemned with the people of God, out of faith in the Messiah to come. All the Israelites were an abomination to the Egyptians, Gen. xlvi. 34, and they handled them ignominiously; yet Moses counted them the people of God, and the people of Christ, and therefore he chose to profess himself to be one of them, and he esteemed the reproach of Christ above all the treasures of Egypt. Thus I have opened the things that are compared.

2. The preference of the one above the other—'He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt;' that is a far more desirable thing than all the wealth and power of that country. Mark, it is not said only he was willing to bear his share in their reproach; no, but he esteemed it, and esteemed it as riches and treasures; that is more emphatical.

Secondly, His ground for all this, what was that which induced him so to esteem this ignominious people of God before his honour in the court?—'For he had respect unto the recompense of reward.' There observe the thing, and his respect to it.

1. The thing itself, and what it was that did cast the balance. A blessed eternity that he had in his eye, called 'the recompense of reward,' that was that he looked to. By the reward we must understand the great and final reward of eternal glory, which is given by God, and received and enjoyed by us as a compensation for all our sufferings.

2. His regard of it—'He had respect unto the recompense.' The word is ἀπέβλεπε. Look, as ἐπέβλεπε is to look towards a thing; so ἀπέβλεπε is to look off from one thing to another; it signifies a removal of the eye from one object to behold another. Apply this now

to the eye of the mind, and the sense is, he turned his mind and heart from the treasures, honours, and pleasures of Egypt, and fixed them upon the rewards of godliness, or the honours, riches, and pleasures of heaven. The word seems to be best explained by the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 18, 'While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen;' there is the taking off the eye from things temporal, and fixing it on things that are eternal; shutting the eye of sense, and opening that of faith. If we did look oftener from that which is present to that which is to come, we should be much wiser than we are. In short, he knew his reproach would be recompensed with exceeding great glory and happiness, which God hath promised to all afflicted believers. Therefore turning off his eye from what was before him to that which was to come, the temptation took no hold of him.

*Doct.* We are not right christians till we have such an esteem of Christ, that the worst things which can befall us in his service should be more to us than the best things of the world.

This was done by Moses, as the text shows; and this was done also by the apostle Paul: Phil. iii. 8, 'Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ.' Paul might have made his market with the Pharisees, by whom he was highly esteemed, and intrusted with a commission to persecute the church of God; but when once the light of the gospel shined into his heart, then all his Jewish honours and prerogatives were loss and dross in comparison of his gain by Christ; and when he had leisure to review what he had done, he repented not of his bargain—'I have counted,' yea, and 'I do account' these things loss for Christ. All things compared with Christ, or set in opposition to Christ, were base and vile in his eyes; so base that a word bad enough could not be found to express his indignation and contempt of them, therefore he calls it *σκίβυλα*, we express it dung; it is a thing fit to be thrown to the dogs, that they might not be a snare to him.

Here, that you may be possessed of the true spirit of christianity—

1. I shall a little open the nature of our esteem of Christ.

2. I shall show why Christ must be thus esteemed, that the worst things that can happen in our case should be more to us than the best things of the world.

*First*, How Christ must be esteemed; not only speculatively, but practically.

1. Speculatively. A man may be easily persuaded that God is the chiefest good, that his favour is our only happiness, and the fruition of him our ultimate blessedness, that there is no enjoyment of him but by Christ, and that upon this account Christ should be dear and precious to us. A man may be easily persuaded of all this, but all that see the truth do not presently embrace it, and carry themselves accordingly. We often approve in our judgments those things which we do not follow in our practice: Rom. ii. 18, 'Thou knowest his will, and approvest the things that are excellent;' and yet they had no mind to embrace them, for he tells us there, they had but *μόρφωσιν τῆς*

γνώσεως, a cold form of knowledge. A man is not constituted good by his opinions, but by his affections. The opinions of many carnal men are right, but their affections incline them to other things; and therefore this is not enough to have a speculative esteem or a bare approbation.

