

brother's righteous;' 1 Peter iv. 3, 4, 'For the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries. Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.' A spiritual slumber is fallen on the carnal world, and they are loath to be disturbed; as Jonah, when the sun groweth hot, and beateth upon his head, falleth a chafing. The devil is a prince of darkness, and delighteth in darkness, and envieth to the world this blessed light and the benefit of it.

Use 2. Is exhortation, to persuade us to get light. It is a shame to be ignorant of our necessary duty. If a man be asked whether he can paint or carve? he may answer without shame, I am ignorant; that skill is not necessary; but if he be ignorant how to love and please and serve God, then he is brutish, like the horse or mule, that hath no understanding.

SERMON XVI.

Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.—EPH. v. 14.

THE apostle confirmeth what he had said, that christianity is light, by a testimony. All that are converted by God, and brought into a state of light, the doctrine they profess is light, and they are to put to shame the deeds of darkness by the light that shineth from them into the consciences of others: 'Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' As if he had said, The drift of the word of God is to call us to a timely conversion, or to awaken us from the sleep and death of sin, that he may enlighten us with the light of the gospel, and we may walk accordingly, and so have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

In the words we have two things—(1.) A preface; (2.) The testimony produced.

1. The preface, 'Wherefore he saith.' Who saith? God in the scriptures. But where doth he say it, since we read not this sentence anywhere in so many formal and direct words?

Ans. [1.] It may be it was some sentence of Christ then in recent memory, as that, Acts xx. 35, 'And to remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

[2.] It may be this is said to be the voice of God, because it is the drift of the whole scripture; for all tendeth to this sum, that those who are asleep, and dead in sin, be stirred up to repentance, and coming to Christ by faith, that he may give them light; that is, that they may be enlightened by his grace, and so fitted for eternal glory: Titus ii. 11-13, 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath

appeared to all men,' *ἐπεφάνη* hath broken out like light upon us, 'teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.'

[3.] There are some scriptures which are like it; as Isa. ix. 2, 'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.' This is spoken of the Messiah, who cometh to enlighten the world by the ministry of the gospel; as it is applied, Mat. iv. 16, 'The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.' Nearer yet, Isa. xxvi. 19, 'Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust.' But nearest of all, Isa. lx. 1, 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;' which chapter speaketh of the glorious estate of the church under the Messiah, and therefore they are exhorted to rouse up themselves, and to mind and improve the grace offered; that is, those that live in these gospel times are in word and deed to hold forth this light and doctrine of Christ to the conversion of others.

2. In the testimony produced there are two things to be observed—

(1.) A command; (2.) A promise.

[1.] A command, 'Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.' In which words observe—(1.) The quality of the persons to whom the command is given; (2.) The nature of the command itself

(1.) The quality of the persons to whom the command is given. They are described by a double character, to be those that are asleep, and those that are dead in trespasses and sins. Sleep and death have a great affinity and resemblance one with another; natural sleep is an image of death, but spiritual sleep is a true spiritual death. In our natural sleep our faculties and their functions are suspended, but yet they remain entire; in spiritual sleep our faculties are corrupted and disabled for any office of life. Zanchy saith these words are spoken to two sorts of persons—to mere unbelievers, and to sinning believers. The last are compared to them that sleep, the other to them that are dead. Awakening is required from the one, and rising from the dead as to the other. But this is more argute than solid. Both expressions denote some persons: 'Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.' The one expression noteth their incapacity to help themselves, the other their security and carelessness; they do not trouble themselves about it.

(2.) The nature of the command, 'Awake,' and 'Arise from the dead.' The things commanded are two—that they should 'awake,' and 'arise from the dead; as in natural sleep men are first awakened, and then they rise and go about their business.

[2.] The promise, 'And Christ shall give thee light,' *ἐπιφάσει σοι*; he shall shine upon thee. When the gospel was first set up, the light did shine about them, but not presently into their hearts: John i. 5, 'The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. This light shineth about us in the tenders of gospel grace, but it shineth into our hearts when we are admitted into the privileges of it, and are made partakers of this heavenly benefit. In opposition to our

natural estate it should be (we would think), Christ shall give thee life, but it is, Give thee light. Christ converts us by shining into our hearts; we are enlightened by being baptized: Heb. x. 32, 'But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of affliction.'

From the whole observe this doctrine—

Doct. That the great intent of Christ in the gospel is to call people out of their woful estate by sin into the marvellous light of his salvation.

This is the great truth here represented; and to clear it up to you—

I. Observe how woful and dangerous the present case of carnal unregenerate men is. It is represented to us under the notions of spiritual sleep and spiritual death; which I shall speak of both generally and apart, and then conjunctly and together.

First, To speak of them generally and apart.

1. They are asleep in sin, whereas the regenerate are awakened: 1 Thes. v. 5, 6, 'Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober.' Their sleep noteth their ignorance and security; they neither mind their duty nor their danger; never think of God's wrath approaching, nor prepare themselves to stand before him with comfort, but go on contentedly in their sinful estate, as if the merry world would always last. Sleeping is either total or partial.

