

for us, for we trust we have a good conscience;’ and hath in it perfection of parts, though not of degrees.

2. This must be seconded with answerable endeavours. *ἵνα πληρωθῆ* noteth a continued act; to have the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us is not the work of one day, but implieth a constant walk and obedience to motions after the Spirit.

3. We must endeavour to be more complete every day: Luke i. 6, ‘They were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;’ and Col. iv. 12, ‘Labouring for you, that you may stand complete in all the will of God.’ So we read of some that were ‘full of all goodness:’ Rom. xv. 14, and ‘full of good works:’ Acts ix. 36, as we find in Dorcas. It is the fault of most Christians, that they beat down the price of religion as low as they can, and so make a hard shift to go to heaven.

4. Our begun-sanctification shall be perfected before Christ hath done with us: Col. i. 28, ‘That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.’ Here we are very imperfect, but it shall be perfectly fulfilled.

SERMON VI.

They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.—ROM. viii. 5.

This scripture containeth a notable character of those that are interested in the privileges of the gospel, and will help you in your assuring work, or making out your claim and title. In the words you have:—

1. An intimation of two sorts of persons; they that are after the flesh and they that are after the spirit.

2. Their different disposition and practice are compared and set forth:—

[1.] By the act: they both mind their several affairs.

[2.] By the object: things of the flesh from things of the spirit. Different persons, different objects, and different affections.

Thus you may in one view and prospect discern the scope and intent of the place. I shall lay it before you in several propositions, and then apply all together.

1. There are two sorts of men in the world—some after the flesh and some after the spirit.

2. That these two sorts of men have two different objects—the things of the spirit and the things of the flesh.

3. That men discover their temper and constitution of soul by their favour or affection to either of these objects.

Doct. 1. There are two sorts of men in the world—some after the flesh and some after the spirit. So it must be. There is a twofold original; which produceth a twofold principle, which is acted by a twofold assisting power; and this bringeth them under a twofold covenant, which maketh way for a twofold final estate, into which all the world issueth itself.

1. There is a twofold original ; some are only born, others new born ; the renewed, and the unrenewed : John iii. 6, ' That which is born of the flesh, is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.' Some remain under the power of corrupt nature ; others are regenerate and renewed by the Spirit.

2. This twofold original produceth a twofold principle ; that men are led by flesh and spirit, which are always contrary one to another : Gal. v. 17, ' The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit lusteth against the flesh ; and these two are contrary one to the other.' Men, if they be merely such as nature hath left them, are governed by the flesh, or their own carnal inclinations. Others are led by the spirit, walk after it, as ver. 1. They that are born again, have a new principle set up in their natures, to incline them to God.

3. These two principles are supported and assisted with contrary powers. They that are governed by the flesh, are also acted by Satan ; he rules and works in them : Eph. ii. 23, ' Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now ruleth in the children of disobedience ; among whom also we had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' There are all the enemies of our salvation. They that follow inbred corruption as their guide, fall into the devil's share, who hurrieth them on in a way of sin, more vehemently than otherwise they would do. But now those that are led by grace, or a new principle, or the new nature, as their guide, they are assisted and acted by the Spirit of God : Rom. viii. 14, ' As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God ; the Spirit is their guardian and keeper ; he exciteth and worketh up the habit of grace into greater power and activity.' Now, being under such contrary powers, no wonder that they are so different in their courses, and so contrary one to another. It is said, Prov. xxix. 27, ' The wicked is an abomination to the just : and he that is upright in his way is an abomination to the wicked.' Their birth is different, the inward principle by which they are guided is different, nature and grace ; and they are under different assisting powers, either under the power of Satan, or under the power and conduct of God's Holy Spirit ; and therefore no wonder that their course is different, and that there is enmity between both the seeds. A godly man cannot delight in a wicked man, and a wicked man cannot abide the godly. The ground of friendship is *eadem velle et nolle*. Similitude, and likeness of mind and disposition, only the enmity and contrariety is carried on with some difference. The godly pity the wicked, but the wicked hate the godly, because they are against that course of life that they choose. They think it strange they do not run with them to the same neglect of God, and carelessness of heavenly things ; and therefore they speak evil of them, 1 Peter iv. 4 ; and despitefully use them, 1 John iii. 12, as Cain hated Abel.

4. As they are under different assisting powers, so they are under a distinct covenant. The carnal are under the covenant of works, the duty of which is to them impossible, and the penalty intolerable. They are under the condemning power of the law : Rom. viii. 6, ' To be carnally minded is death ;' it maketh them liable to the death threat-

ened in the first covenant. But, on the contrary, they that are under the blessed conduct of God's Holy Spirit, and obey the dictates of the new nature begun in them, are under a covenant of grace, where their sincere obedience shall be accepted, and their failings pardoned : Gal. v. 18, ' If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.' They are still under the law, as a rule of obedience, but they are not under the curse and rigour of the law. The law in its rigour pronounceth death on every failing ; so they are not under the law ; but being in some measure enabled to do what the law requires, they are pardoned in what they fall short.

5. These two covenants issue themselves into two places or eternal states, heaven and hell. To the carnal, the scripture denounceth God's eternal wrath ; to the spiritual, God's favour and life eternal. The scripture is plain and positive with us : Rom. viii. 13, ' If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye, through the spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live : ' Gal. vi. 8, ' He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.' All mankind, after they have acted their parts in this world, and God cometh to shift the stage, go into one of these two places. Well then, here is our first step, that the whole world is comprised in one of these two ranks ; there is no neutral or middle state ; either they are guided by the flesh (as all men are in their unregeneracy)—and if they continue so in a constant slavery to their lusts, their end shall be everlasting perdition—or else they are guided by the Spirit and obey the motions of grace, and make it their business and main employment to please God, and enjoy communion with God ; and their end shall be eternal life. It is a question you should often and seriously put to your souls, Shall I be saved, or shall I be damned ? If you have any sense and spark of conscience left you when you are sick and dying, you will then put it with great trembling and anxiousness of heart, Poor soul ! whither am I now going ? It is better to put it now, when you have opportunity to correct your error, if hitherto you have gone wrong. Every man would know his own destiny, what shall become of him, or what is in the womb of futurity, concerning the state of his affairs ; as the King of Babylon stood in the heads of the way, to make divination. Now, no destiny deserves so much to be known as this. If the question were, shall I be rich or poor ? happy, or miserable in the world ? it were not of such great moment ; for these distinctions do not out-live time, but cease at the grave's mouth ; but this question is of greater moment than so, whether I shall be eternally miserable, or eternally happy ? It is foolish curiosity to inquire into other things ; they are not of such importance that we should know them beforehand ; but it concerneth us much, to know whether we be in a damnable or saveable condition ; if we be in a damnable condition, to know it whilst we have time to remedy it ; if we are heirs of salvation, the assurance of our interest will preoccupate our blessedness, and will be a great encouragement to us in the way of holiness for the present. Now, nothing will sooner decide this great question than the business we have in hand, whether we be after the flesh or after the spirit ; for between these two, heaven and hell is divided. These two divide both the present world and the world to

come. I thought good to premise this, that you may consider the weight of the case in hand.

