

nor be afraid ; sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.' Faith vanquisheth carnal fear, as it setteth the fear of God a-work. The Egyptian midwives' saving the children is made to be an act of the fear of God : Exod. i. 17. 'But the Egyptian midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men-children alive.' Faith represents a higher king and greater terrors ; it sets authority against authority, law against law, terror against terror. It fetcheth in invisible supplies : Heb. xi. 27, 'By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king ; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.'

Use. When you are apt to miscarry by carnal fear, set faith a-work. When tyrants set forth unjust edicts, when you fear the loss of parents' favour for God's sake, let faith represent to you the favour of God, and the wrath of God. What is the favour of men to the favour of God ? and the wrath of potentates to the wrath of God ?

SERMON LVIII.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.—HEB. xi. 24.

IN this chapter you have a short chronicle of the worthies of God ; and in this constellation Moses shines forth as a star of the first magnitude. The apostle had spoken first of that faith by which he was saved by his parents ; and now he comes to speak of that faith by which he saved himself ; and here is one instance of it—'By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.' He is commended here for his principle and his carriage.

1. For his principle—*By faith.*

2. For his carriage—*When he was come to years, &c.*

His carriage is set forth.

[1.] By the season—*When he was come to years.*

[2.] By the act of self-denial—*He refused to be called.*

[3.] By the greatness of the temptation—*The son of Pharaoh's daughter.*

I shall give you—

(1.) The explication of the words.

(2.) The vindication of the act.

(3.) The commendation of it.

1. For the explication of the words.

[1.] His principle—'By faith.' His faith was fixed ; partly upon the eternal recompenses : he had never left the delights of the court, if he had not looked for greater blessings. And partly upon the particular promises made to God's people, for he believed that the seed of Abraham should be blessed ; though now they were very miserable and oppressed with hard servitude and bondage, yet he knew the promises of God to Abraham, and this faith urged him hereunto.

[2.] Here is his carriage. Where observe—

(1.) The season of it—‘When he was come to years;’ *μέγας γενόμενος*’ when he was grown great. The same is observed, Exod. ii. 11, ‘When Moses was grown, he went out to his brethren, and he was then forty years old;’ and Acts vii. 23, ‘When he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.’ He had visited his brethren before, for his original was not unknown to him; but now he comes to visit them—that is, to take share and lot with them, to visit them as their guide, that he might lead them out of Egypt; and this he did when he was full forty years of age. Some say, when he was a child, he cast the crown that was put upon his head to the ground. Josephus reports of him that he trampled upon it, which was looked upon by the Egyptians as an ill omen. But if that be fabulous, the Holy Ghost takes no notice of his childish actions, but what he did ‘when he came to years.’ Now this circumstance is put down to show that Moses was of discretion to judge; it was not out of childish ignorance, he knew what he did, for he had forty years experience of this course of life. And partly to excuse the errors of his childhood; those errors are not reckoned upon, if afterwards amended; as Paul said, ‘When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child,’ 1 Cor. xiii. 11. Partly to show that as soon as he was ripe for business he did delay no longer, when he was of full age and strength. And partly to show that he grew in the gifts and graces of the Spirit, as well as in years; as Christ ‘increased in wisdom and stature,’ Luke ii. 42. Moses, when he was come of years, was another manner of person than Moses a child.

(2.) The act of self-denial—*ἤρνησατο λέγεσθαι*, ‘He refused to be called.’ He would not so much as be called so, a pert and open profession: and this not by compulsion; he was not cast out or disowned, but he refused. He might have held the honour of this adoption still, if it had so liked him; but he would rather be called an Hebrew than Pharaoh’s grandchild. This was the language of his heart, not so much of his words. We do not read he made a formal renunciation of his kindred; but indeed he left the court, and joined himself to God’s people.

(3.) Here is the greatness of the temptation; what would he not be called?—‘The son of Pharaoh’s daughter.’ Pharaoh bore full sway at that time in Egypt; and the condition of the worst Egyptian was better than of the best Israelite; yet even then he would not be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; he would not yield to an honour so high, so great. His daughter was Thermutis, Josephus tells us; that Pharaoh had no other child, and she no other heir; so probably he might have succeeded in the throne; and that when he was gone to the Israelites, that Pharaoh should say, I intended to make this child partaker of the kingdom. If this be uncertain, there is enough in what the Holy Ghost sets down to make it a glorious instance of faith. Thus I have opened the words.

2. For the vindication of the act. You will say, Why would Moses do this? Or what great business was there in this? Joseph had faith as well as Moses, and he did not leave the court, but lived there till he died. I answer, Their conditions were not alike, nor their occasions

alike. God raised up Joseph to feed his people in Egypt, therefore his abode in the court was necessary under kings that favoured them ; but Moses was called, not to feed his people in Egypt, but to lead them out of Egypt ; and the king of Egypt was now become their enemy, and kept them under bitter bondage. To remain in an idolatrous court of a pagan prince is one thing ; but to remain in a persecuting court, where he must be accessory to their persecutions, is another thing. However, this is notable too, that Joseph, though he retained his honour to his death, yet he was willing that his family should take his lot with the people of God.

Obj. But Moses' act might seem ingratitude or folly. It was not ingratitude to his foster-mother ; it was not any silly discontent, or unworthy incivility to her, who had compassion on him, to save him when he was ready to perish, and had manifested singular love to him, and special care of him in his education and advancement. But it was a free and noble act of his divine and sanctified soul, whereby he being illuminated from heaven, did by faith see the baseness, uncertainty, and danger of a great estate, of honour, wealth, and power ; and upon this account alone he was willing to part with them for better delights and greater good, and that he might be faithful to God and his people. All relations must give way to the conscience of our duty to God. God's right is the first, and our greatest relation is to him ; therefore, 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.' God hath done more for us than any other hath done, therefore our obligation is the greater. Our Lord Christ when they taxed him for want of respect to his earthly parents, said, Luke ii. 19, 'Wist ye not, that I must be about my Father's business ?' There is a higher authority, and a higher relation which must take place, and all other relations must give way to it.

But then would not this seem folly, for to do as Moses did, who had an opportunity of saving himself and his own stake, or of soliciting the good of the people of Israel at the court of Pharaoh ? I answer, An opportunity to do good is to be valued ; yet when it cannot be lawfully enjoyed, we must prefer God's command even before not only our safety, but those seeming opportunities we have of doing good to others, and expect a supply from his providence ; for God is not tied to means. Now this was the case here. Moses would continue no longer there without sin ; for it is said, ver. 25, 'Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin.' The contentments of that estate he now had was called 'the pleasures of sin ;' either because those delights began to be snares, to besot his mind, and so keep him from a sense of his brethren's afflictions ; or by the contagion of example he might be ready to be entangled in them ; or God would no longer dispense with his living without ordinances, or out of the communion of his people ; or from the impulse that was upon his heart, which was very great, he being now fit for business, and to tarry longer were to delay his obedience to the divine calling ; or else, as the court was then constituted, Moses could no longer live there without being used as an instrument to oppress his own countrymen. Whether this or that were the reason.

the Holy Ghost calleth the advantages of his former life 'the pleasures of sin;' and then it was high time for him to remove.