2. Practically.

[1.] God must be owned as our felicity, not only by the esteem of our judgments, but the choice of our wills, and a thorough resolution to seek him above all as our only hope and happiness. Therefore it is not enough to think that surely this is a truth that the favour of God is better than life, that all the world cannot countervail the loss of it; but we must resolve so to live that we may seek after the favour of God in Christ whatever it cost us, and determine with ourselves, and bind it upon our hearts: Ps. lxxiii. 28, 'It is good for me to draw near to God.' This must be my care and my business, or I am undone for ever. We must choose the better part as well as approve of it. Mary is commended for that: Luke x. 42, 'Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.'

[2.] Not only must this esteem be seen in our resolution, or in the choice of our wills, but in our practice, and the constant and uniform business of our lives and actions; we must show that we prefer Christ above other things. Our esteem must be verified and made good in two cases: in actual trials, and in the constant course of our lives.

(1.) In actual trials, when we are put to the proof of it, which we esteem most. We must be prepared to lose all for Christ; that is common to all christians, to be martyrs in preparation of heart; but when we are actually called thereunto, we must not shift and wriggle, and distinguish ourselves out of our duty, but plainly let go all rather than be unfaithful to Christ. Paul, in that place quoted but now, Phil. iii. 8, he doth not only say, ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν, 'I count all but loss,' but τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, 'I have suffered the loss of all things.' He proves the sincerity of his purpose and esteem by his actual self-denial. He had lost the favour of his friends, his honour in his country, and all things which might be dear to him in the flesh, that he might become a christian. He did not only account all things nothing worth, and to be despised for Christ, and profess that he should take it contentedly if he were stripped of all for his sake—such expressions might seem only brags when temptation is at a distance; no, but he really suffered the loss of all, and was hungry, naked, scourged, imprisoned, and went often in danger of life, and at length actually laid it down; he quitted his honour and credit with his countrymen, and great acquaintance among the Pharisees, who before had a high esteem of him. So Moses here actually refused the pleasures, honours, and profits of the world—the honours which so many greedily catch at, and the pleasures which secretly enchant the hearts of men, and entice them from God, and cause them to neglect God and forget their souls; and the treasures of the earth, which worldly men so much affect, were no other but trash and dung to him, compared with the reproach of Christ. Thus must all do when God comes to try us; not only make liberal offers to God, when we hope

he will not take us at our word, or because there is no visible danger, or probability that our resignation will cost us anything, as men will make a liberal offer to a friend to do him a courtesy when they think he will not take it; no, but we must carry all our temporal felicity in our hands, as ready to give it up whenever God demands it; when the Lord in his providence calls us to disgraceful sufferings, we must willingly undergo them.

2. In the whole drift and tenor of our lives we must act as those that live by this principle. Our chief endeavour must be to get and keep in with Christ: Matt. vi. 33, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof.' The strength of our souls, and the vigour of our endeavours must run in this channel. A dull approbation of that which is good will serve no man—no, not in the most prosperous times of religion; but more or less he must manifest his esteem of Christ and contempt of the world by some act of self-denial, for none can be true to his duty but he will meet with trouble in the flesh. Some of his interests must be sacrificed for Christ's sake, either his reputation, and ease, and peace with the world, or the opposition and scorn of dear friends and relations, and the scorn of our old acquaintance; at least his religion, if it be serious, will put him upon some expense and cost, if not upon uncompliance with the vain fashions of the world, yet upon duties displeasing to the flesh, and which bring their own charge with them. And it may be we shall be laughed at for these things, but the reproach of Christ is greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. This must be our constant dominating principle that must govern and regulate our lives, that everything relating to Christ recommends itself to us, how displeasing soever it be to ourselves or others.

*Secondly,* Why we ought to have such an esteem of Christ. I shall give the reasons in these considerations.

