

THE PATTERN OF PURITY.*

And every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.
—1 JOHN III. 3.

I SHALL not need to stand on any curious division of these words: if you please shortly for your memory's sake to observe these three things:

1. The workman. 2. The work. 3. The pattern to be imitated.

1. *The workman* is 'every one that hath hope in him,' every one that looks to be like the Lord Jesus in the kingdom of glory, he is the man must set about this task. 2. Secondly, *The work* is a work to be wrought by himself; he is a part of the Lord's husbandry, and he must take pains as it were to plough his own ground, to weed his own corn, he must purify himself; this is the work. 3. Thirdly, *The pattern by which he must be directed* is the pattern of the Lord Jesus his purity. Put him for a pattern and instance; look unto him that is the author and finisher of our faith; as you have seen him do, so do you; as he is pure, so labour you to express in your lives the virtue of him who hath redeemed you. These be the three particulars.

Not to stand on curiosity, but to fall to the work in hand, *the work is purity*, 'to purify ourselves;' that howsoever this is a task which is now laughed out of countenance,—purity is become a nickname, those that will be thus are counted the scorn of the world, a reproach to men,—yet it is a point so absolutely needful unto salvation, that if thou despise it thou despisest thyself. If thou hast a hope to be saved, thou must do this; so that if a man do not purify himself, and take pains this way and overgo the scorns of the world, and cannot get the mastery, but will be kept out of heaven for a laugh of the world, he is worthy to go to his place, he is worthy of damnation.

But for *the workman* that God puts this task on, it is 'every one that hath this hope.' What hope is that, you see in the verse before. Now we are the sons of God; it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we

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know that when he appears, we shall be like him as he is, that is, they they that look to be like to the Lord Jesus in glory, they must be conformable in grace. Wilt thou be glorious as he is in heaven, thou must have the image of his grace on earth ; so that if we will be glorious, we must be pure.

Thou must not continue with a common heart, as foul hands are called common hands in the Scripture, we must wash ourselves, make ourselves clean. Now from hence I observed in another place this doctrine,

Doct. 1. That a man that is careless of purifying himself, that man must have no hope.

A harsh point, to bring a thing to desperate issue, but what shall we do ? Shall we encourage men to that hope, that they shall carry with them to hell ? May we say, thou mayest hope to be like Christ in glory, when thou dost not labour to be like him in purity in this world ? We should betray souls. And do you know, this is the beginning of salvation.

When a man hath run hitherto in a naughty course, and now comes to be resolved in his conscience, that if he continue thus and thus, and alter not his course, he shall perish, I say the revolving of his conscience that way is the beginning of his conversion. When a man sees no hope, if he do not alter and turn, this will make him good or nothing,—I proved it from many places of Scripture,—so that, ‘ he that purifies not himself hath no true hope.’ The point I then chiefly insisted upon was, to take away all the objections that the devil, and flesh and blood, could make to keep a man from purifying himself with a false hope, that surely men may come to heaven notwithstanding this hard task ; I put to you the infiniteness of God’s mercy, the mediation of Jesus Christ, the intercession of all saints, all the prayers thou canst make, all thy cries to God in extremity, all thou canst say, I proved they should not help thee one whit. No ; the more infinite God’s mercy is, the heavier his wrath shall burn against thee, that dost not prepare thyself to receive that mercy ; thou hast counted the blood of the covenant an unclean thing. He hath washed us with his blood, but thou wilt not be washed ; thou rejectest that blood, delighting in uncleanness, that it had been better for thee Christ had never been incarnate, he is so far from helping thee that he shall pronounce sentence of damnation against thee, ‘ Go, thou cursed, I know thee not.’ If all the saints in the world should lift up their hands to God for thee, all will do no good as long as a man resolves to continue in iniquity : ‘ If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer.’ If thou continuest in the course of the world, and wilt not take pains to cleanse thy heart, there is no hope of thy salvation ; so that this is harsh, but I say it is true, it is a thing not possible to be altered. Heaven and earth shall pass, before the truth of this I have delivered shall pass. That man that taketh not pains to purify himself, that man must have no hope to be saved.