3. Having explained the words, and also vindicated this act from exception, let me now restore it to its true glory, commendation, and honour. Certainly this was a very great instance of self-denial, and highly conduccible to check the affectation of natural greatness.

[1.] The more advisedly a good work is done, the more commendable. He knew what he did; it was not a rash and childish act, for he was grown up, *μεγὰς γενόμενος*. For a child to prefer an apple before a pearl, it is according to his childish judgment; but the Holy Ghost says he was come to years. An advised obedience is acceptable to God, not headstrong resolutions; therefore when he was grown, when he had maturity of judgment, and could weigh things in his mind, then 'he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.'

[2.] The greater the temptation, the more self-denial. To bear a frown is nothing, to bear a scoff is nothing, to be kept low and bare is nothing; but here is a principality despised, that he might join himself to a contemptible oppressed people. And here all temptations came abreast, and assault him at once; there was a complication of them, honours, pleasures, and treasures. Here are honours, 'to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.' In the next verse we read of pleasures, which are called 'the pleasures of sin,' for the reasons before-mentioned; and then for treasures, ver. 26, 'He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.' Now these things, honours, treasures, and pleasures, usually besot or corrupt the judgment, so that we cannot see what is good in theory, cannot discern true good from false; they obstruct our resolution, withdraw our minds, and charm us that we cannot follow God's call, nor obey him in the things he hath given us to do. But Moses had all these at once; the honour of being called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, a great office that brought him in great plenty—the treasures of Egypt were in a great measure at his dispose—and here were the pleasures of sin. How hard is it for us to part with a small estate! We find it a hard matter to suffer a little disgrace, and to leave a petty interest for Christ's sake. As Mat. xix. 27, the apostles spoke to Christ, 'We have left all, and followed thee.' What did they forsake? A great all! a net, a fisher-boat; but yet they speak magnificently of it; but Moses refused the honours, pleasures, and treasures of Egypt.

[3.] The more thorough the self-denial the better. He left the court of Pharaoh, and all his honours there, and openly professed himself to be a Hebrew. There was not only an inward dislike of the Egyptian idolatry and practices, and an inward approbation of the worship of God, that was kept up among his people, and of spiritual privileges; but here was an open profession, 'He refused to be called,' &c.

[4.] The purer the principle, the better the action. It was not discontent, or any sullen and vexing humour that put him upon this resolution, but faith. The principle much varies the action: Prov. xvi. 2, it is said, 'God weighs the spirits.' God doth not look to the bulk and matter of the action only but to the spirit, with what heart, upon what principle, with what aim it is done. Now, here was a pure spirit. Possibly others may have done somewhat like. We read in

ecclesiastical story of Dioclesian, a bitter persecutor, that left his empire, but it was out of discontent. He had set himself against Christ, and his discontent chiefly rose from this—he was resolved to root out the christians, but they grew upon his hand; and though the persecution was very bitter and grievous at that time, yet he could not root them out, and therefore through very discontent at the disappointment he left his empire. But Moses did all this *pio animo*, upon a holy and gracious consideration; it was from the influence of his faith, because he was convinced of the good estate of God's people, though afflicted; he could see glory and happiness at the end, therefore it is said, 'By faith he refused,' &c. Affectation of privacy and quiet, or natural stoutness, or a politic retreat, differ from self-denial.

The doctrine I shall insist upon is this—

Doct. That faith is a grace that will teach a man openly to renounce all worldly honours, and advancements, and preferments, with the advantages annexed thereto, when God calls us from them, or we cannot enjoy them with a good conscience.

For here is honour, 'to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;' here are the appendages of that honour, 'the pleasures of sin, and the treasures of Egypt;' and these are not only disesteemed, but actually quitted and forsaken; and all this upon God's call, and upon reasons of conscience; and the main turning circumstance, and that which inclined him so to do, was his faith. Here I shall show you—

1. How far the honours and glories of the world are to be renounced and forsaken.

2. What influence faith hath to induce us to do this.

First, How far honours and worldly advantages are to be renounced and forsaken. There are two rocks that we must avoid; on the one side the rock of Popish and superstitious mortification, or a sluggish retreat from business, to live an idle life, sequestered from other christians, as we find in their monkery; on the other side carnal compliance, or an affectation of worldly greatness.

1. It is not simply evil to enjoy worldly honour; good men have lived sometimes in bad courts—Obadiah in Ahab's court, Joseph in Pharaoh's; and we read, Phil. iv. 22, of saints that were in Nero's household, under the very noise, and in the sight of that grievous persecutor and monster of mankind; Mordecai in Ahasuerus' court, and Daniel in Nebuchadnezzar's. And Acts xiii. 1, we read of Manaen, a prophet or teacher, who had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch; in that wicked court he was godly; and so we read, Acts viii. 22, 'There was a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority, under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was a pagan, and had the charge of all her treasures;' and we read of an Ebedmelech in Zedekiah's court. God, to show the freedom of his mercy, and the power of his truth, and that christianity is no enemy to civil relations, and that his people may have occasion more eminently to show forth his grace, and to express their self-denial, that they have something of value to esteem as nothing for Christ; God, I say, doth so order it that even in the courts of pagan princes have been found those who have been very sincere with God; therefore these honours are not unlawful, nor to be renounced but upon just and convenient reasons.