1. Christians can never be safe till they do esteem what they choose. The reason is, because there are many competitors for our hearts. Now, as estimation is the ground of our choice, so it is also the strength of it, and therefore we can never be faithful to Christ till he be valued above all that cometh in competition with him, or is set in opposition against him. As the actual estimation of our judgment swayed our choice at first, so the habitual estimation preserves it, that those things which rival Christ in our hearts may have no entertainment there to his wrong and prejudice. At first we renounced all secular advantages that we might have Christ and his benefits, and if we continue of the same mind we are safe: Heb. iii. 6, 'Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.' Oh, we were exceedingly glad, and blessed ourselves in the hopes we have by Christ, when first we were acquainted with him! Are you of the same mind still? 1 Peter i. 7, 'To you that believe he is precious.' They know his worth and value, and believe it, and count it of infinite advantage to themselves, and they cannot be drawn from him: Ps. lxxiii. 25, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth I desire besides thee.' But when once you begin to lose your esteem of Christ, and he is not so dear as before, you are backsliders in heart, and shall soon prove so in practice. Our love is gone, and a

man is held better by his heart than his head, by his love than by his opinions. If any worldly thing is nearer and dearer to us than Christ, the heart is tainted, and you are prepared for a revolt from him.

2. He that will not err in esteeming, choosing, and cleaving to Christ, needs three things; a clear understanding, an unbiassed will, and a serious consideration of matters propounded to our choice and esteem.

[1.] A clear understanding; for if the mind be blind, how is it able to judge between things that differ? John iv. 10, 'If thou knewest the gift of God,' &c.; if Christ were rightly known he would be more prized, and they would see such an excellency in him as cannot be countervailed. I remember it is said, John vi. 40, 'He that seeth the Son, and believeth on him,' &c.; all believing comes from seeing the Son. If we did but see the Son, and had a true knowledge of his worth and excellency, we would venture all for his sake, and would entirely trust ourselves in his hands. So Paul, 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.'

2. An unbiassed will. For the bias of the will will easily prevail against the light of the understanding. We need not only a mind to know God, but a heart to know God and Christ: Jer. xxiv. 7, 'And I will give them a heart to know me.' That is, to acknowledge, to esteem, to choose me for their God, and for their portion and happiness. This is a work of the heart, and depends upon a right disposition of the heart rather than the mind. The right disposition of the will is God's great covenant gift.

3. A serious consideration of the object propounded to choice; for otherwise, through inadvertency, the poorest paltry vanities may be preferred before the most excellent things in the world. Men do not consider, they do not weigh things: Eccles. v. 1, 'They consider not that they do evil.' They consider not 'there is a lie in their right hand,' Isa. xlv. 19, 20. Therefore, to make a right choice, we should beg of God to be free from a blind, injudicious mind, from a depraved heart, and from a slight and frothy spirit, that we may judge, resolve, and choose what is best for our souls, and weigh all things in a true and impartial balance.

3. That there can be no due or right consideration without a comparison, and giving everything its due weight. For so the apostle represents Moses; on the one side he considers what he was to quit—'the treasures of Egypt;' on the other side, what he was to incur and run the hazard of—'the reproach of Christ,' disgraceful sufferings; and to flesh and blood reproach is more than pain. Therefore he compared these things together. The treasures of Egypt were great, but of a finite value, and there is an infinite recompense of reward which God had set before him. The reproach of Christ was bitter, but it was the way to glory. Man has a power thus to compare things, and traverse them in his mind: Isa. xlvi. 8, 'Remember this, and show yourselves men; bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors.' Consider well of it, and do not rush on like brute beasts. Everything must be brought to the balance of the sanctuary; we have no way else



to clear our mistakes, and prevent the delusions of the flesh, than by serious comparing of things and things.

4. Because the comparison lies between things present and things to come, faith must guide us, that sense may not mislead us; for all this is made the fruit of his faith. Moses looks off from the world to the recompense of reward. The treasures of Egypt were before his eyes, but he removes his mind to another object, the joys and glory of heaven. Things of sense are known easily, and known by all, but things of faith are only known by them who are enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Present things are comfortable to our sense, but they are nothing to what faith propounds; and therefore we must look upon these things through the spectacles of faith. Earthly treasures, compared with the treasures of heaven, will appear no more than trash and dung, if we had but this enlightened mind to apprehend the worth and certainty of these heavenly things. Therefore, all your care must be that these things may be clearly seen and much eyed, that the Spirit may first open the eyes of our minds, and then keep them open, Eph. i. 18. That we often think of the hope of Christ's calling, for this is that which strikes all temptations of sense dead. Three things are here.