[1.] Total, in the unregenerate, who are senseless and mindless of their condition, or regard nothing of their misery and happiness. Their reason and natural knowledge is, as it were, laid asleep, and useless to them. If men did improve common principles, and act as reasonable creatures, they could not so unreasonably allow themselves in such a course of sin and folly as they live in. Therefore our business is to awaken conscience, that they may show themselves men: Isa. xlvi. 8, 'Remember this, and show yourselves men; bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors!' O christians! is this a case to sleep in, when men are upon the brink of hell, and the wrath of God hangeth like a sharp sword over their heads, ready to drop down upon them every moment? If reason were not laid asleep, grace would sooner do its work.

[2.] Partial, in God's people: Cant. v. 2, 'I sleep, but my heart waketh.' There is in them a double principle—the flesh inclining to sleep, and the spirit inclining to wake. We read in the parable, Mat. xxv. 5, 'While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept;' that is, both the foolish and wise virgins. The wise have their slumbering fits. The doctrines of the gospel concerning God and Christ, heaven and hell, sin and holiness, have not always alike lively influence upon their hearts. By the gleams of worldly prosperity faith is fallen asleep, and ready to give place to sensuality, and they are governed more by the desires of the flesh than by the heavenly mind. The heart is kept strange to God and heaven, because it is altogether taken up with carnal vanities.

But the former is now under our consideration, the sleep of the carnal, not of the renewed. That sleep again is twofold—natural and judicial.

(1.) Natural, when they are careless of their souls, neglectful of heavenly things, live without God in the world. This is natural to us through the ignorance and injudiciousness of our minds: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;' Eph. ii. 12, 'That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.'

(2.) There is a judicial hardness, when a spirit of deep sleep falleth upon them, and they are neither awakened by the ordinances nor providences of God: Rom. xi. 8, 'God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day.' This noteth an extreme degree of security and stupidity, when God giveth men up to their wilful obstinacy, by withdrawing that light from them against which they have so often rebelled, and then they are, as it were, intoxicated by some soporiferous potion or medicine; do what we can, we cannot awaken them. All wicked men arrive not to this, but they are in the way to it. Here then is their misery upon the first account, they sleep in sin; and a great misery it is.

(1st.) Because their insensibility and security make their other sins more dangerous. If the devil can keep men asleep in their sins, he hath his ends upon them; he could not make such slaves and drudges of them to their base lusts if reason and conscience were but awake in them: 1 Cor. xv. 34, 'Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God.' It is all the reason men should rouse up themselves out of that drowsy condition of sin wherein they are got so securely and contentedly, without disturbance or remorse.

(2d.) Though they sleep, their damnation sleepeth not: 2 Peter ii. 3, 'Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.' Punishment may be long suspended, yet it breaketh out at last, and surpriseth us ere we are aware. It is sad to sleep on still till we awake in flames. Death, and judgment, and eternity is at hand, and will you still live merrily and quietly, in a careless and unprepared estate, as if all were well?

(3d.) The sun is up, and shines into their windows: Rom. xiii. 11, 'And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed;' 1 Thes. v. 7, 'For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night.' To sleep in our sins when we live in the full sunshine of the gospel is more damnable: John iii. 19, 'And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.' Deeds of darkness do not become a time of light. Will you follow Satan by daylight, and run on with open eyes to everlasting destruction? Our sins are more excuseless and more shameless the more wilful. Every sin is double to what it was in the times of ignorance. Our security now cannot be maintained without atheism and great contempt of God, who so clearly discovereth his mind to us.

2. The next notion is spiritual death; for we are bidden to 'Arise,

from the dead,' which showeth this sleep is deadly : Eph. ii. 1, 'And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins ;' John v. 25, 'The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live.' We are spiritually dead till Christ help us. How are we dead ? Two ways—(1.) Dead as we are destitute of spiritual life ; (2.) Dead as we are destitute of the favour and peace of God.

[1.] Dead as we are destitute of spiritual life. To lessen our disease is to slight our cure, which the scripture seeketh to magnify everywhere. And therefore to be destitute of the Spirit of God is as the body when deprived of the soul. There is no principle in us to incline us to God, or to do anything that is spiritually good, yea, much to the contrary : Rom. viii. 7, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' As there is no inclination and ability, so there is much averseness and enmity ; and therefore we cannot quicken ourselves or convert ourselves. And this incapacity and disability is increased in us by the growth of perverse and carnal habits : 1 Tim. v. 6, 'But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.' Though alive as to the body, she is dead as to God and the heavenly life, and all the interests of it.

[2.] We are dead as we have lost the favour of God, and are obnoxious to his wrath. The law hath sentenced us to death, and our passing from death to life is not only put in opposition to corruption, but is opposite to condemnation : John v. 24, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.' And sins are called 'dead works,' as they render us liable to death, Heb. ix. 14. They merit everlasting punishment. Now this is our woful condition, we are destitute of life spiritual, and obnoxious to the wrath of God, and therefore we should not allowedly continue in this estate for a moment.