Doct. 2. That these two sorts of men have two different objects, the things of the spirit and the things of the flesh, τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ τὰ τῆς σαρκός; the one suits with the one, and the other with the other.

1. τὰ τῆς σαρκός—the things of the flesh. Let us first know what is meant by flesh, and then we shall better understand what are the things of the flesh.

By the flesh is not meant the mass and substance of our fleshly bodies, or the outward part in which our soul is seated, and by which it performeth its functions and operations, but the vitiosity and corruption of human nature, inclining and addicting itself to the interests of the bodily life. There are the inclinations of the flesh, and the interests of the flesh. The inclinations of the flesh are the evil lustings of corrupt nature; and the interests of the flesh are the things that feed this corruption, or gratify these evil inclinations; the same with τὰ σαρκός, in the text. Now these are of two sorts:

[1.] Things apparently evil, as all vices and sins: Gal. v. 19, 20, Ἔργα σαρκός φάνερα—‘The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.’ Though the inward root from whence these things flow be hidden, yet these effects are apparent rank weeds, that smell strong in nature’s nostrils. These are not all, but he concludeth it with a such like; and instanceth in these, as the most known, and most commonly practised; as the commandments forbid the grosser sin in the kind, some serve the flesh in a more cleanly manner. And mark in the things enumerated, some belong to the blind and corrupt will, as idolatry and heresy; some to the depraved will, as witchcraft and hatred; some to the affections both of the irascible faculty, as emulation, wrath, strife; some to the concupiscible, as uncleanness, revellings; some to the sensual appetite as adultery and drunkenness. He instanceth not only in the grosser evils, as adultery, but wantonness, or any unseemly behaviour, that tendeth to excite the lust of filthiness in ourselves or others: not only in witchcraft, but hatred or malice, which is a temptation to it; not only in murder, but wrath and strife; not only in drunkenness, but revelling, riotous feasts, and meetings. There is a difference between sins; but the least is to be avoided, if we would shun the greater.

[2.] Things good in their own nature, but immoderately affected, as all the comforts and appurtenances of the bodily life, which are used as baits of corruption, as worldly profits, honours, and pleasures, some that immediately tend to the pleasing of the flesh, as bodily pleasures; others remotely, as they lay in provision for that end. What are here called the things of the flesh, are elsewhere called earthly things: Phil. iii. 19, ‘They mind, τὰ ἐπιγεια, earthly things;’ such things as, if rightly used, would be comforts in our passage, but through our folly prove snares. Meat, drink, marriage, pleasures, profits, preferments, ease, idleness, softness, daintiness—these things immoderately sought, not in respect to God, or in subordination, but opposition to heavenly things, become baits of corruption, and fuel wherewith to feed the flesh.

While men seek them for themselves, and only to please themselves, they are not *adjumenta*, helps to heaven, but *impedimenta*, lets and snares. Our greatest danger doth not lie in things simply evil, but in lawful things. Carnal men esteem these things as the best, and place their happiness in them; these things they affect, and love, and like, and care for: so that the heart is turned off from God and the pursuit of better things, to entertain itself with these baser objects. This is to seek out baits for the flesh; for the flesh is nothing else but the corruption of nature, which inclineth us to any inferior good, and diverteth us from things truly good and spiritual, as communion with and enjoyment of God. Well, now we have suited those that are after the flesh, with an object proper to them, and agreeable with their inclinations.

2. The next thing is, what are τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος—'the things of the Spirit?' They are all things pertaining to spiritual life and godliness. You may conceive of them thus:

[1.] Such things as the Spirit revealeth. Now he revealeth the mysteries of salvation, or the deep things of God in Jesus Christ, which the natural man is not capable of: 1 Cor. ii. 14. The whole doctrine of godliness, or salvation offered by God in Christ, is the element of the renewed man, his life and soul is bound up in it: Ps. cxix. 103, 'How sweet are thy words unto my taste?' But a natural man savoureth not these things, nor knoweth them, nor loveth them, if he be told of them. They that are in a common way partakers of the Spirit, are said to 'taste the good word,' Heb. vi. 4. So far as the Spirit worketh upon them, so far they have a relish for these things.

[2.] Such things as the Spirit worketh, καρπὸς πνεύματος: Gal. v. 22, 'The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, patience, meekness;' all internal excellences. The renewed man ever seeks to excel and advance in these things; not to trim the body, but to deck and adorn the soul: 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4, 'Whose adorning, let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.' All his desires are to be 'strengthened with might in the inner man by the Spirit,' Eph. iii. 16. He rejoiceth, and fains not under troubles, while the inward man is safe; 2 Cor. iv. 16, for 'as the outward man decreaseth, the inward man is renewed day by day.' If they can keep grace alive in their souls, that is their care, their business, their comfort. The natural heart is altogether taken up about the outward man, but the renewed heart about the inward man, and an increase in holiness, or spiritual strength; for that is the great product of the sanctifying Spirit, and that which they should mainly look after.

[3.] Such things as the Spirit urgeth and inclineth unto; and these are communion with God here, and the full enjoyment of God hereafter. The great impression which the Spirit leaveth upon the soul is a tendency towards God; for his office is to bring us to God, into communion with him here. God, as a Judge, by the Spirit of bondage, drives us to Christ as a Mediator; and Christ, as a Mediator, by the

Spirit of adoption, bringeth us to God as a Father: Rom. viii. 15, 'Ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father.' One of the things which the Spirit urgeth us to look after is the favour of God: Ps. iv. 6, 7, 'Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us,' etc.; and communion with him here: Ps. xvii. 15, 'As for me, I will behold thy face with righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness;' and the full enjoyment of God hereafter: Rom. viii. 23, 'We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies:' 2 Cor. v. 5, 'Now he that hath wrought us for the self same thing, is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit,' always groaning, longing to live with God for ever. So when the unregenerate and regenerate are spoken of as two contrary minds and affections, Phil. iii. 19, 20, the one are said to mind earthly things, the others are said to have *πολίτευμα*, their conversation, in heaven. The flesh draweth us off from God to things earthly and fleshly; but the Spirit's work is to raise the heart to things eternal and heavenly, that our main business might be there. Well now, the things of the Spirit are all those things that are agreeable to the new and spiritual life, as righteousness, peace, grace, and glory, the image of God, and word of God; these things suit with the new nature.