2. Though honours must not be renounced, yet when we enjoy them, they are to be entertained with a holy jealousy and watchfulness. And though honours be not simply renounced, yet we must consider how we come by them ; if we be advanced by the fair providence of God, and God sets us there, we may enjoy them with a good conscience, and may the better venture upon the ordinary temptations that attend them. He that ventures upon slippery places had need have a good warrant, and that his calling be clear. David refused not a crown when God put it upon his head ; yet he says, Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 'Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty ; neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.' He did not aspire after great things, nor seek to wrest the kingdom out of the hands of Saul ; but though he had God's promise that he should enjoy it at length—and though he was incited by the bitter persecutions of Saul, yet he contains himself within the bounds of his duty and calling. But ambition is restless, it hurries on men, and is like a whirlwind that tears down all that is in our way, and breaks down whatever may seem to oppose our greatness ; a good conscience, and all, must go to the ground that they may rise. Moses would not keep that when there was sin attending it, which came in fairly and by God's providence. Therefore if it be got by ill means, if men renounce, deny, dissemble truth, stretch conscience to the humours of men, and all that they may be great, and enjoy something here in the world that is honourable and glorious, then we must abandon it. Nay, though it be not so, yet ambition and affectation of worldly greatness is not only seen when means are apparently evil, but when men make much ado to get honours, and their hearts are set upon them, and they do not tarry for a fair invitation of God's providence, but put themselves forward ; this is exercising ourselves in great things, and in matters too high for us ; therefore it is said, Prov. xxv. 27, 'For men to search their own glory is not glory ;' that is, to be so earnest and so greedy upon such a thing. If men were worthy of honour, their worth would be attractive ; as a violet shrouded by its leaves is found out by its smell. Where the matter is combustible, we need not blow the fire so hard ; but when men are so vehement and earnest to thrust themselves into slippery places, this is that which must be checked by such an instance as Moses. Again, though we come by it by never so holy means, by a fair course of God's providence, yet it must be entertained with a holy jealousy and watchfulness, that the heart may not be puffed up, but still kept humble, as a spire that is least in the top : Prov. xvi. 19, 'Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.' Better to be left out of the account and tale with men, than to be called to divide the spoil, and to be puffed up. But this is not all, negatively, that our hearts be not corrupted by it ; therefore, positively, see it be improved for God. Whatever honour, greatness, and outward advantage you enjoy, reckon that you must some way or other be a gainer by it, and this must be improved for God's glory. Has God that honour that he expecteth ? What a shame is it that you should enjoy so much, and God should have so little glory ! When David was advanced to a crown, he was thinking what to do for God, 2 Sam. vii. 2, 'I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.' God

hath provided for me, he hath advanced me to great empire and sovereignty, but what have I done for God?' So Neh. i. 11, he says there, 'The Lord prosper thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man (for I was the king's cup-bearer).' That parenthesis hath great significancy,—'I was the king's cup-bearer.' When the Lord ordered it so that one of the captivity was advanced to such a high ministry and service about that great king, he was considering, What do I for that God? and how ought I to improve it for the glory of God? So must a christian consider with himself, How have I entered upon this honour? how have I carried myself? It is a slippery place, and therefore we had need be the more watchful.

3. Honours must be actually renounced when they are sinful in themselves, or cannot be kept and enjoyed without sin.

[1.] When they are sinful in themselves; as an office that is unlawful, a calling that is superstitious, idolatrous, and antichristian, whatever honour, pleasure, and treasure is annexed to it. Thus Paul was employed as an officer by the high priests to vex the saints. Better be low and despicable than high and not in God's way. Rev. xvii. 4, the whore of Babylon is said to propine her abominations in a golden cup. Preferment is usually the bait of that carnal and political religion that lords it over God's heritage. Popery is a pseudo-christianity, a christianity calculated for this world, and not for the next; and there all goes by greatness, honour, and preferment; it is nothing but a faction and combination of men; they have debauched the law of Christ to serve a carnal turn and worldly purpose; and therefore all that honour which depends upon that, though it hath pleasure and profit annexed to it, this must certainly be denied. Or,

[2.] When honour cannot be enjoyed with a good conscience, or kept without sin. One that was brought up in a great court said, 'I had rather be Christ's exile than a companion of a great king.' Manaen would rather be a poor teacher at Antioch than a glorious courtier at Jerusalem. A great man—yet he did not disdain to take upon him the ministry, which is usually held so mean a calling. So it is said of Galeacius Caracciolus, that he left his honours in the world, and became an elder at Geneva. Therefore if the thing be sinful, or cannot be kept but by sin, it ought to be renounced. This sin may be either of omission or of commission.

(1.) Of omission, we ought to be 'valiant for the truth,' Jer. ix. 3. Still Christ's interest must be preferred. But now, when to keep our places we must smother our sense of religion, and cannot explicitly declare ourselves to be for God, then it is sinful, for then you prefer it before Christ. We read of Terentius, an orthodox christian, a captain under Valens, an Arian emperor, when he returned from Armenia with a great victory, the emperor bade him ask what he would, and he should have it; he only presented his supplication for liberty for a church of the orthodox. The emperor tore it in pieces, and bade him ask another thing. 'No;' said he, 'I will ask nothing for myself where I am denied for my God.' This is that temper which possesses christians where their hearts are sincere with God: Luke ix. 26, 'For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in his own glory, and in

his Father's, and of the holy angels.' Look, as he that will not own his poor parents, though he do not renounce or formally deny them, is blameworthy; so he that will not own Christ, though he do not formally deny religion, he that stifles his profession altogether in his bosom (I speak when God calls him to confession), and is forced to smother it for his honour's sake, he is not sincere.

(2.) When the sin is a sin of commission; that either they must renounce Christ or their honour in the world; when both come in competition, that they must part with the one or the other. This is a grievous thing, for a man to part with his religion for a little honour and greatness in the world. Thus Pilate, against his conscience, condemned Christ, when they touched him to the quick, and told him, You are no friend to Cæsar unless you condemn him. This is, in short, the case: certainly honour is lawful, and may be improved for God; but we must consider how we come by it; and when we have it, we must possess it with a holy jealousy. But when it cannot be kept without sin—that is, without smothering our profession, or without actual renouncing the truth, then the case is clear.

Secondly, To show the influence that faith has hereupon—

1. It looks for better things that are to come, and so we can the better part with these things. It does exercise the mind about greater things, such as Christ's coming to judgment, and eternal glory and blessedness.

[1.] Faith makes the soul to reflect upon the day of Christ's coming; it is very notable that this is one great principle of, and a great help to, self-denial, to reflect upon the great day, when all things shall be reviewed, and when it shall be clearly discerned what is glorious and what is base. Our Lord tells his disciples, Mat. xvi. 24–27, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.' What is that? It is to abridge ourselves of those conveniences that are grateful to the flesh. Now there are three things that we highly prize—life, wealth, and honour; and Christ accordingly propounds three maxims of self-denial to suit this treble interest. Life, which makes us capable of the enjoyment of all other good things; and as to this, our Lord tells us, ver. 25, 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.' Then for wealth he tells us, ver. 26, 'For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' Then for honour, ver. 27, 'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels.' Why does he mention the glory of the Father? You are dazzled with outward splendour, you stand upon honour and acceptance with men; but the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, 'and then he will reward every man according to his works;' those that have confessed him before men, he will confess them before his Father in heaven. Oh, what honour will it then be to be one of Christ's train, when he comes in the glory of his Father, and all his mighty angels! it will be greater honour than to have lived in the courts of princes. Christ, in the fulness of his glory, will acknowledge and own such before God and the world, and he shall then be admired in such, 2 Thes. i. 10. When David was crowned in Hebron, those six hundred despicable men which followed him were made captains of hundreds, and captains of thousands. So

those that are not ashamed to make profession of his name, when he comes in the glory of his Father, then they will have honour and glory enough. Now this is that which faith pitches upon, and so defeats the present temptation.