Secondly, Let us speak of these terms conjunctly ; the one helpeth to explain the other. When we hear that man sleepeth in sin, possibly we might be apt to be conceited that man's heart is not so corrupt as it is, and are ready to say of it, as Christ did of the damsel whom he raised to life, Mat. ix. 24, 'She is not dead, but sleepeth.' Therefore we must take in the other expression to help it. We do not only sleep in sin, but are dead in trespasses and sins. So, on the other side, when we hear that we are in the state of the dead, we may misconceive of God's work in conversion, and press the rigour of the notion too far, as if he wrought upon us only as stocks and stones ; therefore we must take in the other expression ; we sleep in sins. Life natural is still left us ; there is reason and conscience still to work upon, though we are wholly disabled from doing anything pleasing to God ; that is to say—

1. We have reason. Thou art a man, and hast reason, and therefore art to be dealt with by way of exhortation. God influenceth all things according to their natural inclination, as he enlighteneth the world by the sun, burneth with fire, so he reasoneth with man. God acts necessarily with necessary causes, and freely with free causes. He doth not oppress the liberty of his creatures, but preserveth the nature and interest of his workmanship, and draweth men with the cords of a

man, Hosea xi. 4, propoundeth reasons which we must consider, and so betake ourselves to the heavenly life. He maketh use of the faculties we have, and showeth us the misery of our lost estate, the possibility of salvation by Christ, sweetly inviting us to accept of his grace, that he may pardon our sins, sanctify and heal our natures, and lead us in a way of holiness to eternal life.

2. We have conscience (which is reason applying things to our case), and can judge of our actions morally considered with respect to reward and punishment, and accuse or excuse as the nature of the action deserveth: Rom. ii. 14, 15, 'For when the gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law to themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another.'

3. That we have a natural self-love and desire of happiness: Ps. iv. 6, 'There be many that say, Who will show us any good?' Mat. xiii. 45, 46, 'The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.' We would not be miserable, nor hated of God, nor cast into eternal torments, but would rather have eternal bliss. How can we preach to you? What have we to work upon but this? So that though we are dead, so as to do nothing savingly and acceptably, yet we must remember that we are also asleep, ignorant, slight, careless, do not improve our natural reason, conscience, and desires of happiness to any saving purpose, and will not mind things. Both together giveth us a right apprehension of our woful condition by nature, that we are corrupt, and so are said to be dead; and senseless and secure, so we are said to be asleep, mindless of our danger and remedy.

II. The manner of our recovery out of this wretched estate.

1. In the general, it is by calling of us. God's words are here put in the form of a call or invitation, 'Awake, arise.' 1 Peter ii. 9, 'Who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light;' 2 Thes. ii. 14, 'Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.' This calling is both outward and inward; outwardly by the gospel, and inwardly by the Spirit. The outward calling is necessary that we might have some visible sign of God's good-will towards us, and something from God himself to give us a right and warrant to lay claim to those excellent privileges by which he doth invite us to our duty, that we might not take this honour to ourselves, and seem to usurp and intrude upon the possession of those things which belong not to us: Heb. v. 4, 'And no man taketh this honour unto himself but he that is called of God.' None came to the wedding but those that were bidden, Mat. xxii., or went into the vineyard till they were hired, Mat. xx. It is necessary also to bring home his grace to us, and leave it upon our own choice: Acts xiii. 26, 'To you is the word of this salvation sent;' that if we refuse it, the fault may appear to be our own, and our destruction of ourselves. The inward calling by his Spirit is necessary also to make this grace effectual, otherwise we should remain dead and sleepy still: 2 Peter i. 3, 'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto

life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.' God hath called us to glory and virtue, which we expound, to heaven and holiness. But the call remaineth ineffectual, there being so much opposition without and within our hearts, and slight and vain apprehensions of it. And the devil catcheth the good seed out of our minds as soon as we begin to be serious, Mat. xiii. 19; and we being enchanted with a sensual happiness, do so willingly yield to his motions, that all will come to nothing unless God interpose his divine power to change our hearts, and bring us to life and godliness.

2. More particularly, the order of this calling is set down in the text, in these two injunctions, 'Awake,' and 'Arise from the dead.' We are reduced and brought home to God two ways—either (1.) Preparatively and dispositively; or (2.) Formally and constitutively.

[1.] The preparative and dispositive way is intimated in that word 'Awake,' and teacheth us this great truth, that our first step to conversion is an awakening, or a serious consideration whence we are, whither we are a-going, or what shall become of us to all eternity. Wherever conversion to God is spoken of, somewhat of this is implied. Awakening grace goeth before converting grace: Ps. xxii. 27, 'All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord.' First remember, and then turn; as if they had forgotten themselves all the while before, and had lived as in a dream, and utter neglect of those common principles which discovered a God; and do rule, or govern, and influence all the affairs of mankind. So Ps. cxix. 59, 'I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.' Till we consider what we have done, and what we should do, there can be no expectation that we should correct our errors, and heartily return to a holy life, or to the obedience we owe to God. So it is said of the prodigal, Luke xv. 17, that 'he came to himself' before he thought of returning to his father. There are two parts of religion—to bring men and themselves together, and then to bring them and Christ together; the one is preparative to the other; first they come to themselves, and then they are in a hopeful way of being brought to Christ. So Ezek. xviii. 28, 'Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions which he hath committed.' First he considereth, and layeth his course of life to heart, and then turneth from it. As here in the text; awaking out of the sleep of sin maketh way for the introduction of the light of life: 2 Tim. ii. 26, 'That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil.' In the margin it is 'that they may awake,' *ἀνανήψουσιν*. The word *ἀνανήψειν* signifieth to awake or be sober again after drunkenness, as the scripture expresseth it concerning Nabal: 1 Sam. xxv. 37, 'It came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him all these things, that his heart died within him.' So of Noah: Gen. ix. 24, 'And Noah awoke from his wine.' And so if the fumes of lust were thoroughly dissipated and scattered, and men were come to themselves again, much good might be done upon them. I have done with this preparative way of recovery, when I have observed to you two things, for it consists of two branches—