Doct. 3. That men discover their temper and constitution of soul by their respect to either of these objects. To evidence this to you

1. I will show you what this minding is,
2. Give you some observations,
3. The reasons of the point.

1. What is this minding or respect? Answer.—It may be considered simply, and apart; or comparatively, our respects to these contrary objects being compared together.

[1.] Simply, by itself. Our minding is bewrayed by the three operations of man—thoughts, words, and actions. That which he minds he often thinks of, speaks of, and seeks after, be they the things of the flesh, or of the spirit, the life and vigour of our souls are seen in thinking, speaking, and acting.

(1.) Men's thoughts will be where their hearts are, and their hearts are where their treasure is; Mat. vi. 21. Carnal men are brought in thinking of their worldly affairs: Luke xii. 17, 29, *διελογίσασατο*, and he 'dialogued with himself.' Not that it is simply unlawful to mind our earthly business: I bring it to show the temper of the men; their hearts are always exercised with such kind of thoughts, talking with themselves. And on the other side, godly men are remembering God and heaven, and pleased with this kind of thoughts. 'My soul remembered thee in the night;' and they are described: Mal. iii. 16, 'They that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name.'

(2.) The same is true of words also, they declare the life and vigour of our spirits, for there is a quick intercourse between the tongue and the heart: 1 John iv. 5, 'They are of the world, and speak of the world, and the world heareth them;' men's speeches are as their temper is: Prov. x. 20, 'The tongue of the just is as choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is little worth.' When the heart is stored with

knowledge, and biassed by spiritual affections, they will enrich others with their holy, savoury, profitable discourse; but a drowsy, unsanctified heart in man, bewrayeth itself by his speeches and communications with others.

(3.) By actions, or what we seek after: if all our business be to gratify the flesh, Luke xii. 21; or sowing to the flesh, Gal. v. 8; it argues a fleshly mind. On the other side, they that have a spiritual mind, make it their business to grow in grace: Phil. iii. 13, 'This one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind, I press forward towards the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.' They labour for spiritual and heavenly things: John xvii. 27, 'Seek the things that are above:' Col. iii. 1, 'They mind the things of the Spirit.'

[2.] Comparatively, so the mark must be interpreted. The simple consideration is not so convictive as the comparative.

(1.) Partly, because all minding the flesh is not sinful, but an over-minding the flesh. The body hath its necessities, and they must be cared for. Yea, take the flesh for sensitive appetite, to please it with lawful satisfactions is no sin; for it is a faculty put into us by God, and in due subordination to religion may be pleased. To please it by things forbidden is certainly a sin; and to prefer it before the pleasing of God is a great sin indeed, for it is a character of them who are in a state of damnation, that 'they are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,' 2 Tim. iii. 4. Therefore though we must observe our thoughts, words, and actions, yet it must be thus interpreted not to condemn every act, but that we may know in what proportion the vigour of mind is manifested and carried out to either of these objects, by thoughts, words, or actions. If our thoughts of the world shut out all thoughts of God, Ps. xii. 4, 'God is not in all their thoughts.' If our thinking of spiritual things be too rare, unfrequent, and displeasing to us, we are after the flesh. So for words, if we are heartless in our talk of heavenly things, and we are in our element when speaking of carnal things, and when a serious word is interposed for God, we frown upon the motion. So for actions, compare men's care for the world with their care for their souls; if they more earnestly and industriously seek to please the flesh than to save their souls, it is a sign the flesh and its interests are predominant in them; all things are done superficially, and by the by in religion, not as becomes those that work from and for life, with any diligence and fervency. There is no proportion between endeavours for the world, and their preparations for eternal life; all is earnest on one side, but either nothing is done, or in a very slight manner on the other side; their thoughts, and love, and life, and strength are wholly occupied and taken up about the things of the flesh.

(2.) Partly, because we must distinguish between the sin of flesh pleasing, and the state of flesh pleasing; for a man is to judge of his spiritual condition, not by single acts, but his state, or the habitual frame of his heart. Who is there among God's own children who doth not mind the flesh, and too much indulge the flesh? But they who make it their business to please the flesh, are over careful about it: Rom. xiii. 14, 'Who make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof;' and so indulge the minding of the flesh, as not to mind the things of the spirit, so that vain pleasures do exceed their delight in

God, and kill it yet more and more, and bring a slavery upon themselves, which they cannot help : Tit. iii. 3, 'Serving divers lusts and pleasures,' and being captivated by the fleshly part, they have contracted a strangeness and enmity to God and his ways : Rom. viii. 7. They that have no relish for the joys of faith, and the pleasures of holiness, and do habitually prefer the natural good of the body, before the moral, spiritual, and eternal good both of body and soul, these are in a state of carnality.

2. The observations upon the point.

[1.] This minding of the flesh must be interpreted not with respect to our former estate ; for alas ! all of us in times past pleased the flesh, and 'walked according to the course of this world,' and 'had in time past our conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the will of the flesh, and of the mind,' Eph. ii. 3. It was God that loosed our shackles : Tit. iii. 3, 'We ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, etc., but after the kindness and love of God appeared towards mankind,' etc. If we yet please the flesh we are not the servants of Christ ; but if we break off this servitude, God will not judge us according to what we have been but what we are.

[2.] To know what we are we must consider what principle liveth in us, and groweth and increaseth ; and on the other side, what decreaseth, the interest of the flesh or the interest of the spirit ; for these two are contrary, and the one destroyeth the other. The love of the world, and the flesh, estrangeth us from God : 1 John ii. 15, 'Love not the world, nor the things of the world ; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' On the other side, minding the things of the spirit deadeneth our affections to the world and the baits of the flesh. The conversation in heaven is opposed to the minding of earthly things : Phil. iii. 19, 20, 'Whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things ; but our conversation is in heaven.' So much of affection as we give to the one, we take from the other : Col. iii. 2, 'Set your affections on things above, and not on things of the earth.' Now we are to consider if we grow more brutish, forgetful of God, unapt for spiritual things, the flesh gaineth ; but if the spiritual inclination doth more and more discover itself with life and power in our thoughts, words, and actions, the flesh is in the wane, and we shall be reckoned among those that walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit ; we have every day a higher estimation of God, and Christ, and grace, and heaven, and thereby we grow more dead to other things.