Obj. But if a man object, How doth this stand true, as soon as men have this hope they purify themselves ?

Ans. I answer, Where the Scripture speaks of hope it is a divine hope, a work of grace that shall never disappoint a man ; for hope is upheld and sustained by faith, as Hebrews xi. 1. For what is faith ? ‘ It is the substance of things hoped for.’ It is that that sustains and bears up the thing hoped for ; so that hope is a pillar that is grounded on faith. Nothing is hoped for but what is first believed, on grounds taken from the word of God. As in faith, there is a dead faith, and a lively faith ; now it is not every faith that saveth, but only that faith that is lively, and shews itself

by good works; as James saith, 'What profiteth it, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, and not works? can that faith save him? No', James ii. 14. Therefore the Scripture speaks of a lively hope, as well as of a lively faith: 'Blessed be the Lord, that hath regenerated us to a lively hope,' 1 Peter i. 3.

So that here is the difference between this hope and the other: the one hath for his foundation faith, laying hold firmly on the mercies of God—it is as sure every whit; Christian hope, that divine grace, is a thing as certain and infallible as faith is; for all that is hoped is picked from faith, faith is the ground of the thing hoped for; so that if faith cannot be shaken, hope cannot, which is settled upon and sustained by it.

Now, on the other side, an impure man that walks on in iniquity, what sustains his hope? Faith in God's promises? No; see God's book if there be any promise made to such a one: 'The mercies of God are from everlasting to everlasting towards them that fear him,' Ps. ciii. 17. And in the second commandment, 'The Lord will shew mercy to thousands of them that love him,' Exod. xxxiv. 7. There be promises that way, but where is the least promise, the least syllable in all God's book, that if thou continuest not in his fear he will shew thee mercy? Nay, if a man say, I shall be delivered, notwithstanding I do thus and thus, the Lord will not shew mercy to that man. Deut. xxix. 29, he says, 'Thou that thinkest thou hast a promise of God's mercy, and hast no word to put thee in hope, but to put thee out of hope, know the godly's hope is a work of God's Spirit in their heart, it is sustained by a promise;' faith in the promise makes it God's word, and cannot fail; but the hope of a wicked man is not upheld by faith in the promises, but by a foolish, a presumptuous conceit that he fancies in his own brain.

Indeed, beloved, it is a mad conceit that he hath, that he may do thus and thus; a strong presumption clean contrary to all that God hath set down in his word. It is as impossible as that God should be forsworn, as in the song of Zacharias: Luke i. 70, *et seq.*, 'The oath that he swore unto our fathers, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.'

It is an old oath, God sware that if thou be delivered out of the hands of thine enemies, if thou be freed and rescued from everlasting damnation, God hath taken an oath that thou shalt serve him. Now for a man that will not serve him in holiness and righteousness, and yet persuade himself that he shall be delivered from his enemy, what hope is this?

But you will say, 'If hope be so certain, what difference is there between faith and hope, if one be as sure as the other.' Many will grant, we may hope for salvation, but doubt whether they may believe it, they think there be many things come between this and that. But I say, it is a foolish distinction in respect of the point of certainty, for the certainty must of force be the same, for nothing is hoped for but it is first believed.

'Faith is the substance of things hoped for,' giving the strength and sustentation to it. Therefore, Heb. vi. 19, it is called 'the hope which we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that which is within the veil,' that for certainty and infallibility giveth as great firmness as the anchor doth to a ship, that keeps it from wavering; and the reason is, hope is not like the anchor cast downward, but upwards, entering into that within the veil, is pitched on Jesus Christ, the rock of our salvation. Therefore, if we go by sea while we are

in the sea of this world, this is it that bears us up against all surges and billows.