(1.) An awakening sense and sight of our misery; such the apostle speaketh of Rom. vii. 9, 'When the commandment came, sin revived,

and I died.' This practical conviction maketh us see our lost estate, for we never value Christ as a saviour till we see our own necessity of him. A cold doctrinal knowledge of sin and misery maketh way but for a dogmatical opinionative faith; and the offer of grace is never seriously regarded by any that is not made sensible of his sad and miserable case by nature. Therefore this part of the awakening is necessary. As the physician is welcome to the sick, and ease to the burdened, and redemption to the captive, so is the promise to them that are apprehensive of the curse.

(2.) The next awakening concerneth our remedy, which we slight and neglect while we are drunk with worldly felicity: Mat. xxii. 5, 'And they made light of it, and went their way, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.' We prize not Christ and his salvation till the Lord be pleased to open our hearts, as he did the heart of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14. Then we begin to consider what manner of salvation is offered to us, and how deeply we are concerned in it. And conscience begins to scourge us with such a question as that is, Heb. ii. 3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' And of what punishment shall we be thought worthy if we despise God's offer?

[2.] Formal and constitutive, 'Arise from the dead.' Our conversion is as the recalling of a dead man to life; and therefore called 'repentance from dead works,' Heb. vi. 1. And it is represented by the return of the prodigal, Luke xv. 32, 'For this thy brother was dead, and is alive again.' It is as wonderful a work and as considerable a blessing as if he had been raised from the dead. Things are said to be dead when they are useless as to the ends for which they serve or were created; so we are dead in trespasses and sins, useless to God, and averse from him; but when we renounce and forsake all our former ways, and devote ourselves to God, to live in his love, and do his will, then we are alive again. The other awakening is *gradus ad rem*, a preparative disposition; this is *gradus in re*, a plain passing from death to life. Man before the fall did enjoy spiritual life and communion with God, being his creature, and fitted for commerce with him, but we lost this life by our defection from God; therefore now our great business is to return to it again, by getting our hearts and lives changed. It beginneth in the new birth, when we are first quickened to this life: 1 Peter i. 3, 'Who hath begotten us to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;' Titus iii. 5, 'According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' And the first act of it is our solemn dedication of ourselves to God: Rom. vi. 13, 'But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead; and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.' And still it is carried on in holiness all our days: Luke i. 74, 75, 'That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.' So that to rise from the dead is as much as to get your natures changed and healed, and to quit your former conversation, and the lusts that caused it, that for the future you may live unto God. This is that the returning sinner must mind, that the convictions may not die upon his heart till they produce some good effect, a settled purpose and resolution to live the holy and heavenly life.

III. The next thing is, what a blessed estate Christ calleth them into; he doth not only rescue them out of the power of darkness, but 'he will give them light.'

Many things are intended hereby.

1. By light is meant the lively light of the Spirit, or a clear affective knowledge both of our misery and remedy. Of our misery: Rev. iii. 18, 'And anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see;' that is, see our misery and wretched condition. Our remedy: 2 Cor. iv. 6, 'For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' He alludeth to the creation; as light was the first creature—'Let there be light, and there was light'—so it is in the new creation.

2. Light is put for God's favour, and the solid consolation which floweth from thence: Ps. iv. 6, 7, 'Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness into my heart, more than in the time that their corn and wine increased;' Ps. lxxxix. 15, 'They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.' Naturally we were children of wrath even as others, had no true peace and solid comfort; now to live in the favour of God, whereas before we continually feared his wrath, is certainly a very great blessing.

3. It implieth eternal glory and happiness, to which we have a right now, and for which we are prepared and fitted by grace: Col. i. 12, 'Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'

4. I shall answer some doubts; for may it not seem to be collected hence—

[1.] That it is in our power to obey the call of God, or to do those things which he hath required of us in the gospel, as to repent, believe, and walk in newness of life?

[2.] That we prevent him? for first we awake, and arise from the dead, before Christ giveth us light. So much the order of the words seems to imply, that man is first awakened, and risen, and then enlightened. This cannot be, for it is by the light of Christ that we are both awakened and raised.

To the first I answer—It is not so; it is *potentia Domini, non viribus mortui*, by the power of God alone, by which they are awakened and risen; it is not in their power, but their duty. And in these exhortations God showeth not what we can do, but what we ought to do.

God exhorteth for these reasons—

(1.) To demand his right. Though we have lost our power, yet he must not lose his right. As a debt may be demanded from a prodigal creditor who hath wasted his substance, so may our duty be required of us, especially when it is demanded practically, to convince us of our impotency; that is, that upon trial we may acknowledge the debt, confess our impotency, and beg grace.