[3.] Some things more immediately tend to the pleasing of the flesh ; others more remotely. Immediately, as bodily pleasures, and therefore our inclinations to them are called fleshly lusts, as distinguished from worldly lusts, Tit. ii. 12 ; or from the lusts of the eye, and pride of life, 1 John ii. 16 ; and these are intended, when it is said, 1 Peter ii. 11, 'Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul ;' that is, those inclinations which carry us to vain and sordid pleasures. Other things more remotely, as they lay in provision for that end, as the honours and profits of the world ; as all religion is pleasing God, so all that is opposite to it is pleasing the flesh. Some please it one way, some another ; though a man be not voluptuous, yet he may be guilty of minding the things of the flesh, because the world lieth nearest to his

heart, and so he is taken off from care of and delight in better things: 'envy, emulation, wrath, strife, division make us carnal,' 2 Cor. iii. 3. Namely, as we bustle and strive for greatness and esteem in the world, though they are not sordidly given to brutish pleasures, and worldly lusts, are called foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction: 1 Tim. vi. 9. Therefore fleshly minding must be applied to any thing that inticeth us to neglect things spiritual and heavenly, for the world and the flesh suit; one is the affection, the other the bait.

[4.] Some please the flesh in a more cleanly, others in a more gross manner; as some men's sins are open and manifest, and stink in the nostrils of God, as whoredom, drunkenness, and the like. Now though we fall not into these sins, but escape the pollutions of the world, yet there is a more secret, carnal minding, wherewith we may be tainted, as when we let loose the heart to such alluring vanities as draw us off from God, and Christ, and heaven; and the savour and relish that we have for outward things obstructeth and quencheth the heavenly life, as much as those baser lusts that are more shameful and hateful in the world. Some are disengaged from gross sins, but yet wholly live to themselves, and the pleasures of their fleshly mind; whereas the spiritual living is a living unto God, and subordinateth all things to our great interest; and till we return to God from whom we have strayed, there is little difference what way of sin we choose; we are all gone astray, but every one his own way, Isa. liii. 6.

[5.] The prevalency of the carnal or spiritual mind is known by observing what we mind seriously, resolutely, willingly, constantly.

(1.) Seriously, and in good earnest. Some seek after worldly things in good earnest, but spiritual and heavenly things in an overly, careless, and perfunctory manner. Now it is easy to know to what sort they are to be reckoned, for where the strength of the soul is employed there our mind is. The scripture adviseth us to moderate our affections to earthly things, to rejoice here, as if we rejoiced not; to mourn here, as if we mourned not; to use all things as not over-using them; and many mourn for sin, as if they mourned not; and rejoiced in God, as if they rejoiced not; seek after heavenly things superficially and by the by, not with their chief strength and care: Mat. vi. 33.

(2.) Resolutely, so as to carry it on whatsoever difficulties and oppositions we meet with: Neh. iv. 6, 'The wall was built, for the people had a mind to the work.' It was a great charge for a wasted people to undergo, being newly returned from the captivity; and there was a great opposition, for they were fain to use sword and trowel together, they did work with one hand, and held the sword with the other hand to fight; but it went on, for the people had a mind to the work. We make our way to heaven by conflict and contest every step, till we are resolved and cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart, whatever it costs us: Acts xi. 23, 'He exhorted them, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.' We make no work in religion until we so mind these things that we come to such a resolution as Paul had: 'Ετοιμῶς ἔχω: Acts xxi. 14, 'I am prepared, I am ready, not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ.' Such a resolvedness there is also in minding the things

of the flesh. When they put up many sad wound and check of conscience, overlook their conveniences in the world, credit, interest, sacrifice whatsoever should, is dear and precious to them, to follow their lusts.

(3.) Willingly. How constrained are most men's duties? Their thoughts of God, their prayers to him, their attendance on his word; doing all they do as a task, rather than going about it as a willing and pleasing employment, as Saul said, that he 'forced himself:' 1 Sam. xiii. 12. He pleadeth it as an excuse of his sin, as committing it out of necessity; but it is a just account of most men's worship, they are held to it by force; the heart liketh it not, seeketh to slide away, and they are glad when they are enlarged, and can divert to other things. On the contrary: Ps. civ. 35, 'I will be glad in the Lord, my meditation of him shall be sweet;' this for thoughts. For words: John iv. 32, 'My meat and drink is to do the will of him that sent me.' They are in their element when discoursing and promoting the interest of God. For actions and endeavours: Ps. xl. 8, 'I delight to do thy will, O God:' 1 John v. 3, 'His commandments are not grievous;' nothing is more pleasing to them than when they are thus employed.

(4.) Constantly. This is that which is mainly to be observed, the constancy of our operations, as to things of the flesh and of the spirit.

(1st.) For thoughts. What thoughts have you of God and Christ and the world to come? You mind the world's days, weeks, months, years, it cannot be denied; but if you can never find leisure for God, Christ, and heaven, not in one of a hundred, or a thousand, yea, or twenty thousand thoughts, can you be said to mind the things of the spirit? Did you ever shut the door of your hearts upon vain objects? Cast them out with indignation, as you divert and shift from the thoughts of God, or regarding your last end and great work; we that should retire for the meditation of God banish him out of our minds: Job xxi. 14, 'We say to the Almighty, Depart from us.' We like not these serious reflections, and cast them out.

(2d.) For words. How much, how often, and delightfully do you speak of God and the things of the world to come? Do you show this respect for God, or those useful and necessary things which concern your own salvation and the salvation of others? Speech must be guided by prudence, and you must consider not only what you must do, but others will bear; but as to yourselves, you are to observe the vigour of your own spirits, which way it is most let out. To be pent up in carnal company is a grief to a godly heart. It is a grief to him to hold his peace from good: Ps. xxxix. 2, 3, 'I was dumb with silence, I held my peace even from good, and my sorrow was stirred, my heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned.' But in holy company 'they that fear the Lord speak often one to another:' Mal. iii. 16. In the general, men will speak as they are affected: Ps. xxxvii. 30, 'The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.' He studieth to glorify God, and edify others, because the law of God is in his heart: ver. 31, that is the reason rendered there; that is, because his mind is upon it.

(3d.) For actions. Men are known by their constant exercise, what they pursue and seek after; whether their life be a 'sowing to the flesh' or a 'sowing to the spirit:' Gal. vi. 8.

3. The reasons to prove it. That we may fix the reasons we must again, in a shorter method, consider what minding implieth. It implieth our savour, and our walk; or, to divest it from the metaphor, our affections and endeavours. So the reasons will be two, suitable to these two notions.

[1.] As minding implieth our savour and affections. Men's gust is according to their constitutions, and the bait discovereth the temper: for pleasure is *applicatio convenientis convenienti*; when the object and the faculty suit, things please us, and are minded by us, as they are agreeable to our humour: Luke xvi. 25, 'Son, remember that thou in thy life-time hast received thy good things.' Carnal men have their good things and the children of God their good things. Our relish is agreeable to our nature. A fish hath small pleasure on the dry land, or a beast at sea. A fleshly creature can arise no higher than a fleshly inclination moveth it; therefore men's complacency and displacency showeth of what nature they are. The nature is hidden, but the operations and affections discover it.