[2.] Faith pitches upon the eternal fruition of God in heaven. God hath greater things for us than we can quit for his sake. What is worldly honour in comparison of that glory, honour, and immortality which Christ hath provided for us? Worldly honour is a poor thing, it must be left on this side the grave; and when you are laid in the dust, you will be no more in remembrance than others that have been before you, as to men. Here we are going to the grave, only some are going the higher and some the lower walk, but there they all meet: Job iii. 19, 'The small and the great are there.' Within a little while small and great, master and servant, must meet in the grave, and the world will think as meanly of you as you have done of others. Within a little while the honourable and base will lie under the ground which all trample upon, but there will be an everlasting distinction between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean, between a believer and an unbeliever, between the carnal and the sanctified. It will not be a pin to choose within a little while, what part we have acted in the world, whether we have been rich or poor, high or low; but much will lie upon this, whether we have kept a good conscience, whether we have been sincere with God, for they shall have 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' 2 Cor. iv. 17. Well then, faith pitcheth upon this eternal glory, and compares it with this poor, vanishing happiness which men enjoy here, that shine in the greatest glory. The most shining glory will be soon burnt out into a snuff; and if it be not extinguished by a churlish blast, it will at length consume of itself. Now these things are very great in themselves, the glory wherein Christ shall come, and the glory he will put upon his followers; and if we could apprehend them by faith, they would mightily work upon us; for though they be afar off, faith makes things exist in our mind, as if we were possessed of them, and saw the Lord Christ in his glory, distributing glory to his followers. Therefore in the first verse, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.' The great reason why the glory of the world prevails with us is because it is present, and matter of sense. Now to counterbalance the temptation, faith looks upon these glorious things as sure and near, and so it works upon us. You must take in both, for though a thing be never so great and sure, yet if it be at a distance, it will not work. As a star in the heavens, though it be a vast globe of light that is bigger than this earth, yet it seems to us but a little spangle because of the distance. It is so with the mind as with the eye; an evil at a distance doth not work: Amos vi. 3, 'Ye put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to draw near.' And a good thing at a distance doth not shine with such glory into the soul. But faith shows it is a thing will soon come about; it will not be long ere all this pageantry of the world will be over and taken down, and the Lord Jesus will come in all his glory, to distribute honours and rewards to those that have been faithful to him.

2. Faith gives us right thoughts of things present. It shows us the nothingness of worldly greatness, and the greatness of present spiritual privileges.

[1.] The nothingness of worldly greatness and honours. It is but a vain appearance, a mere pageant, a nothing, a fancy: Acts xxv. 23, 'Agrippa and Bernice appeared with great pomp,' *μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας*, with great fancy. It is but a vain show, more in appearance than in reality: Ps. xxxix. 5, 6, 'Every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Surely every man walketh in a vain show;' Prov. xxvi. 5, 'Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?' They are but poor, gilded nothings. Nature and sense do judge amiss. As faith makes Christ and heaven another thing, so it makes the world another thing: Prov. xxiii. 4, 'Labour not to be rich; cease from thine own wisdom.' How doth the Holy Ghost put these things together! If a man be guided by his natural understanding, and by carnal and present sense, all his business will be to be great, honourable, and rich; but if he hath a spiritual light, and doth cease from his own understanding, if he looks upon these things by an eye of faith, then he sees these poor empty things nothing in comparison of those better things which are offered to us by Christ: Ps. cxix. 96, 'I have seen an end of all perfection;'—it was not only his observation but experience; a man that hath an eye of faith may look to the end of worldly greatness and see through and through it;—'but thy commandment is exceeding broad;' that is the benefit we have by obeying the commandment of God, we cannot see through and through it. So that faith helps us to look upon present things, and to discern what a poor, gilded nothing, what a fashion, what a vain appearance all worldly things are!

[2.] On the other side, it shows us the worth of spiritual privileges, that peace of conscience is better than worldly happiness; that communion with God and his people, though they be an afflicted people, is better than the pleasures of the court; that it is better to be a member of God's church than to have a being in the courts of princes; that adoption is better than to be an heir to the greatest kingdom,—to be a son of God is much more than to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Faith rectifies our judgments about things spiritual. Carnal men cannot value these things, because they have no spiritual discerning, neither of the truth, nor of the worth of these things: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'For the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' Mark, the world cannot well be understood without faith, nor spiritual things without faith. They which constantly attend upon God, and depend upon him, have much more a sweeter life than those that wait upon princes with great observance and expectation: Ps. cxviii. 9, 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.' A servant of the Lord is better provided for than the greatest favourites and minions of princes.

SERMON LIX.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.—HEB. xi. 24.

FAITH apprehends two things, that the servant of the Lord hath a sweeter taste, and that he is upon surer terms; and therefore to faith all the honours of the world are but a child's game, or a man's dream, to the true privilege and real glory that we have by being the servants of God.

1. The service of the Lord is a sweeter work. It is much better to serve the Lord than to humour the highest princes of the earth. The life of the greatest courtier in the world is an unprofitable drudgery in comparison of the life of the poorest saint, who daily is taken up with attendance upon God, and is by faith a courtier and family-servant of the King of kings, the infinite Sovereign of heaven and earth. What a happy life doth he lead whose heart is employed in loving of God, and in praising of God, and in serving of God! This man while he remains on the earth hath his conversation in heaven, and converseth with God in the spirit, and waits upon God.

2. They are upon surer terms, because of the uncertainty of princes' love and life. Of their love, they depend upon God that never changes: Mal. iii. 6, 'I am the Lord, I change not;' they have a surer interest in the love of God than the highest favourites have in their prince's love. They are beloved of God that are faithful and upright with him, and careful to serve him. They have access to him upon every just occasion, they have daily supplies, renewed testimonies of the favour of God; they live here upon his grace, and expect shortly to live with him in glory. Then for life: Ps. cxlvi. 3, 4, 'Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help; his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day all his thoughts perish.' Mark, the drift of that place is to show that princes are not able to do so much for their servants as God is able to do for his servants. They seem to be able to promote us to great dignity and honour here in the world; but they neither can deliver you nor themselves from death. Mark, 'He returneth to his earth.' A prince is earth in his constitution, dust is his composition, and he will be dust again in his dissolution—'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was,' Eccles. xii. 7. So does the dust of the prince; their whole being every moment depends upon the will of God. What then? When he returneth to his earth, as all mortals shall, then 'in that very day all his thoughts perish;' his thoughts, that is, his designs, purposes, promises, are frustrated, and come to nothing: it may be he hath a great good-will to his servants, but when he dies all will come to nothing. The speech of Bathsheba is to be regarded, 1 Kings i. 21, 'When my lord the king shall have slept with his fathers, I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.' Then they that have been most faithful to their prince, and most assured of his favour, it may be, shall be offenders in the eyes of the successor for their fidelity to their former prince. Now faith sees all this, and

shows how much more sure a child of God is of God's love ; he hath a greater interest in his love, and hath a dependence upon a God that is unchangeable, that will never fail. Now faith seeing all this, it mightily prevails upon the heart.