(2.) Because God by calling conveyeth his grace: 'For he calleth the things that are not as though they were,' Rom. iv. 17. His word is a creating word. He cried with a loud voice to the dead man that was ready to stink, John xi. 43, 'Lazarus, come forth;' so to the man with a withered hand, Mat. xii. 13, 'Stretch forth thine hand.'

That was the defect; he could not stretch forth his hand; but God often commandeth those things which he performeth by his own grace, and giveth us to do what he biddeth us to do; and by these exhortations and commands his Spirit worketh that effectually in us which he requireth of us.

(3.) Sinners without these exhortations would be careless, and go on contentedly in sin, and be mindless of these things; therefore it is good to rouse them up, to charge them with their duty, and speedily and earnestly to go about it, if they mean to be saved, that they may take care of this duty as well as they can, else all these rebukes aggravate their sin: Prov. i. 25, 'They set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof.' To put it off when conscience boggleth is aggravated wickedness: Acts xxiv. 25, 'When Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled,' and would hear Paul at a more convenient season.

(4.) When the Lord hath begun with us, we must not remain dead, careless, and sleepy. What God commandeth we must set ourselves to obey; it is our work, though grace be from him. It is I that must be awakened; it is I must arise from the dead, and turn to God; it is I must believe and obey.

[3.] But it seemeth we prevent God.

(1.) This giving light is not an effect or consequent following after, either in order of nature or time, but a cause; for by and in these things God giveth us light, or bringeth us into this lightsome condition of christianity.

(2.) It may be understood not of God's converting or assisting grace, but his rewarding grace; that is, blessing, comfort, peace, and glory, or some further degree of knowledge and grace, whereby a christian may glorify his profession. But often in scripture the Spirit is promised to the penitent: Prov. i. 23, 'Turn ye at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you;' Acts ii. 38, 'And Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' To the believer: John vii. 38, 39, 'He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: but this he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.' But none of this doth exclude his preventing grace, by which he worketh all our works in us.

SERMON XVII.

Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.—Eph. v. 14.

USE. If this be the intent of Christ, it serveth for exhortation, to awaken sinners out of the sleep of sin, that they may rise from the dead, and obtain the light of life. Look every one to yourselves, for

the voice of God speaketh to every one particularly: 'Awake *thou* that sleepest, and rise *thou* from the dead.' A tender waking conscience is a great mercy, whereas a dead and stupid conscience is a heavy judgment; for then neither reason nor grace is of any use to us; we can neither do the functions of a man or a christian while we are asleep. Because every one will shift this off from himself, and think it concerneth not him, I shall show you how it concerneth both the regenerate and unregenerate, and how far both the one and the other may be said to be asleep in sin.

First, For those that are carnal, and live in a course and trade of sin, habitual customary sinners, there is no doubt but they are asleep, and dead in trespasses and sins; for—

1. Their great work lieth undone, which is entering into God's peace, and accepting the grace offered to them for the pardon of their sins, and healing their natures: Luke x. 42, 'One thing is needful.' And what is that one thing, but returning to God from whom we have fallen by our folly and sin, or seeking his renewing and reconciling grace? this is the main thing: Mat. vi. 33, 'But first seek ye the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you;' Phil. iii. 13, 'This one thing I do.' All men in their wits would mind this.

2. Their greatest concernments are forgotten by them, which is avoiding eternal death and obtaining eternal life: Prov. xv. 24, 'The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.' Our wisdom lieth in avoiding our greatest danger, and pursuing after our greatest happiness, and therefore to choose that sort of living which conduceth both to the one and the other. And by nature we are liable to eternal death, but the grace of the gospel provideth for us eternal happiness. The misery is beneath, the happiness is above; and salvation and damnation are no trifles. Now he that only mindeth things below, and neglecteth things above, is plainly asleep, and doth not act as a reasonable creature.

3. The light and direction which God giveth is of no use to him. There is a twofold light that shineth—the light of reason, and the light of religion.

[1.] The light of reason is of no use to a man that sleepeth. Reason will fear and hope, but it doth not stir them. Reason discerneth a difference between good and evil, and our wills were given us to refuse the one, and choose the other; and fears and hopes do awake us to this aversation or pursuit. But alas! to one whose conscience is benumbed, all is lost. Seeing better, they pursue that which is worse; they approve of things that are more excellent; but this law knowledge or natural knowledge is but a form: Rom. ii. 18, 20, 'And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law. Which hath a form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law.' It is but *μόρφωσις τῆς γνώσεως ἐν τῷ νόμῳ*; it is little stirring to make us mindful of our duty, and less effectual to make us perform it. The greatest things do not affect us when we do not think of them.

[2.] The light of religion or christianity, which is but a form too to them that are asleep: 2 Tim. iii. 5, 'Having a form of godliness, but

denying the power thereof.' To sleep under the threatenings of God and the dreadful curses of his law, with so many wounds in our consciences and ulcers in our souls as the word of God discovereth in us, this is a deep sleep indeed. Our duty and danger is discovered to us at a higher rate in religion than was evident in the light of nature, and in a more powerful and affective way; but these hear, and see, and know all things as men asleep, as if it concerned them not at all. Well, then, we should earnestly seek to rouse them up.