[2.] As it implieth our walk and endeavour. Men's actions are according to their predominant principle. As the tree is, so is the fruit: Mat. vii. 18, 'Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit.' And as a man is, so his work will be; for the course of his life showeth the constitution of his soul: such as the man is, so will his works be. Can a man be said to be after the spirit that only looketh after those things which please the senses, and scarce admitteth a serious thought of God, or the life to come? Or, on the other side, can he be said to be after the flesh that maketh it his business to tame the flesh, and his work to please and enjoy God?

[3.] From both. Things that suit with the disposition and inclination of our hearts do banish all love of contrary things. As the carnal minding is opposite to the spiritual minding, and quengeth and weakeneth it more and more, so the spiritual minding weakeneth the inclinations, and retrencheth the interest of the flesh: Gal. v. 16, 'Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' There is no such care of minding the things of the flesh, as by diversion to nobler objects, and obeying a higher principle. Our affections cannot lie idle; while we are awake to the world, we sleep to God; and while we are dead to the spirit, we are alive to the flesh; and so on the contrary.

SERMON VII.

They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.—ROM. viii. 5.

I PROCEED now to the application of the former discourse:

Use I. To put us upon serious self-reflection, of what sort are we? after the flesh, or after the spirit? I pray let us go to a thorough search and trial; and to deal more plainly in it,

1. Consider there are three sorts of persons in the world:—

[1.] Some are wholly carried away by the desires of the flesh, and seek their happiness here but neglect things to come. The case is clear, that they are after the flesh, and so for the present in a state of death and damnation. And they had need to look to it betimes; for 'to be carnally minded is death,' *meritorie et effective*. They provoke God to deny them life, whom they despise for their lusts' sake, and dispense with their duty to him to satisfy some foolish and inordinate desire: and effective, they have no sound belief, nor desire of the world to come: and do you think God will save them against their wills, and thrust and force these things upon them without their consent, or beside their purpose and inclination? No, it will not be. Surely there is no difficulty in the case, to state their condition, who grossly set more by their lusts than by their obedience to God. The things of the flesh are the chief scope and business of their lives; and they care not whether God be pleased or displeased, obeyed or disobeyed, honoured or dishonoured, a friend or an enemy; so the flesh be pleased, that is all their desire and aim.

[2.] There is another sort of men, who do many things that are good, but the flesh too often gets the upper hand; and though they do many things that appertain to the spirit, yet in other things they show they are influenced by the carnal life, as is evident.

[3.] Some unquestionably show they are after the spirit, by their deep sense of heavenly things, their care about them, their diligence and watchfulness over the desires and inclinations of the flesh, and holding a hard hand over the passions and affections thereof, and their serious endeavours to please God. There is no doubt but these are born of God.

All the difficulty is about the middle sort, to understand their condition. They must be again distinguished:—

1. Some are not far off from the kingdom of God.

2. Others are actually admitted, though grace be in some weak degree.

(1.) For the first—those that are not far from the kingdom of God. They are such as have the grace of the third ground described: Luke viii. 14, 'And that which fell among thorns, are they who, having heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and the pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.' They have good sentiments of religion, and retain them longer than the stony ground doth, but they are over-mastered with the cares of this world, and voluptuous living, so as that they attain not to the perfection of that holy and heavenly life that should be in Christians. They do not lay aside the profession, but have not felt the power of Christianity in mortifying their fleshly and worldly lusts, that they may be more at liberty for God, and the duties of their heavenly calling; and so cherish a kind of imperfect Christianity, which little honoureth God in the world, or doth good to their own souls. They are neither wholly on nor off from religion. The bane of it is, that carnal and temporal things lie too near their hearts, so that they cannot fully commence into the divine life, and never took pains to overcome the natural spirit, which lusteth to sensuality, envy, pride, and worldliness. There are some good things found in them; but the carnal minding is not mortified, nor

doth the meek, holy, heavenly spirit prevail in them. There are others—

(2.) Who are regenerate; but grace is weak in them, and corruptions break out, and shake off the empire of grace for a time, though it habitually prevails, and governs their actions. Now for the former, we must persuade them to get a good and a honest heart; that is, that their intentions be more sincere and fixed, their way more thorough and exact, lest they get a name for religion, to do a mischief to it. For most of the calamities of the church, and the prejudices against religion, and hardening by scandals and blemishes, come from that sort of men, and are to be laid at their doors. And for the second, we are to advise them, and call upon them to distinguish themselves from the carnal state more clearly and explicitly. For though God may accept them, yet whilst they border too near upon the carnal world, it is in vain to find out evidences whereby they may assure their hearts before God; for though God possibly hath given them saving grace, and will accept them at last, yet he will not give them assurance; and we do but perplex cases of conscience, to reconcile the tenor of Christianity with their weak state. Exhortation doth better than trial. If they be sincere, they will come on in the way of godliness, and then that which was doubtful will be more clear and satisfactory, and their sincerity will be more unquestionable.

(3.) Because God's dear children write bitter things against themselves, either out of weakness of judgment, or consciousness of too much prevalency of corrupt affections, and tenderness of God's honour, and trouble for their own imperfections, it will be necessary further to state the point. There is to the very last, flesh and spirit in the best: Gal. v. 17, 'For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit lusteth against the flesh;' yet there is enough to distinguish them from the carnal world; and that is the potency and the predominancy of the spiritual principle. *Denominatio est a potiori*; not from what is perfect, but from what is sincere, and habitually reigneth and beareth the upper hand in the soul. But then the question returneth, How shall we know the prevalency? I answer—

[1.] Negatively. Not by a bare sense of duty, or a dictate of conscience, that showeth what ought to be done; but many times we do quite otherwise; for many 'hold the truth in unrighteousness:' Rom. i. 18. A dictate of conscience is insufficient to change the heart and sanctify the life. Nor barely by the resolution of the will, for that may be ineffectual, and without a full purpose of heart: 'I go, sir,' said the first son in the parable, 'but went not:' Mat. xxi. 30. Many resolve well, but they have not a heart to verify and make good their resolutions: Deut. v. 29. The Jews said, 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.' 'Oh! that there were such a heart in them,' saith God. Nor by a faint desire; for many can wish not only for heaven and happiness, but that it might be otherwise with them in point of holiness, that God would change their natures; but they do not use the means: 'The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing,' Prov. xiii. 4. None goeth to heaven by the sluggard's wishes; not by prevailing in one act, or more; for many, in a pang of zeal, may do much for God: Gal. iv. 18, 'It is good to be zealously affected always in a

good matter; Ps. cvi. 3, 'Blessed are they that do righteousness at all times.' Nor by every kind of dislike, and resistance of sin, that may sometimes arise from other lusts; for they sometimes fight among themselves: James iv. 1, 'Whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even from your lusts, which war in yourselves?' Or from hypocrisy, to hide and feed some other lusts the more plausibly. Or if from conscience, the resistance is too feeble to break the power of sin, till the heart be renewed, or more thoroughly set towards God and heavenly things.