[1.] We must be persuaded that all disgraceful sufferings for Christ shall have their recompense: Mat. v. 12, 'Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.' There is a reward, and a reward due by covenant, to all such as are faithful to God, and shall in time be given to them; but not of merit, but of grace; our sufferings do not merit the reward, but qualify us for the enjoyment of it, and give us a title by virtue of God's promise, upon the account of Christ. Surely God is so good that we can be no losers by him; he will not suffer anything to be done or suffered for his sake without a recompense.

[2.] As there is a reward, so it is so great that all the treasures of the world cannot purchase it, nor parallel it, and therefore it is a folly to part with it for trifles. There is a double *μισθαποδοσία*, a double recompense, *pœna et præmiû*, the recompense of punishment, and the recompense of reward. Both may be considered; wealth and greatness, with the neglect of God and his children, and interest in the world, is punished with the flames of hell; but affliction and reproach for Christ is rewarded with heaven and bliss. The recompense of punishment is to be made use of when the temptation hath invaded us; when the heart begins to run into the snare, then we must make use of that part of the Spirit's discipline. Ay, but at other times, when we are not in such great danger of miscarrying, here we must think of the recompense of reward, of the great blessings Christ hath provided, the heavenly bliss he hath provided for his people. Now, there is no comparison between the things that are of this world and this blessedness: Rom. viii. 18, 'I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us;' 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'This light affliction, that is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'

[3.] That the intention of the mind should be much taken up about it. A glance does little affect; the greatest truths work not if we do not

think of them. Moses, he had respect, ἀπέβλεπε, he took off his eye from these things, and fixed it seriously on those things; so a christian must measure all things by his scope: 2 Cor. iv. 18, 'While we look not to the things which are seen, but to the things which are not seen,' &c. Nothing draws our esteem, and fixes our choice so much as a serious respect to eternal things. Well then, these heavenly things must be respected, that they may cast the balance of our choice. If we certainly believe, and earnestly look for this recompense of reward, we shall better resolve for God against all present temptations; for the heart in heaven is the christian's preservation; if it be much there, all temptations lose their force.

*Obj.* There lies one little scruple against this. But is not this mercenary, and want of love to God, to be swayed by the reward? I answer, No. Hypocrisy and unsoundness lies not in aiming at a reward in general, but in subordinating religion to a temporary reward, as they 'followed Christ for the loaves,' John vi. 26. But as to the eternal reward, God's glory and our eternal happiness are so linked together, that the belief and expectation of the reward doth no way abate of our love to God in Christ; no, rather, it is an act of love, for because we love him, we desire to enjoy him at any rate, to see him and be like to him; and this enjoyment is nothing but the exercise of a more perfect reception of his benefits, or the fruits of his love to us.

5. The comparison is rightly stated when the world's best and Christ's worst are brought into competition or consideration; as here 'the reproach of Christ' and 'the treasures of Egypt;' even that which you abhor in a christian's case, that which you account his misery. And the worst of Christ is better than a worldly man's condition, and better than all that for which they lose their souls. If the reproach of Christ be better than all the treasures that are so highly esteemed in the world; if to be scorned for Christ is better than to have the world at will, this strikes temptations to the heart. And as Moses, so Paul doth thus, Phil. iii. 10, compared with ver. 8, 'I count all things but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord,' &c. 'That I might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.' What is the fellowship of his sufferings and conformity to his death? The meaning is, that I may be disgracefully handled for Christ, as Christ was for me and my salvation. I count this to be such excellency as all else is but dung and dross. To clear this to you there are five ways of comparison which a christian should use.