First, 'Awake thou that sleepest.' Consider these motives—

1. Doth it become any to sleep in your case, while you know not God to be a friend or an enemy? yea, when you have so much reason to think that he is an enemy to you, for you are enemies to him by your minds in evil works: Col. i. 21, 'And you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works.' The proverb saith, 'A man that hath an enemy must not sleep;' we take it for a maxim. And have not you made God your enemy when you break his laws, and grieve his Spirit, and dishonour his name? Go and be reconciled quickly. Is the guilt of sin a slight matter, or damnation a thing to be played with?

2. You sleep in that ship that is swiftly carried to eternity, and are just upon the entrance into another world: Mark xiii. 36, 'Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.' Oh, if Christ should come when you least expect him, and find you in a posture incapable of mercy from him, unqualified to receive benefit by his coming, how great will your confusion be! and you cannot present his time to him, and say, Stay till I am prepared; that may be long ere you are so.

3. You have slept out too much precious time already: 1 Peter iv. 3, 'The time past of our life may suffice us.' Have we not kept God out of his right too long, and delayed our own happiness, and left an eternal interest upon too great uncertainties and hazards? and will you do so still?

4. Thou hast been long and often called upon. If God had not sought to awaken you, you had the better excuse: Prov. vi. 9, 10, 'How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of sleep? yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.' Sleepy sinners are not presently awakened; we must continue calling to them. God hath not taken the first repulse, but still continueth calling thee by his word and providence. Men should be ashamed to lie snoring upon their beds when their master or father or prince calleth them. God calleth you by his word; conscience is a little stirred, but you fall asleep again. God seeketh to awaken you by smart providences; then you rouse up yourselves a little, but presently the love of sin prevaieth, and you take your rest again. You would fain sleep a little longer in sin, are loath to renounce your bewitching lusts and betake yourselves to a heavenly life.

5. Now is your time and season: Prov. x. 5, 'He that gathereth in summer is a wise son; but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.' To lose time is sad, but to lose the season worst of all, and a season that bringeth profit as well as labour, as harvest doth. Usually the time of grace is between eighteen and eight-and-twenty; this is matter of observation. We cannot exclude other seasons, for

Christ may effectually call at the eleventh hour. We cannot say, The day of grace is past; but while you are fresh and in your flower, it is good to set your hearts to religion. Though the day of gospel grace hath no shorter end than the end of our life upon earth, God knoweth how long that life or the means of grace may be continued, either to a nation or person; it is quicklier past to some than others. Besides, there are certain times when God actually moveth the hearts of the impenitent towards conversion more than formerly he did. In short, there is the Father's season, the day of his patience, and that is as long as life, while his long-suffering waiteth: 1 Peter iii. 20, 'When once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.' And we are sure of no more; the present time is the best and only certain time: Heb. iii. 7, 'To-day, if you will hear his voice.' And there is God the Son's time, while the offers of grace continue; and we must not sin away and shorten this time: Luke xix. 42, 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes;' 2 Cor. vi. 2, 'I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.' And there is God the Holy Spirit's time, when his motions are stronger and opportunities fairer for conversion than ever afterwards: Isa. lv. 6, 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near.' God may withhold the motions of his Spirit, and leave us to the hardness of our hearts; therefore we are to open when he knocketh, to put in for cure when he stirreth the waters, to let loose the sails when the wind bloweth.

6. Others care for their souls, and are hard at work for God; their diligence should awaken us: Acts xxvi. 7, 'Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come; for which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews;' Heb. xi. 7, 'By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.' As the lazy and drowsy are stirred up by the early rising and constant labour of their neighbours. Why should not our souls be as precious to us as theirs to them? The same common necessity lieth upon us. Now shall not their zeal provoke us? They are flesh and blood as we are, and have not divested themselves of the interest and affections of the animal life no more than we; only they govern them, and overrule them to a better end. Now shall not their zeal provoke us?

7. The devil is awake, and will you sleep? 1 Peter v. 8, 'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.' He is rocking your cradles, stilling your consciences by diversions or vain delights, prejudicing us against a holy ministry that would do us good, instilling into us by his instruments false and base opinions against holiness and strictness of life, to lull us asleep in security. Now, should we that know our danger take up every false allegation against our duty?

8. If nature were well awake, it would disprove your courses as much as religion. Now when duty is unquestionable, and nature doth even

show to us that it is a shame to indulge such lusts and practices, that should much move us; otherwise we neither behave ourselves as men or christians. The thing should be doubly dear to us; that is, dear to us, 'both in the flesh and in the Lord,' Philem. 16. When nature and grace concur, either to commend or condemn a way, we sin greatly if we regard not these motions.

Secondly, 'Arise from the dead;' that is, be converted to God; for the voice of Christ doth not only conduce to awaken us, but to raise us from the dead: John v. 25, 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.' Look about you, then; entertain serious thoughts of getting out of a state of sin into a state of grace.

Take two motives to quicken you to this—

1. Better never be awakened if still we continue in our sins, for this aggravateth them: John iii. 19, 'And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.' When it prevaileth for conviction only, and not for conversion, when you know a better condition, and do not embrace it, this is not only shameful, but wilful sluggishness.