[2.] Positively.

(1st.) By the course of our actions. Habits are known by the uniformity of acts, when the effects of the spirit are more constant than those of the flesh, and the drift and business of our lives is for God and our salvation; our bent and business is the pleasing of God, and the saving of our own souls. Men must be judged, not by a few acts, but their walk, or the tenor of their conversations. They that spend their time in knitting one carnal contentment to another, and glut themselves with all manner of vain delights, and God hath from them but what the flesh can spare, a little formal slight service, that they may pacify conscience, and enjoy their pleasures with less remorse; what are they doing but the flesh's business?

(2d.) By cherishing the best principle with all care and diligence, and mortifying and suppressing the other. The better principle must be cherished; that is, we must get more degrees of faith, love, and hope, that faith may be more strong, love more fervent, hope more lively: 2 Pet. iii. 18, 'But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' On the other side, the flesh would fain be pleased before God; but you must subdue it more and more: 1 Cor. ix. 22, 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection;' give it not what it craveth. Rest not in endeavours without success; for, Gal. v. 24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof.' A Christian is seen *proposito conatu, eventu*. Some victory there must be over the carnal mind. See that the power of the flesh be diminished in you, both as to the motions of it and your obedience to it.

Use 2 is Exhortation.

First. Negatively: Not to mind the things of the flesh. That is, take heed not only of the grosser out-breakings of the flesh, but of serving it in a more cleanly manner, by too free and full a gust and relish in any outward thing; for by this means it securely gets interest, and gaineth upon you. If you freely let loose the heart to every alluring object, and withhold not yourselves from any joy, lust will grow bold and head-strong, and be hardly kept within bounds.

Motives:—

1. Consider your engagement, as you are Christ's: Gal. v. 24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof.' Every man is engaged by his profession and covenant, sealed in baptism, so to do; which should be a very moving argument to press us to do things cross and displeasing to the flesh.

2. Your comfort dependeth on it. For here is your evidence, either you must mortify the flesh, or gratify the flesh; if you gratify the

flesh, you are not under the conduct of the Spirit, and so not under the hope of glory; if you mortify it, then you shall live. The only evidence that will content and satisfy you, as to your gracious state, is such a high estimation of God and Christ and grace, as weaneth you, and draweth off the heart from other things. A dull approbation of that which is good will make no evidence, nor a few good wishes; nothing but such a strong bent as deadeneth your affections to the world: Gal. vi. 14, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.'

3. This will be your wisdom. There is a false wisdom, and a true wisdom: James iii. 15, 'This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devillish:' ver. 17, 'But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable,' etc. This is the true wisdom, to be wise for the spirit. I do the rather insist upon this because there is a notion of wisdom in the word of the text. Carnal men judge their own way wisest, and the way of the godly to be mere folly: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him: neither can he receive them, because they are spiritually discerned.' The godly employ themselves to get things spiritual, and such as God's honour is mainly concerned in; and are not attended with an income of worldly advantage, but rather of loss and detriment—but yet the end shall prove that they that thought themselves the only wise men and gainers, have been mere fools; and the greatest losers (those others whom they looked upon as madmen) are the wisest adventurers and the greatest gainers. The issue will show it: Gal. vi. 8, 'He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting;' Rom. viii. 6, 'To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.'

4. The flesh is really our enemy; yea, our greatest enemy. Therefore we should not indulge the flesh, but give up ourselves to be ruled by the Spirit: 1 Peter ii. 10, 11, 'Take heed of fleshly lusts which war against the Spirit.' That it is one of our enemies, is clear by that: Eph. ii. 2, 3, 'Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now ruleth in the children of disobedience: among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.' There is the course of this world, and the prince of the power of the air, and our own flesh. Corrupt nature within us would make us vile enough, without external incitements and suggestions, though there were never a devil to tempt or evil example to follow. If the devil should stand by, and say nothing, there is enough within us to put us upon all manner of evil, though there were no other irritation than God's law: Rom. vii. 9, 'When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' Other enemies could do us no harm without our own flesh. We are tempted to sin by Satan, encouraged to sin by the example and custom of others, inticed to sin by the baits and allurements of the world; but inclined to sin by our own flesh. It is the flesh that holdeth correspondence with

Satan, the flesh that openeth the door to temptations, the flesh that maketh our abode in the world so dangerous, the flesh that choketh the good seed, that hindereth all our heavenly thoughts, and maketh the service of God so burdensome. The flesh is within us and maketh a part of ourselves. There is more imminent danger from a plague in the body, than from an enemy that waiteth in the streets to kill us. If we would but keep ourselves from ourselves we should do well enough. It is the flesh that lulleth us asleep in carnal security, that tainteth all our actions, and is so ready to betray us. The devil dealeth with us as Baalam by the Israelites; all his curses and charms prevailed nothing, till he found a means to destroy them by themselves, to corrupt them by whoredom, and by whoredom to draw them to idolatry. It is the flesh that is the domestical enemy, that dwelleth with us, and in us, and so maketh us a ready prey to Satan. We carry it about with us wherever we go, and so it is ready to do us mischief upon all occasions. When we are about holy duties, it distracteth us with vain thoughts, and taketh off our edge, and make us drowsy and dead-hearted, and weary of God's service. When we are about our callings, it is the flesh that maketh us lazy and negligent, and diverteth us by the proposals of sensual objects; or else to be so earnest in them, that we have no time nor heart for God and soul-necessities. When we are eating and drinking, it is the flesh that turneth our table into a snare, and tempts us to glut ourselves with carnal delights, and to oppress our bodies when we should refresh them and strengthen them for God's service. In our recreations it is the flesh that maketh us inordinate in them, and to forget our great work and last end; and so we are the more intangled in sin when we should be more fit to glorify God. It is the flesh that, being beaten out at one door, entereth by another, and still assaults us afresh, to our great spiritual prejudice. And will you study how to please the flesh, that is so great an enemy to your souls—that flesh that resists all the motions of God's Spirit; that cloggeth you in every duty, and draweth you off from the pursuit of everlasting happiness?

5. Consider how ill Christ will take it, and what just cause you give him to withdraw, when you prize the things of the flesh before him and the comforts of the Spirit. Must not the Lord Jesus take it exceeding unkindly, that after all his love, and the discoveries of his grace, you should study to please his competitor, and your own enemy? Is his grace and glory worth no more than so? and hath he deserved no better at your hands? 'God spared not his own Son, but gave him up to the death for us:' Rom. viii. 32. 'Christ pleased not himself:' Rom. xv. 3. There is nothing so answerable as some self-denial on our part. The most genuine and natural influence from this grace is, that we should spare nothing, please not ourselves: Titus ii. 11, 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.' Teaching us, etc., how? By way of precept? No, by way of argument. It persuadeth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.