But to the point propounded, that I may not forget to shew what is the difference between faith and hope, if one be as sure as the other. I answer, The difference it is not in certainty, but in another respect, that is thus: *faith is a thing that hath neither time nor place, but makes anything present.* It puts a man as it were in real possession of eternal life; when he believes he hath it, he is in heaven already, but now hope carries us in expectation of it. There is a difference between them, we must stay in the mean time; for now 'it doth not appear what we shall be.' Now are we the sons of God, and faith apprehends that certainly, being an heir, I shall have a kingdom in heaven, faith puts me in real and actual possession of that great inheritance. But stay a while, you are not there yet, 'it doth not appear what we shall be;' then comes hope and qualifies that. Oh that I should be here born to so great estate, and yet be scorned and despised in the world, and kept so long from it; here comes hope and quiets it. It is a patient expectation of that which is firmly believed by faith, that is the difference between hope and faith. Read Rom. viii. 24; there the apostle points to that difference, 'Hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man sees, why doth he yet hope for it? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.' As faith, so hope is of things unseen, hope is certain it shall enjoy the thing unseen. Where is the difference then? Faith puts me as it were in real possession of it, the other makes me patiently to expect the full performance of it. If we hope, we do certainly expect. This distinguisheth these two virtues so near. And then this patience is a thing described by hope: 1 Thes. i. 3, 'Remembering without reasoning* your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.' So that this patience, this expectation, this waiting, as it were, of God's leisure, is the thing that stays the stomach in the mean time, and that that doth distinguish this divine hope from faith. It is not the certainty, for they are equally certain, but the one brings always with it a settlement of the heart, with a patient expectation of the full fruition of the thing hoped for.

Then what follows? Nothing is so certain as the accomplishment of God's promise. He that builds his hope on faith in God's promises, nothing is so sure as he shall attain his desire. On the other side, he that builds his hope on the presumptuous conceit of his own brain, there is nothing so certain as that man's hope shall be vain, as Rom. v. 23, 'We,' saith he, 'have peace with God;' and not only so, 'we glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed.' What is the meaning of that?

Beloved, it is as much as if he had said, there is a difference between divine and human hope. The one hope is, when I repose confidence in the promise of a man, and when I look for the thing hoped for, the man breaks, so that my hope cannot be firmer than that I grounded on. It breaks, I am ashamed and confounded, that I did repose my hope and confidence that way; for this, see Job vi. 15, in the winter time, there comes land floods: 'My brethren,' saith he, 'have dealt deceitful as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away; which are black by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid: what time they wax warm, they vanish away: when it is hot, they are consumed out of

* Qu. 'ceasing'?—Ed.

their place. The paths of their ways are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish. The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them. They were confounded, because they hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.' In the winter time, when waters abound and there is no need of waters, there will be a mighty stream, but in summer being parched with heat, he turns himself thither, and there is no water to be found, he is ashamed; when a man's hope is disappointed, it makes him ashamed.

Then here is the difference between the hope of God's child, that purifieth himself, and of an impure person; when the time comes he shall have need of hope, his hope is gone, as this hope will, that he shall be saved, though he purify not himself. The devil may continue it as long as he continues, but come to death, there is the difference, he is ashamed and disappointed. You see, Prov. x. 18, which is cited there, 'The hope of the righteous shall be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked shall perish;' that is, thou mayest hope for salvation, as well as God's children, but what is the difference? 'The hope of the righteous shall be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.' Again, chap. xi. 7, 'When the wicked dies, his expectation shall perish, and the hope of unjust men perisheth.' So they have a hope, but a hope that shall perish as well as themselves, that shall be quite gone at the time of their death. Therefore, Job xxvii. 8, saith he, 'What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?' Give me that hope that I shall have the comfort of when God takes away my soul. Now, while thou art in this world, thou hast a hope as strong as God's child, and thou wilt not be beaten from it, but when the Lord takes away thy soul what wilt thou get by it? It shall stick upon the world without end; it shall vex and gnaw thy soul, that thou shouldst stick to a hope that deceived thee.