3. Faith sees that nothing is lost that is quitted for God's sake. The gospel way to lose is to save, and the way to save is to lose. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter ; but he lost no honour by it, for he grew 'mighty in words and in deeds,' Acts vii. 22. It may be his name was lost in the Egyptian annals and records among their potentates, or buried in deep silence, or branded with ignominy. Oh, but what a mighty name hath he in all the world to all ages ! And therefore there is nothing lost, no, not many times as to this world, to be sure not in the next. A man, when he is to part with anything for God, he doth it huckingly, and is apt to say as the disciples to Christ, 'Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee ; what shall we have therefore ?' Mat. xix. 27. Christ answers fully, ver. 28, 29, 'Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold,'—either in kind or in value,—'and shall inherit eternal life.' It is notable to take notice of that passage in 2 Chron. xxv. 9, 'Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel ? And the man of God answered, 'The Lord is able to give thee much more than this.' It is better to obey God with the greatest inconveniences, than to sin against God with the greatest advantages ; for he is able to give us more than this. You remember the story of Theodoret, in his third book, chap. xxv. He speaks of Valentinian that had accompanied Julian the apostate to the temple of the heathens ; and when the priest came to sprinkle water upon those that came to worship, he, by office being a captain, called to attend the emperor to the heathen temple, seeing the water upon him, cried out, I am defiled, and threw away his belt, for I am a christian, and so protested against the impious rites there used. Within a little while, as the reward of his obedience and faithful dealing, the Lord advanced him to the empire ; therefore there is nothing lost for God. Now faith goes upon this, to take off the heart from anything that cannot be kept without sin. And though faith doth not determine he will do so, yet usually he gives a hundredfold.

4. Faith resigns to God what we first received from him, when we can keep it no longer with fidelity to him. It is the ground of submission, Job i. 21, 'The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken.' And so it is a great principle of self-denial,—of submission when God takes, of self-denial when we yield it up to God, and he doth not take but what he first gave. An honest debtor will not deny the sum when it is called for again, but says, Here it is ; so when God doth by his providence call, he will interest us in the act ; we must give it up, and say, I had it in God's way, and upon God's call I will give it to him again.

5. Jesus Christ hath denied greater things for us. Now faith goes

upon this, Shall I not deny myself for Christ? For a time he did lay aside his glory, because it was God's will he should sacrifice himself upon the cross: 2 Cor. viii. 9, 'You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.' How was he rich? In the fulness of the glory of the godhead, and yet he did by an unspeakable dispensation abscond his glory, and leave it for a while, that he might sacrifice himself upon the cross. Shall it be irksome to you to leave a little glory and honour here in the world for Christ? The Son of God left his glory; therefore he prays, John xvii. 5, 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with that glory which I had with thee before the world was.' He had it before the world was, but now it was obscured, it was hidden, as a candle in a dark lanthorn, by the veil of his flesh; but now he prays that it might be restored. If the sun of righteousness went back so many degrees, shall it be grievous to us to go back a few degrees? Faith doth not work altogether out of spiritual interest, and with respect to the great honour and immortality God will put upon us hereafter, but out of love; it not only looks forward, but backward, it shows us how infinitely we are engaged to Christ, who made himself of no reputation for us; and shall I not be willing to deny a little honour in the world? By all these considerations and reasonings, faith, through the blessing of God, doth convey such a noble and excellent spirit into the hearts of believers, so that they are carried above themselves, that they are willing to quit all the glory of the world for a good conscience, and that they may still keep their peace with God, and may be faithful with him.

Use 1. You will say, What is all this to us? What use shall private christians make of it, that are not exercised with these temptations? What shall we be the better for this sermon? What glory have I to renounce or to deny for God?

Ans. 1. There is nothing done by Moses but what is required of all christians. See a few scriptures: Luke xiv. 26, 'If any man will 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.' Christians, what do you think? Is this an evangelical council that belongs to perfect christians, or a necessary precept that belongs to all christians? Or do you think this was only calculated for the first christians? You cannot have such unworthy thoughts, that those which have the same privileges, the same spirit, the same advantages, that they should never be put to the same self-denial; surely it holds in all ages: ver. 33, 'Whosoever of you he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.' And that we may not think this only belongs to the first ages, as if they were to suffer for us, and we fail in a full stream of worldly happiness, never to hazard our interest, or lose anything for God, you shall see, Mat. xiii. 45, 46, 'The kingdom of God is like unto a merchant seeking goodly pearls, who when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.' We must renounce all we have in the world, while we are seeking the blessed heavenly kingdom; we must part with and forsake all things,

even the most delicious, glorious things, though we affect them never so much. How must we forsake them? Always in preparation of mind, and a thorough, unbounded resolution, otherwise we are not sincere with Christ; when we cannot have these things without sin, when we cannot keep them with fidelity to God's service, all shall go. Then actually when God calls hereunto; we must forego the enjoyment of them, when they are inconsistent with, or prejudicial to our spiritual and eternal happiness. Christians, do not flatter yourselves, it is not enough to forsake sin itself, but such things as you may justly love and lawfully enjoy; otherwise our resignation and dedication of ourselves to Christ is not true; when God puts you upon the trial, it must be verified and made good. Oh! think of the case of the young man: he would fain enjoy the things of the kingdom of God—Mark x. 17, 'What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?'—but he stuck at Christ's terms, 'and went away sad,' ver. 22. We would all fain have the kingdom of eternal glory and blessedness in the other world; but we cannot make the way to the kingdom wider or narrower than it is. Therefore if you do not like Christ's terms, that is, to resign all in your purpose and resignation of mind, and actually forsake all when called thereunto, you shall not enter into the kingdom of God.

2. It teacheth us the nature and influence of faith. We mistake it if we think it only to be a strong confidence. It is so indeed; but there are other things also. It is such an appreciative esteem of Christ and his benefits, that all other things are lessened in our opinion, estimation, and affection. The nature of faith is set forth by the apostle when he saith, Phil. iii. 7-10, 'What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; 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; and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.' And therefore true faith makes us dead to the world, and all the interests and honours thereof: and is to be known not so much by our confidence, as by our mortification and weanedness; when we carry all our comforts in our hands, as ready to part with them, if the Lord called us to leave them. It is faith alone, and God by faith can only bring us to this resolution: Mat. xix. 26, 'With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible;' he is able to work this temper of soul. Here in the text it was not the spirit of the world, but this mighty faith whereby Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Most men would rather refuse to be called the sons of God, and count it a greater honour to be advanced in prince's courts than to be adopted into God's family. A man void of faith, which is true heavenly wisdom, is strongly inclined to the glory, honour, wealth, and delights of this world, and prefers them before heaven and the eternal felicity thereof. But faith is tried by great weanedness from the world, and carrying your comforts in your

hands, as ready to part with them at God's call. There may be a degree of resolution in some more strong than others, in some a greater deadness to the world, and a greater sense of the world to come than in others, but all must have it in some measure and degree, and be willing thus to part with all for God's sake.