6. Consider, the more you indulge the flesh, the more it is an enemy, and the more is your slavery and bondage increased; and still you grow the more brutish, forgetful of God, and unapt for spiritual use

for make it a wanton once, and it groweth stubborn and contumacious, and secureth its interest, and gaineth upon you. If you allow yourselves too free and full a gust and relish in any outward thing, and let loose the heart to every alluring object, and withhold not your hearts from any joy and sense-pleasing object, which Solomon acknowledgeth as his sin: Eccles. ii. 10; vicious and inordinate desires increase upon you; and the more you gratify them the more they crave. The way to abate their rage is to deny them, and hold a hard hand over them, to 'bring the body into subjection:' 1 Cor. ix. 27. Liberty allowed in satisfying carnal desires doth marvellously increase and nourish them, and will bring you to carelessness, and hardness of heart, if not some foul scandalous fall. I am sure the heart is corrupted strangely. Solomon saith: Prov. xxiv. 21, 'He that delicately bringeth up a servant, shall have him become a son at length;' he will no more know his condition, but grow bold and troublesome. I am sure the flesh was ordained to be a servant, and not a master. Take it in the mildest sense, it was ordained to be God's servant, and our servant, and must be used as a servant, kept fit for work. We are the worse for licence; our natural desires, unless they feel fetters and restraints, will grow unruly; therefore it is good to bridle the flesh, lest it grow masterly. But when the flesh is that which you mind, which you indulge with too free a leave, you deny yourselves nothing, but cocker every appetite; you bring a snare upon the soul; and carnal distempers are the more rooted, and will prove troublesome if not destructive to you.

7. Consider the consequence and weight of these things. If it were a small matter we speak to you about, you might refuse to give ear; but it is in a case of life and death—eternal life, and eternal death. We can tell you of many temporal and present inconveniencies that come by the flesh. The body, the part gratified, suffereth, as well as the soul by it: Prov. viii. 11, 'Thou shalt mourn at last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.' It betrayeth you to commit such sins as suck your bones, and devour your strength, and give your years to the cruel. It bringeth infamy, and a blot upon the name, sins and scandals. Pleasing the flesh, and minding the flesh, makes one turn drunkard, another a wanton, another a glutton, or a hard-hearted worldling, or an ambitious, vain-glorious fool, or a senseless voluptuary: these are no small things. But rather consider, it will be the eternal ruin of your precious and immortal souls. The more you give up yourselves to please the flesh, the more you add fuel to that fire which shall never be quenched, and provide matter of eternal sorrows and confusion of face to yourselves. There will a day come when God will call you to an account for this: Eccles. xi. 9, 'Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee, and walk in the way of thine own heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.' Mark, O young man! We say, *Dandum est aliquid huic ætati*—some allowance is to be made to this age, before they have learned by experimenting pleasures to contemn them; but the young man is admonished: Do what thou pleasest; let thy wanton and wandering eye inflame the lusts of thine heart, smother thy conscience by all manner of sensual and vain delights, but at length thou wilt learn the folly of this to thy bitter cost. These things that

are now so pleasing to the senses will one day gnaw and sting the conscience; when God, whom thou now forgettest, shall, whether thou wilt or no, drag thee forth to judgment, and thou shalt in vain 'call upon the rocks and mountains to cover thee.'

8. Consider how contrary it is to our Christian hopes to mind the flesh, or please the flesh: 1 Peter ii. 11, 'Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.' You are, or you should be, travelling into another country, where are 'the spirits of just men made perfect;' and this body of thine is to become a spiritual body; will you please it not in a gross, but in a more cleanly manner? Nothing is more unsuitable. Shall we that are going to Canaan hearken after the flesh pots of Egypt? Nothing is so contrary to our profession, and that breedeth such unreadiness to depart out of the world, as these vain delights; and therefore if you be strangers and pilgrims, you should not lust after worldly and fleshly things; stop here, lest you forget and forfeit your great hopes.

9. Consider what a vile unthankfulness, and an abuse it is of that liberty which we have by Christ, and all the blessings of God's providence: Gal. v. 13, 'Ye are called to liberty, only use it not as an occasion to the flesh.' We have a great liberty to use worldly comforts, in order to God's glory, and as encouragements of God's service, and for the sweetening of our pilgrimage; but now, when you use this liberty to please the flesh, you turn it into a bondage, and offer a great abuse to Jesus Christ. Surely he never died to promote the power of sin, he never gave us these comforts richly to enjoy, to hearten our enemy; he was not a man of sorrows that we might live in pleasures, he did not suffer in the flesh that we might have liberty to indulge and please the flesh; he bestowed not so large a supply of outward comforts to hinder us from those better and eternal things which he purchased for us—1 Tim. vi. 17, 18—or to turn them into occasions of unrighteousness, and means whereby to dishonour his name, and destroy our souls.

Now if we would not do so, something must be done:—

[1.] As to sinful inclinations.

[2.] As to sinful motions.

[3.] As to sinful actions.

[1.] As to sinful and fleshly inclinations, observe them, weaken them.

(1.) Observe them. Satan doth, and we should; he observeth which way the tree leaneth, and what kind of diet our soul distempers crave, and suiteth his temptations accordingly, as the angler suiteth his bait as the fishes will take it, for every month a bait: 1 Cor. vii. 5, 'Lest satan tempt you for your incontinency.' He hath a bait of preferment for Absalom, for he is ambitious; a bait of pleasure for Samson, for he is voluptuous; a bait of money for Judas, for he is covetous; thus will he furnish them with temptations answerable to their inclinations; a man by temper voluptuous may despise profit, as an earth-worm doth pleasure, or honour, reputation, and great places, or at least doth not so much value these things. It is sad that our enemy should know our temper better than we do ourselves, where we are weakest, and how to make his assaults; and therefore observe

your inclinations. Flesh-pleasing is the general term by which it is expressed. Three objects there are about which this sin of flesh-pleasing is exercised : 1 John ii. 16, 'The lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life'—credit or honour, profit or riches, sensual pleasure or carnal delight. Now see which of these things do you favour or mind most—what carnal interest suiteth with your hearts, and groweth there.