So you see what a case a man is in that takes no pains to purify. We can speak no more to a man's discomfort than to tell him thou canst have no hope. It is said of the Gentiles, before they knew Christ, 'they were strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, being without hope in the world,' Eph. ii. 12; and that is thy case. Let not the devil feed thee with a false hope, and say thou shalt be like Christ in glory, though thou art not like Christ in purity in this world. It is false, it cannot be; thou art in the case of a very Turk, notwithstanding thou hearest much of the Lord Jesus; thou hast received baptism, yet as yet there is no hope for thee unless thou repent. I beseech you, as you tender your own salvation, yield to the truth of God's word. Let not Satan lead you on, and train you to destruction, to think that things may be otherwise than this preacher speaks, as the oracles of God. If we say that a man that purifies not himself cannot have hope, this is confirmed in heaven; whosoever hath this vain hope shall be ashamed. Therefore every one that hath this divine hope, that looks to be saved, to be like Christ in glory, he must without delay purify himself. So much for the workman.

Now, to come to the work. Then, what is the work? 'To purify himself.' 'Every one that hath this hope,' &c.

Doct. 2. Whosoever hopes to be saved, must set himself upon this work, to purify himself. But here is as great a difficulty as the other. Doth it lie in the power of a man to purify himself? That is the work of God; and that David knew well enough, as in the 51st Ps., ver. 10, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me;' and we know it is the great purchase of Christ; they are purified that are purchased by him.

You must not make one truth of God to destroy another; therefore, for the clearing of it, consider what the apostle writes to them: Philip. ii. 12, 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' Mark how one depends on another, and then you shall see these things may stand very well together: 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.' We must go about the work; but why so? 'For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.'

The meaning is, God doth not work things in us or with us, as we do with a spade or a shovel; that is, that we shall be mere patients only, but he works with us suitably to the reasonable soul he hath bestowed upon us. He hath given us understanding and will, so, though the Lord be the first mover and worker, and that we are not able to do anything, yet notwithstanding, as soon as God's grace hath seized on us, presently it puts us on doing; what God worketh in thee, thou must work thyself.

Therefore know, that when God finds a man at the first, when he is without grace, he is not able to stir, nor to do anything; talk of purifying himself, you may as well talk to a dead man. When God first visits with grace, we are not able to work, to do anything, why, we are stark dead; as it is said, 'And you that were dead in trespasses and sins hath he quickened,' Eph. ii. 1, so that God comes first, and finds a man stark dead. He may work natural works, civil works, moral works, but to do works he shall find in heaven, to lay a foundation for the time to come, he is able to do nothing of that; for things of heaven, he is utterly dead in sins and trespasses. Therefore, John v. 25, it is said, 'The hour is coming, and now is, that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and as many as hear his voice shall live;' that is, the force of God's quickening Spirit, the voice of Jesus Christ coming to a dead man, the powerful word of God, seconded with the lively Spirit of Jesus Christ, this finding a dead man conveys life into him, that presently he begins to hear and see. Though first there be an influence of life coming to us from Christ Jesus, yet presently, as soon as life is infused, wherein we are mere patients, presently, I say, as soon as the life of grace is come, we hear, and do, and work, though God works the first act of a man's conversion, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock,' saith God; 'if any man opens, I will come in;' as soon as grace is infused, let me come in, Christ is there, and thou wert not aware of him.