2. Better never rise in the last day if we be not raised from the death of sin. It would be a kind of good news to the wicked if there were an end of them in the grave. No; all must rise again: John v. 28, 29, 'Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. Herein they are worse than the brutes, death puts an end to their pains and pleasures at once; but when a wicked man dieth, he goeth to receive his everlasting doom and sentence, which shall openly be pronounced at the last day. Oh, then, 'arise from the dead.' There are two pleas against this exhortation; some say, It is too soon; others, It is too late.

[1.] Do not say, It is too soon; for we can never soon enough get out of so great a danger. The case is more difficult every day; and when you are awakened, and smother your convictions, that bringeth on penal hardness: Heb. iii. 7, 8, 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' While it is called to-day, before God's day be over, and the heat and force of the impulse be lost. The present time is the only time, and we are not sure the day of salvation may be longer, because death may cut us off. Sin is a hardening thing; and the longer we sin, the more it hardeneth.

[2.] Do not say, It is too late; for the work is yet possible, as short as your time is like to be in the world; and it will be your fault if it be not done. The covenant of grace promiseth pardon to every penitent believer, whenever they truly turn to God, without excepting any hour or person in the world. God doth yet freely offer you mercy; and if you will not refuse him, the design of love shall not break on his part. Repentance, and cries, and tears will be too late in the other world, but never here. God is able. Do not say, as Martha, John xi. 39, 'Lord, by this time he stinketh.' God is able to raise dead souls, as he did Lazarus out of the grave. Indeed, if you think sin is best for you, and you will not hear of changing your course, then for the present christianity speaketh no good to you.

Secondly, I must apply myself to the regenerate and renewed by grace, and so show you how they may sleep in sin, and therefore should awake to righteousness.

1. It may be incident to God's people; for the foolish and wise virgins both slumbered and slept: Mat. xxv. 5, 'While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.'

Reasons.

[1.] There is a diversity of principles within us, the flesh inclining to sleep, and the spirit inclining to wake: Cant. v. 2, 'I sleep, but my heart waketh;' Mat. xxvi. 41, 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' The degrees of grace which the best attain unto in this life are mixed with imperfections; the commanding faculties do but imperfectly direct, and the inferior faculties do but imperfectly obey; the understanding is but a blind guide, and the will is but imperfectly rectified by grace.

[2.] There are variety of natural occurrences working upon the diversity of principles within us; sometimes we are in a prosperous estate, sometimes in deep trouble, and both may cause deadness and drowsiness in us. Deep troubles may make us 'weary of well-doing,' 2 Thes. iii. 13; Heb. xii. 3, 'Lest ye be wearied, and faint in your minds.' So in times of wealth, peace, and honour, these may breed in us security and neglect of God: Prov. i. 32, 'For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.' Ease destroyeth the fool. When Delilah spreads her lap for us, and the delights of the world open their bosom to us, we had need to look to ourselves. David enjoying peace and rest fell into those foul sins of adultery and murder, 2 Sam. xi. 1. He slew Uriah, his friend, who in adversity spared Saul, his enemy; his heart smote him for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment, but without remorse he plotteth secretly to destroy his faithful servant.

[3.] Conversing with spiritual sluggards, who count it a high piece of wisdom not to be too forward in religion. Company and example hath a mighty force upon us, and doth secretly taint our hearts: Isa. vi. 5, 'Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.' Mortified, warm, heavenly, and self-denying christians do exceedingly quicken us: Heb. x. 24, 'Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works.' But carnal company is a deadening thing; a man had need shake them off if he will keep religion alive: Ps. cxix. 115, 'Depart from me, ye evil-doers; for I will keep the commandments of my God.' Our dulness is such, that we need most powerful helps.

[4.] Another cause is dead worship. *Missa non mordet*—The mass bites not. Spiritual duties are compared to new wine, Mat. ix. 17, but pharisaical fasts to old dead wine. A perfunctory sort of worship never keepeth us awake; powerful preaching is compared to goads to prick us: Eccles. xii. 11, 'The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies.'

[5.] Slumber is another cause of sleeping: Mat. xxv. 5, 'They all slumbered and slept;' first they slumbered, then they slept. No man becometh stark naught at the first step. Give way to a remiss will, and it increaseth on you; one degree of carelessness breedeth another;

suppose one act of careless praying, or slight hearing, which draweth on other acts.

[6.] Not keeping graces in a lively and constant exercise : Prov. xix. 15, 'Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep.' The way to be fervent in duties is to be frequent in them. Wells are the sweeter for draining; exercise keepeth us in life and heart.

[7.] Grieving the Spirit causeth him to suspend his quickening influences, and then the soul is soon in a dead and drowsy estate : Eph. iv. 30, 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.' Conscience is more stupid, and the heart more stiff after some notable disobedience to the Spirit's motions. David and Jonah are instances of this.

[8.] Immoderate liberty in worldly things, either in worldly cares or the delights of the flesh : Luke xxi. 31, 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life.' So Ps. cxix. 37, 'Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way.'