[1.] Comparing temporal good things and eternal good things, the good and the good, as the portion of a carnal man, and the happiness of a child of God. This way of comparison is used in Ps. xvii. 14, 15. The men of this world they have their portion, and what good doth it do them? Their bellies are well filled, their backs well clothed, they have heritages which they leave to their children after them, that they may live a life of pomp and ease in the world. Now when the christian is set upon his duty, to enjoy communion with God, it will check the temptation—'But as for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness. When I awake, that is, out of the sleep of death, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.' That vision will make way for

fruition, and that fruition for an exact likeness to God. Or, suppose when sensual delights are compared with those pleasures that we have at God's right hand for evermore; the poor dreggy pleasures, which enchant men's souls, and lull them asleep, are compared with those chaste satisfactions and holy delights that we shall have for ever with God: Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' So when vainglory is compared with eternal glory: John v. 44, 'How can you believe, that receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?' Is not God's glory better than a little vainglory? And so compare temporal deliverance with our final escape: Heb. xi. 35, 'Not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.' They refused deliverance upon man's terms. They were stretched out like a drum, but these bodies shall rise again.

[2.] Another way of comparison is when temporal evil things are compared with eternal evil things; as suppose killing the body with the casting of body and soul into hell fire, Luke xii. 4, 5. We read in the story concerning Biblis, a woman that revolted from the faith for fear of burning, when she saw the fire kindled upon her fellow-martyr, the historian tells us, that she thought of the eternal fire, and then repented of her apostasy, and was burnt together with her fellow. So if we compare a prison with hell, or compare the wrath of man with the wrath of God, or compare shame and scorn in the world now with the confusion of face that shall be at the last day.

[3.] Compare temporal good with eternal evil. As suppose men do pretty well with their worldly portion; ay, but what will become of them for ever? Job xxvii. 8, 'What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?' Put the supposition, every hypocrite doth not make a thriving bargain in the world; ay, but what if he hath gained, what will it avail him when he hath forfeited his soul into the hands of God's justice? He is loth to let it go, but God comes and takes it away: Mat. xvi. 26, 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' The merry life of worldings, if it be compared with endless torment, alas! it will be no temptation to us; or if we compare the pleasure of sin for a season with the pains and torments of the soul which are for ever; when we see the hook in the bait, we shall not be so willing to catch at it.

[4.] There is another way of comparison in scripture; compare temporal bad things with eternal good things. This is the case here in the text, 'the reproach of Christ,' and 'the recompense of reward.' And so in many other places: Heb. x. 34, 'Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.' They were brought before tribunals and exposed to outrage; now he compares their loss with their gain; their goods were spoiled by envious neighbours, but they had an enduring substance: 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'For this light affliction, that is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' There is the temporal evil compared with the eternal good. Afflictions here are *breves et leves*, short and light afflictions, but there is an eternity of blessedness and a weight of glory.

[5.] Another way of comparison is by comparing the evils of christianity in the present state, and the happiness of worldly men in the present state. This is the full case in the text, 'He counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.' Take them with their adjuncts and concomitants; take the world's best now, and a christian's worst now. The world's best, it is but a sorry portion, it lies in treasures, pleasures, and honours. Now all these Moses might have enjoyed, which were vast and magnificent to a carnal heart, but it was accompanied with sin; it was *πρόσκαιρος ἀπόλαυσις ἁμαρτίας*, the pleasures of sin for a season; for though it be spoken but of one thing, of pleasures, yet it must be referred to every one of the temptations, to honours and treasures as well as to pleasures; here is a worlding's best. Now, where a man lives in sin, he can never have any solid pleasure in what he enjoys, for no complacency can be sincere where God is angry, and the soul is in danger of his wrath every moment; it is ill dancing about the brink of hell; here is all the pleasures, treasures, honours of worldly men. But on the other side, take a christian's worst, 'the reproach of Christ,' take it as it is now abstracted from 'the recompense of reward.'