But as soon as a stock of grace is given, presently, thy will must work, and thou must say, Lord, come in; he knocks as soon as thou hast grace, he enables thee to give a will, that thou mayest open. Though principally God, yet there is a concurrence between God and thee; and this is grace, when thy will is made active and able to do things, that now the things done by God's grace are attributed to men. Ezek. xviii. 31, God says, 'Cast away from you all your transgressions, and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?' make you a new heart. So in 2 Cor. vii. 1, saith God, 'Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' So that here is grace indeed, when thy will is enabled to open to Christ, to repent, to believe, to pray to Christ thyself. This is a thing needful to be stood on, because many will be very willing to hear that on God's part; Oh, if God will send grace, that they may not be put to take pains, then all is well, they like that well. But if thou hast hope, thou must work thyself, not as if thou didst it of thyself,

no, God hath given thee ability, he hath given thee life, he would have thee go about thy business, he gives a stock whereby thy will is freed to do so much as God will accept; thou shalt have power to do that which God will accept of as well as the best service. I alway remember that place, Rev. iii. 8, 'I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.' Mark, oh, if I had so much grace as others, I would purify myself; nay, but hast thou any strength, a little grace? Be not a dastard, a coward, but resolve in the work God hath called thee to and then thou wilt do it.

'Thou hast kept my word,' a little strength and a good heart will do it. Thou idle servant, that which thou countest little is a talent, it is a gift fit for the great King of heaven and earth, it will carry thee far, if thou hast not a deceitful heart; if thou hast an upright heart, God giveth thee strength, that thou mayest purify thyself, as he is pure. But wherefore serves grace?

If the Lord have given grace, he will not have thee idle, but this grace frees the will, that thou must go about the work with success. Therefore, I beseech you, that ye be not deluded by this, so making one truth oppose another. When the Son visits with grace, thou art free; wherefore comes the Son? To make thee free. Thou hast thy will bound up, thou couldest not affect* the ways of God; the Son of God hath freed this will, and now requires that thou shouldst use it, to purify thyself as he is pure; so for that point it is clear.

Now for this, that a man should purify himself, what need I bring many arguments; if the first will not do it, nothing will do it; if thou doest not, thou art lost, there is no hope.

1. This must be done; and then, 2. It may be done.

Therefore God gives his Spirit and grace, that though the work comes originally from him, 'For except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it,' Ps. cxxvii. 1, yet if a man say, I will do nothing except the Lord build the house, let him build it if he will have it built. No; the Lord will have it built, but thou must be a workman. 'The foundation of God standeth sure. The Lord knoweth who are his. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity,' 2 Tim. ii. 19. The foundation of God standeth sure; the Lord knoweth who shall believe in him. There is a privy seal put to this, 'the Lord knoweth who are his;' but there is never a seal, but this purging that is for letters patent that be open; this is not a close rule, but thou mayest view and read it thyself; 'and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.' There is the broad seal, whereby I may know that I am one of the number, that I shall appear in glory when Christ appears. Therefore if a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel to honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared for every good work.

Mark how a man works actively and passively. He is 'prepared and sanctified for the master's use,' but is he a mere patient? No; he must purge himself from these things. So there must be an active and passive working. When the Lord hath done the first work, the Lord looks thou shouldst put thine hand to, and be doing; but I say, there is no hope if I do not take pains, and therefore I must of necessity purify myself. All the matter is now, seeing it cannot be avoided, it must be done, and is facible.

* That is, 'choose.'—G.

How may it be done ?

Resolve on the thing, that it must be done, and then I will give directions how to do it. The examples of the world are like a stream that carries a man clean out of the way of purity ; but seeing there is no way but that I must, through good report and bad report, what must I do then ?

1. *Remember we come to do service to a Father* ; that is, for encouragement. God did of his own free accord, not for any goodness in us, cast his love on us ; he hath adopted thee for his son ; he puts thee about his work ; he will spare thee, as a man spareth his own son. This is thy case, thou art not like a mercenary servant, that is only to earn his wages ; thou hast it by inheritance, because thou art a son, and the Lord looketh for filial, and no servile service of thee. If a servant doth not his work, the master puts him off, and takes a better ; but God doth not stand with thee on the strict observance of the law, as if he were to reckon with thee for wages, the Lord requires that thou do thy best, and the Lord will spare thee. Go truly and painfully* about thy work with the strength God hath given thee ; the Lord will spare thee, and will not turn thee off, and take another, but will deal with thee as with his son ; he takes it in good part when thou doest thy best : that is for thy encouragement. The keeping of God's word, as he will accept, may be done with a little strength : then how shall I do ?