2. Wherein the evil of this consists? There is some defect in the vital graces. Faith is dead : James ii. 20, 'Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?' Love is cold : Mat. xxiv. 12, 'Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.' And hope is slight, whereas it should be a lively hope : 1 Peter i. 3, 'Who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' Faith is dead when there is a form of knowledge rather than a lively assent to the truths of godliness, and only a dead opinionative belief. Love is cold when it doth not overrule carnal self-love, and hath not that force and constraint upon the soul that it should have : 2 Cor. v. 14, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us.' And there is not a certain and earnest expectation of the blessedness to come when the heavenly mind doth not fortify us against the allurements of sense. Now the defect in the vitals showeth itself—

[1.] By some intermission of our care and caution to keep ourselves from sin, so that we are either overtaken or overborne. Overtaken through inadvertency : Gal. vi. 1, 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault,' &c. ; or overborne by the violence of temptations and lusts : James i. 14, 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed;' and grace maketh but a feeble opposition. Usually God's children are overtaken by sins that come upon them by insensible degrees, and do not waken them by sudden and frightening assaults, and so they lapse insensibly into pride, covetousness, sensuality, vainglory, and the like sins. But sometimes also they are overborne, and drawn to dishonour God, and wound their peace, and lay stumbling-blocks before others.

[2.] In some abatement of our zeal, fervency, and seriousness in the duties of religion. Grace is ready to die : Rev. iii. 2, 'Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die;' Isa. lxiv. 7, 'There is none that calleth on thy name, that stirreth up himself to lay hold on thee.'

[3.] In neglecting our preparations for our great account, which is the great enlivening work that should keep us awake in our business :

2 Peter iii. 14, 'Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.' And watching is most required and pressed in the scriptures with respect to the day of judgment. Now many times God's children are distracted with worldly cares or benumbed with fleshly delights, and live securely in an unprepared estate, and do not endeavour to get ready for the coming of the Lord. And so the sleeping of the virgins is to be interpreted; they had faith, or a belief of the Lord's coming, and made some general preparation for it: Mat. xxv. 1, 'They went out to meet the bridegroom;' but ver. 5, 'While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept;' his coming was delayed, and they grew careless.

3. How far as to the degree may it seize on God's children?

[1.] There is no intercision of the habit, or radical inclination of the soul to God. Still God is their portion and their happiness; their choice of him as their supreme good remaineth unshaken, and their hearts are set to obey him and please him in all things. But still they are not so dutiful to God, and so true to their great end and scope, but that they are put besides it, and do actions impertinent, and sometimes that seem inconsistent with it.

[2.] It is not an universal slumber and sleep of the whole man, and to all goodness. The heart awaketh: Cant. v. 2, 'I sleep, but my heart waketh.' And it is not an estate of sin that they are in, but some particular sins they are tempted to: Ps. cxix. 133, 'Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.' There is something taketh God's part: 1 John iii. 9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' They are unsatisfied with this drowsy dead estate, and complain of it. They complain of that senseless stupidity, and sluggish dulness, and cold indifferency to heavenly things which they have contracted: Isa. lxiii. 17, 'O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our hearts from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.'

[3.] They are more easily alarmed and roused up out of it than those that sleep the sleep of death, when conscience hath but leisure and help to deliberate; as a candle newly blown out doth sooner suck light than one that was never kindled: Ps. li. title, 'A psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.'

[4.] When they rise again, they are more earnest and fervent than they were before; they resolve, and arm themselves with the stronger resolution for the time to come: Ps. li. 6, 'Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.' In short, there is a difference between enmity and laziness; some deadness that cometh upon us, and death in sin; between a drowsy fit, and a state of carnal security; between careless living in sin, without any fear of God's wrath and care of repentance, and some coldness and indifferency we contract.

[See some of these heads more enlarged on in the author's Sermon on Mat. xxv. 5.]

Well, then, since it is incident in part to God's children, I will press this admonition on them also.

(1.) Awake. It may seize on the young christian who has as yet no experience of the strength of sin, the danger of temptations, or their own weakness: Mat. xxvi. 33, 'Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.' It may seize on one of long standing, who, having made sure of his eternal interests, may grow negligent, as if he were now past all danger: Rev. iii. 17, 'Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' We are in danger not only in prosperity, but in adversity; as before: Ps. xxx. 6, 7, 'And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled;' Phil. iv. 12, 'I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.' In public and in private duties. In private; so it was with the disciples: Mat. xxvi. 45, 'Sleep on now, and take your rest.' In public: Mat. xiii. 25, 'But while men slept, his enemy came, and sowed tares, and went his way.' Not only upon omission of our duty, but when we have performed some eminent service: 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, 'After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple,' &c., then did he rashly engage against Necho, king of Egypt, which cost him his life: Ezek. xxxiii. 13, 'If the righteous trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity,' &c., viz., by neglecting his watch. Oh, let us watch then: 1 Thes. v. 6, 'Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober.' Take heed when a senseless stupidity is growing upon you, or a dulness and want of zeal for God, or any tedious irksomeness in God's service, or too much affection to worldly happiness. If you sleep, you hazard your souls, and expose yourselves to God's severe correction: Hosea v. 15, 'I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offences, and seek my face.' Let us rouse up ourselves: 2 Tim. i. 6, 'Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee.' Beg of God to quicken you, as David often did, Ps. cxix.

(2.) As you would show that you have your part in this lightsome condition of christianity, do not only renounce the works of darkness, but reprove them, and shame them out of the world by a holy awful conversation. We would all have our part in the comfort and peace of christianity; let us all have a hand in representing the glory and lustre of it to the world. Let your religion appear to be manifesting light, not only to direct yourselves, but to convince the world.