3. It is of great use to shame us, that we have no more profited in the gospel. Mark why I give you this note. Moses was of this disposition and temper, though he lived in the court of a heathen prince; and should not we be of this disposition and temper who live in the bosom of the church, where we have the benefit of being trained up in the institutions of Christ, and have the example of self-denying christians? Moses had no such example in Pharaoh's court; what instructions he had I cannot tell, it is not mentioned; possibly he had some concealed converse with his parents or brethren, the people of Israel, who might inform him of some divine and saving truths which might produce this faith; but it was much that in the midst of these temptations those truths did so prevail with him. But, however, God supplied the lack of means by extraordinary grace. Certainly then we should be ashamed that are born and bred up in the church, and live where the light of the gospel doth continually shine upon us, and at the door of whose hearts God is continually knocking, and who have so many helps and means to improve the principle of faith to a more complete self-denial. We should grow more dead to all things that are of a worldly nature.

4. It is useful to wean us from the world. It is good for the children of God to wean themselves from the world by all kinds of instances. Present things seem so glorious, and taste so sweet to the flesh, that they strangely infatuate and captivate our minds, and seem to promise us rare contentment and happiness, that we have much ado to check this worldly expectation. Therefore men seek after these things, and pursue them earnestly and eagerly, hoping and expecting much good from them; and if once they possess and enjoy them, they are loth to quit them, preferring them before heaven and happiness. Yea, the flesh within us is so greedy of the bait, that though we see the hook, yet we are ready to swallow it. Therefore it concerns us mightily to take all occasions to wean us from the world. Now the instances and examples of God's children are one means, when the Lord hath enabled them, even those that have not those advantages of instruction we have. It is a mighty thing that may be urged against temptation. Moses here, the man of God, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; thou art not called to deny so much of the world as he; he lived in the court that was the centre of all pleasure, and he was a great man there, the son of Pharaoh's only daughter. Think of this instance, that it may deaden your desires. The more excellent God's children are, the more they are contemning the world, and still calling off their hearts from it. Abraham left his father's house; Moses left Pharaoh's court. Surely these are not the good things we should look after. They are 'the smallest matters,' 1 Cor. vi. 2. There is a better portion reserved for us.

5. This is very necessary, to teach us to value our spiritual privileges by Christ. We have not high thoughts enough of these privi-

leges. Do you know the worth of them? Moses, that had experience of the pleasures, treasures, and honours of Egypt, left all that he might attain them. No earthly thing is to be compared with the fruition of the favour and fellowship of God, yea, and the service of God. Moses left all for that which God hath bestowed or will bestow upon his people—'Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.' Oh, therefore, value your own mercies! The most painful condition of life joined with any measure of communion with God is better than the most quiet, easy, plentiful condition without it: Ps. lxxxiv. 10, 'A day in thy courts is better than a thousand; I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.' Better be in any mean service and ministration about God than enjoy all honours. And now will you repine and grudge if God hath given you his favour, though he keeps you low and bare? If wicked men grow fat with common mercies, why should we wax lean from day to day if God hath vouchsafed us better things? Ps. xvii. 14, 15, 'They have their portion in this life, whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure; they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' Worldly men have a sweet portion, they ransack all the storehouses of nature, all delicacies are brought to their table, they are well fed and well clothed, they have lands, and heritages, and mansions, which they leave to their children. Oh, but God hath given you communion with himself—'This should put more gladness into your heart than in the time that their corn and wine increased,' Ps. iv. 7. We have no reason to envy wicked men their life of ease, pomp, and honour, for God hath better things for you, which all wise men would quit all other things for.

6. It gives a check to daily temptations, for if we cannot deny a little ease of the flesh, alas! how shall we deny pleasures, treasures, honours, and be so upright and faithful with God as Moses was? We should be ashamed to hear of such things, we that give up at the first assault, and are borne down with every petty temptation, and even 'sell our birthright for one morsel of meat,' Heb. xii. 16; when every slothful suggestion can take us off from God; when we cannot overcome, though but a little profit and respect, that we may manifest our integrity, and show our faithfulness to God when we are disallowed and discountenanced.

7. It should teach us patience, if God should retrench us in our worldly conveniences, if he should lessen us by his providence, if he should make us go back some degrees in the state wherein we have lived before. Shall we not yield to God's power, and submit to that which we must bear, whether we will or no? God did not snatch them from Moses, but he left them by choice: and shall we murmur in such cases? But if God sees these comforts too good for us, and therefore takes them away, shall we be merely passive? No, we should be active, show our willingness to part with them by a quiet submission. And such kind of instances help us.

8. It is of use to us: and now I come to the main thing I am upon, to check ambition and affectation of worldly greatness, and the scrambling for honours and great places, either gain, power, or government

in the world which doth possess the hearts of men. Moses was in the possession of these things, and did quit them; and shall we hunt after that which he quitted for God? And here are sundry considerations and motives.

[1.] The true value of life is by service to God. It is not who lives most plentifully, but who lives most serviceably to God's glory; therefore honour and greatness should not be the game in chase, but service. All our care in the world should be to serve God in our generation, to be an instrument to do his pleasure: Acts xiii. 36, 'David, after he had served his generation according to the will of God, fell asleep.' Every one hath his office and use, from the king to the peasant. We murmur if creatures made to serve us should fail in their seasons; and therefore since we were born for this, and sent into the world for this end, to serve God in our seasons, these for this age of the world, and those for that, therefore this should be our aim. We live to ourselves when our honour, and great, and commodious subsistence is more regarded than our work and service, for then self is put in the room and place of God.