(1.) It hath a relation to Christ. Now everything is sweetened and made honourable to us by its relation to Christ. It is sweetened by our love to him. If we love Christ, his work will be sweet to us; and it is made honourable because Christ is 'the Lord of glory,' James ii. 1, he is the proper fountain of honour. If there were no more in it but its relation to Christ, it were honourable. When the apostles were whipped, and scourged, and disgraced for Christ's sake, they looked upon it as their honour: Acts v. 41, 'They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.' Disgrace for Christ's sake is an honour. Thuanus tells us of a French nobleman that was condemned to die with other protestants, and because of the dignity of his birth he was not bound as they were, and that he called to the executioner, *Cur non et me quoque torque donas?* &c.; give me my chain and rope too, and make me a knight of this excellent order. I bring it for this, to show that those which love Christ, and are possessed of Christ, everything that relates to Christ is honourable to them; so that if the godly might have their choice, they had rather be miserable with the people of God, than happy with his enemies.

(2.) Take the other concomitant that goes along with 'the reproach of Christ,' viz., the strong supports and consolations of the Holy Spirit: 2 Cor. xii. 10, 'I will take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.' Nay, I will rejoice in the worst of Christ, because of the mighty supports of the Spirit; there is a more liberal allowance of the supports and comforts of the Holy Ghost given to God's afflicted people than to others, or given to them then more than at other times; they have rich consolation in their afflictions. The Lord proportions comfort to their troubles, that as the affliction doth abound, so doth the comfort: 2 Cor. i. 5, 'For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.' God's wrestlers, when called to conflict, he anoints them

with this holy oil of the Spirit: 1 Peter iv. 14, 'If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.' Though eternity, and the great reward, puts all out of question, yet this is not to be overlooked.

*Use.* To persuade us to get this temper of soul, to prefer Christ's worst before the world's best.

First argument. It is absolutely necessary; you cannot be christians without it, for it immediately flows from the three essential or fundamental graces which constitute the new creature, which are faith, hope, and love.

1. Faith, which believes the promises of the new covenant, and consents to seek after the benefits offered in them, how dear soever they cost us, and takes this blessedness for its whole felicity, Mat. xiii. 45, 46, and Heb. x. 39. There is in faith assent and consent. The assent that is in faith calls for it, for if we believe the great things God hath promised, it necessarily lessens all other things in our opinion and estimation of them, and affection to them. Faith is like a perspective, that greatens things at a distance, and lessens things near at hand; so faith greatens heavenly things, and lessens worldly things; so that riches and honours, and all worldly things, seem vile and base so far as they divert us from better things. Some value we should have for natural comforts in our pilgrimage, they are the gift of God, but take heed lest they be a snare; we cannot be thankful for them if we have not some esteem for them, nor humbled at afflictions, when God takes them away; but they are lessened so as they are base in comparison of those other things. Then the consent of faith much more inferreth it. The consent of faith is nothing but a subscription to Christ's terms, selling all for the pearl of price: Mat. xiii. 45, 'He sold all that he had, and bought it.' This is the disposition of a disciple of Christ, to part with all rather than his happiness: Heb. x. 39, 'He believes to the saving of the soul.' Mark, believing is all for saving the soul; sense is all for saving the flesh. The word signifies saving the soul with the loss of other things; we must purchase the salvation of our souls at the dearest rate that may be. Now if we be believers, we have this disposition.

2. Our love shows it, for our love to Christ must be transcendent and superlative, not a bare love, but a love above our love to other things: Mat. x. 32, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.' He that loves every base thing, the dirt in the streets, more than you, cannot be said to love you. So to pretend love to Christ, if we do not love him above all other things, is not rightly to love him: Luke xiv. 26, 'If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' He can in some sense trample upon the comfort that results from all his natural relations, and he that hates them not in that sense cannot be my disciple. I rather speak upon this point because love to God is the heart of the new creature, as self-love is the heart of original sin; that inclines us to love, prize, and esteem the things of God; inordinate self-love makes us love the flesh more than our souls. Now if

you have the true love of Christ, you will hate all other things in comparison of him and faithfulness to him. Our love to Christ is but a transcript of his love to us, for unless our religion make a due impression upon us, we were never acquainted with the power of it. Now Christ was satisfied to be anything for our sakes, and he was made sin, he was made a curse for us; he pleased not himself that he might promote the glory of God and our salvation; when he thought of all the shame and bitter agonies our redemption would cost him, he was satisfied: Isa. liii. 11, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.' When he had from all eternity leisure enough to cast up his accounts, what it would cost him to save souls, to redeem sinners, yet he earnestly longed for it: Luke xii. 50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' Now how can we manifest our love and thankfulness to him for these disgraceful sufferings and bitter agonies, by which he procured the pardon of our sins and eternal life, if we cannot deny our pleasures, and the contentments of the flesh in the way of our duty?