(1.) First, *Go to the fountain ; let the cock run.* What is the fountain of all cleanness ? The blood of Christ ; as Rev. i. 5, 'Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood.' There is the first thing, begin with faith. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that must wash me from sin. Thou must not go like a moral man, to labour by multitude of acts to get a new habit ; but thou must work from another principle : all this cleansing must come from the blood of Jesus Christ. And how may I apply this ? By faith. So thou must go every morning, and present thy soul before the Lord, and look on him crucified, and say, Lord, thou didst shed thy blood to cleanse my soul from the spots of sin ; have faith, rinse † thy soul, as it were, in the blood of this immaculate Lamb ; apply the blood of Jesus Christ not only for justification to free thee from the guilt of sin, but let faith work, as it may be applied for sanctification, to wash away the spots and pollutions of sin. This is certainly the most effectual means that can be imagined. Go to the well-head ; look to that main and principal beginning, like a Christian, and not like a moral man ; that though thou art polluted and defiled, yet the blood of the Lord Jesus will purge thee from all sin, spot as well as guilt, as we see written, Heb. ix. 13, 14 ; 'For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh ; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God.' Mark that. You talk of a purgatory : there is the purgatory. That true purgatory is the fountain that is laid open for the house of Judah to wash in : serving not only for expiation of thy sin, that it shall not be laid to thy charge, but it serves to purge thy conscience from dead works to serve the living God. It is as effectual for sanctification, being applied by faith, as it is for justification.

Therefore, as I may speak with reverence, make thy breakfast, as I may say, every morning, of the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, and this will give thee more life, more ability, and strength, the multiplying and con-

* That is, 'painstakingly.'—G.

† Spelled 'rince.'—G

tinual repetition every day of the act of faith, laying hold on Christ's body broken, his blood shed. It is a most effectual means; try it, and you shall find the experience of it.

(2.) No means in the world so effectual than, when a man would go to Christ, *to look to his ordinances*. What are they? His word and his sacraments. Come like a Christian, and not like a moral man. Go to the fountain for justification and sanctification where it may be had, thou shalt find then greater effects than ordinary. Then for the word, it is an effectual means whereby we may purify ourselves: we may read Eph. v. 26, 'Even as Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water by the word.' The blood of Jesus Christ washeth thee, there is the main washing; but notwithstanding, there be certain conduits and pipes, whereby the virtue of this is conveyed. Christ doth sanctify and purify thee, by washing, by water, by the word; so that when a man comes with faith in his word, in his promises, this is a special means. Note one place more: John xv. 2, 'Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.' 'Now you are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you:' nothing is more plain; the word of God taken with faith is a special ordinance, whereby thou mayest come to purify thy heart. But how is that? How may I apply the word thus?

1. First, *Consider the word of God is a word of power*. When thou comest to the ministry of the word, remember that God hath made them able ministers of the Spirit, not only of the letter. Christ is with them to the end of the world. They are not only such as do prescribe barely this and that, and give no strength. No; we are ministers sealed: the Lord accompanies the external ministry of the word with the internal power of his Spirit, that when thou comest to church, thou comest only for the ordinance sake; the Lord hath pleased to make that a door of grace effectual, and he shall not only barely command, but he shall be a minister of the Spirit, shall enable me to do the things God requires. Oh, if a man come as to a market of grace, and say, Lord, thou, thou hast commanded me to come, and to expect from their mouth the donation of the Spirit, thou hast touched their tongue with the fire of thy blessed Spirit, to shew that that shall be a means to convey grace. Now if a man could come thus, the word would go far, and be very effectual, whereas we come now to hear rather a lecture of moral philosophy than for God's Spirit.