[2.] Our service is determined by the call of God's providence. He is the great master of the scenes, that assigns to every man his calling and state of life, and appoints him what part he is to act; therefore if we do not submit to his will, we take his work out of his hands. We must not be our own carvers, and prescribe to God at what rate we will be maintained, and what work we will do. God is our potter, he will make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour; he appoints to every one his calling and work, and doth dispose of every one's condition in the world: Prov. xxix. 26, 'Many seek the ruler's favour;' every one would have the ruler's countenance and respect. But, alas! our affectation meets with shameful disappointment; for 'every man's judgment cometh from the Lord;' he rules all things according to his own pleasure. Servants that have no relation to you may covenant and make their bargain whether they will be employed in the chamber or in the kitchen. But we are at God's absolute dispose. If the master will use us as vessels of honour or dishonour, we must be contented. God appoints a man to his calling, not only in fitting him and giving him abilities,—therefore the apostle dateth his calling from the womb: Gal. i. 15, 'But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb,' when men's parts and temper are framed,—but in giving us occasion to exercise those abilities and gifts. If God hath a mind to use thee, he knoweth when and how without thy care and trouble. We must not fit the garland to our own heads: he that exalteth himself, God sets himself against him to pull him down. In all such cases we must tarry till the master of the feast sets us higher. What a man should use for God, he must take it out of God's hands: John xvii. 4, 'I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do;' that is, the work to which I was fitted by God, inclined by God, and disposed by God in the course of his providence. There is indeed a question, How far a man may offer himself to places of gain or government, either in church or commonwealth? *Ans.* A man may desire the employment of his gifts in a suitable way: 1 Tim. iii. 1, 'If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.' Out of

conscience of his internal call, he may lie at the pool modestly till some put him in, and offer himself to such work as God hath called him unto, and upon a fair call he must not draw back. But yet we should wait and tarry God's leisure, without thrusting and obtruding ourselves. If thy worth be not known, bear it patiently; Jesus Christ lay hid for a long time, and was not known. It was John's testimony concerning Christ, John i. 26, 'There standeth one among you, whom ye know not.' So Joseph, that notable man for business, lay obscurely in prison, and was kept as a slave a long time; and Daniel a long time was nourished among the captive children before his worth and eminency was taken notice of; and David did follow the ewes great with young before the Lord called him out to feed his people, and there was an opportunity to discover his spirit and valour; Moses is a shepherd with his father-in-law, ere he was captain of the people. In the meantime we must not use ill means, nor much trouble ourselves in the use of lawful means. We must not use ill means. Ambition is like a whirlwind to tear all things in our way; it treads down all that stands in their way; truth, gospel, good conscience, all must go down, so they may rise. Moses would not keep honour upon base terms, and will you get it? When a man is in possession, the temptation is the greater; but you never had it, and therefore yours is the greater sin, if for favour and preferment you should deny or dissemble the truth, or stretch conscience to the size of the times or humour men. If we had it, and enjoyed it in the highest manner we are capable of, yet it must be left; but to break through all restraints of honour and conscience to get it, this is sinful. Nor must we much trouble ourselves in the use of lawful means: Prov. xxv. 27, 'For men to seek their own glory is not glory.' Ambition is a mark of indignity; if you were worthy of honour, your worth would attract it, as a violet is found out by its smell. Where the matter is combustible, we need not blow the fire so hard. By eager sucking honour, you disparage yourselves. There is no temper so base as the ambitious; how do they bend, cringe, stoop, fawn, flatter, and all to raise themselves!—'Having men's persons in admiration because of advantage,' Jude 16. Absalom kisseth the people; such carking, caring, and fawning argueth little worth. It disparageth God, as if he did not care for you, and did not know where to employ and set you. And then you tax his providence when with such carking and solicitude you are hunting after great places. And in the end God will make you know that all is at his dispose: Prov. xxix. 26, 'Many seek the ruler's favour, but every man's judgment cometh of the Lord;' what God hath determined concerning his course of life. Men's hearts are in God's hands; worldly potentates are not masters of their own respects, but meet often with a shameful disappointment.

[3.] God may be as well served and glorified in a lower calling as in a higher, if you perform the duties of your present station. The apostle speaks of poor servants, 'that they may adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things,' Titus ii. 10. They have their work and sphere of activity, though it be a lower one; and if they are conscionable in it, and do the duty of their place out of fear and reverence to God, it is a mighty honour to God. The gnat proclaims God as really as the sun, though the sun more notably. Some shine in a more

glorious orb and sphere, but all have their opportunities of service. We must give an account of our talents; he that had but one talent was to employ it: John xvii. 4, 'I have finished the work that thou hast given me to do.' Do what God calls for in the place he hath set you, and trouble not yourself in aspiring thoughts and endeavours to be great; the discharge of your duty will be your comfort and peace.

[4.] Many times in a private life there are many advantages of enjoying God, which we cannot have in more power. Though we are not to refuse power, but improve it if called thereto, yet this should satisfy you; a private condition hath greater advantages of enjoying more communion with God—being often in the meditations of God, in prayers to and praises of him. In a private life you have many pleasant opportunities of retirement for communion with God. Those that live upon mountains have very tempestuous habitations; so men that live in a clatter of worldly business have not such advantages of enjoying the Lord, they are continually exposed to the storms of the envy and jealousy of others, where it is hard to please men, or to please God, or to please ourselves. It is hard to please men, because of the uncertainty of their humours; and there we have the greatest hindrances of pleasing God, our hearts being taken up with these things. Ay, and few find that pleasure they expect from it themselves; therefore who would covet and aspire for that condition wherein there are so few advantages either to please God, himself, or men.

[5.] Consider, as their advantages are less, so their snares are more; the higher their station, the more dangerous. He had need have a steady head that walks upon a precipice; the snares of worldly greatness are many. Trees planted on the tops of mountains are more exposed to bleak winds; and when we are full, we are apt to forget God: Jer. v. 5, 'I will get me unto the great men; but these have altogether broken the yoke.' Rank pastures breed weeds; little fishes escape, when the great ones are held in the net; the moon is eclipsed when it is in the full; so that unless we be in love with our temptation, we should not thus earnestly desire greatness in the world. When the sons of Zebedee desired to be set, one at Christ's right hand, and the other at his left, says Christ, Mat. xx. 22, 'Ye know not what you ask;' so when you seek honour, you know not what you seek, for your snares, sins, and burdens, are greater. Your snares are greater, for there are more temptations; and your sins are greater, because of the eminency of your station; for the higher your station is, every sin you commit is the greater; when others are lost in a crowd, you are taken notice of. And your burden is the greater; the more talents, the greater account you have to make; more duty is required of you than of others; you have talents enough already to answer for. He that cannot bear a lesser burden, how shall he bear a greater?

[6.] Self-seekers are many times the greatest self-losers, for God will cross them; God will appear against them, for he loves to resist the proud. The shadow follows them that run from it; and usually they that seek their own interest least do most convince the world of their real worth, which, where it is, will speak for itself. Therefore those that torture themselves with restless, aspiring thoughts, do not attain their end many times: Ps. cxxvii. 2, 'It is vain for you to rise

up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrow; that is, it is in vain for you, Absalom, to think to rise by a tedious observance of the people, and for you, Adonijah, to torture yourself with restless, ambitious thoughts and pursuits; you toil yourselves to no purpose, 'for God will give his beloved sleep.' Solomon was called Jedidiah, the beloved of the Lord (that is the private sense); God will give the crown to whom he intends it; and so men lose all their travail and pains, it comes to nothing but ruin. Climbing proves very dangerous to men if they have not a good holdfast, as putting up too much sail overturns the ship many times.