(2.) Weaken and subdue them. It is your uprightness and faithfulness : Ps. xviii. 23, 'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquities.' Let a Christian observe the increase or decay of his master sin, and other things will succeed the more easily. 'Fight not against small nor great, but the king of Israel.' When we can deny ourselves in our dearest lusts, Satan is more discouraged. Samson's strength lay in his locks ; so doth the strength of sin, in one part more than another. Every man is sensible of his darling sin, more or less ; but the next thing to be looked after is what we do with it. Herod raged when John the Baptist touched his Herodias ; Felix trembled when Paul touched his bribery and intemperance, but puts it off. The young man went away sad and troubled when Christ told him of selling all that he had, for he had great possessions : Mark x. Many are troubled in conscience, not so much for want of assurance, as loathness to part with some bosom lust ; but when we must pluck out right eyes, and cut off right hands, Mat. v. 29, 30, it is hard to them. When you pray and strive against this sin, and grow in the contrary grace, this showeth the truth of a man's self-denial ; as Abraham's love appeared in that he did not spare Isaac.

[2.] As to evil motions. Prevent them, and suppress them.

(1.) Prevent them : 1 Peter i. 11, 'Abstain from fleshly lusts that war against your souls.' Which implies not only an abstinence from the outward act, but that you weaken the power and root of sin, that it do not so easily bud forth ; those *impetus primo primi* are sins, not only infelicities but sins ; they would not be so rife with us, if the heart were more under command. We are guilty of many sins whereunto we do consent, because we do not more strongly dissent, and more potently and rulingly command all the subject faculties, as a man is guilty of the murder of his child if he seeth his servant kill him, and doth not his best to hinder it ; but chiefly when some partial consent followeth, when the heart is tickled and delighted with them. So an unclean glance is adultery : Mat. v. 28, 'If a man look on a woman so as to lust after her, he hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.' The more they are mortified, the heart is the less pestered with them.

(2.) Suppress them speedily. When we cannot keep sin under, let us crush it. When the mind dwelleth on it, lust is conceiving, which bringeth forth sin : James i. 15. The flesh riseth up in arms against every gracious motion ; so should the spirit against every sinful motion ; if you let it alone, it will break out, to God's dishonour. Dash Babylon's brats against the stones.

[3.] As to sinful actions. Prevent them as much as may be ; repeat them not, lest they grow into a habit.

(1.) Prevent them as much as may be. It is good to stop at last, to hinder the action. When lust hath gained the consent of the will; let it not break forth into action. The very lust is a grief to the spirit, but the act will bring dishonour to God, and give ill example to men: Micah ii. 1, 'Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their bed; when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hands.' If fire be kindled in thy bosom, it is dangerous to let the sparks fly abroad.

(2.) Repeat not these acts; lest they grow into a habit and settled disposition of soul. Evil customs increase by many acts, and so the mischief is more remediless: Jer. xiii. 27, 'I have seen thy adulteries and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredoms, O Jerusalem! Wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?' It is a very difficult thing for a man to leave his inveterate customs; customary exercise in the use of earthly things begets worldly dispositions not easily cured. Augustine saith of his mother Monica: *Ad illud modicum quotidiana modica addendo in eam consuetudinem delapsa erat, ut plenos jam mero calices inhianter hauriebat.* Vinolency crept upon her by degrees. To be gratifying carnal desires now with one thing, now with another, what doth it do, but bring us under the power of a distemper which we cannot remedy: Heb. iii. 13, 'Exhort one another daily whilst it is called to-day, lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' Yield a little to sin, and it prevaileth more, till at last you are brought under the power of it: 1 Cor. vi. 12, 'All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any thing.'

Secondly. Positively, as to the things of the spirit.

1. Mind the things of the spirit more than ever you have done. Many stick there in the very acts that properly belong to the mind, never so much as trouble themselves, or come to any reasoning within themselves, about pardon of their sins, peace with God, the sanctification of the spirit, or hopes of eternal life: Ps. x. 4, 'The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts.' Alas! What have you been doing since you came to the use of reason? How have you spent your time in youth or riper age? If you have never thought of God and his grace, nor regarded the offers of mercy in the gospel, certainly you have lost your time, neglected your duty, and betrayed your souls. What have you been doing? Have you been governed by the flesh or by the spirit? If all your care hath been about back and belly, and your thoughts have reached no higher than the riches, and honours, and pleasures, and applause, and esteem of the world, and heaven and heavenly things have been little regarded, alas! for the present you are in the highway to hell and everlasting destruction, if you do not correct your error in time, and more earnestly mind other things.

2. You must not only mind the things of the spirit, but prize and choose them for your work and happiness, for some of them belong to your duty, and some to your felicity: Luke x. 42, 'One thing is necessary, and Mary hath chosen the better part, which shall never be taken from her.' Give your hearty consent to seek after that happiness in that way. Without choice, or a determinate fixed bent of heart, you

will never thoroughly engage yourselves to God. Determine not only that you must, but you will walk in the way which God hath set forth for you. All will choose happiness before misery, but they are out in the means; they do not choose the good of holiness before the pleasures of sin, nor the life of faith before the life of sense. If you have more mind to keep sin than to let it go, you are still charmed and enchanted with the delights of the flesh, your will and resolution are not fixed.

3. To this add an industrious pursuit and seeking after these things; for our choice is known by our pursuit, and our bent by our work. These things must be diligently sought after, that we may behave ourselves like men that are desirous to have what they seek: Heb. xi. 6, 'God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' Everlasting joys will not drop into the mouth of the lazy soul; these things are not trifles, they will cost us diligence and seriousness: Phil. ii. 12, 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.' It is a weighty work, and it must be followed close; if you miscarry in it, you are undone for ever; but if you happily get through it, you are in a blessed state indeed.

4. You must seek after the privileges of the gospel in God's way. You cannot have spiritual life, and adoption, and justification by Christ, till you are united to him by faith: 1 John v. 12, 'He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life.' You cannot have heaven and glory, but by patient continuance in well-doing: Rom. ii. 3, 'To them that by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life.' You cannot have the end, but in the use of means, and you do not like the end if you do not like the means. Till you come to God by Christ, you cannot live the life of grace; and till you live the life of grace you are not capable of glory. Therefore you must ask your souls often, What have I to show for my title to salvation more than most of the world have?

5. It is not enough that you seek after them in God's way, but you must seek after them above other things. A feeble desire cannot maintain itself against fleshly lusts and temptations. If you have a mind to these things, and a greater mind to other things, your resolution will be soon shaken, carnal things will intercept the vigour and life of your souls. These things must be sought first, and most; all must be sold for the pearl of price: Mat. xiii. 45, 46.

6. You must beg of God to give you a new mind, and a new heart, both to discern and relish spiritual things; for your old corrupt minds and hearts will never do it: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he receive them, because they are spiritually discerned.' He cannot accept, nor savingly understand, these things so as to believe them with a sound belief, and a large affection. Exhortations are in vain, for inclination here doth more than persuasion; all things are of God: 2 Cor. v. 17, 18. God must give both, and therefore ask them of him.