2. Again, *The promises in the word of God, when thou dost apprehend them spiritually, they are a wonderful means to purge*. Many think that they should apprehend only the promises of justification. Nay, faith extends; wheresoever God hath a tongue in his word, there faith hath an ear to hear, and a hand to lay hold on. The oath that he swore to our forefathers, that we should serve him in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life: there is a word God hath sworn, that I shall serve the Lord Jesus; and beloved, if this be a word of truth, and if my faith can apprehend and apply it, notwithstanding many difficulties, though there be oppositions of men and angels, I am yet to wrestle with principalities and powers. But look to the Lord, the Lord hath sworn thou shalt serve him, all thine enemies shall not hinder. Where is thy faith now? Bring faith to this promise, this oath of God: and what will it make a man do? It will make us go out against all oppositions, though we have walls of brass and chariots of iron against us. But hath God said they shall go out?

Lay hold on that; believe that as firmly as thou wilt believe the promise of justification. So the word of God will be made a wonderful effectual means; only let us come, like believers, like true Christians, and the Lord will do wonders, above all we can imagine and think, if we can come in the right way. Well, that is the word.

3. But the Lord hath appointed his *sacraments*. It is a strange thing that the first sacrament of regeneration there should be so little use made of it. It is a popish error, and cannot be yet weeded out of men's hearts. They think, what is in baptism? It washeth away what is there for the present, but it serves for no other matter to purify afterward; a gross and popish error. You must know it hath virtue and effect, that must be made useful for cleansing thyself even at this hour: as Rom. vi. 1-4, 'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know you not that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized unto his death? Therefore we are buried with him in baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should also walk in newness of life.' Mark how the apostle fetches his ground and foundation from baptism, not as past, but as having present operation and force. If thou hast faith to overcome thy corruptions now, the force and effect of baptism is in thee; it hath a regard for the time to come, as well as for the time past; therefore say, Lord, thou hast appointed thy blessed sacraments, to be a seal for the confirmation of thy promises which thou hast made, that I should be washed; Lord, I present thy word, thy own seal; I beseech thee, make it good to my soul. So that if a man look to his baptism, and present it to the Lord, I say, it will be a more effectual means of cleansing thee, than if thou look back, and apply it only for thy present state at the time of baptism; and so of the Lord's Supper. But I cannot go to particulars, these be the main things.

First, Remember to whom thou goest, to a Father; then go to Jesus Christ, then to his word and promises, then make use of his seals and his blessed sacraments, sue God of his word and deed, challenge them, and when thou art thus prepared,

3. *Then go and read a lecture to thyself of watchfulness.* What it is to watch, that implies when a man is in great danger to be surprised, that all is untrusty within him, and false abroad; then reason, I had need of a strong watch of every side; I have a false nature, and this flesh of mine is ready to betray me into the hands of the world and of the devil; therefore there must be a marvellous strong guard. I must not suffer my affections to rove, that is the way to bring in the devil, even seven devils, whereas if I keep a watch all will be well. James i. 14, it is said, when a man is tempted, he is tempted of his own lust, but is he not sometimes with the world and the devil? No; all the temptations of the world and devil will do no hurt. Look to that within; there is a concupiscence; the world and devil cannot tempt thee but by working on thine own lusts; therefore look to thyself within, that there be no parley, no intercourse between them. Make a covenant with thine eyes, with thy tongue: perhaps thou wilt go to a place where there is nothing but filthiness; is this watchfulness? Dost thou know the corruption of thine own nature? 'Be not deceived, evil words corrupt good manners;' put what gloss thou wilt upon them, evil words shew an evil heart, and evil words and an evil heart, hid before in the cinders, now make a great flame. Therefore seeing this corruption will

not be wholly weeded out, yet it must be kept under, that the forces without may not join with them within.