[7.] The true ambition is the spiritual ambition; to seek the true glory, the things of heaven and Christ. There we cannot be too earnest, we must take no nay; as Luther said, *Valde protestatus sum me non sic à Deo satiari*—I protested that I would not be put off with these things. It is no crime or treason to offer violence to the kingdom of heaven, Mat. xi. 12. This is ambition becoming a christian, to affect the crown of glory, to follow God, and not be put off by him. This will make us despise other things. Remember these are the great things, and that others are but small things in regard of these. Compare two places together, 2 Peter i. 4, with 1 Cor. vi. 2. In the latter place he calls the things of the world 'the smallest matters,' and the promises 'exceeding great and precious promises.' These are the greatest things; to have the favour of God, and to have hopes of the glory of God; these are the things that we should most busy our thoughts about.

[8.] That true greatness lies not in honour, but in real worth and grace. A dwarf is but a dwarf though he stand upon a mountain: he may have the advantage-ground, but he is never a whit the taller. A horse is not the better for his trappings, but for his strength and swiftness. A man exalted is not any whit the greater, nothing is added to him. And the Lord to put a scorn upon these outward things gives them sometimes to the basest of men. In troubled waters the mud cometh on the top; as it was told Anastatius, he was exalted, not because he was worthy of the government of the city, but they were not worthy of a better governor. All these considerations should help to free the soul of this cursed weed that is apt to grow and vent itself in our hearts, this affectation of worldly greatness.

Use 2. Exhortation to the high, and those that are in honour, to be of Moses' spirit, actually to quit these things upon trial, but at present in the preparation of your mind. Two things I would press you to—weanedness and resolution.

1. To weanedness. To this end—

[1.] Consider the short continuance of worldly greatness. It is a part acted upon the stage of this world for a while. Others have been in the places you enjoy, and they are dead and gone, and there is no remembrance of them. You are going to the grave only the higher walk: Job iii. 19, 'The small and the great are there, and the servant is free from his master.' Within a little while, and the world will think as meanly of you as you do of them that are gone before you. There will ever be a distinction between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean, between the believer and the unbeliever,

between the carnal and the regenerate ; but there will be no distinction between the rich and the poor, between the honourable and the base. Within a little while there will not be a pin to choose between them ; the most shining glory will be quickly burned to a snuff, though no churlish blast should extinguish it.

[2.] The true value of life is by our service to God. That is the best life wherein we are most serviceable to God, and most helped on to heaven.

[3.] Many times the greater you are in earth, the lesser you shall be in heaven: Lazarus was poor in this world, and Dives was rich ; but one went to heaven, and the other was sent to hell : Mat. xi. 5, 'The poor have the gospel preached to them.'

2. To a resolution—

[1.] To use what you have for the present for God. You must not throw them away. Consider what advantage hath God for thy advancement. It is not enough to see that they do us no hurt, but you must 'honour the Lord with your substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase,' Prov. iii. 9. We should have nothing but God should be honoured by it. Nehemiah was the king's cup-bearer, and his interest was improved for the good of God's people, Neh. i. 11.

[2.] To carry these things in your hands, that when God calleth for them you may be ready to leave them. God giveth you these things that you may have something of value to esteem as nothing for Christ. David carried his life in his hand, as a thing ready to be gone from him : Ps. cxix. 109, 'My soul is continually in my hand.' So should you sit loose to worldly things, expecting God's call to part with them.

[3.] Wisely to discern the interest of Christ, that your honour may not be incompatible with it : Ps. ii. 10, 'Be wise now therefore, O ye kings ; be instructed, ye judges of the earth.' Of all men they should be most inquisitive, that they do not stand in Christ's way, and get all the instruction they can of their duty.

Use 3. Examination ; examine your faith and self-denial. The one discovereth the other.

1. Examine your faith by your self-denial. Have you gone back any degrees for Christ? What have you refused for him? But because every one is not put upon such actual eminent trial, inquire, doth faith take off your hearts from the things of the world? Your weanedness from the world will be an evidence of your faith ; when you have low thoughts of the world, of the honours, and pleasures, and treasures of it. It may be we may speak contemptibly of the world, but this is not enough ; look to the settled disposition of your souls. Two things you may know it by ; what is your first care, and choice delight?

[1.] What is your first care? Mat. vi. 33, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added to you.' It a sign of a worldly spirit when the only thought is to get increase, the only business is to hunt after honour, this is the prey and game in chase. Every man hath a first thing, which is his *τὸ ἔργον*, his work and business. When men are never at

rest till they have gotten this honour, and then that preferment, and are still gaping after more, it is a sign the heart is not purged from worldly lusts and vile affections.

[2.] What is your choice delight? Is it in the Lord Jesus Christ, to be a fellow-heir with him, who is your elder brother? Is it to enjoy communion with God? What is it that you muse upon? See the musings of a worldly great man, Dan. iv. 30, 'Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?' But the musings of a godly man we have, Ps. lxxxiv. 10, 'For a day in thy court is better than a thousand; I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.' It is a delightful thing to them to think of a covenant interest in God, and of liberty of access to him by Christ: Ps. iv. 6, 7, 'There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.' What is it that puts gladness into your hearts? Is it to have worldly things increased? or that God is reconciled to you, and that you have hopes of enjoying him in glory?

2. Examine your self-denial by your faith. Some have not an opportunity to show it, and some men's lusts are turned another way, as swine care not for pearls, but for swill; sometimes men deny themselves out of humour and discontent; or their self-denial is but a politic retreat, or an affectation of privacy and quiet, or from a natural stoutness of spirit. But if you would be satisfied about the sincerity of your self-denial inquire—

[1.] How is it gotten? Is it the fruit of much humiliation, and brokenness of heart, and seeking God, and great strugglings with him? As Esther venturcth all upon her seeking of God: Esther iv. 16, 'Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.'

[2.] What are your motives? Do religious reasons bear sway? How do you reason with yourselves? What draweth you to self-denial? Is it upon divine grounds and arguments, such as love to God, and our great hopes? Faith makes use of the sword of the Spirit, not the motives and reasonings of flesh and blood.

[3.] What is the fruit of it? doth it makes us more humble, both to God and men? To God: Acts v. 41, 'They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name;' not boasting and glorying, but wondering that unworthy creatures should be so honoured. And then it will make it meek towards men, as Stephen prayed for his persecutors: Acts vii. 60, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;' not return railing for railing, or reviling for reviling, or seeking revenge for the wrong they do us, but pitying and praying for them. By these things you may try the truth of your self-denial.