3. The next necessary grace is hope, which is a certain and desirous expectation of the promised blessedness. Therefore our hearts should so fix upon this blessedness, that we may not be diverted from it, either by the comfortable or troublesome things we meet with in the world. Either these things are greater than those we expect, or they are not: if they are greater, why do we so desirously expect other things as our happiness? Let us sit down with these things; if they be not, surely in reason we should be at some cost for our supreme happiness; if you take the joys of heaven for your whole portion, all your worldly prosperity must give way to it. Can you desirously expect this as your treasure, when you will not venture anything for it? Therefore if we had hopes of living with God, this would set us a-work for heaven, whatever we endured, and whatever it cost us here in the way. But when there is a secret reserve to save the world or spare the flesh, your hopes are not placed in heaven; the expectation is neither certain nor desirous. Not certain enough, for you find the calamity or trouble in the flesh certain, but you are not persuaded that the felicity you expect is so certain, and therefore it is so irksome to let go your hold of present things for what is future, and in your opinion uncertain. Nor is it desirous enough, for if you had such an earnest desire of glory to come, you would look after your bodily welfare no farther than would stand with your great hopes. And so, though you have some sentiments of future happiness, you are not very earnest to enjoy it, for you would not have it cost too dear a rate. No; if you did trust in the living God, you would both labour, and suffer reproach: 1 Tim. iv. 10, 'For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God.' Divine hope sets men at work for heaven, and their souls, and Jesus Christ; but carnal hope for the devil, the world, and the flesh; to reconcile both is lost labour.

Second argument. We cannot manifest our fidelity to Christ unless we be of this disposition; much of his service is painful, and cross to the inclinations of the flesh, and the world dislikes many of his ways so that our fidelity to Christ will lay us open to the disgrace

and reproach of the world. Now then, unless we mean to be false and partial hypocrites, and to cull out the easy, cheap, and safe part of christianity, and neglect the rest, we must not only submit to and be content with what befalls us in his ways, but be glad and rejoice that we have occasion of evidencing our sincerity: Mat. v. 11, 12, 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven.' We lie more fair for the promise when it is thus with us; for it is said that the very reproach and affliction helpeth it on: 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'For this light affliction, that is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;' as it mortifieth us to the false happiness, and increaseth the evidence of our right to the true happiness: 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 'It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.'

*Third argument.* This is of good use to us, to abate our eagerness after worldly prosperity, which is a weight at our heels, and the great impediment of our obedience: 1 John v. 4, 'This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith.' When we are not only indifferent to worldly things, but count that we have felicity enough if we may approve ourselves to Christ in the meanest condition.

Well then, from the whole learn—

1. Whatever is a means to our great end should be made lovely to us upon that account, if it conduceth to the great recompense of reward.

2. That whatever relateth to Christ should be prized by us, the cross as well as the crown, and our painful sufferings as well as our felicity.

## SERMON LXII.

*Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.—HEB. xi. 28.*

In this chapter you have a catalogue of God's worthies. Now in this great constellation of saints Moses shines forth as a star of the first magnitude, for the eminency and efficacy of his faith: and the rather is he propounded to these Hebrews, lest they should judaize, and return again from the faith of Christ to the ceremonies of the law. Moses' faith is commended for three things—

1. For the self-denial which his faith produced; he had all kinds of temptations, honours, pleasures, treasures, the three great idols of the world. We shrink at one single temptation, and Moses went through all, though these temptations were all great in their kind. It is irksome to us to deny any of our petty interests, or to go back two or three degrees in the esteem of others, or in pomp of living;