Oh, much ado we have to keep ourselves from being surprised within. Then suppose the devil comes not as to Eve, but to Adam, for Adam's temptation was more dangerous than Eve's. If the devil comes in his own colours, then it is nothing, every one will flee from him; but he comes as to Adam, by the woman, perhaps by a friend, by a great man. Let us know when there is any temptation, any motion this way, this is a way to let in these and these enemies: as 2 Kings vi. 32, 'Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him, and the king sent a man before him; he said to the elders, see how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away my head, look when the messenger comes, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?' Mark, let this be thy case: within, thou hast a false heart; there is danger without; one comes and entices thee to do this and that; what shalt thou do? Shalt thou entertain and listen to, and suffer this treacherous motion to enter into thy soul? Let not thy lust lay hold on it within, then care not for a thousand devils, for ten thousand worlds, for 'the feet of his master follows, his master' the devil will be there presently, on the first motion.

A man that hath this resolution to suppress sin at the first motion, as soon as it is born,—resolving, I will shut the door, there is the feet of the devil behind, that will murder my soul,—shall find comfort. And then again, a man that is resolved not to live in any known sin (perhaps there be some sins of infirmity that will stick to a man's soul), but there be sins that waste the soul, uncleanness, swearing, extortion, and especially such sins as we are subject unto by our calling, and the course we follow, utterly unlawful and unwarrantable, and known by the word of God to be so. As if a man make a trade of living on usury, this is a sin goes with me all the days of my life; it is with me waking and sleeping, a main sin that compasseth me round. If thou mean to purge thyself, thou must not live in any one known sin, for that wastes grace. When a man multiplies sin, he increaseth the stock of original corruption. There is nothing more sure than that we say, that original corruption is equal in all. It is true naturally. Every man's face answereth to his neighbour's, as face to face in water; none better than the other; but though there be an equality that way, I may add weight myself. Two men are weighed, they are just alike heavy; but if one of them contract his spirits, he overweighs* the other; if he add his will to his natural poise, he is heavier than the other. So, notwithstanding, the wickedness of sin is perhaps as much in one as another; yet when I use my will, and multiply and repeat, that is a sign that custom of sin hardens the heart, and makes the stain and spot grow deeper, that now thou canst not wash it out. Therefore be sure, if thou wilt go to heaven, that thou do not continue one hour in any known sin, for the more thou dost, the more thou strengthenest thyself in sin.

I should now go to the third point, the pattern to which we should conform ourselves. The glass we should imitate is our Saviour Jesus Christ, as he is pure. It is not meant thou shouldst ever hope to be as pure in quantity. *As* is not a note of quantity, but of quality, it shews a likeness. 'Thy will be done in earth, *as* it is in heaven;' that is, as by the angels in heaven, cheerfully, readily, and willingly, though not in the same quantity; so that the life of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and the word of God, must be

* That is, = 'outweighs.'—G.

our pattern. But you will say, How am I able to attain to this? I answer, the law of God prescribes to us a perfect form of obedience, though it be not possible for me to fulfil it, and so the life of our Saviour Christ, we are not able to express the virtues in him, and his purity; yet there cannot be a better pattern than the law, and the life of our Saviour Christ.

A man that would have his child to write a fair hand, he will not give him an ill copy to write by, but as fair as may be, though there be no possibility the child should write so well as it. So we cannot possibly attain to that purity in Christ, yet the copy must be fair. Scholars, if they will have an elegant style, they set the best orators before them. Thus, though the law of God be perfect, though such a thing as a man is not able to fulfil, yet it is a fit pattern; the copy must be fair, that I may mend my hand by it.

And thus, if we go on following our pattern, as the scholar's hand, by practice, mends every day, though it never come near the copy, so shall we grow in grace; for, as the prophet speaks, 'then shall we know if we go on in knowing,' Hos. vi. 3. A Christian must mend his pace every day, as he learns his Master's will, so to be transformed into the image thereof, that the virtues of God may shine forth in him, that his 'path may be brighter and brighter unto the perfect day,' Prov. iv. 18, and towards that measure of the age of the fulness of Christ Jesus. But I cannot now press the point further, because of the time.